

"A STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS"

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ABSTRACT:

There is heterogeneity among people while using normal products and eco friendly products. In order to find the consumer behavior towards eco friendly products, this study has been undertaken. Now a days people are aware of this products and they are ready to purchase green products to save their family. Everyone wants to give their family the best; whether that means the best food or the highest quality healthcare, every parent or guardian is looking to provide their children with the best of the best. When looking into products for families, it is important to consider all of the effects of the products used. The demand for green products in India has been growing significantly due to the increased interest in the environment. Consumers today are increasingly " thinking green " and are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products. The increasing numbers of consumers who prefer and are willing to buy these products are subjected to the buying process. Consumers have different buying behaviors and these behaviors are constantly changing as a result of the availability of best alternatives to choose from. To identify the impact of consumer behavior towards eco friendly products, 100 samples are selected from Coimbatore city by convenience sampling method. For this study simple percentage analysis and correlation has been used. The present study reveals majority of the consumers are aware of eco friendly products and they are currently using this for healthy life and for healthy generation.

INTRODUCTION:

Eco friendly products (EFPs) are produced without the use of pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizers, antibiotics, and artificial animal growth hormones in any stages of the production. In the case of EFPs sustainability and the ecological balance of natural resources in their production processes are assumed to be as important as the quantity of products. The main objective of producing EFPs is to optimize the overall productivity of scarce resources while considering the fitness of diverse communities within the agro ecosystem including soil organisms, plants, livestock and people. However, there are many benefits to using eco-friendly products that are not simply centered around the health and well-being of the Earth, but also the health and wellbeing of family.

Along with the eco-friendly benefits, there are also personal benefits that coincide with using all-natural products. Plastics, for example, are known to have BPA, lead, and other harmful chemicals that can cause many different illnesses and diseases in both children and adults. For adults, the risks include diabetes, heart disease, autoimmune diseases, and reproductive system abnormalities. For children, it can cause premature puberty, diabetes, stunted growth, and autoimmune disorders. Eco-friendly, all natural products ensure safety from all dangerous chemicals, and allows families to avoid risky additives that can cause any of these issues. Using eco-friendly products improves quality of life in terms of mortality, age, diseases, and illnesses. They ensure the safety of families and the planet.

Eco-friendly products are products that do not harm the environment, whether in their production, use or disposal. Eco-friendly refers to anything that is good for the environment, also called as environmentally friendly or Green. So an eco-friendly product refers to those products that do not affect or cause any harm to the environment. According to The American Marketing Association, “Green or Environmental Marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment”.

GREEN CONSUMER

The green consumer is generally defined as one who adopts environmentally friendly behaviors and/or who purchases green products over the standard alternatives. Green manufacturer is a person one who is producing eco-friendly products which are giving less or zero detrimental effect to the environment. In business, the terms “green product” and “environmental product” are used commonly to describe those that strive to protect or enhance the natural environment by conserving energy and/or resources and reducing or eliminating use of toxic agents, pollution, and waste. Some of these going green products when in use, help conserve energy, minimize carbon footprint or the emission of greenhouse gases, and does not lead to substantial toxicity or pollution to the environment. Other green products are biodegradable, recyclable or compostable.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behavior is study of individuals, or organizations and the processes, consumers use to search, select, use and dispose of products, services, experience, or ideas to satisfy needs and its impact on the consumer and society. The demand for green products in India has been growing significantly due to the increased interest in the environment. Consumers today are increasingly "thinking green" and are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products. The increasing numbers of consumers who prefer and are willing to buy these products are subjected to the buying process. Consumers have different buying behaviors and these behaviors are constantly changing as a result of the availability of best alternatives to choose from. Overall, the buying process is extremely fast-paced today.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ursil Makhdoomi and Ulfat Nazir It is evident that the purchase behavior and customer satisfaction towards green products is not influenced by age, gender, income or educational qualifications of the consumers. Purchasing behavior of consumers depends on their level of satisfaction towards the products. The concern for environment has been found to be more among the young consumers

Paco&Raposo (2009) had conducted a survey to identify the characteristics of green consumers. The factors considered are environmentally friendly products, environmental activism, environmental knowledge, environmental concern, recycling, perception, resource saving, economic factor and skepticism towards environmental standards.

Murphy et.al(2010) found that consumers positive attitude towards green products is not influenced by recession. The factors for understanding consumer behavior in this research study are demographic, responsibility, information and purchasing.

Tanushree (2010) stated that organic foods are emerging as a global trend in food processing sector which accounts for 1-2 of total food sales worldwide. Organic products are acceptable by the consumers as they are considered to be free from. A Study on Green Product and Innovation for Sustainable Development 627 harmful chemicals and contain higher nutrition levels compared with conventional product.” Indian Food Industry”, vol. 29 (4), pp.18-23.

Cheah&Phau(2011) had investigated the about the influence of eco-literacy, interpersonal influence and value orientation on consumers attitude towards environmentally friendly products and stated that these factors have strong correlation with attitudes of consumers.

Roy and Dhumal(2011) stated that the Indian government is actively participating to promote organic agriculture. India would be amongst the top 10 countries, having land under organic cultivation, "Agricultural review" 2011 vol.31 (1), and pp.70-74.

Wang & Tung(2012) had conducted a study to know how life style of consumers influence their behavior towards environment-friendly products and confirmed that plan oriented consumers are having positive attitude towards green products.

Chen & Chang(2012) have developed a model for understanding green purchase intentions among consumers by using four factors – green perceived value, green perceived risk, green trust and green purchase intention and stated that consumers who perceive green products are better for environment will have positive purchase intention towards green products.

Shabani et al (2013) explores the Buying behavior of green products, insulating home with new equipment, buying environment-friendly and energy-efficient cars are green purchase behaviour.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Marketers today are confronted with environmental issues like global warming, green house emissions, pollution and energy crisis. Therefore, the marketers have to embrace a green move towards framing marketing strategies and are now required to go green. Over the past two decades, environmental problems have forced consumers to take interest in preserving the environment. Now the customers support business that operate in an environment friendly way. Green marketing and use of Green Products should be considered as a significant approach to modern marketing and must be practiced with much more vigor, as it has an environmental and social constituent to it. For this, study is done to understand the consumer behavior towards eco-friendly products.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is mainly confined to study on green marketing practices among the consumers. Green marketing is rapidly changing the trendy marketing tactics as per the consumer demand in a sustainable way. Green marketing strategy reaps multiple benefits like increased revenue, reduced costs, new product development, risk mitigation, environment protection, global safety and enhanced brand reputation. Green marketing is needed to address environmental issues which influence all human society and natural atmosphere. The application of green marketing strategies and green manufacturing methods are analyzed and evaluated and green retailing practices are also examined.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To investigate the consumer attractiveness towards eco-friendly products.
- To examine the factors that affect consumers buying behavior for eco-friendly products.
- To study the problems faced by green marketing.
- To know the marketing strategies of eco-friendly marketing.
- To make recommendations based on the evaluation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Descriptive research is carried out to describe about the phenomenon. For this 100 respondents are selected by convenience sampling method. The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed specially to carry out this study. The first section covers the demographic profile of the respondents, second section deals with level of awareness and usage among consumers towards eco-

friendly products. The secondary data were collected from standard text books related to topic, leading journals, published reports and booklets, documents and the internet.

STATISTICAL TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The collected data were analyzed by using appropriate statistical tools and techniques. The tools used for study is Percentage Analysis and Karl Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation. Simple percentage analysis is one of the basic statistical tools which are widely used in analysis and interpretation to a particular question. It is one of the simple forms of analysis which is easy for everyone to understand the outcome of research. Correlation is a statistical technique that can show relationship between the variables and how strongly pairs of variables are related.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Every research study suffers some errors and limitations. The present study is subject to the following limitations:

- The study is only confined with Coimbatore city. Hence, the findings of the study cannot be generalized in any other district, state or country.
- The result is fully drawn on the basis of information provided by the respondents during the specific time period and hence it may not be applicable to any other period.
- Due to limitation of time, only 100 respondents were collected for the study.

FINDINGS

- Majority 56% of the respondents are male.
- Majority 85% of the respondents are aware of green products.
- Majority 42% of the respondents became aware of green products through television.
- Majority 73% of the respondents are willing to pay more if the price is high.
- 50% of the respondents are willing to pay more as it is environmental protection.
- Majority 32% of the respondents have mentioned package as the element that influence buying of eco friendly products.
- Most of the respondents (32%) are engaged in conserve energy activity.
- More than 75% of the respondents have already purchasing green products.
- Majority 43% of the respondents purchase common products as they are get used to it.
- Majority 84% of the respondents will continue to buy green products.
- There is a positive correlation between the educational qualification and source of information for green products and also a positive relation between the reason for paying high price and the elements influencing of buying eco friendly products.

SUGGESTIONS

- One thing is being reiterated is that the current consumption levels are too high and are unsustainable. Hence there is a need for green marketing for shift in the consumer's behavior and attitude towards more environmental friendly life styles.
- It is suggested that consumers are asked to buy green products voluntarily even though the price of green product is high for saving our nature.
- Good awareness programme will motivate consumer go green.
- Reduction in price of green product will improve sales.

- Government encourage the producer of green products by issuing monetary assistance and helps them to market their products.

CONCLUSION

The present study projects majority of the consumers are aware of eco friendly products and they are currently using this for healthy life and for healthy generation. Environmental friendly products are good for humans and nature. Some environmental friendly products are more costly than 'traditional' types of products but savings can be made if we go 'back-to-basics'. This study reveals the customers are ready to pay high price to green products for environmental protection and most of the consumers have given preference to organic food. Consumers are willing to pay a little extra price towards green products, organizations are taking notice of the demand and behaviour and attitude of the consumers. The factors influencing their purchase are benefit for health, quality and reliability, Variety and quantity, environment and ambience, customer services and friendship advice etc. They also prefer promotional campaign which protects the environment, and distribution channels which are not causing environmental pollution. But they are not ready to compromise the quality of the product for the sake of the environment. The marketers should include consumer's attitude measurement programme in their marketing plan and adopt all aspects of green marketing, then only they can achieve their goal and fulfil the social responsibility of a business concern.

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