

# CONSUMER'S AWARENESS AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS IN KATTAPPANA MUNICIPALITY

\*Ammu Soman

PG Scholar (commerce) BAM College, Thuruthikad.

A Green product is a product whose design or attributes (and/or production and/or strategy) use recycling (renewable/toxic free/biodegradable) resources and which improves environmental impact or reduces environmental toxic damage throughout its entire life cycle. The products those are manufactured through green technology and that caused no environmental hazards are called green products. Promotion of green technology and green products is necessary for the conservation of natural resources and sustainable development. The present study aims to portrait the customer's awareness and attitude towards green products in Kattappana. It found that the awareness of consumers about green products is below average. Most of the customers can't name even 5 green products. There are no enough promotional strategies for making people aware about green products. People should be made more aware of green products and their importance. This will change the attitude of consumers towards green products and it will increase the demand for green products.

**Key words:** green product, awareness, attitude, satisfaction, eco-friendly, pollution.

## Introduction

Awareness of destruction of natural resources has the issue of environmental protection, which in turn has created eco-friendly consumption called —Green consumerism. Marketers responded to the growing environmental consciousness of consumers by adopting green practices and developing environment friendly products. Today, government organizations as well as the general public are concerned about the environment and are taking initiatives at their own level. Various government have implemented environmental laws for environment protection and are also providing subsidies on green environment- friendly products.

According to the American Marketing Association, Green Products is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus Green Products incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Other similar terms used are Environmental Marketing and Ecological Marketing. Thus "Green Marketing" refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the production, marketing consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for switch in to green products and services. While the shift to "green" may appear to be expensive in the short term, it will definitely prove to be indispensable and advantageous, cost wise too, in the long run.

## Statement of the problem

The Green Productsproducts are slowly getting huge awareness in among the world through environmentalist and other social protection conscious people for avoiding the global warming. The dough task to cover the entire Green Productsproducers and customers view in all over the world by research. So, the researchers are trying to portrait the customer's awareness and attitude towards Green Productsproducts in Kattappana.

## Objectives

- To study the consumer's awareness towards Green Products.
- To study the consumer's attitude towards Green Products.
- To analyse the consumers level of satisfaction towards Green Products.
- To study the benefit to the company producing green products

## Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Detailed information has been collected from the sample drawn from the population with the help of questionnaire. General information required has been collected from the secondary sources. The population includes customers. The sample has been collected from the population using stratified random sampling. Some of the participants were contacted by face-to face, phone and e-mail in order to get more details about their opinion on the questionnaire.

## Scope of the study

Green Products is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environment friendly. Thus Green Products incorporates a broad range of activities, including product promotion, modification, changes to the production process, sustainable packaging, as well as modifying advertising. However, not much research with respect to Green Products has been done in India. There is still doubt about green products among consumers. As Green Products is different from the marketing in a traditional way, marketers need to know the factors that persuade the consumers to buy the green products. This study aims to resolve the research problems like, consumer awareness of Green Products, consumer attitude towards Green Products, consumer's level of satisfaction towards Green Products; benefit to the companies producing green products. This study is being conducted among consumers in Kattappana which falls in Idukki district of Kerala.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In 1975, **Herberger Jr.** defined green product as having ecology appeal: among the product's characteristics its viability with the environment is recognizable, understandable and marketable. **Weber** (1991) argued that green products are the ones claiming to be environmentally friendly and biodegradable.

**Mebratu** (2001) claims that a green product possesses environmental procurement: systematically building environmental considerations into day-to-day procurement decision-making and operations.

**Albino et al.**(2009) agree with the fact that the green product is designed to minimize its environmental impacts during its whole life-cycle. In particular, non-renewable resource use is minimized, toxic materials are avoided and renewable resource use takes place in accordance with their rate of replenishment. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) argues that green products are the ones produced without non-toxic chemicals or are recyclable, reusable, bio-degradable or having eco-friendly packaging and with low detrimental environmental impact at all stages of its life-cycle with the long term goal of preservation of natural environment (OECD, 2009).

**Heiskanen, E.** (2000) investigated in his study that Environmental life cycle assessment (LCA) and life cycle thinking are popular approaches to evaluate and manage the environmental aspects of products. While LCA has been propagated as a decision-making tool, the interest here is in LCA as a mental model, which managers may interpret and enact differently. If LCA and life cycle thinking manage to infuse organizations with an extended sense of responsibility, this could counteract some of the organized irresponsibility of modern markets. However, LCA use may also lead to confusion, doubt and denial. This article explores potential managerial interpretations of LCA with a small illustration from the wholesale trade, and through a conceptualization of the illustration in terms of Hatch's (1993) dynamic model of organizational culture.

**Johansson, G.** (2002) revealed that 20 factors essential for successful integration of eco-design in product development are presented. The success factors are structured according to six areas of concern: management, customer relationships, supplier relationships, developmental process, competence and motivation. By relating the factors to a number of product development elements that are generally claimed to be important for product development success, it is indicated that the integration of ecodesign to a great extent are related to the same elements. A few factors seem to be specific for the integration of eco-design. These factors are related to competence and motivation. As many of the eco-design success factors relate to those elements that are acknowledged to affect product development success, this implies that a company manages product development well increases the likelihood of being successful when integrating eco-design into product development.

**Joshi, M.** (2004) discussed increasing environmental concerns of consumers are leading to more information about the environmental characteristics of products being made available by producers through what is called "eco-labelling". Eco-labelling has thus become the medium promoting both the production and consumption of products that are "more environment friendly" than competing products available in the market. Due to this, eco-labelling has generated substantial debate with regard to its implications for market access of similar products and also with regard to the legality of demanding eco-labelling on products, especially in the World Trade Organization.

The article briefly discusses the market access effects of eco-labelling schemes, particularly for developing countries. It discusses the consistency of voluntary life cycle analysis (LCA) based eco-labelling, sponsored both by governments as well as those by nongovernmental bodies, with the relevant provisions of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) and implications if these are considered to be covered by the relevant WTO agreements, as has been claimed by some countries.

**Kilbourne, W.E.** (1998) discussed the failure of Green Products to move beyond the limitations of the prevailing paradigm. The author identifies areas that must be examined for their effect in the marketing/environment relationship, namely economic, political and technological dimensions of the cultural frame of reference.

**Karna, J., Hansen, E. & Juslin, H.** (2003) interpreted that proactive marketers were the most genuine group in implementing environmental marketing voluntarily and seeking competitive advantage through environmental friendliness. The results also give evidence that green values, environmental marketing strategies, structures and functions are logically connected to each other as hypothesized according to the model of environmental marketing used to guide this study.

Oyewole, P. (2001) in his paper presented a conceptual link among green marketing, environmental justice, and industrial ecology. It argues for greater awareness of environmental justice in the practice for green marketing. A research agenda is finally suggested to determine consumers' awareness of environmental justice, and their willingness to bear the costs associated with it.

**Prothero, A.** (1998) introduced several papers discussed in the July 1998 issue of 'Journal of Marketing Management' focusing on green marketing. This includes; a citation of the need to review existing literature on green marketing, an empirical study of United States and Australian marketing managers, a description of what a green alliance look like in practice in Great Britain, ecotourism and definitions of green marketing.

**Prothero, A. & Fitchett, J.A.** (2000) argued that greater ecological enlightenment can be secured through capitalism by using the characteristics of commodity culture to further progress environmental goals. The authors reject both naive ecological romanticism and revolutionary idealism on the grounds that they fail to offer any pragmatic basis by which greater environmental responsibility can be achieved. Drawing on the now well-established theoretical tradition of postMarxist cultural criticism, the authors offer a conceptual justification for the development and implementation of a green commodity discourse. For this to be achieved and implemented, prevailing paradigms regarding the structure, nature, and characteristics of capitalism must be revised. Marketing not only has the potential to contribute to the establishment of more sustainable forms of society but, as a principle agent in the operation and proliferation of commodity discourse, also has a considerable responsibility to do so.

**Sanjay K. Jain & Gurmeet Kaur** (2004) in their study environmentalism have fast emerged as a worldwide phenomenon. Business firms too have risen to the occasion and have started responding to environmental challenges by practicing Green Products strategies. Green consumerism has played a catalytic role in ushering corporate environmentalism and making business firms Green Products oriented. Based on the data collected through a field survey, the paper makes an assessment of the extent of environmental awareness, attitudes and behaviour prevalent among consumers in India.

**Walker, R.H. & Hanson, D.J.** (1998) highlighted and discussed green/environmental implications and imperatives associated with destination marketing as distinct from those related to product and services marketing. A comparative taxonomy has been developed to illustrate these, and to provide a framework for discussing their relevance, with reference to the particular case of Tasmania as a tourism destination

The study by BanumathiMannarswamy(2011) proved that Worldwide evidence shows people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behaviour accordingly. As a result there is a growing market for sustainable and socially responsible products and services.

The study by **MeenakshiHanda**(2006) has indicated that Activist groups and the media have played a major role in enhancing the environmental awareness and consciousness of consumers in recent years. Most studies on the subject show that although the awareness and environmental behaviour of consumers across countries, educational levels, age and income groups may differ, environmental concerns are increasing worldwide.

According to the study by **IndranilMutsuddi&RimiMutsuddi**(2009) found that there is overall consensus among the respondents about the initiatives in workplace like paperless office, use of teleconferencing to reducing travel, training and introduction of waste management practices and introduction of wellness program for healthy work life have been very effective.

The study by **Thankodi and Padmavathi**(2011) analyzed that with three cities of the nation in to ten polluted cities in the world the fourth largest polluting country, the need for green banking is higher than anywhere else here. Hence a new trend was given birth in our endeavour to become eco-friendly or —being greenl. The aim of the green banking is to provide good environmental and social business practice. In their study by Philip Kotler et al (2010), Environmental Sustainability refers to generating profits while helping to save the planet.

**David L. Loudon & Albert J. Della Bitta** (2010) signified that the —greenl movement is growing extensively and marketers are seeking to cash in on an environmental awakening. —Greenl may be to the 90s what —lightl was to the \_80s, with products clamouring to show how they are environmentally sensitive. Michael R. Solomon(2009) identified that firms that adopt the philosophy to protect or enhance the natural environment as they go about their business activities is an instance of green marketing. Marketers point to a segment of consumers who practice LOHAS – an acronym for —Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability.

The study by **Henry Assael** (2006) observed that In U.S., Companies have taken actions to promote environmental controls towards green marketing; For example : Reynolds Wrap promotes recycling , while Crane Papers advertises the natural content of its products, McDonalds switched from plastic to paper wrapping and uses recyclable products to build its restaurants.

**Douglas J. Darymple& Leonard J. Parsons** (2002) believe that the —greenl movement is a answer for business to produce more environmentally safe products. This approach is known as green marketing. Environmentalism is only one aspect of responsible conduct. The products should be designed for recyclability where possible.

According to **Ramanigopal** (2010), Global warming is affecting the world economy. Acting now will cost less than 1 percent of Indian GDP. A study about the environment and societal ethics can help the future managers and equips them with essential knowledge to convert the challenges faced today into opportunities.

**Philip Kotler et al**(2009) revealed that Environmental concerns are manifested in many behaviors. Many top companies such as McDonald\_s Nike, GE, and Dupont are embracing sustainability and green marketing. UPS and FedEx have introduced alternative\_fuel and hybrid electric diesel vehicles to their fleets. Karpagam & GeethaJaiKumar(2010) observed that the Ministry of Environment and Forests launched the scheme of labelling of environment-friendly products in 1991. The label is awarded to consumer goods which met the specified environmental criteria and the quality requirements of Indian standards.

According to **BalaKrishnamoorthy**(2008), Eco-labels provide consumers with information that a product was made with minimal impacts on the environment. These labels set standards for environmentally responsible products to reduce air and water

pollution, cut the waste of energy and natural resources, slow ozone depletion and the risk of global warming, prevent toxic contamination and protect fish and wildlife and their habitats.

### Importance of Green Products

Firstly, there are new perceptions which are being formed or re-evaluated on issues like environmental friendly products, recycle ability, waste-reduction, the cost associated with pollution and the price value relationship of environmentalism.

In addition, Green Products is important because it helps to promote environment friendly products. Thus, it also helps to reduce the causes of global warming and other environmental problems or issues.

Furthermore, there are new perceptions which are being formed or re-evaluated on issues like environmental friendly products, recycle ability, waste-reduction, the cost associated with pollution and the price value relationship of environmentalism. As a result, organizations believe they have a moral obligation to be more socially responsible.

Moreover, governmental bodies are forcing firms to become more responsible. There are pressure from various stakeholders, government, environmentalists, NGOs, consumers which is placed on businesses, which in turn keeps them under constant and relentless watch in their daily operations. Thus, organizations perceive environmental marketing to be an opportunity that can be used to achieve its objectives.

Finally, competitors' environmental activities put pressure on firms to change their environmental marketing activities. Cost factors associated with waste disposal, or reductions in material usage forces firms to modify their behaviour

### Benefits of Green Products

Firstly, it encourages marketers to develop energy-efficient products and gives them competitive advantage and favorable image among consumers. As companies market their green-friendly efforts and products, they simultaneously encourage the green initiative. This perpetuates the efforts by other companies to operate with more green responsibility and causes consumers to remain vigilant in holding companies accountable for their actions. The employees and consumers feel proud to be associated with an environmentally responsible company

In addition, companies that develop new and improved products and services with environment inputs in mind give themselves access to new markets, increase their profit sustainability, and enjoy a competitive advantage over the companies which are not concerned for the environment.

Furthermore it makes firm to charge a premium price for the green products. Consumers may become more comfortable and accepting of paying higher premium prices to acquire earth-friendly products or to support companies that engage in green activities.

Moreover, green products: does not present a health hazard to people or animals; is relatively efficient in its use of resources during manufacture, use, and disposal; does not incorporate materials derived from endangered species or threatened environments; does not contribute to excessive waste in its use or packaging; does not rely on unnecessary use of or cruelty to animals. Finally, it helps save money in the long run. As a result, firm can achieve higher profits and it can be used to make companies to develop innovative products.

The main objective of the study was to find out the Attitude and Awareness of Consumers towards Green Products. The collected data has been analyzed with the use of percentage analysis.

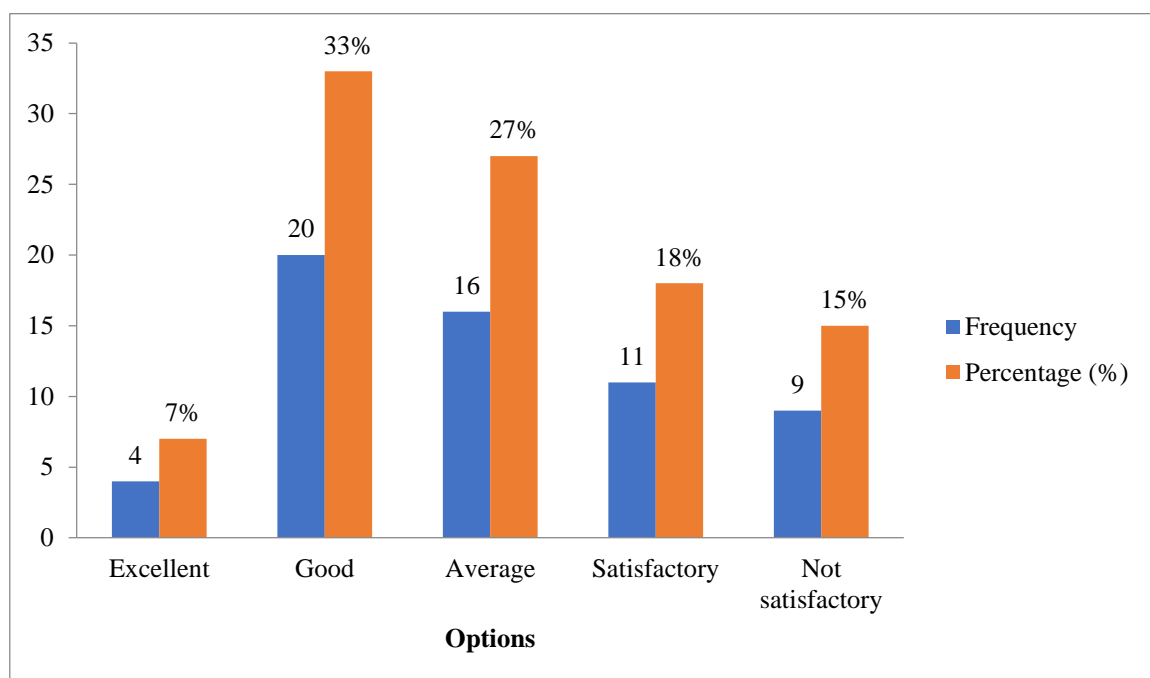
**Table 1 Quality of green products**

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	04	07
Good	20	33
Average	16	27
Satisfactory	11	18
Not satisfactory	09	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: *Primary data*)



The table shows that 7 percent say that the quality of green product is excellent, 33 percent says good, 27 percent says average, 18 percent say satisfactory and 15 percent say not satisfactory. This shows that there is appositve attitude towards green product



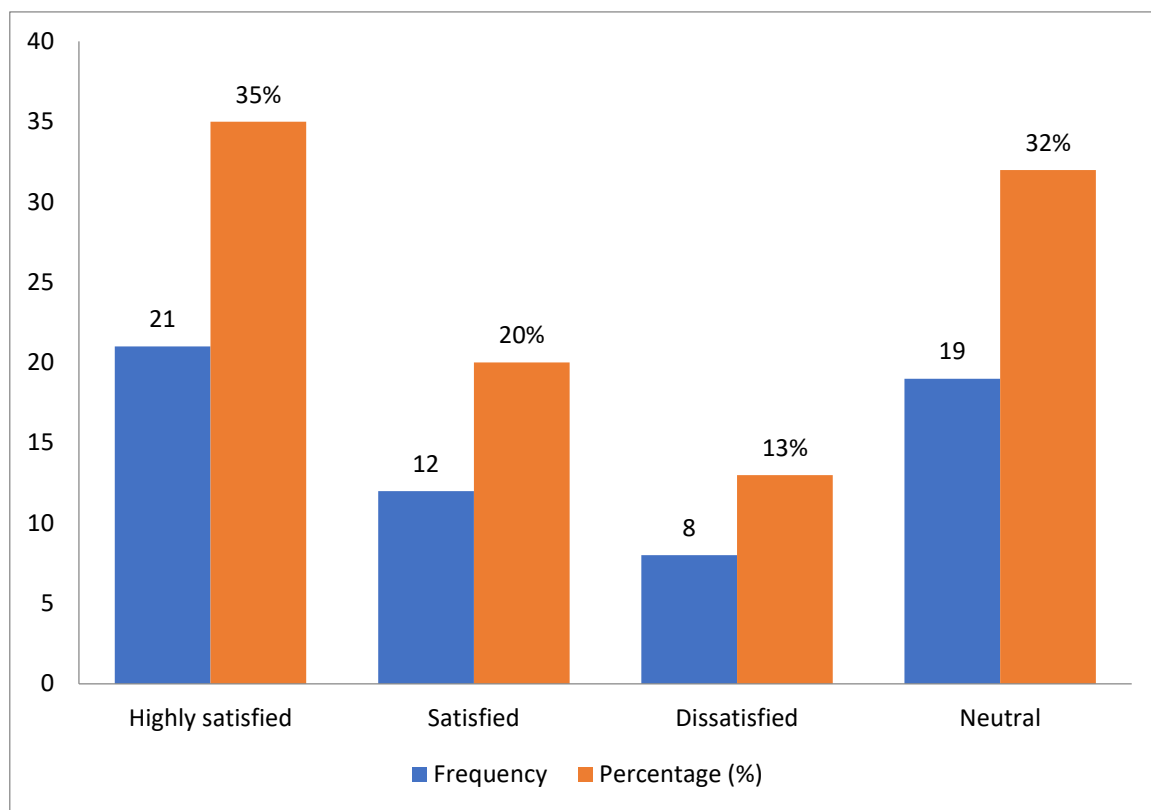
**Figure: 1 Quality of green products**

**Table 2 Level of satisfaction**

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly satisfied	21	35
Satisfied	12	20
Dissatisfied	08	13
Neutral	19	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: *Primary data*)

The table shows that 35 percent of costumers are highly satisfied with green products, 20 percent satisfied, 32 percent neutral and 13 percent of customers are dissatisfied. This shows that the level of satisfaction with green products is good.



**Graph 2 Level of satisfaction**

### Findings of the Study

- Majority of the respondents (57 percent) can name less than 5 green products.
- Among the 60 respondents 60 percent consider environmental aspects while buying products.
- All respondents buy green product.
- Majority of the respondent (47percent) came to know about green products through internet and rest through magazines, television and other media.
- Majority of respondent (60 percent) say that green products are not superior to other products.
- The study reveals that 60 percent of respondent does not recommend green products to their friends.
- The study reveals that 35 percent of respondents are not willing to pay extra for green products. 12 percent are willing to pay 10 percent extra.
- As per the result of the study 23 percent strongly and 22 percent agrees that green products are overpriced.
- Among the 60 respondent 24 percent strongly and 35 percent agrees that going green could be beneficial in long run while 13 percent disagree.
- Majority of the respondents (43 percent) strongly agrees that lack of availability/unease of access is a major reason for low popularity demand of green products.
- Majority of the respondents (52 percent) say that product is the marketing element that strongly influences buying behavior of green products.
- The study shows that 90 percent of the customers can name only less than five green product certification.
- Majority of the respondents say that quality of the green product is good.
- Majority of the respondents (60 percent) are of the opinion that green products are good for addressing environmental issues.
- The study shows that 77 percent of the respondents say that green products strengthen Company's image.
- Majority of the respondents (52 percent) say that green product help to create more market demand.
- Out of the 60 respondents 35 percent are highly and 20 percent are satisfied with green products.

### Suggestions

- The Consumers should be made aware of the relationship between green products and environment through various Medias.
- New promotional strategies should be introduced to promote green products.
- Innovations should be made in green products.
- Price of the green products should be reasonable.

- Availability of the green products should be made easy.
- Consumers should consider environmental factors before purchasing products.
- Consumers should be made aware of green product certifications.

## Conclusion

"Green Marketing" refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the production, marketing, consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., Both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for switch in to green products and services. While the shift to "green" may appear to be expensive in the short term, it will definitely prove to be indispensable and advantageous, cost-wise too, in the long run.

## Reference

1. Divas k. *Green ProductsMix: Rethinking Competitive Advantage during Climate Change*, (IJMS), 2011.
2. Tiwari s. *Green Products– emerging dimension*, *journal of business excellence*, 2011
3. Shefaat F. *Green Marketing*, *excel international journal of multidisciplinary management studies*, 2012
4. Reksha R. *Evaluation of Effectiveness of Green ProductsMix on Consumer Satisfaction and Loyalty* 2013
5. Maheswari A. *Green Marketing: a study on indian youth* (IJMS) 2011
6. Satish Sharma C, *Green Marketing: a gimmick or the real deal?* JFFM, 2012
7. Chaudhary B, Tripathi S, Monga N. *Green Productsand CSR*, IJRFM, 2012

