

A Study on Awareness of Eco-Friendly Products and its Influence on Buying Behaviour of Consumers

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Abstract: *This study delves into the dynamic relationship between consumer awareness of eco-friendly products and their subsequent buying behaviour. With increasing environmental concerns, consumers are becoming more conscious of the products they purchase and their ecological impact. This research aims to understand the extent to which awareness of eco-friendly products influences consumer choices. A mixed-methods approach involving surveys and interviews was utilized to gather data from a diverse sample of consumers across different demographics. Statistical analysis techniques such as regression analysis were employed to explore the correlation between awareness levels and purchasing decisions. The findings reveal significant insights into the factors driving consumer awareness, including environmental consciousness, product labelling, and marketing strategies. Moreover, the study elucidates the direct impact of eco-friendly product awareness on consumer behaviour, highlighting its role as a pivotal determinant in purchase decisions. The implications of these findings are pertinent for businesses seeking to align their offerings with evolving consumer preferences and for policymakers aiming to promote sustainable consumption patterns. This research contributes to the existing literature by providing valuable insights into the interplay between environmental awareness and consumer behaviour, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of the pathway towards sustainable consumption.*

Keywords: Eco-Friendly Product, Consumer preferences.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays a very essential concern has developed is “environmentalism”. The water insufficiency, ground water inadequacy, water toxic waste, air trash, poor management of waste, preservation and quality of forests, biodiversity loss, soil/land degradation, depletion of the ozone layer are the life-threatening environmental problems. To solve the environmental problems, environmental protections and sustainable development are made for those products which are good for health and safe for environment. It rises the awareness of environmental protections and sustainable development for the products among the customers. Consumers are becoming progressively aware of the significance of eco-friendly activities and environmental consciousness and it drives them to consume eco-friendly products

The lifestyle of the people changing towards the environment protection is becoming a trend worldwide and effective measure are taken to preserve the environment. Many companies have started to name themselves as environmentally friendly and the companies need to stand by to certain environmental regulations if they want to operate and remain active players in the market. It also follows preventive environmental strategy which tries to increase resource efficiency of products, processes, and services, and reduce risk to people and the environment. Generally, the consumers most frequently used terms which associate with exoproduct or eco-friendly products. The terms are phosphate free, recyclable, ozone friendly and environmentally friendly.

ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCT:

Product which is certified in all the process are called as an Eco-Friendly product. The procedure or process for making a product is consumption of raw materials, manufacturing, packaging and distribution. These products are containing

natural ingredients, biodegradable, recyclable or compostable in nature, resourced from the cleaner source of energy (i.e. water, wind or solar power) which used for raw materials acquired naturally. Using natural items for packaging the products which make easy to dispose that is biodegradable or recyclable or reusable in nature.

BENEFITS OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS:

- **SUSTAINABLE TO THE WORLD:** The sustainable products are environmentally-friendly throughout their entire life. Start from the raw materials are extracted to the final product is disposed of. There is no permanent damage to the environment. The sustainable products provide measurable improvements in socio-ecological product performance and to deal with socioecological problems on a global level.
- **HEALTHIER LIVING:** Not only are these products healthier for the environment, but they can also be healthier for human being. The products available to the consumers contain harmful chemicals that causes the risk of developing illnesses and diseases. Eco-friendly products eradicate all these risks by using natural products.
- **BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE:** When one start using eco-friendly products means it change the environment being safe and change the life of the human being, the products improve the quality of life by using recycled, reusable and biodegradable products. Reduces the problem faced by the human while using the chemicals and toxic ingredients products.
- **RECYCLED:** Now a day many of the products used have come from recycled products. Simply recycling materials can create a surprisingly large number of items, Conserves natural resources such as timber, water and minerals. The amount of waste sent to landfills are reduced. It increases the economic security by patter a domestic source of materials, prevents pollution by dropping the need to collect new more raw materials. It also saves energy.
- **REUSABLE:** Many products are reusable; it prevents pollution caused by reducing the need to harvest new raw materials. Greenhouse gas emissions reduction that contribute to global climate change. It also saves energy and money. It helps the environment to sustain for future generations.
- **LOWER MAINTENANCE:** Eco-friendly products production cost is more but in “long-term” they are actually more cost effective. Eco-friendly products are made from recycled materials, reusable materials, biodegradable. Eco-friendly products may have high price compare to the normal products, but quality of the products is much better, it will pay back in future.
- **BIODEGRABLE PACKAGE:** Plastics are mostly used in packaging, which are really damaging the environment. The manufacturers make Eco-friendly products with the help of recyclable materials for packaging that can easily decompose in nature, some of them embed seeds in the wrappers so they will end up growing a new plant in the land once it reaches the landfill.
- **SAVES MONEY IN LONG RUN:** The products that are considered eco-friendly may be more expensive compare to the branded products that we use daily, but they are actually money-saving in the long run. Eco-friendly products are made from recycled materials which is more durable and better quality in long run.
- **KEEP OUR ENVIRONMENT HAPPY AND HEALTHY:** The air, land and water are deeply harmed by pollution and toxins products. The companies that manufacture eco-friendly products using things like solar power to run their process for manufacturing. Be aware that although a The company may advertise their products as eco-friendly but truly they are not eco-friendly in their manufacturing process;
- **SAVE ENERGY:** The energy is generating from the sun with the help solar panels, so eco-friendly products gives energy without spoiling any resources. They producing electricity as an alternative source. They do not consume materials like coal, gas, or oil, so it saves energy and natural resources. Moving to LED helps conserve energy and will save you money in long run. It also saves energy by taking on natural light. Open up the curtains and screens and let the sunlight brighten the room. It also decreases the electricity bills.

DRAWBACKS OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

- **MORE TIME AND MONEY CONSUMING:** The time consuming for making green products more compare to non-green products. In each and every process, it takes more time. The reason why eco-friendly products are generally more expensive is because of processing implications. In each and every process it starts from raw material to packaging take more time and extra cost to follow the eco-friendly process. It is not easy making products that have slight impact on the environment and processing costs come with a higher difficulty to buy. More cost less consumption among the consumers.
- **LACK OF SUPPORT:** The lack of knowledge and education about the environment issues among the people. Many people either feel that caring for the environment is not their responsibility. The threats of climate change are not real enough to impact them in their personal lives. The Consumers, Companies and Government are not supporting each and every one activities towards the environmental protection. So the eco-friendly products need support from all side.
- **EXAGGERATIONS OR OUTRIGHT LIES:** Non-eco-friendly packaging materials have toxins, it contains petroleum-based and bisphenol A (BPA) that can pollute food and water. This is harmful to human health. They are also dangerous to aquatic life. Solid waste materials harm marine life as well when they pollute the water. The ingredients used in are not actual eco-friendly. Some companies saying green products but actual it not contains all the green terms. Some other drawbacks are-
- Green products are not easily available.
- Not available in nearby markets.
- No proper advertisement of Eco-friendly products.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

Eco-friendly products have a greater impact on the day-to-day life of the people. It is important to know the usage of eco-friendly products among the people. The study helps in knowing the consumer awareness, perfection, benefits, the level of satisfaction with the eco-friendly products. Benefits of the eco-friendly products slowly helps the future generation to live a safe and healthy life.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- To identify the level of consumer awareness towards Eco-friendly products.
- To find out the attitude towards Eco-friendly products.
- To find out the buying behaviour of consumers related to Eco-friendly products.
- To know about the problems faced among consumers on Green products.
- To analyse the level of satisfaction and preference for repurchase intention of consumers for Eco-friendly products

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The study is restricted to the sample size, data collected based on the views expressed by the users and the data collected during the pandemic situation time, so the opinion of the respondents may differ about the eco-friendly products. The study covers the awareness and perception towards the eco-friendly products.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

- The study is based on questionnaire.
- The sample size is limited.
- The study is restricted to the “geographical limits” of Chennai city only.
- Due to time limit the data were collected from the Chennai city people only.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Divyapriyadharshini et al (2019) conducted a study on Consumer Awareness towards Green Products and its Impact. It identifies the promotional activities of eco-friendly products which influences consumer's green products. This study also divulges that the factor affects buying decision of green products among consumers is awareness about green products.

2. Maulik K Rathod (2018) conducted a study on Consumers' awareness towards Ecofriendly Products in Gujarat. The author concluded that consumers are identifying the ecofriendly FMCG products through the eco-label and in marketing (environmental marketing) products identifying tool is eco-label. The author suggested that the customers, the organization and the government have to join hands together in generating awareness of eco-friendly products among consumers.

3. Zillur Rahman Siddique1 & Afzal Hossain (2018) conducted a study to identify the Sources of consumer's awareness toward green products and its impact on purchasing decision in Bangladesh to examines the environmental concern, knowledge, eco-friendly products, social media, promotional activities on eco-friendly products and reference groups influence. The study has found that promotional activities on eco-friendly products and it significantly influence awareness of consumer's green products and most of the respondents are aware of green products. The author suggested that the business people and marketing experts should promote the strategies for enhancing green product awareness as environmental issues are opportunities to generate consumer demand. The author concluded that there is significant relation between green products awareness and green purchase decision and depicted that consumer's green products awareness are influenced their green purchase decision.

4. Yusuf Balarabe Abdullahi (2018) conducted a study on Factors that influence Consumer Behaviour towards buying Sustainable products. The study found that the product, package, place and promotion towards the motivation of consumption are four value-added areas. It evaluates the consumer attitudes and their perception towards eco-friendly FMCG products.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology describes the methodology carried out to complete the research work.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a part of the research methodology and it is act as a road map for the collection and analysis of the collected data in a research.

"A research design is a blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data and is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted"- **C.R.KOTHARI.**

A Descriptive research design was designed to carry over the research.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A Simple Random Sampling technique (S.R.S) was employed to pick the respondents from the population.

DATA COLLECTION

A questionnaire was sent through google forms to various respondents and the necessary information was collected with respect to the eco-friendly products.

SOURCE OF THE DATA FOR THE STUDY

For research purpose, both primary and secondary data are used.

Primary data:

A structured questionnaire has been used to collect the primary data related to the research topic from the sample respondents.

Secondary data:

The study also relied on secondary data which comprises books, journals and websites which helped in acquiring deep knowledge and enlarged the scope of learning and understanding.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MARITAL STATUS AND PERCEPTION ABOUT THE ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS BY THE USER

The t-test was performed to analyse the difference between the marital status and perception about the eco-friendly products among user.

H0: There is no significant difference between the marital status with regards to the perception about the eco-friendly products among user.

H1: There is a significant difference between the marital status with regards to the perception about the eco-friendly products among user.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MARITAL STATUS AND THE PERCEPTION ABOUT THE ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS AMONG USER

Statement	Marital status	N	Mean	t	df	Sig
Perception	Single	174	44.0230	-2.703	315	0.007
	Married	143	46.0559			

(Source: Computed Data)

From the table 4.3.6 it is inferred that there is a significant difference between marital status with respect to perception about eco-friendly products among the users, since the p value is less than .05. Based on the mean score it is also concluded that married people are having good opinion about the eco-friendly products as compared to the unmarried.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAMILY STATUS AND PERCEPTION ABOUT THE ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS BY THE USER

The t-test was performed to analyze the difference between the family status and perception about the eco-friendly products among user.

H0: There is no significant difference between the family status with regards to the perception about the eco-friendly products among user.

H1: There is a significant difference between the family status with regards to the perception about the eco-friendly products among user.

TABLE 2: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAMILY STATUS AND THE PERCEPTION ABOUT THE ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS AMONG USER

Statement	Family status	N	Mean	t	df	Sig
Perception	Nuclear	197	44.9797	.136	262.691	0.893
	Joint	120	44.8750			

(Source: Computed Data)

From the table 4.3.7 it is inferred that there is no significant difference between family status with respective to perception about eco-friendly products among the users, since the p value is more than .05. Based on the mean score it is also concluded that the respondents of nuclear family and joint family having perception about eco-friendly products equally.

FACTOR ANALYSIS ON THE FACTOR INFLUENCING CUSTOMERS TO BUY A PARTICULAR ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCT

The factor analysis has been performed to group the customers with respect to the factors influencing to buy a particular eco-friendly product. The following table describes the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) of sampling adequacy for the factor influencing customers to buy a particular eco-friendly product. The value of chi-square statistic in Bartlett's test of sphericity is highly statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Table 3 SHOWING THE RESULT OF KMO AND BARLETT'S TEST FOR FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMERS TO BUY A PARTICULAR ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.907
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4640.220
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

(Source: Computed data)

The table 4.4.7 reveals the variance explained by the components after extraction and after rotation. The components have been extracted by applying Kaiser Criteria and rotated imposing Varimax rotation method. It is noted that only 2 components out of 15 are enough to explain the various in the factors influencing the customers to buy particular eco-friendly product.

V. FINDINGS & SUGGESTION

- The non-users of eco-friendly products feel that eco-friendly products are not easily available. It is suggested that the companies should take necessary steps to make the eco-friendly products easily available.
- Non-users of eco-friendly products feel that eco-friendly products are more expensive. It is suggested that the eco-friendly products should be reasonably priced and offer more discounts for the eco-friendly products. So it can be affordable by all the income group of people.
- The awareness campaigns should conduct to make the consumers aware of the health benefits and environmental protection arising due to consumption of eco-friendly products.
- Marketers can concentrate much on the availability of the eco-friendly products to the consumers, so the consumers can purchase eco-friendly products from the nearby market.
- The companies producing eco-friendly products should focus more on the packaging and design of the product as the appearance of product induces the customers to buy eco-friendly products.
- The companies also need to concentrate on the sales promotion activities of the ecofriendly products. The products provide green offering or it is eco-friendly means the companies should make use of the variety of identification terms and logos for marketing their eco-friendly products. They can create a new branded logo for their green products, so the consumers able to identify that the products are eco-friendly.
- Manufacturer shall produce wide range of eco-friendly products which could be useful for the consumers.
- The companies should follow some marketing strategies to meet the changing needs of the customers towards the eco-friendly products. The marketing strategies like focus more on social media advertisement, promote the value of eco-friendly products among the consumers, offers more discounts.
- Government should take necessary measures to create awareness among the consumers using eco-friendly products will make the environment safe and healthy.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study focused on the awareness of eco-friendly products and its influencing buying behavior of the consumers. The customers are aware about the eco-friendly products available in the market. The market for eco-friendly products is growing rapidly because consumer's awareness about the harmfulness of chemical and toxic ingredients. The companies should focus on the consumers' convenience including quality, availability, accessibility, maintaining wide range of products are the most influential factor for using eco-friendly products. It is concluded that the consumers of eco-friendly products have a positive attitude and there is a significant relation between eco-friendly products and purchase decision, it depicted that consumers' awareness are influencing the buying behaviour of the consumers. The consumption of eco-friendly products helps the consumers to live healthy life in long run. The consumers identify the eco-friendly products with the help of the term label, the eco-friendly product is labelled as Eco-friendly, Biodegradable, Energy star, Green seal and Green packages. Most familiar terms used by the consumers are Eco-label,

Green packages and Green certificates for identification of eco-friendly products. The company should focus on the others terms to make aware of the terms or logos among the consumers.

The main reason for not using the eco-friendly products by the consumers, they feel that it is more expensive than the normal products, eco-friendly products are not easily available, not available in nearby markets, no proper advertisement are made for the eco-friendly products. The problem faced by the consumers while purchasing the eco-friendly products are the products only available in online market and not available in nearby markets. The companies should focus in manufacturing cost, advertising and sales promotion activities towards the ecofriendly products. Once the eco-friendly products reach the satisfaction level the consumers make a decision of repurchase the eco-friendly products. The repurchase decision are made from the following statement, they are special feature of the products (natural ingredients and no side efforts), protects them from global warming, preserve the environment for future generation.

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