

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CONSUMERS PURCHASE DECISION OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF EARTH

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ABSTRACT

Consumer is a person who uses a commodity or service. The study of consumer purchase decision is important for increasing the sales volume. Consumers are the main providers of revenue for businesses. When consumers purchase, they are providing income for the businesses and that's why purchase decision is considered as the most important tool in marketing. Eco-friendly products are the trend and a choice by millions of people and are considered as a boon in the present scenario. It also plays an important role in the consumers market. The paper draws a light into purchase decision of eco-friendly products by the consumers. A questionnaire is designed to find out the purchase decision of eco-friendly products and analyse the perception of consumers and to identify the consumer's most preferred eco-friendly product. The data has also been collected from various secondary sources. The results illustrates that majority of the consumers are aware of eco-friendly products from their friends and family. It also depicts that food safety and good taste are the most influencing factors which primarily induce the purchase decision of the respondents.

Keywords: consumers, influencing factors, eco-friendly products, purchases decision....

INTRODUCTION

Eco-friendly products are being used by the general public to protect the environment. Recent statistics shows that organic food products market is the second most important market with organic consumption growth of 20% per year and organic industry is also valued at US\$25 million. According to Pride & Ferrell, "Green marketing also alternatively known as environmental marketing and sustainable marketing refers to an organisation's efforts at designing, promoting, pricing and distributing products that will not harm environment". Many products like jute bags, bamboo utensils, CFL bulbs, hybrid cars, earthenware items, natural soaps, eco-friendly paper, paper cups, face masks, energy saving electronic products, organic foods etc. are available as environment-friendly products and marketing of such products is known as "Green Marketing".



STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Eco-friendly products will be successful only if the marketer understands the green consumers purchase decision. Hence it is essential to conduct a research study of green consumers and find the factors influencing the consumers purchase decision. So a research was conducted to find out the influencing factors of consumer purchase decision towards eco-friendly products in Nagercoil town".

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to find out the consumer purchase decision towards eco-friendly products in Nagercoil town. The following are the specific objectives:

1. To study the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To find out the factors influencing the consumers purchase decision of eco-friendly products.
3. To analyse the source of awareness obtained by the sample respondents.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fotopoulos and Krystallis (2022) examined the purchasing motives and profile of the organic consumers who are ecologically/environmentally ecology-aware and who are concerned with health and quality of life issues. They analysed in terms of their quality, health and environmental consciousness, their price sensitivity, and their exploratory buying behaviour.

Christopher Gan et.al (2018) perceived the environmental consciousness among New Zealanders. The study focused on the general environmental behaviour instead of specifically on consumer's purchasing behaviour towards green products. Therefore, gaps exist in the literature with regards to understanding consumer's purchasing behaviour towards green products. This research empirically examines the factors impacting consumer's purchasing behaviour toward green products in New Zealand.

Annunziata Azzurra & Pascale Paola (2019) opines that, over the last decade consumers' health consciousness is becoming an important factor driving the agro-food market. Healthier food products have entered the global markets with force in the past years and rapidly gained market share. Consequently, the food industry has reacted to this trend by developing a growing variety of new products with health-related claims and images, including organic and functional foods that are selected by consumers for their health-promoting properties. The researchers conclude that a better

understanding of consumers' perception of healthy foods and its determinants are key success factors for market orientation and development and for successfully negotiating market opportunities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION**TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS**

S. NO.	DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS	PARTICULARS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Gender	Male	26	27
		Female	72	73
2.	Age	Below 15	5	5
		16 - 25	12	12
		26 – 35	15	15
		36 – 45	21	22
		Above 45	45	46
3.	Qualification	Up to HSC	12	12
		UG	26	27
		PG	22	22
		Others	38	39
4.	Occupation	Entrepreneurs	20	20
		Government Employees	25	26
		Private Employees	31	32
		Homemakers	22	22
5.	Monthly Income	Below Rs. 20,000	16	16
		Rs. 20001 – Rs.30,000	18	18
		Rs. 30001 –Rs. 40,000	32	33
		Rs. 40001 – Rs.50,000	28	29
		Above Rs. 50,000	4	4

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows that, majority of the respondents (73 per cent) being female and 46 per cent of the respondents are above the age of 45. Further, most of them (39 per cent) fall under other category of education, 32 per cent of them are private employees and 33 per cent of the respondents have Rs. 30,001 – Rs. 40,000 in terms of monthly income category.

TABLE 2: AMOUNT SPENT FOR ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

S. NO.	RESPONSE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Below Rs.1,000	34	35
2.	Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 5,000	43	44
3.	Rs. 5,000 - Rs.10,000	14	14
4.	Above Rs. 10,000	7	7
	TOTAL	98	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows the amount spent for eco- friendly products by sample respondents. Majority of the respondents (44 per cent) had spent an amount of Rs. 1,000 – Rs. 5,000 for one month and 7 per cent of the sample respondents had spent above Rs.10,000 in a month.

TABLE 3: SOURCE OF AWARENESS OBTAINED BY THE RESPONDENTS

S. NO.	RESPONSE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Friends & Relatives	37	38
2.	Newspaper	17	17

3.	Internet	20	21
4.	Advertisement	14	14
5.	Others	10	10
	Total		

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows the source of awareness of sample respondents that, 38 per cent of the sample respondents get awareness from their friends and families and 10 per cent of them from other sources.

TABLE 4: FACTORS MOTIVATING THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

S. NO.	FACTORS	VERY HIGH	HIGH	NEUTRAL	LOW	VERY LOW	TOTAL	RANK
1.	Health Consciousness	125	88	51	30	19	313	IX
2.	Environment Concern	130	104	75	42	-	351	IV
3.	Price	145	80	57	40	10	332	VI
4.	Food safety	225	132	60	-	-	417	I
5.	Social welfare	85	84	75	70	-	314	VIII
6.	Variety & Quality	180	96	51	42	-	369	III
7.	Nutrition	95	84	96	52	-	327	VII
8.	Attraction	110	64	90	30	15	309	X
9.	Accessibility	100	140	45	56	-	341	V
10.	Good taste	150	188	63	-	-	401	II

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 shows the factors influencing the consumers purchase decision of eco-friendly products. Major factor is “Food Safety” which is ranked as one, “Good Taste” has been given the second rank and “Variety & Quality” is given as third rank and the least rank is scored for the factor “Social Welfare”.

TABLE 5: TYPES OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS PURCHASED BY THE RESPONDENTS

S. NO.	FACTORS	ALWAYS	OFTEN	FREQ UENT	SELD EM	NEV ER	TOTAL	RANK
1.	Jute bags	95	100	66	34	15	310	VIII
2.	CFL bulbs	100	116	36	26	24	302	IX
3.	Earthenware Utensils	125	100	57	30	14	326	V
4.	Natural soaps	190	76	63	30	5	364	II
5.	Eco-friendly paper	125	120	69	40	-	354	IV
6.	Paper cups	210	92	99	-	-	401	I
7.	Organic food	150	60	45	40	18	313	VII

8.	Herbal Cosmetics	85	72	60	36	25	278	X
9.	Cloth Masks	155	112	42	50	-	359	III
10.	Paper Files	120	88	54	40	14	316	VI

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 clearly states the responsibility oriented eco-friendly products of sample respondents. Major factor is “Paper Cups” which is ranked as one, “Natural Soaps” has been given the second rank and “Cloth Masks” is given as third rank and the least rank is scored for the factor “Herbal Cosmetics”.

CONCLUSION

Consumers today are increasingly "thinking green" and are willing to pay more for eco-friendly products. It was also identified that while consumers have positive purchase behaviour towards purchasing eco-friendly products, when it comes to actual purchase, food safety, good taste and variety & quality are still the key factors influencing their purchase decisions. The green market should increase the awareness about the eco- friendly products through proper media. Traditional products attribute such as price, quality, and brand are still the most important attributes that consumers consider when making green purchasing decision. Majority consumers always buy eco-friendly products there by an increase in the entire range of market. These consumers are particularly concerned about the health aspects in the food choice and conscious of the link between nutrition and health.

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