



CUSTOMERS ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS TO STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO CHENNAI CITY

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Abstract

“Nothing is more difficult and therefore precious than be able to decide” is quoted to be the words of Napoleon. The most serious problems the world is facing today is the deterioration of the natural resources. Grunet [1993] reported that 40% of the environmental degradation has been brought about by the consumption activity of private households. Now there is need to reverse this trend and bring making them environment friendly. The attitudinal change will produce environmentally conscious citizens. It means that in no circumstances shall we go against the nature. The say walk if you want to use bike, use bike if you want to use car.... The list is endless and one has to find one's own methods to change the environment friendly. It is very clear if we make the earth green our lives will be green. The objective of the study is to understand the attitude of the customers towards eco-friendly products and also to know about the impact that eco-friendly products have created on the society. The season for which business firms should go for green marketing include competitive advantage, corporate social responsibilities, pressure from the government, pressure from the competitors and issue relate cost of profit.

Key Words: Eco-Friendly, Eco-Labeling, Ecological Balance, Environmental Issues.

Introduction

Over the last decade concern for the environmental issues has been increasing due to increased media exposure, greater awareness of environmental pollutions, the impact of major industry disasters and the rise of activist groups on the environment (kulafatis, et al. 1999). Rapidly changing environment is now a major concern for the people throughout world, making them more and more concerned about the environment.

The concern for environmental degradation has resulted in a new segment of consumers i.e. the eco-friendly consumers. These consumers has been identified as one who avoids products which are possible danger for health, damage the environment during production, use materials derived from threatened species on environment and cause unnecessary wastes. This resulted in increase in consumer concern with regard to restoration of ecological balance by presenting demands for eco-friendly products in countries around the world. Eco-friendly is the buzz world gaining popularity in the contemporary generation. In the last decade, consumers have become more enlightened on environmental issues.

In the present scenario, challenges to keep the customers as well as consumers in fold and even keep our natural environment safe which is the biggest need of the time. The originally grown products, recyclable, reusable products, biodegradable products, products having natural ingredients, products having eco-friendly packaging are termed as green products which are also known as eco-friendly products. An eco-friendly product is still at its infancy stage to the customers. Rapid increase of awareness about environment has created conscious customers ready to pay more to keep a cleaner and greener environment. The challenges for eco-friendly products are higher cost, non-cooperation, creating awareness among the customer's promotions on eco-mark or eco-labeling and motivate manufactures by green product awards.

Objectives

- To analyse attitude of the consumers, towards eco-friendly products.
- To investigate the consumer attractiveness towards green products.
- To study about the demand for the eco-friendly products
- To evaluate consumer attitude and perception regarding green products under five value added areas such as product, price, place promotion and package.

Review of Literature

Green marketing came into prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s .The American Marketing Association held the first workshop on “Ecological Marketing” in 1975.The proceeding of this workshop resulted in one of the first book on green marketing entitled “Ecological Marketing”. (Henion and Kinneat 19765) Since that time a number of other books on the topic have been published (Coddington 1993, and Ottman 1993). Green products is known as an ecological product or environmental friendly products. Shamdasami et al, (1993) defined green products as the product that will not pollute the earth or deplore natural resources, and can be recycled or conserved. It is a product that has more environmentally sound content or packaging in reducing the environmental impact (Elkington and Mokower, 1988; Wasik, 1996).

Despite the increasing eco-awareness in contemporary market economies, it is generally recognized that there are still considerable barriers to the diffusion of more ecologically oriented consumption styles .In lay discourse as well as in much of consumer research, these barriers are usually attributed to the motivational and practical complexity of green consumption (Hackett 2000)



Consumer attitude toward environmental sustainability, also known as environmental or “green” attitude, is a function of individuals’ beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to environment issues (Schultz et al. 2004; Milfont and Dukitt 2004, 2010). Soonthorasami, (2007) found that consumers who were increasingly aware and concerned about the essentials of environmental issues were known as green consumers. Chris (2008) showed that consumers were beginning to have a more sustainable life, become more environments friendly.

Research Methodology

The method used is descriptive where in structured questionnaire were used to collect the data from the consumer. The consumers have been selected by adopting random sampling method. The questions are measured by using Likert’s five point scale. The data and information have been collected to accomplish the objectives of the present study.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant difference between demographic profile of the respondent and attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant difference between demographic profile of the respondents and buying tendency of consumers.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between the demand for the ecofriendly product with the increase in income.

Findings & Analysis

Table – 1

S. No	Variable	Frequency	%	
1	Age	18-25	51	51.00
		26-35	19	19.00
		36-45	18	18.00
		>45	12	12.00
2	Gender	Male	60	60.00
		Female	40	40.00
3	Education	High school	10	10.00
		Graduate	10	10.00
		Post Graduate	30	30.00
		Professional	40	40.00
		Doctorate	10	10.00
4	Income(p.m)	5000-15000	20	20.00
		16000-25000	40	40.00
		26000-35000	30	30.00
		>35000	10	10.00

As mentioned in the above table, the characteristics of the sample vary across age, gender, education and income. The finding also suggests that out of these respondents, almost 65% have purchased eco-friendly products.

Data Analysis

Chi-square statistics (test of independence) has been used to understand if there is any dependence among the demographic variables such as age, income, gender, education and occupation and the awareness about eco-friendly products. The attempt also has been made to understand if there is any influence of the above said demographic variables on the respondent’s consideration for eco-friendly products.

Table – 2

Variable	Variable	p-value	Null hypothesis Accepted/Rejected
Age	Attitude of consumer toward eco-friendly products	0.399	Accepted
Gender		0.207	Accepted
Occupation		0.364	Accepted
Education		0.529	Accepted
Income		0.645	Accepted
Age	Buying tendency of consumer	0.032	Rejected
Gender		0.855	Accepted
Occupation		0.047	Rejected
Education		0.000	Rejected
Income		0.197	Accepted



Since, chi-square statistics just helps in identifying the dependence between the two categorical variables, in order to understand and establish a definite relationship between the variables; we can utilize binary logistic regression.

Binary Logistics Regression

Binary Logistics Regression has been applied where the chi-square statistics showed some dependence between variables i.e., education and buying tendency of consumer. The result of an attempt to formulate a model using BLR is not significant and the key regression coefficient shows very poor model fit.

Table – 3

Cox & Snell R square	Nagelkerke R square
.019	.029

The results signify there maybe some dependence between the level of education and the consideration of energy efficient electronic products, but the relation between these two is not strong enough to convert it into a meaningful model.

Frequency Table for Source of Information

Table – 4

Source	Frequency	%
Television	40	40.00
Newspaper	30	30.00
Radio	10	10.00
Educational Institutions	10	10.00
Government Commercials	10	10.00
Total	100	100

From the above table it can be analyzed that respondent's source of information regarding eco-friendly products are more from television and newspaper with 40.00% and 30.00% respectively. This may be so because many of the eco-friendly products manufacturing companies are creating awareness among the consumers by providing advertisements about their eco-friendly products on different medium of information.

Table – 5

Variable	p-value	Null hypothesis Accepted/Rejected
Environmental concern & attitude towards eco-friendly products	0.000	Accepted

As it can be seen from the above table that the null hypothesis has been accepted which implies that there is no significant relationship between consumer's environmental concern and their attitude towards eco-friendly products.

Conclusion

The research finding reveals that the consumers who are environmentally conscious are more likely to purchase green products. The demographic variables such as age, gender, occupation, education and income indicate that the awareness about eco-friendly products is indifferent from the demographic variables. The major sources of information regarding eco-friendly products are television and newspaper, The companies have realized the growing need and demand of such products therefore, they are investing heavily in creating such products and making consumer purchase ecofriendly products.

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