A STUDY ON THE CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHERPULASSERY MUNICIPALITY

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Abstract

Due to the enhanced importance of green marketing to market success, companies continue to launch various forms of green products through the introduction of recyclable and reusable packages. Green marketing has become one of the recent trends in trendy businesses. Consumers are getting additionally sensitive in their environmental attitudes, preferences, and purchases. The desire of consumers' to buy eco-friendly merchandise and services is rising. Most of the people are aware of the environmental issues and they try to choose the products that do not damage the environment.Firms these days are featured with customers who are environmentally acutely aware once creating a buying deal.

This study hypothesises that there is no significant difference in the awareness level of the various dimensions of green products based on age group. This study was conducted in Cherpulassery municipality with a sample size of 100. The findings shows that awareness levels were high for environment and health, while the awareness levels were low for brands and symbols. The study shows that the main motive for using green products was the concern for health, the last concern being status. From the study it is evident that there exists significant difference between green dimension, awareness of benefits of green products for environment and age.The results of the level of agreement with various aspects of green shows that majority of the respondents agreed that green products can contribute in saving the environment.

Key words: Green products, consumer buying behaviour, awareness, motives

I Introduction

Consumer behaviour is "the study of individuals, groups or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and the society". (Hawkins et al. 2011). Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) describe shopper behaviour as "the behaviour that buyers show in checking out, purchasing, using, evaluating and removing product and services that they expect can satisfy their needs".

An array of factors such as cultural, social, personal and psychological, affects consumer-buying-behaviour. The buying decision of a consumer varies for different types of products. For complex products, consumers get more involved and for regular products, their involvement is generally low. It is important for marketers to understand how consumers actually make the buying decisions and which and how the various factors influence their decisions (Kotler, 2002).

Therefore in this paper, researcher makes an attempt to know thelevel of awareness of the consumers towards green products, to know the buying motives, to study whether there is significant difference in the awareness level of the various dimensions of green products based on age group and to know whether there is any association between usage of green products and gender.

II Review of Literature

Goswami (2008) investigated whether the Indian consumers were interested in clothing with eco-labels. A sample of 400 consumers was taken from the two metro cities viz. Kolkata and Mumbai and two non- metro cities viz. Guwahati and Bhubaneswar. Clusteranalysis was applied on the data to identify various segments of the consumers on thebasis of their environmental consciousness, involvement in the environmentalcertification and perception about the importance of the eco-label. Results of the analysisreported three segments of the consumers' viz. 'Light Green segment' (64.2%), 'DarkGreen segment' (19.8%) and 'Non Green Apparel consumers' (16%). The study alsohighlighted that segment of consumers which was motivated for eco-labeled clothesincluded both males and females, post graduate and self-employed professionals.

Karipidis*et al.* (2010) studied consumers' purchasing behavior and their willingness topay for eco-certified food products. Results of the study reported that the level ofawareness about the production conditions, eco-mark experience,

attributesassociations, household income and occupation were the major factors determiningconsumers' intention to purchase eco-certified product. Further the study also advocatedthat the most preferred retailer could add value to the purchasing decision of consumersregarding eco-certified products.

Joshi and Mishra (2011) conducted a study in India (Maharashtra) to study consumers'level of awareness about environment friendly car (EFC). With the sample of 500consumers, the study tested the effect of age and geographical region on the awarenesslevel. Results of the study showed that age was insignificant, whereas geographical areawas significant in determining the differences in awareness level of consumers regarding EFC. It was also concluded that the awareness level of consumers was very generic andtherefore, the government and the marketers should put in more efforts to increase thelevel of awareness. Moreover, effective use of media should be made to publicize thebenefits of EFC.

Sirangi (2012) investigated green consumer behavior of post graduate teachers of arts, Commerce, science and technology and pharmaceutical sciences of

Andhra PradeshUniversity, Andhra Pradesh, India. The study found that university teachers preferredMagazines and TV as most important sources of environmental information of products.Also, 82.5% respondents were found to be aware of all of the green products. Quality wasthe primary factor which contributed the most in purchase decision, followed by price.67.5% respondents reported that they buy green products, whereas 34% respondents werefound to buy lowest priced products without taking into consideration their impact on theenvironment. Besides this, the study explored eight factors influencing green consumerbehavior viz. energy saving, eco-label, need for environmental information, shoppingbehavior, purchase criteria, purchasing behaviour, preference of green outlet andawareness of green outlets.

Objectives of the study

➢ To understand the level of awareness of the consumers towards green products.

➢ To know the buying motives of the consumers towards green products.

➢ To study whether there is significant difference in the awareness level of the various

dimensions of green products based on age group.

➢ To know whether there is any association between usage of green products and gender.

Hypothesis

H1: There is no significant difference in the awareness level of the various dimensions of green products based on age group.

H2: There is no association between usage of green products and gender.

III Research Methodology

The research design used here is analytical research wherein the collected data are analysed and critical evaluations are made to solve problems. It is primarily involved with testing of hypothesis and specifying

and decoding relationships. Convenient random sampling was adopted for collecting the data from the respondents and the sample size is 100.

The primary data is collected through questionnaire and through conversation with buyers of green products. The secondary data is collected from websites, journals, references, etc.

Tools for analysis

The collected response from the respondents were initially edited and coded. The statistical analysis of data was done through computer application using SPSS version sixteen. The main thrust of the data analysis was to check the hypothesis. The statistical tools used here include descriptive statistics, one way ANOVA and Chi-square test.

IV Results

TABLE 1: SHOWING LEVEL OF AWARENESS ABOUT VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF GREEN PRODUCTS

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
I am aware of the benefits of green products for health	100	2	5	4.05	0.72995
I am aware of the benefits of green products for the environment	100	3	5	4.36	0.65935

I am aware of the point of purchase for green products	100	2	4	2.94	0.63277
I am aware of various brands offering green products	100	1	5	2.15	0.71598
I am aware of various symbols/ certifications/ other identifiers which declare the product as green product	100	1	5	2.02	0.8874

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows that mean ranges from 2.02-4.36. The highest mean value is 4.36 which is for the awareness of environment. The next highest mean is 4.05 which is for the awareness of health. The mean value of 2.94 indicates that majority of the respondents have only average awareness on the point of purchase. The mean values of 2.15 and 2.02 indicates that majority of the respondents have low awareness on brands and symbols respectively.

Table 2 TABLE SHOWING MOTIVE FOR USING GREEN PRODUCTS

Sl No.	Motive for using Green products	Summated Score	Rank
1	Concern for health	228	1
2	Concern for status	136	4
3	Concern for environment	216	2
4	Concern for quality products	179	3

INTERPRETATION

From the above table showing motive for using green products, it is clear that majority of the respondents gave first rank to concern for health, second rank for concern for environment, third rank for concern for quality products and last rank for concern for status.

Table 3: ANOVA table showing mean difference between dimensions of green products based on age group

Dimensions of green products	Age Group	Mean	SD	F	Sig
I am aware of the benefits of green products for health	18-25 years	3.8611	0.68255	3.646	0.015
	26-40 years	4.2963	0.72403		
	41-55 years	4.1562	0.62782		
	56 and above	3.4	1.14018		
I am aware of the benefits of green products for environment	18-25 years	4.0833	0.60356	8.605	**0.000**
	26-40 years	4.6667	0.5547		
	41-55 years	4.5312	0.62136		
	56 and above	3.6	0.54772		
I am aware of the point of purchase for green products	18-25 years	2.8333	0.65465	0.755	0.522
	26-40 years	3.0741	0.54954		
	41-55 years	2.9375	0.66901		
	56 and above	3	0.70711		
I am aware of various brands offering green products	18-25 years	2.0556	0.82616	2.881	0.04
	26-40 years	2.3333	0.67937		
	41-55 years	2.2188	0.55267		
	56 and above	1.4	0.54772		
I am aware of various symbols/certifications which declare the product as green	18-25 years	2.0833	1.07902	0.985	0.403
	26-40 years	1.963	0.85402		
	41-55 years	2.0938	0.68906		
	56 and above	1.4	0.54772		

*Significant at 5% level   Bold indicates significant

INTERPRETATION

From the above table it is clear that there exists significant difference between green dimension awareness of benefits of green products for environment and age.

Table 4: Table showing level of agreement with various aspects of green

Descriptive Statistics

Sl No.	Awareness statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1	Deterioration of the environment is a serious issue and green products can contribute in saving the environment	100	1	5	4.16	1.11663
2	I prefer Green products over non green products	100	2	5	3.55	1.05768
3	Production of Green products is totally environment friendly	100	1	5	3.81	0.99184
4	Environment deterioration is bound to happen and green products cannot help in protecting it	100	1	5	2.6	1.3484
5	Green products and non -green products are alike.	100	1	5	2.32	1.17103
6	Manufacturing of green products must be highly subsidized so that more companies can enter into it	100	1	5	3.07	1.17426
7	Using green products gives a sense of satisfaction	100	2	5	3.72	0.95431
8	I want to be a part of Green Movement by using green products	100	1	5	3.75	1.22578
9	I will pay even extra price for eco-friendly products	100	1	5	3.51	1.25122
10	Claims of Green products about health benefits are usually exaggerated	100	1	5	3.21	1.13079
11	Performance of Green products justifies its premium price	100	1	5	3.39	1.02391
12	Paying premium price for green products is a mere wastage of money	100	1	5	2.59	1.18998

INTERPRETATION

From the abovetable it is clear that mean ranges from 2.32 to 4.16. The highest mean is 4.16 which shows that majority of the respondents agreed on the fact that deterioration of the environment is a serious issue and green products can contribute in saving the environment. Majority of the respondents agreed on the fact that production of green products is totally environmental friendly, using green products give a sense of satisfaction and they used green products to become a part of the green movement. The lowest mean is 2.6 which shows that majority of the

respondents disagreed with the statement environment deterioration is bound to happen and green products cannot help in protecting it.

Tables showing association between gender and usage of green products

Crosstab 1				
Count		Organic food		Total
		I use	I don't use	
GENDER	MALE	26	15	41
	FEMALE	44	15	59
Total		70	30	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.435[a]	1	.231		
Continuity Correction[b]	.953	1	.329		
Likelihood Ratio	1.423	1	.233		
Fisher's Exact Test				.271	.164
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.421	1	.233		
N of Valid Cases[b]	100				

a. No cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.30.

b. Calculations done for a 2x2 table

Crosstab 2				
Count		Organic clothes		Total
		I use	I don't use	
GENDER	MALE	11	30	41
	FEMALE	13	46	59
Total		24	76	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.305[a]	1	.581		
Continuity Correction[b]	.099	1	.753		

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Likelihood Ratio	.303	1	.582		
Fisher's Exact Test				.638	.374
Linear-by-Linear Association	.302	1	.583		
N of Valid Cases[b]	100				

a. No cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.84.

b. Done for a 2x2 table

Crosstab 3				
Count		Organic cosmetics		Total
		I use	I dont use	
GENDER	MALE	17	24	41
	FEMALE	24	35	59
Total		41	59	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.006[a]	1	.937		
Continuity Correction[b]	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.006	1	.937		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.550
Linear-by-Linear Association	.006	1	.938		
N of Valid Cases[b]	100				

a. No cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 16.81.

b. Done for a 2x2 table

Crosstab 4				
Count		Organic Electrical Appliances		Total
		I use	I dont use	
GENDER	MALE	14	27	41
	FEMALE	25	34	59
Total		39	61	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.688[a]	1	.407		
Continuity Correction[b]	.386	1	.535		
Likelihood Ratio	.692	1	.405		
Fisher's Exact Test				.532	.268
Linear-by-Linear Association	.681	1	.409		
N of Valid Cases[b]	100				

a. No cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.99.

b. Done for a 2x2 table

INTERPRETATION

The above crosstabs and chi square tests shows that there is no association between usage of green products and gender as the calculated value of chi square is less than table value of 3.841.

DISCUSSIONS

The results of the mean scores obtained for the awareness level of various dimensions of green products shows that the awareness levels were high for environment and health, while majority of the respondents had only average awareness on point of purchase. Also majority of the respondents had low awareness on brands and symbols respectively.

The results obtained for knowing the motive for using green products shows that majority of the respondents gave first rank to concern for health, second rank for concern for environment, third for quality products and last for concern for status.

The results of the test conducted to know the mean difference between awareness level of various dimensions of green products and age shows that there exists significant difference between green dimension, awareness of benefits of green products for environment and age.

The results of the level of agreement with various aspects of green shows that majority of the respondents agreed that green products can contribute in saving the environment, production of green products is totally environmental friendly, using green products give a sense of satisfaction and they used green products to become a part of the green movement.Majority of the respondents disagreed with the statement environment deterioration is

bound to happen and green products cannot help in protecting it.

The results of the chi-square test shows that there is no association between usage of green products and gender.

CONCLUSION

As the concern for environment has gone up now a days, customers look for eco-friendly products which gives them a sense of satisfaction, which enables them to participate in the green movement. The research findings reveal that customers who purchased green products are between 18-25 years of age and those who had a positive attitude towards the environment. Also the study indicates that consumers are less likely to purchase green products if they are too expensive and also if they are not easily available. Unfamiliar brands also had a significant negative impact on the profitability of consumers purchasing green products.

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