



An Analytical Study on Consumer Awareness and Purchasing Behaviour of Green Products with Special Reference to Hubballi City

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ABSTRACT

Consumers today are increasingly “thinking green” and are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products. The increasing numbers of consumers who prefer and are willing to buy these products are subjected to the buying process. Consumers have different buying behaviours and these behaviours are constantly changing as a result of the availability of best alternatives. Hence, the present study is conducted to explore the extent of the impact of consumers’ buying behaviour towards the marketing of green products in Hubballi city. Convenience sampling method was used to select 100 respondents living in the city and who make purchases for the products. (The findings of the study reveal that there is significant relationship between the variables which affects consumers’ buying behaviour for green products. Similarly, the factors affecting the consumers’ buying behaviour have major implications on purchasing decisions.

Keywords: Consumers' Buying Behavior, Green Marketing, Environmentally Friendly Products, Green products

INTRODUCTION

Consumers are becoming more interested in environmentally friendly products, raising the demand against a limited supply. The limited supply may be associated to the lack of clear understanding among Hubballi marketers on consumer’s attitudes and behaviours towards this emerging phenomenon. The success of producing eco friendly products will depend on whether consumers will accept the products or not. Uncertainties of marketing eco friendly products discourage farmers to produce green agriculture products. Consumers will be interested to buy those products if they find those cheap. In this case, our research study will help the marketer to know the fact about eco friendly products whether those will get market or not and consumers will appreciate those positively or vice versa.

ECO LABELLING

Eco Label is an environmental claim that appears on the packaging of a product, making it easy for the consumers to take environmental concerns in to account when shopping. It is awarded to a manufacturer by an appropriate authority. ISO 14020 is a guide to the award of ECO-labels. The government of India launched an Eco-mark Scheme in 1991 to encourage the customers to purchase those products which have less harmful environmental impact.

Green Products and marketing practices

Actually there is no consensus on what exactly is green. There is no accepted definition of green product. However based on different definitions of green marketing, some common characteristics of products generally accepted as green, including the products are:

1. Energy efficient (both in use and in production).
2. Water efficient (both in use and in production).
3. Low emitting (low on hazardous emissions).
4. Safe and/or healthy products.
5. Recyclable and/or with recycled content
6. Durable (long-lasting).
7. Biodegradable.
8. Renewable.
9. Reused products.
10. Third party certified to public or transport standard (e.g., organic, certified wood)

THE 4 GREEN P's

1. Green Product: Attributes such as energy saving, organic etc. that leads to reduction in resource consumption and pollution.
2. Green Price: Most consumers will pay additional value if there is a perception of extra product value.
3. Green Place: Aiming to reduce carbon footprint by way of managing logistics to cut down transport emanations.
4. Green Promotion: To address the relationship between a product and the environmental, to promote green life style, and to present a corporate image of environmental responsibility.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Awareness about environmental issues is growing day by day. Product choice and buying behaviour of products are changing every day. With regard to product attributes, environmental consideration is the key factor influencing buying decision among consumers. The purchase decision is based on direct involvement in consumption of the products, whereas knowledge and attitude are at the other end in the consumption of products. Hence, the study focuses on examining the level of acceptability and reach of green products among consumers in the market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Johri et al (1998) in their study on "Green marketing of cosmetics and toiletries in Thailand" analyzed the green marketing strategy of Thai market. The study was based on case method framed with questionnaire survey to analyze the consumer attitude and brand loyalty towards green marketing strategies. The study found that few companies have made honest attempts to adopt environmental marketing strategy even though Thai customers purchasing decision has not focused more on green attributes. Purohit (2011) in his study on "Consumer buying behaviour on green products" analysed the consumer attitude, roll of marketing mix in buying intention and relationship between consumer attitude and buying intention towards green marketing. The study was conducted with 238 post graduates students. The study found that product, price, place and promotion had significant correlation with buying intention of eco friendly products. The study concluded that consumers were ready to pay high price for eco friendly which cause less pollution to the environment were consumer ready to compensate quality of the product for the benefit of the environment. Mostafa (2007), green purchase behavior refers to the consumption of products that are benevolent or beneficial to the environment, recyclable or conservable and sensitive or responsive to ecological concerns.

A study conducted by D'Souza et al., (2006) contrary reported that generally, perception of green products is negatively associated with customer's intention to purchase them if they are of higher prices and low quality in comparison to traditional products.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the consumer behaviour towards purchase of green products.
- To know the consumers preference towards type of green products and
- To sort out the problems faced by the green consumers.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The concept of green consumption has come in to existence in response to the development of eco- friendly products. The green products replace the artificial ingredients with natural ingredients and there by contribute to protecting the environment; the present study examines the consumers buying behaviour of green products in Hubballi city.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research study was conducted in Hubballi city selecting a sample of 100 green consumers. The data was collected through structured questionnaire. The secondary data for the review were sourced from various research agencies both official and unofficial newspapers. The research design is both descriptive and analytical. The data was analysed with the help of statistical tools like Simple percentage and Descriptive statistics and Rank analysis was made.

LIMITATIONS

1. Due to time constraints and limited resources, the sampling frame for this study was only limited to 100 respondents
2. The study is restricted to Hubballi city only and the result may not be applicable to other places.
3. The result obtained is based on the respondents opinion so there is a chance of consumer bias.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

SOCIO- ECONOMIC PROFILE OF SAMPLE CUSTOMERS

Understanding the demographic and psychographic background and their perception towards green products become essential because there is significant association among the awareness of consumers towards green products and age, geographical area, educational level and income. Demographic details of 100 green customers varying in age, educational qualification, size of the family, number of earning members in the family, family income have been depicted in this section and shown in Table no-1

Table 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Demographic Factor		Labels	Number of respondents	Percentage(%)
1	Age	10years-20years	04	04
		21years-30years	50	50
		31years-40years	26	26
		Above 40years	20	20
		Total	100	100
2	Educational Qualification	Up to school level	12	12
		Diploma/Degree	30	30
		Post Graduation	40	40
		Profession	18	18
		Total	100	100
3	Size of the family	Small	46	46
		Medium	40	40
		Large	14	14
		Total	100	100
4	No of Earning members	One	38	38
		Two	52	52
		Three	06	06
		More than Three	04	04
		Total	100	100
5	Family Income	Below Rs.20000	08	08
		Rs.20000-Rs.40000	36	36
		Rs.40000-Rs.60000	38	38
		Above Rs.60000	18	18
		Total	100	100

(Source: primary data)

Among the total respondents majority(50%) of them belong to the age group 21 years-30 years than other age groups(10-20 years-04%,31-40 years-26%,and above 40 years -20%).40% of the respondents were completed post graduation and the others are(12%-upto school level,30%- diploma/degree and 18%-profession).46% of the family size is small and the remaining are(40% - medium and 14%-large).Majority 52 % of the respondents earning members of the family has two and the others are(38%-one,06%-three and 04% -more than three).38% of the respondents family income is Rs.40,000-Rs.60,000 and the others are(36% -Rs.20,000-Rs.40,000,18%-Above Rs.60,000 and 08%-Below 20,000).

Table-2 SOURCE OF AWARENESS

S.NO	SOURCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Family	6	6
2	Relatives/Friends	22	22
3	Neighbours	12	12
4	Colleague	12	12
5	Dealers	4	4
6	TV Advertisement	4	4
7	Internet	32	32
8	Print Media	8	8

(Source: primary data)

Table 2 shows the source of awareness of sample customers. 22% of the respondents know about green products through their friends and relatives and 12 % of them through neighbours and colleagues and 8% from print media and 6% of them through family and 4% of them have come to know about green products through dealers and TV advertisement. Hence, majority of the respondents (32%) know about green products through Internet.

Table-3 FREQUENCY OF PURCHASE

S.NO	FREQUENCY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Daily	8	8
2	Weekly	45	45
3	Monthly	21	21
4	Yearly	19	19
5	Rarely	7	7

(Source: primary data)

Table 3 shows the frequency of purchase. 45% of the respondents purchase green product weekly, 21 % of them purchase monthly, 19 % of the made a purchase yearly, 8% purchase daily and only 7% of them purchase rarely. Hence the major purchase is made weekly by the respondents.

Table-4 PURCHASE OF TYPE OF GREEN PRODUCTS

S.NO	PRODUCT	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1	Grocery	388	II
2	House hold products	329	IV
3	One use products	307	VII
4	Fruits / Vegetables	426	I
5	Beauty Cosmetics	232	VIII
6	Personal care products(Soaps, Shampoos etc)	312	VI
7	Medicinal products	354	III
8	Automobiles and Electronic goods	226	IX
9	Stationeries	179	X
10	Apparel & Clothing	324	V

(Source: primary data)

Table 4 shows the purchase of type of Eco friendly products. Majority of respondents purchase Organic Fruits/Vegetables and ranked I ,II preference were given to grocery, medicinal products were ranked III, the respondents gave IV rank to household products, Apparel and clothing were given V preference, Personal care products were given VI rank, one use products were give ranked VII, Beauty cosmetics as VIII, Automobiles and electronic goods as IX rank and Least preference were given to Stationeries.

Table-5 PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS

S. No	ITEM	N	MAX	MIN	MEAN SCORE	INDICATOR
1	Use a low-phosphate detergent or soap for my laundry as it is not hazardous to health and cause no ecological problem.	100	5	3	4.56	Strongly Agreed
2	Use only energy efficient electronics/Electrical appliances because it uses less electricity than other brands.	100	5	3	3.34	Neutral
3	Always buy one use products that are free of harmful Toxins that prevents from health and environmental issues.	100	5	2	4.50	Strongly Agreed
4	Always prefer to buy fruits and vegetables which are organic/free of Carbonate which keeps me nutritious and prevent from damages caused by pesticides in food.	100	5	3	4.56	Strongly Agreed

5	Try to consume cosmetics products that contain bleach free from Parabens since it causes no irritation on skin.	100	5	3	3.14	Neutral
6	Conscious to buy shampoos and soaps that are made of herbal extracts and beta gluon that helps to avoid allergic reaction on body.	100	5	3	3.60	Agreed
7	Prefer to buy medicinal products that are made off herbal / Ayurvedic to avoid side effects.	100	5	2	4.46	Strongly Agreed
8	Use automobiles which contribute to least amount of Pollution.	100	5	3	4.36	Strongly Agreed
9	Prefer to buy stationeries made of recyclable materials which protect the environment and planet by reducing deforestation.	100	5	2	3.32	Neutral
10	Buy clothes or apparels made of natural fabric materials since it keeps the body cool and comfortable.	100	5	2	4.32	Strongly Agreed

(Source: primary data)

The respondents purchasing behaviour of green products such as grocery, one use products, fruits and vegetables, medicinal products, automobiles and apparels and clothing showed as strongly agreed. Personal products showed agreed and the House hold products, beauty cosmetics and stationeries showed neutral behaviour.

Table-6 PROBLEMS IN BUYING BREEN PRODUCTS

S.NO	PROBLEMS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	High price	39	39
2	Lack of knowledge	20	20
3	Lack of green product shop	29	29
4	Non-reliable on quality	12	12

(Source: primary data)

Table 6 shows the problems faced by customers in purchasing Eco friendly products. Majority said green products are relatively expensive (39%).29% of the respondents felt lack of green product shop,20% people do not have knowledge about the product, and 12% of the respondents have non- reliable on quality of the product.

RESEARCH IMPLICATION AND CONCLUSION:

FINDINGS:

The findings were summarizes and presented.

- Majority of sample green customers are (50%) 21 years-30 years of age group.
- (60%)respondents educational qualification is post graduation
- Most of the customers family size are small
- Nearly 52% of the respondents earning members are two in the family
- Majority 38% of the respondent's family income are Rs.40, 000- Rs.60, 000.
- Majority of the customer's frequency of purchase for weekly (45%).
- 32% of the respondents aware the green products through internet
- Majority of respondents purchase the type of Eco friendly products is organic fruits/ vegetables.
- Major problems in purchasing Eco friendly product of sample customers is high price (39%).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should change the environment protection for promoting the green products in India. The Hubballi city is the mixture of Traditional & Modern Culture, that is the reason why, the all the respondents are less aware of the green products. At the same time, the customer and retailer and manufacturer of the green products should develop their self-interest to use the green product in their day to day life. Utility score of the respondents are below average in Hubballi. The Hubballi Corporation should take initiative against using the green product in Hubballi for protecting the Hubballi natural policy through corporation policy

CONCLUSION

The study focuses on examining the buying behaviour of green products. Based on the results, buying behaviour supports consumers using green products. However, it is felt that if the suggestions are taken into consideration with due care by the authorities, it will help to enhance the awareness, attitude and buying behaviour of green products among consumers that will help the human beings to live in pollution-free environment in the near present and for the future generations. From the research study it is found that the most of the consumers in Hubballi city are aware of environmental problems and green products in the market. There is a positive attitude and behaviour towards green products. The green consumerism gains momentum in Hubballi city.

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