



A STUDY ON CONSUMER AWARENESS TOWARDS ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS AT COIMBATORE

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Abstract:

Consumer awareness is about making the consumer aware of his/her rights. It is a marketing term which means that consumers are aware of products or services, its characteristics and the other marketing P's (place to buy, price, and promotion). Brand awareness is the extent to which a brand is recognized by potential customers, and is correctly associated with a particular product. Expressed usually as a percentage of target market, brand awareness is the primary goal of advertising in the early months or years of a product's introduction. Product awareness can consist of consumer knowledge of brand benefits, features, slogan, tag lines and other brand messaging elements. Consumers are becoming more ecologically conscious and desirous of purchasing environment friendly products i.e. green products. The present study is an attempt to investigate consumer perception and purchase intention towards green products among youngsters in India. The data has been collected from 100 respondents of different areas.

Key Words: Environment Protection, Green Product, Marketing Strategy, Purchasing Behavior & Consumer Awareness

Introduction of the Study:

Environment friendly, eco-friendly, nature-friendly, and green are marketing terms referring to goods and services, laws, guidelines and policies that inflict reduced, minimal, or no harm upon ecosystems or the environment. Companies use these ambiguous terms to promote goods and services, sometimes with additional, more specific certifications, such as Eco labels. The International Organization for Standardization has developed ISO 14020 and ISO 14024 to establish principles and procedures for environmental labels and declarations that certifiers and eco-labelers should follow. The past decades have witnessed large scale industrialization that resulted in rapid economic growth and increasing consumption all over the world. This in turn has resulted in deterioration of the environment due to exploitation of natural resources. The exploitation of natural resources due to fast paced industrialization causes pollution, global warming, desertification, acid rain, and so forth, which has a negative impact on human health and welfare. Grunert (1993) reported that 40% of the environmental degradation has been brought about by the consumption activities of private households. Considering the importance of the environment, consumers around the globe started showing concern for environmental protection and started avoiding the products that are harmful for the environment. Awareness of the destruction of natural resources has raised the issue of environmental protection, which in turn has created eco-friendly consumption called "green consumerism" (Moisander, 2007). Marketers responded to the growing environmental consciousness of consumers by adopting green practices and developing environment-friendly products. Today, governments, organizations, as well as the general public are concerned about the environment and are taking initiatives at their own level. Various governments have implemented environmental laws for environment protection and are also providing subsidies on green/environment- friendly products. Organizations are also adopting green practices for the concern of the environment as well as to match with the legal framework of environmental regulation.

Objectives of the Study:

- ✓ To study about the awareness level of eco friendly products
- ✓ To study the buying behaviour about eco friendly products
- ✓ To identify the factors influencing the customers to buy the product
- ✓ To find out the level of satisfaction of customers towards eco friendly products
- ✓ To offer suggestions

Scope of the Study:

- ✓ Conservation of energy and fast depleting natural resources is the main scope of this project
- ✓ Increase in economic productivity.
- ✓ Imparting knowledge about waste management, treatment and disposal
- ✓ Develop social responsibility towards environment protection

Limitations of the Study:

- ✓ This study is mainly confined to Coimbatore city.
- ✓ This study is limited to 100 respondents.

- ✓ The limitation of time was another constraint in the study. Research period is not just much enough to know about the satisfaction of customers.

Review of Literature:

According to 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. Clem (2008) reveals that going green reflects a social consciousness around saving and advancing the Earth’s natural resources, preserving and protecting them for the sake of civilization. Consumers are becoming more and more aware of environmental issues and this has increased the demand for ecological products. Green product’s quality is also a concerned factor for most consumers. Green consumers generally trust on these brand and are not ready to compromise on quality. As there is an expectation on the part of customers that all products offered should be environmentally safe without a need to sacrifice quality, businesses must enhance green product quality as well as focus on environmental benefits of a product, and share these aspects with customers in order to achieve the recognition in the market (D’Souza et al, 2006). Hence, these reveal that traditional product characteristics such as brand name, its price and quality are still the most important ones that consumers considered when making purchasing decision (Gan et al, 2008).

Research Methodology:

Sampling Unit and Sample Size: The study has been made in Coimbatore. Coimbatore City is one of the top 10 fastest growing cities of India. It is the second largest city in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and the 15th largest urban agglomeration in India with a metropolitan population of over 2 million. Within the Coimbatore city, the researchers are collecting the primary data in Suler and Singanallur area for this present study. Sample size refers to the number of items to be selected from the population constitute a sample. The sample size for this study is 100.

Sampling Technique: The Sampling technique in this project is convenient sampling. The sampling technique in this project is convenient sampling. .

Statistical Tools: Simple percentage method, Chi-square.

Sources of Data:

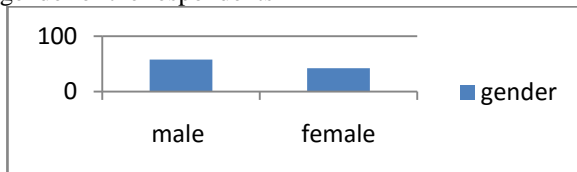
Primary Data: Primary data are the data which are collected from the respondents through respondent’s sheet.

Secondary Data: Secondary data are collected from articles, journals, books and websites.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table and Chart showing gender of the respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	58	58%
Female	42	42%
Total	100	100%



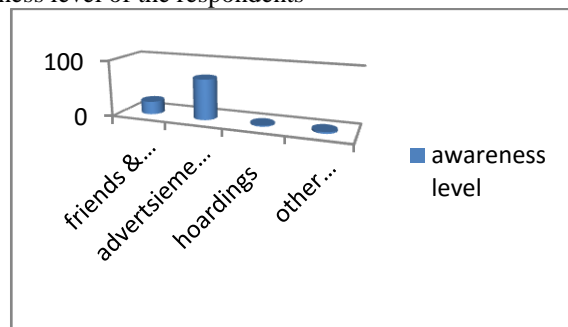
Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table shows that 58 percent of the respondents are male and only 42 percent of the respondents are female. Majority (58%) of the respondents are male.

Table and Chart showing awareness level of the respondents

Awareness Level	No. of respondents	Percentage
Friends & Relatives	23	23%
Advertisement	72	72%
Hoardings	2	2%
Other Medium	3	3%
Total	100	100%



Source: Primary Data

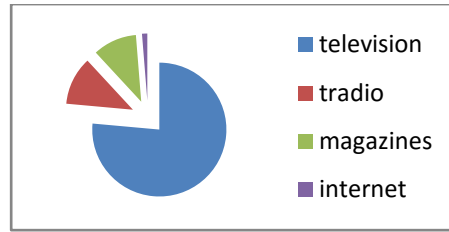
Interpretation:

The above table shows that 72% of the respondents are aware by advertisement, 23% of the respondents are aware by friends & relatives, 3% of the respondents are aware by other medium, and only 2% of the respondents are aware by hoardings. Majority (72%) of the respondents are aware by advertisement.

Table and Chart showing media of advertisement

Media of advertisement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Television	72	72%

Radio	11	11%
Magazines	10	10%
Internet	7	7%
Total	100	100%



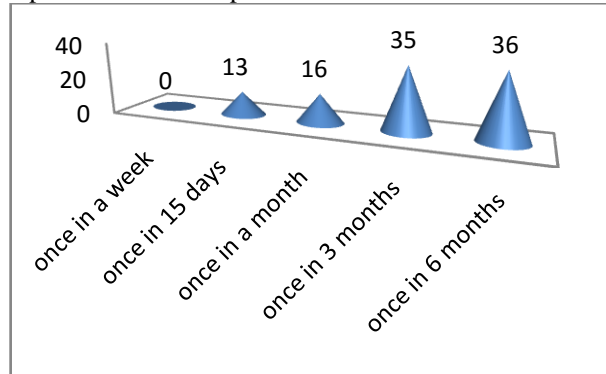
Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table shows that 72% of the respondents are aware through television, 11% of the respondents are aware through radio, 10% of the respondents are aware through magazines, and only 7% of the respondents are aware through internet. Majority (72%) of the respondents are aware through television.

Table and Chart showing often purchase of the respondents

Often purchase	No. of respondents	Percentage
Once in a week	0	0%
Once in 15 days	13	13%
Once in a month	16	16%
Once in 3 months	35	35%
Once in 6 months	36	36%
Total	100	100%



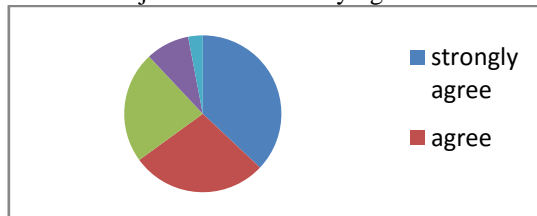
Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table shows that 36% of the respondents visit once in 6 months, 35% of the respondents visit once in 3 months, 16% of the respondents visit once in a month, and only 13% of the respondents visit once in 15 days. Maximum (36%) of the respondents purchase once in 6 month.

Table and Chart showing Advertisement has major influence in buying decision

Advertisement has major influence in buying decision	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	37	37%
Agree	28	28%
Average	23	23%
Disagree	9	9%
Strongly Disagree	3	3%
Total	100	100%



Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table shows that 37% of the respondents are strongly agree, 28% of the respondents are agree, 23% of the respondents are average, 9% of the respondents are disagree, and only 3% of the respondents are strongly disagree. Maximum (37%) of the respondents strongly agrees that advertisement influences in buying decision.

Chi-Square Test:

H0= null hypothesis. There is no significant relation between 2 factors

H1= alternative hypothesis. There is significant relation between 2 factors

The test is made at 5% level of significance.

Table showing relation between family monthly income and price range

O	E	O - E	(O-E) ²	Σ[(O - E) ² / E]
2	0.8	1.2	1.44	1.8
3	2.56	1.44	2.07	0.81
2	4.16	-2.16	4.66	1.121
0	0.48	-0.48	0.23	0.48

4	2.6	1.4	1.96	0.75
8	8.32	0.32	0.102	0.012
12	13.52	-1.52	2.31	0.17
2	1.56	0.44	1.19	0.124
4	2.8	1.2	1.44	0.514
8	8.96	-0.96	0.92	0.102
14	14.56	-0.56	0.313	0.215
2	1.68	0.32	0.10	0.60
0	3.8	-0.38	0.144	0.038
12	12.16	-0.16	0.025	2.05
24	19.76	4.24	17.97	0.90
2	2.28	-0.28	0.07	0.03
			$\Sigma x^2 =$	9.716

From the above table, the calculated value is less than the table value ($9.716 < 16.919$) at 5% level of significance. Hence the Alternative Hypothesis (H1) is accepted. There is a significant relationship between respondent's monthly income and price range.

Findings and Suggestions:

- ✓ Majority (54%) of the respondents are male.
- ✓ Maximum (42%) of the respondents belong to the age group of below 25.
- ✓ Maximum (45%) of the respondents are under graduates.
- ✓ Students are the more number of respondents.
- ✓ Majority (52%) of the respondents are single.
- ✓ Majority (73%) of the respondents comes under single family.
- ✓ Maximum (38%) of the respondent's family monthly income is Rs. 20001-40000.
- ✓ Maximum (41%) of the respondent's family size is four persons.
- ✓ Majority (72%) of the respondent's aware online shopping through Television.
- ✓ Maximum (44%) of the respondent's buying decision is influenced by advertisement.
- ✓ Maximum (36%) of the respondent purchase once in six months.
- ✓ Maximum (29%) of the respondents like to purchase due to convenient.
- ✓ Maximum (50%) of the respondents typically purchase price range between Rs. 1000-5000.
- ✓ Majority (62%) of the respondents prefer gift coupons
- ✓ Majority (63%) of the respondent's payment mode is cash.
- ✓ Majority (58%) of the respondents are probably like to purchase again.
- ✓ Majority (89%) of the respondents said that it provide value for money.
- ✓ Majority (74%) of the respondents said that they will recommend it to others.
- ✓ There is a significant relationship between respondent's monthly income and price range.
- ✓ There is a significant relationship between respondent's occupation and mode of payment.

Suggestions:

- ✓ Customers like best quality of product on any price, so it should add latest collections.
- ✓ Customer behaviour always looks for some extra benefit with purchasing.
- ✓ They demand for affordable price for product and gifts with purchasing.
- ✓ It should give more emphasis on advertising to create market awareness and to make a brand image.
- ✓ It should do more publicity through magazines, newspaper and TV ad.

Conclusion:

It could be easily concluded here that much work and efforts are required on part of the government and industry for proper planning and implementation of green marketing. The attitude of the consumers towards better environment and subsequently their contribution in making the green marketing initiatives successful is of paramount importance. Most of the retailers' opinion that green products are liked by consumers but because of poor awareness and high prices has not been fully adopted by them. As far as consumers are concerned the awareness level is increasing and has started implementing them in their normal life and also government intervention is needed to implement normal price in green market.

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