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A Study On Consumer Perceptions Of Eco-Friendly And Sustainable Products

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ABSTRACT

Consumer perception plays a vital role in determining the success of eco-friendly and sustainable products in the market. The project entitled “A Study on Consumer Perceptions of Eco-Friendly and Sustainable Products” is carried out with the objective of understanding consumer attitudes, preferences, and challenges in adopting sustainable alternatives. The primary focus of this study is to analyse the factors influencing consumer decisions regarding eco-friendly products, such as environmental awareness, price sensitivity, product availability, and trust in sustainability claims. Secondary data for this research is collected from books, journals, and credible websites. For primary data collection, a structured questionnaire is distributed using a convenience sampling method, targeting consumers who actively engage in purchasing sustainable products. The responses are analysed using statistical techniques, including percentage analysis, ranking, and chi-square tests, to derive meaningful insights. This study aims to explore the role of marketing, product attributes, and brand positioning in shaping consumer perceptions of eco-friendly products. Additionally, it examines the challenges businesses face in promoting sustainable consumption and strategies to enhance consumer trust and engagement. Findings from this research will provide valuable insights for businesses and policymakers to strengthen their sustainability initiatives and drive greater adoption of eco-friendly products in the market.

KEYWORDS: Consumer perception, eco-friendly products, sustainable consumption, environmental awareness, green marketing.

INTRODUCTION

The global emphasis on environmental sustainability has significantly influenced consumer behaviour. With increasing awareness of climate change, pollution, and resource depletion, consumers are becoming more conscious of their purchasing decisions. Eco-friendly and sustainable products, which prioritize environmental and social responsibility, have gained traction across various industries, including fashion, food, technology, and personal care. Consumer perception plays a crucial role in determining the success of sustainable products in the market. Businesses need to constantly assess the latest and most attractive marketing trends. Marketing trends can be found out by continually researching about the changes in consumer behaviour in the marketplace. By identifying the changes in the consumer behaviour, the businesses can modify their offering to the consumers. Consumers today are more concerned about environmental degradation and negative impact of their uses of product and services on environment. The reason for this concern could be visible climatic changes, global warming and increasing air and water pollution. Thus, using green marketing by the organizations not only provides an opportunity to meet consumer expectations and address their environmental concerns, but also to gain a competitive advantage and a strong consumer base Green Products and marketing practices.

In this scenario, the true marketers must understand these changing trends in society and respond positively to change in order to sustain in the competitive market. The various studies by environmentalists indicate that people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behaviour pattern so as to be unfavourable towards their environment. Now we see that the most of the consumers, both individual and industrial, are becoming more concerned about eco-friendly products. Most of them feel that eco-friendly products are safe to use. As the result, the concept of eco-friendly marketing has emerged, which aims at marketing sustainable and socially-responsible products and services.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite increasing awareness of sustainability, a gap remains between consumer support for eco-friendly products and actual purchasing behaviour. Various factors, such as environmental awareness, health benefits, social responsibility, price sensitivity, and trust in eco-friendly certifications, influence these choices. However, businesses and policymakers struggle to develop effective marketing strategies due to limited insights into key motivators. Misconceptions and a lack of information about sustainable products further hinder adoption. This study aims to explore how environmental awareness shapes consumer attitudes, identify key drivers of green product purchases, and examine consumer perceptions of sustainability. The findings will help bridge the gap between consumer expectations and market adoption, offering insights for businesses and policymakers to promote sustainable consumption.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To assess how environmental awareness shapes consumer attitude towards eco-friendly products.
- ✓ To examine consumer attitudes and perceptions towards eco-friendly and sustainable products.
- ✓ To explore the key factor that motivate consumers to prefer eco-friendly products, such as environmental concerns, health benefits or social responsibility.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on analysing consumer perceptions, attitudes, and purchasing behaviours toward eco-friendly and sustainable products. It aims to explore the factors influencing consumer decision-making, such as awareness, pricing, perceived quality, trust in sustainability claims, and the impact of marketing strategies. The research will cover a broad range of eco-friendly products, including sustainable packaging, organic food, renewable energy products, biodegradable goods, and environmentally friendly personal care items. This study effort to examine consumer perceptions towards eco-friendly products with reference to Tirupur city.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION

PRIMARY DATA

The primary data are collected from eco-friendly products users who has purchased who have purchased eco-friendly and sustainable products and it is also collected by the help of the questionnaires.

SECONDARY DATA

- Literature review from academic journals, industry reports, government publications, and sustainability studies.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study will utilize a mixed-methods research design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively investigate consumer perception and brand preference towards eco-friendly and sustainable products.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

A convenient sampling technique will be used participants will be selected based on their accessibility and willingness to participate. The sample will include individuals from diverse demographic backgrounds, including age, gender, income level, and geographical location, to ensure representativeness.

TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

- Chi-square test
- Ranking method
- Anova
- Descriptive analysis

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Swapna Swarupa Mallick, Sweta Leena Hota, Arya Kumar, and Himanshu Agarwal (2024)¹ Explored the complexities surrounding eco-friendly marketing tools, specifically environmental advertisements, eco-labels, and eco-brands, and their influence on consumer choices towards sustainability.

K. Pradeep Reddy and Venkateswarlu Chandu (2023)² provided valuable insights for green product marketers by analysing the high perceived eco-cost among consumers. Their study underscores the importance of carefully crafted marketing communication campaigns that highlight the long-term benefits of sustainable products.

Monu Bhardwaj, Abishek Mishra, and Kevin Rivera (2023)³ revealed that consumers are increasingly concerned about the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions. The study indicates that many consumers believe eco-friendly products offer superior benefits not only for the environment but also for their health

Barbu et al. (2022)⁴ identified eight key factors shaping consumer perceptions of eco-friendly and sustainable products, including the natural environment, social norms, a company's green image, product characteristics, perceived risks and benefits, institutional trust, sociodemographic, and consumer confidence.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Classification of the respondents according to the factors influencing the eco-friendly products in environmental issues.

The mean ranking in descriptive statistics ranges from minimum to maximum. A five- point rating scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 agree and 5 strongly agree has been constructed to find out the factors influencing eco-friendly products in environmental issues. The mean ratings were found out for each item. The results are discussed below.

FACTORS INFLUENCING ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Produce less pollution and waste	100	1	5	1.85	1.038
Lack of awareness	100	1	5	4.68	.680
Price	100	1	5	4.23	.777
Avoiding chemicals and toxins	100	1	5	4.17	.888
Energy consumption	100	1	5	4.32	.909
Reduce plastic consumption	100	1	5	4.19	.918

(Source: Computed)

INTERPRETATION

From Table 4.2.1, the mean ratings computed based on the responses of the respondents, it can be inferred that the consumers strongly agree influencing eco-friendly products in environmental issues lack of awareness (4.68), followed by energy consumption (4.32) and Price (4.23), avoiding Chemicals and Toxins (4.17), Reducing Plastic Consumption (4.19), If can further be declared that the eco-friendly products rarely influence the environmental issues based on produce less pollution and waste (1.85).

Therefore, it can be said that most of the respondents have mentioned that they Strongly agree factors influencing eco-friendly products in environmental issues is lack of awareness (4.68) based on the high mean rating 4.68.

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

H0=There is no significant association between age of the respondents and perception of brand eco-friendliness.

H1= There is a significant association between age of the respondents and perception of brand eco-friendliness.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND PERCEPTION OF BRAND ECO-FRIENDLINESS

S. No	Age	Use of green packaging	Claims of carbon neutrality	Endorsement by celebrities or influencers	Demonstrating sustainability through story telling	Total	Percentage
1	Below 18	1	-	2	1	4	4%
2	18-25	31	17	8	5	61	61%
3	25-36	12	3	2	3	20	20%
4	Above 36	7	4	2	2	15	15%
	TOTAL	51	24	14	11	100	100%

Calculated chi square value	Table value	Degree of freedom	Result
8.447339318	16.919	9	Accepted

INTRERPRETATION

The calculated chi square value (8.447339) is lesser than the table value (16.919), Hence the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level significance. It can be concluding that there is no association between age of respondents and perception of brand eco- friendliness.

ANOVA

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND FACTORS INFLUENCING BUYING DECISION

AGE	SUM OF SQUARE	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG
Between Groups	12.288	19	.647	1.023	.445
Within Groups	50.552	80	.632		
Total	62.840	99			

INTERPRETATION OF THE ANOVA TABLE FOR AGE

The given ANOVA table analyses variance for the variable Age. The sum of squares for between groups is 12.288, with 19 degrees of freedom (DF), while the within-groups sum of squares is 50.552, with 80 degrees of freedom. The mean square values are 0.647 for between groups and 0.632 for within groups. The computed F-value is 1.023, which represents the ratio of variance between groups to the variance within groups. The p-value (Sig.) is 0.445, which is greater than the standard threshold of 0.05. This suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in age across the groups. The variations in age among the groups are likely due to random chance rather than any meaningful effect. As a result, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that age does not significantly vary between the groups being compared.

RANKING ANALYSIS OF FREQUENTLY USING ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Ranking analysis is a method of evaluating and comparing items, individuals, or entities based on specific criteria to determine their relative position or importance. It helps in decision-making by identifying top-performing options and areas for improvement.

S.NO	FREQUENTLY USING ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL	RANK
1	Organic Fruits And Vegetables	46	11	6	4	4	2	1	26	551	V
2	Eco- Friendly Dish Soap	21	28	12	6	8	6	14	5	549	VI
3	Bamboo Toothbrushes	27	12	21	8	4	9	7	12	535	VII
4	Bio Degradable Trash Bags	24	19	16	11	10	4	8	8	552	IV
5	Personal Care Items	25	20	12	21	5	6	5	12	577	I
6	Energy Efficient Light Bulbs	23	13	19	16	15	6	2	6	557	III
7	Recycled Cotton Clothing	21	24	16	11	5	12	4	7	533	VIII
8	Diy Gardening Supplies	34	16	11	13	5	5	9	7	575	II

INTERPRETATION

From the above table, it shows the clear picture of respondents personal care items got first rank with a score of 577 points, diy gardening supplies got second rank with a score of 575 points, energy efficient light bulbs got third rank with a score of 557 points, bio degradable trash bags got fourth rank with a score of 552 points, organic fruits and vegetables got fifth rank with a score of 551 points, eco-friendly dish soap got sixth rank with a score of 549 points, bamboo toothbrushes got seventh rank with a score of 535 points and recycled cotton clothing got eighth rank with a score of 533 points.

Majority of the respondents are using personal care items got first rank with a score of 577 points.

SUGGESTIONS

- Many respondents indicated that better availability and clear labelling would improve eco-friendly product adoption. Brands should focus on transparent labelling and expanding product availability in more retail locations.
- Social media promotions play a significant role in influencing perceptions. Brands should create interactive content, testimonials, and real-life impact stories to build trust and awareness.

CONCLUSION

The study on consumer perception of eco-friendly and sustainable products highlights the increasing awareness and preference for environmentally friendly products among consumers. Findings suggest that factors such as environmental concern, product quality, price, and brand reputation play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions. While many consumers express a willingness to purchase sustainable products, actual buying behaviour is often influenced by affordability and availability