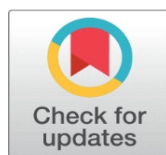
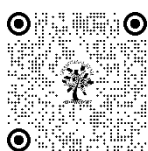


CONSUMER ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TRIVANDRUM CITY

Dr. H. Sajeena¹✉, Dr. S.A. Deepa Azhakeswari²✉

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Government Arts and Science College, Nagercoil

²Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, Muslim Arts College, Thiruvithancode



Corresponding Author

Dr. H. Sajeena,
sajeena.gasc@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

In the current scenario, understanding the attitude of customers towards eco-friendly products holds immense importance due to the rise of eco conscious consumerisms particularly among the younger generation, where ethical and environment consideration play a major role in their purchasing decision. As consumers increasingly realise the importance of eco product, the marketers are also seeking to promote sustainability. So the present study was conducted with the primary focus on analysis of consumer attitude towards eco-friendly products among the consumers. A sample of 250 respondents from Trivandrum city was selected by purposive sampling technique and analysed with the help of statistical tools such as percentage analysis, Chi-square test and Garrett's ranking technique. The findings of the study help the marketers to adapt strategies to meet evolving consumer expectations, promotes sustainable consumption pattern based on consumer attitudes, contributes broader environmental objectives and fosters a more responsible and eco conscious future.

Keywords: Eco-friendly products, green consumers, significance and Consumer Attitude

1. INTRODUCTION

Environmental pollution poses a significant threat to ecosystems, human health and the overall well-being of the planet. Various types of pollution including air, water and soil pollution, contribute to environmental degradation. The widespread use of non-biodegradable materials, emission from industrial processes and the disposal of pollutants into water bodies are among the key contributors to pollution. To combat environmental pollution, the adoption of eco-friendly products has gained importance. Eco-friendly products are designed to minimize their environmental impact throughout their life cycle, from production to disposal. Thus eco-friendly marketing is used to satisfy the wants and needs of consumers and protect the environment and benefits to the society in a more environmental friendly way. The companies are also keen to incorporate the concept of eco-friendly marketing into all aspects of marketing activities to reduce the perceived risk of their product with respect to environmental consideration and to enhance their competitive advantage.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Eco-friendly products often referred to as environmentally friendly or green products are items intentionally designed and manufactured to minimize the impact on the environment. These products prioritize the use of renewable, recycled or biodegradable material to reduce the strain on non-renewable resources. Manufacturers of eco-friendly products aim to implement sustainable and energy efficient production processes, contributing to a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions and waste generation. The packaging of these products is typically designed to be environmentally conscious, emphasizing the reduction of excess material and utilizing recyclable or compostable options. The overall goal of eco-friendly products is to promote a more sustainable and responsible approach to consumption, contributing to global efforts to reduce environmental harm.

DEFINITION

According to J.A. Ottman 1998, "Green products are typically durable, nontoxic, made of recycled material or minimally packaged".

According to Liu and Wu (2009) "Green products are products whose function or ideas deal with the process of material retrieval, production, sales, utilization and waste treatment available for recycling, reduced pollution and energy saving.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

- Environmental preservation
- Resource conservation
- Health and well being
- Waste reduction and circular Economy
- Social Equity and fair labour practices
- Market competitiveness
- Community Engagement and Empowerment
- Eco Tourism and Green Tourism
- Corporate social responsibility
- Global collaboration for sustainable development

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gupta R. Pathak, R. Yadav (2021) in their article states that the consumer awareness of eco-friendly products has been grown recently and the consumers are ready to pay premium price for these products. They also demand that more study be done in developing nations, where the use of eco-friendly products are still low.

Purohit (2011) in his study on "Consumer buying behaviour on green products" analysed the consumer attitude in buying intention and relationship between consumer attitude and buying intention towards green marketing. The study found that product, price, place and promotion had significant correlation with buying intention of eco-friendly products. Sachdev S (2011) in his study found that green consumers are the main motivating force behind the green marketing process. It is their concern for environment and their own well being that drives for eco-friendly products, which in turn encourages improvement in the environmental performance of many products and companies.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Eco-friendly products are essential in minimizing the ecological footprint, preserving natural resources and mitigating the impacts of human activities on the environment. In contemporary consumer culture also there is a discernible shift in awareness regarding the significance of eco-friendly products.

The rise of eco-conscious consumerism particularly among the younger generations reflects a changing set of values where ethical and environmental considerations play a central role in purchasing decisions. As consumers increasingly realise the importance of eco-friendly products, businesses that prioritize sustainability are not only meeting current demand but also positioning themselves as leaders in shifting market landscape. So the marketers must urgently delve into understanding consumer awareness and attitude about eco-friendly products and factors shaping these attitudes to navigate the shifting landscape of sustainable preferences and strategically position their brands. Against this contextual

backdrop, the study examining the consumer attitudes towards eco-friendly products was initiated to gain deeper insights into the prevailing dynamics.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The major objective of the study is to evaluate the attitude of consumers towards the Eco-friendly products in Trivandrum City.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Any adult member of the family who takes the purchase decision for the family was the respondent for this study. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study and 250 respondents were selected on the basis of accessibility.

SOURCES OF DATA

For the purpose of study both primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data were collected through a well-designed questionnaire and secondary data from various journals and websites.

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The data was analysed with the help of statistical tools like simple percentage, Chi-square test and Garrett's ranking technique.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study attempts to examine the attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products, the relationship with demographic profile of consumers and consumer attitude and the factors that prevents consumers from using these products. The study was restricted to the consumers of Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala, who are using eco-friendly products like Organic vegetables, food products, Herbal cosmetics and CFL lights.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

FOLLOWING ARE THE IMPORTANT LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

1. The study was restricted to Thiruvananthapuram city only and the result may not be applicable to other places.
2. The study focuses on consumers who were using a few forms of eco-friendly products only.
3. The result obtained was based on respondents' opinion. So, there is a chance of bias.

7. ANALYSIS OF DATA

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS

The socio-economic conditions of the sample green product consumers are analyzed and presented in the following table.

Table: 1
Socio-Economic Background of the respondents

Demographic Profile	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age	Below 30 yrs	82	32.8
	30 – 40 yrs	95	38
	40 – 50 yrs	48	19.2
	Above 50 yrs	25	10
	Total	250	100
Gender	Male	94	37.6
	Female	156	62.4
	Total	250	100
Marital Status	Married	206	82.4
	Unmarried	44	17.6
	Total	250	100
Educational Qualification	Higher Secondary	18	7.2
	Under Graduate	103	41.2
	Post Graduate	39	15.6
	Professional	79	31.6
	Others	11	4.4
	Total	250	100

Occupation	Business	85	34
	Government Employee	28	11.2
	Private Employee	80	32
	Professionals	5	2
	Home Makers	49	19.6
	Others	3	1.2
	Total	250	100
Monthly Income	Up to Rs. 25000	35	14
	Rs. 25000 – 35000	98	39.2
	Rs. 35000 – 45000	70	28
	Above Rs. 45000	47	18.8
	Total	250	100

Source: Primary data

AGE: From the above table it is find out that, 32.8 percent of the respondents belongs to the age group of below 30 years, 38 percent of the consumers belongs to the age group 30 – 40 years, 19.2 percent of them belongs to the age group 40 – 50 years and the remaining, 10 percent of the sample consumers belongs to the age group of above 50 years

GENDER: It is clear from the above table that, 37.6 percent of the respondents are male and 62.4 percent of them are female.

MARITAL STATUS: The above table reveals that 82.4 percent of the sample consumers are married and 17.6 percent of them are unmarried.

EDUCATION QUALIFICATION: From the above table it is find out that 7.2 percent of the respondents are having higher secondary education, 41.2 percent of them are under graduates, 15.6 percent of the respondents are Post Graduates, 31.6 percent of the sample consumers are professional degree holders and the remaining 4.4 percent of the respondents are having other qualifications such as diploma, technical education etc.

OCCUPATION: Regarding the occupation of the sample consumers, it is revealed that, 34 Percent of the consumers are business persons, 11.2 percent of the respondents are Government employees, 32 percent of them are private employees, 2 percent of them are professionals, 19.6 percent of them are home makers and the remaining 1.2 percent of them comes under category.

MONTHLY INCOME: From the above table it is clear that, 14 Percent of the respondents are earning Up to 25000 per month, 39.2 Percent of the respondents are earning up to 25,000 – 35000, 28 percent of them earning 35,000 – 45,000 and the remaining 18.8 Percent of the respondents are earning above 45,000 per month.

FACTORS PREVENTING CUSTOMERS FROM USING ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

There are many factors preventing the consumers from using Eco-friendly products. The ranks assigned by the consumers are converted into Garrett mean scores and presented in the following table:

Table: 2

Factors preventing customers from using Eco-friendly products

Sl. No.	Factors	Garrett Mean score	Rank
1	Cultural Resistance	58.73	II
2	High Cost	63.87	I
3	Lack of trust	53.51	III
4	Limited Product range/variety	48.31	IV
5	Confusing green labels	37.48	VII
6	Limited marketing visibility	38.41	VI
7	Lack of Awareness	47.13	V

Source: Computed Data

Garrett's ranking technique results shows that High cost was the first factors that prevent customers from using eco-friendly products with the mean score of 63.87 followed by cultural resistance (58.73), Lack of trust (53.51). Confusing green labels was the last rank with the mean score of 37.48.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND CONSUMER ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

An attempt was made to know the relationship between demographic profile and consumer attitude towards eco-friendly products in Trivandrum city. The Chi-square test was adopted for the analysis and the results were presented in the below tables.

CHI-SQUARE TEST

To determine the relationship between the demographic profile and consumer attitude towards Eco-friendly products the “Chi-square Test” is adopted.

The following formula has been used for computing “Chi-square Test”.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

With (r-1) (c-1) degrees of freedom

Where,

χ^2	=	Chi – square value
O	=	Observed frequency
E	=	Expected frequency
r	=	No. of rows in a contingency table
c	=	No. of columns in a contingency table

The calculated value of χ^2 is compared with the table value, level of significance usually at 5 per cent level. If the calculated value is less than the table value then the Null hypothesis is accepted. Otherwise, it is rejected.

The following null hypothesis was framed to analyze the association between the demographic factors and attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products.

NULL HYPOTHESIS

H₀ There is no significant association between the demographic factors and attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products.

Age and attitude towards Eco-friendly products -Chi-square Test

The age of an individual is an important factor which is associated with their purchasing behaviour and hence it is considered to analyze the association of consumer attitude towards Eco-friendly products. The results are presented in the following table.

Table: 3
Age and attitude towards Eco-friendly products -Chi-square Test

Sl. No.	Particulars	Values
1	1. Calculated value χ^2	14.32
2	Degrees of freedom	6
3	Table value	12.59
	Inference	Dependent

Source: Computed Data

The above table depicts that the calculated value (14.32) of Chi-square is greater than the table value (12.59), and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant association between the age and attitude of the consumers towards Eco-friendly products.

GENDER AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

An analysis was made to find out the association between the gender of the consumers and their attitude towards Eco-friendly products by adopting chi-square test and the result was presented in the following table.

Table: 4
Gender and attitude towards Eco-friendly products

Sl. No.	Particulars	Values
1	Calculated value (χ^2)	3.94
2	Degrees of freedom	2
3	Table value	5.99
	Inference	Independent

Source: Computed Data

From the above analysis it is seen that the calculated value (3.94) of Chi-square is greater less the table value (5.99), and hence the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant association between gender and attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

The educational qualification is another important factor which give more knowledge about the products available in the market and their usages. Hence the qualification of the consumers is also considered for the study and the result was presented in the following table.

Table: 5

Educational qualification and attitude towards Eco-friendly products -Chi-square Test

Sl. No.	Particulars	Values
1	Calculated value (χ^2)	16.83
2	Degrees of freedom	8
3	Table value	15.50
	Inference	Dependent

Source: Computed Data

It is revealed from the above table that the calculated value (16.83) of Chi-square is greater than the table value (15.50), and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, it is found out that there is a significant association between the educational qualification and attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products in the study area.

OCCUPATION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Occupation of a person decides the monthly income and it also influence the buying behaviour of the person. To find out the association between the occupation and attitude towards Eco-friendly products the Chi-square test was adopted and the result was presented in the following table.

Table: 6

Occupation and attitude towards Eco-friendly products -Chi-square Test

Sl. No.	Particulars	Values
1	Calculated value (χ^2)	12.99
2	Degrees of freedom	10
3	Table value	12.30
	Inference	Dependent

Source: Computed Data

From the above analysis it is revealed that the calculated value (12.99) of Chi-square is greater than the table value (12.30), and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It is inferred that there is a significant association between the occupation and attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products in the study area.

MONTHLY INCOME AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Monthly income influences the standard of living of a person and it leads the expense pattern. Hence the association of monthly income and attitude of consumers towards Eco-friendly products was analyzed and the result was presented in the following table.

Table: 7

Monthly income and attitude towards Eco-friendly products -Chi-square Test

Sl. No.	Particulars	Values
1	Calculated value (χ^2)	14.05
2	Degrees of freedom	6
3	Table value	12.59
	Inference	Dependent

Source: Computed Data

The above table reveals that the calculated value (14.05) of Chi-square is greater than the table value (12.59), and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is found out that there is a significant association between the Monthly income and attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products.

8. FINDINGS

THE MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY ARE:

- Regarding the age (38%) of them comes under the age group of 30-40 years.
- Most of the sample consumers 62.4 percentage were female.
- Majority of the respondents 82.4 percentage of them are married.
- It is found out that 34 percentage of the respondents were businessman.
- 41.2 percentage of the respondents were undergraduates.

- Majority of the respondents' monthly income ranges between Rs 25000 – Rs 35000.
- Garrett's ranking technique shows that high cost was the main factor that prevents customers from using eco-friendly products.
- The demographic factors such as age, educational qualification, occupation and monthly income are dependent and the factor Gender is independent with the attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products.

9. SUGGESTIONS

Following are the suggestions provided by the consumers attract more consumers and to educated them about green products.

- Leverage social media platforms and interactive digital campaigns to communicate the environmental benefit of eco-friendly products and raise awareness about the importance of sustainability.
- Explore innovative pricing strategies to minimize the price disparity between sustainable and conventional options and balance affordability with sustainability for attracting broader customer base.
- Ensure transparent and honest certification, eco labels and relevant information to build trust in the minds of consumers.

10. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, "The study on consumer attitude towards eco-friendly products in Thiruvananthapuram City" reflects growing consciousness about environmental sustainability among consumers. As consumers increasingly prioritize ethical and eco-conscious choices business face both challenges and opportunities. Overcoming the hurdles such as perceived high cost, lack of trust and cultural resistance involves exploring innovative pricing strategies, transparent labelling and educational initiatives. Regularly measuring and analysing the attitude helps business to adopt strategies to meet evolving consumer expectation. Collaborative commitment from consumers, government bodies and marketers are essential for the long-term success of eco-friendly initiatives and to build a resilient world for future generation.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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