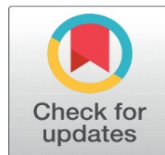
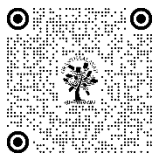


# A STUDY ON FACTORS THAT INFLUENCING GREEN CONSUMERS TO PURCHASE OF ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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## DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i5.2024.4798](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i5.2024.4798)

**Funding:** This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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## ABSTRACT

The increasing concern over environmental degradation and the need for sustainable consumption have directed attention toward eco-friendly products. This study examines the factors influencing consumer behavior toward eco-friendly products in Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu. The research identifies green consumer segments—Active Greens, Potential Greens, Latent Greens, and Non-Greens—using environmental variables. A sample of 90 respondents from rural areas was analyzed through a descriptive research design using convenience sampling. The data were evaluated using percentage analysis and Garret Ranking. The findings reveal that consumers with higher levels of environmental knowledge and eco-friendly product awareness exhibit stronger purchasing intentions. Among the key factors influencing purchasing decisions, product attributes and brand reputation emerged as the most significant, followed by eco-labeling, environmental concern, health reasons, energy-saving potential, and quality-of-life enhancements. Cost benefits, although considered, were ranked lowest in importance. Furthermore, the study indicates that younger, married, and well-educated consumers with moderate income levels are more inclined toward eco-friendly product consumption. It also highlights that perceived trust, product value, and credible green claims play a pivotal role in shaping purchase behavior. To promote eco-friendly product adoption, marketers should focus on enhancing consumer awareness, building brand credibility, and offering transparent product information. This research contributes valuable insights into the eco-friendly product market, assisting marketers in developing effective segmentation strategies and tailoring green marketing initiatives. By addressing the barriers to purchase, businesses can stimulate sustainable consumption and contribute to environmental conservation. The findings serve as a foundation for further research in consumer behavior and green marketing within the region.

**Keywords:** Green Consumerism, Buyer Sentiment, Buying Choice, Eco-Friendly Products, Consumer Perceptions, Sustainability, Psychological Factors

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional eco-friendly products such as bamboo furniture, earthenware pots, and bio-gas systems have lost their market due to the widespread adoption of modern lifestyles and reliance on gadgets. This shift has driven industries to meet the growing consumer demand, often leading to environmental degradation. Major challenges like pollution, climate change, and resource depletion are prevalent. Despite global efforts and policy interventions, significant environmental improvements remain elusive. Countries like Switzerland lead in sustainability, while India ranks low in the Environmental Performance Index. Although industries are increasingly adopting green practices under corporate environmental responsibility, the impact is limited without consumer participation.

Consumers play a crucial role in environmental conservation through their purchasing decisions. While there is a growing awareness of environmental issues, this awareness does not always translate into action. Many companies now

produce eco-friendly products, but consumer demand remains low. To bridge this gap, it is essential to understand consumer behavior, attitudes, and environmental concerns. Segmenting consumers based on their environmental values can help marketers design effective strategies to promote green products. A collective effort from consumers, industries, and policymakers is necessary to drive sustainable consumption and create a greener future.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sheetal Gulecha and Elangovan, A. (2022) analysed the role of perceived trust, risk, value and packaging on eco-friendly products purchase intention, and the factors affecting consumers while taking decision towards eco-friendly products. The study explored the different variable with relevance to the demographic factors and demonstrated that certain variables like perceived trust and perceived value of eco-friendly products had positive effect on the eco-friendly product purchase behaviour while perceived risk and perceived packaging had negative effect on purchase intention. The factors that affect the eco-friendly product purchase behaviour were high prices, the risk of green claims, non availability of eco-friendly products, limited range, accessibility and not trendy.

Rahbar, E., & Wahid, N. A. (2023). The investigation of green marketing tools and their effect on consumers' purchase behavior is essential for understanding how environmental marketing strategies influence buying decisions. This research examines various green marketing tools, such as eco-labels, sustainable packaging, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and assesses their impact on consumer attitudes and behaviors. Eco-labels, for example, provide consumers with verifiable information about a product's environmental credentials, enhancing trust and influencing purchase decisions by making it easier for consumers to choose environmentally friendly options. Sustainable packaging, which reduces waste and uses recyclable materials, appeals to environmentally conscious consumers who prioritize sustainability in their purchasing choices. CSR initiatives, such as a company's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint or supporting environmental causes, can also positively affect consumer perceptions and loyalty.

Sheetal Gulecha and Elangovan (2024) analysed the environmental knowledge, environmental concerns and environmental responsibilities of consumers and to examine the association between environmental concerns of consumer and eco-friendly product purchase intention and also analyzed the factors that resist consumers to purchase eco-friendly products. The study explores different variable with relevance to the demographic factors and shows that certain variables like Environmental concerns and responsibilities to an extent have positive effect on the eco-friendly product purchase behaviour while price has negative effect on eco-friendly product purchase intention. The factors that affect the eco-friendly product purchase behaviour most were high prices, the risk of green claims, non-availability of eco-friendly products, Limited range, accessibility, not trendy and the risk of green claims.

## 3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Pollution, global warming, over population, natural resource depletion, waste disposal, climate change, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, over acidification, ozone layer depletion, acid rain, water pollution, urban sprawl, public health issue and genetic engineering are the major environmental issues faced all over the world including our nation today. The major causes of the environmental issues are due to over exploitation of natural resources, emission and effluents of hazardous substance from the industries, colossal demand, modern lifestyle, unjustifiable and conspicuous consumption by consumers. Tamil Nadu is the third industrialised and the most urbanised state in the country. Major environmental issues encountered by the state of Tamil Nadu are air pollution, water scarcity, unexpected climate changes, lack of proper waste disposal. Though we have a plethora of laws for protecting the environment, environmental improvements have not taken place in the right direction. Therefore, it is high time to redefine production, marketing, consumption and post consumption activities. Unless markets, corporates and consumers participate proactively, environmental improvement will hardly be achieved. Consumers have to be fundamentally aware of the usefulness towards adapting eco-friendly products lifestyle. Today, marketers use environment friendly strategies to minimize the environment pollution. The growing number of firms entering the eco-friendly product market indicate the need for suitable green consumer segmentation and thereby necessitates to understand the perception and attitude of these segments towards purchase of eco-friendly products. Marketing managers have used market segmentation strategies for conventional products and have been successful in maximizing their profits. However, they have failed to promote eco-friendly products, despite of its presence in the market for the past four decades. There is a big argument

among the marketing philosophers regarding how to attract consumers towards purchase of eco-friendly products. There arises a gap between the two ends (producers and consumers), consequently there arises pre-requisite imperative for a better understanding of consumers in terms of how they react when it comes to environmental issues. However, there has been minimal research published which specifically focuses upon environmental concerns, beliefs, attitudes, values and environmental responsibilities and its association with consumers' perception, attitude, intention and behaviour towards eco-friendly products. With this background, the research has been undertaken to identify distinct green consumer segments through the use of environment variables and the identified groups are clustered into four segments namely Active Greens, Potential Greens, Latent Greens and Non-Greens and the study analyses its association with eco-friendly products purchase intention.

#### **4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The world faces major environmental issues like pollution, climate change, and resource depletion, often driven by industrialization, modern lifestyles, and excessive consumption. Tamil Nadu, as a highly industrialized state, struggles with air pollution, water scarcity, and waste management. Despite numerous environmental laws, improvements remain limited. While marketers have successfully segmented conventional product consumers, promoting eco-friendly products remains a challenge. This research aims to identify green consumer segments — Active Greens, Potential Greens, Latent Greens, and Non-Greens — and analyze their perceptions, attitudes, and purchase intentions toward eco-friendly products.

#### **5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Marketing managers have effectively used market segmentation for conventional products to maximize profits, but promoting eco-friendly products has remained a challenge despite their presence for over four decades. This study proposes a new segmentation approach to categorize green consumers and expand the market for eco-friendly products. Products considered include organic foods, solar water heaters, electric vehicles, energy-saving appliances, and eco-friendly cosmetics and apparel, which are gradually gaining popularity worldwide. The research focuses on understanding the association between the purchase behavior of selected eco-friendly products and various green consumer segments in Kanyakumari District. A model analyzing perception, attitude, and purchase intention is proposed to offer insights for marketers. The study targets individual consumers, recognizing their influence on corporate environmental practices. As the first study of its kind in Kanyakumari District, the findings aim to help marketers enhance eco-friendly product adoption in the District.

#### **6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- 1) To study the Consumers Consumption Choice of Selected Eco-friendly Products.
- 2) To examine the Level of Environmental Knowledge, Eco-friendly Product Awareness, Perception, Attitude, Purchase Intention and Purchase Behaviour.
- 3) To analyze the Factors that Influence Consumers to Purchase Eco Friendly Product.

#### **7. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The present study is of Descriptive in nature. Sample size selected for the study was 90 respondents in rural areas of Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu State. Convenience sampling technique was adopted in the selection of the respondents. For analyzing the data, Percentages and Garret Ranking were applied.

## 8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 8.1. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table - 1 : Demographic Variables of the Respondents**

VARIABLES		Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	50	56
	Female	40	44
	<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>
Age	Upto 25	18	20
	26-35	27	30
	36-45	25	28
	45-55	10	11
	Above 55	10	11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>
Educational	Upto SSLC	13	14
	HSC	10	11
	Graduation	31	34
Qualification	Post-Graduation	27	30
	Others	9	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>
Monthly Income	Less than 15000	9	10
	15000-30000	26	29
	30000-45000	25	28
	45000-60000	17	19
	Above 60000	13	14
	<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Primary Data

The above table presents the demographic distribution of the respondents, offering a detailed overview of their characteristics. It indicates that the majority of respondents belong to the age group of 26-35 years, reflecting a dominant representation of young adults in the sample. This age group often comprises individuals who are actively pursuing their careers or managing household responsibilities, making them a significant segment for understanding consumer behavior.

In terms of marital status, the data shows that married respondents outnumber unmarried ones. This may suggest that family responsibilities and household needs influence their purchasing decisions, particularly for eco-friendly products that contribute to a healthier living environment.

Regarding educational qualifications, the largest proportion of respondents are graduates, surpassing other educational groups such as secondary, higher secondary, postgraduates, and professionals. This higher level of education might indicate greater awareness and understanding of environmental issues, leading to a more conscious preference for eco-friendly products.

Furthermore, the table highlights that most respondents have a monthly income ranging between ₹10,000 to ₹20,000. This income bracket suggests that the sample consists primarily of middle-income individuals who may be budget-conscious but are still willing to invest in sustainable products. It also implies that affordability remains a key factor influencing their consumption choices. Overall, the demographic distribution offers valuable insights into the

purchasing patterns and motivations of consumers, providing a strong foundation for further analysis of eco-friendly product preferences.

## 9. CONSUMERS PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR OF SELECT ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Environment knowledge, concern and responsibilities is said to be meaningful only when they are transformed into action of actual purchase of commodities that are environmental friendly. This part highlights on consumers' willingness to purchase eco-friendly products selected for the study. The following listed eco-friendly products are chosen to understand the products which has highest choice and the least choice among consumers.

**Table – 2 : Consumers Consumption Choice of Selected Eco-friendly Products**

Selected Eco-Friendly Products	No. of respondents	Percentage
Organic Food Products	15	17
Health Care Products	22	24
Cosmetic Products	21	23
Cleaning products	18	20
Others	14	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>

### Primary Data

The above table provides insights into the consumers' consumption choices of selected eco-friendly products. Among the respondents, 22 reported consuming Health Care Products, indicating a significant preference for products that contribute to personal well-being while being environmentally conscious. Cosmetic Products were the choice of 21 respondents, reflecting a growing interest in sustainable and eco-friendly beauty products. Additionally, 18 respondents indicated consuming Cleaning Products, suggesting an awareness of the benefits of using environmentally safe cleaning solutions. Organic Food Products were preferred by 15 respondents, highlighting the rising inclination towards healthier and eco-conscious dietary options. Furthermore, 14 respondents opted for Other Products, which may include eco-friendly household items, sustainable fashion, or reusable products, demonstrating a broader commitment to green consumption practices. This data underscores the increasing adoption of eco-friendly products across various categories, reflecting a positive shift towards sustainable consumer behavior.

## 10. ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE OF CONSUMERS AND PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE OF CONSUMERS TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Consumers environmental knowledge plays a vital role in enhancing their concern and responsibilities towards the environment, similarly awareness, perception and attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products are important factors which could positively determine the actions of consumers towards eco-friendly buying behaviour. Environmental consciousness and eco-friendly product awareness, perception and attitude are integral factors to trigger the eco-friendly product purchase intention of consumers. Hence the researcher has chosen the variables namely environmental knowledge, eco-friendly product awareness, perception, attitude, for analysing its impact on purchase intention and purchase behaviour. These variables form the basis for the analysis and facilitates the researcher to assess the level of environmental consciousness and eco-friendly product awareness of the consumers.

**Table – 3 : Level of Environmental Knowledge, Eco-friendly Product Awareness, Perception, Attitude, Purchase Intention and Purchase Behaviour**

Factor	Mean Score	Rank
Level of Environmental Knowledge	62.06	<b>I</b>
Level of Eco-friendly Product Awareness	61.25	<b>II</b>
Level of Perception	60.03	<b>III</b>



Level of Attitude	59.24	<b>IV</b>
Level of Purchase Intention	59.07	<b>V</b>
Level of Purchase Behaviour	57.05	<b>VI</b>

### Computed data

The analysis of Table 3 reveals the ranked importance of various factors influencing consumer behavior toward eco-friendly products. Among these factors, **Environmental Knowledge** holds the highest significance, securing the **I rank**. This suggests that consumers with greater awareness and understanding of environmental issues are more likely to make informed decisions in favor of sustainable products. Environmental knowledge often includes awareness of pollution, climate change, resource depletion, and the impact of consumption on the environment, leading to responsible purchasing behavior.

Following closely, **Eco-friendly Product Awareness** is ranked **II**. Consumers who are well-informed about the availability, benefits, and certifications of eco-friendly products tend to prefer these options over conventional ones. Awareness campaigns, product labeling, and brand transparency play a significant role in enhancing this knowledge, further encouraging sustainable consumption.

The **Level of Perception** ranks **III** in importance. This factor reflects how consumers interpret and evaluate eco-friendly products based on personal beliefs, product quality, brand reputation, and the perceived effectiveness of green products. A positive perception often results in greater acceptance and preference for environmentally friendly choices.

**Level of Attitude** is placed at the **IV rank**, indicating that a favorable attitude toward sustainability and environmental protection strongly influences purchasing decisions. While knowledge and awareness initiate interest, a positive attitude fosters long-term commitment to sustainable consumption practices.

**Purchase Intention**, ranked **V**, signifies the consumers' willingness to buy eco-friendly products. Although intention is a critical precursor to behavior, external factors such as product availability, price, and peer influence can impact actual purchasing decisions.

Lastly, **Purchase Behavior** is assigned the **VI rank**. While it is the final step in the decision-making process, it is often influenced by the preceding factors. Despite having the intention to purchase green products, actual behavior may vary due to situational constraints or lack of product accessibility.

**Table - 4: Factors that Influence Consumers to Purchase Eco Friendly Product**

Factors	Mean Score	Rank
Product Attributes	66.74	<b>I</b>
Brand name	65.65	<b>II</b>
Eco-Label	61.37	<b>III</b>
To preserve the environment	60.18	<b>IV</b>
Health Reasons	59.27	<b>V</b>
Energy Saving	59.13	<b>VI</b>
Enhances Quality of life	58.56	<b>VII</b>
Cost Benefits	57.05	<b>VIII</b>

### Computed data

The analysis of **Table 4** reveals the ranking of factors influencing the purchase of eco-friendly products. Among these factors, **Product Attributes** hold the highest significance, securing the **I rank**. This indicates that consumers prioritize specific product characteristics, such as durability, quality, functionality, and eco-friendly materials when making purchasing decisions. Products that clearly demonstrate sustainable benefits, including biodegradable packaging, non-toxic ingredients, or energy-efficient usage, tend to attract more environmentally conscious consumers. Additionally, certifications and third-party endorsements further enhance consumer confidence in eco-friendly products.

Following closely, the **Brand Name** is ranked **II** in importance. A well-established and reputable brand often assures consumers of product quality, sustainability claims, and reliability. Consumers are more likely to choose eco-friendly products from trusted brands that actively promote green initiatives and maintain transparency in their supply chains. Brand loyalty and perceived brand reputation play a crucial role in influencing purchase decisions in the eco-friendly market.

**Eco-Label** holds the **III rank**, reflecting the importance of credible environmental certifications and labeling in influencing consumer choices. Eco-labels provide assurance that products meet specific environmental standards and promote responsible consumption. Labels like **Energy Star**, **Fair Trade**, and **Organic Certification** significantly influence buying decisions by reducing the uncertainty around green claims and increasing consumer trust.

The motivation **To Preserve the Environment** is assigned the **IV rank**, emphasizing that consumers are increasingly conscious of their ecological impact. This factor indicates that consumers choose eco-friendly products as a form of environmental responsibility and a commitment to sustainable living. Businesses promoting environmental stewardship and sustainability through their products tend to resonate well with such consumers.

**Health Reasons** are placed at the **V rank**, suggesting that a significant number of consumers prioritize personal health benefits when purchasing eco-friendly products. Many sustainable products are free from harmful chemicals, additives, and pollutants, making them safer for both consumers and the environment.

Ranking **VI** is **Energy Saving**, indicating that consumers value products that contribute to reducing energy consumption and lowering carbon footprints. Energy-efficient appliances, solar-powered devices, and products made using renewable energy sources are often preferred for their long-term benefits.

The factor **Enhances Quality of Life** occupies the **VII rank**, signifying that consumers recognize the broader well-being benefits associated with eco-friendly products. Products that improve indoor air quality, offer better nutrition, or provide a healthier living environment contribute to an enhanced quality of life.

Finally, **Cost Benefits** rank **VIII**, implying that while price remains a consideration, it is not the most decisive factor for consumers inclined toward eco-friendly products. Many consumers are willing to pay a premium for sustainable products, particularly when they perceive long-term cost savings, such as energy efficiency, durability, or health benefits.

## 11. FINDINGS

The major findings that emerged from the study are:

- Majority of respondents belong to the age group of 26-35 years, reflecting a dominant representation of young adults in the sample.
- In terms of marital status, the data shows that married respondents outnumber unmarried ones.
- Regarding educational qualifications, the largest proportion of respondents are graduates, surpassing other educational groups such as secondary, higher secondary, postgraduates, and professionals.
- Most of the respondents have a monthly income ranging between ₹10,000 to ₹20,000.
- 22 reported consuming Health Care Products, indicating a significant preference for products that contribute to personal well-being while being environmentally conscious.
- Environmental Knowledge and Eco-friendly Product Awareness are the most significant factors driving sustainable consumption.

## 12. SUGGESTIONS

- Marketers should provide trustworthy claims about the genuineness of eco-friendly products which ultimately would provide value and build trust among consumers to capture a large market share.
- Identification the green consumer segments will assist marketers to tap each segment by designing the right marketing mix for each segment.
- Marketing messages and strategies should demonstrate to the consumers that their business cares about the environment by focusing on green product advantages and eco-friendly business practices. This would build value and trust among consumers.

- Prices should be reasonable so that consumers could use it on trial basis and based upon the benefits derived after using these products they would make future decisions.

### 13. CONCLUSION

Consumers with high environmental knowledge and concerns believe that their attitudes significantly influence their purchase behavior. They are willing to pay more for eco-friendly products, recognizing their role in reducing environmental degradation and promoting a healthier lifestyle. Awareness plays a key role in shaping perceptions, which in turn drive positive attitudes and stronger purchase intentions for eco-friendly products.

Despite the potential market for green products, barriers often prevent consumers from translating their positive attitudes into actual purchases. Marketers must adopt targeted strategies to overcome these barriers, enhance product adoption, and convert non-green consumers. The study identifies green consumer segments in Kanyakumari District, proposing a model that links perception, attitude, and purchase intention. These insights can guide marketers in designing effective campaigns to promote eco-friendly products and foster sustainable consumption.

### CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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