

“A STUDY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS THE CONSUMPTION OF NON BIODEGRADABLE PRODUCTS”

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Abstract:

The present study examined the harmful effects of non biodegradable wastes or residual after the consumption. They are not decomposing in soil and emit the harmful gases in the air while burning. It is an attempt to explore and examined the attitude of consumers towards the reusability and decomposition of the wastes with reference to specific products such as shampoos, toilet cleaners, cosmetics, refrigerator, and pesticides used in home and agriculture. It indicates and critically evaluates the effect of non biodegradable products on biodiversity of animals such as Vulture's species and some marine species including phytoplankton and zooplanktons which are adversely affected by water contamination through non biodegradable products used by households. It also suggests what measures we can take for the protection of environment. The data pertaining to the study have been collected from 130 consumers and 50 farmers from district Hisar. The results obtain reveals that occupation, educational qualification and place of living significantly affect the customer preference.

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Introduction:

Non-biodegradable substances remain in the environment without changing chemically or change at a very slow rates with many hazardous byproducts such poly chlorines, harm full gases thus can cause harm to the environment. Plastics used as containers, insulators and as the material to make innumerable devices for use in the home, medicine, transport and industry. Trash or garbage of non-biodegradable products discarded by people on the ground, along with accidental or intentional dumping of rubbish, that are washed by rainfall into storm drains and eventually discharged into surface waters. The utility depends on what use we may have for the item. If the item needs to last a long time and not deteriorate then non-biodegradable may be the answer. If the item is not needed past packaging and getting to its destination, then biodegradable may be best, especially for the environment.

Review of literature:

It is universally acknowledged fact that effective research cannot be accomplished without critically studying what already exists in relation to it in the form of general literature, therefore, it is considered as an important prerequisite to actual planning of an execution of any research project. It helps to eliminate the duplication of what has been done and provides useful hypotheses and helpful suggestions for significant investigation.

Girardin et al. (1999) evaluated the effects of agriculture waste on water ecosystem and reported that non biodegradable products increase the bioindicators population which clearly indicate pollution such as *Chlorella sp.*, *Nostoc*, *Duniella teritolecta*, *Cyclotella cryptic* and *Pavlova lutheri* which adversely affect other aquatic fauna especially ichthyofauna along with zooplankton and phytoplankton.

Liu et al. (2002) revealed the effect of pollution on diversity moss which were drastically reduced the in terms of habitat destruction and climate change due to continuously use of non biodegradable products and their side effects. The study revealed that mosses like *Homaliodendron scalpellifolium* Fleisch, *Symphyodon perrottetti* Mont., *Herberta longifolissa* Steph. and *Bazzania albicans* Horik were affected by pollution at faster rates.

Derraik, (2002) reported that the deleterious effects of plastic debris on the marine environment were reviewed by bringing together most of the literature published so far. A large number of marine species is known to be harmed and/or killed by plastic debris, which could jeopardize their survival, especially since many are already endangered by other forms of anthropogenic activities. Marine animals are mostly affected through entanglement in and ingestion of plastic litter. Other less known threats include the use of plastic debris by “invader” species and the absorption of “Polychlorinated Biphenyls” from ingested plastics. Less conspicuous forms, such as plastic pellets and “scrubbers” are also hazardous. To address the problem of plastic debris in the oceans is a difficult task and a variety of approaches are urgently required.

According to D’Souza et al. (2006) reveals six variables which were corporate perception, products labels, product dimension, environmental regulation, customer’s past experience and price and quality perception, an investigation of multiple following factors, which have influence on green purchase intentions of the customers.

Kalantari et al. (2007) conducted a research on individual and social factors affecting environmental behaviour of urban citizens in Tehran. It reports that environmental behaviour of urban people is under influence of variables like age, gender, income, education, problem based knowledge, environmental legislation, environmental attitude. The social influence was main predictors of adolescent’s green purchasing behaviour.

Ward et al. (2008) reported that the ill effects of anthropogenic factors such as mass land filling by non biodegradable products and there byproducts enter the food chain and continuously harm the biodiversity, especially vulture population.

Lee (2009) reported that female adolescents score higher in environmental concern, environmental attitude, and perceived seriousness of environmental problems, perceived environmental responsibility, peer- influence and green purchasing behavior than male adolescents. On other hand, male adolescents have higher average score on self identity in environment protection than their female counterparts.

Objective of the study:

To explore the awareness among the consumers towards the harmful effects of biodegradable product for the protection of environment.

Research methodology:

Primary data was collected from the 120 sample respondents through pre tested Interview Schedules in Hisar. The questionnaire was designed on five point likert scale consisting options of Definitely Agree=1, Mostly Agree=2, neither agree nor disagree =3, Mostly Disagree=4, definitely disagree =5. The pilot testing was done on the sample of 30 consumers. After pilot study, the language of some statements was modified and some rephrasing was done. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated from the results of pilot testing by using SPSS software.

The coefficient of reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0.87 that is Cronbach alpha. It is more than 0.75 that reveals that questionnaire is relevant to measure the attitude of consumers towards the consumption of non biodegradable products.

Statistical tools:

Analysis of the data can be done by employing certain statistical tools as per the requirement of the objective of study. The data collected from this survey analyze with the help of computer software SPSS package. Mean comparison and standard deviation is applied to arrive at the results. F test also applied for testing the differences among means. After having completed the analysis, it is necessary to interpret the results drawn through the application of statistical tool.

Need of the study:

An attempt has been made in this conceptual paper to critically appraise on emerging issues and challenges concerning environment safety to showcase that many product with their facility they are offering the hazardous thing which harm our environment. This paper offers a comprehensive but critical appraisal on the non biodegradable products with specific products such as shampoos, toilet cleaner, cosmetics, refrigerator, and pesticides used in home and agriculture. It calls for a broad-minded approach with a heavy emphasis on harmful impact of

these for the reusability or decomposition. It creates the evading of many species of the animals which definitely are harmful for the ecological system.

Analysis and interpretation:

Table-1: Perception of customers towards the consumption of non biodegradable products on the basis of educational qualification.

Educational qualification	Mean	Standard deviation	F value	Sig.
Under graduate	35.65	9.198	6.173	.014
Graduate	46.121	3.65		
Post graduate	40.44	7.088		

From (Table-1) it can be concluded that maximum customers are aware towards the quality marks are graduates. As there is mean score of graduates are higher than the mean score (46.121) of under graduates (38.65) and post graduates (45.44). From the ANOVA it was found that f value is 6.173. So, there is ($p < .05$) indicate that there is a significant difference between the customers perception toward the consumption of non biodegradable products on the basis of various level of the educational qualification.

Table-2: Perception of customers towards the consumption of non biodegradable products on the basis of occupation.

Occupation	Mean	Standard deviation	F value	Sig.
Business	38.453	6.931	5.796	.021
Agriculture	32.546	5.83		
Professional	44.458	5.44		
Student	45.654	7.54		

From the (Table-2) it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the various occupations towards the awareness and towards the quality marks. It indicates that the customers should check before buying whether the product is having quality marks or not. Overall students are more toward the marks of quality assurance on the products specification the food items. From the ANOVA it was found that there is a significant difference between the customers awareness toward the consumption of non biodegradable products on the basis of occupation such as business, agriculture, profession and student as $p < .05$.

Table-3: Perception of customers towards the consumption of non biodegradable products and residence area.

Residence area	Mean	Standard deviation	F value	Sig.
Rural area	31.05	4.590	13.68	.001
Urban area	37.65	3.708		

From the (Table-3) it was revealed that mean score of urban area (37.65) is higher as compare to the rural area (31.05) for the awareness among the customers regarding the harmful effects of the gases emit by the various electrical machine which we are use for the our convenience and from the F test it can be concluded as $p < .05$ there is significant difference between the customers' awareness towards the consumption of non biodegradable products and educational qualification on the basis of consumers belongs to rural and urban areas.

Conclusion:

From the present paper, it is concluded that demographic variables play an important role. It influences perception of customers towards the consumption of non biodegradable products and educational qualification. The result indicates that occupation, educational qualification and place of living significantly affect the customer preference. It was found that there is significant difference between the awareness among the customers regarding the responsibility towards environment, while consuming goods and services belongs to rural and urban areas. From the ANOVA it was found that there is a significant difference between the customers awareness toward the consumption of non biodegradable products and educational

qualification on the basis of occupation such as business, agriculture, profession and student as $p < .05$.

Suggestions and implications:

Environmental pollution has brought severe hazards to various species and some species have already become extinct. There is need to identify and develop consumption choice for the society that meet the current requirement and also considering the interest of future generation. There is need to develop the product which will not be the deteriorating the environment. New technology should be introduced which should not be harmful for the environment. We should use the alternative of plastics bags and plastic tumbler which are biodegradable. So, that it can be decomposed. There should be the provision of the reusability of the non plastic bottles of shampoos, oils etc. There should be a provision of incentive for the customer who returns the empty plastic bottles in terms of rebate.

Scope for future research: Future research may be collecting data from other areas with larger samples in order to have more comprehensive study. The area selected for the study is Hisar. The result gathered may generally be limited in order to improve the external validity of the instrument, geographical diversity.

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