



An Exploratory study of Customer perception towards Eco-friendly Products in Chandigarh

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Abstract

In recent times, consumers are emerging in the global struggle to create an environmentally sustainable world. Now days, consumers know a lot about the safeguard required to protect the environment from pollution to avoid further degradation. The present study is focused on the green marketing particularly on consumerism. Green consumerism refers to minimum harm to the environment by the use of recycled and green products. Green marketing is a business practice about the conservation of the natural environment by creating the awareness among the consumers. The study also focuses on the buying pattern of green personal care products in the Chandigarh city. Questionnaire was administered to the respondents in order to collect firsthand information to 200 respondents. 140 respondents who had the experience of purchasing green personal care products had submitted the questionnaires to the researcher. The factor analysis technique was performed with the help of SPSS Software 20 Version. It was found in the study that there are four major factors which influences their choice of towards green personal care products. These factors are environmental benefits, socially responsible behavior, enhanced reputation and trust-worthy products and rational behavior.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Green Consumerism and personal Care Products.

Introduction

Green consumerism is the intentional purchase and use of green or eco-friendly products which can be recycled by minimize the damage to the society. The consumer considers goods and services to be made with minimal harm to the natural environment. The protection of an environment has become a major challenge and that is why the awareness is increasing among the consumers to conserve the natural environment. Green consumers or environmentally friendly consumers have concern regarding the environment and makes deliberate efforts to purchase products to conserve the environment. Moreover, consumers are also worried about the environmental degradation and other issues related to the

surroundings, so they change their habits to purchase green products that are made from natural ingredients.

A Review of Literature

Chen and Lau Teck Chai (2010) observed that due to persistent environmental deterioration, there is need of sustained efforts on consumers' awareness regarding the use of green products. There is a need to awaken developing countries towards the green movement. The major factors were identified their research study .i.e. the environmental protection, role of a government and personal norms. It was further found that there is great impact of positive attitudes of consumers towards the conservation of environment on the purchase of green product.

Biswas and Roy (2015) found that during recent decades there is a substantial change in consumption pattern and quantum in developing countries. The increasing consumption of production in putting undue pressure on the environment. It is found that consumers are highly price sensitive in the choice of green products. Social values are the most important criteria for sustainable consumption behavior adoption of green products.

Christopher Gan et.al (2008) carried the research study and found that the main purpose of consumers to buy green products are to save the environment for further deterioration. The green products should be provided to the consumers at economical prices along with high quality. There is a need to change the negative mindset of the consumers by adoption of improved marketing strategy for the green products. Marketers can do it by adding an environmental attribute into a traditional product. In order to gain competitive advantage, there is a need to mainstream green marketing strategies with corporate plans and policies.

Need of the Study and Research Methodology: The concern for environment has become an important issue throughout the world. Nowadays, the people realize that the consumption activities can lead to environmental problems such as climate change, pollution, depletion of non-renewable resources etc. Consumers are becoming more aware about environmental concern and translating their activity for choosing green products, moreover they are also taking responsibility to protect the environment by avoiding the usage of most harmful products. The present study was carried out with the purpose to identify the awareness level and buying patterns of green products among the consumers in Chandigarh city. The data for the present study was collected with the help of questionnaire. It was administered to 200 respondents by convenience sampling. 140 respondents filled their questionnaire in order to conduct the study. The collected data were

analyzed using SPSS. Percentage analysis, reliability analysis, factor analysis and simple ranking method were used in this study.

Objectives of the Study

- (1) To assess the level of awareness among consumers towards green personal care products.
- (2) To analyze the pattern of buying habits among the consumers towards green personal care products.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 shows the details of socio-economic profile of the respondents in Chandigarh City.

Table 1 Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents

Socio-Economic Details	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Sex		
Male	80	57
Female	60	43
Total	140	100
Age		
Under 20	30	21
20-30	20	14
30-40	35	25
Over 40	55	39
Total	140	100
Level of Education		
Under-Graduate Students	45	32
Post –Graduate Students	30	21
Professional Students	60	43
Ph.D Students	5	4
Total	140	100
Family Income (Monthly)		
Below Rs 40,000	40	27
Between Rs 40,000 to Rs 80,000	30	20
Greater than Rs 80,000	20	53
Total	140	100

Among 150 respondents, 57% of the respondents were males and 43% of the respondents were females. 43% of the respondents were professional students, 32% of the respondents were under-graduate, 21% of the respondents were post-graduate students and 4% were Ph.D students.

Table 2: Sources of Awareness towards Green Products

S.NO	Sources of Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
1	Television	15	11
2	Friends and Relatives	30	21
3	Pamphlets and Window Display	25	18
4	Books and Magazines	6	4
5	Seminar and Conferences	24	17
6	Internet	40	29
	Total	140	100

In table 2, it was found that 29% of the respondents agreed that internet is the major source for creating awareness towards green products followed by 21 % of respondents have awareness due to interactions with friends and relatives, 18% of the respondents have awareness from pamphlets and window display, 17% of the respondents have awareness due to participation in seminar and conferences and the rest of the respondents have awareness due to television (11% of respondents) and through books and magazines (4% of the respondents).

Table 3 Consumers Buying Pattern of Green Personal Care Products

S.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Frequently	60	43
2	Occasionally	80	57
	Total	140	100

Table 3 shows that 57 % of the consumers occasionally buys green personal care products while 43 % of the respondents were frequently purchasers.

Table 4: Frequently level of Buying Green Personal care Products

S.No	Frequency Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Weekly	20	14
2	Bi-weekly	20	14
3	Monthly	40	30
4	Bi-monthly	30	21
5	Rarely	30	21
Total		140	100

Table 4 shows that 30% of the respondents buys the green products monthly followed by 21% of the of the respondents bought the green products bi-monthly and rarely, 14% of the respondents bought weekly and bi-weekly.

Table 5: Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.942	20

Table 5 shows that Cron-bach's Alpha value was carried out on 20 statements and its value is .942. It shows that the data is reliable. KMO measure is used to measure the adequacy of a sample. KMO value is found to be .837 which shows the adequacy of a sample to carry out the factor analysis. An approx. value of chi-square is 3322.691 and significant value is .000 in a Bartlett test of Sphericity. It shows that on the data set of the present study, factor analysis can be applied.

Along with varimax rotation, principal component analysis was carried out in order to find out the underlying factors. Factors having eigen value more than one were retained in the present study and factors having value below 1 are not considered in the present study. Total variance explained in table 6 suggests that it extracts four factors out of 20 selected variables. These four factors accounts for 81.2 percent of the variance of the relationship between variables.

Table 6: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.805	49.023	49.023	9.805	49.023	49.023	4.445	22.224	22.224
2	2.611	13.054	62.077	2.611	13.054	62.077	4.141	20.706	42.929
3	2.134	10.672	72.750	2.134	10.672	72.750	4.132	20.659	63.588
4	1.690	8.450	81.200	1.690	8.450	81.200	3.522	17.612	81.200
5	.836	4.179	85.379						
6	.583	2.914	88.293						
7	.473	2.365	90.658						
8	.395	1.975	92.633						
9	.293	1.463	94.095						
10	.210	1.048	95.143						
11	.189	.944	96.088						
12	.156	.779	96.867						
13	.127	.635	97.502						
14	.120	.599	98.101						
15	.088	.442	98.543						
16	.083	.414	98.957						
17	.074	.371	99.328						
18	.055	.274	99.602						
19	.046	.230	99.832						
20	.034	.168	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

In factor analysis, factors can be determined on the basis of eigenvalues exceeding 1. Table 6 shows that only four factors are extracted from 20 variables. The eigenvalues for four factors were 9.805, 2.611, 2.134 and 1.690 respectively. The percentage of the total variance is used as an index which helps to extract factors from the selected variables. It is shown in table 6 that the selected four factors have 81.20 percent of total variations.

Table 7: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
V11	.815			
V12	.810			
V13	.843			
V14	.865			
V15	.868			
V6		.879		
V7		.811		
V8		.891		
V9		.727		
V10		.788		
V1			.766	
V2			.752	
V3			.779	
V4			.847	
V5			.843	
V16				.845
V17				.862
V18				.903
V19				.767
V20				.771

Table 7 depicts that four important factors are emerged for the preference of using green personal care products which are discussed as follows:-

Factor 1: Environmental benefits:

This factor explains the 49.023 % of variation. There are five variables included in this factor which is mentioned below.

V11	I would buy green products because they are easy to disposable in nature.	.815
V12	I would describe myself as environmentally responsible	.810
V13	I prefer to buy green products because they increase my prestige.	.843
V14	I convince my family and friends not to buy some products that are harmful to environment.	.865
V15	I feel that the use of green personal care products increases my self – esteem.	.868

Factor 2: Socially Responsible behavior

This factor has five variables which have 13.054% of variation. There are five variables included in this factor which is mentioned below.

V6	I wish to spend more money on green products.	.879
V7	I buy green products because they are recyclable and reduce wastages.	.811
V8	I recommend green products to my friends/family.	.891
V9	I would buy green products only when recommended by others.	.727
V10	I would go for green personal care products just for a change.	.788

Factor 3: Enhanced Reputation and Trust-worthy Products

This factor explains the 10.672 % of variation. There are five variables included in this factor which is mentioned below.

V1	I buy green personal care food products for the health and safety.	.766
V2	I observe marketers have distinct image by selling green products.	.752
V3	Green products are available in selected stores only.	.779
V4	I feel that the green personal care products are generally trustworthy.	.847
V5	I feel that the green product meets my expectations.	.843

Factor 4: Rational behavior

This factor explains the 8.45% of variation. There are five variables included in this factor which is mentioned below.

V16	Green personal care products are available in small size sachet.	.845
V17	The green personal care product provides very good value for me.	.862
V18	I would buy green products regularly before buy them on trial basis.	.903
V19	Limited variety of green products is available.	.767
V20	I always check the eco label before buying the personal care products.	.771

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that by using more green products will help to conserve our environment. It is found in the study that consumers having positive attitude towards the environment are keener to buy green products. The consumers prefer the green personal care products due to their four major benefits which are environmental benefits, socially responsible behavior, enhanced reputation and trust-worthy products and rational behavior. It is recommended in the present study that reduction in the prices of green personal care products, offering some discounts and providing small size sachet will encourage the consumers to switch over from conventional products to green products. Advertisement plays a major role for purchasing the products. So, the marketers should focus the benefits of green personal care products for consumers. At the same time, the companies also should focus on green labels, in-store displays and pamphlets. This would help to know about the concept of going green and also increase the purchasing habits of the consumers. Consumers are not able to differentiate the green products and non-green products easily because they faced a lot of problems for choosing the green product. So, the company must market their products for end-user in such a way which provides solutions to all their problems.

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