

GREEN CONSUMERISM: AWARENESS TOWARD ECO-FRIENDLY FMCG PRODUCTS (A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE DISTRICT)

Ms.D.Saranya , Assistant Professor UG Department of Commerce(CA)
NGM College, Pollachi

ABSTRACT

This study examines the awareness and purchasing behaviour of consumers toward eco-friendly FMCG products in Coimbatore District. It aims to understand the level of environmental knowledge, factors influencing green consumerism, and the challenges faced in promoting eco-friendly products. A survey-based approach was used to collect data from a diverse group of respondents, focusing on demographic segmentation, knowledge, and behaviour. The findings reveal high environmental awareness and a growing preference for eco-friendly products, with organic food and personal care items being the most popular choices. Word of mouth emerged as a significant source of awareness, while challenges like lack of product availability and green washing practices were identified. The study highlights the importance of fostering consumer education and ensuring the accessibility of eco-friendly products to support sustainable consumption practices in the region.

INTRODUCTION

Green consumerism has emerged as a significant trend in the modern marketplace, driven by growing environmental concerns and the demand for sustainable products. It represents the conscious efforts of consumers to make eco-friendly choices, particularly in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, which includes essential items used daily. As environmental issues like climate change, pollution, and resource depletion become more pressing, consumers are increasingly inclined toward products that minimize ecological impact. Environmental degradation and the urgent need for sustainable development have placed green consumerism at the forefront of modern consumer behavior. Green consumerism refers to the practice of choosing products and services that are environmentally friendly, socially responsible, and sustainable in production and consumption. Within the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector—comprising daily essentials like food, beverages, personal care, and household products—this shift is particularly significant due to the high demand for these products and their potential environmental impact.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable rise in consumer awareness about the consequences of unsustainable consumption, including pollution, resource depletion, and climate change. Consumers, especially in urban regions, are becoming more conscious of their role in promoting eco-friendly practices by opting for products that use biodegradable materials, organic ingredients, and environmentally responsible packaging. This growing trend has encouraged businesses to adopt green marketing strategies and develop products that align with consumer expectations for sustainability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the socio economic profile of the consumers
- To study the consumers awareness towards Eco friendly FMCG products.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The increasing environmental challenges such as pollution, resource depletion, and climate change have heightened the need for sustainable consumption patterns. In the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, which caters to daily consumer needs, the adoption and promotion of eco-friendly products are crucial. However, despite the growing importance of sustainability, there remains a gap in understanding consumer awareness and behavior toward eco-friendly FMCG products, particularly in specific regions like Coimbatore District.

While some consumers are becoming environmentally conscious, others face barriers such as a lack of awareness, limited availability of eco-friendly products, misconceptions about their effectiveness,

and concerns about higher costs. Businesses, on the other hand, often struggle to align their green marketing strategies with consumer expectations. This disconnect not only hinders the adoption of eco-friendly practices but also poses challenges for achieving broader environmental sustainability goals.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Eldesouky et al (2020) showed that consumers were having a positive attitude and perception towards eco-friendly products and quality, price, brand name, eco-label, social and environmental features were affecting purchasing decisions of consumers for eco-friendly food products. Environmental features, eco-label, price were taken as variables for finding out the factors affecting buying behaviour.

Singh (2011) examines the awareness and challenges of adopting green marketing among companies in the Delhi NCR region. The study reveals that firms are increasingly aware of incorporating green marketing into their production processes, driven partly by government mandates aimed at ensuring a clean and safe environment. The findings emphasize the need for advertisers to prioritize eco-friendly and ethical practices, as neglecting these could result in higher costs in the future.

Chaarlas (2012) investigated consumer awareness of green marketing initiatives across FMCGs, durable goods, and the services sector, using a sample of 51 respondents from Tiruchirappalli. Through Chi-square testing, the study found no relationship between age and consumer awareness of green marketing, but it revealed a significant correlation between education level and awareness. The study concludes that sustainable corporate activities should go beyond legal requirements and external pressures, integrating environmental responsibility as a core corporate objective.

Padmavathi (2012) examined environmental knowledge, perceptions, awareness, and factors influencing the purchase of eco-friendly products among 522 respondents in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The study found high environmental awareness and concern among green consumers, with word of mouth being a key source of information. Organic food and eco-friendly personal care products were frequently purchased, especially by green leaders and loyal consumers. Younger respondents showed greater influence by determinants of eco-friendly products. However, significant differences in consumer categories revealed issues like lack of awareness and product unavailability. The study also highlighted the negative impact of green washing on both consumers and environmental efforts.

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected with the help of Questionnaire. The secondary data is collected from the websites, journals etc, the study is concerned with buying behaviour of consumers towards digital marketing. The size of sample is 50 consumers were collected for the study in Coimbatore District. Convenient sampling techniques were used for the collection of data. The collected data should go through analysis process which is done with the help of statistical tools and methods such as simple percentage and mean score and rank using weight average method.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1: SOCIO-ECONOMIC VARIABLES

Factors	Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Age	21-30 years	21	42
	31-40 years	10	20
	41-50 years	11	22
	Above 50 years	8	16
Gender	Male	14	28
	Female	36	72
Marital Status	Married	33	66
	Unmarried	17	34
Educational Qualification	HSC	05	10
	Under Graduate	23	46
	Post Graduate	15	30
	Professional	07	14
Occupation	Business	6	12
	Private Employee	22	44
	Government Employee	15	30
	Profession	7	14
Monthly Income	Below Rs.20,000	14	28
	Rs.20001-Rs.40,000	17	34
	Rs.40001 to 60,000	12	24
	Above Rs.60,000	10	20
Size of Family	Up to 2 Members	24	48
	3 to 4 Members	14	28
	Above 5 Members	12	24

TABLE NO 2 : CONSUMERS AWARENESS TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCT

Consumer awareness	Mean	Standard Deviation
I am aware of companies producing eco-friendly products	4.07	0.84
I understand the advantages of eco-friendly products	4.09	0.80
I know the features of eco-friendly products	3.38	1.13
Eco-friendly products reduce environmental pollution	4.02	0.78
Eco-friendly products enhance the quality of life	3.61	0.98
Eco-friendly products are more effective as compared to non-eco-friendly products	3.32	1.09
Overall Mean Score	3.74	

Above table no.2 shows that mean and standard deviation of the variables considered for the study. It is found that, advantages of eco-friendly products in the awareness aspect had the highest mean score followed by companies producing eco-friendly products, pollution awareness, quality of life enhancement, features, Effectiveness of eco-friendly products, The mean value of 4.07, 4.09, 4.02,

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and 3.61 of the above result shows that customers have enough awareness about eco-friendly products.

Thus, from the above analysis in the above table no. 2, it is also found that – a) The consumers are aware of companies producing eco-friendly products b) They understand the advantages of eco-friendly products. c) They know that eco-friendly products reduce environmental pollution d) Eco-friendly products improve quality of life.

TABLE NO: 3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION/AWARENESS ABOUT ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Sources of Information/Awareness about Eco Friendly Products	Weighted Average	Rank
Product Label	6.11	1
Word of Mouth	5.45	3
Outdoor advertisement	5.82	2
Newspaper	4.85	4
Website	2.46	8
Television	3.62	7
Radio	3.66	6
Print Media	2.46	5

The table no.3 reveals that product labels (Rank 1) are the most effective source of awareness for eco-friendly products, followed by outdoor advertisements (Rank 2) and word of mouth (Rank 3). These findings emphasize the importance of clear labelling, visually engaging ads, and personal recommendations in influencing consumer awareness. Traditional media like newspapers (Rank 4) has moderate influence, while radio, television, and websites rank lower, suggesting they are less relied upon for such information. Efforts should prioritize top-ranked sources while improving digital and other media strategies to enhance their effectiveness.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Findings

- Majority 42(42%) of the respondents belong to the age group ranging between 21-30 years.
- Majority (72%) of the respondents are female.
- Majority (66%) of the respondents are married.
- Majority (44%) of the respondents are having qualification of under graduate.
- Most of the (44%) respondents are private employee.
- Majority (34%) of the respondents are monthly earnings between 20,001 to Rs.40,000.
- Majority (48%) of the respondents are size of the family.
- Consumers understand the advantages of eco-friendly products in the awareness aspect had the highest mean score.
- The majority of the respondents are source of information about eco- friendly product labeling is get first mark.

Suggestions

A study on consumer awareness towards eco-friendly FMCG products could focus on evaluating how much consumers know about the environmental impact of these products and the role of sustainability in their purchasing decisions. It could explore factors like the influence of eco-labels, marketing efforts, and social media on awareness. Additionally, the study could identify barriers that prevent consumers from choosing eco-friendly options, despite being aware of their benefits, such as price or availability. The findings could offer insights into how brands can better engage consumers and promote sustainable products.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, consumer awareness towards eco-friendly FMCG products is a key factor in promoting sustainability in the market. While many consumers are aware of the environmental

benefits of these products, factors such as price, convenience, and trust in eco-friendly claims still influence their purchasing decisions. To drive greater adoption, brands need to focus on increasing awareness through targeted marketing, clear communication, and offering affordable and accessible eco-friendly alternatives. With continued efforts, both from consumers and companies, eco-friendly FMCG products have the potential to become a mainstream choice, contributing to a more sustainable future.

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