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A Study on Consumer Perception towards Eco- Friendly Products in Tiruchirappalli City

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Abstract

The present work made an attempt to analyses consumer satisfaction with reference to green products in Tiruchirappalli, with special emphasis on perception, preference and satisfaction factors. Eco- Friendly products marketing is a concept which gives a chance to save the planet earth from human destruction. Eco- Friendly products marketing is a much broader concept and it includes industrial goods and services, consumer goods, etc. Eco- Friendly products marketing aims at raising voice against consumption, production or disposal of any products that harm the consumers, the environment or the society in any way. It is a necessity that both consumers as well as businessmen abstain from harmful products. Thus, this paper analyzes the impact on consumer perception towards Eco- Friendly products in Tiruchirappalli City. A well structured questionnaire was prepared to collect one hundred respondents and simple random sampling technique had been used for this study. The findings of the study showed that most of the respondents (65 per cent) are female, 89 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group between 18-24. Therefore product is the most influencing marketing element.

Keywords: Eco- Friendly products marketing, Impact, perception, Awareness, Usage etc.,

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of Eco- Friendly products marketing has expanded rapidly in the world. With regards to this consumers have been taking responsibility and doing the right things. Consumer awareness and motivation continues to drive changes in the marketplace, mainly through the introduction of more eco-friendly products. Compared to consumers in developed countries, the Indian consumers have much less awareness about the harmful effects of global warming. Successful marketing has always been about positioning products and services, recognizing trends in a manner that supports buyer's intentions. Eco- Friendly products marketing has a positive impact on the health of people and ecological environment. People are aware of pure methods of producing and usage of pure products. It encourages combined efforts for purity both in production as well as consumption. It helps to reduce the various causes that lead to environmental problems like global warming. Promotion of environmental products is possible with the help of Eco- Friendly products marketing. As there is increased pressure from governmental bodies, consumers, NGOs, etc, firms believe that it is their moral obligation to be more responsible socially. Cost factors related to waste disposal are forcing firms to alter their behavior.

Modern marketing has created a lot of problems. Growth in marketing activities resulted into rapid economic growth, mass production with the use of advanced technology, comfortable and luxurious life, style, severe competition, use of unhealthy marketing tactics and techniques to attract customers, exaggeration in advertising, liberalization and globalization, creation of multinational companies, retailing and distribution by giant MNCs, etc., created many problems. Excessive pollution from large factories, departmental stores, etc has provoked the nature and has started to behave in unnatural ways. Economic growth via production and consumption threatens peaceful life of human being on the earth. Eco- Friendly products marketing is an attempt to protect consumer welfare and environment (the nature) through production, consumption, and disposal of eco-friendly products. Eco-Friendly products marketing basically aims at production and consumption of environmental friendly goods and services, which in turn helps in protection of the ecological environment.

Statement of the Problem

Due to increase in globalization, the environmental condition is worsening day by day. As more and more manufacturing plants and firms are coming up, huge part of the land is being cleared and at the same time there is a lack of proper waste management system. This study aims to find out what Eco- Friendly products techniques and concepts the previous studies have failed to find out and gives recommendations regarding the same. The same is found out with the help of

questionnaire by studying the profile of the customers and their awareness level about Eco- Friendly products marketing.

Scope of the Study

This study aims to pressurize the firms to switch to Eco- Friendly products marketing concepts which will increase the level of consumer awareness regarding the same. As the firms increase the promotion of Eco- Friendly products marketed products and services, this in turn will induce the customers to purchase those products and services. Eco- Friendly products marketing is a very wide concept as; it's not just production of environmental friendly goods. It incorporates a wide range of activities It involves many areas from conservation to controlling the pollution. Firms should take strict efforts to take up research to come up with environmental friendly products and services by considering the interests of the society as a whole.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the profile of the customers and also to find out the factors that impact the behavior of customers in choosing Eco- Friendly products in Tiruchirappalli City.

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is significant relationship between the factors affecting consumer's perception and the choice of Eco- Friendly products.

Review of Literature

Rashad Yazdanifard ,IgbazuaErdoo Mercy (2011), to find out the impact of Eco- Friendly products Marketing on customer satisfaction and environmental safety. The main theme throughout the strategy of sustainable development is the need to integrate ecological and economic considerations in the process of decision making which helps conserve the quality of environmental protection and agricultural development.

NargesDelafrooz, et al (2013), to analyze the influence of Eco- Friendly products marketing tools like eco- brand, environmental advertisement and eco-label on the purchasing behavior of the customers. The result of the regression model used in the study showed that largest share in anticipating customer's purchase behavior was held by environmental advertising. The study was concluded by giving recommendations like various other forms of Eco- Friendly products marketing tools should also be studied and the confidence level of eco-label and eco-brand should be worked on.

Babita Saini (2013), to find out how Eco- Friendly products marketing affects customer's buying behavior. This research study was conducted in Rohini district of Delhi.

The study suggested that firms that develop environmental friendly products and services should make sure that it performs competitively as well. Therefore, it is concluded by saying that companies must find a way to strengthen its product performance.

YeowKar Yan & Rashad Yazdanifard (2014), focuses on various concepts like Eco- Friendly products marketing, levels of consumer consumption with regards to Eco- Friendly products marketing, Eco- Friendly products development, etc. Therefore it was concluded by stating that Eco- Friendly products development and Eco- Friendly products have been proved to be the best ways to comply with customer's purchase decision and also to adhere to the rules of the government. It is also recommended that firms should take necessary steps to prove to the customers that they are promoting environmental friendly products.

SeemaLaddha, MayurMalviya (2015), analyses whether consumer's awareness of Eco- Friendly products and knowledge regarding environmental issues affect their purchase of Eco- Friendly products. The study concludes that variation in the customer's buying behavior should be identified by the marketers and they must accordingly offer products and services in order to build Eco- Friendly products brands in future and also retain their market share.

A.Muthukumaran (2015), examines the present trends of Eco- Friendly products marketing in India, describes the reason why companies are adopting it, future of Eco- Friendly products marketing. The paper is concluded by stating that Eco- Friendly products marketing will continuously grow in both practice and demand.

MeghnaSharma&Prachi Trivedi (2016), identify different variables of Eco- Friendly products marketing and also to analyze the effect of each variable on the customer's buying behavior for Eco- Friendly products marketed products. The study is concluded by stating that with adequate use of these variables, environmental damage can be reduced to a great extent.

Research Methodology

The type of research used in the study is Descriptive in nature. Data has been collected from primary source with the help of a well-structured questionnaire from the residents of Tiruchirappalli. The study was conducted with the help of information collected from 100 respondents. The sampling technique used was Simple Random Sampling technique. The study was completed during November-December in 2016. The profile of the respondents is analyzed using by Percentage analysis and the reasons for them to choose Eco- Friendly products is assessed using Factor analysis.

Analysis and Discussion

In order to study the profile of respondents, various factors like gender, age, status, income, usage of Eco- Friendly products, etc are analyzed below.

Table No. 4. 1: Profile of the Respondents

Factors	Classification	Frequency	Per cent
Gender	Male	35	35
	Female	65	65
	Total	100	100
Age (in years)	18-24	89	89
	25-34	6	6
	35-44	3	3
	45-54	2	2
	Total	100	100
Status	Employed	8	8
	Unemployed	4	4
	Student	88	88
	Total	100	100
Income	1000-15000	53	53
	16000-20000	27	27
	21000-25000	11	11
	26000-30000	7	7
	31000 & above	2	2
	Total	100	100
Usage of Eco-Friendly products	Everyday	5	5
	Once a week	26	26
	At least once a month	22	22
	Less than once a month	6	6
	Very rarely	41	41
	Total	100	100
Research Company's Eco-Friendly products status	Yes	7	7
	No	60	60
	Sometimes	33	33
	Total	100	100
Influence of marketing element	Product	34	34
	Package	18	18
	Price	16	16

	Promotion techniques used	13	13
	Place	4	4
	People	8	8
	Physical existence	7	7
	Total	100	100
Source of awareness	Television	40	40
	Class lectures	10	10
	Magazines	18	18
	Newspapers	19	19
	Others	13	13
	Total	100	100

Source: Computed Results based on primary data

Table 4.1 depicts that majority (65 per cent) of the respondents are female. Most of the of the respondents (89 per cent) belong to the age group of 18-24. Most of the respondents (88 per cent) are students. More than half of the respondents (53 per cent) earn an income between Rs.1000- 15000. Majority (41 per cent) of the respondents very rarely purchase Eco- Friendly products. Majority of the respondents (60 per cent) do not research about the company's Eco- Friendly products status. Most of the respondents (34 per cent) view product is the most influencing marketing element for the purchase of Eco- Friendly products. Majority 40 per cent of the respondents gained awareness through Television.

Table No. 4.2 KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.778
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	365.110
	Df	78
	Sig.	.000

Source: Computed Results based on primary data

Table No.4.2 reveals Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity have been applied, to the resultant correlation matrix to test whether the relationship among the variables has been significant or not as shown in Table. The result of the test shows that with the significant value of 0.000 there is significant relationship among the variables chosen. KMO test yields a result of 0.778 which states that factor analysis can be carried out appropriately for these thirteen variables that are taken for the study. The Bartlett's statistics tests the hypothesis that the correlation matrix of chosen variables is an identity matrix. The KMO test explains the proportion of variance in the variable which is common variance that might be caused by the underlying factors may be determined.

Table No. 4. 3 Rotated Component Matrix

Factors Affecting Customer's Buying Behavior	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Eco-friendly	.185	.850	.182	.043
Protect environment	.119	.903	.108	.003
Avoid people judging	-.072	.044	.144	.834
Product satisfaction	.552	.018	.118	.514
Unplanned decision in super market	-.003	.105	.809	.104
Increase in value of such goods	.274	.206	.579	.294
Enhances quality of life	.590	.236	.361	.071
Easily disposable	.584	.389	-.417	.121
Choose to take care of environmental needs first	.575	.360	-.004	.102
Recyclable and Reusable	.608	.390	.055	-.008
Not tested on animals	.516	.073	.442	-.339
Contain natural ingredients	.623	.181	-.004	-.178
Can be used for longer time	.781	-.160	.190	.101
Total	3.087	2.147	1.609	1.245
% of Variance	23.743	16.512	12.379	9.575
Cumulative %	23.743	40.255	52.633	62.208
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.				
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.				

Table No. 4.3 illustrates that the principle component analysis and rotated factor loading method is used for stimulating factors. It is observed that out of 13 factors, 4 factors are identified by the rotation method. The total per cent of variation in Factor I is 23.743, Factor II is 16.512, Factor III is 12.379 and for Factor IV is 9.575.

Table No. 4.4 Clustering of Sectors into Dimentions

Dimensions	Factors	Rotated factor Loadings
I (4.313 per cent) Product benefits	Can be used for longer time	.781
	Contain natural ingredients	.623
	Recyclable and Reusable	.608
	Enhances quality of life	.590
	Easily disposable	.584
	Choose to take care of environmental needs first	.575
	Product satisfaction	.552
II (1.959 per cent) Environmental benefits	Protect environment	.903
	Eco-friendly	.850
	Increase in value of such goods	.206
III (.953 per cent) Customer relation	Unplanned decision in super market	.809
	Avoid people judging	.144

Source: Computed results based on primary data

The above 12 factors are clustered into 3 dimensions. Dimension I named as “Product Benefits” consist of factors like; Can be used for longer time (0.781), Contains natural ingredients (0.623), Recyclable and Reusable (0.608), Enhances quality of life (0.590), Easily disposable(0.584), Choose to take care of environmental needs first (0.575) and Product satisfaction (0.552). Dimention II named as “Environmental benefits” consists of factors like: Protect environment (0.903), Eco-friendly (0.850) and Increase in value of such goods (0.206). Dimension III named as “Customer relation” consists of factors like: Unplanned decision in super market (0.809) and Avoid people judging (0.144).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the three dimensions that affect the consumer’s buying behavior are:

- i. Product benefits
- ii. Environmental benefits
- iii. Customer relation

II. CONCLUSION

Consumers' satisfaction with products that are environmentally friendly is one of the strongest drivers of these products' acceptance and performance in the market. The present study helps to understand the factors that influence satisfaction levels in Tiruchirappalli and offers practical cues to behaviour of consumers in this region. "Eco- Friendly products Marketing" globally. It will bring about a drastic change in the business world if all the nations take strict actions to protect the environment and prevent it from getting degraded, as, Eco- Friendly products marketing aims at saving the world from being polluted. A business organization that is environmentally committed not only produces quality goods that are less harmful to the environment, but also, pressurize their suppliers to act in an "environmentally responsible manner" as well. Main objectives as to why this study has been conducted were to study the profile of customers, to assess their level of awareness and to analyze their reasons for choosing Eco- Friendly products over other products. It was observed that gender is not a concern for their level of awareness about the concept Eco- Friendly products marketing, while, age was a major concern. Eco- Friendly products marketing is still in its infancy and a lot of research is to be done to fully explore its potential.

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