

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS GREENCOSMETIC PRODUCTS- A STUDYWITH REFERENCE TO THE STUDENTS OF THE BHOPAL SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Abstract

These days as consumers are getting more concerned with regards to the environment and health. Consumers have become conscious towards the products they use and their effects. The younger generation is most active and capable in bring the change in this current scenario, they have started using Green products which are beneficial for environment and health. Indian marketers are also now realizing the importance of green marketing concept. There is a very limited research that is conducted in India with regards to the green marketing, consumer preference, consumer perception and consumer behaviour regarding the green products. This research provides a brief review on level of awareness regarding green marketing and consumer behaviour and awareness towards green cosmetic products.

The study was conducted on 132 valid responses, it was found that the consumers were highly aware of green cosmetic products and the concept of green marketing. The behaviour of the consumers was found to be moderately positive towards the environment. This research gives a good insight to the marketers for promotion of the green cosmetic products and to create a greater presence of the green cosmetic products on various advertising platforms. It was found that consumers are willing to purchase green cosmetic products over conventional ones if there is proper communication of the benefits of using the green cosmetic products to the health and the environment and if the organizations take the initiative in solving the environmental problems.

Keywords: Green marketing, Green cosmetic Products, Consumer behaviour. environmental problems

INTRODUCTION

Green products or environmentally friendly products are getting more and more popular these days regardless of different categories of people and their demographic factors. With increase in concern towards environment has resulted in the concept of green marketing. (Ms. R. Surya, Sep 2014) in their research introduced green marketing as a process of selling products which are environmentally friendly or has environmental benefits. Green marketing is also known as eco marketing, environmental marketing. American Marketing Association (AMA) has defined green marketing as Marketing of products which are presumed to be environmentally safe. Green marketing covers a wide range of activities which are to constantly modify the products with the market trends, updating the production and packaging process, and advertising of the product. (Polonsky, 1994) said green marketing involves ideating strategies which satisfy consumers expectations in eco-friendly manner. Green marketing is a great strategy for the companies to prove themselves as environmentally friendly.

(Ms. R. Surya, Sep 2014) in their research have talked about benefits of green marketing for companies green marketing allows accessibility to new markets, increased profits, ensures long term growth, cost saving, help companies market their products for the benefit of environment with addition of enjoying competitive advantage. (Kaur, 2017) Green Marketing is a great way to working on preserving the environment for future generations. With increase of global warming at an alarming rate, it is significant that green marketing should become the

norm.. (Ottoman, 2011), said green marketing will help industries to promote eco-friendly products which will result in prevention of environmental degradation and will also not affect the industrial growth.

EVOLUTION OF GREEN MARKETING

Green marketing got fame in the late 1980 and early 1990. The American Marketing Association (AMA) held the first workshop on 'Ecological Marketing' in the year 1975. In this workshop first book on green marketing was released named "Ecological Marketing" during 1980s two books on the same concept was released both named green marketing. (Peattie, 2001) have told that the evolution of green marketing has 3 phases. First phase was "Ecological" green marketing this was the phase when the marketing activities focused on solving environmental problems and provided solutions. Second phase was "Environmental" green marketing in this phase innovative technologies were being invented to save environment from pollution and for better waste disposal. Third phase was "Sustainable" green marketing the products were being developed that had the ability to meet consumers expectations and standards.(Pavan Mishra, 2010) in their research stated that "green products" and "environmental products" are commercial terminologies that are used commonly to indicate that these products are environment friendly and save the environment by using organic resources and not using substances which are harmful to the environment.

Green cosmetic products are also known as organic or natural makeup, cosmetics are extremely popular and widely used to enhance one's appearance. There is a huge demand of all types of cosmetic products in the beauty market. Many cosmetic products are made with chemicals that may be harmful for health, but with increase in concern for health and environment consumers are more careful and selective with the kinds for products they use. Green cosmetic products are made from natural resources such as plant extracts. They are completely free from synthetic and harmful chemicals.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Polonsky, 1994) stated that if customers are aware of the benefits of buying and using green cosmetic products, they will purchase prefer them over the non-environmentally friendly products.

(Prashant Kumar, 2015) increase in level of awareness regarding the benefits of engaging in green behaviour of the consumers will inspire them to purchase green products.

(Suzanne C. Grunert, 1995) stated that forty percent of the environmental damages are caused by household purchases.

(Polonsky, 1994) said that customers' want clear information regarding the products they purchase to analyse how one product over another will benefit the environment. Consumers sometimes face difficulty while choosing the right product which will help in conservation of environment. They also not always understand the environmentally friendly labels attached to the products.

(K. P. Aryal, 2009) said that consumers are not aware with eco-Label terms like biodegradable, Environmentally Friendly and recyclable etc.

According to (E. Rex, 2007) green products can be promoted with the same strategy used in promotion of conventional products like addressing wider range of customers, positioning strategies of price, place, promotion etc. conventional marketing strategies can be used in green marketing.

(Naman Sreen, 2018) stated that seeing the shift in the consumer behaviour the organizations are triggered to promote environmentally friendly products and influence the consumers to purchase their products.

(Purohit, 2011) concluded in his study of Relationship between consumer attitude and buying intention towards green marketing that 4p's i.e., product, price place promotion play an important role when it comes to purchasing an eco-friendly product. It was also observed that consumers were willing to pay higher price for eco-friendly products which will result to less harm to environment.

(Sachdev, 2011) have found that only top two percent of the consumers are willing to pay more than twenty percent for green products whereas rest of the consumers are looking for parity in price to more sustainable products.

(S, 2017) consumers are greatly making their purchase decision of a green product based on price of it. If they find the price of the green product to be high, they are less likely to purchase it. Government, industries etc. should make an effort to reduce the price and also in creating awareness among consumers to motivate them to buy green products.

(Thanika Devi Juwaheer, 2012) stated that effective green marketing strategies greatly influence the green behaviour.

(Maheshwari, 2011) discovered that consumers didn't felt responsible towards environment and were of the opinion that government and companies should take the responsibility for environment.

(Nihayatu Aslamatis Solekah, 2020) in their study they mentioned that young generation is influenced by the environmentally friendly advertisements, attributes or labels on a product, regarding the environmental issues they trust those brands which they know are aware of.

(Ottoman, 2011), are of the opinion that Green marketing will help industries to promote eco-friendly products

which will result in prevention of environmental degradation and will also not affect the industrial growth.

NEED FOR STUDY

Green Marketing in this day and age a very important concept for all the marketers as it is providing competitive advantage. A developing country like India is going through major shift in choice and preferences of products. As consumers are getting more aware regarding the products and its effects on environment and health, companies in India have identified this shift and started promoting themselves as green organizations. It is identified that there is not much research conducted on this concept in small towns of India and awareness about green cosmetic product and factors affecting their purchase decision is questionable. Youth will playing a very important role as they will be facing the consequences of the environmental degradation that have happened so far but they can also be the changemakers for next generation and can take this situation to a more sustainable position. This study covers the young population of college students to know their consumer behaviour regarding green cosmetic products.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the consumer behaviour towards green cosmetic products among students of The Bhopal School of Social Sciences.
2. To study the level of awareness regarding the concept of green marketing.
3. To rank the factors affecting the purchase decision of green cosmetic products.

HYPOTHESIS

The level of awareness towards green cosmetic product marketing in association with gender.

H₀: There is no association of gender and the level of awareness towards green cosmetic product marketing.

H₁: There is an association of gender and the level of awareness towards green cosmetic product marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Exploratory and descriptive research methodology is used for the study. Secondary data is collected through articles. Random stratified sampling is used for the collection of primary data. Primary Data is collected online through google form. The research has been conducted on students studying in The Bhopal School of Social Sciences. The form was distributed to 200 students out of which 132 valid responses were received in total. For the purpose of analysis suitable mathematical and statistical technique chi-square test is used.

DISCUSSIONS

1. A question towards awareness on concept of Green marketing had fetched the following values

Table 1: Awareness on concept of Green marketing

Gender/Awareness	Yes	No
Male	28	14
Female	72	18
Total	100	32

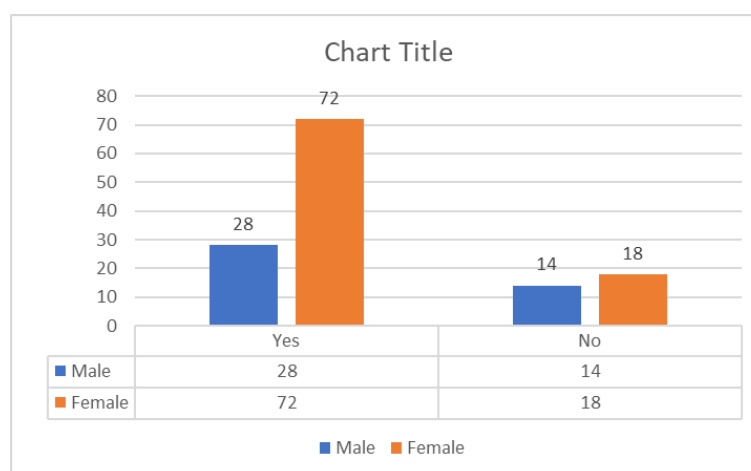


Figure 1: Awareness on concept of Green marketing

From the above Table1 and figure.2 it is found that majority of the respondents were aware about the concept of green marketing that is 100 respondents and rest 32 respondents were not aware of this concept.

HYPOTHESIS

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Table 2: Calculation of Chi square

Gender	Aware regarding Green Marketing(100)	Not Aware Regarding Green Marketing(32)	Chi Square Value	Chi Square Table Value
Male	28	14	5.96	3.84
Female	72	18		
Total	100	32		

DECISION

Chi square value was calculated with 0.05 significance level and degrees of freedom 1. The calculated value of chi square was 5.96 and the table value was 3.84. Since the calculated value is more than the table value, the Hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is observed that there is an association of gender towards awareness level on green cosmetic product marketing.

2. The response towards the concern of consumers towards protection of environments is summarised as in table 3

Table 3: Concern of Consumers on protection of environment.

Opinion on concern	Frequency
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	5
Neutral	62
Agree	49
Strongly Agree	16
Total	132

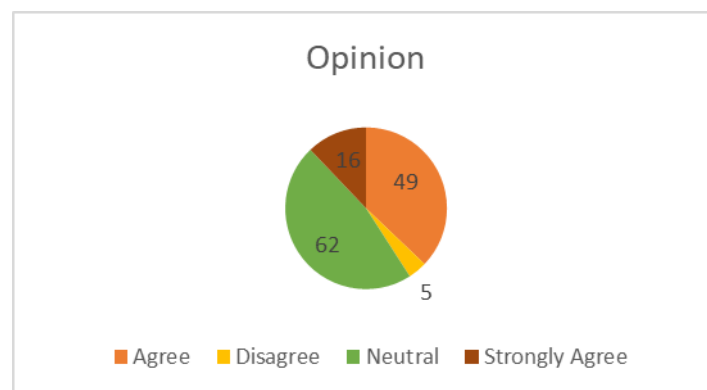


Figure 2: Concern of Consumers on protection of environment

It was asked to the consumers if they have become more concerned about the protection of the environment. Majority of the respondent agreed i.e., 49 of them and 16 of them strongly agreed 62 of the respondents had neutral opinion and 5 of them disagreed.

3. The response towards awareness of category wise green products being used by the consumers is shown in table 4.

Table 4: Respondents awareness on Green products

Product Categories	Frequency
Bath	5
Skin Care	37
Hair Care	39
Make Up	46
Others	5
Total	132

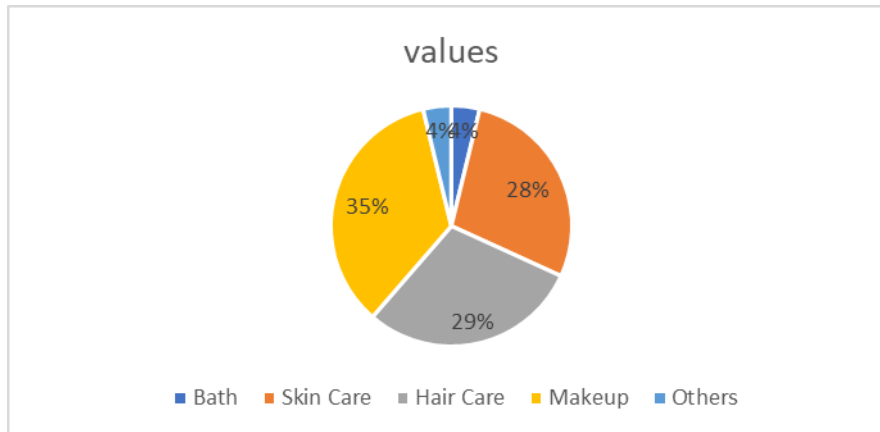


Figure 3: Respondents awareness on Green products

Analysis from the above table 4, exhibited that consumers with regards to the category wise products were most aware of Makeup and Hair Care. 46 of the respondents were aware of Makeup, 39 were aware of haircare, 37 were aware of skin care, 5 were aware of Bath and 5 respondents were aware of other types of green cosmetic products.

4. Ranking of factors influencing the purchase decision.

The factors identified from reviews were forwarded to respondents to find the influencing level of purchase decision. The observed values were used to rank the order. Table 5 below shows the ranking of factors influencing the purchase decision of green cosmetic product as per opinion of the surveyed consumers.

Table 5. Ranking of factors influencing the purchase decision

S.NO	Factors	Values	Ranking
1.	Awareness about green products	87	4
2.	Availability of green products	89	1
3.	past experience	76	6
4.	Information provided on product	89	2
5.	Family and friends	81	3
6.	I prefer green products over conventional products	71	8
7.	I feel that green products are priced higher as compare to conventional products	81	5
8.	I feel the price of Green product affects my purchase behaviour	75	7
9.	I consider ill effects of manufacturing and consumption on the natural environment	53	9

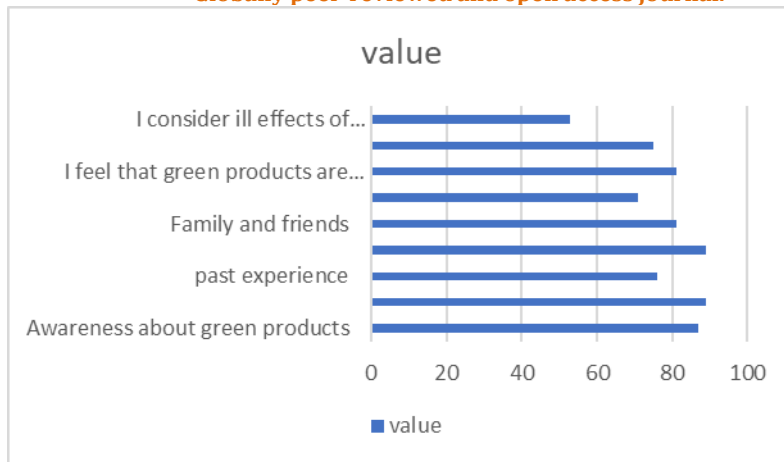


Figure 4: Ranking of factors influencing the purchase decision.

From the above analysis it was found that availability of the green product was the most important factor it was ranked 1st, followed by information provided on the green products on rank 2nd the 3rd most important was influence of family and friends. On 4th rank was the awareness regarding the green products. On 5th rank was the price, green cosmetics are priced higher than conventional products. On rank 6th was the consumers experience with that product, on 7th rank was that the consumers felt that they can purchase the green cosmetic products but they are expensive. On 8th rank was their preference to green products over conventional products. On 9th rank and the last factor which influenced their purchase decision was the concern towards environment.

5. Consumer behaviour towards green products.

Few statements were put forth to the respondents to understand their behaviour towards environments and green products. The responses are as showed in table 6 below:

Table 6: Behaviour response of consumers towards green products

S. No	Statements to understand the behaviour towards green products	Frequency
1.	I buy green products and I spend time and effort in Environmental activities.	37
2.	I buy green products but I don't spend time and effort in Environmental activities such as recycling.	39
3.	I can buy green products but I don't have the time and energy for environmental activities.	24
4.	I do not buy Green products. I believe that businesses and government should take initiative to resolve environmental problems	22
5.	I am the least involved in Environmentalism.	10
	Total	132

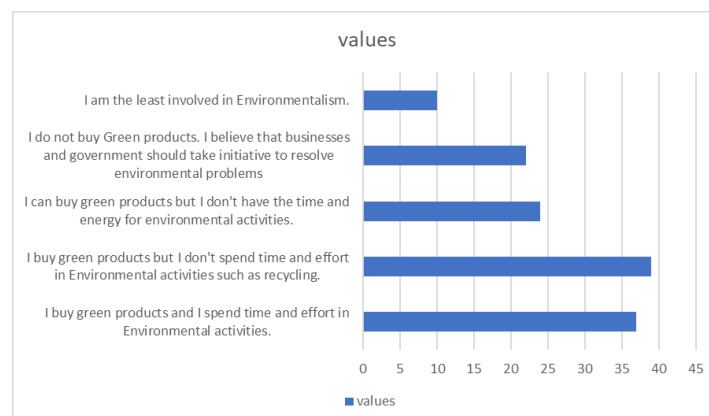


Figure 5: Behaviour response of consumers towards green products

Respondents were asked how they are involved in environmental activities. Majority of the respondents i.e., 39 of the respondents choose “I buy green products but I don't spend time and effort in Environmental activities such as recycling”. 37 of the respondents said “They buy green products but don't spend time and efforts in environmental activities”. 24 respondents said they I can buy green products but I don't have the time and energy for environmental activities. 22 said that “I do not buy Green products. I believe that businesses and government should take initiative to resolve environmental problems”. 10 choose “I am the least involved in Environmentalism”

RESULT OF HYPOTHESIS

Table 6: Calculation of Chi square

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Chi square value was calculated with 0.05 significance level and degrees of freedom 1. The calculated value of chi square was 5.96 and the table value was 3.84. Since the calculated value is more than the table value, the Hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is observed that there is an association of gender towards awareness level on green cosmetic product marketing.

FINDINGS

In the study it was found that consumers level of awareness among students of The Bhopal School of Social Sciences, regarding Green Marketing was high, many of the consumers were using green cosmetic products of different categories. Majority of the consumers were aware of Green Makeup and Hair Care. There are many factors which affect the purchase decision of a consumer, the respondents were asked to choose the factors which affect their purchasing decision the factors were ranked from 1st to 9th rank 1 being the most chosen. It was found that consumers buy green cosmetic products based on the availability of them and make their purchase decision based on the information provided on the green product. Consumers are also highly influenced by their family and friend's recommendation and feedback regarding the green products. Consumers are greatly influenced by the awareness and presence in the market of the green product. Consumers are concerned regarding the price of the green products over the conventional ones as green cosmetic products are priced higher. Some of the consumers purchased the green cosmetic product because of their concern for the environment. Consumers are of the opinion that they have become more concerned regarding the protection of the environment but many of them had no opinion regarding this concern and very few of them disagreed. Consumer behaviour towards the green environment was on a moderately positive level. Consumers willingly buy Green cosmetic products but don't spend time and efforts in environmental activities because they don't have time and energy. Some respondents were of the opinion that they believe that government and manufacturing industries should take the initiative to resolve environmental problems. Few of the respondents admitted that they are least involved in environmental activities.

SUGGESTIONS

Consumers buy green cosmetic products based on their availability, presence and price it is suggested to the Marketers to identify the green cosmetic products which the consumers are looking for and willing to buy, and to present them in such a way to increase their presence on various advertising platforms, marketers should also emphasize the benefits of using that green cosmetic product for the health and environmental concern. As consumers are already aware of the increasing concerns towards protection of health and environment, they may prefer Green products over conventional ones.

Marketers should take this as an opportunity to build their brand presence and reputation as green products. Consumers expect the government and the organisations to take the initiative and employ green marketing practices towards the protection of the environment. Marketers should regularly communicate their messages in such a way that will motivate the consumers to pursue that product and it remains in the top of the consumers mind to buy that product.

FUTURE SCOPE OF STUDY

There are many areas where further researches can be done.

1. Identifying impact of eco labelling on consumer behaviour and preferences in various states in India.
2. Environmental activism and perceived environmental responsibility among consumers in India.

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