

AN ANALYSIS OF GREEN CONSCIOUSNESS OF CONSUMERS IN KERALA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to study the green or environmental consciousness of consumers in Kozhikode district. This paper tells about the awareness of green products, buying behaviour and understanding of terminologies used for defining the Greenness of the Products. Effects on the climate change, rapid loss of bio diversity, global warming, etc are the key problems. If the global warming and environmental pollution will go on increasing, one day the entire world will be submersed. To curb these problems, alternative ways to be derived. In the present scenario the green products and green consciousness are inevitable factors of marketing. "Go green, grow green" slogan is spreading all over the world against the problem of environmental degradation. Even then some of the consumers have not heard or understood about the green products. So it is an attempt made to familiarize the term green and to analyze the green consciousness of consumers.

Key words: Green consciousness, green products, green purchasing behavior, green consumers

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1. INTRODUCTION

Growing population and its changing consumption pattern have created a harmful change in its environment. The depletion of natural resources, ozone depletion, rapid loss of biodiversity, the drastic climate change, etc are the effects of the exploitation of environment made by human beings. Various efforts have been taking place as remedial measures. Many Nature conservation programs, Summits on climate change, pollution control and prevention efforts are there and billions have been spent on these. Even then the sustainability measures are not enough. The word green is related with the environment friendly efforts. Twenty years ago it was rare to hear about a green phenomenon such as green product, green business, green purchasing behavior, green marketing, green consumer, etc. Green product is product which has lesser or no adverse environmental impacts or has environment friendly features throughout its life cycle. Green consumers are the consumers who purchase and use the green products and, avoid the products that have adverse effect on the environment. This paper emphasizes the green

consciousness / awareness of consumers and the barriers of green purchasing behaviour. This work may be an inspiration to the entrepreneurs in framing their green marketing efforts; to the job seekers for starting green business and to the consumers for understanding and buying the green products.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Green consciousness is considerably new term. A few studies are there in this regard. Some of the reviews are as follows;

Faizan Zafar Sheikh, Ashfaq Ahmed Mirza and Anam Aftab and Bilal Asghar(2014), an attempt has been made to understand a how consumer will make its green purchase decision and behaviour toward green products by selecting 200 respondents within the age group 18-15 through their article titled “Consumer Green Behaviour Toward Green Products and Green Purchase Decision”.

Jesitha. J and Dr. B. Ramesh(2014), have described the term Green marketing in the context of Corporate social responsibility.

P. N. Harikumara and K. S. Chandrasekhar(2014), have examined the attitude of automobile customers towards environmental marketing and the factors affecting the purchasing decisions through their article titled“ Green marketing: an empirical investigation on customer behavior of Automobile industry”.

Prasad Modak, Shantanu Roy, Sonal Pareek Kaushik ,Sonal Alvares,Romil Bajaj and Shweta Arora(2014), have analysed the survey data to understand the perception of the consumers on green products in india and the gaps and barriers to the adoption of green products through a research project conducted by Green Purchasing Network of India*.

This paper tries to make out the green consciousness of consumers by selecting data through direct interview schedule.

2.1. Objectives

- To know consumers understandings about green products.
- To analyze the factors influencing buying decision of green products.
- To examine the barriers of green purchasing behaviour.
- To serve as an inspiration to entrepreneurs, job seekers, consumers, etc.

2.2. Limitations of the Study

- The study is restricted to Kozhikode district.
- Lack of enough time to respond was a problem to the selected consumers since the data collected through interview schedule.

2.3. Need of Study

The environmental problems that we face today have a serious impact on our lives. People are very much aware about this crisis. Everyone tries to direct their actions towards green as a remedy. The consumers try to purchase green products. So this paper is about the analysis of green consciousness of consumers in Kerala.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary as well as the secondary data. An attempt has been made to know the green consciousness of consumers (about terminologies, barriers to green purchase, and influencing factors) by selecting 75 consumers, in Kozhikode district, who are aware about the term green products. Convenience sampling method is used to select these respondents. A structured interview schedule is used to collect the information from the respondents. Various journals, books and websites form the secondary sources of information. The collected data is tabulated and/ or presented in graphs and diagrams. Percentages are also used to analyze the data. The present study is descriptive and analytical in nature.

3.1. Data Analysis and Interpretations

Table: 1

Demographic Segment of the respondents

Demographic Segment of Respondents	Total no. of respondents	Classifications	Frequency	Percentage
Age	75	Below 20	5	7
		20-30	29	39
		30-40	22	29
		40-50	10	13
		Above 50	9	12
Gender	75	Male	36	48
		Female	39	52
Educational Level	75	High school	8	10
		Higher secondary	15	20
		Graduation	31	41
		Post graduation	13	17
		others	19	25
Monthly income	75	Below 10000	4	5
		10000-20000	25	33
		20000-30000	31	41
		30000-40000	9	12
		Above 40000	6	8

Table I shows the demographic characteristics of respondents such as age, gender, educational level and monthly income of green consumers.

Table II

Green Products Awareness of Consumers

Terminologies of green products	No. of respondents		Total	Percentage	
	Aware	Not aware		Aware	Not aware
Low carbon	72	3	75	96	4
Non toxic	69	6	75	92	8
Recycled	65	10	75	87	13
Up cycled	25	50	75	33	67
Reusable	64	11	75	85	15
Energy efficient	72	3	75	96	4
Organic	73	2	75	97	3
Bio degradable	75	0	75	100	0
Water positive	68	7	75	91	9

Table II shows the Green products awareness and understanding of Terminologies used for defining the Greenness of the Products with their respective percentages. It is understood that among the selected consumers (75), most of them are very much aware about the terminologies such as low carbon (96%, 72consumers), non-toxic(92%,69 consumers), recycled(87%, 65consumers),up cycled(33%,25consumers),reusable(64%,64 consumers), energy efficient(96%, 72 consumers), organic(97%,73 consumers), bio degradable(100%, 75 out of 75), and water positive(91%,68 consumers).

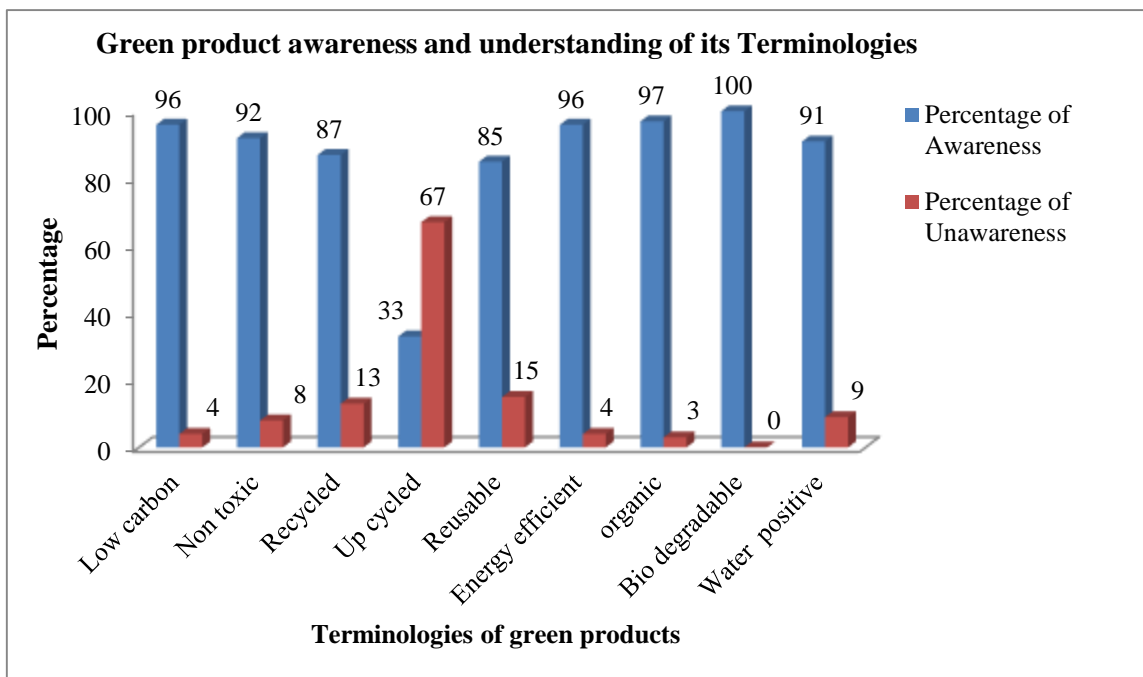


Figure I Green Product Awareness and Understanding

Figure I show the percentage of consumers' awareness/unawareness level of terminologies of green products. It is the graphical representation of table-II.

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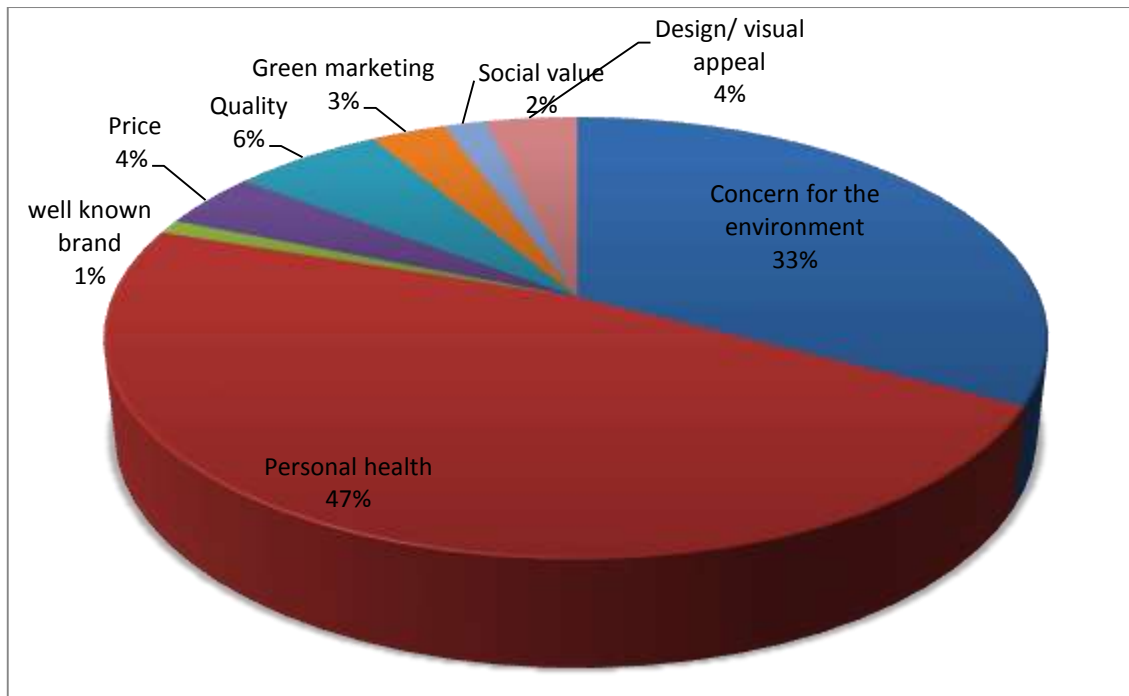


Figure-II Factors Influencing Buying Behavior

Figure II shows the green purchasing decision of consumers. Most of the consumers purchase green products for the sake of personal health (47%) as well as for the benefit of environment. Other factors are influence of well-known brand(1%),price(4%),quality(6%),green marketing(3%), social value(2%), ad design(4%).

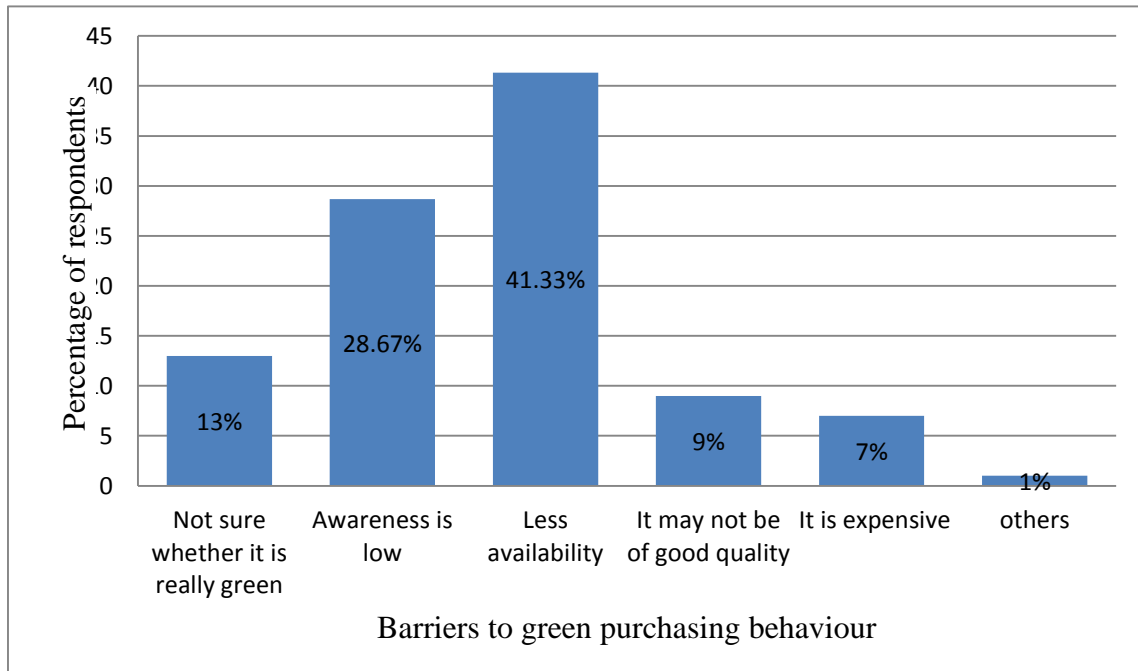


Figure III Barriers to Green Purchasing Behaviour

Figure III shows the barriers of green purchasing behaviour of selected consumers. According to the study 13% of the consumers are resisting to buy green products, because of doubt in greenness in the product, 28.67% of respondents think awareness about the product

availability; use, features, etc are the main barrier. As per respondents opinion the major barrier is the problem of availability (41.33%). Other barriers are problem of quality (9%), cost factor (7%) and other available products (1%).

4. FINDINGS

The study is undertaken by analyzing the information collected from green consumers who fall in the age limit 15-55. The major findings of the study are as follows:

- It is the era of green revolution. Now people are very much aware about the environmental degradation as well as the green products. They are well known about different aspects/ terminologies of green products.
- The consumers purchase green products mainly due to environmental concern and personal health. Other affecting factors are brand, price, quality, green marketing, social value, and design.
- The main problem of consumers who wish to buy green products is the lack availability. Other problems are lack of awareness about the green product availability, use, etc. Doubt in quality, greenness, etc are also come under this.
- Now most of the consumers are not bothering about green products' price. They are now becoming more environment conscious consumers for the sake of environment as well as for personal health.

5. SUGGESTIONS

- As the consumers are now more environment conscious, the entrepreneurs as well as job seekers can take it as an opportunity.
- The government can play an important role in environmental protection through promoting green products as the consumers are very much aware about the green aspects.
- The producers of green products should make available the product to all consumers who are willing to buy the green product. The information about the product should be conveyed to the consumers properly.
- Remedial measures will be there for ensuring the greenness of the product.
- To promote green products and practices education campaigns needs to be designed.

6. CONCLUSION

Consumers today are much more concerned about environmental issues than they were even few years ago. There is a noticeable change in consumer preferences and life styles. They prefer environment friendly products and ready to pay a little extra price for such green products. The main problem is green product availability. The objective of this study was to analyze the green consciousness of consumers and their understanding about the green products. Results of the study indicate that the majority of the respondents appeared to be aware of the concept green and the consumers didn't attach more importance to cost of the green products as a barrier. Now it is in the hands of entrepreneurs to make use of this as an opportunity for a competitive advantage.

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