

A Study On Consumer Perception And Purchase Intention Towards Eco-Friendly Products With Special Reference To Thoothukudi District

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This study investigates consumer perception and purchase intention towards eco-friendly products with a special focus on Thoothukudi district. It explores factors such as product quality, safety, durability, price, and overall value, alongside environmental attitudes and personal responsibility influencing buying decisions. The research uses primary data collected from 130 respondents via a structured questionnaire. Statistical analysis, including ANOVA and independent samples tests, was employed to examine associations between perceptions, purchase intentions, gender, and age. Findings reveal no significant association between consumer perception and gender or between purchase intention and age groups. Although eco-friendly products are recognized for their environmental and health benefits, barriers such as price sensitivity and convenience concerns persist. The study highlights the need for targeted awareness and marketing strategies to promote sustainable consumption locally. The insights aim to support businesses and policymakers in fostering green consumer behaviors in Thoothukudi district.

Key Words: Eco-friendly products, Purchase intention, Sustainable consumption.

INTRODUCTION

Eco-friendly products have emerged as a growing focus among consumers, businesses, and policymakers worldwide. This trend is driven by rising environmental awareness, concerns about climate change, and the quest for healthier lifestyles. Eco-friendly products are designed to minimize harm to the environment by using sustainable materials, reducing pollution, and promoting responsible production and consumption. In Thoothukudi district, there is an increasing availability of such products in local markets, reflecting changing consumer attitudes and expectations. The perception of eco-friendly products often hinges on factors such as their quality, safety, durability, price, and overall value for money. People may view these products as superior due to their health benefits or as costly compared to conventional alternatives. Personal values, such as prioritizing environmental protection and feeling

responsible for choosing sustainable options, have become influential in shaping consumer choices. Despite the growing momentum, not all consumers are equally aware or motivated to purchase eco-friendly products. The degree to which consumers feel guilt about environmentally harmful purchases or show willingness to pay extra for eco-friendly alternatives varies widely. Understanding these perceptions and intentions is crucial for businesses seeking to promote sustainable products and for policymakers aiming to drive responsible consumption.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kim (2023) examined the influence of environmental consciousness on purchase intention and actual buying behavior of eco-friendly products. The study revealed that environmental knowledge and perceived consumer effectiveness positively affect purchase intention, which in turn drives actual behavior. Moderating factors such as ease of purchase and eco-label credibility were found to help translate intentions into purchases, highlighting the intention-behavior gap in green consumerism. The findings suggest that improving situational factors can stimulate eco-friendly purchasing behaviors

This study investigates consumer perception and buying behavior regarding eco-friendly products. The authors found that growing environmental concerns have shifted attitudes toward eco-friendly products, and favorable perceptions significantly correlate with increased purchase intention. However, barriers such as price sensitivity and lack of awareness continue to hinder widespread adoption. The research emphasizes the importance of targeted strategies by marketers and policymakers to enhance awareness and address these challenges, thus promoting eco-friendly products in the marketplace (Journal of Business Management and Information Systems, 2024)

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Eco-friendly products offer significant environmental and health benefits, their adoption rate among consumers in Thoothukudi district remains uncertain. Several factors can act as barriers to their wider acceptance, including doubts about their quality, performance, safety, and higher price tags compared to conventional items. Additionally, while some consumers may be willing to pay more for the perceived value and societal benefits of green products, others are deterred by cost and convenience concerns. The influence of personal values, such as prioritizing environmental protection and responsibility, adds complexity to the decision-making process. In this evolving marketplace, businesses and policymakers lack clear insights into how local consumers perceive eco-friendly products and what motivates or discourages them from making sustainable choices. This study aims to address these gaps by analyzing consumer perceptions and purchase intentions specifically related to eco-friendly products in Thoothukudi district, identifying both challenges and opportunities for promoting sustainable consumption.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess consumer perception of eco-friendly products with respect to quality, safety, durability, price, and overall value in Thoothukudi district.

- To examine the impact of environmental attitudes and personal responsibility on consumer purchase intention towards eco-friendly products.

HYPOTHESIS

- ✓ **H₀₁:** There is no significant association between consumers' perception of eco-friendly products and gender
- ✓ **H₀₂:** There is no significant association between purchase intention and age group

METHODOLOGY

Designing a suitable methodology and selecting analytical tools are important for a meaningful analysis of any research problem. This section shows the choice of the study area, sample design, collection of data, and tools of analysis used in the study.

SAMPLING DESIGN

Keeping the objectives of the study in mind, the researcher constructed the questionnaire to elicit information from the customer. The questionnaire was administered to a sample of 130 respondents selected at convenience using the sampling method given in the time frame within which the researcher was meant to complete it.

COLLECTION OF DATA

Data collection is the process of obtaining information from the respondents. In the present study, both the primary data and secondary data have been used. The study is largely based on primary data. The required primary data have been collected through a well-structured questionnaire both by visiting the houses of the respondents, online reservation centre and public places. Necessary secondary data have been collected from various secondary data have been collected from various sources like newspaper, magazines and websites.

FRAME WORK OF ANALYSIS

The questionnaire schedule thus filled up is thoroughly examined to ensure accuracy, consistency and completeness. The Collected data are then edited and tabulated for analysis. The data collected from the primary source are analysed with reference to each of the objectives by applying appropriate statistical tools.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

NULL HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant association between consumers' perception of eco-friendly products and gender

ANOVA						
Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Eco-friendly products are of good quality.	Between Groups	1.760	4	.440	.641	.634

	Within Groups	85.847	125	.687		
	Total	87.608	129			
Eco-friendly products are safe and healthier to use.	Between Groups	1.044	4	.261	.333	.855
	Within Groups	97.948	125	.784		
	Total	98.992	129			
Eco-friendly products are durable/perform well.	Between Groups	3.663	4	.916	1.088	.365
	Within Groups	105.229	125	.842		
	Total	108.892	129			
Eco-friendly products are usually more expensive than conventional ones.	Between Groups	4.296	4	1.074	1.316	.267
	Within Groups	101.981	125	.816		
	Total	106.277	129			
Paying a little extra for eco-friendly products is worth it.	Between Groups	3.136	4	.784	.730	.573
	Within Groups	134.257	125	1.074		
	Total	137.392	129			
Eco-friendly products offer good overall value for money.	Between Groups	5.215	4	1.304	1.107	.356
	Within Groups	147.255	125	1.178		
	Total	152.469	129			
Environmental protection is an important personal priority.	Between Groups	1.439	4	.360	.474	.755
	Within Groups	94.838	125	.759		
	Total	96.277	129			
My purchasing decisions should minimize environmental harm.	Between Groups	5.048	4	1.262	1.503	.205
	Within Groups	104.921	125	.839		
	Total	109.969	129			
I feel responsible for choosing sustainable products.	Between Groups	4.328	4	1.082	1.187	.320
	Within Groups	113.896	125	.911		
	Total	118.223	129			

I feel guilty when I buy products that harm the environment.	Between Groups	1.353	4	.338	.428	.788
	Within Groups	98.716	125	.790		
	Total	100.069	129			

Source: Primary Data

Inference:

The results of the ANOVA test indicate that there is no significant association between consumers' perception of eco-friendly products and gender. For all the perception factors analyzed including quality, safety, durability, price, value, and environmental attitudes the significance values were greater than the commonly accepted threshold of 0.05. This means that the differences in perception scores between different gender groups are not statistically significant. The F-values were also relatively low, further confirming the lack of meaningful variation across genders. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between gender and consumer perception of eco-friendly products, cannot be rejected. This suggests that in the sample studied, male and female consumers hold similar views regarding the qualities and values of eco-friendly products, as well as their personal responsibility toward environmental protection. Gender does not appear to be a determining factor in shaping consumers' perceptions of eco-friendly products in this context.

NULL HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant association between purchase intention and age group

Independent Samples Test					
Factors	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
I intend to buy eco-friendly products in the next month.	2.205	.140	-.250	128	.803
			-.255	125.970	.799
I will choose an eco-friendly product over a conventional alternative when available.	.248	.619	1.386	128	.168
			1.417	126.235	.159
I plan to recommend eco-friendly products to others.	.491	.485	.040	128	.968
			.041	122.770	.968
I am willing to switch brands to buy eco-friendly products.	4.757	.031	.582	128	.561
			.603	127.909	.548
I often check labels to see if a product is eco-friendly.	.326	.569	.516	128	.607
			.514	116.563	.608
I have reduced my purchase of products with excessive plastic packaging.	.117	.733	-.096	128	.924
			-.096	118.434	.924

I frequently purchase eco-friendly products when shopping.	.004	.948	-.599	128	.550
			-.598	117.229	.551

Source: Primary Data

Inference:

The results of the independent samples test show that there is no significant association between purchase intention and age group for any of the factors measured. The significance values (Sig.) for all statements related to purchase intention, such as intention to buy eco-friendly products in the next month, choosing eco-friendly products over conventional alternatives, recommending eco-friendly products to others, willingness to switch brands, checking product labels, reducing purchases of products with excessive plastic packaging, and frequently buying eco-friendly products, are all greater than 0.05. This indicates that the differences in purchase intention across different age groups are not statistically significant. Although the test for willingness to switch brands to buy eco-friendly products showed a significance value of 0.031 for the Levene's test of equality of variances, the corresponding t-test significance value was 0.561, which is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant association between purchase intention and age group cannot be rejected. These findings suggest that age does not play a significant role in influencing consumers' purchase intentions toward eco-friendly products within this sample, implying similar attitudes and behaviors across age groups.

CONCLUSION

The overall conclusion of this study is that consumer perception and purchase intention towards eco-friendly products in Thoothukudi district are influenced by multiple factors including product quality, safety, durability, price, and environmental responsibility. However, the analysis reveals no significant differences in perception based on gender or purchase intention based on age group, indicating that these demographic factors do not strongly impact green consumer behavior in this context. Despite growing environmental awareness and the availability of eco-friendly products, barriers such as higher costs and convenience still inhibit widespread adoption. The findings highlight the importance of enhancing consumer education, increasing product accessibility, and developing effective marketing strategies tailored to local preferences. Encouraging sustainable consumption will require ongoing efforts from businesses and policymakers to address these challenges while reinforcing the value and benefits of eco-friendly products. This study provides valuable insights for promoting environmental consciousness and fostering a culture of responsible purchasing in Thoothukudi district.

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