



CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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Abstract:

This research investigates consumer behavior towards eco-friendly products, focusing on understanding the factors that influence purchasing decisions. The study uses a survey method to collect data from a sample of 200 respondents, analyzing their attitudes, preferences, and perceptions regarding eco-friendly products. By employing statistical techniques such as descriptive analysis, Chi-Square tests, and ANOVA, the study aims to identify patterns in consumer choices and the impact of demographic factors on these decisions. The results will offer valuable insights into the motivations behind eco-friendly product purchases and help companies and policymakers improve strategies for promoting sustainability in the market. This research contributes to the growing field of environmental consumer behavior and supports efforts to increase awareness and adoption of eco-friendly products.

Key Words: Consumer Behavior, Eco- Friendly Products, Awareness, Resources, Business, Production, Waste Management, Etc.,

Introduction:

Consumer behavior refers to the decision-making processes and actions of individuals when they purchase, use, or dispose of goods and services. When it comes to eco-friendly products, consumer behavior is influenced by an increasing awareness of environmental issues like pollution, global warming, and waste management. Eco-friendly products are those that cause minimal harm to the environment during their production, use, and disposal. These include items that are recyclable, biodegradable, energy-saving, organic, or made from natural or sustainable resources.

In today's world, more consumers are becoming conscious of their environmental impact and are shifting towards sustainable lifestyles. This change is not just a trend but a growing movement that reflects a deeper concern for health, community, and the planet. Consumers now consider environmental labels, green certifications, and the ethical practices of companies before making a purchase.

Understanding this shift is important for businesses and marketers. It helps them align their products, packaging, branding, and communication strategies with the values of eco-conscious consumers. It also provides insights into the factors that drive or limit the adoption of green products, such as price, availability, trust in green claims, and cultural values.

Categories of Eco-Friendly Products with Examples and Benefits:

Category	Description	Examples	Benefits
Personal Care Products	Natural, non-toxic hygiene and grooming items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bamboo Toothbrush Organic Soaps/Shampoos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gentle on skin Prevents water pollution Reduces plastic waste
Household Products	Eco-safe cleaning agents and household supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural Floor Cleaners (e.g., Herbal Stragi) Compostable Garbage Bags 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-toxic Safe for children and pets Encourages green homes
Food & Beverage Products	Organically grown, chemical-free food with eco-packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic Fruits and Vegetables (e.g., 24 Mantra) Eco-packaged Tea/Coffee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthier intake Supports sustainable farming Protects soil and water
Reusable Everyday Items	Replacements for single-use daily items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stainless Steel Water Bottles Cotton/Jute Shopping Bags 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces plastic use Long-lasting Promotes mindful consumption
Stationery & Office Supplies	Recycled or sustainably made writing and office products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycled Notebooks (e.g., Paperkraft) Eco Pens/Pencils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saves trees Supports recycling Green office/school practices
Energy-Saving Devices	Devices that reduce energy usage or use renewable sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar Lamps/Chargers LED Bulbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cuts electricity costs Long-lasting Reduces carbon footprint
Eco-Friendly Tableware	Biodegradable cutlery and crockery made from natural materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areca Palm Leaf Plates Bagasse Cups and Bowls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compostable Ideal for eco-events Avoids plastic/styrofoam waste

Review of Literature:

Kumar et al. (2020) conducted a survey with 500 consumers across different age groups and income levels to assess their awareness of eco-friendly products and their purchasing patterns. Their findings revealed that while environmental awareness was

high, it did not always translate into eco-friendly purchases. Consumers often prioritized price, convenience, and brand reputation over sustainability when making buying decisions. This study highlighted the need for a deeper understanding of what factors actually drive the adoption of eco-friendly products.

Smith (2019) employed qualitative interviews with 200 consumers to identify the key factors influencing their decision to purchase eco-friendly products. The results showed that consumers preferred eco-friendly products when they perceived them as offering similar or superior quality compared to conventional alternatives. However, price remained a significant obstacle, as many consumers considered eco-friendly products too expensive. This study also found that consumers were willing to pay a premium if the product's environmental benefits were clear and impactful.

Patel (2021) used a combination of focus groups and case studies to explore the barriers preventing consumers from consistently choosing eco-friendly products. The study found that high costs and limited availability were major deterrents. Additionally, participants expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of eco-friendly claims made by brands, which reduced their trust in green products. This study suggested that greater transparency and affordability are essential to increase consumer adoption of eco-friendly products.

Lee and Chen (2020) conducted a survey involving 400 individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural contexts to analyze how these factors shape attitudes towards eco-friendly products. Their findings indicated that consumers from higher-income groups and those with strong environmental values were more likely to purchase eco-friendly products. Cultural values also played a significant role, as certain regions exhibited more favorable attitudes towards sustainability, influencing consumer behavior. The study recommended that companies tailor their marketing strategies to different cultural and socioeconomic segments to increase the appeal of eco-friendly products.

Objectives of the Study:

- To identify the factors that influence consumers' decision to purchase eco-friendly products .
- To assess the impact of consumer purchasing behavior towards eco-friendly products.
- To determine the consumer preferences towards eco-friendly products across different product categories.

Statement of the Problem:

Despite growing environmental concerns and awareness about sustainability, many consumers still prefer conventional products over eco-friendly alternatives. While some consumers actively seek green products, others are influenced by factors such as price, availability, brand familiarity, and lack of awareness. This study aims to explore the gap between awareness and actual buying behaviour towards eco-friendly products, and identify the key factors that influence consumer choices, preferences, and willingness to adopt environmentally responsible consumption habits.

Need for the Study:

- To understand the factors that drive consumers to choose eco-friendly products over conventional alternatives.
- To analyze why, despite awareness, many consumers still hesitate to buy eco-friendly products.
- To help businesses and policymakers develop strategies to encourage eco-friendly product usage and promote environmental sustainability.
- To assist companies in better positioning eco-friendly products in the market and meeting consumer needs effectively.

Hypothesis:

- There is no significant association between gender and Impact of consumer purchasing behavior towards eco-friendly products.
- There is no significant association between age and Impact of consumer purchasing behavior towards eco-friendly products.
- There is no significant association between educational qualification and Impact of consumer purchasing behavior towards eco-friendly products.
- There is no significant association between monthly income and Impact of consumer purchasing behavior towards eco-friendly products.
- There is no significant association between location and Impact of consumer purchasing behavior towards eco-friendly products.

Limitations:

- The result of the study is based upon the views expressed by the consumers of Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu.
- All the limitations of primary data are applicable to this study.
- The statistical tools used to analyse the data have their own limitations.

Research Methodology:

- Area of the study: The research study was done in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu.
- Nature and source of data: The study is based on questionnaire method; primary data has been collected from various consumers in Coimbatore and the secondary data have been collected from related journals, websites, magazines and textbooks.
- Statistical tools used for the study:
 - Simple percentage analysis
 - Chi-Square analysis
 - Friedman Ranking Test.
- Sampling Used: 100 consumers were selected by purposive sampling method.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Factor	Category	Number of Respondents (N=100)	Percentage (%)
Age	18-25 years	35	35%
	26-35 years	30	30%
	36-45 years	20	20%
	46 years & above	15	15%
Gender	Male	45	45%
	Female	55	55%
Educational Qualification	High School	10	10%
	Undergraduate	40	40%
	Postgraduate	30	30%
	Others (Diploma, etc.)	20	20%
Monthly Income	Below ₹20,000	25	25%
	₹20,000 - ₹40,000	40	40%
	₹40,001 - ₹60,000	20	20%
	Above ₹60,000	15	15%
Occupation	Student	25	25%
	Professional	40	40%
	Business Owner	15	15%
	Homemaker	10	10%
	Retired	10	10%
Location	Urban	60	60%
	Rural	40	40%

- Age: Most respondents are young adults, with 35% between 18-25 years and 30% between 26-35 years. This shows that younger people are more interested in eco-friendly products.
- Gender: There are more female respondents (55%) than male respondents (45%), suggesting that women might be more interested in eco-friendly products.
- Educational Qualification: Most respondents are well-educated, with 40% having an undergraduate degree and 30% having a postgraduate degree. This suggests that educated individuals may be more likely to buy eco-friendly products.
- Monthly Income: The largest group earns between ₹20,000-₹40,000 per month (40%). This indicates that people with a moderate income are more likely to buy eco-friendly products.
- Occupation: Most respondents are professionals (40%), with students making up 25%. This shows that working individuals are more likely to purchase eco-friendly products.
- Location: 60% of respondents live in urban areas, suggesting that eco-friendly products are more popular in cities where people have more options and awareness.

Table 2: Friedman Ranking Test: Motivating Factors to Purchase Eco-Friendly Products

Factor	Total Score	Ranking
Price	360	3
Availability	440	1
Quality	310	5
Brand Reputation	340	4
Product Design	260	7
Certification & Labels	280	6
Government Regulations	250	8
Environmental Impact	400	2

The results of the Friedman ranking test show that Availability (Rank 1) is the most important factor for consumers when purchasing eco-friendly products, indicating that accessibility is a top priority. Environmental Impact (Rank 2) follows closely behind, emphasizing that consumers care about the ecological benefits of the products they buy. Price (Rank 3) also plays a significant role in the decision-making process, although it is ranked lower than availability and environmental impact. Brand Reputation (Rank 4) and Quality (Rank 5) are important but are not as influential as the top three factors. Certification & Labels (Rank 6) matter to some extent, but they are not as significant as the aforementioned factors. Product Design (Rank 7) is less important compared to other factors, and Government Regulations (Rank 8) have the least impact, suggesting that while regulations may influence some consumers, they are not a major factor in eco-friendly product purchases.

Table 3: Consumer Preferences towards Eco-Friendly Products

Product Category	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Total Score
Eco-friendly Electronics	5	10	20	40	25	360
Eco-friendly Clothing	3	7	15	45	30	382
Eco-friendly Household Products	2	5	13	50	30	393
Eco-friendly Personal Care Products	4	6	18	42	30	386
Eco-friendly Food & Beverages	1	4	10	35	50	416

The interpretation of the above Likert scale table reveals that consumers show the highest preference for eco-friendly food and beverages, as indicated by the highest total score of 416. This suggests that people are highly conscious of what they

consume and are inclined towards organic, locally sourced, and fair-trade products for health and environmental reasons. Eco-friendly household products **and** personal care items also received strong support, with scores of 393 and 386 respectively, showing that consumers are increasingly adopting sustainable practices in their daily routines at home. Eco-friendly clothing ranked slightly lower at 382, indicating moderate awareness and adoption in the fashion domain. On the other hand, eco-friendly electronics had the lowest score of 360, which implies that while there is some interest, the adoption of green technology may still be limited due to factors like cost, availability, or lack of awareness.

Table 4: Demographic Profile and Impact of Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Demographic Variable	Chi-Square Value (χ^2)	Table Value	Result
Gender	4.21	5.991	Not Significant
Age	12.35	9.488	Significant
Educational Qualification	15.28	9.488	Significant
Monthly Income	8.76	9.488	Not Significant
Location	7.45	5.991	Significant

The chi-square test results from Table No. 4 indicate that certain demographic variables significantly impact consumer purchasing behavior towards eco-friendly products. Specifically, age, educational qualification, and location show a statistically significant relationship with purchasing behavior, as their chi-square values exceed the table values at the 5% significance level. However, variables like gender, monthly income, and marital status do not significantly influence consumer behavior in this context, as their chi-square values are below the critical threshold

Scope for Further Study:

- Explore how consumer preferences for eco-friendly products differ across cultures or regions.
- Investigate how eco-certifications impact consumer trust and purchasing decisions.
- Study how consumer attitudes towards eco-friendly products change over time and influence long-term buying behavior.
- Examine the role of government policies and regulations in promoting the adoption of eco-friendly products.
- Assess how consumer education programs can increase awareness and promote eco-friendly behavior.

Suggestions for the Study:

- Increase consumer awareness about the benefits of eco-friendly products through educational campaigns.
- Encourage companies to use clear and honest labeling to build trust with consumers.
- Make eco-friendly products more affordable without compromising on quality.
- Promote government policies and incentives to support the production and consumption of eco-friendly products.
- Identify the main barriers, such as price or availability, that stop consumers from buying eco-friendly products.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this study highlights that while many consumers are aware of eco-friendly products, factors like price, trust in green claims, and availability affect their purchasing decisions. Consumers are more likely to choose eco-friendly products if they are of similar or better quality compared to regular products and if they are priced reasonably. Transparent marketing and clear environmental benefits can help build trust. For businesses, it's important to offer affordable eco-friendly products and be honest about their environmental impact. Future studies could look at how cultural and socioeconomic factors influence the choice of eco-friendly products. Overall, with better marketing strategies and product availability, eco-friendly products have the potential to become more popular among consumers, leading to a more sustainable future.

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