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Factors Driving the Buying Behavior of Eco-friendly Products among Generation Z

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Abstract:

Eco-friendly products are environmentally friendly products that have been designed, produced and marketed with a focus on minimizing the impact on the environment. The availability of eco-friendly product has increased significantly in recent years and many companies are offering sustainable alternatives to traditional products. As a result, there is a growing market for eco-friendly products and the companies can benefit from developing and marketing sustainable products. The study aims to identify the sources of awareness and adoption of eco-friendly products and the factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers. The required data for the study was collected through a structured questionnaire from 130 eco-friendly product consumers in Coimbatore city. The statistical tools adopted for the study includes percentage analysis and Chi-square analysis. The results of the study reveals that majority of the respondents become aware through social media. More consumers are aware of the environmental impact of their purchasing choices and are willing to pay more for eco-friendly products. Availability and Cost are still major factors that influence consumers purchasing behaviour. The hypothesis result shows that there is a significant association between age of the respondents and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers at 1 % level and online advertisement at 5% level. Further, the study concluded that business should prioritize making their eco-friendly products more widely available to consumers.

Keywords: Eco-friendly Products, Buying Behavior, Sustainability and Green Economy

Introduction:

Sustainable eco-friendly economy is the need of time, and eco-friendly products can play a decisive role in this goal. Low consumption of eco-friendly products is a serious concern of researchers and policymakers (Mustafa, et. al., 2022). Eco-friendly product is environmentally friendly products that have been designed, produced and marketed with a focus on minimizing their

impact on the environment throughout their life cycle. Eco-friendly products are usually identified by having two basic goals – reducing waste and maximizing resource efficiency. Consumers are more aware of the severity of environmental problems, which has led to an increase in their desire to buy environmentally friendly services and products from businesses that engage in environmentally friendly practices. Environmental protection is critical for consumers to act that not harm the environment. Environmental protection also manifests as consumers' emotionally involved to protect the environment by adopting environmentally friendly-based decisions. The availability of eco-friendly product has increased significantly in recent years and many companies are offering sustainable alternatives to traditional products. As a result, there is a growing market for eco-friendly products and the companies can benefit from developing and marketing sustainable products. The buying behaviour of the consumers depends on the beliefs and the consciousness towards environmental concerns. It has positive effects on the environment as it is less toxic, biodegradable, recyclable, energy efficient and renewable. It is also suggested that price of the eco-friendly products should be reduced to an extent which is affordable to all the consumers.

Scope of the Study:

The study was taken up to understand the awareness, factors driving the buying behavior and the customer satisfaction towards eco-friendly products. The study was carried out with reference to Coimbatore City. This study mainly focuses on Generation Z, as they are the future of India.

Research Questions of the Study:

- What is the level of awareness and purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products among Generation Z?
- Which factors are driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among Generation Z?
- What is the level of satisfaction towards eco-friendly products among Generation Z?

Research Objectives of the Study:

- To study the awareness and purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products among Generation Z.
- To identify the factors driving the buying behaviour of eco-friendly products among Generation Z.
- To analyse the customer satisfaction towards eco-friendly products among Generation Z

Hypotheses of the Study:

H₀₁: There is a significant association between age of the respondents and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumer.

H₀₂: There is a significant association between monthly income of the respondents and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumer.

Research Methodology:

This research study attempts to examine the factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among Generation Z. To achieve these objectives a suitable research methodology is adopted. In Coimbatore City, most of them are aware of eco-friendly products and their benefits. Hence, Coimbatore City was selected as the area of research study. A purposive sampling method was used to select the sample respondents. The required data was collected from Generation Z, i.e, age group between 11 to 26. Accordingly, sample of 130 respondents was selected. The research study was conducted during September, 2023. The primary data was collected through questionnaire from the sample respondents about their demographic profile, sources of awareness and adoption of eco-friendly products, factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products and level of satisfaction on using eco-friendly products. The frame work of the methodology includes Percentage Analysis and Chi-Square analysis.

Limitations of the study:

- o This Study covers 130 respondents in Coimbatore City only due to time constraint
- o The result is based on the information given by the individuals, so it may be biased.

Analysis and Interpretation:

The analysis of the study is presented under the following sections.

- I. Socio-economic profile of the respondents
- II. Sources of awareness and adoption of eco-friendly products
- III. Factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products
- IV. Level of satisfaction on using eco-friendly products.

I. Socio economic profile of respondents

Table 1 Socio-economic profile of respondents

S. No	Particulars	Number	Percentage (%)
1	Gender Male	54	41.5
	Female	76	58.5
2	Age between 11-16	18	13.8
	17 – 21	43	33.1
	22 – 26	69	53.1
3	Education Qualification		
	+ 2	18	14.2
	Under graduate	98	75.3
	Post graduate	12	09.0
	Professionals	2	01.5

4	Monthly Income		
	20,000 – 30,000	87	66.9
	30,001 – 40,000	32	24.6
	40,001 – 50,000	09	07.0
	Above 50,000	02	01.5

Source : Primary Data

It is inferred from the table that majority of the sample are women (59%) compared to men (41%). It is understood that majority (53%) of the sample are from the age group of 22 – 26 years. The majority (75%) of the respondents are under graduate. Only (14%) of them are +2. This table reveals that salaried people (66%) are from the income group Rs.20,000 to Rs.30,000. The socio economic profile of the sample users shows that most (86%) of them are degree holders, (91%) are having annual income between Rs.20,000 – 40,000.

II. Awareness and Adoption of eco-friendly products among Generation Z

Table 2 Awareness and Adoption of eco-friendly products among Generation Z

Particulars	No of respondents (n=130)	Percentage (in %)	Cumulative Percentage (in %)
Friends	32	25	25
Social media	46	35	60
Family	22	17	77
Newspaper	7	5	82
Advertisement	23	18	100

Source: Primary data

Table 2 shows the results of sources of awareness of eco-friendly products among consumers. Majority 35 percentage of the respondents become aware through social media as it played a significant role in raising awareness about environmental issues, health benefits etc.. 25 percentage of the respondents become aware through friends, followed by 18 percentage through advertisement and 17 percentage of the respondents become aware through family. Only 5 percentage of the respondents become aware through newspaper due to decrease in number of print media readers.

III. Factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products

Table 3 Factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among Generation Z

Particulars	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Dis-agree	
	No	(%)	No	(%)	No	(%)	No	(%)	No	(%)

Re- Usable	45	35	47	36	14	11	11	8	13	10
Health Concern	42	35	43	33	21	16	12	9	12	9
Trust in Products	43	33	40	31	17	13	11	8	19	15
Energy Efficiency	48	37	43	33	11	8	10	8	18	14
Quality of the Product	44	34	47	36	12	9	7	6	20	15
Online Advertisement	36	28	44	34	23	18	17	13	10	7
Easy Availability	40	31	44	34	19	15	12	9	15	11

Source : Primary Data

Table 3 shows the results of factors driving the buying behaviour of eco-friendly products among consumers. Majority 37 percentage of the respondents are strongly agreed that energy efficiency factor determining the buying behaviour as consumers are interested in products that are energy-efficient and can help them save on their energy, followed by 36 percentage of the respondents are agreed that re-usable and 35 percentage of the respondents are agreed that health concern factor influenced the consumer buying behaviour. 34 percentage of the respondents are agreed that easy availability factor influenced the consumers buying behaviour. 33 percentage of the respondents are strongly agreed that trust in eco-friendly products factor influenced the buying behaviour of the consumers. Only 28 percentage of the respondents are strongly agreed with online advertisement as traditional methods of advertisement and promotion may still hold more sway over consumers.

IV. Level of satisfaction on using eco-friendly products.

Table 4 Level of satisfaction on using eco-friendly products among Generation Z

Particulars	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Eco-friendly products are toxic free	69	53	42	32	14	11	3	2	2	2
Eco-friendly products have no side effects	60	46	49	38	18	14	2	1	1	1
Eco-friendly products are eco-Friendly	51	39	35	27	34	26	7	6	3	2
Eco-friendly products are high in quality	52	40	41	31	19	15	14	11	4	3
Eco-friendly products are sustainable	55	42	40	31	18	14	7	5	10	8
Eco-friendly products are safe	59	45	37	28	19	15	11	9	4	3

Eco-friendly products leads to	72	55	25	19	26	20	6	5	1	1
Healthier life style										

Source: Primary data

Table 4 shows the results of level of satisfaction on using eco-friendly products among consumers. Majority 55 percentage of the respondents are strongly agreed that using eco-friendly products leads to a healthier lifestyle followed by 53 percentage of the respondents strongly agreed that eco-friendly products are toxic-free as consumers are highly concerned about the safety of the products they use. 46 percentage of the respondents are strongly agreed that eco-friendly products have no side effects. 45 percentage of the respondents are strongly agreed that eco-friendly products are safe because safety is a top priority for consumers when it comes to choosing products and 42 percentage of the respondents are agreed eco-friendly products are sustainable.

Results of Hypotheses:

H₀₁ : There is a significant association between age of the respondents and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers.

Table 5 Age of the respondents and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers.

Particulars	Chi – Square Value	P-Value	Result
Energy Efficiency	39.165	0.01	Significant
Online Advertisement	28.551	0.05	Significant
Re Usable	33.142	0.01	Significant
Trust in eco-friendly products	31.974	0.01	Significant
Quality of the products	35.783	0.01	Significant

Source : Primary Data

Level of significance :5%

Table 5 reveals the association between age of the respondent and the major factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers. The P-Value of age of the respondents and energy efficiency, re-usable, trust in eco-friendly products, quality of the product is highly satisfied at 1 percent level of significant. There is a significance association between age and factors determining the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers. Only online advertisement reported the P-Value at 0.05. The value is below 5% level of significant. There is a significance association between age and online advertisement. Hence, Null hypothesis is rejected, Alternative hypothesis is accepted. There is a significance association between age and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers.

H₀₂ : There is a significant association between monthly income of the respondents and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers.

Table 6 Monthly income of the respondents and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers.

Particulars	Chi – Square Value	P-Value	Result
Energy Efficiency	42.680	0.01	Significant
Online Advertisement	39.121	0.01	Significant
Re Usable	43.210	0.01	Significant
Trust in eco-friendly products	35.465	0.01	Significant
Quality of the products	32.420	0.01	Significant

Source: Primary Data

Level of significance: 5%

Table 6 reveals the association between monthly income and the major factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers. The P-Value of age of the consumers and Energy efficiency, online advertisement, re-usable, trust in eco-friendly products, quality of the product is highly significant at 1 percent level. Hence, Null hypothesis is rejected, Alternative hypothesis is accepted. There is a significance association between monthly income and factors driving the buying behavior of eco-friendly products among consumers.

Suggestions:

- Have to increase awareness about eco-friendly products among rural consumers and make these products easily available in rural areas also.
- Consumers should deny receiving plastic bags from the retailers or any other marketers.

Conclusion:

Consumers have become increasingly aware of the importance of sustainability, which is leading companies to find creative and innovative ways to reduce their environmental footprint. The present study reveals that there is a positive trend in the adoption and usage of eco-friendly products among consumers, with an increasing preference for eco-friendly and sustainable products. Companies can use social media and online stores to effectively advertise and sell their eco-friendly products to the upcoming generation, who are more aware of environmental issues. The paper was mainly focused to study the buying behavior of eco-friendly products of Generation Z. It is evident that the factors driving the buying behavior towards eco-friendly products is highly associated with age and monthly income of the consumers.

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