

Consumers Purchase Intention towards Eco-Friendly Products Based On Their Environmental Attitude

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Abstract

The product preference which reflects consumer needs has grown with high-level sensibility as well as value consumption through product information. There is increased public interest in artificial leather fashion products as environmentally friendly and sustainable goods due to the desire to protect nature and animals. There are various kinds of fashion items included these market tendencies as shown through constant product development and new merchandising strategies. Corporations and consumers are especially interested in artificial leather fashion products as shown through ongoing eco-consciousness studies. This paper examined how eco-friendly consciousness and consumer attitudes influence purchase intentions as well as investigated moderating effects between consciousness and purchase intentions.

The Eco-Friendly Product Consumer

There is growing interest among the consumers all over the world for protection of the environment. The eco-friendly product consumers are the main motivating force behind the eco-friendly product marketing process. It is their concern for environment and their own well being that drives demand for eco-friendly products, which in turn encourages improvements in the environmental performance of many products and companies. Thus, for a marketer it is important to identify the types of eco-friendly product consumers. Although no consumer product has a zero impact on the environment, in business, the terms —eco-friendly product and —environmental product|| are used commonly to describe those products that strive to protect or enhance the natural environment by conserving energy and/or resources and reducing or eliminating use of toxic agents, pollution, and waste. Worldwide evidence indicates people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behavior and there is growing awareness among the consumers all over the world regarding protection of the environment where they live. People do want to bequeath a clean earth to their offspring.

Various studies by environmentalists indicate that people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behavior pattern so as to be less hostile towards it. Research reveals that increasing number of the consumers, both individual and industrial, are asking for environment friendly products. Most of them feel that environment-friendly products are safe to use. As a result, eco-friendly product marketing has emerged, which aims at marketing sustainable and socially responsible products and services profitably but without having any adverse effect on the environment. Now is the era of recyclable, non-toxic and environment friendly goods. This has become the new mantra for marketers to satisfy the needs of consumers and earn better profits in an eco-friendly product way. It includes a broad range of activities like product modification, changing the production process, modified advertising, change in packaging, etc., aimed at reducing the detrimental impact of products and their consumption and disposal on the environment.

Companies all over the world are striving to reduce the impact of products and services on the climate and other environmental parameters. Marketers are taking the cue and are going eco-friendly product. Eco-friendly product marketer can attract customers on the basis of performance, money savings, health and convenience, or just plain environmental friendliness, so as to target a wide range of eco-friendly product consumers. The eco-friendly product consumers are the driving forces behind the eco-friendly product marketing process. It is they who drive consumer demand, which in turn encourages improvements in the environmental performance of many products and companies. Thus, for a marketer it is important to identify the types of eco-friendly product consumers.

Environment Conscious Attitude of Consumers

It is important for consumers to evolve lifestyle and behavioral patterns in order to resolve environmental problems; subsequently, an increased consumer eco-consciousness results in a more positive towards eco-conscious activities (Lee, 2003). Eco-consciousness means that a consumer is

more cognizant about environmental problems and follows a more environmentally friendly lifestyle that results in mitigated environmental problems in the purchase, use, or disposal of goods (Ahn & Park, 1998). This reduction in waste also entails reduced energy consumption to help preserve the natural environment.

These behavioral patterns produce positive results in the preservation of nature through a lifestyle that is harmonized with nature and are considered behavior that improves the quality of life in consumers (Min & Rhee, 1999; Cha, 2000). Eco-conscious behavior is an environmentally friendly consumption philosophy that recognizes the importance of the relationship between society and the environment as well as considers individual desires and the well-being of society as a whole. These behavioral patterns arise throughout the purchase of, use and disposal of goods (Park & Rhee, 1995). Recycling is found to be closely related to pro-social behavior such as altruism and social contribution (Hopper & Nielsen, 1991).

A study by Park and Oh (2005) suggests eco-conscious behavior is categorized as resource conservation, public awareness, environmental preservation and recycling consciousness with significant effects on apparel recycling attitude and behavior. Park and Rhee (1995) argued that eco-conscious behavior was positively affected by the influence of reference groups, environmental interest, consumer efficiency, public awareness, income level, consumer awareness, and exposure to environmental education.

Kim (1995) studies on eco-conscious consumer behavior and clothing purchasing type showed that there were purchase behavior differences between high eco-consciousness and low eco-consciousness groups and that the high eco-consciousness group was more active in recycling clothes.

A study by Shim (1995) on recycling tendencies in the case of clothes disposal found that females recycled more clothing than males. Continuous research and study on eco-conscious behavior helps to understand consumer behavior and emphasizes it as the most important artificial leather fashion item purchasing behavior variable; therefore, previous studies searched for eco-conscious behavior, resource conservation, and recycling consciousness.

Suggestions to Improve the Natural Environment

- Using eco-friendly products
- Regular vehicular pollution check-ups
- Avoid using plastic
- Gather and spread environmental information
- Tree plantation
- Enforcement of law
- Water harvesting
- Proper treatment and disposal of industrial and household waste
- Improve public transport system
- NGO should come forward for environmental protection
- Recycling scrap

Challenges Ahead For Eco-Friendly Products

Many of the early products designed to be environmentally responsible, such as electric cars and recycled paper, did not meet the basic expectations of consumers. Rightly or wrongly, these early disappointments have made it tougher to convince today's consumers that green products work as well as those that they are intended to replace, or are worth higher prices.

1. Spread awareness and advantages of eco-friendly products. Majority of the people are not even aware of green products and their uses.

2. Convince customers about long term cost effectiveness of eco-friendly products First, consumers have to be aware that a eco-friendly product is available before they purchase it. Yet many of the customers don't even know about the availability of green alternatives in many product

categories. Next, consumers must be convinced that a product will achieve the objective for which it is being purchased. But many believe that green products are of lower quality than their more traditional “conventional” counterparts. Consumers must then come to a decision whether a product lives up to its green reputation.

Conclusion

Since society becomes more anxious with the natural environment, businesses have started to adjust their behavior in an attempt to address society's "new" concerns. Some businesses have been quick to accept concepts like environmental management systems and waste minimization, and have integrated environmental issues into all organizational activities. People are conscious about the less environment friendly products due to their own welfare, which is why this issue is a very modern topic in India. This paper tries to unearth consumer attitudes and perceptions towards eco- friendly products and their willingness to pay on green products.

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