



CONSUMER AWARENESS TOWARDS GREEN MARKETING

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ABSTRACT

In current business scenario environmental issues plays an important role in business. In most of the countries government is concerned about the environmental problems. In today's business environmentally sustainable development has become a key issue. Thus Green marketing is one of the strategies a firm can adopt. Green Marketing refers to the process of selling products and /or services based on their environmental benefits. Such a product or service should be eco-friendly in itself or produced in an eco-friendly way. In today's environmentally conscious world the word "Green" has become a buzz word. Green causes are increasingly popular with public making green marketing good for public relations and sales. Green Marketing has been defined by AMA as "The study of the positive and negative aspects of marketing activities on pollution, energy depletion and non-energy resource depletion". However one of the basic assumptions of green marketing is that potential consumers would be willing to pay more for a "green" product. The present paper makes an attempt to analyse the awareness and willingness of the consumer to buy green products.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Pollution, Sustainable development.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Global warming, carbon credits, ozone depletion, environmental hazards, environment impact assessment have all become common terminology in the 21st century and it is an indication of environmentally conscious society. Society becomes more concerned about natural environment when ill effects of environmental degradation are experienced by the society. One of the reasons for this degradation is problems that arise out of mass production, mass consumption and mass marketing of environmentally irresponsible products. As a result business houses have begun to modify their behavior in an attempt to address these kinds of 'new' concerns of the society. Conventional marketing involves selling products and services that satisfy consumer needs at affordable prices but green marketing has the additional challenge of defining 'what is green' and developing and selling products that the consumer will like.

Green marketing also known as environmental marketing involves a range of activities including product modification changes in production process, changes and modifications in packaging as well as modifying advertising. As defined by Tapan K. Panda "Green or Environmental Marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy human needs or wants such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs with minimal detrimental impact on natural environment". It is imperative that when we talk and think about green products; to be really 'green' they should claim that they are 'less environmentally harmful' rather than environmentally friendly. Thus environmental marketing should look at minimizing environmental impacts. Environmentally friendly products balance environmental compatibility with



performance, affordability and convenience. They are typically durable, recyclable, and non-toxic and should be made out of materials which are either decomposable or recyclable. These products should have minimum packaging and embody low environmental energy impact. However there is very little data available on the consumer base in India or the willingness and ability of the consumer to pay extra for green products. The present paper is an attempt to study the consumer awareness of people in the city of Thiruvananthapuram.

1.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study by Welling & Anupama S Chavan (2010) analyses Green marketing is not going to be an easy concept. The firm has to plan and then carry out research to find out how feasible it is going to be. Green marketing has to evolve since it is still at its infancy stage. Adoption of Green marketing may not be easy in the short run, but in the long run it will definitely have a positive impact on the firm.

The study by Dharmendra Mehta (2011) indicated that Indians are not only conscious about their environment but also health conscious as well. This paradigm shift in attitude has made Indian consumers attractive to green marketers. It has made the population more responsive and aware towards green marketing appeals.

The study by Project Guru (2010) indicated that India is still at nascent stage in using eco-friendly products. It is the responsibility of the individuals, organizations and Government to take further steps to increase the awareness on benefits of eco- friendly products

The study by Vinay et al (2015) determined that the concept of green marketing has been around at least since the first earth day in 1970. But the idea did not catch on till 1980's, when rising public interest in the environment led to a demand for more green products and services. The companies like Wipro, HCL, TNPL, IBM, ONGC etc., implemented the concept of green marketing in their organization.

The study by Saranya (2017) analyses that, Green Marketing mainly focuses on promoting the consumption of green products. Marketers also have the responsibility to make the consumers understand the need for and benefits of green products than non-green products.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the awareness of consumers with respect to green marketing.
2. To find the willingness of the consumers to pay more for green products.
3. To find out awareness about eco- friendly or green products.
4. To analyse relationship between education and income with awareness of green products.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As the concept of "GREEN" was introduced in the year 1975 but got more importance and more weightage in the decade of 1980 and 1990. The awareness and buying decisions of green product customers are affected by different factors. The present study is assessing the different attribute wise influence on green market awareness and green product buying decisions.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS:

1. Consumers are aware about green marketing.
2. Consumers are willing to pay more for eco-friendly products.

1.6 METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

Both primary data and secondary data have been used for the research paper.

1. Primary Data

This includes questionnaire survey of people from the study area.

2. Secondary Data

Various published articles from journals, books, internet websites.

1.7 SAMPLE DESIGN

The present study has been conducted for the city of Thiruvananthapuram. The researchers have only considered the middle class and higher middle class as our respondents. Due to limitations of time and the questionnaires were collected through convenient sampling method. A total of 100 cases were considered for the analysis.

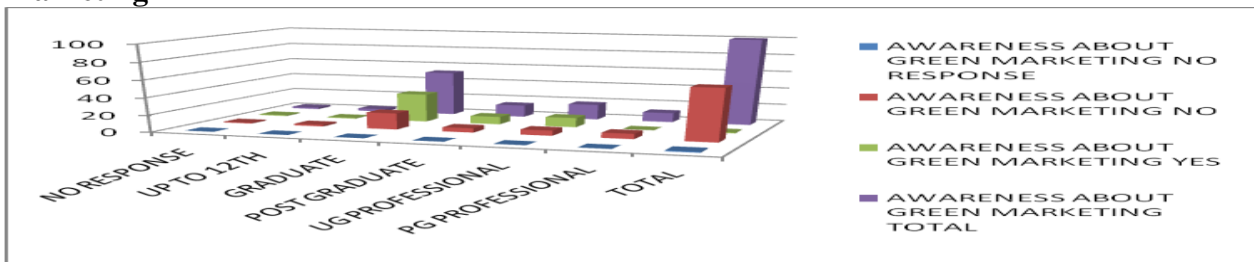
1.8 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis of the data has been done with the use of SPSS software. Cross tabulation of the variable of green marketing was done with the variables- educational qualifications, occupation and income. Similarly cross tabulation was also done for willingness to buy expensive eco-friendly products, and preference for eco-friendly. The results and interpretation is as follows:

Table No. 1 Educational Qualification and Awareness About Green Marketing

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	AWARENESS ABOUT GREEN MARKETING						TOTAL
	NO RESPONSE		NO		YES		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
NO RESPONSE	0	0	1	50	1	50	2
UP TO 12TH	0	0	2	66.7	1	33.3	3
GRADUATE	0	0	19	36.5	33	63.5	52
POST GRADUATE	0	0	5	35.7	9	64.3	14
UG PROFESSIONAL	0	1	6	38.9	11	61.1	18
PG PROFESSIONAL	0	0	6	54.5	0	0	11
TOTAL	1		60		1		100

Graph No. 1 Relationship between Educational Categories and Awareness about Green Marketing



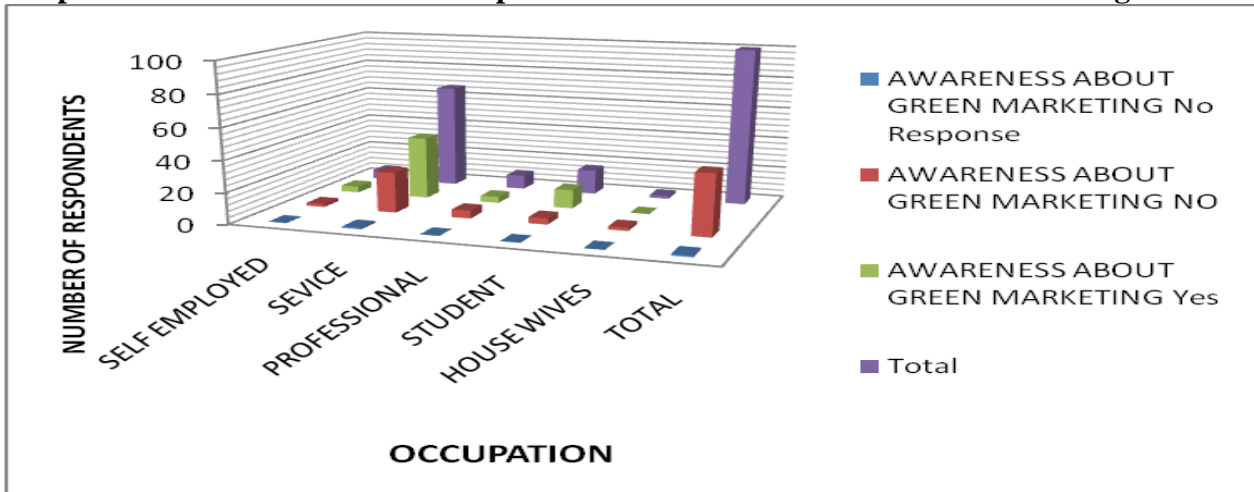
It is clear from the above table that more consumers are aware about green marketing. This trend is visible across all categories of educational level. From the different categories of educational strata graduates and post graduates show an awareness level of 63.5% and 64.3% respectively. While among the professionals the awareness for graduates and post graduates is 61.1% and 45.5% respectively. Over all 60% of the respondents were aware of the concept of green marketing. Only those consumers who have very low level of education are unaware about the concept of green marketing.

Table No. 2 Occupation and Awareness about Green Marketing

	AWARENESS ABOUT GREEN MARKETING	Total
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OCCUPATION	No Response		NO		Yes		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
SELF EMPLOYED	0	0	2	20	4	80	6
SEVICE	1	1.5	26	38.80	40	59.70	67
PROFESSIONAL	0	0	5	55.55	4	44.44	9
STUDENT	0	0	4	25	12	75	16
HOUSE WIVES	0	0	2	100	0	0	2
TOTAL	1		39		60		100

Graph No. 2 Relation between Occupation and Awareness about Green Marketing

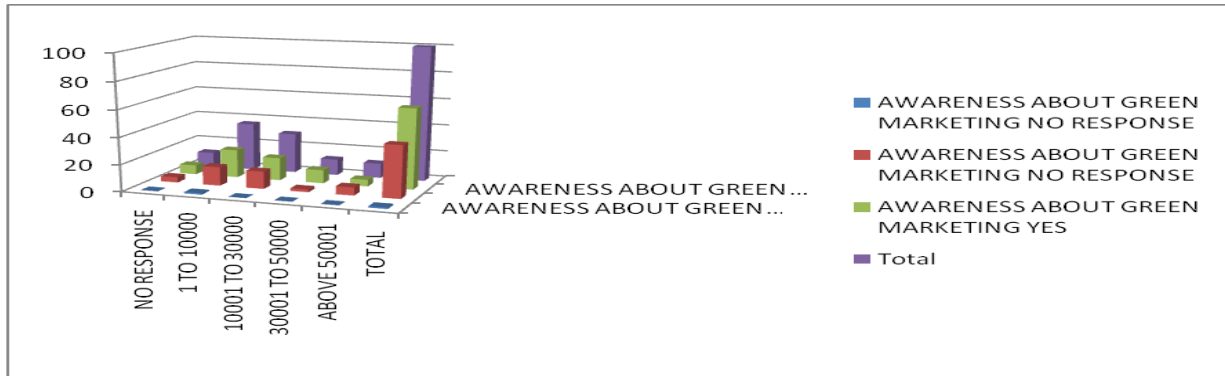


It is evident from the above table that respondents belonging to service category show highest awareness i.e., 59.70% regarding awareness about green marketing. Similarly among students the awareness levels are exceptionally high – 75%.

Table No. 3 Income and Awareness about Green Marketing

INCOME	AWARENESS ABOUT GREEN MARKETING						Total
	NO RESPONSE		YES				
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
NO RESPONSE	0	0	4	36.36	7	63.52	11
1 TO 10000	1	2.77	14	38.33	21	58.33	36
10001 TO 30000	0	0	13	43.33	17	56.66	30
30001 TO 50000	0	0	2	16.67	10	83.33	12
ABOVE 50001	0	0	6	54.55	5	45.45	11
TOTAL	1		39		60		100

Graph No. 3 Relation between Income and Awareness about Green Marketing



Again it is evident that in various income categories the trend shows overall awareness of green products across the class barriers. Highest levels of awareness are 83.33% in the category 30,000 – 50,000. The category of 0 – 10,000 shows an awareness of 63.52%.

Table No. 4 Educational Qualification and willingness to buy Expensive Eco-friendly Products

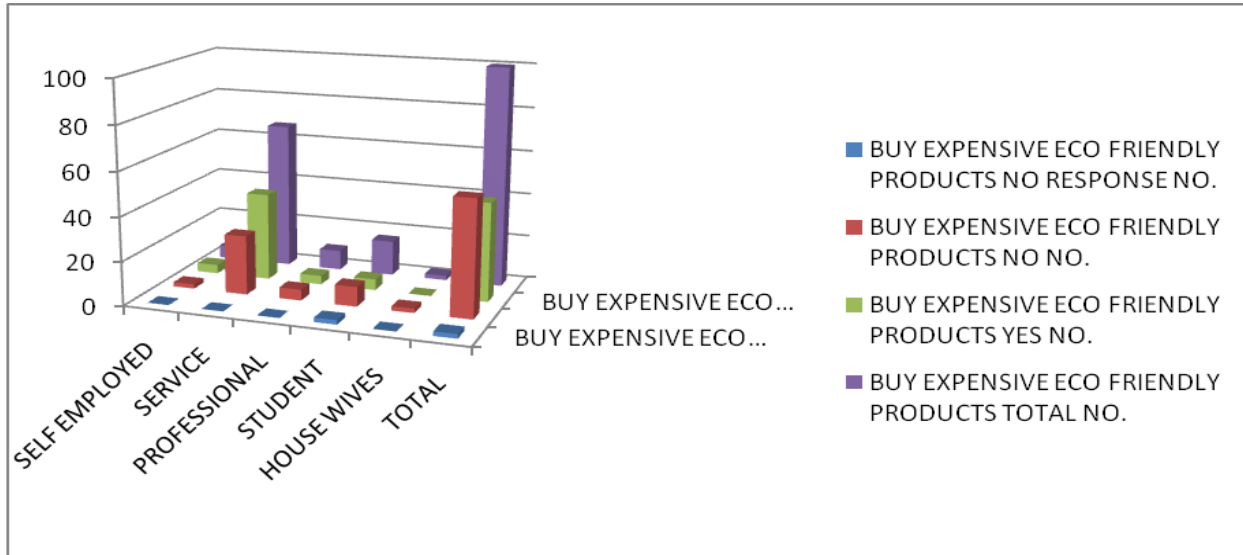
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	BUY EXPENSIVE ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS						TOTAL
	NO RESPONSE		NO		YES		
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	
NO RESPONSE	0	0	0	100.	2	0	2
UP TO 12TH	2	0	2	33.33	1	66.67	3
GRADUATE	0	0	25	50.00	25	50.00	52
POST GRADUATE	0	0	3	21.42	11	78.58	14
UG PROFESSIONAL	0	0	8	44.45	10	55.55	18
PG PROFESSIONAL	0	0	7	63.64	4	36.36	11
TOTAL	2		53		45		100

The total respondents 53 % are willing to buy expensive eco friendly products. However in the category of PG Professionals only 36 % are willing to buy such products. So the assumption that consumers who are highly educated and have money to spend might is not necessarily aware of or willing to buy expensive eco friendly products.

Table No. 5 Occupation and willingness to buy Expensive Eco-friendly Products

OCCUPATION	BUY EXPENSIVE ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS						TOTAL
	NO RESPONSE		NO		YES		
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	
SELF EMPLOYED	0	0	2	33.33	4	66.67	6
SERVICE	0	0	27	40.30	40	59.70	67
PROFESSIONAL	0	0	5	55.55	4	45.45	9
STUDENT	2	12.5	9	56.25	5	31.25	16
HOUSE WIVES	0	0	2	100	0	0	2
TOTAL	2		53		45		100

Graph No. 4 Relation between Occupation and willingness to buy Expensive Eco-friendly Products

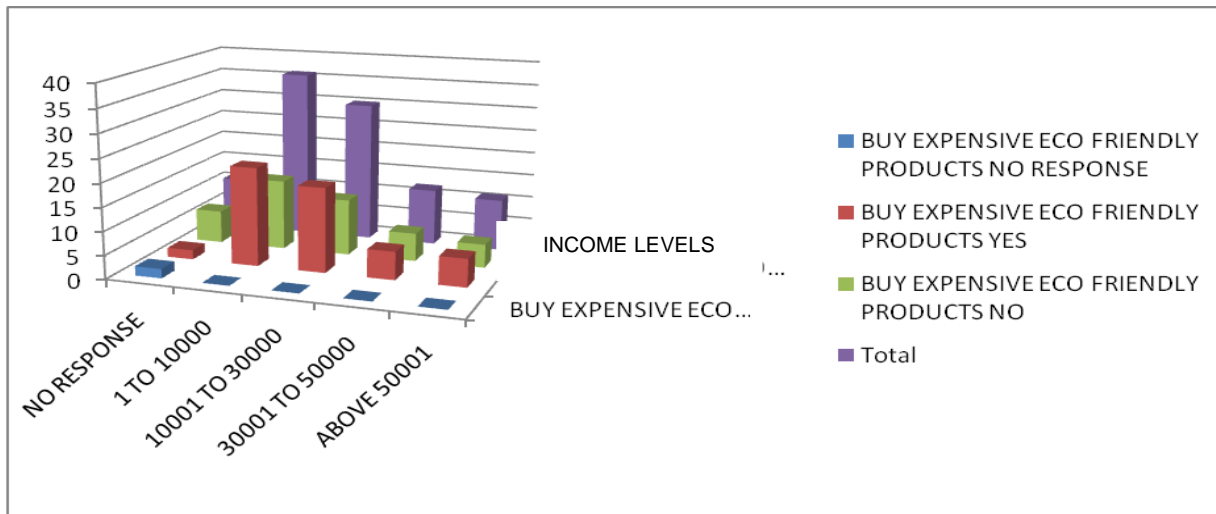


People across all occupation categories are willing to buy expensive eco-friendly products. However the percentage of willingness to buy these products varies from 31.25% for the students, 45.45% for professionals, 59.70% for service and 66.67% for the self employed. Overall willingness to buy expensive eco-friendly products is only 45%.

Table No. 6 Income and Willingness to Buy Expensive Eco-friendly Products

		BUY EXPENSIVE ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS						Total
		NO RESPONSE		YES		NO		
		No	%	No	%	No	%	
INCOME	NO RESPONSE	2	18.18	2	63.64	7	18.18	11
	1 TO 10000	0	0	21	41.67	15	58.33	36
	10001 TO 30000	0	0	18	40.00	12	60.00	30
	30001 TO 50000	0	0	6	50.00	6	50.00	12
	ABOVE 50001	0	0	6	45.45	5	54.55	11
Total		2		53		45		100

Graph No. 5 Relation between Income and Willingness to Buy Expensive Eco-friendly Products.



The above graph shows the trend with respect to overall willingness to buy expensive eco-friendly products. On an average 53% of the respondents expressed their willingness to buy expensive eco-friendly products. 50% of people having an income between 30,000 – 50,000 show willingness to buy expensive eco-friendly products while 41.7% and 40% of people having an income between 1 – 10,000 and 10,000 – 30,000 respectively show willingness to buy expensive eco-friendly products.

Table No.7 Awareness of Eco-Friendly Products and Preference for Eco-Friendly Products.

AWARENESS OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS	PREFERENCE FOR ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS						TOTAL
	NO RESPONSE		NO		YES		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
NO RESPONSE	0	0	0	0	2	100	2
YES	2	2.70	5	6.76	67	90.54	74
NO	0	0	6	25	18	75	24
TOTAL	2		11		87		87

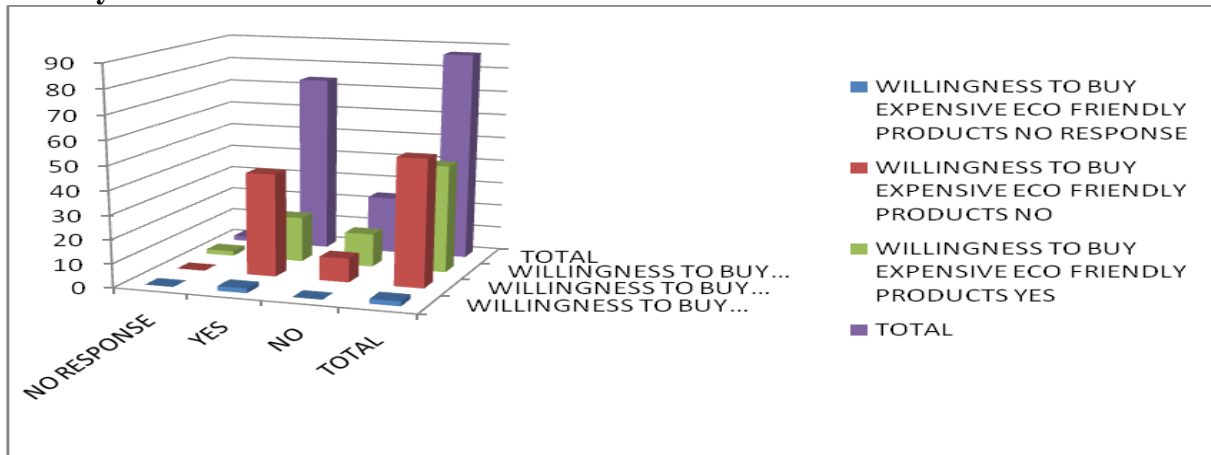
Here again we find that out of the 74 respondents who are aware of eco-friendly products 67 i.e., 90 % show preference for eco friendly products. And out of the 24 respondents who are not aware of these products 18 of them are still willing to buy eco-friendly products. On an average 87 % of the respondents shows willingness to buy eco friendly products.

Table No. 8 Awareness of Eco-Friendly Products and Willingness to Buy Expensive Eco-friendly Products.

AWARENESS OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS	WILLINGNESS TO BUY EXPENSIVE ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTS						TOTAL
	NO RESPONSE		NO		YES		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
NO RESPONSE	0	0	0	0	2	100	2
YES	2	2.71	43	58.11	29	39.18	74

NO	0	0	10	41.66	14	58.34	24
TOTAL	2		53		45		100

Graph No. 6 Awareness of Eco-Friendly Products and Willingness to Buy Expensive Eco-friendly Products.



The above graph shows the willingness of people to buy products that are expensive in as a result of being eco-friendly. Though people are aware of eco-friendly products the willingness to buy expensive products is low i.e., 39.18%. Even among the category where awareness about eco-friendly products is negative the willingness to buy expensive eco-friendly products is only 58.34%.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Overall 60% of the people are aware of the concept of ‘Green Marketing’. Therefore the hypothesis stated is proved.
2. No significant relationship is visible between income, educational qualification and occupation with respect to awareness about Green marketing.
3. It seems that people who belong to the service category among occupation are more aware and willing to buy eco-friendly products.
4. Consumers who are aware of eco-friendly products and have a preference for eco friendly products are not willing to buy expensive eco-friendly products. Hence the second hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSIONS

From the study it can be concluded that most of the customers are aware of Green Marketing concepts and products. Most of the customers are preferred the different types of green products. It means people are ready to accept but still, the entrepreneurs and the Government has to take initiative for promoting and implementing the concept of green marketing and green products. As environmental issues continue to affect human activities, society is more concerned in this regard. Most firms have started using sustainable development framework which is known as green marketing and most of the organizations have acknowledged green products which are environmentally friendly. A major barrier in the purchasing of green products is concern over whether the product will perform as expected. The essence of this study says that “People buy products that are less damaging to the environment so that they feel better”.

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