A STUDY ON CUSTOMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

Environmental sustainability has become a critical global concern due to rising environmental degradation, climate change, and increasing health risks caused by pollution and excessive use of non-renewable resources. In this context, eco-friendly products have gained importance as they help reduce environmental damage while supporting sustainable and responsible consumption. The present study aims to examine consumer awareness, attitudes, and preferences towards eco-friendly products in Coimbatore city. The research adopts a descriptive research design and is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected from 52 respondents through a structured questionnaire administered using Google Forms, while secondary data were gathered from books, academic journals, research articles, and reliable online sources. A non-probability convenience sampling technique was used to select respondents from different demographic backgrounds to understand varied consumer perspectives. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, chi-square test, and average score method were employed to analyse the collected data and interpret consumer behaviour effectively. The findings reveal that while a majority of consumers are aware of eco-friendly products and their environmental benefits, this awareness does not always translate into actual purchasing behaviour. Factors such as higher prices, limited availability, doubts regarding product quality, and insufficient product information significantly influence consumer purchase decisions. Additionally, a lack of effective promotional activities and clear eco-labelling reduces consumer trust in eco-friendly products. The results of the study provide useful insights for marketers, manufacturers, and policymakers to develop effective strategies for promoting eco-friendly products and supporting sustainable development.

Key Words: *Eco-friendly Products, Consumer Preference, Environmental Awareness, Sustainable Consumption, Green Marketing, Purchasing Behaviour.*

INTRODUCTION

Due to the rapid depletion of natural resources, climate change, and rising levels of pollution, environmental sustainability has emerged as a major concern in recent years. These challenges have encouraged consumers to become more conscious of the environmental consequences of their purchasing decisions. Eco-friendly products have therefore gained market prominence. Products such as organic soaps and shampoos, bamboo toothbrushes, reusable shopping bags, stainless steel bottles, and eco-friendly household items are designed to minimise environmental harm by using sustainable materials and reducing pollution. In India, awareness regarding eco-friendly consumption is gradually increasing, particularly in urban cities like Coimbatore. Understanding consumer awareness, attitudes, and purchasing patterns toward eco-friendly products is essential because consumers are becoming more aware of environmental issues and the need for sustainable living. This study aims to analyse customer preference towards eco-friendly products in Coimbatore city and provide insights that can help marketers, manufacturers, and policymakers promote sustainable consumption and environmental responsibility.

Since they are typically made of natural, organic, and non-toxic materials, eco-friendly products offer significant health benefits. Eco-friendly products, in contrast to conventional products that contain harmful chemicals, lower the likelihood of skin allergies, respiratory issues, and other health issues. Organic food and personal care items, herbal shampoos, eco-friendly detergents, and herbal shampoos all contribute to improved health and wellness. The use of eco-friendly household and personal care products also enhances

indoor air quality and ensures a safer environment for children, elderly people, and individuals with sensitive health conditions. Organic food consumption also aids in the reduction of body chemical residues. As a result, eco-friendly products not only help protect the environment, but they also help people live healthier lives and have a better quality of life.

STATEMENTOF THE PROBLEM

Despite growing environmental awareness, there exists a noticeable gap between consumers' concern for the environment and their actual purchasing behaviour towards eco-friendly products in Coimbatore city. Although many consumers express interest in protecting the environment, this concern does not always result in the purchase of eco-friendly products.   The absence of clear and trustworthy information regarding eco-friendly products is one major issue.

Consumers often find it difficult to distinguish genuine green products from misleading claims due to greenwashing practices. Eco-friendly products typically cost more than conventional alternatives, making them less affordable for many customers. This makes price sensitivity a significant obstacle. Limited availability in local markets further reduces accessibility and convenience. Consumers have doubts about the quality, durability, and effectiveness of eco-friendly products, which affects their confidence in purchasing them. Adoption is also hindered by conventional purchasing habits and insufficient promotional activities. These challenges highlight the need for better awareness programs, trust-building initiatives, and effective marketing strategies to encourage consumers to adopt eco-friendly products and support sustainable development.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study involves an in-depth analysis of customer preference towards eco-friendly products in Coimbatore city. Understanding consumer perceptions, awareness levels, and the impact of environmental concerns on purchasing decisions are the primary focuses of the research. Key factors such as price, quality, availability, promotional efforts, and environmental responsibility are examined to assess their impact on consumer preference. In order to gather diverse consumer opinions, the study includes respondents from a variety of demographic backgrounds, including age, gender, income level, education, and occupation. It is limited to selected eco-friendly product categories available in the local market, including organic personal care products, reusable bags, eco-friendly cleaning products, and stainless steel bottles. The research is limited to the city of Coimbatore and carried out within a predetermined time frame.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the level of awareness among consumers regarding eco-friendly products in Coimbatore city.
- To analyse the factors influencing customer preference towards eco-friendly products, such as price, quality, availability, and environmental impact.
- To examine consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour towards eco-friendly products, including personal care items, reusable bags, and eco-friendly household products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
SOURCES OF DATA

The methodology of research Sources of information The study follows a descriptive research design to analyse customer preference towards eco-friendly products. A Google Forms-based structured questionnaire was used to collect data from customers. The collected data were analysed using appropriate statistical tools to derive meaningful insights.

DATA COLLECTION METHOD   Primary Data

Primary data were collected through an online survey using Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice questions and Likert scale statements to measure consumer awareness, preference, and purchasing behaviour related to eco-friendly products.

AREA OF THE STUDY

 The study is confined to Coimbatore city. It focuses on understanding consumer awareness, attitudes, and purchasing behaviour towards eco-friendly products among residents of this area. Demographic variables such as age, income, education, and occupation, along with product-related factors like price, quality, availability, and environmental concern, are considered in the analysis.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE

A non-probability convenience sampling technique was adopted, as respondents were selected based on accessibility and willingness to participate. Data were collected through an online survey, enabling quick and efficient response collection. In order to represent a variety of consumer perspectives, a sample size of 52 respondents representing various age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds was selected.

PERIOD OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted over a period of three months, from November 2025 to January 2026. During this time, primary data were collected and analysed to assess customer preference towards eco-friendly products.

TOOLS FOR STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

- **Simple Percentage Analysis**: This method was used to summarise information about respondents in percentage form, such as their age, gender, income, and level of education. This technique was used to summarise respondent information such as age, gender, income, and education in percentage form. It contributed to a clear understanding of consumers' eco-friendly product awareness and preference patterns.

- **Chi-Square Test:** The chi-square test was used to find whether there is a significant association between demographic factors and customer preferences. It helped to understand how variables like age, income, and education influence the purchase of eco-friendlyproducts.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The study is confined to a limited number of respondents, which may not represent the entire population of Coimbatore city.
- The geographical scope is restricted to Coimbatore city; therefore, findings cannot be generalised to other regions.
- The small sample size may limit the accuracy of the results.
- Consumer preferences may change over time due to new products, marketing strategies, or awareness programs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr Sindhu P. M., Ankita Nair, Aman Gupta, and Garima Garg (2025)[1] conducted a detailed study on how premium pricing influences consumer behaviour towards eco-friendly products. The research revealed that although consumers are increasingly aware of environmental issues and sustainability benefits, high

prices remain a major obstacle to regular purchasing. Many respondents expressed positive attitudes toward green products but preferred conventional alternatives due to affordability concerns. The study also found that younger and well-educated consumers showed a greater willingness to experiment with eco-friendly products, particularly when prices were competitive or discounts were offered. Brand image and perceived quality were identified as supporting factors that enhance purchase intention. However, price sensitivity was more evident among middle-income groups. The researchers emphasised that reducing production costs and offering affordable, eco-friendly alternatives would significantly increase market penetration. Overall, the study highlights the importance of balancing sustainability goals with pricing strategies to encourage widespread adoption of renewable products.

Godara, Jain, and Kumar (2025)[2] examined the role of consumer awareness and perception in shaping green purchase behaviour. Their study indicated that consumers who possess higher environmental knowledge are more likely to choose eco-friendly products over conventional ones. Awareness regarding climate change, pollution, and sustainability was found to positively influence purchase intention. The research further highlighted that transparent labelling, ecocertifications, and product information improve consumer trust and confidence. Many respondents felt that misleading claims or a lack of information reduced their willingness to buy green products. Promotional campaigns and digital media were found to be effective tools in educating consumers. The study stressed the need for consistent awareness programs and honest communication from companies. Overall, the research concluded that consumer awareness acts as a strong foundation for developing positive attitudes and long-term commitment toward eco-friendly consumption.

Dahiya, Bhatt, Kumar, and Kant (2025)[3] applied structural equation modelling to analyse factors influencing green product purchase intention. The study identified environmental concern, perceived usefulness, and personal responsibility as key motivators encouraging consumers to choose eco-friendly products. Respondents believed that green products contribute positively to environmental protection and personal well-being. However, barriers such as higher cost, limited availability, and lack of variety were found to restrict actual purchase behaviour. The research also revealed that consumers are more inclined to purchase green products when they are easily accessible in local markets. Marketing communication and peer influence were identified as supporting factors. The authors suggested that companies should improve supply chain efficiency and adopt competitive pricing strategies. The study concludes that addressing both motivational and practical barriers is essential to enhancing green purchase intention.

Singh and Kumar (2025)[4] investigated consumer preferences toward eco-friendly products in the context of environmental sustainability. Their findings revealed that consumers value products that offer long-term environmental benefits and reduced ecological impact. Health benefits, such as reduced exposure to harmful chemicals, were found to be a strong motivating factor. Eco-labels and certifications increased consumer confidence and influenced purchase decisions positively. The study also highlighted the growing importance of social influence, where recommendations from friends, family, and online communities affect consumer choices. Respondents expressed a sense of responsibility toward protecting the environment for future generations. However, some consumers still hesitated due to price and lack of awareness. The study concluded that aligning sustainability goals with consumer expectations can strengthen eco-friendly purchasing behaviour.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected through a structured questionnaire administered using Google Forms from 52 respondents. The data were analysedusing percentage analysis and the average score method to understand the level of awareness, preference, and purchasing behaviour of consumers towards eco-friendly products. These analytical tools helped in identifying the factors influencing customer preference, such as price, quality, availability, and environmental concern, and in evaluating overall consumer opinion regarding eco-friendly products in Coimbatore city. **Table 1.1 (Personal profile of the respondents)**

Personal Profile	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	32	61.5%
	Female	20	38.5%
Age	Below 20	15	28.8%
	21-30	13	25%
	31-40	17	32.7%
	41-50	7	13.5%
	Above 50	-	-
Educational qualification	School level	1	1.9%
	UG	27	51.9%
	PG	13	25%
	Professional	11	21.2%
Occupation	Student	22	42.3%
	Employee	10	19.2%
	Homemaker	7	13.5%
	Business	13	25%
Monthly Income	Below ₹20,000	19	36.5%
	₹20,001–₹40,000	14	26.9%
	₹40,001–₹60,000	16	30.8%
	Above ₹60,000	3	5.8%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

From the above table, it is understood that the respondents belong to various groups based on gender, educational backgrounds, and income levels. The table indicates that most of the respondents fall under the economically active age group, suggesting that they are more likely to be aware of and purchase eco-friendly products. This diversity in demographics helps to understand the overall behaviour, awareness, and perception of consumers towards eco-friendly products. The data shows a balanced representation of respondents, which provides a reliable basis for aanalysingfactors such as product preference, purchasing behaviour, and challenges faced while buying eco-friendly products in Coimbatore city.

Chart 1.1 (Represents Age, Gender)

Interpretation

As per the charts, out of 52 respondents, a majority belong to the 31–40 years age group (32.7%), followed by those below 20 years (28.8%) and 21–30 years (25%), indicating that most respondents are young and economically active. A smaller proportion falls in the 41–50 years age group (13.5%), while there are no respondents above 50 years. This suggests that younger consumers show greater interest and awareness towards eco-friendly products. Gender wise it is 61.5% of the respondents are male, and 38.5% are female. The representation of bot genders indicates balanced participation, allowing a fair understanding of consumer awareness and preference towards eco-friendly products across gender groups.

Chart 1. 2 (Awareness of Product)

Interpretation

Based on chart 1.2 shows that 46.2% of respondents have a very high level of awareness about eco-friendly products, followed by 30.8% with a high level of awareness. About 17.3% of respondents have a moderate level of awareness, while only 3.8% and 1.9% fall under low and very low awareness levels, respectively. This indicates that overall awareness about eco-friendly products among consumers is high.

Chart 1.3 (Purchasing behaviour)

Interpretation

The study shows that cloth/jute bags (32.7%) and eco-friendly household products (28.8%) are the most commonly purchased eco-friendly items among respondents. In terms of purchasing frequency, 46.2% of consumers sometimes buy eco-friendly products, while 21.2% always prefer them, indicating moderate but growing adoption. Greater awareness (38.5%) and better product availability (34.6%) are the main factors encouraging higher purchase, whereas lower price (17.3%) plays a secondary role. Regarding price sensitivity, 34.6% of respondents are willing to pay extra for eco-friendly products, while 44.2% decide based on the product, showing cautious but positive consumer attitudes toward sustainable purchasing.

Chart 1.4 (Overall Satisfaction)

Overall satisfaction with eco-friendly products
52 responses
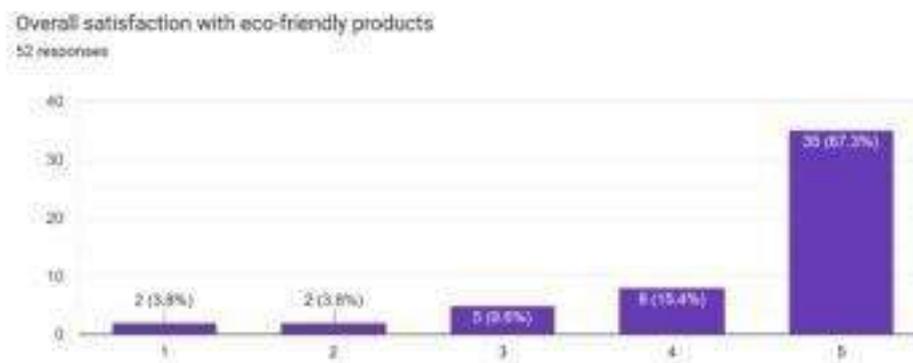
Interpretation:

The chart shows that the majority of respondents are highly satisfied with eco-friendly products. About 67.7% (35 respondents) reported the highest level of satisfaction, followed by 15.4% (8 respondents) who are satisfied. Only a small proportion expressed moderate or low satisfaction (3.8% each). Overall, the findings indicate a strong positive consumer satisfaction towards eco-friendly products.

Table 1.2 (Chi-Square Analysis)

Null Hypothesis (Ho)

It indicates that there is no significant relationship between the personal factors of respondents and the overall impact of digital payments.

Alternative Hypothesis(H1)

It shows there is a significant relationship between the personal factors of respondents and the overall impact of digital payments.

S. No	Personal Factors	Chi-Square Value	Significance Value (p)	S / NS
1	Gender	2.769	0.096	NS
2	Age	18.381	0.001	S
3	Educational Qualification	26.469	0.000	S
4	Occupation	7.214	0.065	NS
5	Monthly Income	12.452	0.014	S

Interpretation

The chi-square analysis shows that Age, Educational Qualification, and Monthly Income have a significant influence on the respondents because their p-values < 0.05. However, Gender and Occupation do not have a significant influence since their p-values are greater than 0.05.

FINDINGS

Based on Table 1.1, the study indicates that the majority of respondents, particularly young and working individuals, show a high level of awareness and interest in eco-friendly products. The demographic analysis reveals that economically active groups and students are more likely to be exposed to information about environmentally friendly and sustainable consumption. Table 1.2 reveals that the average score analysis reflects a moderate to high level of satisfaction with eco-friendly products, indicating positive consumer experiences in terms of quality, usefulness, and environmental benefits. Additionally, the chi-square analysis was used to investigate the connection between consumer preference for eco-friendly products and demographic variables. Age has a significant impact on awareness and preference levels, according to the findings, while gender and occupation do not have a significant impact. Overall, the study comes to the conclusion that consumers have a conscious and responsible way of buying things. They prefer eco-friendly products over impulsive ones, mostly because they care about the environment and the long-term benefits.

SUGGESTION

The study's findings suggest that digital marketing, social media campaigns, and educational programs should be used to raise awareness of eco-friendly products even more, especially among middle-aged and older consumers who are less aware. To build consumer trust and confidence, marketers and manufacturers ought to concentrate on clearly communicating the benefits of products, eco-labels, and certifications. In order to broaden their use, eco-friendly products ought to be made more accessible and affordable. Promoting loyalty rewards, trial packs, and discounts can entice new customers, particularly younger ones. Incentives and awareness campaigns can also be used by government and non-government organisations to encourage eco-friendly consumption. These measures will help promote sustainable purchasing behaviour and increase long-term usage of eco-friendly products.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that consumers, especially younger and more educated groups, have a high level of awareness and satisfaction with eco-friendly products. The average score analysis indicates a positive and balanced attitude toward using eco-friendly products in daily life. The chi-square analysis confirms that age plays a significant role in influencing awareness and preference levels. In general, eco-friendly goods are regarded as trustworthy and advantageous alternatives to conventional goods. The findings show that consumers make conscious purchasing decisions with environmental responsibility rather than impulsive behaviour. Eco-friendly products can significantly contribute to sustainable development and responsible consumer behaviour with ongoing awareness campaigns, improved accessibility, and supportive policies.

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