

The impact of consumer's engagement in Pro-environment activities on the preference for green food products

Deepika Jindoliya¹ and Gagandeep Nagra²

D.Y. Patil Deemed University, School of Management, Navi Mumbai, M.S., India

(Received 15 April, 2020; Accepted 30 May, 2020)

ABSTRACT

The scientists and environmentalists have been rooting for adaptation of eco-friendly lifestyle for a very long time. Human activities in the past few decades had caused irreversible damage to the earth's ecosystem. The industrial revolution, deforestation, and indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers in farming has not only affected the environment adversely but also posed a threat to human health. So it is of considerable significance to promote eco-friendly food products that are grown and processed with a sustainable perspective, taking into account the welfare of all stakeholders. This research study is an attempt to find out the effects of consumer's engagement in pro-environment activities on preference for green food products. A sample of 210 respondents is analysed for the study. It is observed that a person's pro-environment behaviour directly translates into his/her preference for an eco-friendly product.

Key words : Sustainable lifestyle, Pro-environment activities, Green food products, Green consumer behaviour

Introduction

Green Food Products

Green products, also known as eco-friendly products or sustainable products, are the products with minimal impact on the environment. A product can be termed as sustainable if it strives to reduce the impact on the environment as thoroughly as possible, beginning from the first stage of raw material extraction and manufacturing to processing to final stage disposal. As the food is one of an essential constituent of life, It causes an immediate effect on human health and the environment. A food product can be called green/ eco-friendly based on following parameters:

Green Raw Material/ Content

Organic food is the food produced, cultivated, and harvested by methods and techniques which comply with the standards and norms of organic farming. As per the definition by Wikipedia, there are several different standards for organic food products, but most of the practices cycle resources, conserve biodiversity and promote ecological balance. From the environmental viewpoint, the extensive use of chemical fertilizers in conventional farming, and the pressure of overproduction to feed the ever-growing population has negatively affected the ecosystem, underground water, nature's balance and biodiversity of the earth. These environmental issues can be addressed by adopting organic farming. So it can be said that the foods that are grown

(¹ Research Scholar, ²Associate Professor)

without most synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, and animal products that are free of antibiotics and hormones.

Green Process: Food processing plants are a big concern for the environment. Whether it is the matter of high consumption of energy or the use of preservatives or the disposal of bi-products of processing food products, these plants are significant contributors to environmental pollution. In western nations, there are comparatively strict rules for processing units in comparison to underdeveloped countries. There is still a requirement of precise regulation regarding the functioning of food processing units.

A food product qualifies to be called eco-friendly if :

- 1) Its processing involves less use of power or adoption of an alternative source of power
- 2) Uses less water
- 3) Does not use preservatives and chemical
- 4) The processing unit has a proper mechanism for disposal of bi-products.

Green Packaging: the use of non-eco-friendly materials for packing processed food products is a significant environmental concern. These packaging materials release toxic pollutants that affect human health and the environment. Single-use plastic is the most commonly used packaging material as it is cheap and convenient. However, this modern con-

venience is proving to be detrimental to the environment.

According to a report by The Guardian, "Packaging is one of the most problematic types of plastic waste, as it is typically designed for single-use, ubiquitous in the trash, and extremely difficult to recycle. A constant increase in the use of flexible and multi-layered packaging has been adding challenges to collection, separation, and recycling,"

A product can be termed as eco-friendly if:

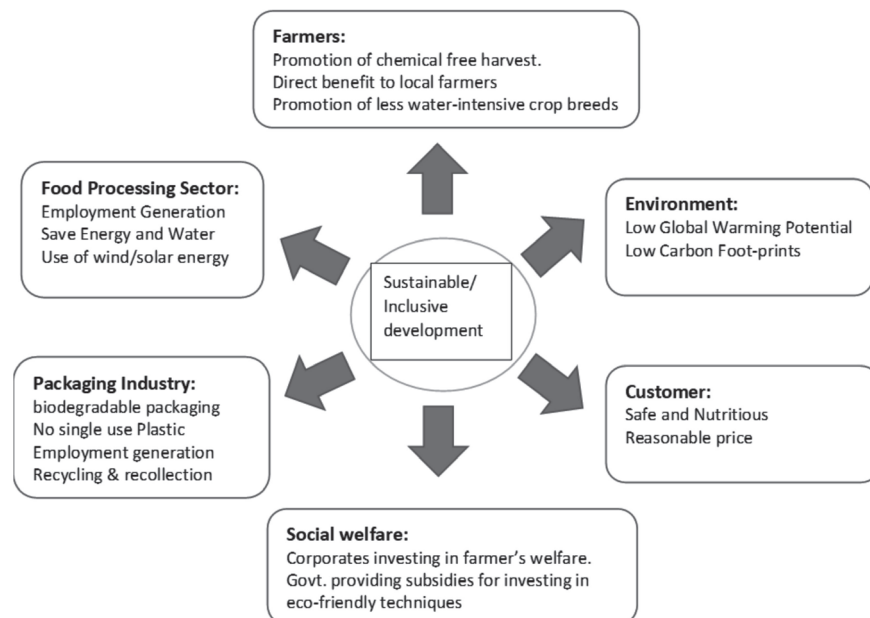
- It is packed in bio-degradable material
- If the food company has a policy for recollection and recycling of empty packs
- If the packing material is reusable or if it uses minimal packing
- If the packing material is BPA and chemical-free

Sustainable Development: A development that tends to the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future.

The consumer's environmental consciousness and engagement in pro-environmental activities can have a high impact on their buying behaviour and might genuinely reflect in their preference for green food products.

Literature Review

Claudio Eduardo Ramos Camfield, Patricia Piceti (2016), "Consumerism, sustainability, and consumer



Presentation of different aspects of sustainable development from the perspective of stakeholders of the processed food sector (Developed on the basis of literature review on the subject)

behaviour: A systematic literature review," research was based on secondary data. The conclusions are drawn based on the analysis of 27 articles. This study identified the different internal and external factors which influence the customer's behaviour, attitude, and perception towards sustainable products.

Tanner Carmen and Sybille Wölfing Kast (2013) "Promoting sustainable consumption: Determinants of green purchases by Swiss consumers" emphasized the need for more responsible and sustainable consumption. This study tries to identify the influence of contextual factors (socio-economic characters, living conditions) and personal factors (perceived behaviour, knowledge, attitude). This study concludes that consumer behaviour is highly influenced by his attitude towards the environment, knowledge, local produce, and fair trade.

Pickett-Baker, Ritsuko Ozaki, "Pro-environmental products: marketing influence on consumer purchase decision," tried to investigate whether the branding techniques can establish brands as green and introduce more sustainable patterns of consumption in contemporary lifestyles. This study takes a sample of 52 mothers who shop from supermarkets. The findings of the study are indicators of the increasing affinity of mothers towards green products. It is also observed that the consumers are not very aware of the parameters of eco-friendliness and can not quickly identify the green products. There is a correlation between consumer's confidence in the performance of green products and their pro-environmental beliefs.

Hee Yeon Kim and Jae-Eun Chung, "Consumer purchase intention for organic personal care products" (2011), consider the moderating effect of perceived behavioural control on the attitude-intention relationship. This study suggests that the most critical factors are environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness.

Farheen Mujeeb Khan (2018) "Green Marketing in the Processed Food Industry of India" Studies the marketing Strategies adopted by selected companies of North India and factors affecting green consumer behaviour. In this study, selected companies of Sonapat, New Delhi, Aligarh, and Lucknow are studied. The focus was mainly on Strategies of food processing companies.

Sudipta Majumdar (2015) Identified factors responsible for the popularity of green cosmetics and food products in Kolkata presented in his study

"Analysis of Factors Influencing Consumer Preferences for Green Cosmetic and Food Products: A study in and around Kolkata."

Kwong and Balaji (2016), " Linking Green Scepticism to Green Purchase Behaviour," Consumers were found to be sceptical towards green advertising in Malaysia.

Nair and Marram (2014), " Consumer Behaviour In Choice Of Food And Branding " the study examines and analyses the factors contributing to and inhibiting green consumer behaviour. The paper distinguishes the concepts relevant to consumer behaviour and branding. It suggests ways to overcome green consumption barriers.

Gap Analysis: There is limited research on the impact of pro-environmental activities on the consumer's preference for eco-friendly processed food products, especially in the regions of Mumbai, Chandigarh, and Bhatinda. There is a vast scope of further research in the field of processed food products.

Objectives

- To study the impact of consumer's engagement in "pro-environment activities" on the preference for green food products

Hypothesis

H_{01} : There is no significant impact of the consumer's engagement in "pro-environmental activities" " on the consumer's preference for processed green food products.

H_{11} : There is a significant impact of consumer's engagement in "pro-environment activities" on the consumer's preference for processed green food products.

Materials and Methods

Research Methodology

Primary and Secondary data were extensively used for Research Study. Primary Data collected through 210 consumers from Mumbai, Chandigarh, and Bhatinda region. A thoroughly structured questionnaire was used for the same purpose. Secondary data was collected through different web sources. Suitable statistical techniques were used to test the Hypothesis of study, and inferences were drawn from the same, and the conclusion was drawn.

Q. No.	Construct of Question	Q. No.	Construct of Question
Sec-B	Pro-environmental activities	Sec-C	Preference for green products
Q.2	Involvement in pro-environment steps like plantation of trees, cleaning of rivers, seashores.	Q. 7(1)	• Preference for food products without the use of chemicals and preservatives in processing
Q.4	Active participation in events associated with spreading awareness about environmental issues like greenathon, conferences on sustainable development	Q. 7(4)	• whether consumer purchase food as per taste or eco-friendliness
Q.6	Carrying cloth bag before going for shopping.	Q. 7(9)	• Preference for food products packaged in bio-degradable material
Q.8	Active search for brands associated with green initiatives.	Q.7(33)	• If a particular food product is not available, the consumer is ready to purchase a non-green alternative.

Data Analysis-Response Analysis

Data Analysis		C7_1	C7_9	C7_31	C7_33
B2	Correlation value	.362**	.405**	.365**	-.104
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.135
	N	210	210	210	210
B4	Correlation value	.358**	.418**	.363**	-.195**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.005
	N	210	210	210	210
B6	Correlation value	.466**	.604**	.520**	-.256**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	210	210	210	210
B8	Correlation value	.517**	.380**	.552**	-.507**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	210	210	210	210

Questionnaire analysis:

Results

Discussion

Interpretation of data analysis values-

- The positive correlation value with a p-value of less than 0.05 indicates a significant positive relationship.
- The negative correlation value with a p-value of less than 0.05 indicates a significant negative relationship.
- If the p-value is not less than that of 0.05 indicates a non-significant positive correlation or Negative correlation.

Conclusion and Findings

- A significant percentage of Respondents who

are engaged in pro-environment activities prefer food products without chemicals and preservatives.

- A significant percentage of Respondents who are engaged in pro-environment activities purchase products based on their eco-friendliness.
- A significant percentage of Respondents who are engaged in pro-environment activities prefer products packaged in bio-degradable material.
- A significant percentage of Respondents who are engaged in pro-environment activities do not go for a non-green alternative if an eco-friendly product is not available.

So it can be concluded that the people who involve in activities like plantation of trees or actively participate in environmental awareness events or who always carry their bags for shopping are more inclined to purchase eco-friendly green food products.

Limitation of Study

The research study is limited to respondents related to only green food products. The other types of green product users are not being studied in this research. The research study is limited to only Mumbai, Bhatinda, and Chandigarh. The results may vary for different demographic areas.

Scope of the study: Future research can be done to enhance the finding and enrich knowledge-base by conducting the extension in the following areas:

- Other areas and localities with a variation in socio-economic profile.
- Other categories of eco-friendly products

References

- Bui, M. and Kemp, E. 2011. Healthy brands: establishing brand credibility, commitment and connection among consumers. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. 28(6): 429-437.
- Chang, A., Tseng, C. and Chu, M. 2013. Value creation from a food traceability system based on a hierarchical model of consumer personality traits. *British Food Journal*. 115 (9) : 1361-1380.
- Claudio Eduardo Ramos Camfield and Patricia Piceti 2016. Consumerism, sustainability, and consumer behaviour: A systematic literature review. *Brazilian Journal of Marketing, Opinion, and Media Research*. pg. 85-100
- Farheen Mujeeb Khan, 2018. Green Marketing in the Processed Food Industry of India. Aligarh Muslim University
- Jindoliya Deepika, Nagra Gagandeep. 2020. Analysis of Motivating Factors and Barriers in Adaptation of Eco-friendly Processed Food Products: Study of Selected Cities of India. *International Journal of Advance and Innovative Research*. 7(1): 48-52.
- Hee Yeon Kim and Jae-Eun Chung, 2011. Consumer purchase intention for organic personal care products. 2011. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. 28(1) : 40-47.
- Kalafatis, S. P., Pollard, M., East, R. and Tsogas, M. H. 1999. Green marketing and Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour: A cross-market examination. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. 16 (5) : 441-460.
- Majumdar Sudipta, 2015. Analysis of Factors Influencing Consumer Preferences for Green Cosmetic and Food Products: A study in and around Kolkata. ICFAI University Jharkhand
- Marques, C. P. and Almeida, D. 2013. A path model of attitudinal antecedents of green purchase behaviour. *Economics and Sociology*. 6(2) : 135-144.
- Massa, S. and Testa, S. 2012. The role of ideology in brand strategy :the case of a food retail company in Italy. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*. 40(2) : 109-127.
- Nair R. Suja, Krishna Hari and Maram Maram, 2014. Consumer Behaviour in Choice of food and Branding. 7th Annual Euro Med Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business, September 18-19, Kristiansand, Norway pg. 1160-1169.
- Ottman, J. A., Stafford, E. R. and Hartman, C. L. 2006. Avoiding green marketing myopia. *Environment*. 48: 22-36.
- Pickett-Baker and Ritsuko Ozaki, 2008. Pro-environmental products: marketing influence on consumer purchase decision. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. 25 (5): 281-293.
- See Kwong Goh, Balaji, M. S. 2016. Linking Green Skepticism to Green Purchase Behaviour. *Journal of Cleaner Production*. 131 : 629-638.
- Tanner, C. and Kast, S. W. 2003. Promoting sustainable consumption: Determinants of green purchases by Swiss consumers. *Psychology and Marketing*. 20(10) : 883-902.