



Eco-friendly buying behaviour of women : a study with special reference to Guwahati city, India.

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Abstract

Simply, buying behaviour is nothing but a study of how individuals make decision in spending their available resources (time, money and effort) on consumption of different household objects. When people consider environment as an important factor to be protected through their friendly behaviour in purchasing household objects then it is called eco-friendly buying behaviour. Today's women are often called as 'homemaker'. Now a day, almost in all families, women play as the chief 'purchase officer', controlling all kinds of purchase decisions. She has accomplished this financial freedom by her sheer ability to compete in the male-dominated world. The New Indian Woman (NIW) is a hard working, multi-tasked who juggles her role as home maker and professional woman. Today Indian woman has a greater sense of empowerment and economic freedom and this indicates that her consumption pattern has been changed. From general observations it can be said that now a day, women love for shopping as they like to purchase their own household objects at their own choice and necessity. There are some common factors which always influence a person to take decision in consumption of related items and therefore, the very first objective of the study is to identify those factors. The second objective of the study is to have an idea about the eco-friendly buying behaviour of women in Guwahati city. In achieving the above mentioned objectives, descriptive survey method has been used and it was observed that majority of the respondents had a moderate extent of environment friendly buying behaviour in the selected household objects.

Keywords : Eco-friendly, women, buying behaviour, Guwahati.

1. Introduction

The new descriptions of Indian women have connotations for the marketers. Today Indian woman has a greater sense of empowerment and economic freedom and this show in a way that her consumption pattern has been changed. From general observations it can be said that now a day, women love for shopping as they like to purchase their own household objects at their own choice and necessity.

Buying behaviour is a study of how individuals make decision to spend their available resources on consumption related items. Therefore an attempt has been undertaken to study the eco-friendly buying behaviour of women with special reference to Guwahati city.

2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are-

- To identify the various factors influencing women's buying behaviour
- To study the eco-friendly buying behaviour of women on some selected goods.

3. Significance of the study

Women are called the home-maker in the society. Particularly, educated women hold a respectable position and take equal (in some cases majority) part in all kinds of decision making process in the family. Again, the success of the marketing program rests on the decision of the buyers or the ultimate users who are the female section of the families. So, emphasis should be given upon developing the eco-friendly consuming behaviour by each and every person not only by women. Now a day, manufacturers are also responding to all types of pressures to reduce packaging or make a product more environment-friendly. It is highly important that present day consumer is aware of various issues related with the impact of packaging on the environment. On the other hand, Guwahati is one of the rapidly developing cities of India which is also mostly polluted. Bharalu is the highest polluted river of India (Source: News Live, 14/3/2013). So, it should be a duty of every citizen to develop eco-friendly behaviour to take a pollution free breath living in a secured environment.

In developed countries several products are available which have been given eco- mark to ensure that the product is least harmful to the environment. Such a mark is given after doing 'cradle-to-grave' analysis of the product. But the Indian consumers have to select and make a "good green choice" among various alternatives available in the market. By selecting the alternative which is the least harmful to the environment, they exhibit their eco-friendly behaviour. In such a backdrop, an attempt has been undertaken to study the eco-friendly behaviour of educated women of Guwahati city in their consuming behaviour and the problem has been stated as –"Eco-friendly Buying Behaviour of Women- A Study with

special reference to Guwahati City"

4. Methodology

Descriptive Survey method has been applied in the present study. For the sample, 80 women have been selected purposively as per convenience of the investigator. A self-structured Interview schedule was used to collect primary data from the sample respondents. The schedule contained a list of selected consumer goods available in the market in various packaging materials ranging from least to most eco-friendliness.

5. Delimitations of the study

(i) The study is restricted to the environment-friendly buying behaviour of educated women only. Buying behaviour of men is not covered under the area.

(ii) The study is delimited to 80 educated women of Guwahati city only.

6. Review of related studies

Rajaselvi, K. (2003), Choudhury, K.N.& Dandwate,S.S.(2011), Khan,S& Noor, F.(2012), Nema,J& Bhopatkar N(2012)and Sharma,S& Shukul,M (2012) studied on factors influencing buyer behaviour towards different household objects and electronic goods. All the studies highlighted that Company's advertisement, reputation, free gift, price and quality of the products and retailer's advice are some of the factors influenced the choice of consumer durable. Friends and relatives' advice, joint decision of the family and credit facility is responsible for purchase decision. The above researches proved that there is a positive & significant relationship between these factors price, quality, motivation, product information, attitude, culture, consumer resources, personality, brand image, group & family & purchasing advisor.

7. Analysis of data in tabular form

Collected data have been analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics. All the collected data have

Table-1 : for Objective No.1
Factors influencing buying behaviour of women on some selected products

Product Factors	Coo- king Oil	Coffee powder	Hair Oil	Cold Drink	Pickles	Ghee	Jam	Tea Leaves	Beauty Cre- ams	Deter- gents	Nutr- itional Food	TO- TAL
Price	43	12	2	5	2	15	13	33	26	51	3	205
Quality	20	54	13	33	71	60	45	21	9	5	10	341
Culture	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	15	19
Adverti- sement	7	8	45	28	0	0	1	22	35	15	2	163
Friends	0	2	2	10	3	0	1	0	5	0	7	30
Relative's advice	0	1	1	0	1	3	0	0	1	1	14	22
Family	5	2	7	2	3	2	19	2	3	3	12	60
Credit facility	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Free gift	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	4	3	13
Retailer's advice	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
Motivation	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Attitude	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	17

Table-2 : for Objective No- 2
Environment-friendly buying behaviour of the respondents on some selected goods

Sl. No.	Product	Most Eco- Friendly	Moderate Eco-Friendly	Least Eco- Friendly	Total Respondents
1	Cooking Oil	Tin Container 12(15%)	Plastic bottles 53(66.25%)	Refill Packs 15(18.75%)	80
2	Coffee Powder	Glass bottles 3(3.75%)	Refill Packs Loose 73(91.25%)	In Thin Polythene bags 4(5%)	80
3	Hair Oil	Tin Container 46(57.5%)	Glass Bottles 5(6.25%)	Plastic Bottles 29(36.25%)	80
4	Cold Drink	Glass Bottles 9(11.25%)	Plastic Bottles 71(88.75%)	Tetra Pack 00	80
5	Pickles	Glass Bottles 60(75%)	Plastic Bottles 0	Refill Packs 20(25%)	80

6	Ghee	Tin Container 5(6.25%)	Glass Bottles 53(66.25%)	Tetra Pack 22(27.5%)	80
7	Jam	Glass Bottles 68(85%)	Plastic Container 2(2.5%)	Squeeze Tube 10(12.5%)	80
8	Tea leaves	Cardboard Carton 6(7.5%)	Plastic Container 34(42.5%)	Refill Packs 40(50%)	80
9	Detergents	Click Lock-Card board Box2(2.5%)	Plastic Box 38(47.5%)	Refill Packs 40(50%)	80
10	Nutritional Supplements	Glass Bottle 26(32.5%)	Plastic Bottles 41(51.25%)	Refill Packs 13(16.25%)	80
11	Beauty Creams	Tin Container 3(3.75%)	Glass Container 52(65%)	Squeeze Tube 25(31.25%)	80

been presented systematically for Objective-1 in table number-1 and for objective -2 in table number-2.

8. Discussions and findings of the study

From the data presented in table number-1, twelve (12) common factors have been identified as influencing factor of women's buying behaviour. These factors are- Price, Quality, Culture, advertisement, Friends, Relative's advice, Family, Credit facility, Free gift, Retailer's advice, Motivation and Attitude. Among all these, 'Quality' is the most influencing factor which gets preference for total 341 times in purchasing all the selected products by the respondents and it was followed by 'Price' getting preference for 205 times. 'Credit facility' got preference not for a single time in any product. After analyzing the data regarding each product in details in table no. 2, it was observed that nearly two third of the respondents purchased cooking oil in moderate environment friendly packaging (plastic bottles). Most of the women purchased coffee powder in moderate environment friendly packaging and it was total 91.25% respondents. Majority of the respondents purchased hair oil in most environment friendly packaging available that is Tin Container. Nearly 89% respondents selected moderate eco friendly packaging while purchasing cold drinks that is, plastic bottles

whereas 75% respondents showed mostly eco friendly behaviour purchasing pickles in Glass bottles. In case of purchasing Ghee, more than three fourth of the respondents have shown moderate eco-friendly behaviour. The highest 85% respondents purchased jam in most environment friendly packaging of glass bottles whereas exactly half of the respondents purchased Tea Leaves and Detergents in Refill packs showing least eco-friendly buying behaviour. Regarding nutritional supplements and beauty creams the women showed moderate eco-friendly buying behaviour purchasing the products in plastic bottles and glass container respectively.

9. Implications of the study

The present study has a number of implications. It will help the government to take important decision to ban the sale of packaging that is harmful for environment. The consumers should be made aware and encouraged for purchasing good in eco-friendly packaging. This can be done with the help of educational programme. The field of Family and Community Resource management can play a significant role in preparing and promoting such educational programmes. The findings of the study is of great importance for homemakers as it will make them aware and awaken about their purchase of good in eco-friendly packaging and thus reflecting their environmental concern.

10. Conclusion

In the study it has been observed that the respondents showed most eco-friendly buying behaviour in case of hair oil, pickles and jam whereas they showed moderate eco-friendly behaviour regarding cooking oil, coffee powder, cold drink, ghee, nutritional supplements and beauty cream.

Least eco-friendly buying behaviour was found in case of detergents and tea leaves. It can be concluded that majority of the respondents had a moderate extent of eco- friendly buying behaviour and the reasons behind the purchase of selected goods in different packaging were nothing but economy and convenience.

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