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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BUYING DECISIONS OF MALE AND FEMALE GREEN CONSUMERS



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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to compare buying decisions of green consumers on the basis of gender. To conduct the study, 250 male and 250 female green consumers were selected purposively. The selection of sample was done from Malwa Region of Madhya Pradesh. Buying Decision Scale constructed and standardized by researchers was used in the present study to assess buying decisions of green consumers. Results reveal that buying decision of female green consumers towards green products was found to be significantly more favourable as compared to male green consumers. Therefore it may be concluded that female green consumer possesses more knowledge towards environmental issues and that reflect in their decidedly favourable buying decision towards green products as compared to their male counterparts.

KEYWORDS :Green consumers, Buying Decision, Gender.

INTRODUCTION

In this modern era environmental and green products are the main area of research in the context of ethical and social responsibility and they are inter linked biodiversity and sustainability. Since the inception of Earth Day overall public concern



towards environmental issues have grown up steadily in last three decades (Kim and Choi, 2005).¹ Hueber (1991)² reported that consumer behaviour towards products which are harmful to environment undergoes a drastic transformation and the customers opined that they avoid purchasing products that are potentially harmful to environment. In connection to this, word “green consumer” emerged. According to Elkington (1994)³ “green consumer as one who avoids products that are likely to endanger the health of the consumer or others; cause significant damage to the environment during manufacture, use or disposal; consume a disproportionate amount of energy; cause unnecessary waste; use materials derived from threatened species or environments; involve unnecessary use of, or

cruelty to animals; adversely affect other countries.”

Due to importance of growing importance of green products in terms of preserving nature and biodiversity, researchers have conducted studies which address the issue of buying decision of green consumers. One of the demographic variable used to assess buying decision of green consumer is gender but the findings are somewhat contradictory. In a study do Paço, Raposo and Filho, 2009⁴ reported that women perceive environment issues in a better way than men and they are more sensitive to environmental issues. In contrary to this, Mostafa (2007)⁵ reported that men have extensive knowledge of environmental issues. In the light of these divergent findings the researcher decided to assess the effect of gender on buying decision of green consumers.

HYPOTHESIS

Gender will significant influence the buying decisions of green consumers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample :-

To conduct the study, 250 male and 250 female green consumers were selected. The selection of sample was done from Malwa Region of Madhya Pradesh. The age of the selected subjects was between 18 to 60 years. The sample for the present study was collected through purposive sampling.

Tools:

Buying Decision Scale constructed and standardized by researchers were used in the present study to assess buying decisions of green consumers. It consists in all 24 items which assess attitude and perception of consumer towards green products. A typical five-level Likert item i.e. Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree and Strongly agree were used in this scale. This scale is highly reliable and valid. Higher scores on scale indicate favourable buying decisions towards green products.

Procedure:

Buying decision scale was distributed to identified 500 male and 500 female green consumers. 650 fully filled responses were returned. Out of these fully filled responses 500 were considered for the study in which 250 were of male respondents while 250 responses were from female respondents. Scoring of response was done as per numerical weightage given for Likert item. Afterwards obtained data was tabulated according to their respective groups. Independent sample ‘t’ test was used to compare buying decisions of male and female green consumers. The results are presented in table 1.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table No. 1
Comparison of Buying Decisions of Green Consumer on the Basis of Gender

Variable	Male Green Consumers (N=250)		Female Green Consumers (N=250)		Mean Diff.	't'
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.		
Buying Decisions	83.26	12.03	85.80	11.49	2.53	2.40*

* Significant at .05 level

Results presented in table 1 indicate that female green consumers showed significantly more favourable buying decisions towards green products ($M=85.80$) as male green consumers ($M=83.26$). The calculated $t=2.40$, which was found to be statistically significant at .05 level also gives statistical weightage to this finding.

The results of the present study are consistent with the previous findings of, Brown and Harris, (1992)⁶; Tikka et al., (2000)⁷ in which they found that men having more negative attitudes towards the environment compared to women. In another study Mainieri et al. (1997)⁸ reported that women were more likely to buy green product because they believe the product was better for the environment. Hence the present study once again add new dimension to the existing contradictory knowledge regarding the effect of gender on buying decisions of consumers.

CONCLUSION

On basis of results and associated discussion, it may be concluded that gender has potential enough demographic variable which affect buying decisions of green consumers.

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