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An analysis of knowledge, attitude and practices among urban consumers towards green cosmetics

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Abstract

The growing environmental concern amongst the public has demanded organizations, businesses and individuals to be responsible and conscious in their everyday activity not to cause any harm to the environment. Most environmental problems are caused by the way people living and continuously damaging the environment. The study was conducted with the aim to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices among the urban consumers towards green cosmetics. The exploratory research design was adopted to conduct the study. The data was collected from 300 educated consumers from the urban areas of Dharwad and Belagavi district. The data was analyzed by using frequency, percentage, mean and 't' test. The results revealed that majority of the consumers belonged 22-29 years of age group and more than half of the consumers selected for study were graduates. With regard to occupation one third of the consumers selected for the study were students, followed by unemployed and self employed consumers. Majority of the consumers had medium family income of rupees 7,380-51,780 per month. Maximum number of the selected consumers belonged to upper middle socio economic category. The female consumers had better knowledge about green cosmetics, male consumers had favourable attitude (17.85) compared to female consumers, female consumers had better practices compared to male consumers. The knowledge of the consumers will help the policy makers to develop the product and services based on the genuine need of the customers.

Keywords: Consumer, cosmetics, environment, knowledge, attitude, practices

Introduction

Environmental pollution is one of the most serious problems experienced by humanity and other life-forms on the earth today. Going green means leading lifestyle that's not just more beneficial for people who do it, but for their surroundings as well. All the green products that we use provide benefit for the people not just economically, but also socially and environmentally, which means that the green products preserve the public health in general. The more people decide to use green products the better it is for everyone around them. When we use products that are natural, it is much better for our well being.

The rapid economic growth in the past years have witnessed increasing consumers' consumption worldwide causing environmental deterioration through over-consumption and utilization of natural resources (Chen & Chai, 2010) [6]. With technological development, there has been an increase in industrial activities that have directly and indirectly affected the environment. The environment has been extensively exploited, resulting in climate change, global warming, pollution, environmental exploitation, ozone layer depletion etc. Such problems have raised concerns about protecting our climate, which has led to the idea of going green. Government has adopted policies to save the world from further deterioration, so businesses have chosen the environment friendly practices. Creation of goods that are environmentally friendly is one of the first initiatives taken to resolve this environmental problem.

A consumer's concern towards a safe environment has been frequently increasing. Nowadays, the market contains a wide variety of products that are environmentally safe. The purchase behavior of the consumers depends on the beliefs and the consciousness of the consumers towards their health and environmental concern. The decision to purchase these products depends on the behavior which the consumers adopt towards green products. Consumers who are concerned with the environment and are knowledgeable about the environmental issues when shopping try to purchase only eco-friendly products. Increasing environmental concerns and awareness of eco-friendly products among consumers have resulted in their green buying behavior.

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One can only hope that change is the only thing that is constant, once we decide protecting our nature thereby ensuring our own safe future and then the rest of it follows. Let's start using eco-friendly products for a start now and turn the vision of a lovely environment in the future a reality.

Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge about green cosmetics among the urban consumers
2. To analyze the attitude about green cosmetics among the urban consumers
3. To study the practices about green cosmetics among the urban consumers

Methodology

The study was conducted during 2018-20, the data was collected by using structured interview questionnaire. Totally 300 urban consumers from Dharwad and Belagavi district were selected for the study. Frequency, percentage and mean

scores were used to interpret the results of demographic variable and awareness, knowledge attitude and practices among the consumers towards green cosmetics.

Results and Discussion

The age of the respondents was grouped into three categories. The majority of the consumers (43.00%) were in the age group of 22-29 years, followed by more than 29 years (30.00%) and less than 22 years (27.00%). More than half of the selected consumers (57.67%) were graduates followed by 39.00 percent were studied upto 12th standard and only 3.33 percent were post graduates. More than one third of the consumers were students (32.67%), followed by unemployed (21.66%), self employed (21.00%), employed in private sector (13.33%) and employed in government sector (11.33%). Majority of the consumers (83.00%) had medium family income of ₹ 7,380/-51,780/- and only 17.00 percent of them had high income of more than ₹ 51,780/- as presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on their socio-personal characteristics N=300

Variables	Classification	Male (n=150)	Female (n=150)	Total
Age (yrs)	<22	39 (26.00)	42 (28.00)	81 (27.00)
	22-29	62 (41.33)	67 (44.67)	129 (43.00)
	>29	49 (32.67)	41 (27.33)	90 (30.00)
Education	Upto 12 th std	61 (40.66)	56 (37.33)	117 (39.00)
	Graduate	84 (56.00)	89 (59.33)	173(57.67)
	Post Graduate	5 (3.33)	5 (3.33)	10 (3.33)
Occupation	Student	35 (23.33)	63 (42.00)	98 (32.67)
	Unemployed	15 (10.00)	50 (33.33)	65 (21.66)
	Self employed	63 (42.00)	0 (0.00)	63 (21.00)
	Private sector	15 (10.00)	25 (16.67)	40 (13.33)
Monthly Family Income (₹)	Government sector	22 (14.67)	12 (8.00)	34 (11.33)
	Low (<7380)	-	-	-
	Medium(7380-51780)	110 (73.33)	139 (92.66)	249 (83.00)
	High (>51780)	40 (26.67)	11 (7.33)	51(17.00)

The distribution of the consumers according to their socio economic status categories as per the Aggarwal (2005) [1] scale was represented in the Fig 1. It was clear from the data that 64.00 percent of the consumers belonged to upper middle

socio economic category, followed by lower middle (28.66%) socio economic category and only 7.33 percent of the consumers belonged to high socio economic category.

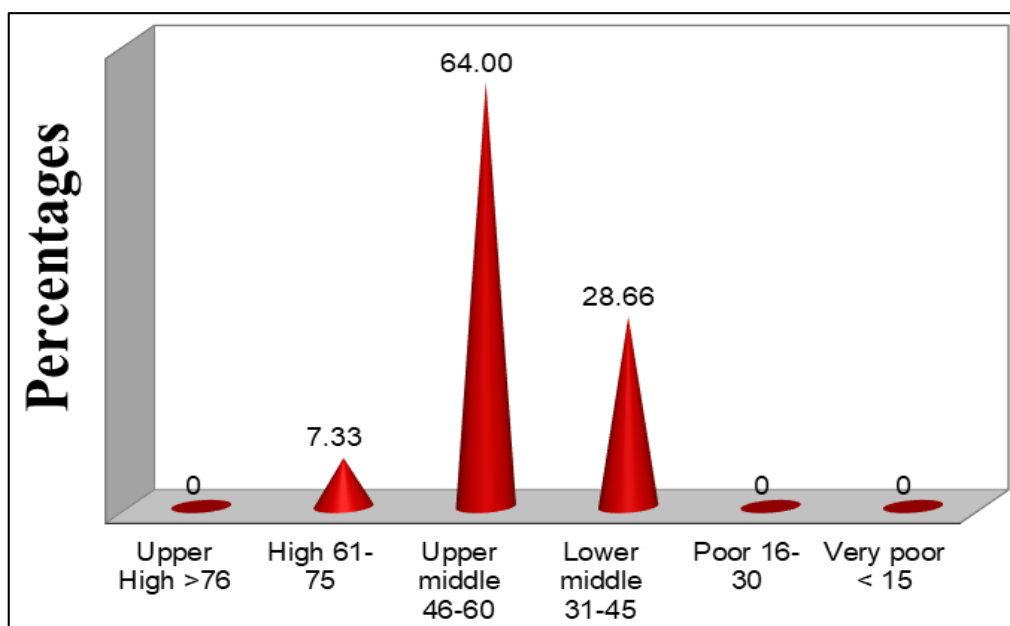


Fig 1: Socio economic status of the selected consumers

Knowledge about cosmetic products among consumers

The self developed knowledge scale was used to assess the knowledge of the respondents which includes ten Yes or No questions and ten multiple choice questions. The female consumers had better knowledge about green cosmetics with the mean value of 15.05 than male consumers. female consumers were more conscious about the beauty and health. Hence, they were interested to get more information about the

green products which were free from the toxins. The similar results were found by Matic and Puh (2016) ^[4] that majority of the women purchase the natural cosmetics so they would like to had better knowledge about the products because of their health and beauty consciousness. Rekha and Gokila (2015) ^[5] revealed that female consumers had better knowledge towards green cosmetics than the male consumers.

Table 2: Comparison of average scores of knowledge about green cosmetics among consumers N=300

Product	Male (n=150)	Female (n=150)	Total
Green cosmetics	12.83	15.05	13.94

Attitude of the consumers towards green cosmetics

Attitude refers to thinking, thoughts and persuasion of the respondents. The attitude of the consumers towards green products was measured by using five point Likert scale for all five categories selected for the study.

It was clear from the Table 3 that male consumer had favourable attitude (17.85) compared to female consumers (17.68). There was no difference among the male and female respondents attitude. Female consumers' beauty

consciousness, self image and green product attributes influenced them in purchase of green cosmetics compared to men. The results are on par with the results obtained by Matic and Puh (2016) ^[4] who explained that the respondents who had higher intention to purchase natural cosmetics had positive attitude towards the natural cosmetic products. Fernando and Hennayake (2017) ^[2] found that majority of consumers had positive attitudes towards green cosmetics products.

Table 3: Mean scores of attitude of the urban consumers towards green cosmetics N=300

Statements	Male (n=150)	Female (n=150)	Total
1. Green cosmetics can be used to maintain and promote health	3.85	3.90	3.88
2. I worry that there are chemicals in my cosmetic products	3.65	3.61	3.63
3. I use biodegradable soaps or detergents	3.27	3.09	3.18
4. I am willing to pay a premium price for an eco-friendly cosmetic product	3.63	3.59	3.61
5. I believe in the information on eco-friendly cosmetic products packaging	3.45	3.49	3.47
Total	17.85	17.68	17.77
't' value	0.37		

Practices followed by consumers towards green products

The practice followed by consumers towards green products was assessed by using three point Likert scale.

Gender wise comparison reveals that female consumers had better practices (12.18) compared to male consumers (11.86) towards green cosmetics (Table 4). Consumers who were more conscious about the health and beauty, sometimes use green cosmetics, sometimes prefer to purchase well known

brands of green cosmetics, consult brochures and pamphlets for information before buying green cosmetics, sometimes easily find eco-friendly cosmetic products in market. The results are on par with results of Kumar *et al.* (2012) ^[3] that consumers were more concerned about their health, status and quality of life which make them buy the green cosmetics regularly.

Table 4: Mean scores of the practices of the consumers about green cosmetics/ herbal products

Statements	Male (n=150)	Female (n=150)	Total
1. I use green/herbal cosmetics	2.47	2.51	2.49
2. I prefer purchasing well known brands of green cosmetics	2.41	2.45	2.43
3. I consult brochures and pamphlets for information before buying green cosmetics.	2.35	2.33	2.34
4. I am more tempted to buy discount priced green cosmetics.	2.35	2.43	2.39
5. I easily find eco-friendly cosmetic products in market	2.28	2.46	2.37
Total	11.86	12.18	12.02

Conclusion

Environmental pollution is one of the most serious problems experienced by humanity and other life-forms on the earth today. Going green means leading lifestyle that's not just more beneficial for people who do it, but for their surroundings as well. All the green products that we use provide benefit for the people not just economically, but also socially and environmentally, which means that the green products preserve the public health in general. Consumers had better knowledge about the green cosmetics. There was no difference among the male and female respondents attitude.

Female consumers showed better practices compared to male consumers towards green cosmetics.

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