

A Research On Need Of Green Consumerism In The Upcoming Years-A Study On Consumers Of Dehradun District

Ms. Ankita Rana, Dr. Seema Bhakuni

Department Of Commerce, Doon Institute Of Management And Research, India.
Department Of Management, Doon Institute Of Management And Research, India.

Abstract:

Background: With increasing environmental concerns, there is a rising demand for eco-friendly products, known as 'green products'. Marketers face pressure from various stakeholders to produce and promote environmentally beneficial products. However, consumer awareness about green products remains low, necessitating efforts to educate and empower consumers towards sustainable consumption practices. This research aims to introduce green consumerism, assess consumer expectations and awareness regarding green purchasing in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, and empower consumers to demand green products, thereby promoting sustainable consumption practices.

Previous studies highlight the positive impact of consumer awareness and attitudes towards green products on their purchasing behavior. However, challenges such as lack of awareness and investment constraints persist, emphasizing the need for targeted strategies to promote green consumerism.

Materials and methods: Data was collected from 100 respondents via structured surveys aimed at educated individuals of age 25 and above. To ensure adequate representation from the desired demographic, Simple Random Sampling techniques were utilized.

While existing studies focus on urban consumers, this research addresses the gap by examining awareness and buying behavior among local and village market consumers, providing insights into the need for green consumerism in these areas.

Results: Analysis of consumer responses revealed varying levels of awareness and engagement with green products. While there is high awareness, significant segments still lack this understanding or hesitate to purchase green products, indicating the need for relevant education and marketing efforts towards that.

Conclusion: The findings underscore the importance of green consumerism in addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainability. Efforts to increase awareness, overcome barriers to adoption, and promote eco-friendly products are crucial for driving the transition towards more sustainable consumption patterns.

In summary, this research contributes to understanding consumer behavior towards green products and emphasizes the urgency of promoting green consumerism for environmental preservation and sustainable development.

Keyword: Green Products, Green consumerism, Green Consumer, Microplastic

Date of Submission: 19-02-2024

Date of Acceptance: 29-02-2024

I. Introduction

Due to the intensified conditions of the environment, there is an upsurge in the demands of the products which are environment friendly, commonly known as 'Green products'. There is a constant pressure on the marketers either from governments, media, or environmental activists to care for the environment and induce in their products the features which are beneficial for the environment or curb those features which are harmful to the environment. Hence, it has become imperative for the marketers to produce and promote green products in the best possible manner. Consumers do not know what green products are, how these products are environmentally safe or where they can get these products from. Green consumption, also known as sustainable consumer behavior which encompasses the consumption of goods and services that prioritize environmental preservation for both present and future generations. It signifies a conscious effort to safeguard the natural environment while meeting consumer needs and preferences. Green consumerism reflects a desire among consumers to purchase items produced in a manner that minimizes harm to the environment. Green products embody characteristics such as energy efficiency, recyclability, eco-friendly packaging, non-toxic materials, and biodegradability. They represent a commitment to sustainable manufacturing practices and contribute to reducing ecological footprints.

The emergence of the green consumer, characterized by a strong inclination towards environmentally-friendly products and services, marks a shift in consumer behavior towards greater environmental consciousness. This trend is driven by factors such as the rise of double-income households, evolving and transforming family structures, and changing societal attitudes and lifestyles.

However, despite the growing awareness and interest in green consumption, several challenges persist. A significant portion of consumers lack awareness of green products and their benefits, while firms may face barriers in developing innovative green technologies due to investment constraints. Moreover, emerging health concerns, such as the presence of microplastics in the environment and their potential impact on human health, underscore the urgency of adopting sustainable consumption practices.

Green consumption is related to sustainable development or sustainable consumer behavior. It is a form of consumption that safeguards the environment for the present and for future generations.

Green consumerism is the situation in which consumers want to buy things that have been produced in a way that protects the natural environment.

Green products are the products characterized by energy efficiency, recyclability, eco-friendly packaging, non-toxic material, biodegradability, etc.

Green Consumer is an eco-friendly consumer, who is buying only eco-friendly products and using only green services. He is a buyer who is too concerned about the environment and he purchases only environment-friendly or eco-friendly products or energy-efficient products and so consumes fewer natural resources

Green products are the products which are recyclable, reusable, and biodegradable in nature. They are products with natural ingredients that do not harm or pollute the environment.

Examples: Lead free paints from Kansai Nerolac (Kansai Nerolac has worked on removing hazardous heavy metals from their paints).

Wipro's Green Machines: Wipro InfoTech was India's first company to launch environment friendly computer peripherals. Wipro has launched a new range of desktops and Laptops called Wipro Greenware, thus reducing e-waste in the environment.

Sustainable shopping bags, Stainless steel water bottles, LED bulbs E-vehicle etc. are some other examples which rest with many brands.

II. Problem Statements

1. The Problem is lack of consumer awareness to consume green products, because of inability to comprehend the importance of green product usage. The consumer does not know what green products are, how these products are environmentally safe or where they can get these products from.

2. The development of green products requires innovative technology which requires huge investments by the firms. The firms may lack such innovative green technology to come up with green products which are environmentally safe.

3. Need for prevention from upcoming health disasters.

Microplastic as the name suggests is the mini particles of plastic, and it is a major source of pollution in the environment. It was found in the human blood in researches done by scientists in the Netherlands. (**Heather A. Leslie et.al, 2022**)

A team of researchers from Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna University found plastic fibers in the guts of fishes in Alaknanda river. The samples were sent to IIT-Roorkee and a public lab in Chandigarh, where further study confirmed the presence of microplastic in the fish. (Azad.S, 2022)

III. Objectives

1. To make consumers aware about the concept of green consumerism in the society (Introduce green consumerism to people in the society).

2. Understanding local consumers' expectations and awareness related to green purchasing in the Dehradun District of Uttarakhand.

3. To bring consumers in the position that they may demand green products from manufacturers and marketers.

IV. Literature Review

The consumers' awareness of green products and their attitudes towards them have a positive impact on their actual purchasing behavior. Moreover, willingness to pay more for environmentally friendly options coexists with price sensitivity, as consumers perceive green products pricier than the conventional ones. Demographic factors influence consumers' perceptions of green products, awareness levels, and intentions to purchase them. Enhanced awareness of environmental issues and the role of green products in helping climate change related issues can shape consumers' attitudes towards these products. The study also highlights the mediating role of consumers' willingness to pay a premium for green products. While green consumption extends beyond mere

economic rationale, cost associated with it and the health and other benefits consistently influence consumers' decisions. (Mallya, M.M. 2022)

Additionally, prioritizing environmentally sustainable purchasing is crucial as impulsive buying decisions can lead to substantial environmental harm. Many researchers suggest that consumer household purchases account for 40% of the total environmental damage. (Joshi, Y. & Rahman, Z. 2015). We can correlate it with the many packaged items we purchase in our monthly ration.

Consumers' positive perceptions of green products can boost their willingness to purchase them. It's important to continuously impart information and knowledge about green products to further stimulate consumer interest and their willingness to buy them. (Handayani, W. et.al, 2017)

The study (Kirmani, D. Naved, M. 2016) by researchers wherein they studied 200 papers, deemed that only 70 percent of the papers were about the consumers' inclination towards their choice of purchasing green products. Rest all talked about the marketing principles or strategies for green products. That shows a lack of awareness or interest towards the topic.

The study brought up the fact that people were well aware of images and availability, but not loyal entirely to organic food products in Chennai city. (B, Shreeya. 2020)

One of the studies indicates that the concept of green marketing is increasingly significant in emerging economies like India, where numerous companies have embraced green initiatives and introduced innovative eco-friendly products. Corporate prosperity is now intricately connected with environmental considerations, with topics such as climate change, socio-moral responsibility, and sustainable development becoming integral to corporate practices. To remain competitive and foster positive environmental impact, firms are advised to incorporate green marketing strategies, including eco-design of products, green labeling and packaging, and utilization of green logos. (Dhanda, U. & Gupta, S. 2015)

The examination revealed a positive correlation between the social values of consumers who purchase green products and their awareness of such products. While Indian consumers show environmental concern, their level of environmental knowledge does not significantly impact their awareness of green products. This analysis was conducted on 426 supermarket consumers in West Bengal. (Saha, A. Ing. 2017)

The present research holds considerable managerial importance as it highlights crucial factors influencing green purchasing behavior, serving as a warning for marketing professionals and policymakers. be able to frame innovative marketing techniques to frame more consumers towards their innovative green products. Inculcating green products in their product chain or coming up with such products, may help the marketers to present themselves as responsible entities and thereby helping them to stand out better amongst the competitors. Employing green marketing techniques can yield benefits for both consumers and companies, all the while aiding environmental conservation efforts and facilitating sustainable development. Srivastava et al., 2016).

In Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States, 53% of consumers express concern about environmental and social issues yet remain abstained from inculcating such consumer behaviour. Additionally, another 13% are inspired to pay more for purchasing environment friendly products but currently lack the means to do so. (McEachern, M. G., & McClean, P. 2002)

Environmentally friendly behavior is uniform across different socioeconomic groups. A study of green consumers highlights that their age and income are significant economic and demographic factors for green segments. There is an increase in the portion of the population who are ready to invest in cosmetics that are safe for both themselves and the planet. This trend is attributed to the rise of double-income households, evolving family sizes, and changing attitudes and lifestyles. (Rawat, S. R., & Garga, P. 2012).

V. Research Methodology

A structured questionnaire has been prepared containing objective and subjective type questions. The data has been collected online via google form and offline by interview and self-survey. The increasing availability of technologically advanced systems, internet signals and convenience related to that has made the surveys from remote areas to remote people convenient and reliable. (Dillman et al, 1999; Dillman & Bowker, 2001)

Target Population -The 100 consumers who are of 25 years or above regardless of being male or female with the ability and willingness to make purchase decisions are taken into account for getting the questionnaire filled. All the target respondents who are chosen as samples are decision makers, educated, and have buying capacity.

Sampling Method-In this research, simple random sampling method was used.

VI. Research Gap

Although many studies and research have examined the supermarket consumers and consumers residing in metro cities, there is lack of research on consumers of the local/village areas. Due to awareness related to green products, there is much stress on purchasing green products in developed countries citing their environmental

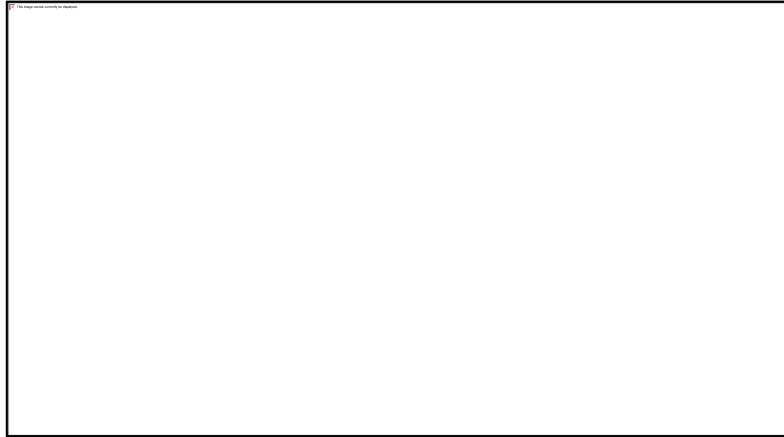
concern. (Ramayah T, Lee JWC, Mohamad O, 2010). This research gap limits our understanding of awareness level and buying behavior towards green products among local consumers of the small cities.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the awareness level and buying behavior of local and small cities' market consumers. On the basis of this research, we might be able to make conclusions about the need for green consumerism in the coming years for the small cities.

VII. Discussion Based On Consumer Responses -Analysis And Result

Observations from Consumers' responses:

Gender



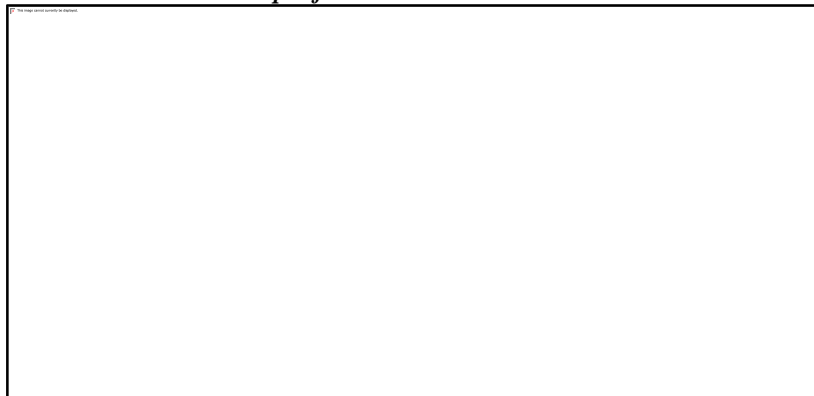
The survey questionnaire was sent to equal numbers of males and females but this research sample appears to have a majority of responses from females (61.7%) compared to males (38.3%). In the context of this study on awareness about green products, this gender distribution may suggest potential differences in awareness or engagement levels with green products between males and females. Further analysis could explore these gender-specific patterns and their implications for marketing strategies or environmental education initiatives targeting different demographic groups.

Awareness of Green Products



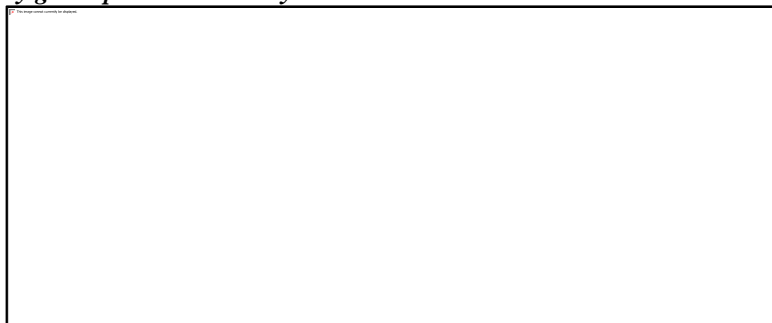
The research indicates that a significant majority (93.3%) of the sampled population is aware of green products, reflecting a growing trend towards environmental awareness. However, it is difficult to decipher the amount of knowledge they have about green products. It might be at the superficial level for some and some consumers must be fully aware of the same. However, the existence of a 6.7% segment that is not aware suggests that there are still individuals who may not have been reached by current sustainability messaging or initiatives. This finding underscores the importance of targeted outreach efforts to bridge this awareness gap and potentially broaden the adoption of green products among a more diverse audience. There is awareness of green products in developed nations but budding markets are still in need of this awareness. (Mittelman. R, 2022)

People around you aware about the concept of Green Products



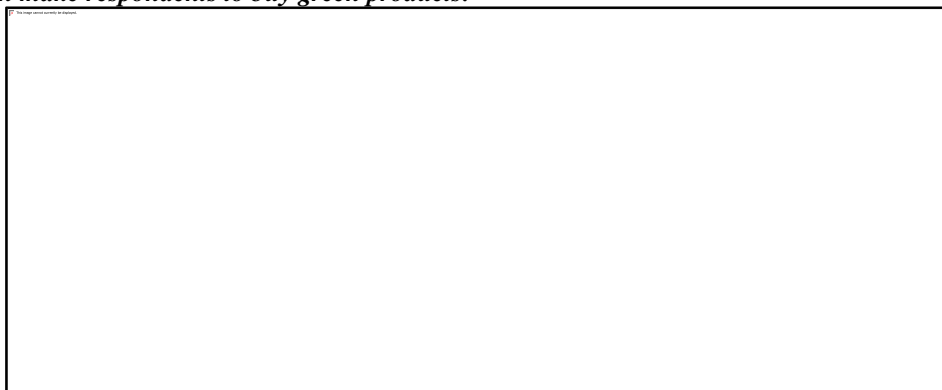
The data reveals varying degrees of awareness among the people surrounding the respondents regarding green products. While a notable portion (21.7%) is fully aware of the concept, a significant majority (43.3%) lacks complete understanding. The presence of respondents reporting "somewhat" understanding (20%) suggests a middle-ground of awareness, and 15% reporting no awareness indicates a minority without any knowledge. This suggests the importance of tailored education and outreach efforts to address the gaps in understanding and promote greater awareness and adoption of green products within the broader community.

Have you bought any green products recently?



The responses show that a considerable number (56.7%) of participants haven't bought green products recently. This might suggest obstacles or difficulties preventing them from embracing eco-friendly purchasing behaviors. Delving into the reasons for this reluctance could offer insights into where marketing tactics, product availability, or green product affordability could be enhanced. Tackling these challenges could promote the adoption of sustainable consumption habits, leading to favorable environmental impacts. This also suggests that the shallow knowledge of green products and the hazard the non-eco-friendly products are throwing, is either not the concern of the consumer or he is so involved in his life that he doesn't want to pay heed to it as an important topic which can later pose severe threats to the environment.

Facts which make respondents to buy green products:



The survey indicates that the factors influencing respondents to buy green products indicates that the primary driver is concern for environmental issues, with 68.3% citing this as a motivating factor. This underscores a strong sense of environmental awareness and commitment among consumers. Additionally, a significant portion (20%) are influenced by product features, suggesting that attributes such as eco-friendly materials or energy efficiency play a role in purchasing decisions. However, the lower percentages for packaging (8.3%) and promotion campaigns (3.4%) suggest that while these factors may still influence some consumers, they are not as prominent as environmental concerns or product features in driving green product purchases. Even after the pricing of the green products remaining at the higher side, people with the flair towards it, tend to buy them because of their long-term positive impact. (Ritter ÁM, Borchardt M, Vaccaro GLR, Pereira GM, Almeida F, 2015)

VIII. Result

Combining the interpretations from the previous discussions,

1. The research sample comprises a majority of females (61.7%) compared to males (38.3%).
2. There is a high level of awareness about green products among the respondents, with 93.3% indicating awareness and 6.7% not aware, indicating a positive trend towards environmental consciousness.
3. Regarding the awareness of people around the respondents about green products concepts, results show that 21.7% are fully aware, 20% have some understanding, 43.3% lack complete understanding, and 15% have no awareness, suggesting varying levels of awareness within the community.
4. When asked about recent purchases of green products, 43.3% of respondents reported yes, while 56.7% reported no, indicating a significant level of engagement with environmentally-friendly options but also a majority portion of the population that may not prioritize or actively seek out green products.
5. Factors influencing respondents to buy green products include concern for environmental issues (68.3%), product features (20%), packaging (8.3%), and promotion campaigns (3.4%), suggesting a strong sense of environmental responsibility among consumers and the importance of eco-friendly attributes in purchase decisions. If the consumer is well equipped with the knowledge of green products and the benefits associated with it, there is a possibility of their purchase choices based on the benefit of the environment. (Wu S-I, Chen Y-J, 2014)

Overall, these interpretations provide valuable insights into consumer behavior, environmental awareness, and the factors driving the adoption of green products. They highlight the importance of targeted education, marketing strategies, and product innovation to promote sustainable consumption practices and address environmental challenges.

IX. Conclusion

Considering the collective interpretations from the previous discussions, it's evident that there is a significant need for green consumerism in the coming years. Several key points support this conclusion:

Gender Dynamics: The predominance of females in the research sample (61.7%) compared to males (38.3%) underscores the importance of inclusive approaches to promote green consumerism that appeal to diverse demographics.

High Awareness Levels: The high level of awareness (93.3%) about green products among respondents highlights a growing trend towards environmental consciousness. This suggests a fertile ground for promoting green consumerism in the future.

Varied Awareness Levels: The varying levels of awareness among the people surrounding the respondents about green products concepts (ranging from full awareness to no awareness) underscore the need for widespread education and outreach efforts to enhance understanding and promote adoption of sustainable practices.

Mixed Purchase Behavior: While a significant portion (43.3%) have purchased green products recently, a majority of respondents (56.7%) have not. This indicates both progress and room for improvement in promoting green consumerism.

Motivating Factors: Concern for environmental issues emerges as the primary motivating factor for purchasing green products (68.3%). This underscores the urgency of addressing environmental challenges through consumer behavior change.

Taken together, these insights emphasize the critical role of green consumerism in addressing environmental issues and promoting sustainability in the coming years. Efforts to increase awareness, overcome barriers to adoption, and promote eco-friendly products and practices will be essential for driving a transition towards more sustainable consumption patterns.

In combination, these findings highlight the vital significance of green consumerism in tackling environmental challenges and fostering sustainability in the years ahead. Initiatives aimed at raising awareness, addressing adoption barriers, and promoting environmentally-friendly products and behaviors will be crucial for driving the transition towards more sustainable consumption patterns.

X. Suggestions From Respondents

- Develop durable products to minimize the need for frequent replacements, thus reducing resource consumption.
- Increase promotional activities.
- Produce environmentally-friendly items.
- Offer affordable product options.
- Educate the public about electric vehicles for environmental improvement.
- Provide personal care products free from harmful chemicals.
- Design eco-friendly products that benefit both society and health.
- Encourage consumption of eco-friendly products that do not harm the environment.
- Have you explored transitioning to reusable water bottles or using energy-efficient light bulbs? These small adjustments can yield significant environmental benefits and long-term cost savings. Let's collectively strive for a greener, more sustainable future.

References-

- [1]. Azad,S.(2022,May24).Microplastic Found In Fish Of Alaknanda River In Pauri
[Http://M.Timesofindia.Com/Articleshow/91750896.Cms?Utm_Source=Contentofinterest&Utm_MediUm=Text&Utm_Campaign=Cppest](http://M.Timesofindia.Com/Articleshow/91750896.Cms?Utm_Source=Contentofinterest&Utm_MediUm=Text&Utm_Campaign=Cppest)
- [2]. B., Sreeya. (2020). Customer Awareness Towards Organic Food Products In Chennai. *Test Engineering And Management*. 82, 15375-15380.
- [3]. Dillman, D., R. Tortora, & Bowker, D. (1999). Principles For Constructing Web Surveys. Retrieved February 11, 2004, From [Http://Survey.Sesrc.Wsu.Edu/Dillman/Papers/Websurveyppr.Pdf](http://Survey.Sesrc.Wsu.Edu/Dillman/Papers/Websurveyppr.Pdf)
- [4]. Dillman, D. & Bowker, D. (2001). The Web Questionnaire Challenge To Survey Methodologists. Retrieved September 20, 2004, From The Washington State University Web Site: [Http://Survey.Sesrc.Wsu.Edu/Dillman/Zuma_Paper_Dillman_Bowker.Pdf](http://Survey.Sesrc.Wsu.Edu/Dillman/Zuma_Paper_Dillman_Bowker.Pdf)
- [5]. Dhanda, U. & Gupta, S. (2015). Exploring The Go Green Mantra In India. *Indian Journal Of Science And Technology*. 8(Supplementary 4), 1-12. 10.17485/Ijst/2015/V8is4/67056
- [6]. Handayani, W., Prayogo, A.R. (2017) Green Consumerism: An Eco-Friendly Behaviour Form Through The Green Product Consumption And Green Marketing, *Sinergi Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Manajemen*. 7(2), 25-29. Doi: 10.25139/Sng.V7i2.364.
- [7]. Heather A. Leslie, Martin J.M. Van Velzen, Sicco H. Brandsma, A. Dick Vethaak, Juan J. Garcia-Vallejo, Marja H. Lamoree, (2022). Discovery And Quantification Of Plastic Particle Pollution In Human Blood, *Environment International*. 163, 107199, Issn 0160-4120, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2022.107199>.
- [8]. Joshi, Y., & Rahman, Z. (2015). Factors Affecting Green Purchase Behaviour And Future Research Directions. *International Strategic Management Review*. 3(1-2), 128-143.
- [9]. Kirmani, D, Naved. M. (2016). Green Consumerism- A Review Of Extent Literature. *Pacific Business Review International*. 9, 48-59.
- [10]. Mallya, M.M. (2022). A Study On Green Consumerism Awareness And Behavioural Attitudes Towards Green Products Among Women In Mangalore City Corporation Area Of Karnataka. Thesis Presented To Mangalore University, [Http://hdl.Handle.Net/10603/445132](http://hdl.handle.net/10603/445132)
- [11]. Mceachern, M. G., & Mcclean, P. (2002). Organic Purchasing Motivations And Attitudes:Are They Ethical? *International Journal Of Consumer Studies*. 26(2), 85-92.
- [12]. Mittelman R (2012) Green Consumer Behaviour In Emerging Markets: A Review Of Research. *Proc Ann Market Div Conf* 33(3):392-441
- [13]. Ramayah T, Lee Jwc, Mohamad O (2010) Green Product Purchase Intention: Some Insights From A Developing Country. *Resour Conserv Recycl* 54(12):1419-1427. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2010.06.007>
- [14]. Rawat, S. R., & Garga, P. (2012). Understanding Consumer Behaviour Towards Green Cosmetics.Avaliable At Ssrn 2111545.
- [15]. Ritter Ám, Borchardt M, Vaccaro Glr, Pereira Gm, Almeida F (2015) Motivations For Promoting The Consumption Of Green Products In An Emerging Country: Exploring Attitudes Of Brazilian Consumers. *J Clean Prod* 106:507-520
- [16]. Saha, A. Ing. (2017). Green Awareness: Consumer Intention Towards Green Consumerism In India. Doctoral Thesis Published By: Tomas Bata University, Zlín.
- [17]. Srivastava, M., Malik, K., & Kumar, R. (2016). "Consumers' Readiness For Green Products And Its Effect On Sustainable Development". *Amity Journal Of Marketing*. Admaa, 1(1), 93-104.
- [18]. Wu S-I, Chen Y-J (2014) The Impact Of Green Marketing And Perceived Innovation On Purchase Intention For Green Products. *Int J Market Stud* 6(5):81-100