

**SOCIO ECONOMIC FACTORS AND MOTIVATION OF GREEN CONSUMERS ON THE DEMAND FOR GREEN PRODUCTS IN THE MALLS OF ERNAKULUM DISTRICT OF KERALA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The people of Kerala are educated and are considered socially and environmentally responsible population. They follow traditional values in connivance with socially enlightened and progressive trends. The demand for green products assumes significance in this context. The demand for green products are steadily increasing in Kerala today .This paper tries to analyse the relationship among socio economic factors, motives behind the purchase of green products by the green consumers in Kerala. This green motives varies from individual to individual. The study is confined to two important Malls in Kerala. A direct interview was scheduled for the purpose and the information was collected from 134 consumers. Of which, a sample size of 79 is taken for the study as they are green consumers. The different motives behind green purchasing primarily concentrates on two important factors, environment concerns and health concerns. This analysis helps policy makers to accentuate the demand for green products among the people to sustain the future generation in this blue planet.

**Keywords:** Green Products, Green Motives, Green Consumers, Malls, Environmental Concerns, Health concerns.

**Introduction**

The educated population of Kerala usually embrace the twin concepts of tradition and modernity in their lives. They do consider the traditional values and at the same time uphold the modern views. The men and women are equally educated and they exhibit high degree of social and environmental responsibility towards the society in which they live. They follow certain traditions through which they protect the environment in which they live. Large number of population follow nuclear family. The people usually give preference to education and family. Most of the women along with their male counterparts have jobs and earn living on their own to

support their spouse. A good number of families usually spend their holidays in Malls, where they can buy goods and can spend time with their family leisurely.

The people are aware of and are concerned about the destruction and depletion of resources, which are necessary for human sustenance. So they are increasingly thinking about alternatives and explore upon the possibility of buying and using green products. Being family oriented and aware of environmental and other related issues that the world faces today, thanks to the information received from the wide social platforms like what's up , internet etc. the people of Kerala are aware of green products and its benefits to the society.

Green products are those products whose consumption creates less impact on the society, particularly to the individual and nature. They can be reused for other purposes. They can be recycled and can produce other products which are useful to mankind. Another important fact to be noted is that they are easily bio degradable. Unnecessary consumptions are avoided to a larger extent and thus avoid the destructive exploitation of products in the society.

The extent of preference for green products differ with gender, age, education, occupational status, type of family etc. But in this analysis our analysis depends upon only limited factors. Some of the generally described different motives on which green consumption depends on are environmental concerns, health concerns, mere need for the product, social status etc. In this article, what we consider are the environmental concerns and health concerns behind the green motives. There are certain people who consider the wellbeing of the society and are more concerned about different types of environmental issues existing in the society. They are aware of destruction and depletion of natural resources in the economy. They are genuinely concerned about the very existence of human beings in the society due to the environmental issues that affect the very sustenance of their survival in this planet. Likewise some people are confined to their self and is concerned about their immediate family and their existence only. They are more attentive to the health factor of themselves and also of their dear and near ones. They consider good health as the foundation of their life on this blue planet. These two motives always cross the considerations of the people.

### **Methodology and Analysis**

The main aim of this paper is to analyse between the two main motives of purchasing green products, the health concerns and environmental concerns. The study is confined to the Ernakulum district of Kerala. Two important Malls are selected for the primary data collection. Consumers are interviewed directly for the purpose and the responses are marked in the schedule. At total of 134 consumers are interviewed, of which 79 only are green consumers. The sample size is very small, since the data for analysis was collected from green consumers only.

**The details are given in the following table:**

Name of the Mall	No: of consumers responded	No: of green consumer	No: of green consumers (%)	Male consumers	Male consumers (%)	Female consumers	Female consumers (%)
Mall A	62	37	60	16	43	21	57
Mall B	72	42	58	19	45	23	55
Total	134	79		35		44	

In Mall –A, 37 consumers buy green products. In this analysis 21 are women and the rest 16 are men. .In Mall –B, 42 of the responded consumers are green, of which 23 respondents are female and 19 are male.

From the above table, we can infer that in Mall A, of the total consumers responded 60% are green consumers whereas in the case of Mall B, 58% are green consumers. We can also see that the female respondents are 57% and 55% in both malls. The male responses are respectively 43 and 45% in both malls A and B. majority of respondents are female in both the Malls.

Malls	Age up to 25	Age up to 25(%)	Age 26-60	Age 26-60(%)	Age 60 above	Age 60 above (%)
A	11	30	23	62	3	8
B	10	24	27	64	5	12

We can infer from the above analysis that ,of the 37 responses received at Mall A ,30% are below 25 years and 62% between 26-60.In the case of Mall B 24%are from age up to 25 and the 64 % from 26-60 age group. The rest in both sides are only a minority from the age group above 60.

Malls	Income up to 25000	Income up to 25000(%)	Income 26000-50000	Income 26000-50000(%)	Income above 51000	Income above 50000(%)
A	3	8	24	65	10	27
B	2	5	24	57	16	38

From the table above we can see that 65% of green consumers at Mall A and 57% at Mall B belong to the income bracket between 26000-50000, 27% and 38% respectively for the income above 50000. For the income level up to 25000, only 8% and 5% are green consumers.

Malls	Nuclear family	Nuclear family (%)	Joint family	Joint family (%)
A	32	86	5	14
B	33	79	9	21

What is analysed from the table above is that 86% and 79% of green consumers in Mall A and B have nuclear families. And the rest belong to joint families.

Malls	Education –up to plus two level	Education –up to plus two level (%)	Graduates	Graduates (%)	Post graduates and professional	Post graduates and professionals (%)
A	2	5	13	35	22	60
B	4	10	9	21	29	69

About 60 % and 69% of green consumers are either post graduates or professionals at Mall A and Mall B, whereas 35% and 21% are graduates and only 5% and 10% had education up to plus two level.

Malls	Motive of buying green products – environmental concerns	Motive of buying green products – environmental concerns	Motive of buying green products – health concerns	Motive of buying green products – health concerns
A	11	30	26	70
B	8	19	34	81

The environmental concerns influence 30% and 19% of green consumers at Mall A and B to buy green products whereas the health motives influenced 7% and 81 % respectively at Mall A and B.

A consolidated analysis is given below, where analysis is based on gender also.

Mall	A				B			
	Male	Male(%)	Female	Female (%)	Male	Male(%)	Female	Female (%)
No; of green consumers	16	43	21	57	19	57	23	55
Nuclear family	14	88	18	86	16	86	17	74
Joint family	2	12	3	14	3	14	6	26
Environment concerns motivate to buy green products	9	56	2	10	7	10	1	4
Health concerns motivate to buy green	7	44	19	90	12	90	22	96

products								
Education –up to plus two level	0	0	2	10	2	10	2	9
Graduates	6	38	7	33	3	33	6	26
Post Graduates	10	62	12	57	14	57	15	65
Age up to 25	3	19	8	38	5	38	5	22
Age 26- 60	11	69	12	57	12	57	15	65
Age 60 above	2	12	1	5	2	5	3	13
Income up to 25000	1	6	2	10	1	10	1	4
Income between 26000- 50000	10	63	14	67	11	67	13	57
Income above 51000	5	31	5	23	7	23	9	39

We can find from the analysis above that 43% of green consumers are male and 57% are females in Mall A .88% and 86% of males and females belong to nuclear family and it was 12 and 14% in the case of joint families.56% of males are concerned about environment, whereas the 44% are concerned with health issues while proceeding with green purchase. In the case of females 90% of them give priority to health aspects while going for green products and the remaining 10% concerned about environment.38% of male and 33% of females are graduates .The percentage of green consumers who are post graduates or professional are 62% and 57% for males and females respectively. The green consumers between age group 26-60 are 69% and 57% for male and female.12% and 5% respectively for male and female consumers in the age group above 60.The percentage of male and female in the age group below 25 are 19 and 38% respectively.63 and 67% of male and females are having income between 26000-50000 and 31 and 23% male and female consumers are having income above 50000.

We can view from the table above that 45% of green consumers are male and 55% are females in Mall B .84% and 74% of males and females belong to nuclear family and it was 16 and 26% in the case of joint families.37% of males are concerned about environment, whereas the 63% are concerned with health issues while proceeding with green purchase. In the case of females 96% of them give priority to health aspects while going for green products and the remaining 4% concerned about environment.16% of male and 26% of females are graduates .the percentage of green consumers who are post graduates or professional are 73% and 65% for males and females respectively. The green consumers between age group 26-60 are 63% and 65% for male and female.11% and 13% respectively for male and female consumers in the age group above 60.The percentage of male and female in the age group below 26 are 26 and 22% respectively.58 and 57% of male and females are having income between 26000-50000 and 37 and 39% male and female consumers are having income above 50000.

Another interesting factor observed is that the motives of male and female consumers differ in their inclination to buy green products. In both Malls, it is found out that the male green consumers are more concerned about the environment, whereas female green consumers are more family oriented and is concerned about the health issues while demanding green products.

### **Findings**

We can find out that the number of female green consumers outnumber the male green consumers. It is also revealed that the females respond to the interview on demand for green products much more than the males and hence are more socially responsible. An in-depth analysis has not been facilitated as the observations are limited to a small sample size and also confined to the two Malls only. One thing to be noticed is that the consumers mostly belong to the nuclear family without any gender bias. Another fact observed is that the majority of green



consumers belong to the middle income group, that is between 26000-50000. The number of green consumers are higher in the age group 26-60. As far as education level is concerned majority are in the category post graduates/professionals.

We can infer from the analysis above that green consumers and higher education are positively related. As education increases the number of green consumers are also in an increasing trend. Nuclear family increases the concern of members to their own family, particularly to the women and hence consider the consumption of green products looking into view that its consumption increases the welfare of their family members. Green consumers predominate the middle age group 26-60 as they are aware of environmental issues threatening the sustenance of this earth round them. They also possess a good and steady income which is needed for the continued purchase of green products which help the sustained economic consumption and hence the sustainable development.

### **Conclusion**

This study tried to analyse the relationship between motives of green purchase and socio-economic factors of green consumers at Malls in Kerala. The consumers are found to be more conscious of the need to use alternative products for consumption due to the destruction and depletion of natural resources. But the motives of buying green products differs gender wise. Men prefer green products as they are more concerned about environmental issues, but women are more health conscious and are concerned about the health of family members.

Green consumption behaviour is increasing at a larger pace in beautiful blue planet, thanks to the increasing awareness of individual in the society regarding the environmental issues that engulfed the sustenance of the future and present generations.

Green products definitely are a good and almost perfect alternative to reduce the depletion and destruction of natural resources in our blue planet

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