

ABSTRACT

Concern about the environment is on the rise and that has caused an increase in consumer environmental awareness, and thus an increase in consumer green purchasing. Marketers have viewed this as offering business opportunities and have recognized the value of environmental or green marketing. Therefore, this research aims to determine gender differences in attitudes towards environmental issues and ecologically conscious consumer behavior.

To determine differences in attitudes and ecologically conscious consumer behavior of different groups of consumers, exploratory research and descriptive research are applied. While principle independent variables are attitudes towards environmental issues and ecologically conscious consumer behavior and dependent variables are defined as demographic variables including gender, income, age, education and occupation. With regards to the sampling method, a non-probability sampling is employed since there is no way of estimating the probability that any population element will be included in sample. This research applies quota sampling to ensure the representativeness of the sample in terms of gender by determining equally 150 male and female respondents, followed by convenience sampling of respondents at department stores in Bangkok. After the data collection procedures are carried out, all the research hypotheses are testing by using Independent T-Test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Correlation Analysis.

Based on the findings of the research, it shows that there is an existence of the environmental concern in consumers in Bangkok as the majority of the respondents (39.7%) have strong attitudes towards environmental issues and most of them (63%) have high level of ecologically conscious consumer behavior.

In addition, according to the results of the analyses, it can be concluded that there is difference in attitudes towards environmental issues between male and female consumers. Moreover, the results of the study support theoretical justification given earlier by Eagly (1987) that women hold green attitudes more consistently than men do. As a result, marketers need to be aware of this fact and implement marketing strategies accordingly.

Furthermore, it is found out that there is a difference in attitudes towards environmental issues between age groups. There are also differences found between income, age, and occupation groups when concerning ecologically conscious consumer behavior. It can be concluded that there are few demographic variables found to have statistically significant differences in attitudes towards environmental issues and ecologically conscious consumer behavior. Accordingly, the study proves that the characteristics of the concerned segment may not be wholly demographically defined. The findings are largely consistent with a previous study (Roberts, 1996) that demographic variables do not appear to be effective in explaining variation in ecologically conscious consumer behavior. Accordingly, choices of media vehicles, creative appeals, and the like should not be based on demographic assumptions.

From the findings of the research, it can be recommended that there now seems to be considerable demand for products that not only satisfy a consumer's immediate needs but also benefit the environment in the long term. Therefore, there appears to be an opportunity here for marketers to successfully practice differentiated

marketing, that is, different products and appeals for different segments. Marketing to this segment by changing existing products or introducing new ones may represent a new market opportunity for many firms. This is because consumers now consider the environmental consequences of products before making their purchasing decisions.

Thus, organizations aiming to increase market penetration for existing green product offerings would be recommended to develop campaigns directed at increasing concern about environmental quality in the consumer base (e.g. advertising campaigns, point-of-sale material).

Finally, organizations in the process of developing new green product offerings should ensure that their products perform competitively in other dimensions. This is due to the fact that consumers often purchase products based on many reasons such as price, availability, quality, and convenience (Schlegelmilch et al., 1996).

