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## **A STUDY ON ENVIRONMENT POLLUTION AND ITS CAUSES**

# A Study on Environment Pollution and Its Causes

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**Abstract – Environmental pollution is one of the biggest problems that the world faces today. It is an issue that troubles us economically, physically and everyday of our lives. The contamination of the environment is also being linked to some of the diseases that are around currently. Yet, most people do not know about this problem. This shows that environmental pollution is becoming an increasingly worse problem that needs to be taken care of as soon as possible, not only for the good of the environment but also for the people that live in it. Many factors are present for why environmental pollution has become such a large issue in the world. However, if the people of the world were to address the issue, it would definitely help both the environment and its people. There are many activities that can be done by both the common citizen to the governments of the world, which could severally improve the world's environmental problem. On the other hand, if the current way the world's environmental problem is being handled continues, catastrophic consequences can follow for the future population.**

## INTRODUCTION

Current environmental issues include global warming, air pollution, acid rain, carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, water pollution from runoff of pesticides and fertilizers, limited natural fresh water and desertification. These and other adverse effects of environment on humankind are enormous and are a major impediment to sustainable development.

Man's greed for socio-economic progress and in his curiosity to probe into and understand the philosophy of the creation, he initiated exploitation of not only co human and other beings, but also the faculty of natural resources. In this process, man has reached to an extreme state of polluting his own surrounding environment thereby endangering the very existing of peaceful and natural living of all. Scientists bring to our attention complex but urgent problems that are bearing on our very survival. A warming globe, acid precipitation, threats to ozone layer, accumulation of green house gases, deserts consuming agricultural land, fast depletion of vital natural resources, the disappearance of rain forests and loss of species. Reports indicate that the Baltic Sea is dying from sewage and other pollution.

Every year, we lose 25 billion tons of top soil affecting 6 to 7 million hectares of agricultural land affected by water-logging, stalinization and alkanization.

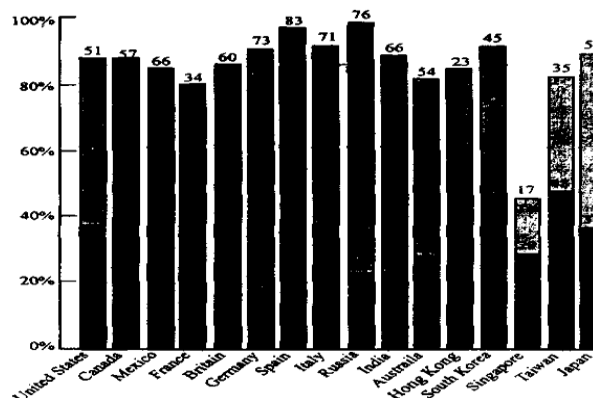


Fig : Worldwide Environmental Concern

Total Average Country Basis 54% Strongly Agree, 32% Moderately Agree, 10% Moderately Disagree, 3% Strongly Disagree, Angus Reid World Poll of 16 countries, 4600 interviews, in a opinion poll of 16 countries in 1992 for the statement of "I am very worried about the state of environment" was found that more than four-fifths of the respondents worried about the state of the environment. More than half concurred that pollution must be reduced even if it means slower growth.

The ecological crisis has an outcome of human impact on nature. Reliance on fossil fuels, use of firewood for household purposes ensuring dramatic deforestation as well as fanning activity make up an essential cause of the current global warming. These activities are releasing around 7 billion tons per annum of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Unbridled and apparently uncontrollable growth of

industry, transport and motor vehicle considered the primary sources of sulphur dioxide and nitrogen which pollutes air. This air pollution has become a serious threat in major urban centers.

Waste of household, agricultural and industrial origin alike is carried off in the world's water bodies turning them into gigantic sewers. The direct consequences are the accumulation of heavy metals, highly toxic organic compounds in sediment on the ocean floor, riverbeds and lakebeds resulting in a massive death of aquatic life. Soil pollution is a consequence of agricultural practices imposed by market pressure, intensive farming, monoculture, crops unsuited to local ecosystems and climates etc.

The most disturbing aspect of ecological crisis is the destruction of the world's forest. In 50 years, one third of the world's tree cover has disappeared. This has hit tropical countries the hardest. Deforestation is the outcome of over-harvesting of tropical woods, with no concern for sustainable management.

This aggravates not only the problem of greenhouse effect but also destroys biodiversity. One quarter of the earth's biodiversity could disappear within the next 25 years and eventually destabilize the environmental balance, with incalculable consequences on human living conditions. The UN estimates that approximately 500 million people are environmental refugees forced to leave their regions of origin in the wake of drought, flood, soil erosion, and the extension of export oriented agriculture etc.

These and other dramatic changes are fundamentally impinging upon our global environment. An already crowded planet will have to support twice as many people within the next 40 years. To meet the needs of the people, world industrial output will have to quintuple. About 90 per cent of this population growth is expected in the already over populated poor countries who face tremendous shortage of resources for development. Already industrial development has grown more than 50 times over the past century, four-fifths of which has come since 1950. Industrialization, urbanization, consumerism, new consumption and social linkages are mainly responsible for the present state of environmental problems. In the quest for economic development, the society has, so far given total freedom to business enterprises in consumption of natural resources. This unbridled freedom has led to the fast depletion of the natural resources which gives a stress on the supply chain of the nature.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Success of any marketing programme or plan to address any environment problem depends upon the extent of consumer's participation. It is possible through changing the attitude and behavior of the consumer toward the programme. Therefore, studying the consumer behavior is essential. Researches were

conducted by various scholars at different times to identify ecologically concerned consumers. The following are some of the research in the area of consumer behavior.

Kistaitain (1971) used demographic and socio economic measures like age, sex, education, social class, home value, occupation, marital status and political party.

Anderson & Winningham (1972) used 8 items of social responsibility scale (SRS) as a surrogate measures for environmental concern. The researchers used personality measures viz., alienation, dogmatism, personal competence, status consciousness, cosmopolitanism and conservation to know the Ecological concern of the society. They also used demographic and socio economic measures viz., Occupation, Income, Education, Age, Stage in family life cycle, Socio economic status, etc., for their study.

Kinnear & Taylor (1973) used 8 items index of ecological concern as a measure. They did not use package related questions, but used personality, demographic and socio economic, cultural & geographic measure to know the attitude and behavior of the consumers.

Anderson & Henion Cox (1974) compared recycles with non recycles across different dimensions. Also asked questions about packaged related measures particularly whether they participated in the recycling or not. This has been considered the first study which used packaged related question at research level. They used personality, demographic, socio-economic, cultural and geographic measures.

Kinnear Anxiety, Taylor & Ahmed (1974) items index of ecological concern item perceived consumer effectiveness, to know the ecological concern of the respondents. Aggression, anxiety, self-esteem, play, desirability, dominance, sentience, understanding, harm-avoidance and tolerance as personality measures. Age, Education, income and Occupation were used as demographic and socio economic measures Webster (1975) related measures using 8 items measures of socially conscious consumer, 2 items perceived consumer effectiveness were used. He also studied about concern for use of returnable and use of recycling series of packages. Dominance, Tolerance, Socialization and responsibility were used as personality measures. Age, Education, Gender, Income, Marital Statues and Occupation were used as demographic and socio economic measures and in the case of cultural and geographic measures, 8 items social responsibility scale were used.

Henian & Wilson (1976) used a research considering 8 items index of ecological concern. 1 item perceived consumer effectiveness and 128 item ecology scale were used to know the environmental concern and related measures of the respondents. It studied

about use of recyclables. First time, 24 items locus of control has been used to know how personality measures play a role in deciding the purchase behavior of environmentally safe packages. They did not use Demographic, Socio Economic, Cultural and Geographic measures in their study to know its influence in the purchase behavior of the consumers in purchasing environmentally safe packages.

Murphy, Kangun & Locander (1978) for the first time, the concern for solid waste was used at research level. Interest in recyclable and attitude of returning the packages were also studied. Race and social class had been used as Demographic and Socio economic measures to know how these variables determine or influence in the behavioral patterns of the respondents.

Murphy (1978) had studied using simulated brand choice of environmentally correct product to know the ecological concern. To know the attitude regarding packages, he studied the interest of the consumers in choosing returnable soft drink container. The study was a replica of the previous study regarding personality, cultural and geographic variables. Age, Education, Income, Occupation, Marital Status and Family Size were used as demographic and socio economic variables.

Tremblay and Dunlap (1978) studied using 8 item pollution concern measures and population density as cultural and geographic measures. Package, Personality and Demographic and Socio Economic variables had not been used by the researchers.

Beleh (1979) studied using ecological concern, package, and personality as the variables in determining the purchase behavior of the respondents. 20 items measure of concern with social and ecological dimension were used to study the ecological concern. This study focused on concern over littering and how litter creates pollution.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

Objectives of the present study are:-

- To identify ecologically concerned consumers, demographic, Socio-economic, cultural and personality variables, and attitudes of consumers towards environmental friendly packaging.
- Consumer's concern with plastic carry bags contribution to solid waste, pollution and consumer's interest in the use of recyclable or reusable carry bags like cloth, jute etc., and play a predominant role.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

Demographic and Socio-economic variables will be used to find out whether it has a capacity to predict ecologically concerned consumers and if it is so, how it could be used for segmenting the market to have a separate shelf in the supermarket to satisfy the customers. The previous studies, which used demographic and socio economic variables, found that these variables have the capacity to predict ecologically concerned consumers and few other researches reveal that these variables are limited in explaining variation in environmental concern. Therefore the present attempt could verify the findings of the previous studies also.

The instrument viz., interview schedule will be conducted which will be based largely on variables deemed important on the ecologically concerned consumers. Nine scales will be used to understand one's attitude towards litter, perception of pollution, attitude towards environmentally conscious living, attitude about the living area etc. The purpose of assessing these dimensions is to determine whether those with favorable inclinations towards the environment and those aware of pollution could be more likely to purchase ecologically packaged goods or not.

All the scale items in the schedule for measuring the eco-attitude and behavior of the respondents with regard to environment will be subjected to reliability analysis to ascertain whether the items included in the various scales are reliable or not for farther proceeding the analysis.

A sample of 1000 will be drawn adopting convenience sample method among the consumers who visited the 20 super markets. The interview schedule will be administered on the selected sample. Sophisticated statistical tools such as t-test, f-test, Factor analysis, Cluster analysis, Reliability test, Multiple regression analysis, Discriminate analysis and Structure-matrix will be employed for analysis purpose.

## **SCOPE OF THE STUDY:**

The rise of green marketing has stimulated the most research in the area of consumer behavior. How consumers integrate green issues into the decision-making processes appears to be of utmost interest for practitioners. The underlying rationale is that once organizations understand the green needs of their consumers, then they can subsequently better satisfy consumer needs. Additional change or modification of consumer behavior, to integrate environmental issues in consumption patterns, has also been interesting to many practitioners.

Consumer awareness about climate change is high. Therefore, business response to climate change is an area of interest where sufficient research is needed. Consumer behavior regarding the travel mode is a potential area of future research as the consequence of air pollution is apparent. Consumer behavior in the tourist places is another area of academic interest.

Public policy and macro-marketing have also received academic attention. Governmental regulations relating to the environment appear to be continuously changing. These changes emanate from the society's changing values as well as mankind's development of a body of environmental knowledge.

Yet another academic area for research is the industrial marketing. Despite being the least-examined topic, it is probably one of the most important. The production process and its impact on marketing deserve more interest. Borrowing some of the tenets of management and integrating into the marketing in order to address some of the concerns is the need of the hour. Understanding some of the organization behavior and motivation concepts and how these concepts can be modified to integrate green issues may be one of worth mentioning areas that need to be researched.

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