

Role of Socio-Demographics in Segmenting and Profiling Green Consumers: An Explanatory Study of Selected Wards of Kolkata

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Abstract:

Consumerism is the economic and cultural tendency to purchase goods and services in increasing quantities, often driven by convenience, brand appeal, and lifestyle aspirations. In contrast, green consumerism emphasizes environmentally responsible and ethically conscious purchasing decisions aimed at reducing the ecological footprint. This Study investigates the contrast between these two consumption paradigms, with a particular focus on the awareness and adoption of green consumerism across different wards. Using both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study assesses consumer awareness, attitudes, and behaviours, alongside the influence of factors such as income, education, product availability, and trust in green claims. Results indicate considerable variation in awareness levels between wards, with some showing high consciousness but limited adoption due to price sensitivity, accessibility issues, and “greenwashing” concerns. The findings highlight that while environmental awareness is gradually increasing, targeted policy interventions, localized awareness campaigns, and improvements in market availability are essential to accelerate the transition from conventional consumerism to sustainable consumption practices. This Study contributes to understanding how socio-economic and contextual factors shape consumer choices and offers practical recommendations for fostering greener consumption habits at the community level.

Keywords: Green consumers, Factors, trends, Consumer Behaviour, Awareness, Environmental sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

In today’s rapidly globalizing world, consumption plays a central role in shaping economies, cultures, and lifestyles. Consumerism marked by pursuit of goods and services in ever increasing amount has driven economic growth and technological innovation, but often at the expense of environmental sustainability and social equity. In response to growing awareness of climate change, pollution, unsustainable waste production and resource depletion, a more conscious alternative has emerged: Green Consumerism. Unlike conventional consumerism, green consumerism emphasizes purchasing decisions that are environment friendly, ethically produced and socially responsible.

LITERATURE SURVEY

A systematic literature search has been chosen for their coverage of the issue of *Consumerism Vs Green Consumerism* which drew attention from experts and agencies of national and international arena.

1. **Sustainable Consumption in India: Challenges and Opportunities: Kumar, D. ,Goyal, P. , Rahman, Z. and Kumar, I. (2011)** aims to study the challenges of sustainable consumption in India. An integrated approach with participation of various stakeholders is essential to adopt the sustainable consumption practices and Changing economic condition and improvement in income level resulted into a remarkable shift in the consumption behavior of Indian middle class.
2. **Effect of Green Marketing on Consumer Behavior – a study with particular reference to West Bengal (India): Roy, H. (2013)** the aim of this study is to find out how consumer behavior is influenced by green marketing by companies. To find out how people perceive green marketing and how aware they are of the “environmental contribution” that is made by the companies.
3. **Analysis of the Awareness of Green Products in the city of Kolkata: Chaudhuri, D. (2014)** analyzed the awareness of the people regarding green products. Green Products are available from the retail market. This survey was conducted of people in three different places in Kolkata, India. The study found that North Kolkata people from the Shyambazar area are most aware of green products.
4. **Analysis of Factors Influencing consumer Preferences for Green Products: A study around Kolkata (West Bengal, India): Majumdar, S. (2015)** the study tries to establish whether there is any significant impact of demographic profile of the consumers on their preference towards green products.
5. **A study on Eco Friendly Consumerism: Pratap, S. (2018)** understand the consumers behavior and to come out with recommendations to promote the consumption of green products.
6. **A Study of Emerging Buying Propensity of Environment Friendly Products and Prospective green Consumerism in India: Kanetkar, M. (2020)** focusses on the present scenario of green consumerism in India. Objectives of this study firstly to know about the increasing buying habit of green products in Indian consumers and secondly to find out their deliberation to protect environment and create sustainable development.
7. **Green Consumerism – Emerging Trends and Evolving Consumer Perception in India: Shweta and Abdin, S. (2020)** aims to introduced by the world’s environmental concerned community to prevent the businesses and environment both, which is known as sustainable development. This study find to explore how this turn has come in consumers perception regarding environment and green products. As a result, found that independent factors as environmental knowledge, environmental concern, perceived knowledge, organizational green image and social influence always reflect in the mind of consumers as green perception.
8. **Emerging Green Consumerism in India: Mohapatra, R. and Swain, S. (2022)** this study seeks to analyze the factors contributing to the rising green consumerism and to further study the governmental intervention which can effectively benefit both the marketers and consumers as well.
9. **Green Consumerism in Indian Market: Berad, N. (2022)** examines people who were actively making consumption decisions and had the ability to adopt green consumerism. The survey findings show that respondents attitudes towards environmental concerns and green consumption are usually favourable.
10. **Determinants of Green Consumption Behavior: Empirical Evidence From India: Arora, C. (2022)** aims at examining different factors determining green consumption behavior in India. This is done in the context of consumption behavior towards goods in the two product categories, viz. organic food products and energy-efficient electrical appliances. Result of the study determine various factors like behavioral flexibility, peer group influence, eco-labelling and certification, family size, and price of green products.

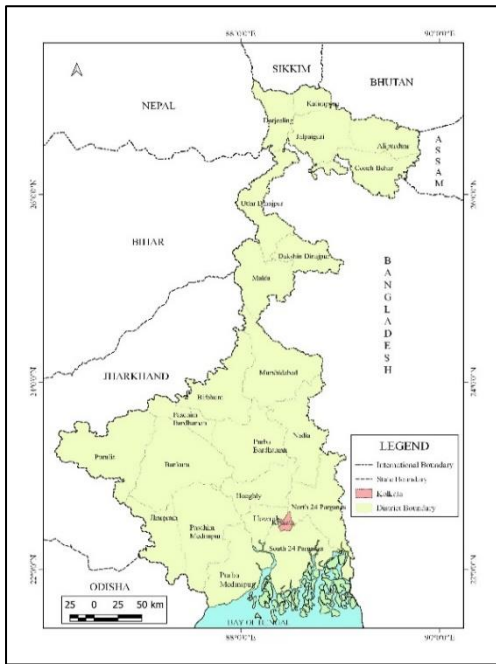
11. **Consumer Perception towards Green Marketing: An Empirical Study in Kolkata: Turkan, I. and Mitra, S. (2023)** to investigate the level of green awareness among individuals and comprehend the concept of green value in consumer purchasing behaviors. Additionally, the researchers attempt to determine how age, gender, and academic credentials affect consumers propensity to make environment friendly purchases.
12. **Green Marketing: A Study of Consumer Perception and Preferences in India: Bhatia, M. and Jain, A. (2023)** This research provides a brief review of environmental issues and identifies the green values of the consumers, their level of awareness about environmental issues, green products and practices. This paper highlights the consumers' perception and preferences towards green marketing practices.
13. **Green Consumer Behaviour in Global Market: Luckho, T. , Gaya, Y. and Veerapen, L. (2023)** this study investigates green consumer behavior focusing on the influence of demographic variables. Findings reveal significant relationships between gender, education, income, and green consumer awareness and attitudes but not only age.
14. **A study on consumer awareness of Green Services and Green Marketing in West Bengal: Chattopadhyay, A. and Mukherjee, S. (2024)** aims to understand the focus on green marketing. Analyses consumer awareness of green products and services, and the concept of green marketing, specifically in West Bengal, focusing on metro areas and nearby regions.
15. **Green Consumerism and Environmental Sustainability: Kumar, A. (2024)** examine whether this new buzzword of green consumerism has any long term benefit for the environment sustainability or is it merely a gimmick in the name of green products.

SELECTION OF STUDY AREA

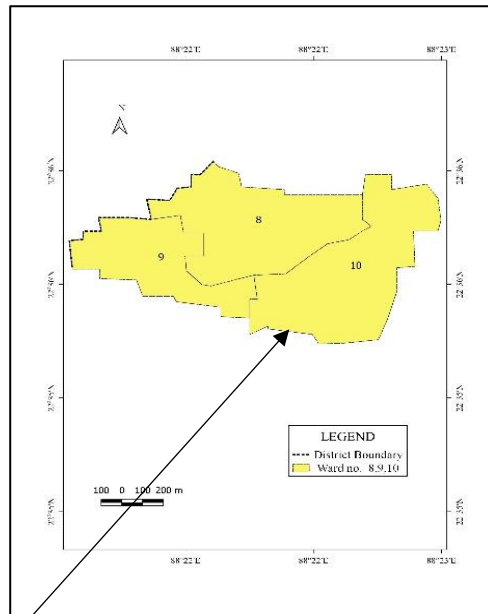
Ward no. 8, 9, 10 with latitudinal 22°35'N-22°36'N and longitudinal 88°22'E-88°23'E extension which is located at northwest and Ward no. 130,131,132 with latitudinal 22°19'N-22°31'N and longitudinal 88°18'E-88°19'E extension located at southwest corner of Kolkata. Comparing the use of green products between these two parts of Kolkata(Fig 1)

LOCATION OF STUDY AREA

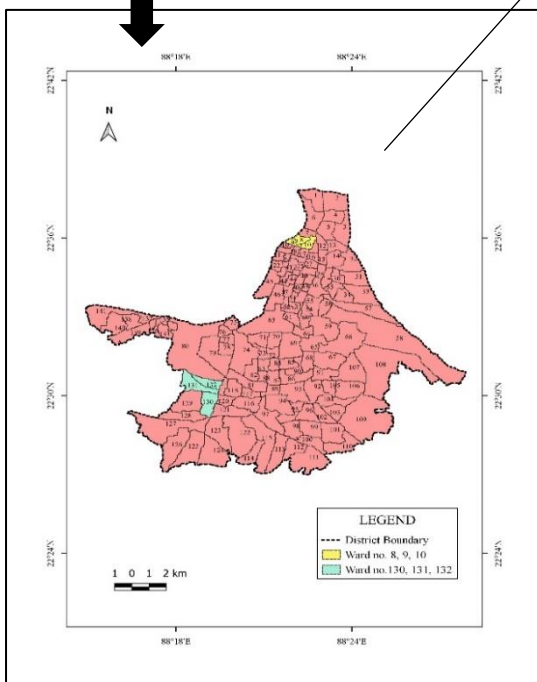
District Map of West Bengal



Study Area Selected from Northern Part of Kolkata



Ward Map of Kolkata



Study Area Selected from Southern Part of Kolkata

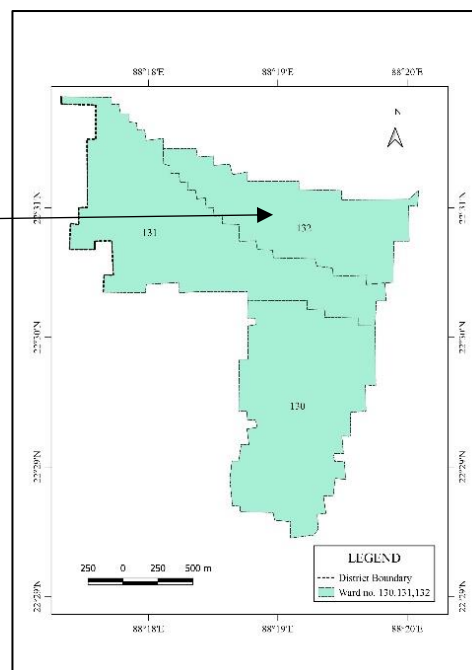


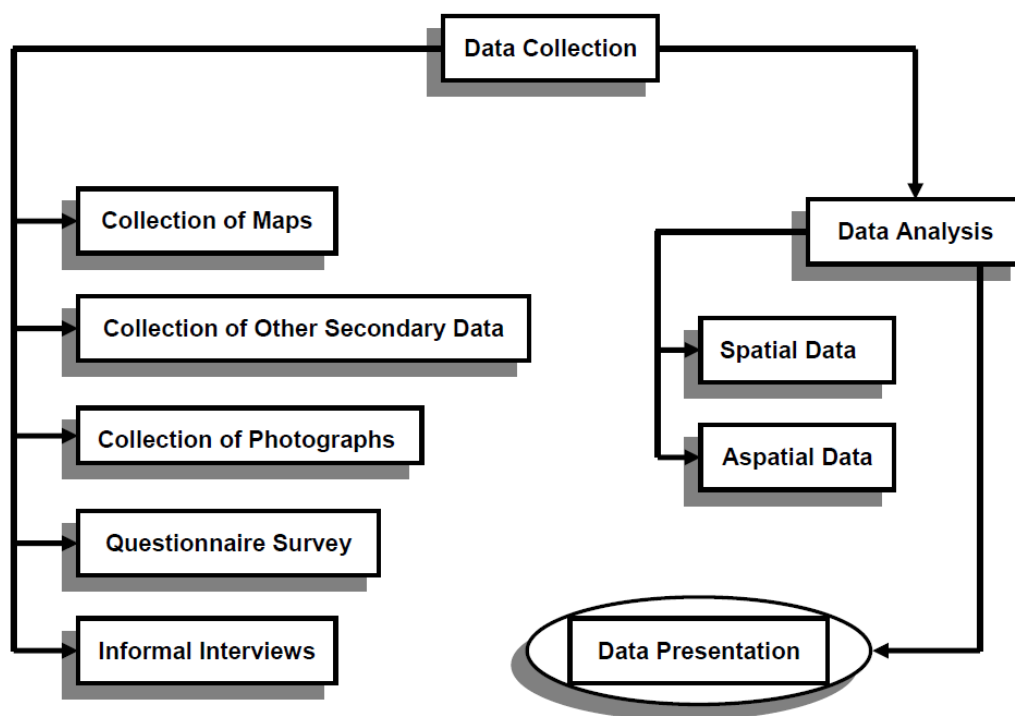
Fig 1

OBJECTIVES

- To find out the how aware people are of green consumerism compared to traditional consumerism.
- To identify the factors affecting green consumerism across different demographics.
- To identify the household consumption behaviour.
- To discuss the challenges or barriers of green consumerism.
- To discuss the benefits or effectiveness of green consumerism.
- Hypothesis is tested to show the impact of barriers on the rise of green consumerism.
- To take effective measures to enhance green consumerism

METHODOLOGY

The methods applied in this study include the description of the study area, information collected from appropriate authority and community perception survey. The methodological approaches of the study are as follows:



DISCUSSION

Green Consumerism across Different Demography

The Gender Composition of Consumers in most wards, female consumers outnumber males(Fig 2)
 The Age profile of consumers shows that the 25–50 being economically active and tech-savvy, often represents the peak consumer class, engaging in regular purchases, including lifestyle and luxury goods. This group is also increasingly aware of environmental sustainability, making them a key target for green marketing and eco-friendly products.(Fig 3)

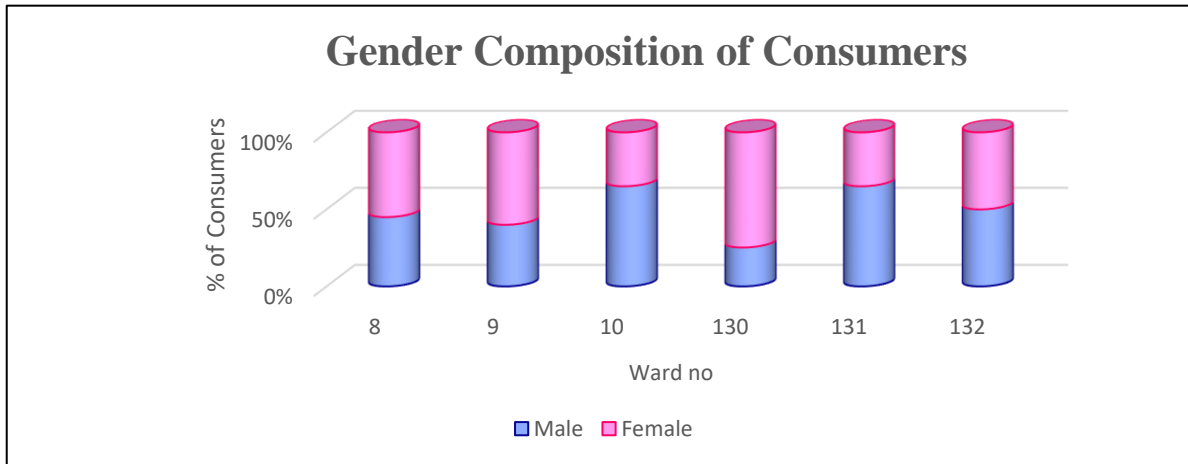


FIG: 2

Higher education is often associated with greater environmental awareness and a better understanding of sustainable practices, making these wards more inclined towards green consumerism. (Fig 4)

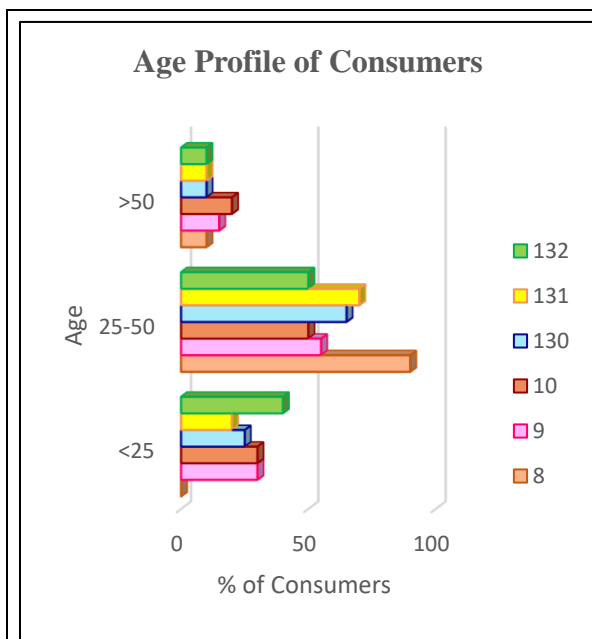


Fig 3

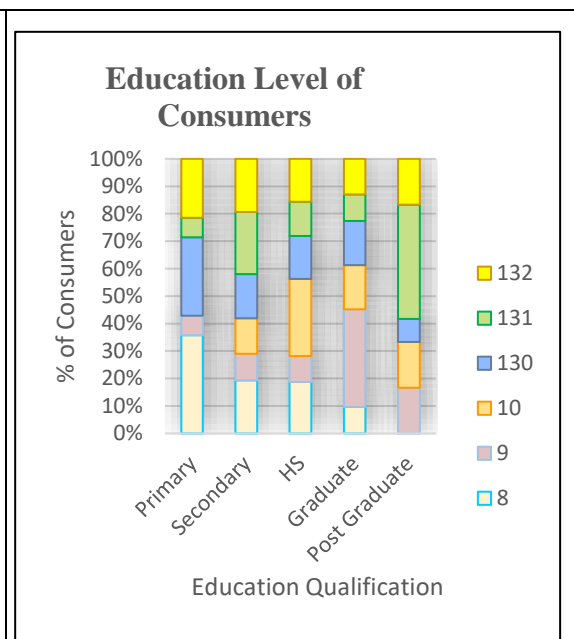


Fig 4

Financial stability, combined with educational awareness, enables these consumers to make more environmentally conscious choices, such as buying eco-friendly or ethically produced goods.

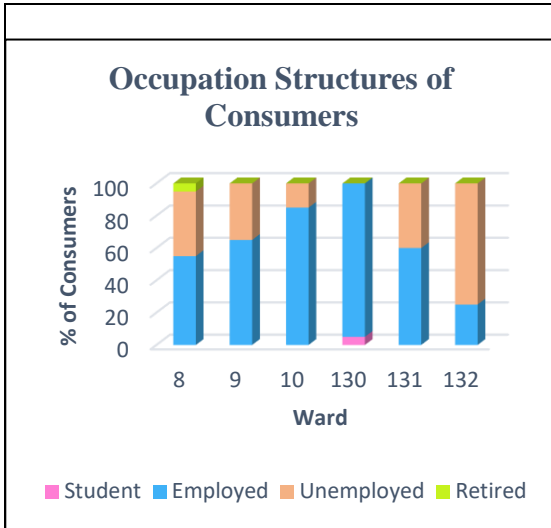


Fig 6

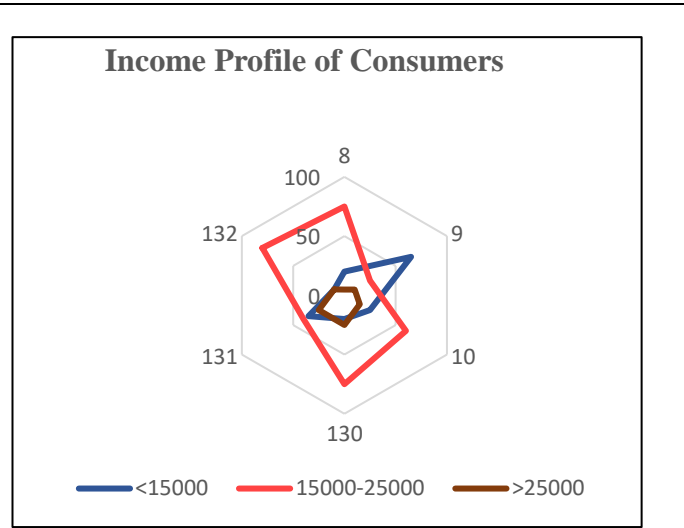
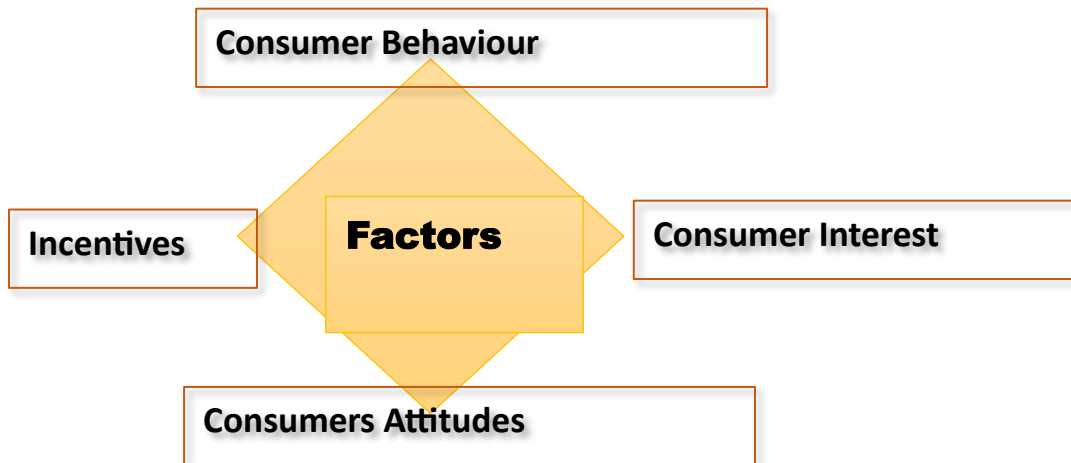


Fig 7

Wards 130 and 132, fall under the middle-income group (₹15,000–₹25,000 and above), which strengthens their purchasing power and inclination toward modern consumer goods. However, lower-income groups, particularly in wards like 9 and 10, show limited consumption due to financial constraints. (Fig 6 and 7)

FACTOR AFFECTING GREEN CONSUMERISM



GREEN CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

A significant portion of consumers in ward no 10 consistently prefer branded products, reflecting strong brand loyalty and possibly higher purchasing power. Ward 10 stands out as the most brand-aware, while Wards 130 to 132 reflect the lowest level of brand preference.(Fig 9)

Check Eco level While Purchasing

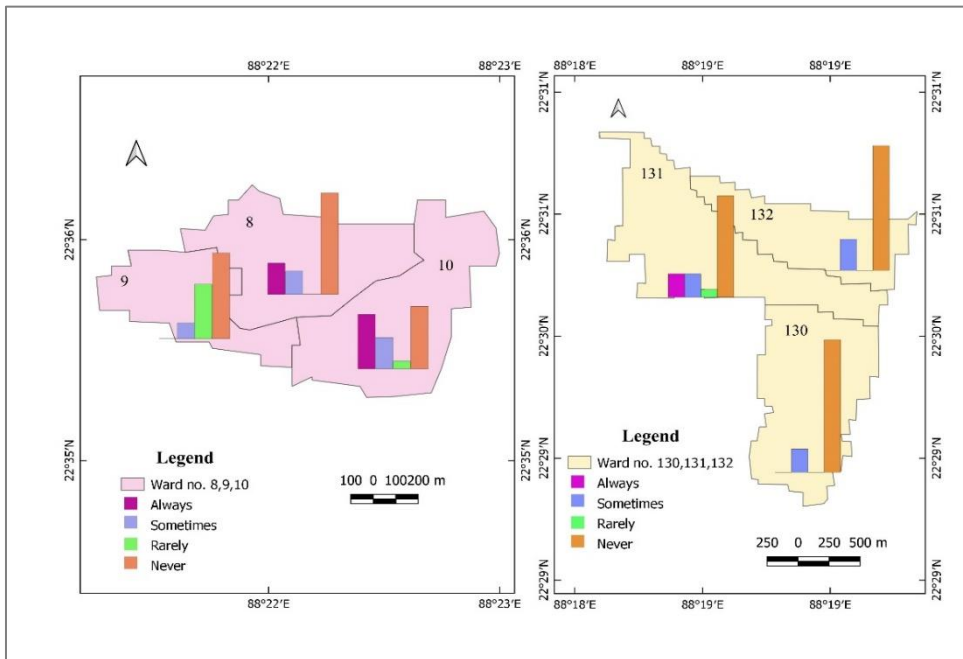


Fig.No. 8

Brand Preference for Shopping

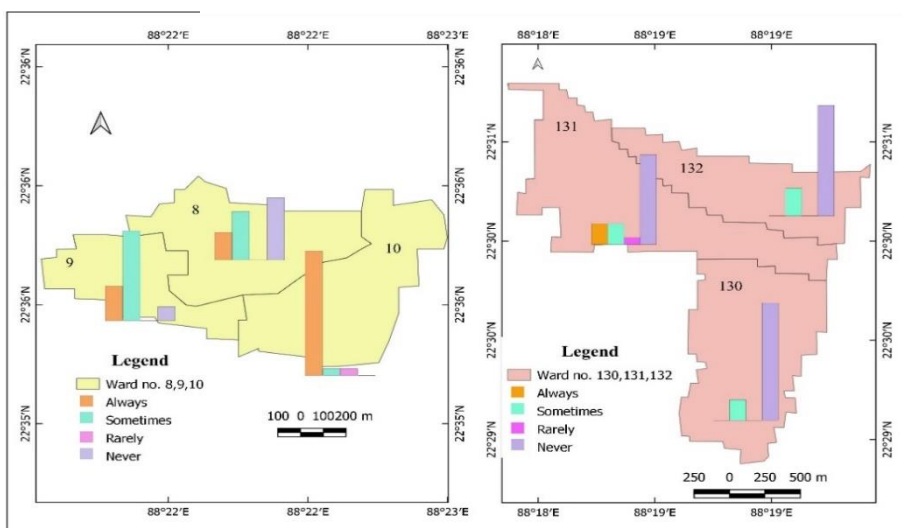


Fig.No. 9

Check Eco level reflects that in ward no.131 is most environmentally aware ward on the contrary ward no.8 indicating a majority of consumers do not consider eco consciousness in their purchasing behaviour. This could be influenced by education, income level, or awareness programs in those areas.(Fig 8)

In wards 8, 9, and 10, there is a relatively low level of commitment toward reducing single-use plastics, with a mix of responses indicating partial reduction or future plans, rather than current significant action. In contrast, wards 130, 131, and 132 demonstrate a strong and consistent eco-friendly attitude. Thus, a strong positive relationship exists between the two behaviors in the wards (130, 131, 132), while a weaker or inconsistent relationship is seen in the ward (8,9,10), highlighting geographical disparities in environmental responsibility among consumers. (Fig 9 and 10)

Bring Reuseable Bags for Shopping

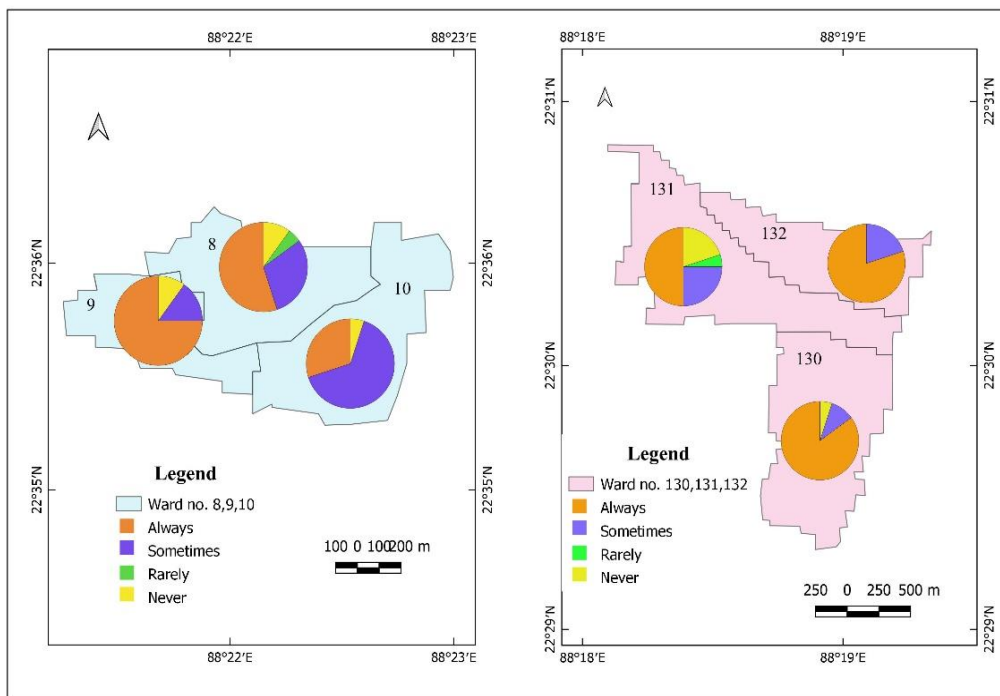


Fig.No.9

Reduced Single Used Plastics by Consumers

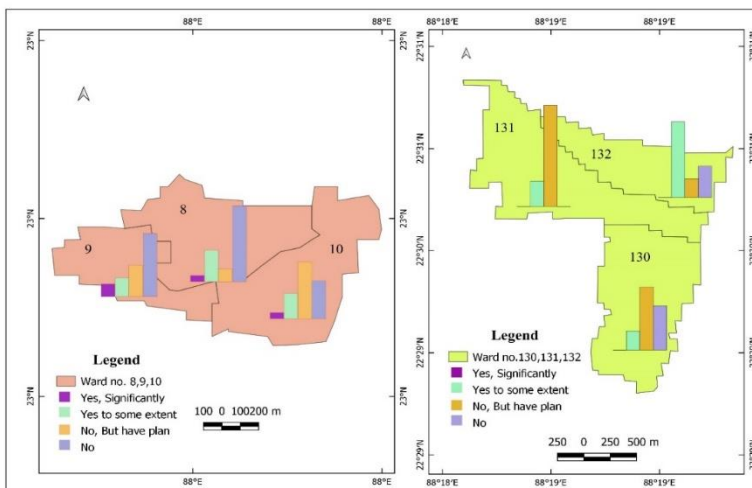


Fig.No. 10

Switched to Digital Bill Pay

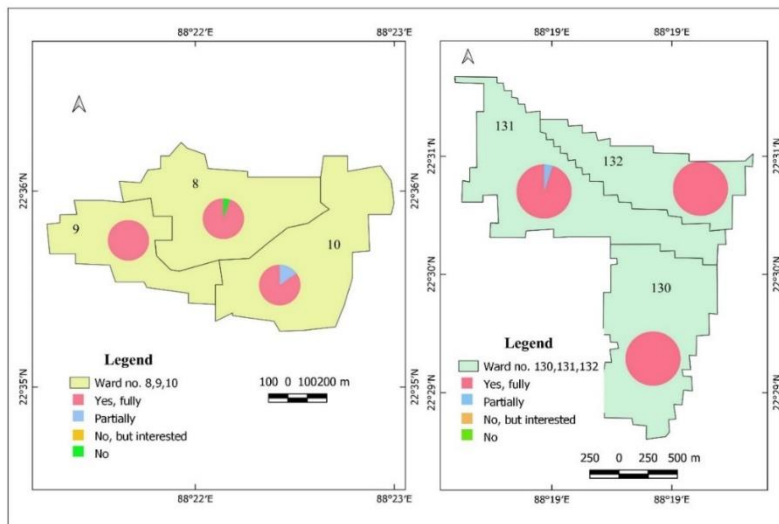


Fig 11

While the largest proportion of residents in each ward has fully switched to digital payments there is still a visible presence of those who have only partially switched and a small fraction who are either not interested or yet to adopt.(Fig 11)

CONSUMERS INTEREST

This study analyses that the most of the people are wanted to use green product but the price are creating a barrier to use this product. But at the same time if the green product and a normal products are found in same price then people are choosing always the green product. Study reveals that people are aware but everyone can not afford the green product.(Fig 12)

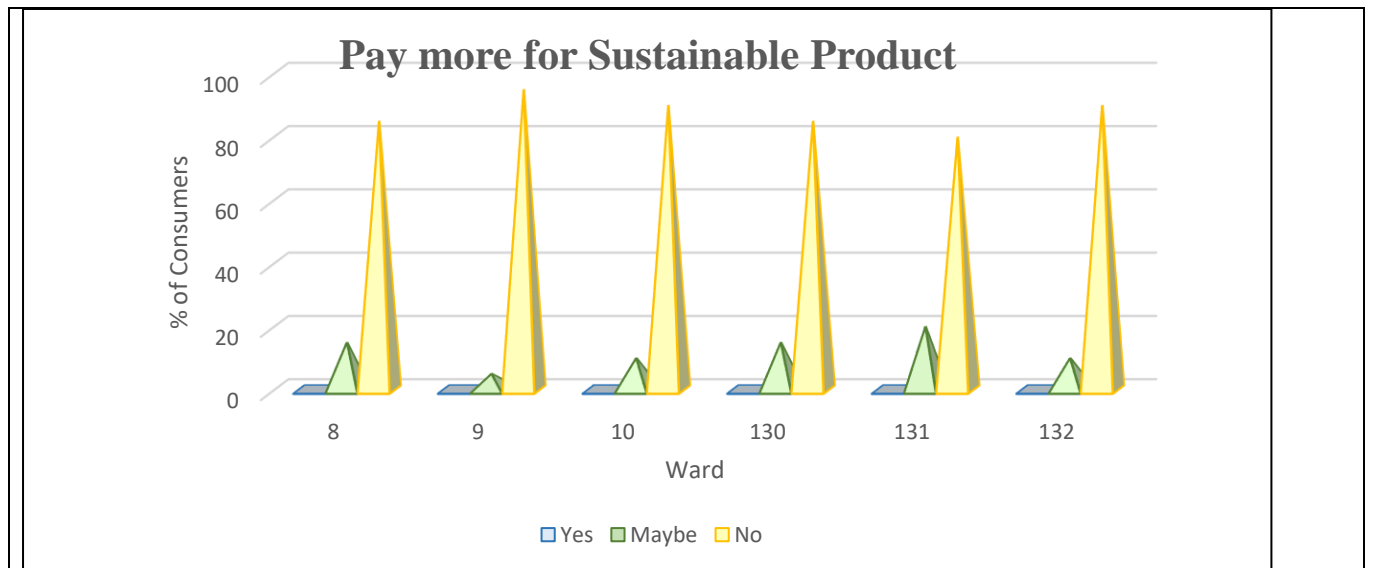


Fig 12

CONSUMERS ATTITUDES

The attitudes of consumers towards green product is mostly they are agreeing that without uses of green product harm the environment as well as human life. But the economically unstable groups are unable to use this product. People are aware about the use of plastic is harmful, some people point of view is bags are not always kept, so sometimes they have to take plastic.(Fig 13)

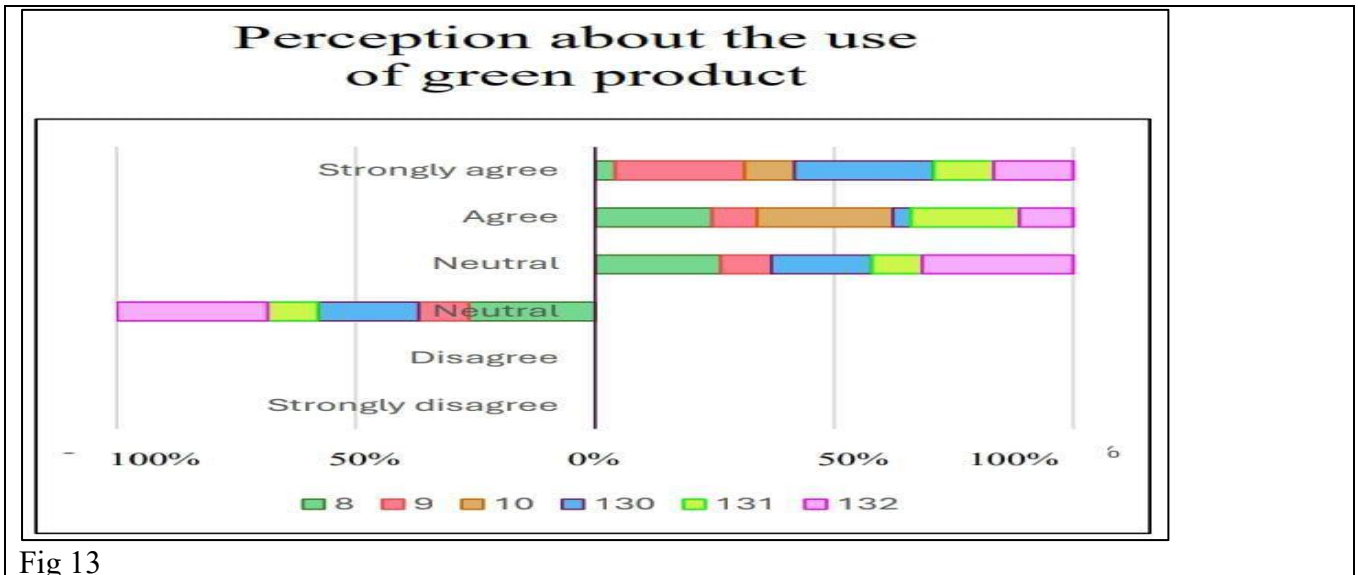


Fig 13

INCENTIVES

The motivation to use green products in urban areas is influenced by lifestyle preferences, awareness, and accessibility. Social status also plays a role, as green consumption is seen as modern and responsible. Government incentives, strong infrastructure, and the cost-saving benefits of sustainable options like LED lights and reusable goods further motivate middle- and upper-class households.

EFFECTIVENESS OF GREEN CONSUMERISM

- The relationship between Participation on environmental activity and use of Green Product. By Chi Square Method signifying that there is no relation between these two factors.
- The impact of Education on Uses of green product by Mann-Whitney U test. There is Significant relation between them.
- The Relationship between Income and Use of Green Product by t test analysis, which determine there is significant relation between these two parameters. (Fig 16 and 17)
- The relation between Age and Use of Green Product by t test analysis, Which shows there is significant relation between Income and Green consumerism.(Fig 18 and 19)

This economic barrier limits the market reach of green products and discourages sustainable consumption despite growing interest.

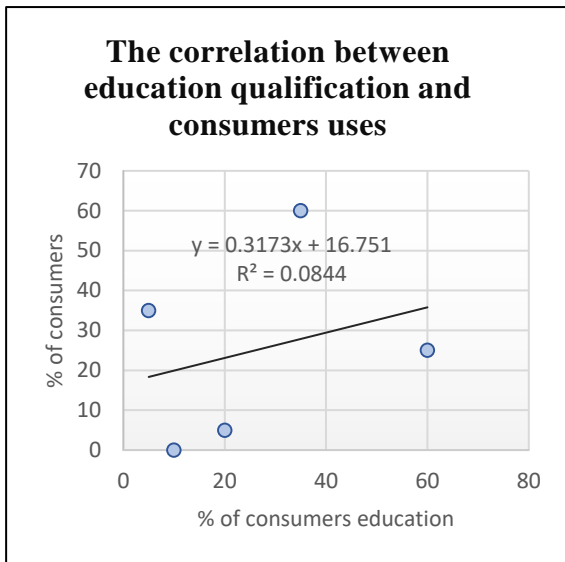


Fig 14

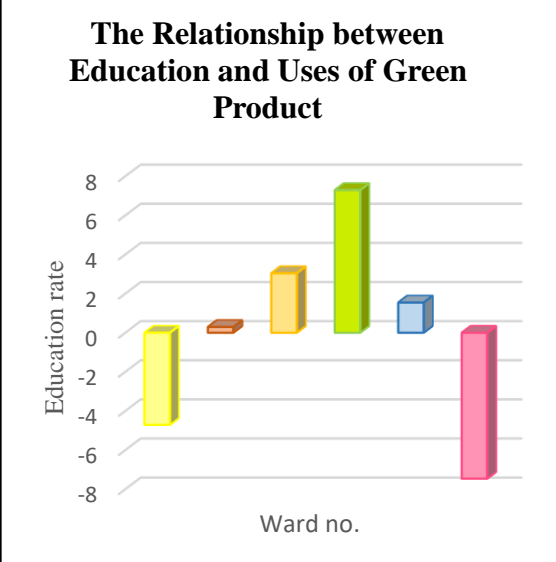


Fig 15

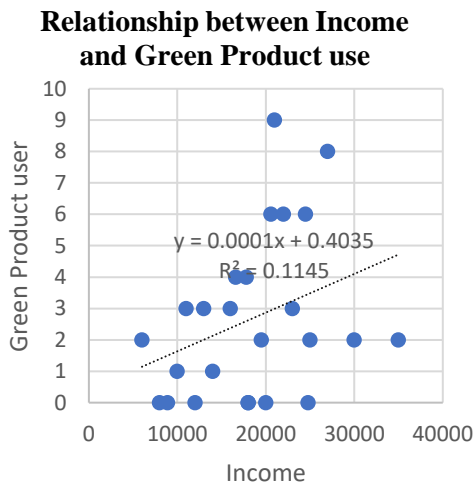


Fig 16

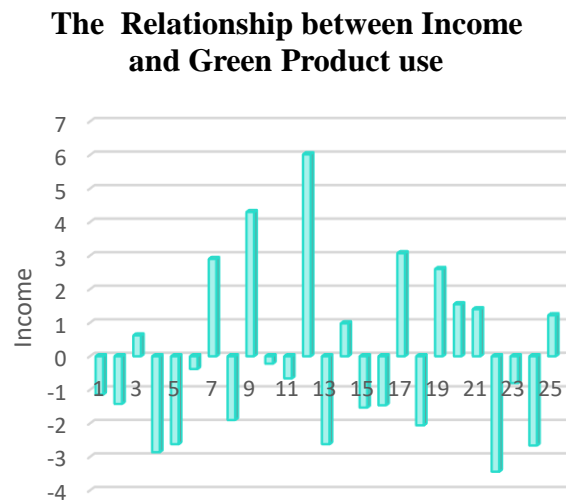


Fig 17

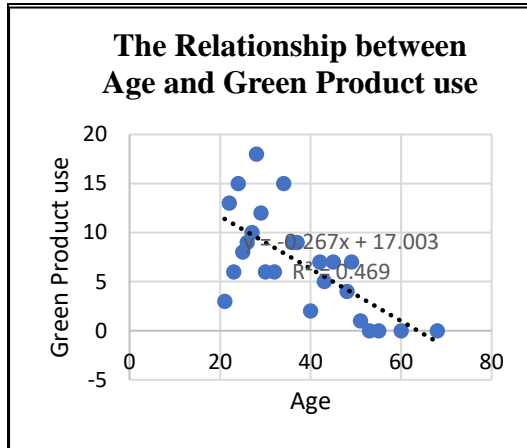


Fig 18

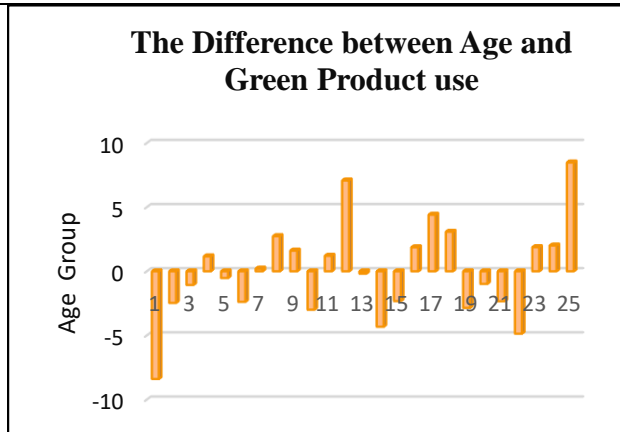
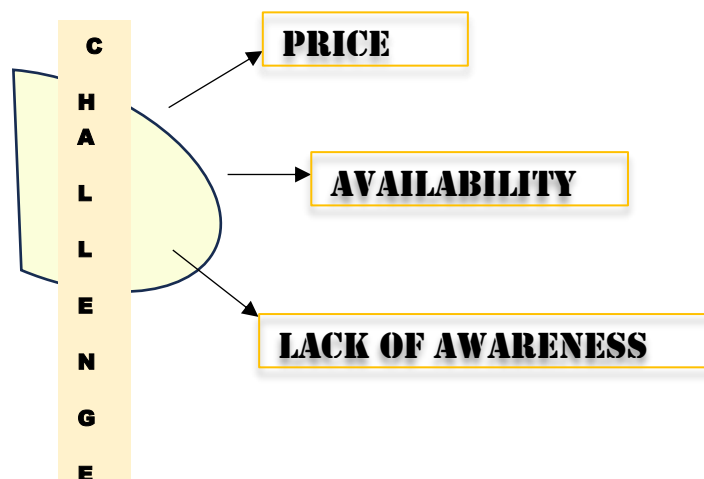


Fig 19

Only urban markets, mainstream outlets may only offer a limited range of eco-friendly products, often restricted to niche or luxury segments. This scarcity makes it difficult for willing consumers to transition toward greener lifestyles. Furthermore, even when products are available, greenwashing presents a significant obstacle.

Many individuals are not fully informed about the environmental consequences of their consumption patterns or the benefits of choosing sustainable alternatives. Furthermore, they may be unfamiliar with eco-certifications, labels, or regulatory standards that help identify green products. Without proper education and awareness campaigns, even well-intentioned consumers may fail to make informed purchasing decisions.



GREEN MARKETING AND BUSINESS IMPACT

The income distribution of shop owners across different wards. Ward 131 has the highest proportion of owners earning above ₹25,000, while most other wards have a larger share in the ₹15,000–₹25,000 range. Lower-income groups (<₹15,000) are comparatively smaller across wards.(Fig 20)

This ward are less to moderate availability of green products. The main reason is low demand of the green products. Most of the people are not aware and skepticism about the green products.(Fig21)

The use of bio degradable and degradable product the bars are divided into two sections the lower section (below 0) indicates non-biodegradable products, while the upper section (above 0) indicates biodegradable products(Fig 22)

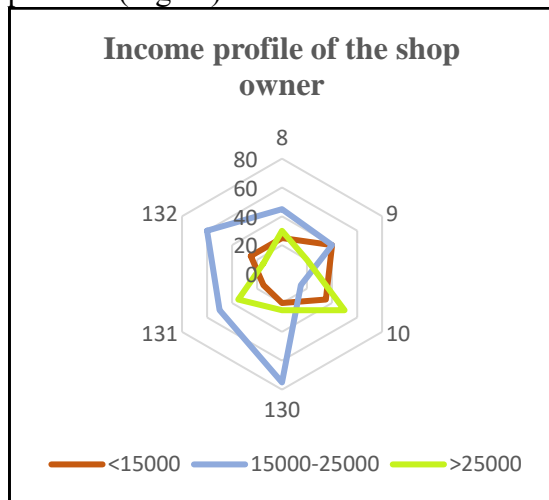


Fig 20

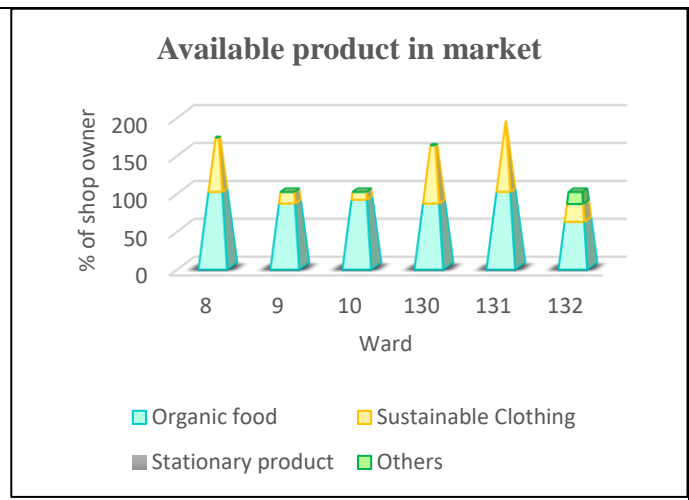


Fig 21

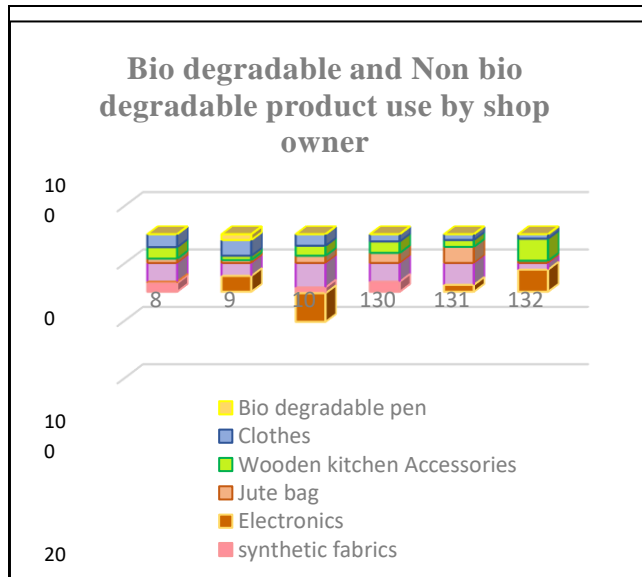


Fig 22



Fig 23

Most wards prefer sustainable products only if cost is equal.

Price is the most significant factor influencing consumers' decisions. On the other hand, environmental concern and health benefits which are typically least bothered for adopting green products.(Fig 23)

Factor Influence for Buying Green Product						
Ward no	8	9	10	130	131	132
Factors						
Environmental Concern						
Health						
Product quality						
Brand Reputation						
Price						

Fig 24

POLICY AND SOCIETAL IMPACT

- Role of Government Regulation
- Role of Awareness Campaigns
- Role of Education
- India's Laws and Policies
- Environmental Protection Act, 1986
- Consumer Protection Act, 2019
- Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016
- Energy Conservation Act, 2001
- National Green Tribunal Act, 2010
- Ecomark Scheme
- FAME India Scheme (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles)
- Solid waste Management Rules,2016

SUPPORTING INCENTIVES AND POLICIES

- Swachha Bharat Abhiyan
- National Action Plan on Climate Change
Suggestion
- Increase Awareness Campaigns
- Make Green Products Affordable and Accessible
- Stricter Regulation on Green Washing
- Introduce Sustainable Education in school
- Promote local green market

- Conduct periodic impact assessments

CONCLUSION

As this study on green consumerism in Wards 8, 9, 10, 130, 131, and 132 concludes, it becomes evident that consumer behavior is gradually shifting towards sustainability, though several barriers remain. This journey into consumer attitudes, market trends, and environmental awareness has not only revealed the growing interest in eco-friendly products but also highlighted the challenges such as affordability, limited availability, and lack of awareness.

This study has shown that while government policies, educational initiatives, and marketing efforts are shaping greener choices, there is still much work to be done to integrate sustainable habits into everyday consumer life. This study has deepened the understanding of the link between individual actions and collective environmental outcomes. It has emphasized the importance of continued advocacy, education, and policy implementation to promote green consumerism more effectively. Green consumerism is not just a market trend; it is a cultural shift toward responsibility and resilience, and each conscious choice made by a consumer contributes to a more sustainable future.

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