

## **ETHICAL CONSUMERISM: CUSTOMER PERCEPTION STUDY**

**Dr.Thnanapackiam\***

HoD, Dept. of Commerce (PG)

St.Francis de Sales College (SFS COLLEGE), Electronics City, Bengaluru, Karnataka

**Roopesh M \***

**Divyashree.S\***

Dept. of Commerce (PG)

St Francis de Sales College (SFS COLLEGE), Electronics City, Bengaluru, Karnataka

\*Corresponding authors | Received: 02/07/2023 | Accepted: 22/08/2023 | Published: 30/09/2023

**Abstract:** *Ethical consumerism has gained significant attention in recent years as consumers increasingly prioritize the ethical and social implications of their purchasing decisions. This abstract explores the concept of ethical consumerism, its underlying principles, and the motivations behind its adoption. The abstract also discusses strategies for Ethical Consumerism Factors Influencing the Ethical Consumption, Customers' awareness of ethical consumerism and the ethical aspects present in FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods) products are subjects under scrutiny. Moreover, there is an exploration of how businesses contribute to the promotion of ethical practices and how consumer demand can potentially influence consumer behavior. The abstract wraps up by stressing the significance of education and awareness in empowering consumers to make well-informed ethical selections, thus fostering a more sustainable and responsible marketplace. In summary, ethical consumerism is an expanding movement that strives to synchronize consumer values with purchase choices, thereby nurturing constructive transformation and motivating businesses to adopt a more socially and environmentally responsible approach.*

*Key words: ethical consumerism, sustainability, customer behaviour, ethical consumption.*

### **Introduction**

Importantly, buying goods made in conformity with moral and ethical standards falls into the larger category of consumer behavior that is referred to as ethical consumption and ethical consumerism. Furthermore, this concept extends to every phase of the consumption lifecycle, spanning from acquisition to product usage and eventual disposal. The concept of "ethical" shopping revolves around individuals' preferences for purchasing items produced while prioritizing universal principles and moral values. As an illustration, there has been a commendable shift towards the preference for electric cars over conventional gasoline vehicles, despite their higher cost, due to their environmentally friendly attributes, which contribute to preserving environmental sustainability. Similarly, Wearing clothing made of synthetic leather and imitation fur is becoming more and more popular as a way to lessen the need for commercial animal killing. Concurrently, the global trend of adopting a plant-based diet and the increase in the demand for organic cosmetics—which do not include animal testing—have gained significant popularity. This tendency is definitely becoming noticeable.

Beyond this, there is a general consensus that the Internet and other digital technologies, together with mass media, have a significant impact on the acceptance of ethical consumerism. Information about firms that are exposed in the media for participating in unethical acts like child labor or environmental degradation, among other things, tends to elicit significant reactions from consumers. Furthermore, Recognized is the crucial role played by internet-based information dissemination in elevating consumer awareness concerning the ethical attributes associated with their purchases of products and services.

In this context, the primary aim of the study is to center its attention on ethical consumers, all the while evaluating how consumers perceive this phenomenon and the essential validity of this overarching paradigm. Of significant note, this research also places emphasis on the prevailing disparity in behavior that currently exists and is deeply rooted in the concept of ethical consumerism.

### Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to comprehend the notion of ethical consumerism. Concurrently assessing consumer attitudes towards this phenomenon and the existing disparity in promoting ethical consumerism

- ❖ Evaluating the factors that exert an influence on the adoption of ethical consumer behavior.

### Research Design

**Sample Size:** This research investigation will rely on the perspectives of 55 consumers.

**Sampling Type:** The research sample will be gathered using a non-probabilistic sampling approach, specifically employing the convenient sampling method.

### Data Interpretations

Table 1  
Are You Aware of The Term Ethical Consumerism

Frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
<b>Yes</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>74.5%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7.3%</b>
<b>May Be</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18.2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary-data

The provided table illustrates that 74.5% of the respondents are familiar with the concept of ethical consumerism. From this data, it can be deduced that, in general, people are acquainted with the term ethical consumerism.

**Table 2**  
**Even More Common in The Food and Apparel Sector Is Ethical Consumption**

Frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
Agree	<b>31</b>	<b>56.4%</b>
Agree Strongly	<b>6</b>	<b>10.9%</b>
Neutral	<b>17</b>	<b>30.9%</b>
Disagree	<b>1</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
Disagree Strongly	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
Total	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary-Data

According to the above data, 56.4% of them said that ethical consumption was more common in the food and clothing industries, while 0% disagreed.

**Table 3**  
**Payment Ethics Affects Both Public and Private Sector Organizations**

Frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
Agree	<b>35</b>	<b>63.6%</b>
Agree Strongly	<b>5</b>	<b>9.1%</b>
Neutral	<b>13</b>	<b>23.6%</b>
Disagree	<b>2</b>	<b>3.7%</b>
Disagree Strongly	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
Total	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary-Data

The table above shows that 63.6% of them agreed with the statement ethical consumption influences both public\ private sector organization and 23.6% of them told neutral

**Table 4**  
**The Link Between Sustainability and Ethical Consumption Is Strong.**

Frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
Agree	<b>31</b>	<b>56.4%</b>
Agree Strongly	<b>7</b>	<b>12.7%</b>
Neutral	<b>14</b>	<b>25.5%</b>
Disagree	<b>3</b>	<b>5.5%</b>
Disagree Strongly	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
Total	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary data

The table depicted above indicates 56.4% of respondents have concurred that a robust correlation exists between ethical consumption and sustainability.

**Table 5**  
**Ethical Consumption Paradigm Pushes All Brands Into Action**

Frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
Agree	<b>33</b>	<b>60%</b>
Agree Strongly	<b>7</b>	<b>12.7%</b>
Neutral	<b>13</b>	<b>23.6%</b>
Disagree	<b>2</b>	<b>3.7%</b>
Strongly Disagree	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
Total	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

The table provided indicates 60% of respondents have concurred that the concept of ethical consumption serves as a catalyst for all brands.

**Table 6**  
**Ethical Consumerism Is Prominent in Developing Nation**

Frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
Agree	<b>35</b>	<b>63.6%</b>
Agree Strongly	<b>8</b>	<b>14.5%</b>
Neutral	<b>10</b>	<b>18.2%</b>
Disagree	<b>1</b>	<b>1.9%</b>
Disagree Strongly	<b>1</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
Total	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows 63.3% of them have agreed that ethical consumerism is prominent in developing nation

**Table 7**  
**Engaging In Ethical Consumerism Poses A Greater Challenge Compared To Conventional Shopping Trends.**

Frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
Agree	36	65.5%
Agree Strongly	6	10.9%
Neutral	11	20%
Disagree	2	3.6%
Disagree Strongly	0	00%
Total	55	100%

Source: primary data

The data shown indicates that 65.5% of participants said that ethical consumerism presents more challenges than traditional buying trends.

### Hypothesis Testing

**Ho:** There is significant relationship between qualification and ethical shopping

#### Correlations

		Qualification	Ethical shopping
Qualification	Pearson-Correlation	1	.517**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	55	55
ethical shopping	Pearson-Correlation	.517**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	55	55

The correlation is highly significant at the 0.01 significance level, considering a two-tailed test.

### Interpretation

From the preceding examination, a moderately favorable and statistically noteworthy Pearson correlation was established between educational attainment and involvement in ethical shopping ( $r=0.517$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). As a result, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was dismissed, lending backing to the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ). This implies that educational qualification does, in fact, have an impact on ethical shopping conduct.

### Findings

1. A survey reveals that 74.5% of participants exhibit awareness of the concept of ethical consumerism.
2. According to the sampling data, 56.4% of participants consider ethical consumption to be more prevalent in the food and apparel sectors.
3. According to the poll results, 63.6% of participants said that ethical consumerism has an influence on organizations in the public and private sectors.
4. The survey underscores that 56.4% of respondents perceive a strong correlation between ethical consumption and sustainability.
5. The results of the poll show that 60% of respondents agree that all brands are influenced by the ethical consumption paradigm.
6. According to the poll results, 67.3% of participants said that consuming items that are ethically produced is easy and convenient.
7. The survey's findings indicate that 63.6% of participants agree that ethical consumption is common in developing countries.

## Conclusion

The primary objectives of the current research were to ascertain the foundations of ethical consumption and assess the factors that facilitate the adoption of ethical consumer behavior. The analysis identifies tactics that may be used to encourage moral consumption in marketplaces. Questionnaires were used in the research, and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data that was gathered. The study's findings show that ethical consumption has gained traction in the market, particularly in developing countries. There is a strong sense of the importance of ethical consumption in these rising economies, which is perhaps why it is so prevalent there.

Furthermore, the research reveals that age plays a pivotal role in determining the level of awareness regarding ethical consumerism. This underscores the impact of gender on the awareness level of ethical consumerism, as well as the influence of educational qualifications on ethical shopping habits.

Furthermore, it is notable that the ethical consumerism movement has had a considerable impact on firms in industrialized countries as well. Interestingly, these companies and brands are now releasing goods that follow the guidelines of ethical consumerism. This provides further evidence that a sizable segment of the populace engages in morally responsible purchasing.

## References

- i. Apanasevic, T., 2018. Primary data collection: Approaches of service providers towards mobile payments.
- ii. Adnan, N., Nordin, S.M., Rahman, I., Vasant, P.M. and Noor, A., 2017. A comprehensive review on theoretical framework - based electric vehicle consumer adoption research.
- iii. Arli, D., Tjiptono, F. and Winit, W., 2015. Consumer ethics among young consumers in developing countries: a cross national study. *Social Responsibility Journal*.
- iv. Arli, D., 2017. Does ethics need religion? Evaluating the importance of religiosity in consumer ethics. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*.