EFFECT OF SOCIAL RESPONSIVENESS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIETY WITH REFERENCE TO ECOFRIENDLY APPARELS

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Abstract

Sustainable development means using the present resources in a way that there are enough resources for the future generations. A part of sustainable development comes through social responsiveness which refers to the obligation of an individual towards his society which improves the quality of life and environment around him. In our study, the social responsiveness is analysed through the consumers of the eco-friendly apparels. With the apparel industry being the second largest polluter of the globe, using eco-friendly apparels has become the need of the hour. We want to find out the effect of social responsiveness of eco-friendly apparels towards sustainable development of the whole community. The study was conducted in 'Dehradun' with the age group 18 to 45 years. Survey was done through questionnaires. Sample size of 150 individuals was taken. The descriptive tools used were mean and standard deviation. The inferential tool used was multiple regression analysis. Our research is being conducted to find out the effect of social responsiveness on sustainable development of the society. The research study suggests that there is a considerable degree of effect of social responsiveness on sustainable development of the society with respect to eco-friendly apparels. The apparels industry has caused a lot of environmental hazards over the decades. Eco-friendly apparel is an excellent alternative towards sustainable development, and this can be done through the social responsiveness. Our results show that there is a significant percent of effect of social responsiveness on sustainable development for eco-friendly apparels.

Key words: Social responsiveness, sustainable development, eco-friendly apparel.

1. Introduction

Sustainable development is the idea that human societies must live and meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Specifically, sustainable development is a way of organizing society so that it can exist in the long term. This means taking into account both the imperatives present and those of the future, such as the preservation of the environment

and natural resources or social and economic equity.

Need of Eco-friendly apparels

Apparel industry has caused a lot of environmental hazards over the years and is currently the second largest polluter in the world, after the oil industry. Some of the alarming environmental issues caused by the apparel industry are water pollution, water consumption, waste accumulation, soil degradation and release of microfibers in our ocean. For example, 2700 liters of water is used to produce one cotton t-shirt and this is the amount of water an average person drinks in 2.5 years. Also, washing clothes releases 5,00,000 tons of microfibers into the ocean each year which is equivalent of 50 billion plastic bottles. Furthermore, most of the brands use synthetic fibers like polyester, nylon and acrylic which takes hundreds of years to biodegrade and are not sustainable. These synthetic fibers also release microfibers into the water bodies because of which plastic enters into the food chain and ultimately affects our body. As the name suggests, eco-friendly apparels are sustainable and not harmful for the environment. Eco-friendly garments are solely made with plant-based fibres as these fibres don't release microfibers into the water bodies and are eco-friendly, biodegradable and recyclable. The plant-based fibers used for the garments of our brand are mainly vegan leather, ringel, banana fibers, hemp, linen, ramie, organic cotton and natural rubber. Apart from this, natural dyes like indigo in the manufacturing process.

Social Responsiveness towards Sustainable Development by using Eco-friendly Apparels

This study focuses on the effect of social responsiveness of eco-friendly apparels towards sustainable development of the society. Social responsiveness is a person's obligation to contribute to the community in a way that makes the quality of life and environment better for those around them.

Buying eco-friendly apparels as a contribution towards sustainable development for the society, for example, would be considered social responsiveness because you are doing your part to improve the lives and circumstances of those living in your community. It should be noted that not all social responsiveness needs to be as active as in the example above; it can be a passive act as well. If, for example, you choose to stop buying nonsustainable apparels, this would also be an act of social responsiveness because you are intentionally avoiding something that you believe deteriorates the welfare of others.

Sustainability & Eco-friendly Apparels

Sustainability has become an important concern nowadays as globally, 91% of the world population is exposed to unhealthy levels of pollution. For textile and apparel sector this is a major issue, as it is the second largest polluter in the world, after the oil industry. It also produces 10% of all humanity's carbon emissions and is the second-largest consumer of the world's water supply. Over the past few years, increasing awareness of the environmental and social concerns surrounding the fashion industry have led

to a rise in the implementation of sustainability initiatives. People are becoming more conscious about what they are buying and are preferring eco-friendly apparels over apparels made of man-made apparels. As we know sustainable development is the idea that human societies must live and meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations. Through buying eco-friendly apparels and showing social responsiveness, conscious consumers are saving the Earth from pollution caused by the apparel industry.

Why does India need Eco-friendly apparel?

India has witnessed rapid strides of development at sustained growth rates of more than 8% and has seen a huge spurt in consumption. Consequently, it has been estimated that the increased consumption may result in the country becoming one of the leading offenders relating to environmental pollution. The textiles industry in India is traditionally one of the worst offenders of pollution, with its small units following outdated technology processes. One opportunity to reduce the environmental impact of clothing industry in India is to concentrate textile production with eco-friendly apparels.

There are some brands in India which already make eco-friendly apparels. Some of these brands are-

1. **FabIndia**: it prides itself on being one of the leading sustainable fashion brands in India.

2. **Pero**: Pero focuses on Indian textile crafts and tradition, along with popularizing the use of organic cotton.

3. **The Jodi Life**: It is a favourite for lovers of environmentally conscious brands in India.

4. **Khadi Cult**: The hand spun fabric of Khadi Cult is one of the most environmentally friendly fabrics.

2. Review of Literature

According to R. Indrajith (2018), despite the general lower level of awareness of eco-friendly apparel, an increased level of awareness was found to be prevailing with college students, professional and higher officials.

According to Heesook Hong and Ae-Ran Koh (2019), the pragmatic benefits positively affected but aesthetical benefits negatively affected the purchase intention of eco-friendly apparel and health functional apparel. The social benefits influenced the purchase intention of health functional apparel but did not influence the purchase of eco-friendly apparel.

According to Paromita Goswami (2018), the existence of a segment of consumer who are positively motivated towards eco-labelled garments is there is term of demographic and psychographic variables

Research Gap: Signalling a gap in previous researches, very few study has been conducted on the relation between social responsiveness of eco-friendly apparels and sustainable development.

3. Research Methodology

Problem Statement: With the apparel industry being the second largest polluter of the globe, using eco-friendly apparels has become the need of the hour. We want to find out the effect of social responsiveness of eco-friendly apparels towards sustainable development of the society.

Purpose of the study

-To evaluate the effect of social responsiveness related to eco-friendly apparels on sustainable development of the society.

Research design

We have used Descriptive and inferential research approach in our research. To conduct the research, we used convenience sampling technique [unrestricted sampling], which is a part of non-probability sampling.

Data collection and analysis

To conduct the research, we have used primary [questionnaire in google form] method. The period of data collection is from 6th February 2021 to 18th February 2021. The data was collected from 'DEHRADUN' and total number of respondents were 150. We used multiple regression [SPSS], mean & standard deviation to find out the effect of social responsiveness related to eco-friendly apparels on sustainable development of the society. To measure the perception of respondents on 6 parameters [Availability, Affordability, Recyclability, Decomposability, Skin disease & use of chemicals], Five-point Likert Scale [Interval scale] used.

Propositions

H_0 [Null Hypothesis]: There is no effect of social responsiveness on sustainable development of the society.

H_1: There is a significant effect of social responsiveness on sustainable development of the society.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation by using SPSS
Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the following are given below:

(a) Gender

(b) Variables

Table 1. Gender of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Female	94	62.7	62.7	62.7
Male	56	37.3	37.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Skin disease	150	4	1	5	2.89	1.130
Recyclability	150	4	1	5	3.37	1.120
Availability	150	4	1	5	2.13	1.101
Affordability	150	4	1	5	3.27	1.140
Use of chemicals	150	4	1	5	3.11	1.396
Decomposability	150	4	1	5	3.33	1.156
Valid Number (list wise)	150					

Multiple regression analysis

Table 3. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.733[a]	.537	.518	.703

a. Dependent variable: Sustainable Development of society

b. Predictors: (Constant), Skin disease, Affordability, Decomposability, Recyclability, Use of chemicals and Availability. The value of R is .733 and it indicates a positive relationship between X and Y Variables. The Value of R Square and adjusted R square is

.537 and .518 respectively.

Table 4. Anova

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	82.147	6	13.691	27.698	.000[b]
Residual	70.686	143	.494		
Total	**152.833**	**149**			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable Development of society

b. Predictors: (Constant), Skin disease, Affordability, Decomposability, Recyclability, Use of chemicals and Availability.

In our analysis, P value is equal to 0.000 and less than .005. It indicates Alternative hypothesis is accepted and null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 5. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	5.566	.251		22.170	.000
SKIN DISEASE	.121	.059	.135	2.058	.041
AFFORDABILITY	.175	.059	.199	2.934	.004
DECOMPOSABILITY	.158	.048	.217	3.273	.001
RECYCLABILITY	.208	.056	.234	3.725	.000
USE OF CHEMICALS	.176	.058	.192	3.035	.003
AVAILABILITY	.155	.057	.172	2.745	.007

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable development of the society

b. Predictors: (constant), Skin disease, Affordability, Decomposability, Recyclability, Use of chemicals and Availability.

Model: Sustainable development is a function of social responsiveness.

Sustainable development = f_n [Social responsiveness (Skin disease, affordability, decomposability, recyclability, Use of chemicals and availability)]

$Y = a + bx$

$= 5.566 + .121X_1 + .175X_2 + .158X_3 + .208X_4 + .176X_5 + .155X_6$

5. Findings

By conducting this research, we have found that Eco-friendly apparels have a positive impact on the sustainable development of the society. After analysis of data we have found a positive co-relation between dependent [sustainable development of the society] & independent variables [Availability, Affordability, Recyclability, Use of chemicals, Decomposability & skin disease]. Majority of the people who are purchasing eco-friendly apparels are female and belong to high income group. The awareness of eco-friendly apparels is increasing among the people [Especially in youth], and people are understanding their social responsibility. By buying these clothes they are preventing the environment from being polluted and are keeping themselves healthy because organic elements like; eco-friendly rubber from algae, organic cotton from milk protein, animal free wool from coconut husks & cruelty free leather from pineapple leaves etc are used while making these clothes. As a result, the chances of catching skin related diseases are reduced. In multiple regression analysis, we have found that the most important variable

which has contributed significantly is 'recyclability' bcz the value of beta [standardized coefficients] is greater than other independent variables. The other variables also contributed significantly and their names as per contribution in the value of beta are; decomposability, affordability, use of chemicals, availability & skin disease.

6. Conclusion

India is a developing nation and reducing soil, air & water pollution is a big challenge. As the use of eco-friendly apparels will increase the pollution level will decrease. While making synthetic apparels, harmful chemicals are used as a result pollution increases. Most importantly, eco-friendly apparels are easily recyclable and decomposable. Therefore, the Government should give monetary and non-monetary benefits to companies that make ecofriendly apparels. As a result, the capability of companies will increase and can bring technological advancement in the country. They will be able to offer their apparels in rural area, and innovativeness of companies will also increase. There are possibilities that these companies will start making eco- friendly products other than apparels. Eco-friendly products are easily recyclable and decomposable. Consequently, the burden of waste management on the Government of India will reduce.

7. Limitations and Implications of the study

To conduct the research, we have put in a lot of efforts in order to ensure the reliability, validity and objectivity of our research. The biggest limitation of our research is that we have conducted our research on eco-friendly apparels in Dehradun only, and sample size is 150 only. The samples are collected from one clothing showroom i.e. Fabindia. 51.8% of sustainable development is explained by our independent variables. There could be other variables which are not included in our research. In future researchers can keep these limitations in their mind to enhance the quality of their research. This type of research can also be conducted in other sectors also, to find out the effect of social responsiveness on sustainable development of the society.

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