

Influence of Consumer Concern about the Environment on Attitude and Intention Regarding Purchasing of Green Products

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Abstract:

The business ecosystem is experiencing a major rise in environmental consciousness and effort to improve health. This trend made a huge impact on global consumer purchasing behaviour, which has changed the “production and marketing strategies” and has driven the market for green products forward at an impressive rate in India. This study aims to understand the influence of consumer concern about the environment on attitude and intention regarding purchasing of green products in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The data was collected from 405 respondents using convenience sampling. Inferential statistics were opted to draw inference. Data analysis was done through SPSS software. The result indicates that consumers' attitudes and intentions regarding the purchase of green products were considerably influenced by their concern for the environment. This study provides preliminary idea for consumer attitude and intention towards the buying of green products.

Keywords: Consumer concern, attitude, intention, purchasing, green products, environment.

Introduction

Nowadays, the increasing environmental issues and its concerns among societies, has not only facilitated an increase in environmental consciousness and knowledge among consumers but also impacted on worldwide buying behaviour of consumers and thus influenced the marketing concept (Chen, 2008). As a result, all business stakeholders are aware of how their production, consumption, and purchasing choices will have an influence on the environment. To cope with this transformation, businesses must have a thorough understanding of consumer psychology around buying because the power to make decisions to buy is the key given to a consumer.

According to Liu et al. (2012), understanding consumer psychogenic behaviour, which comprises concern, awareness, knowledge, intention, attitude, and belief in order to satisfy their requests for the green product, is vital for effectively establishing marketing policies and strategies and serving the target market. Despite consumers' concern for the environment and their favourable attitudes toward sustainability and green products, previous studies have shown that there is little evidence to imply that consumer purchasing of green items has increased (Bray et al., 2011). Various factors, like health concerns, environment protection, social norms, and beliefs, are suggested to have a significant role in determining the purchase of green products (Golob et al., 2018).

According to studies, utilising green products is a step that can be performed to lessen adverse environmental effects and ensure a sustainable future; buying green products could be the first action to be taken. Consumer psychogenic behaviour especially the attitude and their buying towards purchasing of green products, is vital for effectively establishing marketing policies and strategies and serving the target market. Thus, the present study aimed to understand

the influence of consumer concern about the environment on attitude and intention regarding purchasing of green products

Literature Review:

Conceptual framework: As consumers embrace social concerns more and more, they look for things that reflect their ideals. Consumer behaviour research typically adheres to such a broad perspective that incorporates concepts from an information processing and decision-making paradigm. According to Kotler et al. (2020), the study of consumer behaviour focuses on how people or groups acquire, utilise, and discard goods, services, concepts, or experiences in order to fulfil their needs or desires. Before making a purchase, a consumer would first identify the problem, then seek for information, assess it, make the buy, and provide feedback. Thus, the marketing professionals need to pinpoint consumer groups where consumers care more about the environment and are more prepared to pay more for products that are ecologically friendly (Laroche et al., 2001).

Consumer buying behaviour is “the way in which consumers engage in the exchange-related portion of their lives is through the dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behaviour, and environmental events” (Peter & Olson, 2008). Consumer behaviour theory is a strictly economic approach, which Ekstrom (2003) referred as the "early empiricist phase," and contends that "all consumers make decisions based on the expected consequences". Consumer behaviour research evolved from being a component of several disciplines, including marketing, psychology, anthropology, and others, to being a discipline unto itself. New facets of consumer behaviour, such as risk perception, cognitive dissonance, personality, and social class, have been studied. Cognitive psychology had a big influence on the investigations. Thus, consumer buying intention is a crucial indicator of future purchasing behaviour (Newberry et al., 2003) especially when it comes at the stake of environmental concern.

Research Parameters and hypothesis

Attitude: Attitude is considered to be an important factor in consumer behaviour because its characteristics that relatively consistent with the behaviour that it reflects. The term "attitude," which is often referred to as a "mental and neurological state of readiness," is used to describe how a person reacts to all objects and circumstances with which it is linked. Numerous researches have suggested that environmental concern and pro-environmental behaviour are positively correlated (Roberts & Bacon, 1997). Berger and Corbin (1992) found that customers' green purchasing tendencies may be influenced by their perceived attitude toward environmental conservation and the expectation is that attitudes will influence consumer behaviour by increasing their awareness of the environment. Mainieri et al. (1997) observed that middle-class urban respondents had generally pro-environment sentiments that were high, but their ideas about their environmental responsibilities as consumers were lower and their reported green-buying behaviours were lowest.

The influence of attitudes on behaviour has been demonstrated in a number of ecologically relevant circumstances and it is the best indicators of buying natural foods, rather than values. According to the study of Khaola et al (2014), when attitudes toward green products and environmental worry are taken into account at the same time to forecast green purchasing intentions, the impact of environmental concern is minimal or environmental concern is moderately associated to the intentions to buy green items and substantially related to attitudes toward eco-friendly products. Lasuin and Ching (2014) said that self-image and environmental concern had a favourable, substantial link with the intention to make green purchases.

The association between consumer attitudes toward purchasing green products and environmental concern and knowledge was explored based on the aforementioned studies. To measure attitudes toward green products, the current study used a subjective measure of perceived environmental knowledge based on individual perception of the issue. Several studies have also found a strong link between environmental awareness and attitudes toward green products, which in turn affects consumers' intentions to make green purchases (Barber, et.al., 2009). Hence, based on the previous studies we postulate following hypothesis (H₁): Concern about the environment significantly impact the attitude of consumer for buying green products

Buying intention: The "green buying intention" refers to a person's propensity and desire to prioritise green goods above conventional ones when making a purchase decision. Intention is the likelihood that a customer will purchase or repurchase a product based on previous purchases. The intention and behaviour of buyers to make green purchases are reportedly positively and directly influenced by their environmental concern, when there is a favourable attitude toward the behaviour, a subjective norm, and more perceived behavioural control, the intention to engage in the behaviour increases. Consumers can decide to buy something after considering benefits of the product, predicted price, and estimated income (Kotler et al., 2020).

Aman et al. (2012) found that customers' intentions to buy environmentally friendly products were greatly impacted by their environmental awareness and concern. The motivational elements that affect consumers' green purchase behaviour are captured by intentions (Ramayah et al., 2010). Purchase intentions have a good possibility of influencing a consumer's choice to purchase a green product and lists purchase intentions as a predictor of green consumer behaviour (Chan, 2003).

Consumers' intentions to make green purchases were positively impacted by interpersonal informational influence as well. A correlation between consumer normative interpersonal influence and green purchase intention, however, could not be proven (Chang, 2015). There is a substantial correlation between consumer intention to utilise green products and perceived value of green products (Doszhanov& Ahmad, 2015). Therefore, based on the buying intention of consumers, we postulate following hypothesis (H₂): Environmental concern significantly influence buying intention of consumertowards purchasing green products.

Research Methodology:

Data Collection and Sampling: The data for the study was collected digitally from the consumers of entire urban area of Lucknow, who buy green products. Lucknow is the capital of Uttar Pradesh, India, with the population of more than 3 million in urban area (Census, 2011). Non-probability sampling technique was opted for the study using a structured questionnaire for data collection. The sample size taken for this study was computed with the help of Cochran Equation (Cochran, 1963), at 95% confidence level. In the survey, 450 questionnaires were distributed using Google Docs, among which the valid responses received was 405. Around, 57.5% respondents were male and 42.5% were female. The demographic details of the respondents, such as their gender, age, education, employment status, and family income, have been mentioned in Figure 1(a-f).

Measurement of Construct: The constructs have been adopted from the previous studies. The measurement items included in this based were adopted from various environmental concern adapted from the research of Mostafa (2009) and Chen and Tung (2014), attitude (Kim & Han, 2010; Frederiks et.al., 2015) and intention (Kim et al., 2013; Frederiks et.al., 2015). The details of the construct are mentioned in Table 1. A five-point Likert scale viz., Strongly Agree (SA),

Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD); where a high score indicated the high impact on buying decision of green products, was employed for this study.

Assessment of constructs and Data analysis: To assess and validate the constructs, reliability coefficient i.e., measure of scale reliability was opted. The reliability coefficient is an indication of internal consistency, that is, how closely a set of items are related as a group. For this purpose, Cronbach's alpha is most frequently utilized. The SPSS (IBM Corp., 2013) package was used to perform the Analysis of variance and other statistical test, at 95% confidence level.

Results and Discussion

After the proposed model's reliability and validity were established, ANOVA was conducted to analyze the hypothesis 1 and 2. Further, the model accuracy was evaluated with the help of R-square for both the hypothesis proposed. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was applied to verify the dataset's reliability. The results have established convergent and discriminant validity.

Validation of constructs: All constructs with Cronbach's alpha values are larger than 0.700 and no problems with reliability (Anderson et al., 2010). George and Mallery (2003) define the threshold levels for evaluating alpha coefficients: greater than 0.9 is excellent, greater than 0.8 is good, and greater than 0.7 is acceptable, however, values above 0.6 are also accepted (Taber, 2018). Table 2 shows that the value of Cronbach's alpha for each construct crosses the threshold value 0.700.

Hypothesis 1: Hypothesis 1 (H_1) was statistically stated as "Concern about the environment significantly impact the attitude of consumer for buying green products". The null and alternate hypothesis was proposed as:

H_{01} : Concern about the environment do not significantly impact the attitude of consumer for buying green products.

H_1 : Concern about the environment significantly impact the attitude of consumer for buying green products.

The result obtained (Table 3) shows that when the mean attitude levels is larger than the standard deviation, there is no discernible difference between attitude variables and environmental concern of the respondents. This demonstrates that the data are homogeneous and adequate for analysis, for examining the influence of consumer's concern about the environment on attitude regarding purchasing of green products. The concern about the environment significantly impacts the attitude of consumer for buying of green products as the significance values (p) for all the parameters at 95% confidence level is <0.05 (Table 4).

The measures of association as mentioned in table 5 reflect that environmental concern is significantly impacting as R square value shows the higher impacting values. Hence it can be concluded that strong concern about environment of respondents significantly impacts the attitude of consumer for buying of green products. So, we fail to accept the null hypothesis. Thereby, hypothesis 1 is accepted and it is concluded that concern about the environment significantly impact the attitude of consumer for buying green products.

Hypothesis 2: Hypothesis 2 (H_2) was statistically stated as "Environmental concern significantly influence buying intention of consumer towards purchasing green products." The null and alternate hypothesis was proposed as:

H_{02} : Environmental concern do not significantly influence buying intention of consumer towards purchasing green products.

H_2 : Environmental concern significantly influence buying intention of consumer towards purchasing green products.

Table 6 demonstrates that the mean of buying intention is higher than the standard deviation and this indicate that there is no obvious difference between the respondents' environmental concerns and their buying intention variables. This demonstrates that the data are homogeneous and suitable for analysis to investigate the influence of environmental concerns on buying intention of consumer for green products. Thus, environmental concern significantly influences buying intention of consumer towards purchasing green products as the significance values (p) at 95% confidence level of all buying intention levels is <0.05 (Table 7). The table also shows measures of association, as R square value of the variables the higher impacting values.

Therefore, it reflected that respondents who have environmental concern may significantly influence buying intention of consumer towards purchasing green products. Thereby, null hypothesis is liable to rejected and hypothesis 2 is accepted. Thus, it is inferred that environmental concern significantly influence buying intention of consumer towards purchasing green products.

The outcome implied that consumers' attitudes and intentions to purchase green products are greatly influenced by their considerable environmental concerns. The findings are corroborated by the result of research of Kinnear and Taylor (1973), who stressed that a person's level of care is associated with his or her attitude and their intention while developing a scale for environmental concern. Kim and Choi (2005) also reported that consumers who are extremely concerned about the environment are much more likely to purchase environmentally friendly goods than people who are not as concerned, whereas Chan and Lau (2000) study show that environmental concern varies depending on the perspective and the complex and unstable nature of the issue. The findings thus lead to the conclusion that consumers' attitudes and intentions regarding the purchase of green products were considerably influenced by their concern for the environment.

Conclusion, Limitation and Future scope

The study evaluated the relative impact of perceived emotional benefit on attitude and intention about purchasing of green products. Two hypotheses dealing with perceived emotional benefit on attitude and intention were proposed. The result outcome revealed that emotional benefits significantly influence the attitude of consumer about buying green products ($p < 0.05$). Also, there was significant correlation between influence of emotional benefits and buying intention of consumer about buying green products ($p < 0.05$). Thus, it is concluded that consumers' attitudes and intentions toward purchasing green products are highly influenced by the perceived emotional benefits.

The psychogenic determinants examined in this study, may not be the sole elements influencing consumers' buying decisions about green products. Therefore, a number of additional determinants may also impact consumers' buying decisions can predict the likelihood that consumers will purchase green products. Furthermore, it's probable that not all green products may provide the results seen in this study, hence it's crucial to use caution when extrapolating the results.

In order to produce more reliable results and recommendations, future studies should involve participants from a variety of cities or villages around the nation. To reach more perceptive results, a broader outlook of comparable green products might be repeated. It is recommended that future research should consider other determinants like economic and cultural factors, etc. It could be interesting to do a comparison study between green products and standard products adopting this study's mediating variables. The comparison could be paramount

to assist the manufacturers in obtaining the views of the consumers on these substitute products, which will give the market a wider range of product categories.

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Tables:

Table 1: Measurement Items (Constructs, Survey measures and Scale sources)

Construct	Survey measures	Scale sources
Environmental Concern	EC1: Environment is severely abused by humans.	Mostafa (2009) Chen and Tung (2014)
	EC2: We are approaching the limit of the no. of people the earth can support.	
	EC3: Humans need to adapt to the natural environment because they cannot remake it to suit their needs.	
	EC4: To maintain a healthy economy, we will have to develop a steady-state economy where industrial growth is controlled.	
	EC5: We must maintain the balance of nature for our survival.	
	EC6: The balance of nature is very delicate, hence get easily disturbed.	
	EC7: I would like to buy green products to reduce environmental damage.	
	EC8: I am worried about the worsening of the quality of environment.	
	EC9: Environment is my major concern.	
	EC10: I often think about how the environmental quality can be improved.	

Attitude	<p>ATT1: I understand the information on green packaging.</p> <p>ATT2: I am willing to pay a higher price for a green product (for example, +10%).</p> <p>ATT3: I pay attention to green advertising.</p> <p>ATT4: I know where the green displays are in my market.</p> <p>ATT5: I easily find green products in a market.</p> <p>ATT6: I hear and pay attention to my friends/ family opinion concerning green product.</p> <p>ATT7: I recommend green products to my friends/family.</p>	<p>Kim and Han (2010)</p> <p>Frederiks et.al. (2015)</p>
Buying Intention	<p>BI1: These give a good image of mine.</p> <p>BI2: I want to protect the environment.</p> <p>BI3: I simply enjoy green products.</p> <p>BI4: People may judge me if I do not make a purchase.</p> <p>BI5: In a market, I made an unplanned purchase of green products.</p> <p>EI6: I was satisfied with most of green products I bought.</p> <p>EI7: Environmental issues are very important to me.</p> <p>EI8: I would like to pay more for green products for high quality life.</p> <p>EI9: Will you purchase green products next time?</p>	<p>Kim et al., (2013)</p> <p>Frederiks et.al., (2015)</p>

Table 2: Construct validity

Psychogenic determinants	Number of items	Cronbach's Alfa	Action taken
Environmental Concern	10	0.915	All retained
Attitude	7	0.859	All retained
Buying Intention	9	0.795	All retained

Table 3: Summary data of attitude of consumers for buying green products across the environmental concern variables.

EC: Environmental Concern		ATT 1	ATT 2	ATT 3	ATT 4	ATT 5	ATT 6	ATT 7
Strongly disagree	Mean	1.830	1.500	1.500	1.670	1.670	1.500	1.500
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Standard Deviation	0.983	0.837	0.837	0.816	0.816	0.837	0.837
Disagree	Mean	3.000	2.750	2.500	2.250	3.000	3.000	2.500
	N	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	Standard Deviation	1.414	1.500	1.291	1.258	1.414	1.414	1.915
Neutral	Mean	3.260	3.100	3.070	3.190	3.140	3.290	3.31
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
	Standard Deviation	0.885	0.726	0.745	0.833	0.899	0.864	0.869
Agree	Mean	3.79	3.53	3.76	3.50	3.35	3.81	3.89
	N	242	242	242	242	242	242	242
	Standard Deviation	0.623	0.752	0.630	0.780	0.871	0.593	0.642
Strongly Agree	Mean	4.240	3.960	4.220	3.840	3.470	4.160	4.420
	N	111	111	111	111	111	111	111
	Standard Deviation	0.844	0.852	0.756	0.949	1.069	0.769	0.654
Total	Mean	3.820	3.570	3.770	3.520	3.330	3.810	3.930
	N	405	405	405	405	405	405	405
	Standard Deviation	0.824	0.867	0.817	0.897	0.959	0.786	0.831

Table 4: ANOVA of attitude across the environmental concern variables.

	Variations	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ATT 1 * EC	Between Groups	59.499	4	14.875	27.667	0.000
	Within Groups	215.054	400	0.538		
	Total	274.553	404			
ATT 2 * EC	Between Groups	55.494	4	13.873	22.374	0.000
	Within Groups	248.022	400	0.620		
	Total	303.516	404			

ATT 3 * EC	Between Groups	79.974	4	19.993	42.164	0.000
	Within Groups	189.671	400			
	Total	269.644	404			
ATT 4 * EC	Between Groups	42.891	4	10.723	15.202	0.000
	Within Groups	282.136	400	0.705		
	Total	325.027	404			
ATT 5 * EC	Between Groups	20.705	4	5.176	5.900	0.000
	Within Groups	350.959	400	0.877		
	Total	371.664	404			
ATT 6 * EC	Between Groups	59.954	4	14.988	31.590	0.000
	Within Groups	189.785	400	0.474		
	Total	249.738	404			
ATT 7 * EC	Between Groups	87.142	4	21.785	45.438	0.000
	Within Groups	191.782	400	0.479		
	Total	278.923	404			

Table 5: Measures of association between attitude across the environmental concern variables.

Association	R	R Squared	Eta	Eta Squared
ATT1*EC	0.460	0.211	0.466	0.217
ATT2*EC	0.418	0.175	0.428	0.183
ATT3*EC	0.535	0.286	0.545	0.297
ATT4*EC	0.347	0.120	0.363	0.132
ATT5*EC	0.196	0.038	0.236	0.056
ATT6*EC	0.467	0.218	0.490	0.240
ATT7*EC	0.551	0.304	0.559	0.312

Table 6: Summary data of buying intention of consumers for buying green products across the environmental concern variables.

EC: Environmental concern		BI1.	BI2	BI3.	BI4	BI5	BI6	BI7	BI8	BI9
Strongly disagree	Mean	2.170	1.330	2.000	2.500	1.670	2.000	2.000	2.330	2.000
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Standard Deviation	0.983	0.816	1.265	1.517	0.816	1.095	1.673	1.633	1.673
Disagree	Mean	2.250	2.750	2.500	2.500	2.000	2.750	2.750	3.250	2.750
	N	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

	Standard Deviation	1.500	1.258	1.291	1.291	1.414	1.500	1.258	1.500	2.062
Neutral	Mean	3.020	3.380	3.170	2.790	3.070	3.240	3.260	3.240	3.140
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
	Standard Deviation	0.975	0.987	0.794	0.842	0.894	0.906	1.014	0.906	0.783
Agree	Mean	3.060	4.080	3.640	2.380	3.170	3.600	4.100	3.680	4.000
	N	242	242	242	242	242	242	242	242	242
	Standard Deviation	0.907	0.683	0.788	0.931	0.883	0.794	0.599	0.832	0.562
Strongly Agree	Mean	3.290	4.670	4.090	2.340	3.190	3.860	4.590	4.090	4.470
	N	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111
	Standard Deviation	1.303	0.637	0.910	1.247	1.202	0.807	0.667	0.900	0.658
A Total	Mean	3.100	4.120	3.680	2.410	3.130	3.600	4.100	3.720	4.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405	405	405	405	405
	Standard Deviation	1.053	0.884	0.907	1.034	1.005	0.863	0.841	0.927	0.804

buying intention of consumer for buying green products across the environmental concern variables.

	Variations	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
BI1 * EC	Between Groups	12.645	4	3.161	2.904	0.022
	Within Groups	435.405	400	1.089		
	Total	448.049	404			
BI2 * EC	Between Groups	110.544	4	27.636	53.923	0.000
	Within Groups	205.002	400	0.513		
	Total	315.546	404			
BI3 * EC	Between Groups	52.616	4	13.154	18.815	0.000
	Within Groups	279.656	400	0.699		
	Total	332.272	404			
BI4 * EC	Between Groups	6.795	4	1.699	1.597	0.174
	Within Groups	425.343	400	1.063		
	Total	432.138	404			
BI5 * EC	Between Groups	18.864	4	4.716	4.847	0.001
	Within Groups	389.200	400	0.973		
	Total	408.064	404			

BI6 * EC	Between Groups	31.017	4	7.754	11.480	0.000
	Within Groups	270.183	400	0.675		
	Total	301.200	404			
BI7 * EC	Between Groups	89.421	4	22.355	45.571	0.000
	Within Groups	196.223	400	0.491		
	Total	285.644	404			
BI8 * EC	Between Groups	37.811	4	9.453	12.210	0.000
	Within Groups	309.661	400	0.774		
	Total	347.472	404			
BI9 * EC	Between Groups	85.465	4	21.366	48.689	0.000
	Within Groups	175.532	400	0.439		
	Total	260.998	404			

Table 8: Measures of association between buying intention across the environmental concern variables.

Association	R	R Squared	Eta	Eta Squared
BI1 * EC	0.153	0.023	0.168	0.028
BI2 * EC	0.583	0.340	0.592	0.350
BI3 * EC	0.396	0.157	0.398	0.158
BI4 * EC	-0.084	0.007	0.125	0.016
BI5 * EC	0.149	0.022	0.215	0.046
BI6 * EC	0.309	0.095	0.321	0.103
BI7 * EC	0.551	0.303	0.560	0.313
BI8 * EC	0.327	0.107	0.330	0.109
BI9 * EC	0.562	0.315	0.572	0.327

Figures:

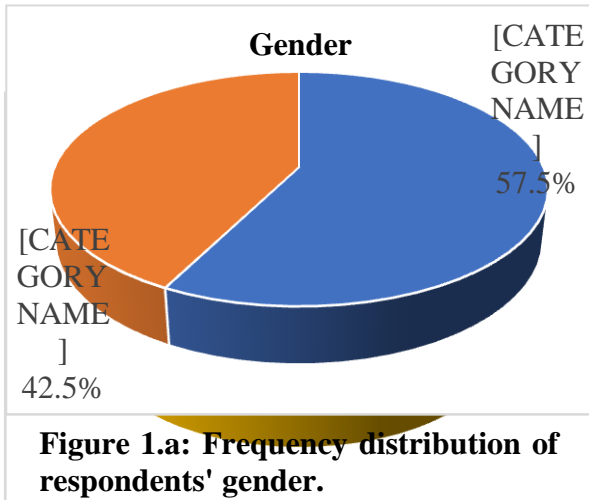


Figure 1.c: Frequency distribution of respondents' education.

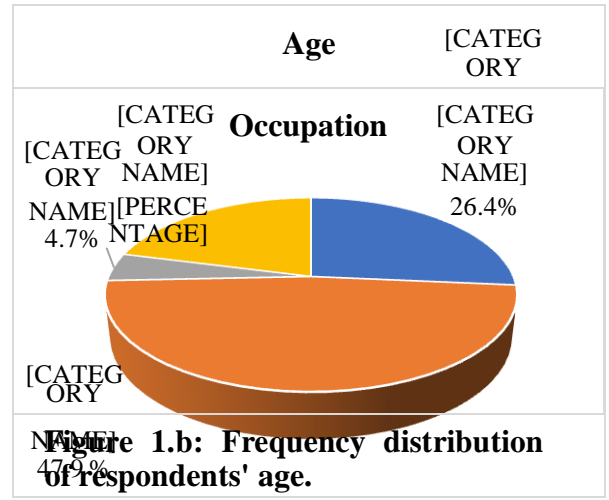


Figure 1.d: Frequency distribution of respondents' occupation.

