



Ecolabel and Consumers





Eco-Labeling Strategies and Price- Premium: The Wine Industry Puzzle

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Although there is increasing use of eco-labeling, conditions under which eco-labels can command price premiums are not fully understood. In this article, authors demonstrate that the certification of environmental practices by a third party should be analyzed as a strategy distinct from—although related to—the disclosure of the eco-certification through a label posted on the product. By assessing eco-labeling and eco-certification strategies separately, researchers can identify benefits associated with the certification process, such as improved reputation in the industry or increased product quality, independently from those associated with the actual label. In the context of the wine industry, it shows that eco-certification leads to a price premium while the use of the eco-label does not.

Keywords:

Eco-certification, Eco label

Managing Green Complexities: Consumers' Strategies and Techniques for Greener Shopping

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The complexities of green consumption are often discussed. Studies bring to fore difficulties of choosing sustainable alternatives in a complex world. How are consumers to know what products to purchase in a market society with global commodity chains? Can consumers really trust corporations' environmental reporting? In arguing this, these studies are giving voice to some of the difficulties and anxieties people have to deal with in a consumer society. As others have argued, consumption involves work and being a consumer is increasingly a laborious and anxiety-producing activity. However, what these studies are missing is the fact that consumers do manage to consume green, at least some of them do. An interesting question is then, how is this complexity managed? The aim of this paper is to contribute to the field of green consumption by illustrating and conceptualizing how consumers practically manage green complexities when performing green shopping. The focus is on shopping practices. Drawing on an ethnographic study of the Nordic Nature Shop – a Swedish retailer chain of outdoor products – and making use of practice theory, this paper shows that consumers have different strategies and techniques to make their shopping practices more sustainable. One strategy used is to shop for things that last. Consumers focused then on finding quality outdoor products with 'timeless design'. Another strategy included instead consuming less. These consumers had different techniques that aimed at reducing their overall consumption of outdoors products. Finally, there were also those that focused on purchasing green products. Here, two techniques were talked about. While some focused on finding green brands, others looked at the product information in search on information concerning its manufacturing. In sum, the practice-based analysis showed that green complexities are managed through the development of various green shopping strategies. Green shopping, however, is not an uncomplicated accomplishment. Green shopping, the analysis suggests, is knowledge demanding for consumers and requires an enabling/supportive socio-material retailscape.

Keywords:

Green Consumption, Green Marketing, Eco label, Trade; Sustainable



Consumers' Preferences for Eco-Friendly Appliances in an Emerging Market Context

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At present, the South African (SA) energy supply per person surpasses that of several developing countries in the world notwithstanding the energy crisis in the country and the evidence that SA produces among the highest greenhouse gas emissions per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) in the world. The problem is aggravated by an increased demand for major household appliances in recent years, contributing to an overextension of existing capacity and perpetual power failures. Increasing consumption patterns in the rapidly expanding economy of South Africa require intentional efforts to promote more sustainable product choices e.g. an understanding of the relevance of environmental attributes in consumers' evaluation of product alternatives to ensure lasting environmental implications. Using Sawtooth conjoint software, trade-off tasks were included in a cross-sectional survey involving 648 households in Tshwane, South Africa to assess the relative importance of various environmental attributes in relation to other product features (e.g. brand and price) of washing machines. Aggregate results reveal that consumers across various age, income and educational levels prioritize brand and price, despite the long-term financial and environmental repercussions of product features that impact on the use of natural resources. Four consumer segments were identified through cluster analysis that differ in terms of preference structures, which offer valuable insight for the development of intervention strategies and marketing campaigns. The findings underline current literature, namely that 'green' product offerings must also perform competitively in terms of non-environmental attributes. Future studies should focus on a broader scope of factors, including consumers' knowledge and awareness of the environmental impact of their product choices, to better inform marketing campaigns and intervention initiatives.

Keywords:

Conjoint Analyses, Emerging Economies, Environmental Attributes, Green Products, Household Appliances, Pro-Environmental Choices

Consumer Understanding, Perceptions and Behaviours with regard to Environmentally Friendly Packaging in a Developing Nation

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There has been very little research conducted into sustainable consumption patterns, knowledge and attitudes in relation to environmentally friendly packaging in South Africa. Market research that has been conducted in relation to sustainable consumption has largely been based on overseas studies and is therefore limited in that its reflection of information is from a first world country perspective. Environmental knowledge has been found to impact environmentally friendly behaviour both directly and indirectly. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to investigate South African respondents' understanding (knowledge) and perceptions of environmentally friendly packaging as well as the extent to which they exhibited green behaviour with regard to environmentally friendly packaging activities such as reusing and recycling.

The data gathered for this study were collected by means of a questionnaire distributed to respondents using snowball sampling through Facebook networks. The snowball sample required respondents to answer the questionnaire and pass it on to other Facebook users. The unique benefit of this study is that it is conducted in a developing nation where issues such as sustainable consumption are new and evolving. There is limited promotion or implementation of environmentally responsible practices by authorities or industry. South African consumers in this study were found to exhibit limited knowledge of what environmentally friendly packaging is, how to differentiate it from normal packaging, as well as its benefits. However, actions are even less evident with regard to environmentally friendly packaging. Recommendations of how to improve knowledge as well as facilitate purchase of environmentally friendly packaging are provided.

Keywords:

Environmentally Friendly Packaging, Green Marketing, Green Consumers, Packaging