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Impact of shopping bags on environment by users of plastic shopping bags

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Abstract

Plastic bag users are at risk of numbers of health hazards. The study indicates with regards to awareness of hazards associated with the usage of plastic bags among people and their perception towards the conscious of the access of plastic bag. This study was conducted in Acharya Narendra Dev University of Agriculture and Technology Kumarganj, Ayodhya. Data was collected by interview and judgment based in each of the selected respondent using interview schedule and judgement schedule for judging the awareness schedule of health hazards by the respondents.

Keywords: health hazards, plastic bags, environment

Introduction

The world plastic comes from the Greek word *plastikos*, which means “able to be shaped or molded”. Molding and shaping plastic by using heat is a basic part of its manufacturing process. Plastic bags have been introduced in 1970's and gained an increasing popularity amongst consumers and retailers. They are available in huge numbers and varieties across the world. Plastic industry is one among the rapidly growing industries in India. The production of plastic has reached 8.5 million tons in 2013 with a growth rate of 8% over the previous five years. The growth rate is expected to be 10% over the next five years. The reason for popularity for using the plastic bags are light weight, resistance to degradation (by chemicals, Sunlight and bacteria), durability and above all low cost.

Plastic bag packing for hot edible items causes migration of harmful chemicals to food. These include styrene which is carcinogenic, phthalates and bisphenol these chemicals cause diabetes and diseases of the heart and liver. Plastics are not only dangerous towards human health but also making survival impossible for other flora and fauna on planet earth.

Materials and Methods

This study was undertaken in 2020 in the A.N.D.U.A.&T. Kumarganj, Ayodhya. The sample size for the study was aimed at 100 respondents including both experts & consumers. A written informed consent was taken from each participant. Socio demographic information viz age, educational status and occupational status were inquired from each participant. Questions regarding frequency of usage of plastic bags and what do they do or how do they dispose the bags after every usage were asked. They were also enquired about that they felt was the reason for popularity of plastic bags, whether they were habituated in demanding the bags more than the actual requirement from shop keepers or a whether the shop keepers, generously; offered them the bags without checking their actual requirements and whether they were habituated in refusing plastic bags by carrying their own bags for shopping visits. The questions on their awareness regarding hazards and types of hazards associated with plastic bag usage, awareness about recyclable plastic bags, awareness regarding eco- friendly alternative material for making bags and environment protection were inquired.

Statistical Analysis: The bags were coded from A₁ to A₃₀. The responses were marked in the interview schedule. The data was coded, tabulated and calculated in term of frequency and percentage.

Frequency: The no. of respondents marked in any particular parameter is its frequency.

Percentage: It is calculated by dividing obtained score by the total score and multiplying it by 100.

Percentage = Obtained Score ÷ Total Score × 100

Result and Discussion

Socio - Demographic Status of the Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their age

S. No.	Age group	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	20-30	10	10%
2	30-40	20	20%
3	40-50	30	30%
4	50-60	40	40%

The data in the table 1 shows age distribution of respondents. It was found that majority (40%) of the respondents fell in the age group of 50-60 years. Its groups were active for given direction of preparing bags. The minimum (20%) of the respondents fell in the age group of 30-40 years. These groups are busy in purchasing raw materials. The least (10%) of the respondents fell in the age group of 20 -30 years this group is dominant in preparing bags through value addition technique used. The other age of the 40 -50 years (30%) of the respondent were very active in stitching of bags.

Table 2: Educational qualification of the respondents

S. No.	Educational qualification	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Primary	10	10%
2	Junior or high school	10	10%
3	High school	20	20%
4	Intermediate	13	13%
5	Graduation	12	12%
6	Post graduation	15	15%
7	PhD	20	20%

The table 2 presents distribution of the respondents according to their educational qualification. The majority of the

Table 5: Environment friendly alternative to plastic bags

S. No.	Types	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Jute bags	10	10%
2	Paper bags	10	10%
3	Bio-degradable bags	20	20%
4	Reusable bags	30	30%
5	Cloths bags	30	30%

The table 5 shows the distribution of samples according to environment friendly alternative. Majority (30%) of the respondents used reusable and cloths bags for saving money and environment. Minimum (20%) of the respondents used biodegradable bags for saving environment. Last (10%) of the respondents used jute bags and paper bags for health consciousness.

Conclusion

It was differed from the study that education had a role in opinion formation. The educated people were found to be aware about the health and environmental hazards of the plastic bags. Additionally, the reusable and cloth bags were opined to be liked by people as a replacement of plastic bags. This shows that people are now becoming aware of plastic pollution and hence, want to migrate towards healthier and more useful substitutes for the sake of mother earth.

respondents (20%) were Ph.D. The minimum of the respondent (20%) were past graduate. The (15%) of the respondents were Graduate then (12%) of the respondents were intermediate and last (13%) of the respondents were High school, Junior high school and primary standard.

Table 3: Occupational states of the respondents

S. No.	Name of occupation	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Private sector	10	10%
2	Government service	80	80%
3	Self employed	5	5%
4	Business	5	5%

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents according to their occupational status. Majority (80%) of the respondent worked in Government services. Minimum (10%) of the respondents worked in private sector. Last (5%) of the respondents worked of self employed and business.

Table 4: Income of the family

S. No.	Income	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	170000-above	70	70%
2	140000-169999	10	10%
3	120000-139999	5	5%
4	100000-119999	5	5%
5	70,000-99999	5	5%
6	50,000-69999	5	5%

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents according to income of the family. Majority (70%) of the respondents had income of about 170000 and above. Minimum 10% of the respondents were income of 14,0000-169999. While last 5% of the respondent's income of 12,000-139999,100000-119999,70,000-99999and 50,000-69999.

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