The knowledge, awareness, attitude and motivational analysis of plastic waste and household perspective in Malaysia

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Abstract The focus of this study is to analyze the level of knowledge, awareness, and attitude toward plastic waste and to distinguish the key drivers that encourage the households in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to participate in “No plastic campaign.” This study used the logistic regression model to explain the factors that may affect the willingness to participate (WTP) of households in the campaign. In this study, it is found that 35% of households are willing to participate in the campaign. The results of the study also indicate that people who are more informed and more convinced of their knowledge have a more positive attitude toward recycling than their counterparts do. Furthermore, this study provides additional evidence of the level and classification of importance of motivating factors for plastic recycling, using the modified average and coefficient of variation of the models. From the analysis, the factor “helps reduce landfill use” is found as the most important factor and the factor of “raising money for charity” is found as the least important factor that motivates households to participate in recycling. The determinations of the study suggest some strategies that could hold implications for government and households to boost them to participate in the campaign “No Plastic Bag.”

Keywords No plastic bag campaign · Knowledge · Awareness · Attitude · Motivational factors · Logistic regression

Introduction

Recycling means turning waste materials into financial, environmental, and societal resources (US Environmental Protection Agency 2012). Recycling has been widely accepted and recognized as a method of managing solid waste, because of its power to protect the environment, cut down transport costs and disposal of solid waste, and protract the life of landfills (Moh and Manaf 2014).

In any country’s public perception, posture and behavior are significant elements that determine the success of the recycling program (Delistavrou et al. 2005). Although recycling is becoming mainstream in developing countries, consumer participation is yet far from the desired standards in these countries (Tilikidou 2001; Delistavrou 1999). In recent years, numerous research papers have recognized the significance of public perception, knowledge, awareness, attitude, and behavior toward environmental problems. They also reported that there was a breach between public perception, awareness, cognition, and behavior (Masud et al. 2015). In this sense, Schultz and Oskamp (1996) and Patchen (2006) studied the importance of cognition and attitudes as keys to better public adequate natural environment features. Leiserowitz (2007) also gave importance to public perception and attitude because of their part in future policies on environment and evolution. Attitudes are important measurements that mimic how people study their immediate surroundings.