



A STUDY ON STATUS OF ENVIRONMENTAL LABELS AND RECYCLING SYMBOLS ON PROCURED SURGICAL CONSUMABLES IN A TERTIARY CARE GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL.

Environmental Science

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ABSTRACT

Aim: A Study on status of environmental labels and recycling symbols on procured surgical consumables in a Tertiary Care Government Hospital.
Objectives: To study the status of eco label-I and recycling symbols on surgical consumables, and procurement rules with respect to green procurement rules.
Methodology: Study was conducted at central store of a tertiary care Government hospital. It was cross sectional, observational and descriptive type of study for 4 weeks duration. Observational checklist with parameters like availability of Eco label-I and recycling symbols on surgical consumables and cost of consumables, policy for procurement of consumables.
Results: Out of 81 items observed only 1 (1.23%) item had Eco label-I and 23 (28%) items had recycle symbols. There was a procurement policy as per government financial rules 2017.
Conclusion: A policy for green procurement is need of the hour. Policy decisions at central level should consider Eco-labels/environmental parameters for procurement.

KEYWORDS

Eco Labels, Green Procurement, Recycling Symbols

INTRODUCTION

Eco-labels are voluntary certifications practiced around the world. They are developed by governments, manufacturers, and third-party organizations independently. Producers and service providers demonstrate through eco-labels that they comply with high standards of environmental protection during the life-cycle of the products and the provided services.

In this modern era of developed technology and increasing environmental awareness by consumers, the concept of the eco-labels helps the consumers to take decisions about the products which are eco-friendly. It has emerged as one of the effective communication tools to communicate these actions to the consumers. It enables consumers to make safe and healthy purchasing decisions based on the information provided related to environmental characteristics and environmental impacts of eco-labelled products over its life cycle. So, it is now imperative for manufacturers to gain competitive advantage in the marketplace and to differentiate their products from others [1].

More and more international organizations are trying to transform the way they procure and to bring their contribution towards a more sustainable economy. Green procurement is a powerful tool to support the cause of the environment but, like every other change, it takes time for it to sink in to organizational practices. Environmental labels can be useful tools in the hands of public procurers and requisitions to overcome these difficulties. But more clarity is needed on the nature of different types of labels, on the way they function and on how they can be used in the procurement process. The increasing number and differing quality of environmental labels is also per se a challenge; the growing popularity of environmentally friendly products has caused the multiplication of consumer facing logos, with very different levels of reliability, thoroughness and independence. The risk of misusing labels, or misinterpreting their quality and features is real. Procurement practitioners will also find information on the progress of environmental labelling in developing countries, and on how to support sustainable production and consumption through the use of labels in procurement [2].

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the status of eco label-I on surgical consumables.
2. To study the status of recycling symbols on surgical consumables.
3. To study the procurement rules for surgical consumables with respect to green procurement rules.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at the central store of a tertiary care Government hospital. It was a cross sectional, observational and descriptive type of study. Duration of study was 4 weeks. The data was collected by a checklist. Parameters taken were availability of Eco label-I and recycling symbols on surgical consumables and cost of consumables, policy for procurement of consumables.

RESULTS

Availability of Eco label-I on surgical consumables

All the surgical consumables available in the central store were observed for the availability of eco label-I [3].

Figure 2: Eco-labels Type I :-



Total 18 eco labels under eco label-I were observed on 81 surgical consumables out of which it was available on one (1.23%) item. The Eco label ISO 14001:2015 was available on this item. ISO 14001 is an internationally agreed standard that sets out the requirements for an environmental management system. It helps organizations improve their environmental performance through more efficient use of resources and reduction of waste, gaining a competitive advantage and

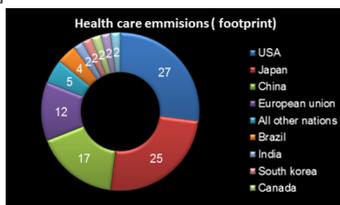


Figure 1: Health care emissions of all over the world

in gaining trust of stakeholders.

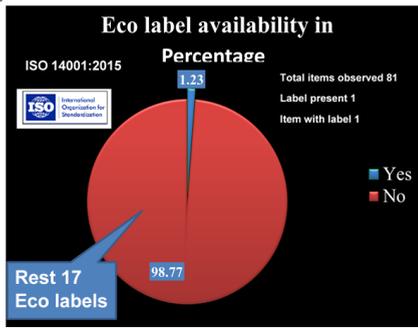


Figure2: Availability of Eco-labels



Figure3: Eco-label available

The practice of Eco labelling indicates that a company has a long-term vision, is flexible and innovative. anticipates market expectations, is environmentally conscious and has the creativity to produce sustainable products [4, 5].

Availability of recycling symbols on surgical consumables

Available surgical items of the central store were observed for recycling symbols. All items were observed for Mobius and green dot symbols. A total of 81 items were observed out of which 23 items (28%) had a recycling symbol. Mobius symbol was available on 10 items (12.34%) and green dot symbol was available on 13 items (16.04%). Recycling offers both environmental and economic benefits. A conscious and judicious practice of recycling not only reduces the amount of waste sent to oceans, landfills and incinerators considerably it also safeguards natural resources by limiting the need to harvest new resources, prevents pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials and consequently reduces greenhouse gas emissions that contributes to global climate changes, saves energy and as it produces new material from waste, creates new jobs and therefore helps a country remain economically competitive in a resource-constrained future [6].

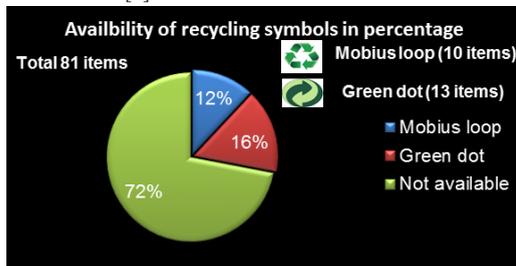


Figure4: Availability of recycling symbols

Policy of tertiary care hospital for procurement of surgical consumables

It was observed that hospital had followed the government financial rules for the procurement. No green procurement policy was available.

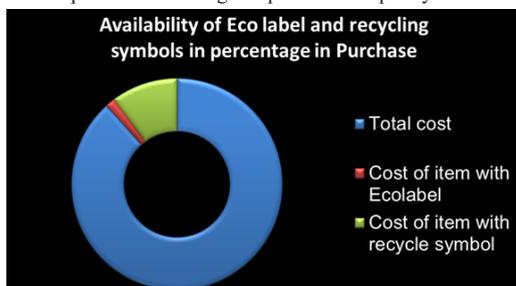


Figure 5: Availability in terms of cost

It was observed that total purchase price for surgical items from 1 September 2018 to 31st august 2019 was twenty-one crores thirteen lakh sixty-seven thousand two hundred twenty-nine rupees. The purchase price of items with Eco label was thirty-five lakh ninety-eight thousand two hundred rupees (1.7%) of total amount. The purchase price of items with recycle symbols was two crore forty-three lakh forty-nine thousand two hundred thirty rupees (11.52%).

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In March 2004, the Council and the European Parliament adopted new Public Procurement Directives and developed several tools in order to support green public procurement. The Buying Green EU handbook is designed to help public authorities launch green purchasing policies. The handbook follows through the structure of a procurement procedure, explaining the European Community law in a practical way, and looks at simple and effective solutions for implementing the procedures [7].

Unfortunately, not many studies have been conducted on the status of environmental labels. So, a policy for green procurement is the need of the hour. More studies should be conducted on the availability of Eco labels and recycling symbols on consumables which in turn will help to generate awareness amongst the staff regarding benefits of certain products, energy efficiency, waste minimization and product stewardship.

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