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Consumer attitude towards the repair and the second-hand purchase of small household electrical and electronic equipment. A Spanish case study

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Abstract

This study presents a survey to identify current habits and practices regarding the repair and second-hand purchases of small household electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) in Spain, and to identify the profile of consumers who are more or less prone to this behavior. This can be useful for targeting future awareness campaigns to proper audiences that promote extending the usage life of EEE by repairing and through second-hand purchases. To this end, a survey was designed and conducted with a representative sample size of 400 valid responses obtained through telephone interviews. It allowed the identification of the most frequent small EEE in households, and consumer habits as regards replacement, repairs and second-hand purchases. Consumers used small household EEE for an average of 6.25 years; 9.56% of those interviewed had never repaired broken small household EEE, and only 0.75% had bought second-hand small household EEE at some time. The analysis of the relationship between consumer attitudes and their socio-economic characteristics using logit models indicated that older consumers and females were more prone to repair small household EEE, while older males with medium family incomes tended to purchase second-hand small household EEE more. Finally, consumers indicated that they considered it important that the design and labeling of small household EEE included aspects and information about their durability. The obtained results are useful for designing and targeting future awareness campaigns to proper audiences that promote extending the lifetime of EEE by repairing and second-hand purchases. These actions can help to achieve the minimum recovery targets for preparing for the reuse stated within the waste policy framework.

Keywords: survey; consumer behaviour; small waste electrical and electronic equipment; WEEE; environmental education

Acronyms

EEE: electrical and electronic equipment
WEEE: waste electrical and electronic equipment
VAC: vacuum cleaners
BLE: hand blenders
COF: coffee makers
JUI: juicers
KET: kettles
IRO: irons
SAN: sandwich makers
HAI: hair dryers
TOA: toasters
HEA: heaters

1. Introduction

Cleaner production is a concept that aims to prevent waste production, while increasing efficiency in the use of, among others, material resources. Along these lines, the waste hierarchy (Directive 2008/98/EC) and the European Circular Economy Action Plan (COM 614, 2015; COM 33, 2017) promote reuse and preparation for reuse as strategies to prevent waste and to keep material resources in use for longer periods. Product

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