

A Study on Consumer Behaviour towards Green Marketing

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Abstract

Green marketing is a new concept which has evolved in recent years. It is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Environmental disasters is the main problem which today everybody is facing. Right from Government to corporate bodies, all are concerned about this issue. Everybody is putting their efforts to reduce the effects on nature. Many corporate businesses changed their logo brands to reflect their willingness and commitment towards fighting this issue and adopt Go Green logo.

This article tries to examine the consumers' conscious behaviour towards environment. The rising number of consumers' preference and willingness to buy Eco-friendly products are creating opportunity for businesses that are using eco-friendly or environmental friendly component as their value proposition. This change in consumer behaviour and future trends is spotted by the marketers and offer products and services to consumers in order to retain market share and build future green brands. Green marketing has moved from a trend to a way of doing business and businesses that should recognise the value of going green and to incorporate the message into their marketing program and communicating the green concept to the consumers. Green is slowly and steadily becoming the symbolic colour of eco-consciousness. Still the firms adopting the green marketing strategy should go a long way in convincing the large consumer population.

Keywords:

Green marketing, Environmental issues, consumer preferences and willingness, Government and corporate business.

Introduction:

Consumer behaviour is "the study of individuals, groups or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use and dispose of products, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society." In the international level there is an increase in the awareness of global warming and adverse environmental condition, so there is an interest towards environmental protection and sustainability. This issue is changing the consumer buying behaviour and this change is going to set a different trend in the field of marketing. The true marketer must understand the changing trends in the society and should respond positively to this change in the competitive market. This consciousness on part of consumers can also be called as environmental consumerism, green buying.

According to the American Marketing Association, green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. It includes a broad range of activities like product modification, changes to the production process, packing changes, modifying advertising. This term is also known as environmental marketing and ecological marketing. Green marketing refers to holistic marketing concept where production, marketing, consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness.

Scope of the study:

- 1) To study the importance of green marketing in the future.
- 2) To know about consumer environmental concern, awareness and knowledge about buying eco-friendly products.
- 3) To know whether green marketing is accepted by the consumers.

Methodology:

Present paper has done on the basis of secondary data collected from secondary data source. An extensive survey was done on internet, books, journals and magazines.

Contents of the study:

	AREA	STUDY
1)	Green marketing and sustainable development	According to the World Commission on Environmental Development (1978), Sustainable Development defines “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs” The idea in this strategy of sustainable development is the desire to merge economic and ecological developments in decision making by constructing policies that help in environmental conservation. The environment conservation for the current and the future generation is what the outcome product of green marketing is. The corporate businesses should work on both sides of satisfying consumers and protecting environment by adopting green marketing and also see to their self developments.
2)	Green marketing tools	Eco-label, eco-brand and environmental advertisement are part of the green marketing tools which can make perception easier and increase awareness of eco-friendly products features and aspects. Consequently, this will lead the consumers to purchase the environmentally friendly products. Practicing these policy tools plays an important role in changing consumer purchasing behaviour to purchase environmental friendly products, thus, decreasing the adverse effect of artificial products on the environment. Eco-labelling schemes are connected to degradable, agricultural products, energy conservation, electronic equipment, hazardous metal free electrical, non-toxic plastic packaging material, recycled paper and biodegradable cleaning agents. Eco-brand is a name, symbol or image of products that are harmless to the environment. Applying eco-brand aspects can help consumers to distinguish them by some means from other non-green products. Consumers will pursue to purchase eco-friendly options for products that produced high level of environmental impact correspond to those with low level of environmental impact. Green advertisement is one of the ways to influence consumers’ purchasing behaviour that will strongly encourage consumers to buy products that are eco friendly to our environment. Consumers direct their attention to the positive consequences of their purchasing behaviour, for themselves as well as the environment .There is three elements in green advertisement. Firstly, the company should start a statement that is related to the environment. Secondly, the company should demonstrate its concern and dedication to improve the environment by its changed procedure to green advertisement. Thirdly, specific environmental actions in which the company is involved should be promoted through green advertisement.
3)	Businesses and Green marketing	There are significant alterations for activation in the business world in relation to the importance towards the environment and the society. Corporate ethical code of the 21st century is being green. Without a doubt, the main objective of companies is profitability but it is highly difficult for companies with the particular objective of making profit to achieve sustainability. Companies should be mindful of their duties towards the environment and the community similarly as towards

		<p>customers, workers and shareholders. In order to improve profitability, which is a direct advantage for the business itself, green marketing can advantage society</p> <p>by promoting not only the communication about but also the practice of green business process. The companies actually have a strong possibility to enhance their attitude if they engaged in environmental business activities. This is because to allege that their products are eco-friendly they have to absolutely assess the product in a way that matches valid requirements to acquire certified eco-labels. Also, they will not wish to lose the trust of the environmentally conscious consumers they focus on.</p>
4)	Marketing Mix in green Marketing	<p>Marketing mix basically are the different ways invented by a company to bring a good or service to the market. In green marketing, environmental concern is an element that marketing mix must give full accountability. Marketing mix ordinarily known as 4P's comprises of components such as product, price, place and promotion. In the extended marketing mix as in case of service sector, three other components such as people, physical evidence and process are combined to make up 7P's. According to green marketing principle every components in the marketing mix will have a green perspective from establishing to introducing a product to the market. When a product is manufactured under a process of eco friendly and harmless to the environment, the product may be named as green product. During production process, environmental pollution is an issue that business has to reduce. Natural resources ought to be preserved during physical removal of raw materials from a product. Eco friendly design product should be manufactured and packaging process should lessen contamination and pollution. Product enhancements certainly involve a significant amount of sunk costs but they are worth the resolution since development in the product would bring about a turnaround in sales. The manner of reversed logistics whereby customers return to the business used wrapping, packaging and even the recycled product itself would considerably help to conserve the environment. Going green will increase price as they comprise various costs such as teaching nation, gadget, establishment of modern technology, absorbing extrinsic costs, converting waste into recycled products. Undoubtedly these will cause the products to be more expensive. Therefore green price is termed as premium price. These will have additional stress on promotions due to premium price. Marketing exertion must rationalize these expenses and consumers need to be convinced to pay a premium, so that a realistic message in adverts is needed. Indeed some businesses have established this to be an attractive scheme when packaging costs develop a huge part of the unit cost. Green distribution comprise appointing pathway in a manner to diminish environmental impairment. Most of the damages are induced during shipping of goods. Therefore safety precautions must be implemented in the shipping of goods. Promotional material of a business is necessary in green marketing. The major information of go green has to transmit to the customers through direct marketing, sales promotions, advertising and public relations. Public relations and advertising indeed have become the most broadly used platforms to launch the green perspective of a business. Going green occasionally develop into a major national connections exercise as it form a bridge between the business and the society. Green advertising might be used to promote products, justify their features and price. Due to</p>

		deficiency of information, most customers are not exactly aware the significance of green product thus green promotional strategy should realize this fact. To forward this void in the lack of information, a business may exercise numerous green promotional strategies.
5)	Green Consumers	<p>Consumerism can be defined as a progress which originally started as a practice which was presented to safeguard consumers against operations of unethical business. Over time this has widespread and grew wider in nature. When today's agenda with regards to consumer advocacy is taken into study it can be recognized that conservation of the environment is the most important element. There is an impact growth in the concern revealed towards environmental conservation leading to "green consumerism". The green consumer is typically known as one who support eco-friendly attitudes and/or who purchases green products over the standard alternatives. Almost all consumers are conceivably green consumers. For instance, when a consumer has option to choose from two similar products, the consumer will choose to buy environmentally friendly product. There have been a total of various circumstances which are influential in encouraging green consumers to buy green products. This overpowering advance in the general environmental awareness among various consumer biography have been attempt undertaken by companies to "go green" by introducing the idea of corporate environmentalism</p>
6)	Consumers Environmental Concerns	<p>Consumers' environmental concerns are connected to the benefit towards the biophysical environment and its issues connected to the consumer and the surroundings. Initially, gender plays an essential role in consumerism and environmental consciousness. It has been recognized by prior research that women were more concerned about the environment than men. Besides, it has been told that consumers show environmental concerns depending on product features, precision of green product claims, information provided on the products and its advantages .For consumer packaged goods purchased, women are usually the primary target audience as they still do the bulk of today's household shopping. For instances, Seventh Generation, a viable personal care and household cleaning products manufacturer, targets the middle age along with new mothers, whom they find to be specifically concerned in creating the world a better place for their newborns. Other the other hand, packaging plays a crucial role in the product's sustainability. Consumers are conscious of environmental packing choices progressively and are shaping their behaviour as a consequence. Moreover, another powerful consumer packaging trend is the use of reusable shopping bags at grocery store. Now it is almost trendy to bring your reusable shopping bags to grocery store as consumers and retailers are recognizing this new environmental behaviour.</p>
7)	Benefits of Green Marketing	<p>1) Revenue increases: Consumers prefer every new and positive concept, so that innovator plays an essential role in this segment. A successful product that fulfils consumer satisfaction will definitely have an increase in sales and revenue.</p> <p>2) Reduced Cost: In green marketing, the cost of raw materials is low thus it will increase the productions and save money. It saves money in</p>

		<p>the long run, though initially cost is more. 3) Brand value: On top of that, green marketing can build brand value. A great green practices company will get a good brand value in the heart of the consumers. It ensures sustained long term growth along with profitability. 4) Benefits: Another important benefit of green marketing is getting tax breaks and loans from government because those innovative companies which help the nation who are living in a rural or un-employment will bear uncertain risks. Besides, they save environment and health of nation so they receive subsidies from government. It helps in accessing the new markets and enjoying competitive advantage. 5) The most crucial advantage of green marketing is world salvation. Disposal and treatment of wastage, production process of companies will produce emissions of several greenhouse gases which contribute to global climate change which can causes green house effect. By following a great way of green practices, the companies could save the world in the way of saving the health of peoples and the environment. 6) Employees feel proud to work for environment responsible company.</p>
8)	Challenges of Green Marketing	<p>Costly: Renewable and recyclable materials, new technology, huge investments.</p> <p>Awareness: people are not aware of green products and their uses and consumers will not wish to pay extra for the products.</p>

Examples:

- Lead free paints from Kansai Nerolac.
- Wipro’s Green Washing machines, computer peripherals, desktops and laptops called Greenware
- Whirlpool introduced CFC free Refrigerators, LED bulb, Jute bags.
- Digital bill payment (avoids paper bills and receipts).

Green marketing in India:

India’s rapid GDP growth and the highly negative environmental impact, demand for eco-labelled products may create the necessary consumer pressure to ensure a cleaner environment. But there is an existence of an environmental value-action gap, a gap between consumers’ beliefs and behaviours over being green. Products given greater exposure will be more likely to sell in greater numbers. Pro-environmental values are more likely to result in more pro-environmental behaviour. A major barrier in the purchasing of green products is that the concern over whether the product will perform as expected. However, consumers generally trust the performance of well known brands, so green products that work well and do not make over inflated green claims could sell successfully under well-known brands. The current levels of consumer awareness about global warming, India’s brands need to help raise consumer consciousness. Indian manufacturers have yet to find a market for green products, even as consumers have a low awareness of them because of the insufficient efforts made by the marketers. But by embracing the green imperative and investing in green initiatives and consumer education, Indian brands can break this vicious cycle. In general it is clear that the Indian market for greener products is under-exploitation by marketers within consumer groups with pro-environmental values. There is greater use of marketing brands to sell green products that are genuinely environmentally friendly in India.

Conclusion:

As environmental issues continue to affect human activities, now society is showing much concern to this issue. Most firms have started using sustainable development framework which is known as green marketing and most of the organizations have acknowledged green

products which are environmentally friendly. Marketing managers can use green marketing to earn profits. In addition, green marketing is able to preserve the environment while satisfying customers' needs. Therefore, green marketing is a tool now used by many companies to increase their competitive advantage as people is presently very concerned about environmental issues. At the time of applying green marketing, the companies have to comply with the consumers' needs and wants. Consumers will want to recognize themselves with companies that are green compliant and are willing to pay more for a greener life style. For this reason, green marketing is not only an environmental protection tool but also a marketing strategy. Other than that, marketers can provide training to their employees, especially sales representative. This is to give them knowledge on how to promote the green product effectively by clearly presenting the main message to the consumers. Green marketing covers a wide range of business activities and it is similar to marketing mix. Therefore, marketers should adopt a suitable single green marketing mix and strategy corresponding to company in which they conduct and target consumers' demands and personality. In addition, companies that carry out green marketing in the right place and on the right person will get support from consumers to achieve their competitive advantage.

To wind up consumers have a strong positive attitude towards Green Marketing. These days consumers are more aware of environmental issues. Consumers think "In future more and more consumers will prefer green products." Consumers agree that "Companies which can establish themselves with green image will have distinctive advantage in the market place."

The price has to be affordable to the majority of the consumers. The places that distribute green products have to be convenient to the consumers.

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