

A Study on the Awareness Level and Attitude Level of the Green Consumer

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Abstract

Human activities through the years have degraded all the vital life supporting systems like air, water and land. An exposure to green products does not lead a consumer to buy the same. What really matters is the awareness in the consumer's mind towards the purchase of green products. This paper tries to find out the awareness and attitude of consumers regarding the green products and the purchase of them and tries to look into the consumer beliefs and attitude on environment protection and their purchasing behavior of eco friendly products. Further, the paper tries to identify the efforts put by marketers in bringing green brand awareness in consumer mind. It is understood that consumers lack the exposure to green product marketing communication and more promotions are required to promote and sell products that are environmentally friendly and function effectively. The main objective of this study is to know the consumer awareness about the green products and its impact on green purchasing behavior. The research design used in this study is exploratory research design. It is believed that the Indian market could be made as a market for greener products with environmental values if proper marketing and promotion strategies are followed. The study in addition will try to investigate the behavior of the consumer and the impact of marketing communication to identify how they are persuaded again and again to opt for greener products on a regular basis. The data has been collected from the various sources and secondary data was collected from various published sources.

Keywords: Awareness, Attitude, Green, Product, Green Consumer, Green Marketing.

JEL Classification: M31, M39.

1. Introduction

“Green Marketing” is a newer issue in the eyes of marketers. “Green Marketing” is defined as the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. There is a

common perception among the general population that the term green marketing refers only to advertising or promoting products that possess environmental characteristics. Consumers want to do the right thing when it comes to protecting the environment and their health. Even in this economic climate, the green movement is gathering momentum, and it's hard to miss the deluge of ads introducing new green products from well-known national brands. As resources are limited and human wants are unlimited, it is important for the marketers to utilize the resources efficiently without waste as well as to achieve the organization's objective. So green marketing is inevitable.

The green movement has been expanding rapidly in the world. With regards to this consumers are taking responsibility and doing the right things. Consumer awareness and motivation continue to drive change in the marketplace, notably through the introduction of more green products. Compared to consumers in the developed countries, the Indian consumer has much less awareness of global warming issues. Successful marketing has always been about recognising trends and positioning products, services and brand in a manner that supports buyer intentions. Today, "Green" marketing has moved from a trend to a way of doing business and businesses that sell should recognize the value of going green and incorporating this message into their marketing program and communicating the green concept to their consumers. Green is slowly and steadily becoming the symbolic color of eco-consciousness in India. The growing consumer awareness about the origin of green products and the concern over impending global environmental crisis there are increasing the opportunities to marketers to convince consumers. Firms have increasingly introduced GPIs (Green Product Innovations) into their product developments over recent decades. Studies on the consumption of environmentally sustainable products have demonstrated that perceived product performance is a significant barrier to their selection.

2. Evolution of Green Marketing

The green marketing has evolved over a period of time. According to peattie (2001), the evolution of green marketing has three phases:

2.1 First phase:

First phase was termed as “**ecological**” green marketing, and during this all marketing activities were concerned to help environment problems and provide remedies for environmental problems.

2.2 Second phase:

In the second phase was “**environmental**” green marketing and the focus shifted on clean technology that involved designing of innovative new products, will take care of pollution and waste issues.

2.3 Third phase:

The third phase was “**sustainable**” green marketing. It came in to prominence in the late 1990's and early 2000.

3. Literature Review

Prothero, A. (1998) introduces several papers discussed in the July 1998 issue of 'Journal of Marketing Management' focusing on green marketing. This includes; a citation of the need to review existing literature on green marketing, an empirical study of United States and Australian marketing managers, a description of what a green alliance look like in practice in Great Britain, ecotourism and definitions of green marketing. Oyewole, P. (2001). In his paper presents a conceptual link among green marketing, environmental justice, and industrial ecology. It argues for greater awareness of environmental justice in the practice for green marketing. A research agenda is finally suggested to determine consumers' awareness of environmental justice, and their willingness to bear the costs associated with it. Prothero, A. & Fitchett, J.A. (2000) argue that greater ecological enlightenment can be secured through capitalism by using the characteristics of commodity culture to further progress environmental goals. Marketing not only has the potential to contribute to the establishment of more sustainable forms of society but, as a principle agent in the operation and proliferation of commodity discourse, also has a considerable responsibility to do so. Kilbourne, W.E. (1998) discusses the failure of green marketing to move beyond the limitations of the prevailing paradigm. The author identifies areas that must be examined for their effect in the marketing/environment relationship, namely economic, political and technological dimensions of the cultural frame of reference. Karna, J., Hansen, E. & Juslin, H. (2003) interpret that proactive marketers are the most genuine group in implementing environmental marketing voluntarily and seeking competitive advantage through environmental friendliness. The results also give evidence that green values, environmental marketing strategies, structures and functions are logically connected to each other as hypothesized according to the model of environmental marketing used to guide this study. Donaldson (2005) in his study realized in the Great Britain initially concluded that in general the ecological attitude of consumers changed positively. This study reported the strong faith of consumers in the known commercial brands and in the feeble behavior referring to the "green" claims, which was the main cause behind the consuming failure to interpret their concerns beyond the environment in their behavior. Alsmadi (2007) investigating the environmental behavior of Jordanian consumers reveals a high level of environmental conscience. Unfortunately however this positive tendency and preference in the "green" products does not appear to have any effect on the final decision, obviously because these consumers have a stronger faith in the traditional products and a small confidence in the green statements. The above obstacles are further strengthened by the lack of environmental conscience by a lot of enterprises and the existence of a large scale of prices for the same product, many of which included an impetuous estimate of environmental responsibility. The same phenomenon has been presented in other researches too (Ottman, 2004; Donaldson, 2005; Cleveland et al, 2005). Brahma, M. & Dande, R. (2008), The Economic Times, Mumbai, had an

article which stated that, Green Ventures India is a subsidiary of New York based asset management firm Green Ventures International. The latter recently announced a \$300 million India focused fund aimed at renewable energy products and supporting trading in carbon credits. Sanjay K. Jain & Gurmeet Kaur (2004) in their study environmentalism has fast emerged as a worldwide phenomenon. Business firms too have risen to the occasion and have started responding to environmental challenges by practicing green marketing strategies. Green Consumerism has played a catalytic role in ushering corporate environmentalism and making business firms green marketing oriented. Based on the data collected through a field survey, the paper makes an assessment of the extent of environmental awareness, attitudes and behavior prevalent among consumers in India.

4. Research Objectives

- To create awareness about the Eco-friendly products.
- To find out the attitude level of green consumer and ways to utilize maximum resources in an effective manner regarding economic prosperity and its growth.
- To find out the sustainable ways of growth in green marketing.

5. Research Methodology

Secondary data: On the basis of my research I have obtained the secondary method:

(A) It is obtained from existing literature, different scholars' and researchers' published books, articles published in different journals, periodicals, conference paper, working paper, magazines, news paper, central & state government website.

(B) The secondary data and information will analyze for preparing the paper extensively.

6. Finding & Suggestions

The purpose of my research study is on the green marketing but specifically on consumers' attitudes and purchase intention of eco-friendly products. It has been the global concern for the purpose of the preservation of the polluting and degradation of environment. Many studies have been done on the green marketing exploring the importance of the topic and relationship to the attitude and purchasing behavior of the consumers of eco-friendly products. Through the vital information provided by the expertise, competent and experience researchers, companies have understood the importance of green marketing in order to produce eco-friendly products and these provided much rich information for the literature studies of the thesis. The objective of this research was looked into and explored the influencing of the four traditional marketing-mix elements, satisfaction and word of mouth (WOM) on attitude and purchasing intentions of consumers on eco-friendly products specifically fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) or non-durable ones. The purpose of the study was to obtain information from consumers' point of view. Our findings indicated that consumers who already bought eco-friendly products and those who are satisfied by these

previous purchases were willing to repeat purchases. Indeed satisfaction goes with purchase intentions. Positive attitudes concerning willingness to pay an extra price for green products are also correlated with purchase intention. However we discovered also that positive attitudes towards green products do not always lead to action i.e. purchase of these products.

7. Conclusion

On the basis of my research I have concluded that the attitude and awareness level of green consumer is neither low nor high. They are getting more knowledge about the eco-friendly products. Green marketing tools can be examined. Any discussion of gender differences can also be considered. The confidence of the eco-brand and eco-label can be worked on. The novelty of this study is the 'feeling' towards the health benefits of a brand. People buy products that are less damaging to the environment so that they feel better.

8. Future Work

Green marketing is not an infancy term in the world but it plays a vital role in terms of environmental safety and security. It is the beginning of my research study so trying to find out the awareness level and attitude level of the green consumer. Even consumers are willing to pay high prices for the quality products which are beneficial for their life. It is the sustainability of human life.

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