

AN EXPLORATORY RESEARCH ON CONSUMERS TOWARDS GREEN MARKETING IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY

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ABSTRACT: The term Green Marketing is the buzzword used in industry which is used to describe business activities which attempt to reduce the negative effect of the products/services offered by the company to make it environmentally friendly. As society becomes more concerned with the natural environment, business has begun to modify their newer challenges or changes like environmental management, minimization of the waste aligning with organizational activities. For a company to be successful in implementing green marketing strategy, it should not forget attitude of consumers towards green marketing. The outcome of this paper may trigger the minds of marketer to give a thought for adopting the suitable strategies which will give them a way to overcome major problems associated with regular marketing techniques and make a shift to green marketing. Eventually the marketers can save a lot on overhead costs and associated entities in the market. Keeping this thing in mind this paper is an attempt to understand awareness of consumers' towards green marketing and green branding along with exploring the concept of green marketing.

Keywords: Green marketing, Eco-Friendly products, Green brands, Green products.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the American Marketing Association, green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Thus "Green Marketing" refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the production, marketing consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of 5+global warming, non – biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for switch in to green products and services. While the shift to "green" may appear to be expensive in the short term, it will definitely prove to be indispensable and advantageous, cost-wise too, in the long run. The basic ideas behind environmentalism dictate that corporations have responsibilities that go beyond the production of goods and services. These responsibilities involve helping to solve important social problem, especially those they have helped create (Buchholz 1991; Porter & Van der Linde 1995; Peattie, 1995). Corporations such as McDonald's, Wal-Mart, Procter & Gamble, and Du Pont acknowledge that the environment must be protected and enhanced for economic growth to take place, and have taken action towards that goal.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Green Marketing: A section around the world become more concerned with the natural environment, this concern has resulted in either personal motivation or through government legislations. And this was followed by organizational activities aiming at modifying the organizational behavior to adapt with these social trends. Polonsky (2007) indicated that the evidence of this was the emergence of journals such as; "Business strategy and the Environment" and "Greener Management international," which are specifically founded to publish articles, relating to business' environmental behavior. Marketing has got the lion's share in these researches and discussion, to come to

us new terms we have not seen before such as, “green marketing” and “environmental marketing”.

Green Marketing Concept: Many people believe that green marketing is a way to promote or advertise a specific product using environmental terms, such as television advertisement, to announce a type of heaters as not to cause a shortage of oxygen but all that cannot be named more than eco – declaration, or green advertising, which forms one component of green marketing, or of the green marketing claims, therefore, green marketing includes a wider range of organizational activities, such as; product modification, changes to process, packing changes and delivery changes, and more (Polonsky, 2007). Prakash (2002), pointed out that he employed the term green marketing in his survey” to refer to the strategies to promote products by employing environmental claims either about their attributes or about the systems, policies and processes of the firms that manufacture or sell them”, while (Polonsky, 2007), has defined it as” green or environmental marketing consist of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy human need or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment ”

How Organizations can be Green?

The literature included different arguments, that required actions from organizational to be green, Polonsky and Philip (2001) argued that organizations who want to be green must understand the nature of consumer transaction, even questioning how to create values, and this may need to assumptions and ways of thinking by asking: are consumers actually need to own the products? Or are there other ways to deliver the capabilities that satisfy their needs? While Prakash (2002) reported that the organizations can green themselves through two levels: first is the firm level represented by; value addition process, and management systems, second; product level. In order to green the value – organization may start by redesigning them and eliminating some of them and this may require modifying the current technology or inducting new technology, all of these aiming at reducing the environmental impact aggregated for all stages, such as the hybrid cars that reduce the fuel consumption and environment polluting (Lopez, 2009).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to the authors like Ottaman, (1993) and Ken Peattie, (1993) conventional marketing is out and green marketing is in. In the developed countries, the surge of environmental consciousness that followed Earth Day in 1990 washed over the marketplace rapidly. In poll after poll, consumers claim they are willing to change their buying habits – and even pay more for products – to protect the environment (Pearce, 1990; Consumer Reports, 1991; Berger and Corbin, 1992; Cordington, 1993; Davis, 1993; McDougall, 1993; Ottoman, 1993). Manufacturers got the message that the Marketing Intelligence Service (Consumer Reports, 1991), which tracks new product introductions, reports that the percentage of new packaged products making some kind of green claim more than doubled between 1989 and 1990, rising from 4.5% to 11.4% of the total. During the same year, the number of green advertisements appearing on television and in major print outlets more than quadrupled, according to an audit by the advertising agency J. Walter Thompson (Consumer Reports, 1991).

According to the Joel makeover (a writer, speaker and strategist on clean technology and green marketing), green marketing faces a lot of challenges because of lack of standards and public consensus to what constitutes “Green”.

According to Peattie (2001), the evolution of green marketing has three phases. First phase was termed as “Ecological” green marketing, and during this period all marketing activities were concerned to help environment problems and provide remedies for environmental problems. Second phase was “Environmental” green marketing and the focus shifted on clean technology that involved designing of innovative new products, which take care of pollution and waste issues. Third phase was “Sustainable” green marketing. It came into prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000. Green marketing is a vital constituent of the holistic marketing concept.

Objectives of the study

- To understand the awareness of consumers towards green marketing.
- To assess the attitude of consumers towards green branding.

2. METHODOLOGY

Researcher have used structured questionnaire and a five point balanced likert scale for measuring consumer attitude towards green marketing and green branding. Primary data was collected from respondents of Tiruchirappalli city through a questionnaire designed for a sample of 100 respondents by using the survey method. Random sampling method was adopted by the researcher and selects the sample from Tiruchirappalli city representing the all levels of people. The data collected from the respondents and analyzed into logical statements using mean and percentage analysis. Secondary data which were collected from journals, periodicals, publications, business newspaper and magazines.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents with mean scores (N=100)

Age	%	Gender		Occupation		
		Male	Female			
20-30	60	78	22	Part Time Employees		
30-40	26			Employees		
Above 40	14			Sr. Executive/Entrepreneur		
	10					
	0					
Monthly Income	%					
0-5k	20					
6-10k	35					
10-20k	30					
25-30k	10					
>40k	5					

Table 1 depicts the demographic information about the respondents which reveals that 60% of the respondents were under the age group of 20-30. 26% of the respondents come under 30-40 and 14% respondents were above 40 years of age.

Table 2 Consumer Awareness towards Green Marketing is high

S. No	Description(filled by Respondents – likert)	SA	A	NA	DA	SDA	% of Respondents	Mean Score
1	I believe in the concept of green marketing	69	22	3	4	2		4.52(5) (considered the next higher value)
2	I am aware of companies going green	69	23	3	4	2		4.79(5)
3	I know about the advantages of green products in an organization	47	31	12	4	6		4.09(4)
4	I feel that the regular marketing techniques harm the environment	72	18	3	4	3		4.52(5)
5	Employees in any organization feel that their work schedule gets affected by implementing green concept	47	35	6	10	6		4.19(4)
6	Green marketing concept is existed for long time back but it is not implemented by many companies in India						67 % said Yes, 33% said No	
7	Productivity can be improved drastically by using green marketing (paper less)	72	20	3	3	2		4.57(5)
8	Companies are reluctant in implementing green marketing concept	47	31	12	4	6		4.09(4)
9	It is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketing	70	23	3	3	1		4.58(5)
10	Huge investment is required to develop green products	43	37	10	4	6		4.07(4)
11	Government should take initiative in making companies to go green	68	28	1	2	1		4.6(5)
12	Everyone is responsible for successful green marketing concept	75	18	3	3	1		4.67(5)
13	Green marketing is just an old concept	8	20	50	10	12		3.02(3)

Consumers' attitude towards green branding is high

14. I am familiar with green brand?

Table 3

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	71	4.63(5)
4	Agree	23	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	2	
1	Strongly Disagree	3	
	Total	100	

Table 3 clearly indicates that Respondents strongly agree that they are familiar with green brand.

15. I am interested to know more about green branding

Table 4

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly	80	4.56(5)
4	Agree	9	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	3	
1	Strongly Disagree	5	
	Total	100	

Table 4 clearly indicates that Respondents strongly agree that they are interested to know more about green branding.

16. Green Marketing is more effective than regular marketing?

Table 5

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	21	3.24(3)
4	Agree	20	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	34	
2	Disagree	12	
1	Strongly	13	
	Total	100	

Table 5 clearly indicates that Respondents neither agree nor disagree with the fact that green marketing is more effective than regular marketing.

17. Do you believe in the concept of complete green marketing conditions throughout the world?

Table 6

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	34	3.68(4)
4	Agree	31	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	
2	Disagree	15	
1	Strongly Disagree	8	
	Total	100	

Table 6 showing Respondents agree that they will believe in the concept of complete green marketing conditions throughout the world.

18. Transition from regular marketing to green branding is quite difficult in India

Table 7

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	36	3.71(4)
4	Agree	32	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	
2	Disagree	9	
1	Strongly Disagree	12	
Total		100	

Table 7 showing Respondents agree to the fact that transition from regular marketing to green branding is difficult

19. Do you realize the importance of green branding?

Table 8

	% of Respondents
Yes	69
No	31
Total	100

Table 8 clearly indicates that 69% of the Respondents realize the importance of green branding and 31% of the Respondents doesn't realize the importance of green branding.

3. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The findings are tabulated after having used likert scale for measuring the awareness of consumers towards green marketing and attitudes of consumers towards green branding (Highest Rating is 5- Strongly Agree and 1- Strongly Disagree)

Table 9. The computed mean and percentage of respondents

Consumers awareness towards green marketing is high			
Sl. No	Description (filled by Respondents-likert scale)	% of Respondents	Mean Score
1	I believe in the concept of green Marketing		4.52(5) considered the next higher value
2	I am aware of companies going green		4.79(5)
3	I know about the advantages of green products in an organization		4.09(4)
4	I feel that the regular marketing techniques harm the environment		4.52(5)
5	Employees in any organization feel that their work schedule gets affected by implementing green concept		4.19(4)
6	Green marketing concept is existed for long time back but it is not implemented by many companies in India	67 % said Yes, 33% said No	
7	Productivity can be improved drastically by using green marketing (paper less)		4.57(5)
8	Companies are reluctant in implementing green marketing concept		4.09(4)
9	It is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketing		4.58(5)
10	Huge investment is required to develop green products		4.07(4)

11	Government should take initiative in making companies to go green		4.6(5)
12	Everyone is responsible for successful green marketing concept		4.67(5)
Consumers attitude towards green branding is high			
13	I am familiar with green brand		4.63(5)
14	I am interested to know more about green branding		4.56(5)
15	Green marketing is more effective than regular marketing		3.24(3)
16	DO you believe in the concept of complete green marketing conditions throughout the world		3.68(4)
17	Transition from regular marketing to green branding is quite difficult in India		3.71(4)
18	Do you realize the importance of green branding	69% said yes 31% said No	

After having understood the concept of green marketing and green branding this paper triggers a thought for marketers about the impact of significant changes in green marketing for effective utilization of resources and the final product which company develops shall be less detrimental to the environmental to the environment which can be concluded from the following paragraphs related to awareness of consumer towards green marketing and green branding.

Consumers' awareness towards green marketing is high

Consumers have expressed strong concerns about the concept of green marketing and companies going green. A part from this, consumers are well aware of the fact that the productivity of companies can be drastically improved. People are aware of green environment because it is less detrimental to the environment and companies can look into implementation of this concept for betterment of business. From the results of data analysis given in table 9 we can infer that the role of government plays a vital role in green marketing. Some consumers neither agree nor disagree for the fact that green marketing is just an old concept. As far as initiation of green marketing is concerned everyone are responsible for green marketing. If we analyze the facts pertaining to green marketing the significant results are positive at one end. On other end, consumers say that it is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketing.

Consumers' attitude towards green branding is high

As far as green branding is concerned the consumers strongly expressed that they are familiar with green brand and shown interest to know more about green branding. In India, at present situation is concerned the transition from regular marketing to green brand is difficult. Most of the consumers realize the importance of green branding which means that there is a positive sign for betterment of the environment as well as for business. This exploration into green marketing or eco-friendly marketing is a positive sign for transition from India to a greener and greater India.

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