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GREEN MARKETING IN INDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

To gain a competitive advantage in the changing world, firms are following the demand trend of customers and make improvements of this development over time. On one hand, marketing and marketers have come to understand the importance of valuing and maintain a long term relationships with stakeholders who are rejoining reciprocal trust and loyalty. On the other hand, environmental management as a strategic tool not only improves control and reduces environmental impact but also develops business opportunities for company.

KEYWORDS

Green Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Environment, Global Concern.

INTRODUCTION

Population Growth, Global Warming, exhaustion of Natural Resources are threatening the future of human beings, develops and revealed the concept of "Green Marketing". With the 'triple bottom line' or the three pillars of business - People, Planet and Profit; gaining more attention day by day, and green is becoming the new mantra of success in any business. On the other side, a new trend of Green Consumerism is also emerging, in which consumers are becoming more aware and concerned about the environment and looking for environment friendly products and companies are also doing their best by adopting Green Production Process.

1980s was said to be the mark of the *first stage* of Green Marketing. In this stage, the industry was first introduced to the concept of "Ecological Green Marketing" The 1990s decade, which was the *second stage*, began with very high and hopeful forecasts about the emergence of an "Environmental Green Tide" of consumers and new products. The *third stage* of Sustainable Green Marketing has started since 2000. More advanced technology has been implemented, deceptive claims are taking at stricter enforcement, new regulations from the government and a thorough and detailed inspection from various environmental organizations and the media, consumer's confident has been greatly improved and many high quality green products has been made during this period. In addition to the global concern of environmental quality that is steadily rising, green marketing now has picked up its momentum again.

According to the *American Marketing Association*, **Green marketing** is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe.

Green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising.

Green marketing refers to the process of selling products and services based on their environmental benefits. Such a product or service may be environmentally friendly. It is produced and packaged in an environmentally friendly manner.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

All over the world, the demand in *Green Products* is growing and as such there is a concern for understanding how green is a green product. One of the most important restrains to the development of green products is the lack of consumer trust and the lack of information (Yiridoe et al., 2005).

Regarding both interest in *Green Products* and green certifications, demographics tend to play an important role (D'Souza et al., 2007). Yet, results seem rather inconsistent in profiling the green consumer. For instance (18-25 years) are particularly positive toward organic products. A decade earlier, Byrne et al. (1990) had also found that young females with a high school degree and above average income were most likely interested in purchasing more expensive organic products.

Attitudes are sets of beliefs about a certain object or an act, which may translate into intention to carry out the act. Attitudes are the favourable or unfavourable evaluation an individual forms of a specified behaviour. Attitudes impact the intentions held and the more favourable the attitude, the bigger the intention to perform the behaviour will be. In addition, attitudes are predictors of purchase intentions and consequently purchase behaviour. Moreover, attitudes are necessary, as consumers require an understanding of their attitudes and motivations in order to overcome the perceived purchase barriers they face. (Smith & Paladino, 2010).

Recognizing the seriousness of environmental problems possibly caused by excessive use of energy and non-renewable natural resources, copious supplies of foods and products, environmentally unfriendly production processes, and environmental disasters, increasing numbers of individuals are aware of environmental issues and feel our natural resources are limited and the environment is more fragile than we once believed. Such environmental awareness instils in the public a positive attitude toward eco-friendly activities, and encourages people to more frequently engage in ecological behaviours in their everyday lives (Han & Hsu, 2011).

From the reviewed literature and information cited it is observed that there is a lot of scope for development in this subject. At present this subject *Green Marketing* is in infant stage and gaining popularity and demand in the Indian scenario too. The recent development in the subject advocates that frequent Eco-friendly awareness product campaign at national level should be incorporated, followed by frequent Green Products Advertisement and incorporation of the subject in the study curricula.

BENEFITS OF GREEN MARKETING

Companies that develop new improved products and services with environmental inputs in mind give themselves access to new markets, increase their profit sustainability, and enjoy a competitive advantage over the companies which are not concerned for the environment and consumer also benefited by application and use of Eco- friendly product.

ADOPTION OF GREEN MARKETING

There are basically five reasons for which a marketer should go for the adoption of *Green Marketing* they are -

- Opportunities or competitive advantage
- Corporate social responsibilities (CSR)
- Government pressure
- Competitive pressure
- Cost or profit issues

THE GREEN MARKETING MIX**PRODUCT**

Product should offer ecological products which not only must not contaminate the environment but should protect it and even liquidate existing environmental damages.

PRICE

Price for such products may be a little higher than conventional alternatives. But target groups who know the importance of green products are willing to pay extra for green products.

PLACE

A distribution logistics is of crucial importance with main focus on packaging, marketing of local and seasonal products.

PROMOTION

A communication with the market should put stress on environmental aspects because ecological products will probably require special sales promotions.

THE 4 P'S TRANSFORMED IN 4 C's**CUSTOMER SOLUTIONS**

These solutions go beyond selling physical products and present solution to customer's problems. They imply knowing customers and their needs well and offering products and services that satisfy customer needs and that take into account social as well as environmental aspects.

CUSTOMER COST

Customer cost does not only include the financial price a buyer has to pay for a product or a service, it also considers the psychological, social and environmental costs of obtaining, using and disposing of a product.

COMMUNICATIONS

"Green" communication goes beyond promotion, which is a form of persuasion and a one-way communication from seller to buyer. Communication is a process of interactive dialog within which it is essential to build trust and credibility.

CONVENIENCE

Means those customers want to use products and services that meet their needs and that are easy and convenient to access and use.

FACTORS INFLUENCING GREEN PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR

1. Social Influence
2. Environmental Attitude
3. Environmental Concern
4. Perceived seriousness of environmental problems
5. Perceived environmental responsibility
6. Perceived seriousness of environmental behaviour
7. Concern for self image in environmental protection

SOCIAL INFLUENCE

The social dynamic in which individual associate with other people by presenting similar qualities is identified as homophile (Ryan, 2001). It also can be known as situations that a person shares the same thoughts, beliefs and values as the person that he/she are communicating with. For purchasing certain clothing among adolescents, conformity by peers is a very important factor (Chen-Yu & Seock, 2002). Also Lee (2008) found out that peer influence was the most important factor for Hong Kongs adolescents green purchasing behaviour compare to other factors.

ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDE

A positive relationship between environmental attitude and environmental behaviour has been discovered in some studies (Kotchen & Railing, 2008). Environmental attitude refers to the individuals value judgment and it taps the individuals cognitive Assessment of the value of environmental protection (Lee, 2008). Most recently, it is found that Egyptian consumer's attitude towards green purchase can influence their green purchase intention and affecting their green purchase behavior in a direct manner (Mostafa, 2007)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

One of the most essential factors for marketers as they can easily target environmentally conscious consumers is environmental concern (Mostafa, 2007). Environmental concern can be known as affective traits that can signify an individual worries, consideration, likings and dislikes about the environment (Yeung, 2004).

PERCEIVED SERIOUSNESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

According to Lee (2008) teenagers in Hong Kong perceived the seriousness of environmental problems as the least important factor in influencing the green purchasing behaviour. The reason behind this was known due to repetitive exposures, which makes them react negatively. However, it is found that Asian people rate environmental problems as more severe than those who live in western countries (Lee, 2009).

PERCEIVED ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Citizens of Hong Kong have a high awareness of environmental problems, because they have attained more environmental knowledge, but their perceived environmental responsibility is weak (Lai, 2000). Among adolescents of Hong Kong, perceived environmental responsibility is one of the important factors that affect their green purchasing behaviour (Lee, 2008).

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR

This is related to one's perception to contribute good things to the environment by involving him/her-self in pro-environmental behaviour or movement. Perceived effectiveness of environmental behaviour is the fifth predictor of green purchasing behaviour among adolescents in Hong Kong (Lee, 2008)

CONCERN OF SELFIMAGE IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Identity formation, the most important factors when studying adolescents, they are most likely to do activities that portray their identity (Sinnappan and Rahman 2011). Further, Martinson *et al.*(1997) found out that supporters of environmental protection tend to be younger. Concern of Self-image in Environmental protection was the third predictor of green purchasing behaviour among adolescents in Hong Kong (Lee, 2008).

IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

Public concern for environmental issues has gradually but steadily increased over the past three decades since the inception of *Earth Day* appealing to preserve nature and biodiversity. Linking to consumer behaviour, over 70 percent of Americans reported that they were in support of environmental protection, and 49 percent said that they would avoid purchasing products that are potentially harmful to the environment. Indian perspectives regarding Green Products are also heading towards the same direction. As a consequence, Indian marketers have reacted quickly to consumers Eco- friendly' shifting behaviour.

INTERNATIONAL STATUS

The subject *Green Marketing* certainly possesses international status because it is not restricted to geographical boundaries of one country. Green Marketing provides solution to the unforeseen problems arises due to unlimited wants. On a global level, there is an increased awareness of global warming and adverse climate conditions and as a result there is a spur in interest towards environmental protection and sustainable development. One type of environmentally conscious behaviour is environmental consumerism green buying, purchasing and consuming products that are benign towards the environment. The rising number of consumers who prefer and are willing to buy eco-friendly products are creating opportunity for businesses that are using "Eco-friendly" or "Environmentally friendly" as a component of their value proposition.

NATIONAL STATUS

The force of "Going Green" is now extending to the Asian region, where environmental threats are alarming local governments and citizens. The fast-growing economy in Asia has led to a vigorous rise of financially empowered consumers across Asia who is willing to spend more than previous generations. A progressive degradation of nature, air and water pollution, and ineffectiveness of technical solution to cope with environmental problems are often more severe in developing countries like India. It is found that 30-40% of natural degradation has been caused by the consumption activities of private households. Responding to the Indian environmental concern, one must focus on adoption of waste management system i.e. application of 3R (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

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. There is growing interest among the consumers all over the world regarding protection of environment. Worldwide evidence indicates people are concerned more about the environment and are changing their behaviour accordingly. As a result of this, *Green Marketing* has emerged which speaks for growing market for sustainable and socially responsible products and services which obviously is the origin of the research problem.

OBJECTIVES

1. To Study the attitude of consumers towards green marketing.
2. To establish a relationship between consumer purchasing decision and green marketing.
3. To identify if education level affect the buying behaviour on consumers for eco-friendly products.
4. To identify if consumers are willing to pay more for eco-friendly products.
5. To identify consumers behaviour towards Quality of product, Green advertising, and green labelling.
6. To highlight the opportunities challenges being faced by consumer & companies.

HYPOTHESIS

The purchase behavior of consumers is not influenced by green marketing practices of organizations.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of the study revolves around two prime focuses i.e. one from consumer point of view and other from organisation point of view.

From consumer perspective – qualitative Eco-friendly product at a lesser price

From organisation Perspective – Customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, & profit maximisation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION

Primary data is collected through structured questionnaires. The questionnaire contained various aspects of *Green Marketing* and its impact consumer behaviour. Secondary Data collected through Annual Report of Companies, Books, Journals, Magazines and other related literature.

SAMPLING METHOD

For reasons of convenience, simple random sampling method (SRSM) is selected for research purpose. Sample Data has been collected from randomly selected buyers from markets / retail outlet of the green products.

SAMPLE SIZE

A Random sampling strategy would be carried out. A survey of about 100 consumers belonging to Amravati district of Maharashtra would be taken. They are familiar with the purchase of these products and also responsible for the purchase decisions.

FINDINGS

1. 80% of respondents are aware of green products
2. 40% can pay more for eco friendly products
3. 80% have agreed that there is enough information about the products while 20% not.
4. 80% of the population in the sample agrees or strongly agrees that the organizations should practice green marketing.
5. Majority of the people are concerned about organizations polluting environment as very few are neutral regarding the issue.
6. 80% buyers prefer to repurchase such products which are green and 20% are not.

In short Green marketing encourages consumers to use eco-friendly products and manufacturers to develop more. The

Awareness about the products should be done through advertising so that individual buying behavior can be changed which can have an impact on the welfare of the environment. It is also important that companies aiming at developing new eco-friendly products should ensure that products perform competitively.

CHALLENGES OF GREEN MARKETING

Green products require renewable and recyclable material, which is costly, requires a technology, which requires huge investment in R & D Water treatment technology, which is too costly.

CONCLUSION

The effective green marketing requires vigorous application of good marketing principles to make green product desirable for consumer. Green marketing is still in its infancy and lot of reformation is to be done with a view to explore its full potentials. Green product requires renewable and recyclable material, which is costlier and some time not affordable. Green marketing should never be considered as just one more addition to approach to marketing, but it has to be pursued with much great vigour, as it both in terms of environmental and social dimensions. Consumer awareness must be created by corporate by transmitting the messaged among consumer about the benefits of environmental friendly product and services. In green marketing consumer are even willing to pay more to maintain cleaner and greener environment. Finally consumer, industrial buyers and suppliers needs to emphasise on minimizing the negative effect on the environment.

LIMITATIONS

1. A study is restricted only to 100 consumers belonging to Amravati district of Maharashtra state only.
2. The study comprises of consumer behaviour towards green product related only to consumer durables.
3. The result arises may or may not be applicable to other parts of the state, or country.

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