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CONSUMER ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE MARKETING-MIX OF THE GREEN PRODUCTS**ARIF ANWAR****RESEARCH SCHOLAR****DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION****FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES & RESEARCH****ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY****ALIGARH****SUMAIRA JAN****JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOW****CENTRE FOR MANAGEMENT STUDIES****JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA****NEW DELHI****ABSTRACT**

The environment is deteriorating because of the consumption pattern of consumers and the fast growing nature of economies. This degradation of environment may be brought up to the track by the consumption of green products. It will not only help in conserving the present resources but will also help the environment to sustain for a longer time. Thus, it is very important to market the Green Products among consumers. American Marketing Association says that green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. This concept has gained tremendous importance in the recent past only. Consumers are being informative about the long-term benefits of green products and thus are showing their high involvements during the selection of environment friendly products. This makes green marketing inevitable in nature and a hot topic for further research. The current paper focuses on identifying the different dimensions of green marketing, knowing about the attitude of customers towards the green products and developing a model of green marketing mix. A survey of more than 100 respondents from Delhi/NCR was undertaken to identify the attitude of consumers towards the green products and their marketing, so as to develop a model of green marketing mix from it and to know about the attitude of customers towards the green products which are a bit costly but friendly with nature.

KEYWORDS

green marketing, attitude, marketing-mix, 4p's.

INTRODUCTION

Across the globe, we have experienced a high growth rate in the economies. Especially, the industrial growth rate had been high enough in recent decades to cause environmental deterioration. The major reasons for such degradation has been the over-consumption of the natural resources which has caused ozone depletion, global warming and distinct kind of pollution. Grunert (1993) reported that about 40% of environmental degradation has been brought about by the consumption activities of private households. Reports of environmental pollution being showcased as a major reason for damage to the crops, people and wildlife in almost all countries like USA, Brazil, Mexico, Europe etc. have made the protection of the environment as a major domain of current field of research. It is seen to highly impact infant deaths, premature births, low birth weights etc. All these things call for changing the alignment of the marketers and the policy makers towards utilising the current resources very efficiently and effectively as resources are limited on this planet and needs are unlimited.

In such situation, marketers need to re-think about their marketing strategies and product offerings. Various government policies and current environmental conditions has forced marketers to think and provide products which are environment friendly and acceptable by society and market. Also, profit driven firms are usually motivated to adopt the concept of green marketing in their businesses provided that consumers demonstrate a high degree of environmental attitude and hence translate this into environmental friendly purchasing commitment. However, some of the greatest challenges faced by these firms are changes in consumer preferences, suspicion of green advertising claim, unfavourable consumer perception of green products and the high cost invested in developing green products. Green marketing is a holistic marketing concept where the production, consumption and the disposal of products/services happens in a manner which is least hazardous to the environment and with maximum concern for safeguarding the ecological balance of nature.

Green products are expected to have characteristics like recyclable, reusable and biodegradable. Their composition must be all natural. No use of toxic chemicals must be there so that they must not harm the environment in any way. Such products are not supposed to be tested on animals. Packaging of such products has to be eco-friendly. They must be grown in their original state.

Last decade has witnessed the enlightenment of customers on the environmental issues. There are people who are now willing to pay extra for the purpose of safeguarding the environment. People are showing high involvement in the matters concerning the environment. Such things make green marketing an opportunity to the marketers to develop products/services to create a different niche of the market, satisfy their needs and use it to create differentiation for them in the long run. This paper focuses on investigating the attitude of the customers towards different dimensions of green marketing and developing a model of green marketing mix.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The concept of green marketing came into existence in the late 1980's and early 1990's. After the coining of this theory a lot of research has been done on distinct perspective. Some of the researches have been highlighted here which are in context of Green Marketing and the strategies related to it. Major focus has been given to theories of Green Marketing-Mix. Soonthonsmai (2007) defined green marketing as the activities taken by firms that are concern about the environment or green problems by delivering the environmentally sound goods or services to create consumers and society's satisfaction. Peattie (1995) and Welford (2000) defined green marketing as the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying the requirements of customers and society in a profitable and sustainable way. Pavan & Payal (2010) discussed that how the businesses potentially increase their rate of targeting the green customers' i.e. the ones which are concerned about the environment and allow it to affect their decision of what to buy and what not. It explains the opportunities and the challenges that the companies face with green marketing. It also enlightens the three different segments of green customers. This study also discusses that why companies take up green marketing, present trends in it and its future in India. It finally concludes that green marketing is something that will grow both in practice and demand in the near future.

Globally companies are assigning a higher status to environmental management and weaving it into all levels and functions of their corporate structure (Ghahremani, 1990). These forces and institutional pressures from investors and employees (including management), have been major catalysts for the greening of business, which, in turn, has given rise to the concept of green marketing. Peattie (2001) divided the entire domain of green marketing into three phases including that of ecological marketing, environmental marketing and the sustainable marketing. The scope of the green marketing moved from a narrower dimension to a much broader one which is applicable currently. The initial focus was to reduce dependence on the harmful products while the current focus is to

create a sustainable advantage where resources are used effectively and future generations are not left to work for themselves and depleting all the resources from the earth.

Mathur & Midha (2012) in their study discussed that differentiation is the core essence of strategy today. It not only provides competitive advantage but the firms' sustainability quotient is also leveraged. Sources of differentiation exist in all industries. And green marketing is one such concept which can enable firms to gain maximum customers and differentiate their offerings in a way which is clearly unique, identifiable and clearly agreeable. Consumers are becoming aware about the environmental issues and are showing willingness to pay extra for every green product they purchase. This gives marketers a chance to use green marketing as a source of differentiation. Various researchers have contributed to the knowledge of Green marketing-mix elements. Ginsberg & Bloom (2004) used the primary marketing-mix tools of product, price, place and promotion to divide green marketing into distinct strategies like, the lean green strategy, the defensive green strategy, the shaded green strategy and the extreme green strategy. The researchers also described how firms may adopt these strategies for achieving their marketing goals.

Green products namely, environmentally friendly products or environmentally conscious products are referred to as products designed to lessen the consumption of natural resources required and minimize the adversely environmental impacts during the whole life-cycles of these products (Albino et al., 2009; Janssen & Jager, 2002; Tsai, 2012). Pricing of green marketing is important and considering the fact that they support environmental friendliness so the value can be added to the product for changing its appearance, functionality and through customization, etc. (Shrama & Goyal, 2012). Green promotion needs to communicate substantive environmental information to consumers that has meaningful links to corporate activities. As such, it is unlikely to be an effective strategic tool unless it is supported by other corporate activities. Thus, promoting some real environmental attribute of a product or firm requires a change in the product, process or corporate focus. Such changes do not have to be strategic in nature (Solaiman, et. al. 2015).

Mendleson & Polonsky (1995) in their study discussed the problems that producers face while manufacturing green products including lack of credibility, consumer cynicism, and consumer confusion over claims. However such issues can be addressed by ensuring proper ties with different environmental groups. Not only the above problems will be solved but we will also have adequate information on the environment, reduced public criticism, increased access to new markets and increased awareness of customers on the green marketing. While, Kilbourne (1995) proposed that the current paradigm of green marketing had many limitations unless and until its boundary was widened to include a holistic approach. Such approach has to be not just holistic but multi-disciplinary in nature as well. Only then the true value of green marketing can be realized and its benefits can be reaped.

In reality, companies that pursue green marketing encounter numerous challenges mainly from the variability of demand, unfavourable consumer perception and high cost (Gurau and Ranchhod, 2005). The key concern lies in an understanding of green consumers and their characteristics to enable firms to develop a new target and segmentation strategies (D'Souza et al., 2007). Prakash (2002) focused on the development of green marketing mix which is not just a combination of the general 4 P's of marketing but also involves a proper understanding of the public policy processes. It extends its wings to explaining the need on part of marketers to arrive on their environmental claims and give customers what they expect in a green product/service.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the research problem and extensive literature review researchers have come to the point where the study should be focused upon and brought up the following research objectives.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the different dimensions of green marketing-mix.
2. To investigate the attitude of customers towards the green products/services.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference among all the green marketing mix components, i.e., 'Product', 'Price', 'Promotion' and 'Place'.
2. There is no significant impact of 'Product_Mix' of marketing of green products on the 'Attitude of customers'.
3. There is no significant impact of 'Price_Mix' of marketing of green products on the 'Attitude of customers'.
4. There is no significant impact of 'Promotion_Mix' of marketing of green products on the 'Attitude of customers'.
5. There is no significant impact of 'Place_Mix' of marketing of green products on the 'Attitude of customers'.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was conducted in National Capital Region which encompasses the entire national capital territory of Delhi which includes New Delhi as well as urban areas surrounding it in states like Haryana, Uttar Pradesh etc. The research design of this proposed research study has been chosen as survey research design. The purpose is to generalize from the sample to the population so that inferences can be made about the attitude of customers towards the green products. This survey research design warrants us to make a survey where in questionnaires will be administered on the sample. Primary data has been collected through self-administered questionnaires. The sample size for the population has been chosen above 100 from Delhi/NCR. The sample size is so taken because of the set benchmark from the previous researchers. The type of questionnaire used during the study is structured and formalized and the types of questions asked during the study are straight forward and limited probing. Non-probability judgmental sampling was used as the sampling procedure.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Analysis of the data was started for finalizing the questionnaire with proper set of items to be asked from the respondents. The questions were asked on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. These scales were finalized based on previous researches, pretesting and pilot testing of the scales with the help of subject experts. Initially, a pilot survey was conducted with 21 items initially. After using the factor analysis technique 4 items were dropped from the final questionnaire. Rest 17 items has been considered with a set of five different variables for the final study. The final section of the questionnaire comprised of questions related to demographic of the respondents.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

The data were gathered from more than 110 respondents using the questionnaire. Only relevant responses were considered for the final analysis. Total of 103 responses were received among which 63% of the respondents were male and rest were female. Most of the respondents were post-graduates or they possessed a degree of doctorate. More than two-third of respondents come from a family where annual income is higher than 6 Lacs per annum. This may signify that most of the respondents may have a good amount of disposable income. Responses were collected from people who were either professionals or students which are considerably equal in numbers. These data were entered into a computer database using MS Excel and then analysed using SPSS. The data analysis consists of factor analysis, reliability testing, analysis of variance (ANOVA), correlation analysis, regression analysis and descriptive statistics including frequencies, means and standard deviations.

Factor analysis is an important technique to assess the internal construct validity. Previous studies show that Dimension Reduction technique is used for factor analysis. In this technique KMO measure is tested for all the items used in the questionnaire and value of KMO above 0.6 is considered for adequate sampling.

TABLE 1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, KMO, FACTOR LOADING & AVE

Variable	KMO Measure (Significance)	Construct Items	Factor Loading	Avg. Variance Explained
Attitude	.771 (4 Items) Sig.= .000	Knowledge Possession	.922	81.576%
		Awareness Level	.920	
		Information Seeking	.900	
		Feeling Associated	.870	
Product_Mix	.713 (4 Items) Sig.= .000	Choice Variation	.896	61.069%
		Guarantee	.844	
		Packaging	.696	
		Services Attached	.666	
Price_Mix	.656 (3 Items) Sig.= .000	Value for Money	.939	78.297%
		Pricing	.872	
		Extra Pay	.841	
Promotion_Mix	.615 (3 Items) Sig.= .000	Health Conscious	.904	68.762%
		Protect Environment	.821	
		Store Attribute	.756	
Place_Mix	.619 (3 Items) Sig.= .000	Easy Availability	.868	62.170%
		Distribution	.864	
		Door Step Availability	.606	

RELIABILITY TEST

As per the reliability test conducted, value of Cronbach's Alpha for all the 17 items have come out to be 0.813 which is considered to be very good for such type of study. Individual reliability statistics have been shown in the table below for all the distinct variables.

TABLE 2: RELIABILITY STATISTICS

Factors/ Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Attitude	.922	4
Product_Mix	.776	4
Price_Mix	.856	3
Promotion_Mix	.767	3
Place_Mix	.743	3

In the study of green products and the marketing mix technique, it was observed that all the four P's of marketing mix, i.e., Product_Mix, Price_Mix, Promotion_Mix and Place_Mix were the independent variables. Correlation test was applied using SPSS to check how closely or distinctly the variables are related to each other. The correlation coefficients are described in the table below.

TABLE 3

Correlations		Consumer Attitude	Product_Mix	Price_Mix	Promotion_Mix	Place_Mix
Consumer Attitude	Pearson Correlation	1	.279	.493**	.389**	.204
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.027	.000	.000	.037
Product_Mix	Pearson Correlation	.279	1	.245	.385**	-.253
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.027		.044	.004	.049
Price_Mix	Pearson Correlation	.493**	.245	1	.670**	.197
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.044		.000	.037
Promotion_Mix	Pearson Correlation	.389**	.385**	.670**	1	.140
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.004	.000		.046
Place_Mix	Pearson Correlation	.204	-.253	.197	.140	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	.049	.037	.046	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

We can observe that Consumer Attitude is significantly correlated with Price_Mix and Promotion_Mix but the level of correlation is moderate. Also, Product_Mix is moderately and significantly correlated with Promotion_Mix. Promotion_Mix is highly correlated with Price_Mix. In fact, this is the only correlation which is highly correlated and from this we can deduce that high level of promotion from the marketers end may result into convincing the consumers for pricing of the green product offerings. All of these mentioned correlations are significant even at 1% level, which have been marked with double asterisk. Rest of the variables which are not mentioned here are weakly correlated with other variables.

HYPOTHESES TESTING

Based on proposed model, given hypotheses are tested followed by description of statistical procedures used in testing the null hypotheses, stating no relationship between variables. The established significance level for rejecting all null hypotheses taken is 0.05.

TABLE 4

S No	Null Hypotheses	Accepted/Rejected
1	There is no significant difference among all the marketing mix components of green products, i.e., 'Product', 'Price', 'Promotion' and 'Place'.	Rejected.
2	There is no significant impact of 'Product_Mix' of marketing of green products on 'Consumer Attitude'.	Rejected.
3	There is no significant impact of 'Price_Mix' of marketing of green products on the 'Consumer Attitude'.	Rejected.
4	There is no significant impact of 'Promotion_Mix' of marketing of green products on the 'Consumer Attitude'.	Rejected.
5	There is no significant impact of 'Place_Mix' of green marketing of green products on the 'Consumer Attitude'.	Rejected.

Further, observations are made from the regression line which is developed using the tools and tests with the help of SPSS. In this Regression test all the four P's are taken as independent variables and the Attitude of the respondents is set to be dependent variable. The Model Summary from the regression test gives the value of adjusted R square as 51%.

TABLE 5: MODEL SUMMARY^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.724 ^a	.524	.510	.437	1.372

a. Predictors: (Constant), Place_Mix, Promotion_Mix, Product_Mix, Price_Mix

b. Dependent Variable: Consumer Attitude

Furthermore, residual values of linear regression can be checked for better results and to strengthen the proposed model. One of the tools used is Durbin-Watson statistics which tests the null hypothesis that the residuals from an ordinary least-squares regression are not auto-correlated against the alternative that the residuals follow an AR1 process.

The Durbin-Watson statistic ranges in value from 0 to 4. A value near 2 indicates no autocorrelation; a value toward 0 indicates positive autocorrelation; a value toward 4 indicates negative autocorrelation. Because of the dependence of any computed Durbin-Watson value on the associated data matrix, exact critical values of the Durbin-Watson statistic are not tabulated for all possible cases. Instead, Durbin and Watson established upper and lower bounds for the critical values.

Typically, tabulated bounds are used to test the hypothesis of zero autocorrelation against the alternative of *positive* first-order autocorrelation, since positive autocorrelation is seen much more frequently in practice than negative autocorrelation. To use the table, one must cross-reference the sample size against the number of regressions, excluding the constant from the count of the number of regressions.

TABLE 6: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.962	4	4.991	17.756	.000 ^b
	Residual	27.041	98	.207		
	Total	44.003	102			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Attitude

b. Predictors: (Constant), Place_Mix, Promotion_Mix, Product_Mix, Price_Mix

TABLE 7: COEFFICIENTS^a

Model		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics
		Beta			VIF
1	(Constant)		7.908	.000	
	Product_Mix	-.188	-1.105	.038	1.094
	Price_Mix	.626	5.597	.001	1.926
	Promotion_Mix	.354	2.274	.026	2.002
	Place_Mix	-.163	-.717	.047	1.061

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Attitude

Another diagnostic tool is the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), which represents the inflation that each regression coefficient experiences above the ideal. The VIF for the *i*th regression coefficient is written $VIF = 1/(1-R^2)$, where the coefficient of the multiple determination of the regression is produced by regressing the variable *X_i* against the other independent variables. If this value is large, the *i*th independent variable has a strong linear association with the remaining independent variables. If VIF becomes larger than 10, severe multi-collinearity is indicated (Myers, 1990).

CONCLUSION

As this study was focused to identify the different dimensions of green marketing and understanding the attitude of customers towards the green products, therefore the respondents were targeted from urban and metropolitan region where awareness about the green products is more as compared to other parts of the country. This study was conducted using a structured questionnaire among the respondents who are well educated and are living in these areas.

More than one hundred respondents participated in giving input through the survey. After using certain tools and techniques the data were gathered, tabulated and analyzed using software package like SPSS. The results show that people are familiar with the concept of green marketing and the initiatives taken by marketers to promote green products through marketing mix are well versed but need to look at some of the areas where possibilities for improvement are there. The above results show that consumers are affected by the marketing mix of green products, i.e., Product, Price, Promotion and Place.

The hypotheses were tested and we can conclude that Price and Promotion are major marketing mix components which make better impact over the attitude of consumers regarding green products as compared to Product and Place. Consumers will be willingly investing for using the green products if they are satisfied with the pricing of the green products and also if the promotion may influence the consumers attitude. We also found that it is not the discounts and offers on green products which can make people switch to them but the factors like Health-consciousness of respondents, Eco-friendly nature of green products, better Promotion techniques and other benefits related to green products. However, Product and Place components of marketing mix show significant impact of on Attitude of consumers but the impact is much weaker when compared to former mentioned marketing mix components.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In this study, there are certain limitations. The results of this research must be used with caution as the sample size of the exploratory study is very less if the population for consumers of green products is considered. Subsequent study should include a cross section of the Indian metropolitan population. Future research should also include the perception, behaviour and purchase pattern of consumers, as it is essential for the researcher to understand the overall consumer behaviour to foster a favourable attitude towards the green products. Also, additional attention need be devoted to examine the effects of perceived consumer effectiveness on environmental attitudes. Additionally, the study on the social norms is suggested to be included in the future research to compare its impact with personal norms on the consumers' attitudes towards green products. As the current research is restricted to the investigation on the green product generally, future study should focus on the consumers' attitude and perception on the green label, green packaging and green values or green service on a specific type of green product in the market. Finally, future research should consider including the areas of green purchase intention and green buying commitment rather than just considering 4P's of marketing mix.

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