

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

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**GREEN MARKETING AND THEIR IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENT: A STUDY**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Today, due to rapid industrialization and other human activities against nature have badly affected the nature which was earlier considered to be green. As a result there is an urge for protecting the nature so as to sustain longer human life and in action to that, few areas have integrated green concept with their daily activity. This also applies to marketing and is popularly known as "Green Marketing" and "Environmental Marketing". As society becomes more concerned with the environment, businesses have started to modify their behavior in an attempt to address society's "new" concerns. Some businesses have been quick to accept concepts like environmental management systems and waste minimization, and have integrated environmental issues into all organizational activities. Not only industries but governments around the world have shown concern for the same and have made norms to regulate industries so as to protect nature. In this paper we have attempted to introduce the terms and concepts of green marketing, its importance and examine various reasons because of which organizations are adopting a green marketing philosophy, with mentioning some of its problems.*

**KEYWORDS**

Green Marketing, Green Business, Green Technology, Green Consumer.

**INTRODUCTION**

The concept of Green Marketing came into picture between late 1980's and early 1990's when for the first time the American Marketing Association (AMA) organizes a workshop entitled "Ecological Marketing" in which various factors of marketing process which directly or indirectly affects environment were discussed. It is a great myth among people that green marketing only solely to the promotion or advertising of products with environmental characteristics. So, generally terms like Phosphate Free, Recyclable, Refillable, Ozone Friendly, and Environmentally Friendly are most often associated with green marketing. But in general green marketing is a much broader concept, that can be applied to consumer goods, industrial goods and even services. In fact, green marketing includes a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising.

The Green Marketing concept is designed to suit both buyers and organizations because it is a well known fact that voluntary exchange will not take place unless both the buyer and seller mutually benefit. The above definition also includes the protection of the natural environment, by attempting to minimize the detrimental impact this exchange has on the environment.

Thus green marketing should look at minimizing environmental harm, not necessarily eliminating it.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

While doing extensive literature survey regarding Green Marketing, we find following things that are directly or indirectly linked or affected by the term Green and these are:

**GREEN CONSUMER**

Consumer is the main center of any marketing activity and whole firm's decisions revolve around it. It directly or Indirectly affect the activities within an organization. Ultimately it is the consumer who finally gets affected with deteriorating environment because of firms action. The green consumer is generally defined as one who adopts environmental friendly behaviors and/or who purchases green products over the standard alternatives. Green consumers are more internally controlled as they believe that an individual consumer can be effective in environmental protection. Thus, they feel that the job of environmental protection should not be left to the government, business, environmentalists and scientists only; they as consumers can also play a part. They are also less dogmatic and more open-minded or tolerant toward new products and ideas. Their open-mindedness helps them to accept green products and behaviors, more readily. According to the consumption report of the EU (Consumers in Europe), it is found that ten percent of the consumers recognize the ecological product labels or green energy labels on the products sold in the supermarkets. Although the companies in our country progress with significant speed in terms of the environment, it is not possible yet for us to say that they have reached the same level regarding consumer sensitivity. In Western implementations, environmental awareness and the "green policy" in business organizations are reflected in the business as result of the environmental awareness of the consumers. The most recent and classical example regarding this subject is airline transportation industry. In airline transportation, large amount of carbon emission released by the planes into the environment is a matter in question. British Airway offers the following "relieving" solution to people who have to travel by plane but feel disturbed due to the carbon emission: to give financial support to a fund providing researches intended to reduce carbon emission. The carbon emission, released during the distance covered is calculated and a contribution of 12.08 Euro per ton can be paid per person. Carbon dioxide emission per one passenger during an Istanbul-London flight reaches 29 kilograms, and with this fund, which was established on a voluntary basis, environmentally conscious passengers can donate 3.25 Euro and feel relaxed. On the other hand, Turkish Airlines has stated "we achieved fuel savings and this saving reduced carbon emission" in a statement they made in October, demonstrating that the firm has a more low profile "temporary" approach.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY**

Environment is simply our surrounding and is mandatory for the longer sustenance of human life. Organizations are now a day's affecting it and have created various environmental problems in front of human being. Some of such problem's are: Global Warming, depletion of vital non-renewable natural resources, Industrial Air Pollution, slow depletion of Agricultural land, Water Pollution, disappearance of forest land, hazardous waste from industry. Environment can only be protected against such problems by awareing the consumers and in India one such role is played by Media. The increased awareness on environmental issues is as a result of increased publicity on the media on issues such as, the warring off of the ozone layer and increased pollution of the environment by industries. Customers have become concern about their everyday habit and the impact it has on their environment. Managing environmental safety issue is highly challenging, time consuming and expensive. There are many laws on environmental safety that have made companies liable to any wrongdoings. These

laws cover areas such as, harmful pollution, managing of hazardous materials and soon. As a result, several hazard control, pollution control and prevention programs are held in different parts of the world on emergency procedures, contingency planning and employee training. Similarly, many regulatory bodies and acts are set to ensure environmental safety and protection, some of which include, OSHA (Occupational Safety and health Act), CERCLA ( Comprehensive environmental Respond Compensation liability Act), TSCA (Toxic Substance Control Act), HMTA ( the Hazardous Material Transportation Act), FIFRA ( Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act), FFDC (Federal food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, GHS (Globally Harmonized System of Classification and labeling of Chemicals). Environmental Safety is not an easy task to implement. Implementing the GHS standardization policies of a single frame work of the classification and labeling of chemicals so hazards are consistently defined across different national jurisdiction is beneficial but highly challenging, especially in countries like U.S, Japan and Korea that have multiple regulatory authorities. EH&S (Environmental Health and Safety) regulatory compliance and CSR (Cooperate Social Responsibility) initiative throughout the supply chain can help promote and sustain ongoing improvement within an organization. These improvements will help the company achieve regulatory compliance and position itself as a socially responsible company.

### GREEN MARKETING IN TERMS OF PRICE, PRODUCT, PLACE AND PROMOTION

Green Marketing begins with 'green design'. Product design constitutes an active interface between demand (consumers) and supply (manufactures). An example by Ottman and Terry; super- concentrated laundry detergents are associated with energy saving, reduced packaging, space and money. The product itself has to be made in such a way that it satisfies consumer and manufacture's needs. For ecologically sustainable products to be successful, green branding attributes have to be efficiently communicated. Most buyer decisions are influenced by the labeling, (green labeling) that states all that makes the product green compliant. The price of green product has to be affordable for the customer to encourage purchase. Industrial differentiation works only when products reduce client's cost. Most buyers are influenced by advertisement that reflects a company's commitment to environment. Companies that do green advertisement that tend to portray an image of environmental friendliness, influences their customer purchase decisions. Consumers love to associate themselves with companies that are environmental stewards. When a company communicates this through their advertisements, promotions, publicity and corporate social responsibilities, they are sure to get many loyal customers. Green distribution is a very delicate operation. Customers must be guaranteed of the 'Ecological nature' of the product. The green environment is a constantly regulated environment and as such high level of compliance is necessary when carrying out distribution of green products. This is a common procedure in the united state.

### CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND GREEN MARKETING

Customer satisfaction has been defined in two basic ways: as either an outcome or as a process. As an outcome, satisfying the end state resulting from the consumption experience. As a process, it is the perceptual evaluative and psychological process that contributes to satisfaction. The definition is varied with regards to their level of simplicity which includes; • Product satisfaction • Satisfaction with the purchase decision experience. • Satisfaction with the performance attribute Marketing literature suggests that there is a relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty. Satisfaction leads to attitudinal loyalty. It could be seen as the intension to purchase. Satisfaction is an outcome that occurs without comparing expectations. Customer satisfaction could also be defined as an evaluative response to perceived outcome of a particular consumption experience. It is an overall judgment on satisfaction, based on the assumption that satisfaction is the outcome of ser- vice quality. Many Authors believe that customers have a high level of involvement regarding environmental issues as a consequence of growing environmental consciousness. Studies have shown the significant influence of environmental knowledge and consciousness on consumer environmental attitude. Consequently, companies that communicate their 'green product' in their packaging, advertisement or manufacturing process, gain satisfied customers. Because of the green trend, companies that fail to 'go green' are not failing to fail in their industry. Customers want to associate themselves with companies and products that are eco-friendly.

### GLOBAL SCENARIO IN GREEN MARKETING

"Green" is the buzzword that is gaining popularity among the current generation. A number of businesses right from private entities such as Wal-Mart trying to push the concept of organic food to public entities like the London governments congestion charge are all aimed at improving the environment by promoting 'Green' products and issues. 87% of people from various nations like Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, the UK and the US have shown an interest in reducing their impact on the environment, according to a survey by (McKinsey, 2007). However, showing interest and actually acting on the interest are two different deeds. This fact is proved by a survey that was conducted on a global scale, which was repeated in 2008 with the help of BBC World, which showed that not a lot of people were actually doing something to move their lifestyle to a green lifestyle.

The overall market for green marketing is said to be worth \$ 3.5 trillion by the year 2017, according to a report by Global Industry Analysts Inc. of 2011. The report also states that increasing awareness about the environmental issues among the people, businesses and the governments is one of the main reasons for such market potential. Another research study by Mintel, clearly showed that 12% of the American population actively sought green products. There is a growing need to switch over to green products and services by both marketers and consumers. Even though the shift to 'green' will be expensive to both the consumers as well as businesses, it will most definitely pay off in the long run. There are a number of literatures that focus on various aspects related to green marketing and also delves into the various inter relationships between the customers attitudes and environmental strategies in relation to the organizations use of marketing. Environmental issues are addressed in green marketing efforts. The core idea of green marketing is to create awareness among people on the environmental issues and how consumers would be helping the environment if they switch over to green products. Thus green marketing aims to provide more information to people and also gives those more choices to switch over to green lifestyle. According to (Rex and Baumann, 2007), those aspects will spur businesses to develop more products from an environmentally friendly perspective. Green marketing is a part of marketing and therefore shares a number of aspects with traditional marketing such as price, promotions, products and place. Even green marketing requires that businesses develop and maintain a strong relationship with all their suppliers, their market intermediaries and significantly with the consumers, according to (Chan et al., 2012). A number of businesses have begun committing themselves to making their entire operation more environmentally friendly. Thus corporations are becoming more aware of their responsibilities towards the environment. This has forced the law makers, environment groups, consumers, financial institution, insurers and the organization's own employees to become more aware of environmental aspects and this in turn has led to an increase in the number of policies and schemes and regulations at both the national and international levels.

### FACTORS IN FAVOR OF FIRMS TO ADOPT GREEN MARKETING

The question of why green marketing has increased in importance is quite simple and relies on the basic definition of Economics. According to McTaggart, Findlay and Parkin " Economics is the study of how people use their limited resources to try to satisfy unlimited wants". So, mankind has limited resources on the earth, with which she/he must attempt to provide for the world's unlimited wants. In market societies where there is "freedom of choice" for the consumer, it is the strong duty of firms that they must develop new or alternative ways of satisfying these unlimited wants against limited resources that are available to them. Ultimately green marketing looks at how marketing activities utilize these limited resources, while satisfying consumers wants, both of individuals and industry, as well as achieving the selling organization's objectives.

When looking through the literature there are several suggested reasons for firms which ultimately results in increased use of Green Marketing. And these possible reasons can be summarized as below:

1. Organizations perceive environmental marketing to be an opportunity that can be used to achieve its objectives.
2. Organizations believe they have a moral obligation to be more socially responsible.
3. Governmental bodies are forcing firms to become more responsible.
4. Competitor's environmental activities pressure firms to change their environmental marketing activities; and



5. Cost factors associated with waste disposal, or reductions in material usage forces firms to modify their behavior.

The detailed analysis of various factors is as follows:

#### 1. OPPORTUNITIES

It was discovered (as per the survey's conducted) that all types of consumers, both individual and industrial are becoming more concerned and aware about the natural environment. According to *Ottman* in a 1992 study of 16 countries, more than 50% of consumers in each country, other than Singapore, indicated they were concerned about the environment. A 1994 study in Australia found that 84.6% of the sample believed all individuals had a responsibility to care for the environment. A further 80% of this sample indicated that they had modified their behavior, including their purchasing behavior, due to environmental reasons. As a result, many firms see these changes as an opportunity to be exploited to overcome firms marketing non-environmentally responsible alternatives. Numerous examples can be collected from history which shows the effect of Green Marketing and one such example is:

"McDonald's replaced its clam shell packaging with waxed paper because of increased consumer concern relating to polystyrene production and Ozone depletion". And "Xerox introduced a "high quality" recycled photocopier paper in an attempt to satisfy the demands of firms for less environmentally harmful products".

Further, not all firms have undertaken environmental marketing activities. In some cases firms also have misled consumers in past in an attempt to gain market share.

#### 2. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Many firms are beginning to realize that they are members of the wider community and therefore must behave in an environmentally responsible fashion. This translates into firms that believe they must achieve environmental objectives as well as profit related objectives. This results in environmental issues being integrated into the firm's corporate culture. Firms in this situation can take two perspectives; 1) they can use the fact that they are environmentally responsible as a marketing tool; or 2) they can become responsible without promoting this fact. There are examples of firms adopting both strategies.

Organizations like the Body Shop heavily promote the fact that they are environmentally responsible. While this behavior is a competitive advantage, the firm was established specifically to offer consumers environmentally responsible alternatives to conventional cosmetic products. This philosophy is directly tied to the overall corporate culture, rather than simply being a competitive tool.

An example of a firm that does not promote its environmental initiatives is Coca-Cola. They have invested large sums of money in various recycling activities, as well as having modified their packaging to minimize its environmental impact. While being concerned about the environment, Coke has not used this concern as a marketing tool. Thus many consumers may not realize that Coke is a very environmentally committed organization.

Another firm who is very environmentally responsible but does not promote this fact, at least outside the organization, is Walt Disney World (WDW). WDW has an extensive waste management program and infrastructure in place, yet these facilities are not highlighted in their general tourist promotional activities.

#### 3. GOVERNMENTAL PRESSURE

Any government is supposed to work in favor of consumers and society, and this protection now a days has significant green marketing implications. Governmental regulations relating to environmental marketing are designed and enforced to protect consumers in several ways, 1) reduce production of harmful goods or byproducts; 2) modify consumer and industry's use and/or consumption of harmful goods; or 3) ensure that all types of consumers have the ability to evaluate the environmental composition of goods.

Governments establish regulations designed to control the amount of hazardous wastes produced by firms. Many byproducts of production are controlled through the issuing of various environmental licenses, thus modifying organizational behavior. These regulations are all designed to ensure consumers have the appropriate information which would enable them to evaluate firm's environmental claims.

So, we can say that governmental attempts to protect consumers from false or misleading claims should theoretically provide consumers with the ability to make more informed decisions.

#### 4. COMPETITIVE PRESSURE

Competitive Pressure is another major factor in the environmental marketing area which forces firm's desire to maintain their position in marketing. It was seen that firms are silently observing their competitor's promoting green environmental behaviors and attempting to emulate it in order to stay in the market. This behavior is further becomes necessary due to the much educated and environmental concern consumers. For example, the introduction of "Recycled Paper" by Xerox's was introduced in an attempt to address the introduction of recycled photocopier paper by other manufacturers.

#### 5. COST OR PROFIT ISSUES

Firms may also use green marketing in an attempt to address cost or profit related issues. This can be done in following three ways:-

1. One such attempt is because of governmental pressure on firms regarding disposing of environmentally harmful byproducts are becoming increasingly costly and in some cases difficult. Therefore firms that can remove or minimize harmful wastes may incur substantial cost savings. This ultimately forces firms to re-examine their production processes & as a result they often develop more effective production processes that not only reduce waste, but reduce the need for some raw materials. This serves as a double cost savings, since both waste and raw material are reduced.
2. Another such attempt from firms without minimizing waste is try to find markets for their waste materials, where one firm's waste becomes another firm's input of production. One Australian example of this is a firm who produces acidic waste water as a byproduct of production and sells it to a firm involved in neutralizing base materials.
3. The last way in which cost or profit issues may affect firms' environmental marketing activities is that new industries may be developed for waste recycling.

#### SIDE EFFECTS OF GOING GREEN

As there are always two sides of any technology, similarly green marketing concept has some negative sides also. Till now we have studied only positive impact of it, some of the problems with this concept are as follows:-

1. Firms using green marketing must ensure that their activities are not misleading to consumers or industry, and do not breach any of the regulations or laws dealing with environmental marketing set by regulating authority time-to-time.
2. Firms which modify their products due to increased consumer concern must contend with the fact that consumers' perceptions are sometimes not correct.
3. When firms attempt to become socially responsible, they may produce the risk that the environmentally responsible action of today may be found to be harmful in the future just because of limited scientific knowledge at any point in time. So, it may be impossible for a firm to be certain they have made the correct environmental decision.
4. While governmental regulations are designed to enforce green marketing in favor of consumers, but, there are various difficulties in establishing policies that will address all environmental issues.
5. Reacting to competitive pressures can cause all "followers" to make the same mistake as the "leader." Thus blindly following the competition can have costly ramifications.
6. The idea to reduce costs or increase profits may results in firms not addressing the important issue of environmental degradation. E.g the idea of "End-of-pipe" where waste of one firms may be the input or raw material for another firm may not actually reduce the waste but rather shift it around.

#### GREEN MARKETING & ITS INDIAN SCENERIO

- **Need for Standardization** It is found that only 5% of the marketing messages from "Green" campaigns are entirely true and there is a lack of standardization to authenticate these claims. There is no standardization to authenticate these claims. There is no standardization currently in place to certify a product as organic. Unless some regulatory bodies are involved in providing the certifications there will not be any verifiable means. A standard quality control board needs to be in place for such labeling and licensing.

- **New Concept** Indian literate and urban consumer is getting more aware about the merits of Green products. But it is still a new concept for the masses. The consumer needs to be educated and made aware of the environmental threats. The new green movements need to reach the masses and that will take a lot of time and effort. By India's ayurvedic heritage, Indian consumers do appreciate the importance of using natural and herbal beauty products. Indian consumer is exposed to healthy living lifestyles such as yoga and natural food consumption. In those aspects the consumer is already aware and will be inclined to accept the green products.
- **Patience and Perseverance** The investors and corporate need to view the environment as a major long-term investment opportunity, the marketers need to look at the long-term benefits from this new green movement. It will require a lot of patience and no immediate results. Since it is a new concept and idea, it will have its own acceptance period. This long period is not generally afforded in Indian market by consumers.
- **Avoiding Green Myopia** The first rule of green marketing is focusing on customer benefits i.e. the primary reason why consumers buy certain products in the first place. Do this right, and motivate consumers to switch brands or even pay a premium for the greener alternative. It is not going to help if a product is developed which is absolutely green in various aspects but does not pass the customer satisfaction criteria. This will lead to green myopia. Also if the green products are priced very high then again it will lose its market acceptability.
- **Vague credibility:** False or misleading green marketing claims made by businesses that do not undergo proper certification but still want to appeal to environmentally conscious consumers can damage the credibility of the whole sector. Consumers have a hard time distinguishing between simple green advertisements and valid, certified claims.
- **Deluding information:** Green marketing can lead to consumer awareness, but it also runs the risk of deluding consumers with erroneous information. There is always a danger that the marketing of these products or services may send a message that might lead to behavioral change with substantial adverse effect on the environment and society in the future (such as buying electric vehicles without considering how to dispose of old batteries in the future).
- **Gap between sustainable intention and behavior:** Although most consumers might claim they are intending to follow a sustainable lifestyle or that they would want to buy green products, when it comes down to actually transforming these intentions into actions, only a fraction of people actually do it. A survey conducted by EcoAlign in the United States found that although 90 per cent of the American citizens were aware of the importance of eco-efficiency, only 3 per cent of them turned their computer off during the night.
- **Price premium:** Consumers who are interested in making more sustainable purchases are often not willing to accept the comparatively high price of green products, resulting from the internalization of environmental costs. Only a very small fraction of the population is willing to compromise performance, quality or price in exchange for environmental performance in their purchasing decisions, diminishing the motivation for businesses to venture into green production and marketing.
- **Information gap:** Despite the increasing consumer awareness of green purchasing alternatives, the number of people who are truly familiar with a wide range of green products or their benefits for the environment is still quite low. The US American environmental labeling program, ENERGY STAR, for example, was only known to 56 per cent of American citizens some 12 years after its creation in 1992.

## CONCLUSION

Green marketing is a tool for protecting the environment for the future generation. It has a positive impact on environmental safety. Because of the growing concern of environmental protection, there is an emergence of a new market which is the green market. For companies to survive in this market, they need to go green in all aspects of their business. Consumers want to identify themselves with companies that are green compliant and are willing to pay a premium for a greener life style. As such, green marketing is not just an environmental protection tool but also, a marketing strategy.

## SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Green Marketing is the emerging technology which is greatly affecting both customers and firms. As Environment protection is mandatory for the longer sustenance of the human life on earth, so adopting of Green concept by firms is becoming more and more compulsory either in terms of marketing field or in production technology. In this paper, we have mainly studied Green term related to marketing mainly. The same concept can further be studied related to production inside firms.

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