

GREEN MARKETING-A CASE STUDY OF AWARENESS ABOUT ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS IN INDIAN CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT

Educated Indian consumer (literate urban consumer) is becoming more and more ware about the qualities of Green products. It is a new concept for masses but emerging well amongst consumers. It is high time to popularize this concept and make the public aware about the environmental threats. Since it is a new concept so consumer will take time to appreciate this and it will have its own acceptance period. According to the American Marketing Association, green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe and this is also known as: Environmental Marketing (EM), Ecological Marketing, Eco- Marketing. Green Marketing is above than the widely spread terms like recyclable, refillable, environment friendly product, ozone friendly items etc. Green Marketing is above than this and is a much broader concept because it incorporates a broad range of activities like making and producing a product which is beyond traditional product and marketing this product in such a way that we can inculcate the core values which are beneficial for environment into the consumers and consumers can associate these values with him or her also need to set new target market while taking into consideration the aspects like methods of processing, packaging, distribution with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment .The main aim of the study is to understand the behavior of the customer awareness on environmental friendly product. The objective of the study is to understand the awareness levels and create awareness of the eco friendly product so that the efforts of the manufacturers of green products will be achieved.

Keywords: Consumer awareness, green products, awareness and acceptability of green product.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Elikington (1994:93) defines green consumers as one who avoids products that are likely to endanger the health of the consumer or others; causes unnecessary waste; use materials derived from threatened species or environments, involve unnecessary use of, or cruelty to animals; adversely affect other countries. The concept of green marketing is not only associated/ restricted to marketing of green products rather the relationship among environmental consciousness, pro environmental behavior or ecological buying behavior, psychology of the customer and sociological scenario of the geography and business management including(new product development, advertising, marketing research and other administrative challenges.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

Marketing people generally take strategic decision for business development responsibility and business growth responsibility but green marketing mainly exercise on environmental concerns

and follows the concept of social marketing where the main motive to aware and promote social goals of an individual as well society. There are several factors which prompt us to use “eco-and earth-friendly products”. Green consumers prefer products made from recycled material or products whose use entails reduced environmental impact but the concept of pricing make it more crucial because of premium pricing policy. In spite of several “if” and “but” acceptability and adaptability for such product is increasing day by day. Globalization increases the opportunities for buyers to source from in an increasing number of countries, potential and prospective buyers increases so their focus is on environmental improvement. It is an important social issue and also government wants to ‘protect’ buyers and society from the ill effect of non-green products. The policies of government can help in shaping up the role of companies and as well as the employees so that larger interest of society can be catered. Government’s main motive is to design a product which can position itself as the first choice of the consumer and also a product which is socially, ecologically and economically sustainable. However government is always constrained in selection of the companies, suppliers, dealers, manufactures etc. because they want to select the lowest bid in the market and it is not necessary that the company chosen by government will satisfy the need of mass.

3. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

Green Marketing Concept is based on the concept of preservation of natural resources while taking into consideration the satisfaction of the human needs and wants. As it is very evident that only big companies can have sustainable development or sustainable business through green marketing. While promoting the green product companies must realize the importance of transparency. Although it is impossible to cover all the aspects of green marketing but companies must find some flexible approach to promote this concept. To create ecological consciousness among consumers in current environmental conditions is not very tough although it requires patient handling. Media involvement can make the task easier because it can be used in delivering the information to the mass and can also help in strengthening the individual’s outlook towards the concept. Government and social organizations must help in promoting the green marketing practices. Government should provide financial assistance in terms of easy loan facility so that company can take initiative. Government must award to those who are sincerely and successfully practicing Green Marketing. Green marketing must not be considered just one more marketing concept rather its societal and environmental dimensions must be taken into consideration. Green –marketers must induce the concept that these product are beneficial for consumer and as well as for the environment because the expensive nature of the product compel the consumer to think in a different direction that by selling these products the profit margins will be raised –up and “being environment friendly” is just a mere concept to divert the attention of the consumer and to fascinate them.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CORPORATES TO HAVE THE CONCEPT OF GREEN MARKETING:

CSR is a highly popularized agenda in today’s competitive scenario. Not only big companies like Tata, Reliance are associated for the social good in their operations rather every well-established company is trying their best for the development of society and for the betterment of social set up, CSR is “doing social good” concept based. CSR always ensures the safety of the consumer which has a similar motive of using green product. CSR always take precautionary step to all the environmental changes and also promote socio-economic rights of the consumers

.Implementation and enforcement of adopting the green concept is speeding up day by day and also the Indian government is installing economic stimulation to adopt environmental friendly measures.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

Awareness level about green marketing product is very low and those who are aware about the concept either they are having little knowledge or misled knowledge about it. People are confused about green product claims because they think that the products are beyond this concept and it is just marketing gimmick to promote its brand. People distrust regarding the credibility of green products and to remove this confusion and transparent and crystal clear information need to be provided to consumers. "Eco Labeling" can assure the customer about the genuineness of the green product and can make it popular. Create consumer awareness about the big companies who have adopted the concept of green marketing or green product. One of the most popular way of promoting product is eco sponsoring which draws the attention very quickly and also cast a very strong impression in the mind of the consumer and somewhat it is also related with the reputation of the sponsor. Companies must engage themselves with the projects related with environmental or ecological issues. There are many other ideas also like involvement of the company into recycling program, reuse program, community services program etc.

The specific objectives of the study may be stated as:

- To study the awareness levels of the customer about the product.
- To study the consumers' attitude towards the acceptability of green product.
- To study the impact of green advertising on consumer.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS:

The following hypothesis has been tested as a part of research.

Ho: There is no association exists between advertisement viewing and intensity of awareness.

H1: There is an association exists between advertisement viewing and intensity of awareness.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study is based on the empirical research, conducted to know the consumers' behavior towards green products: in Meerut city (Uttar Pradesh). In this study, researcher used both the primary and secondary data. However, the major data for study has been collected by means of structured interview schedule (Survey Method). The sampling plan used has been consistent with the methodological guidelines provided for conducting survey research in marketing. A sample of 250 respondents was randomly selected by using multi stage random method. Secondary data were collected from magazines, news papers, internet, annual reports etc.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Table 1: Respondents' attitude towards the green product in the market.

ATTITUDE	TOTAL NO.OF RESPONDENT	%
CUSTOMER ACCEPTING THE AVAILABLE GREEN PRODUCT	150	60

CUSTOMER MODIFICATIONS REQUIRING	100	40
TOTAL	250	100

(SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA)

Respondent's attitude towards available green products is given in **Table 1**, it reveals that the 60 percent of the respondents adopted the available green products while 40 percent respondents expecting modification in the available green products.

Table 2: Level of awareness through advertising amongst the respondent.**(SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA) (*Rounded Percentage Value)**

From the Table 2 it is inferred that out of 250 respondents green advertisement viewers are 150. Out of these 150 advertisement viewers 30 respondents have the high level awareness, 50

INTENSITY OF AWARENESS	HIGH(%)	MEDIUM(%)	LOW(%)	TOTAL(%)
CUSTOMER VIEWING ADVERTISEMENT	30(20)	50(34)*	70(47)*	150(100)
CUSTOMER NOT VIEWING ADVERTISEMENTS	20(20)	25(25)	55(55)	100(100)
TOTAL	50(20)	75(30)	125(50)	250(100)

respondents have medium level awareness and 70 respondents have only low level awareness. Further Table reveals that among 100 advertisement non-viewers 20 respondents have high level of awareness, 25 respondents have the medium level awareness and 55 respondents have low level awareness. In order to come to the conclusion regarding whether the advertisement influencing the consumers or not, Chi-Square Test is used.

Chi-Square Test:

	d.f.	Calculated Value	Table Value
Chi-Square Test	2	2.21	5.991

Result:

H_0 is rejected in favor of H_1 , (i.e. advertisement viewing and intensity of awareness are not independent to each other.

Since the calculated value is 5.991, hence the hypothesis is accepted.

RESULT AND FINDINGS:

1. The major percentage (60%) of the respondents is using green products.
2. 40 % of the respondents are seeking some modifications in the existing green products.
3. Out of these 150 advertisement viewers 30 respondents have the high level awareness, 50 respondents have medium level awareness and 70 respondents have only low level awareness.

4. Out of 100 advertisement non-viewers 20 respondents have high level of awareness, 25 respondents have the medium level awareness and 55 respondents have low level awareness.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: It is concluded from the result that though customer's have an opinion that they are aware about the green products but is very evident from the result that more awareness has to be created about green products. Consumer prefer green products based on their interest in environmental friendliness and the quality of the green product, therefore it is observed that green advertising enables the consumers to gain the knowledge about green products. It is suggested that green marketers have to focus more on product quality and should create awareness about the benefits of green products.

LIMITATIONS:

The research has made every effort to contribute best in its own capacity. In spite of this there have been few limitations to the study like, the limited knowledge of the respondents and sample size is small.

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