

A STUDY ON GREEN MARKETING AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR AND SATISFACTION LEVELS IN MADURAI

J.Rosareen Sandra¹, K.Iyyapan²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Management Studies, PRIST University, Thanjavur

²Director, Department of Management Studies, PRIST University, Thanjavur

Email: ¹sandrarosareen@gmail.com, ²directormadurai@prist.ac.in

Abstract—Green marketing refers to the process of selling products and/or services based on their environmental benefits. Such a product or service may be environmentally friendly in itself or produced in an environmentally friendly way, including: Being manufactured in a sustainable fashion. The concept of Green Marketing is still in the stage of infancy. Even till date it has not been inculcated as a subject in identifying the key ideas in relation to the awareness of green products that may be most relevant to eco-friendly environment. This paper attempts to identify the extent to which consumers are concerned to purchase green products, to study the various factors which affect consumers purchasing green products, to evaluate attitudes of consumers regarding green products, to analyze the demographics of the consumers inclined to purchase green products and to evaluate perceptions of consumers. This research study tries to determine whether the green marketing practices influences the consumer buying behaviour in Madurai. A sample of 50 respondents was selected in Madurai and a questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Percentile) and correlation to establish the relationship between variables have been used in this study for analyzing the primary data. The results of the study highlight that the consumer purchasing decisions in Madurai are influenced by the green marketing practices. Moreover, the consumers are willing to pay a premium price for the 'green' products, if the eco-friendly products provide an extra value to the consumers. Thus, strategies need to be tailored to enhance the product's performance and offer products that values the consumer and the environment.

Keywords—Eco-Friendly, Environment, Green Marketing, Infancy, Sustainable.

INTRODUCTION

Environmentally-responsible or "green" marketing is a business practice that takes into account consumer concerns about promoting preservation and conservation of the natural environment. Green marketing campaigns highlight the superior environmental protection characteristics of a company's products and services. The sorts of characteristics usually highlighted include such things as reduced waste in packaging, increased energy efficiency of the product in use, reduced use of chemicals in farming, or decreased release of toxic emissions and other pollutants in production.

Marketers have responded to growing consumer demand for environment-friendly products in several ways, each of which is a component of green marketing. These include: 1) promoting the environmental attributes of products; 2) introducing new products specifically for those concerned with energy efficiency, waste reduction, sustainability, and climate control, and 3) redesigning existing products with an eye towards these same consumers. Marketing campaigns touting the environmental ethics of companies and the environmental advantages of their products are on the rise.

Most observers agree that some businesses engage in green marketing solely because such an emphasis will enable them to make a profit. Other businesses, however, conduct their operations in an environmentally-sensitive fashion because their owners and managers feel a responsibility to preserve the integrity of the natural environment even as they satisfy consumer needs and desires. Indeed, true green marketing emphasises environmental stewardship. Green or environmental marketing may be defined as any marketing activity that recognises environmental stewardship as a fundamental business development responsibility and business growth responsibility. This expands, to some extent, the traditional understanding of a business's responsibilities and goals. This report would attempt to:

- Introduce the terms and concepts of green marketing.
- Briefing why “Go Green” concept is important.
- Examine why companies switch over to green philosophy.
- Discuss the problems related to green products.
- To seek improvement in customer appeal through marketing strategies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the level of awareness regarding green marketing among consumers.
- To examine the success of green marketing as a corporate social responsibility.
- To eliminate the concept of waste.
- To seek ways in making environmentalism profitable.
- To explore the factors that influence the buying behaviour of consumers in Madurai towards green products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is exploratory in nature, it focuses on literature review, newspapers, journals, websites and other reliable sources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study by **Polonsky (2011)** examined that green marketing was still in infancy. In the perception of marketing scholars, green marketing refers to eco-level and market segmentation and the role of structural factors and economic incentives in influencing consumer behaviour. The green marketers must understand to satisfy two objectives: improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction.

The research by **Rosenberger (2001)** primarily focused on finding inefficiencies in the carbon value chain of energy production using renewable methods. By utilizing anaerobic digestion and gasification technology Aura could produce biogas from cattle, swine, and other farm animals.

The study by **Vernekar (2011)** highlighted and explained the surprising prevalence of assertive environmental messages in the media. Environmental agencies, which are populated with people who perceive protecting the environment as a highly important issue, should understand that not all consumers are as informed and concerned about the environment.

Table 1: Level of Awareness of Green Products

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Very low	8	16
Low	6	12
Average	18	36
High	11	22
Very high	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Chart 1: Level of Satisfaction Regarding Green Products

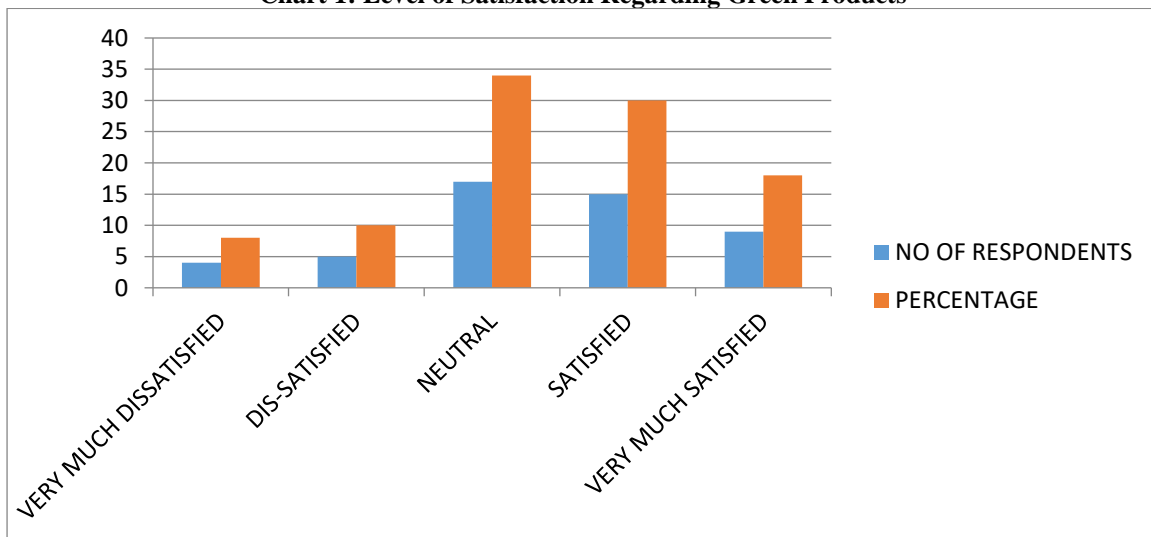


Table 2: Intentional usage of green products with regard to the environment

Factors	Contribution towards saving planet earth			Preference in buying products which has been recycled			Read through contents to check if they are environmentally safe			Avoidance in buying from companies which are not environmentally responsible		
Strongly agree	5	27	135	5	22	110	5	15	75	5	13	65
agree	4	14	56	4	20	80	4	17	68	4	20	80
undecided	3	5	15	3	8	24	3	0	0	3	9	27
disagree	2	4	8	2	0	0	2	9	18	2	4	8
Strongly disagree	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	9	9	1	4	4
Total	15	50	214	15	50	214	15	50	170	15	50	184
Average	14.2			14.2			11.3			12.2		
Weight	I			I			III			II		

Table 3: Usage of green products in future is a dependent variable on the effectiveness of marketing strategies which induce the buying behaviour of the consumers.

$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$
9	81	20	400	180
10	100	9	81	90
5	25	11	121	55
14	196	10	100	140
12	144			12
50	546	50	702	477

$$R = \frac{N(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2} * \sqrt{N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2}}$$

$$= \frac{50*477 - (50)(50)}{\sqrt{50*546 - (50)^2} * \sqrt{50*702 - (50)^2}}$$

(0.75) Hence, positively correlated.

SUGGESTIONS

Green marketing is still in its infancy and a lot of research is to be done on green marketing to fully explore its potential. Certain suggestions were been best arrived during the end course of this research, which includes:

- A proper awareness among the consumers about the merits of green marketing and the environmental threats pertaining is considered huge importance.
- Green marketing campaigns which make use of eco labels and eco logos would bring up a good change.
- Recycling of paper, metals, plastics, etc., in a safe and environmentally harmless manner should become much more systematised and universal. It has to become the general norm to use energy efficient lamps and other electrical goods.
- Marketing communication needs more focus and it should better concentrate on the benefits and the theme of the message.

- Marketers should make the products available for the consumers for easy consumption.
- As the price are too high for certain green products, the government and the manufacturing organisation should work in unison to cater ways in order to make it affordable.
- The manufacturing firms have to ensure the value of the green product on the aspect of performance, design, and visual appeal which would influence the buying behaviour of the consumers.
- Consumers, industrial buyers and suppliers have to forbid the products which have negative impact on the environment.

CONCLUSION

The word “eco-friendly” has become a buzzword of today’s marketing practices of different companies throughout the world. Green marketing is gaining noteworthy attention from both marketers and consumers. Given that a carefully crafted green marketing strategy can earn credibility with customers and provide a stage for revenue growth, it’s an area worthy of additional reflection. Given India’s rapid GDP growth rate and the highly negative environmental impact, demand for eco-labelled products may create the necessary consumer pressure to ensure a cleaner environment.

This study confirms the existence of an environmental value-action gap, a gap between consumers’ beliefs and behaviour over being green. This paper has highlighted various aspects of consumer behaviour and shown that consumer preference for greener goods could be influenced by marketing. A major barrier in the purchasing of green products is, concern over whether the product will perform as expected. However, consumers generally trust the performance of well-known brands, so green products that work well and do not make over inflated green claims could sell successfully under well-known brands.

The current low levels of consumer awareness about global warming, India’s brands need to help raise consumer consciousness. Indian manufacturers have yet to find a market for green products, even as consumers have a low awareness of them because of the insufficient efforts made by the marketers. Overall, it is clear that the Indian market for greener products is under exploitation by marketers within consumer groups with pro-environmental values. Green marketing should not be measured as just one more approach to marketing, but has to be pursued with much better energy, as it has an environmental and social measurement to it. With the danger of global warming looming large, it is very important that green marketing becomes the norm rather than an exemption or just a fashion. Green marketing assumes even more importance and significance in developing countries like India.

REFERENCES

- [1] Polonsky, M. J. & Rosenberger, P. J. (2001). Reevaluating green marketing: a strategic approach. *Business Horizons*, 44(5), pp 21-30.
- [2] Polonsky, M. J. (2011). Transformative green marketing: Impediments and opportunities. *Journal of Business Research*, 64(12), pp 1311-1319.
- [3] Vernekar, S.S. and Wadhwa, P. (2011). Green Consumption an Empirical Study of Consumers Attitudes and Perception regarding Eco-Friendly FMCG Products, with special reference to Delhi and NCR Region. *Opinion*, Vol 1, NO 1, December 2011. pp.64-74.
- [4] Murugesan, K. (2010). Personality variables and environmental attitudes as predictors of ecologically responsible consumption patterns. *Journal of Business Research*. 17 pp. 51–56.
- [5] Coddington, W. (1993). *Environmental Marketing: Positive Strategies for Reaching Green Consumers*. McGraw-Hill, New York, NY, pp 56-68.
- [6] Schlegelmilch, B.B., Bohlen, G.M., Diamantopoulos, A. (1996). The link between green purchasing decisions and measures of environmental consciousness. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 30 No.5, pp.35-55.
- [7] Hartmann, P., Ibanez, V.A., Sainz, F.J.F. (2005). Green branding effects on attitude: functional versus emotional positioning strategies. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 23 No.1, pp.9-29.
- [8] Charles Lamb,W. (2005). Green advertising effects on attitude and choice of advertising themes. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, Vol. 17 No.3, pp.51-66.
- [9] Shrikanth,R.(2011).Contemporary green marketing-brief reference to Indian scenario, *International journal of social science and interdisciplinary research*, vol. I, Jan.2012.26-38.
