

GREEN MARKETING-AN EXPLORATORY RESEARCH ON CONSUMERS IN BANGALORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The term Green Marketing is the buzzword used in industry which is used to describe business activities which attempt to reduce the negative effect of the products/services offered by the company to make it environmentally friendly.

As society becomes more concerned with the natural environment, businesses have begun to modify their process in an attempt to address society's new issues. Some businesses have been quick to accept the newer challenges or changes like environmental management, minimization of the waste aligning with organizational activities. For a company to be successful in implementing green marketing strategy, it should not forget attitude of consumers towards green marketing. The outcome of this paper may trigger the minds of marketer to give a thought for adopting the suitable strategies which will give them a way to overcome major problems associated with regular marketing techniques and make a shift to green marketing. Eventually the marketers can save a lot on overhead costs and associated entities in the market. Keeping this thing in mind this paper is an attempt to understand awareness of consumers' towards green marketing and green branding along with exploring the concept of green marketing.

Keywords: Green marketing, Eco-Friendly products, Green brands, Green products

INTRODUCTION

According to the American Marketing Association, green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Yet defining green marketing is not a simple task where several meanings intersect and contradict each other; an example of this will be the existence of varying social, environmental and retail definitions attached to this term. Other similar terms used are Environmental Marketing and Ecological Marketing. Thus "Green Marketing" refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the production, marketing consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global

warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for switch in to green products and services. While the shift to "green" may appear to be expensive in the short term, it will definitely prove to be indispensable and advantageous, cost-wise too, in the long run.

An average green company can be described by using the models and experiences reported by John Elkington, Peter Knight and Julia Hailes in their book *The Green Business Guide* (Elkington et al., 1992). A green company is based on its corporate vision that includes environmental concerns as the company's functioning. This simply means that the company realizes the needs of the ecosystem with which it interacts. For example, any company wants "to be a good company, having concern for the community and the environment". Green marketing might be a result of pragmatic policy, referring to the changes of

preferences of the customers and /or to follow the mainstream development of the industry. However, there are companies, which are really centered on green values and try to realize their ecological worldview in their business activities (e.g. the Body Shop, Ben and Jerry's, Tom's of Main, Interface).

Polonsky (1994) defines green marketing as .all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment.

The basic ideas behind environmentalism dictate that corporations have responsibilities that go beyond the production of goods and services. These responsibilities involve helping to solve important social problems, especially those they have helped create (Buchholz 1991; Porter & Van der Linde 1995; Peattie, 1995). Corporations such as McDonald's, Wal-Mart, Procter & Gamble, and Du Pont acknowledge that the environment must be protected and enhanced for economic growth to take place, and have taken action towards that goal. McDonald's has made a \$100 million commitment to its consumers for recycling purposes. Wall-Mart encourages the purchase of environmentally friendly products and reports that the green labeling program that they initiated in 1989 contributed to an overall 25% increase in sales for the year. Procter & Gamble has pledged to spend \$20 million per year to develop a composting infrastructure. (Lodge and Rayport, 1991).

Theoretical background

Green Marketing

As section around the world become more concerned with the natural environment, this concern has resulted in either personal motivation or through government legislations. And this was followed by organizational activities aiming at modifying the organizational behavior to adapt with these social trends. Polonsky (2007) indicated that the evidence of this was the emergence of journals such as;" Business strategy and the Environment" and "Greener Management international," which ate specifically founded to publish articles, relating to business' environmental behavior. Marketing has got the lion's share in these researches and discussion, to come to us new terms we have not seen before such as, " green marketing " and " environmental marketing " .

Green Marketing Concept

Many people believe that green marketing is a way to promote or advertise a specific product using environmental terms, such as television advertisement, to announce a type of heaters as not to cause a shortage of oxygen m but all that can not be named more than eco-declaration, or green advertising, which forms one components of green marketing, or of the green marketing claims, therefore, green marketing includes a wider range of organizational activities, such as; product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes m and delivery changes, and more (Polonsky,2007). In their attempt to define green marketing, researches and practitioners have addressed several terms relate with this concept, Praskash (2002), pointed out that he employed the term green marketing in his survey " to refer to the strategies to promote products by employing environmental claims either about their attributes or about the systems, policies and processes of the firms that manufacture or sell them", while (Posonsky,2007), has defined it as " green or environmental marketing consist of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy human need or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment ." Other researchers have defined environmental marketing as " the holistic management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying the requirement of customers and society, in a profitable and sustainable way" (Karna et al, 2001).

How Organizations can be Green?

The literature included different arguments, that required actions from organizational to be green, Polonsky and Philip (2001) argued that organizations who want to be green must understand the nature of consumer transaction, even questioning how to create values, and this may needs to assumptions and ways of thinking by asking: are consumers actually need to own the products ? Or are there other ways to deliver the capabilities that satisfy there needs? While Prakash (2002) reported that the organizations can green themselves through two levels: first is the firm level represented by; value addition process, and management systems, second; product level. In order to green the value-addition, the organization may start by redesigning them and eliminating some of them and this may require modifying the current technology or inducting new technology, all of these aiming at reducing the environmental impact aggregated for all stages, such as the hybrid cars that reduce the fuel consumption and environment polluting (Lopez, 2009).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to the authors like Ottaman, (1993) and Ken Peattie, (1993) conventional marketing is out and green marketing is in. In the developed countries, the surge of environmental consciousness that followed Earth Day in 1990 washed over the marketplace rapidly. In poll after poll, consumers claim they are willing to change their buying habits – and even pay more for products – to protect the environment (Pearce, 1990; Consumer Reports, 1991; Berger and Corbin, 1992; Coddington, 1993; Davis, 1993; McDougall, 1993; Ottoman, 1993). Manufacturers got the message that the Marketing Intelligence Service (Consumer Reports, 1991), which tracks new product introductions, reports that the percentage of new packaged products making some kind of green claim more than doubled between 1989 and 1990, rising from 4.5% to 11.4% of the total. During the same year, the

number of green advertisements appearing on television and in major print outlets more than quadrupled, according to an audit by the advertising agency J. Walter Thompson (Consumer Reports, 1991).

Elkington (1994: 93) defines green consumer as one who avoids products that are likely to endanger the health of the consumer or others; cause significant damage to the environment during manufacture, use or disposal; consume a disproportionate amount of energy; cause unnecessary waste; use materials derived from threatened species or environments; involve unnecessary use of, or cruelty to animals; adversely affect other countries.

According to the Joel makeover (a writer, speaker and strategist on clean technology and green marketing), green marketing faces a lot of challenges because of lack of standards and public consensus to what constitutes "Green". According to Peattie (2001), the evolution of green marketing has three phases. First phase was termed as "Ecological" green marketing, and during this period all marketing activities were concerned to help environment problems and provide remedies for environmental problems. Second phase was "Environmental" green marketing and the focus shifted on clean technology that involved designing of innovative new products, which take care of pollution and waste issues. Third phase was "Sustainable" green marketing. It came into prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000. Green marketing is a vital constituent of the holistic marketing concept. It is particularly applicable to businesses that are directly dependent on the physical environment; for example, industries like fishing, processed foods, and tourism and adventure sports. Changes in the physical environment may pose a threat to such industries. Many global players in diverse businesses are now successfully implementing green marketing practices.

Ginsberg, J.M. & Bloom, P.N. (2004). Choosing the Right Green-Marketing Strategy. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 46(1), pp. 79-88.

Green marketing has not lived up to the hopes and dreams of many managers and activists. Although public opinion polls consistently show that consumers would prefer to choose a green product over one that is less friendly to the environment when all other things are equal, those "other things" are rarely equal in the minds of consumers. How then, should companies handle the dilemmas associated with green marketing? They must always keep in mind that consumers are unlikely to compromise on traditional product attributes, such as convenience, availability, price, quality and performance. It's even more important to realize, however, that there is no single green-marketing strategy that is right for every company. It is suggested that companies should follow one of four strategies, depending on market and competitive conditions, from the relatively passive and silent "lean green" approach to the more aggressive and visible "extreme green" approach - with "defensive green" and "shaded green" in between. Managers who understand these strategies and the underlying reasoning behind them will be better prepared to help their companies benefit from an environmentally friendly approach to marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Researcher have used structured questionnaire and a five point balanced likert scale for measuring consumer attitude towards green marketing and green branding. Primary data was collected from respondents of Bangalore city through a questionnaire designed for a sample of 100 respondents by using the mail survey method due to limitation of time factor.

Random sampling method was adopted by the researcher and selected the samples from Bangalore region representing both the genders, different age groups, education level, marital status and monthly income. The data collected from the respondents are coded, tabulated and analyzed into logical statements using mean and percentage analysis. Secondary data was collected from the available literature, journals and web search wherever necessary.

The Questionnaire method was chosen for its versatility speed and cost benefits.

Due to shortage of time the researcher has used only descriptive statistical tool- Mean and percentage to arrive at findings and conclusion.

The study has been carried out keeping in mind the following primary objectives:

- To understand the awareness of consumers towards green marketing.
- To assess the attitude of consumers towards green branding.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents with mean scores (N=100)

Age	%	Gender		Occupation
		Male	Female	
20-30	60	78	22	Part Time employees)
30-40	26			Employees
Above 40	14			Sr. Executive/Entrepreneur
	100			
Monthly Income	%			
0-5K	20			
6-10K	35			
10-20K	30			
25-30K	10			
>40K	5			

Table 1 depicts the demographic information about the respondents which reveals that 60% of the respondents were under the age group of 20-30 .26% of the respondents come under 30-40 and 14% of respondents were above 40 years of age.

Consumers awareness towards green marketing is high

1. I believe in the concept of green marketing?

Table 2. Ratings given by respondents about the concept of green marketing

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	69	4.52(>4.5 considered the next higher value)
4	Agree	22	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	4	
1	Strongly Disagree	2	
Total		100	

Table 2 clearly depicts that Respondents said *strongly agree* that they believe in the concept of green marketing. This can be inferred from the computed mean.

2. I am aware of companies going green?

Table 3. Consumer’s awareness of companies going green

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	69	4.79(> 4.5 =5)
4	Agree	23	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	4	
1	Strongly Disagree	2	
Total		100	

Table 3 depicts that Respondents Strongly Agree about the awareness of companies going green which can be inferred from the computed mean.

3. I know about the advantages of green products in an organization?

Table 4. The advantages of green products in an organization

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	47	4.09(4)
4	Agree	31	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	
2	Disagree	4	
1	Strongly Disagree	6	
Total		100	

Table 4 depicts that Respondents agree that there is an advantages of green products in an organization.

4. I feel that the regular marketing techniques harm the environment

Table 5. The regular marketing techniques can harm the environment.

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean score
5	Strongly Agree	72	4.52
4	Agree	18	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	4	
1	Strongly Disagree	3	
Total		100	

Table 5 depicts that Respondents *strongly agree* that the regular marketing techniques may harm the environment

5. Employees in any organization feel that their work schedule gets affected by implementing green concept

Table 6

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	47	4.19(4)
4	Agree	35	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	6	
2	Disagree	10	
1	Strongly Disagree	6	
Total		100	

Table 6 clearly indicates that respondents *agree* that organization feels that their work schedule get affected by implementing green marketing. Respondents Agree that employee in any organization feel that their work schedule gets affected by implementing green concept.

6. Green marketing concept is existed for long time back but it is not implemented by many companies in India

Table 7

	% of Respondents
Yes	67
No	33
Total	100

Table 7 depicts that 67% of the Respondents said that green marketing concept existed for long time but it is not implemented by many companies in India. 33% of the Respondents said *no*. Respondents have realized that green marketing existed for long time due to lack of various factors it is not implemented in many companies in Indian context.

7. Productivity can be improved drastically by using green marketing (paper less)

Table 8 showing productivity can be improved by using green marketing.

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	72	4.57(5)
4	Agree	20	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	3	
1	Strongly Disagree	2	
	Total	100	

Table 8 depicts that the Respondents strongly agree that productivity can be improved drastically by using green marketing.

8. Companies are reluctant in implementing green marketing concept

Table 9. The companies are reluctant in implementation of green marketing concept.

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	47	4.09(4)
4	Agree	31	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	
2	Disagree	4	
1	Strongly Disagree	6	
	Total	100	

Table 9 depicts that Respondents agree that companies are reluctant in implementing green marketing.

9. It is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketing

Table 10. Respondents Strongly Agree

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	70	4.58(5)
4	Agree	23	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	3	
1	Strongly Disagree	1	
	Total	100	

Table 10 showing Respondents Strongly Agree that it is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketing.

10. Huge investment is required to develop green products

Table 11

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	43	4.07(4)
4	Agree	37	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	
2	Disagree	4	
1	Strongly Disagree	6	
	Total	100	

Table 11 clearly indicates that Respondents agree that huge investment is required to develop green products.

11. Government should take initiative in making companies to go green

Table 12

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	
5	Strongly Agree	68	4.6(>4.5 considered as 5)
4	Agree	28	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	
2	Disagree	2	
1	Strongly Disagree	1	
	Total	100	

Table 12 clearly indicates that respondents Strongly Agree that government should take initiative in making companies go green.

12. Everyone is responsible for successful green marketing concept

Table 3

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	75	4.67(5)
4	Agree	18	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	3	
1	Strongly Disagree	1	
	Total	100	

Table 13 clearly indicates that Respondents Strongly Agree i.e., everyone is responsible for successful green marketing concept.

13. Green marketing is just an old concept

Table 14

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	8	3.02(3)
4	Agree	20	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	50	
2	Disagree	10	
1	Strongly Disagree	12	
	Total	100	

Table 14 clearly indicates that Respondents indicated that they neither agree nor disagree that green marketing is just an old concept.

Consumers attitude towards green branding is high

14. I am familiar with green brand?

Table 15

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	71	4.63(5)
4	Agree	23	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	2	
1	Strongly Disagree	3	
	Total	100	

Table 15 clearly indicates that Respondents strongly agree that they are familiar with green brand.

15. I am interested to know more about green branding

Table 16

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	80	4.56(5)
4	Agree	9	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	3	
1	Strongly Disagree	5	
	Total	100	

Table 16 clearly indicates that Respondents strongly agree that they are interested to know more about green branding.

16. Green marketing is more effective than regular marketing?

Table 17

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	21	3.24(3)
4	Agree	20	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	34	
2	Disagree	12	
1	Strongly Disagree	13	
	Total	100	

Table 17 clearly indicates that Respondents neither agree nor disagree with the fact that green marketing is more effective than regular marketing.

17. Do you believe in the concept of complete green marketing conditions throughout the world?

Table 18

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	34	3.68(4)
4	Agree	31	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	
2	Disagree	15	
1	Strongly Disagree	8	
	Total	100	

Table 18 showing Respondents agree that they will believe in the concept of complete green marketing conditions throughout the world.

18. Transition from regular marketing to green branding is quite difficult in India

Table 19

Rating Scale		% of Respondents	Mean Score
5	Strongly Agree	36	3.71(4)
4	Agree	32	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	
2	Disagree	9	
1	Strongly Disagree	12	
	Total	100	

Table 19 showing Respondents agree to the fact that transition from regular marketing to green branding is difficult in India.

19. Do you realize the importance of green branding.

Table 20

	% of Respondents
Yes	69
No	31
Total	100

Table 20 clearly indicates that 69% of the Respondents realize the importance of green branding and 31% of the Respondents doesn't realize the importance of green branding.

Findings and Conclusion

The findings are tabulated after having used likert scale for measuring the awareness of consumers towards green marketing and attitudes of consumers towards green branding (Highest Rating is 5-Strongly Agree and 1-Strongly Disagree)

Table 21. The computed mean and percentage of respondents

Consumers awareness towards green marketing is high			
Sl No	Description(filled by Respondents – likert scale)	% of Respondents	Mean Score
1	I believe in the concept of green marketing		4.52(5) considered the next higher value)
2	I am aware of companies going green		4.79(5)
3	I know about the advantages of green products in an organization		4.09(4)
4	I feel that the regular marketing techniques harm the environment		4.52(5)
5	Employees in any organization feel that their work schedule gets affected by implementing green concept		4.19(4)
6	Green marketing concept is existed for long time back but it is not implemented by many companies in India	67 % said Yes ,33% said No	
7	Productivity can be improved drastically by using green marketing (paper less)		4.57(5)
8	Companies are reluctant in implementing green marketing concept		4.09(4)
9	It is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketing		4.58(5)
10	Huge investment is required to develop green products		4.07(4)
11	Government should take initiative in making companies to go green		4.6(5)
12	Everyone is responsible for successful green marketing concept		4.67(5)

13	Green marketing is just an old concept		3.02(3)
Consumers attitude towards green branding is high			
14	I am familiar with green brand		4.63(5)
15	I am interested to know more about green branding		4.56(5)
16	Green marketing is more effective than regular marketing		3.24(3)
17	Do you believe in the concept of complete green marketing conditions throughout the world		3.68(4)
18	Transition from regular marketing to green branding is quite difficult in India		3.71(4)
19	Do you realize the importance of green branding	69% said Yes 31% said No	

After having understood the concept of green marketing and green branding this paper triggers a thought for marketers about the impact of significant changes in green marketing for effective utilization of resources and the final product which company develops shall be less detrimental to the environment which can be concluded from the following paragraphs related to awareness of consumer towards green marketing and green branding.

Consumers awareness towards green marketing is high

Consumers have expressed **strong concerns** about the concept of green marketing and companies going green. Apart from this, consumers are well aware of the fact that the productivity of companies can be drastically improved. People are aware of green environment because it is less detrimental to the environment and companies can look into implementation of this concept for betterment of business. From the results of data analysis given in table 21 we can infer that the role of government plays a vital role in green marketing. Some **consumers neither agree nor disagree** for the fact that green marketing is just an old concept. As far as initiation of green marketing is concerned everyone are responsible for green marketing. If we analyze the facts pertaining to green marketing the significant results are positive at one end. On other end, consumers say that it is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketing. Environmental education refers to organized efforts to teach about how natural environments function and particularly how human beings can manage their behavior and ecosystems in order to live sustainably (Wikipedia, 2009).

Consumers attitude towards green branding is high

As far as green branding is concerned the consumers strongly expressed that they are familiar with green brand and shown interest to know more about green branding. In India, at present situation is concerned the transition from regular marketing to green brand is difficult. Most of the consumers realize the importance of green branding which means that there is a positive sign for betterment of the environment as well as for business.

This exploration into green marketing or eco-friendly marketing is a positive sign for transition from India to a greener and greater India. Further Research can be carried out in implementation of hypothesis and advanced statistical tools can be used to achieve accuracy of results which adds flavor to this paper.

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