

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

A STUDY ON CONSUMER'S AWARENESS ON GREEN MARKETING AND THEIR BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS IN CHENNAI CITY

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Dr. A.Kadhar Lal , Abdul Hareez N -- A Study On Consumer's Awareness On Green Marketing And Their Buying Behaviour Towards Green Products In Chennai City -- Players-Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 18 (4), ISSN 1567-214x

Key words: India, Digital inequality, online learning.

ABSTRACT

Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. It incorporates a broad range of activities including product modification, changes to the production process, sustainable packaging as well as modifying advertisement. Thus, green marketing refers to holistic marketing concept that production, consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implication of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants, etc. both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for green products and services. While the shift of 'green' may appear to be expensive in short run, it will prove to be indispensable and advantageous in the long run. This study is necessary to identify whether the consumers in Chennai City are aware of green marketing and green products. It examines the factors which influences the buying behaviour of the consumers towards green products. It focuses the reasons which make the consumers willing to pay for green products. To identify the difficulties faced by the consumers. This Paper Presents primary data of 50 respondents in Chennai. The statistical tools used in the study are frequency table, one sample One- Way ANOVA and Chi-Square Test. IBM SPSS 20 was used to perform statistical analysis.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

Green marketing is a modern concept which evolves in recent years.

Marketing is the holistic approach towards identifying and satisfying need and wants of consumer and potential consumer, but Green Marketing means manufacturing and marketing of products and services which are manufactured through green processes. It is not limited to adding green theme to brand name or making websites or product/packaging design with green colour. It is the overall efforts of a company to eliminate processes which are detrimental to the environment and use environmentally friendly processes and packaging for manufacturing and presenting the products. Protecting environment, creating a safe living environment has become one of the most important concerns of consumers. In return to these attitudes of the consumers, companies have started to form their marketing strategies which is named as “**Green Marketing**”. Nowadays the environment has become a mainstream issue in the current competitive world. The main purpose of the study is to find out the awareness level of the consumer’s towards green products in Chennai City.

Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. It incorporates a broad range of activities including product modification, changes to the production process, sustainable packaging as well as modifying advertisement. Thus, green marketing refers to holistic marketing concept that production, consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implication of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants, etc. both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for green products and services. While the shift of ‘green’ may appear to be expensive in short run, it will prove to be indispensable and advantageous in the long run.

The green movement has been expanding rapidly in the world. With regards to this the consumers are taking responsibility and doing the right thing. Consumers awareness and motivation continues to drive change in the marketplace, notably through the introduction of more green products. Compared to consumers in developed countries, the Indian consumers have much less awareness of global warming issues. The consumer needs to be educated and made aware of the environmental threats. The new green movement need to reach the masses that will take lot of time and efforts.

Successful marketing has always been about recognising trend and positioning products, services and brand in manner that supports buyer’s intention. Today we all face a lot of environmental problems and it is one of the main reasons why the green marketing emerged. Green marketing has now evolved as one of the major areas of interest for marketers as it may provide competitive advantage. It will be successful only if the marketer understands the consumers behaviour. Green is slowly and steadily becoming the symbolic colour of eco- consciousness in India. The growing consumer awareness about the origin of products and the concern over implementing global environmental crisis, there are increasing opportunities to marketers to convince consumers.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The study is done to identify whether the consumers in Chennai city are aware of green marketing and green products. To examine the factors which influences the buying behaviour of the consumers towards green products. To find the reasons

which makes the consumers willing to pay for green products. To identify the difficulties faced by the consumers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the awareness level and opinion of consumers towards green marketing.
2. To analyse the buying behaviour of consumers towards green products.
3. To find the willingness of the consumers to pay for green products.
4. To identify the challenges faced by the consumers towards green lifestyle

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study mainly focuses on green marketing and green products and the level of awareness among the consumers. The aim is to educate the consumers about green marketing and make them aware of the green products. It also helps understand the decisions made by the consumers while purchasing green products and their willingness to pay. It helps to find the problems faced by the consumers towards green marketing and products and tries to solve it.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The current study mainly depends on primary data collected from 50 respondents in Chennai city. A well-structured questionnaire was designed to collect the information from the respondents the questionnaire was designed to study consumer's awareness on green marketing and their buying behaviour towards green products. Likert five-point scale was used to obtain responses and the questionnaire comprises of open ended, close ended and multiple-choice questions.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Random sampling interview method was adopted for collection of primary data. The responses have been collected by means of face to face interview by the researcher. Secondary data was collected from all relevant published information through books, journals, and websites.

STATISTICAL TOOL

The statistical tools used in the study are frequency table, one sample One- Way ANOVA and Chi-Square Test. IBM SPSS 20 was used to perform statistical analysis.

LIMITATIONS

1. The research is limited to the consumers in Chennai city.
2. The study is restricted to only 50 respondents.

3. The research study was conducted for a period of six months only.
4. Respondents were sometimes reluctant to fill the questionnaire.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Green marketing refers to the process of selling products or services based on their environmental benefits. Such a product or service may be environmentally friendly in it and produced or packaged in an environmentally friendly way. The obvious assumption of green marketing is that potential consumers will view a product or service's "greenness" as a benefit and base their buying decision accordingly. The not-so obvious assumption of green marketing is that consumers will be willing to pay more for green products than they would for a less-green comparable alternative product.

Definition

“Marketing products and services based on environmental factors or awareness. Companies involved in green marketing make decisions relating to the entire process of the company's products, such as methods of processing, packaging, and distribution”.

History of green marketing

The term Green Marketing came into prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The American Marketing Association (AMA) held the first workshop on "Ecological Marketing" in 1975. The proceedings of this workshop resulted in one of the first books on green marketing entitled "Ecological Marketing". The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Reports started with the ice cream seller Ben & Jerry's where the financial report was supplemented by a greater view on the company's environmental impact. In 1987 a document prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as meeting “the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need”, this became known as the Brundtland Report and was another step towards widespread thinking on sustainability in everyday activity. Two tangible milestones for wave 1 of green marketing came in the form of published books, both of which were called Green Marketing. They were by Ken Peattie (1992) in the United Kingdom and by Jacquelyn Ottman (1993) in the United States of America.

Evolution of green marketing

The green marketing has evolved over the period. The evolution of green marketing had 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. This was the result of the term sustainable development which is defined as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Green marketing concept

Environmental sustainability is not simply a matter of compliance or risk management. Businesses are increasingly recognizing the many competitive advantages and opportunities to be gained from eco-sustainability. Worldwide evidence indicates that people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behaviour accordingly. As a result, there is a growing market for sustainable and socially responsible products and services. The types of businesses that are emerging, what they manufacture, and their approach to marketing are changing.

Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally preferable to others. Thus, green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, sustainable packaging, as well as modifying advertising. Other similar terms used are environmental marketing and ecological marketing.

Green, environmental, and eco-marketing are part of the new marketing approaches which do not just refocus, adjust, or enhance existing marketing thinking and practice, but seek to challenge those approaches and provide a substantially different perspective. In more detail green, environmental and eco-marketing belong to the group of approaches which seek to address the lack of fit between marketing as it is currently practiced and the ecological and social realities of the wider marketing environment. It also involves developing and promoting products and services that satisfy customers' wants and needs for quality, performance, affordable pricing, and convenience – all without a detrimental impact on the environment. People generally want to do the right thing, so the challenge and opportunity for the green marketer is to make it easy for people to do so. The marketing industry can 'walk and talk' and become the new corporate champions of the environment. Successful green marketers will reap the rewards of healthy profits and improved shareholder value, as well as help to make the world a better place in the future. Environmentalists evaluate products to determine their impact on environment and marketers' commitment to the environment. Environmentally safe products are approved, and companies receiving the green signal and use it in advertising and on packaging. The aim of green marketing is to sustain the environment in the following ways:

1. Eliminate the Concept of Waste

Waste and pollution arise usually from inefficiency. Therefore, make things without waste instead of handling the waste.

2. Reinvest the Concept of a Product

Products should be either consumables or durables. Consumables can be either eaten or placed in the ground so that they turn into soil without any harm to the environment. Durables could be made, used and returned to the manufacturer within a closed loop system.

3. Make Environmentalism Profitable

Consumers are beginning to recognize that competition in the marketplace

should not be between companies harming the environment and those trying to save it.

4. Make Prices Reflect the Cost

Every product should reflect or at least approximate its actual cost – not only the direct cost of production but also the cost of air, water, and soil.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis and interpretation is the process of assigning meaning to the collected information and determining the conclusions, significance, and implication of the findings. Analysis involves

estimating the values of unknown parameters of the population and testing of hypothesis for drawing inferences. The research was undertaken to analyse the consumer awareness on green marketing and their buying behaviour towards green products. The data was collected using questionnaire and analysed. SPSS tools like Chi-square and ANNOVA was used.

Age of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-25	19	38.0
26-30	10	20.0
31-35	9	18.0
Above 35	12	24.0
Total	50	100.0

Interpretation:

From the above table and chart it is clear that 38% of the respondents are at the age group of 18-25, 24% of the respondents are above the age of 35, 20% between the group of 26-30 and 18% are between age group of 31-35. The major number of the respondents are between the age of 18-25.

Gender of the respondent

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	23	46.0
Female	27	54.0
Total	50	100.0

Interpretation:

From the above table and chart, it is clear that, 54% of the respondents are female and 46% are male. Female respondents are more compared to male.

Awareness of green marketing

Awareness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	25	50.0
No	10	20.0

Somewhat	15	30.0
Total	50	100.0

Interpretation:

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents are aware of green marketing, 30% are somewhat aware and 20% are not aware of green marketing.

Age And Buying Behaviour

H0: There is no significance difference between age and buying behaviour of the consumers towards green products

H1: There is significance difference between age and buying behaviour of the consumers towards green products

CHI-SQUARE TEST

Statement	Value	Df	Asym. sig. (2-slided)
Age of the respondent and preference of green products over non green products.	16.381	12	.174
Age of the respondent and price of the product is the first thing to look before taking decision to purchase	5.135	12	.953
Age of the respondent and purchase of green products if easily available	4.959	9	.838
Age of the respondents and paying extra for green products just because safe for health	12.550	12	.403
Age of the respondent and using green product as status symbol	13.013	12	.368
Age of the respondent and preferring green products when price discounts are offered	10.308	12	.589

Interpretation:

- The above table shows the relation between age and buying decision of consumers towards green products. There is no significant difference between age and preference of green product over non-green as respondents of different age buy it. The calculated value is more than the table value (i.e. $16.381 > 0.174$)
- Price is the first thing looked before buying green products by respondents of different age. The calculated value is more than significant value (i.e. $5.135 > 0.953$) and the null hypothesis is accepted.
- The calculated value is more than table value (i.e. $4.959 > 0.838$) and consumers buy products if they are easily available.
- Paying extra for green products is not affected by age as people would pay and like

to buy if they are safe for health and the calculated value is more than table value (i.e. $12.550 > 0.403$)

- There is no difference between age and buying behaviour in using green products as status symbol as calculated value is more than table value (i.e. $13.013 > 0.368$)
- Consumers buy green products when price discounts are offered, and it does not affect the age. The null hypothesis is accepted as calculated value is more than table value (i.e. $10.308 > 0.589$)

From the above analysis it is understood that there is no significant difference between age of the respondents and buying behaviour towards green products. So, **the Null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted and Alternative hypothesis (H₁) is rejected.**

FINDINGS

From the research on the topic Consumers awareness on green marketing and their buying behaviour towards green products in Chennai city, I found out that

- Most of the consumers in Chennai city are aware of green marketing (50%)
- 50% of consumers have average level of awareness and only 2% have very high level of awareness.
- Majority of people (54%) around the respondents are somewhat aware of green marketing.
- 42% have knowledge about the benefits of using green products.
- Most of the respondents considered newspaper as best source of information (54%), 44% said television, 42% said magazines, 30% class lectures and 32% relatives and friends.
- Buying behaviour of the respondents towards green products vary in different situations. Some buy when price discounts are offered, some as status symbol, but most of the people buy as they are safe and good for health. Age of the respondents does not affect their buying decision as per the analysis.
- Most of the people use green food products (90%), 64% bags, 58% water bottles, 42% use cosmetics, and personal products.
- 72% of the respondents do not use electrical appliances.
- Majority of the respondents (50%) said that product feature influences them to buy green products, 40% agreed with packaging, 42% for environmental issues, 46% advertisement and 42% said that friends and relatives also influences them.
- Consumers are willing to pay for green products as they are good for health and environment, gives high level of satisfaction, enhances a quality life. Some are also interested to pay as it is new trend and fashionable and income level does not affect it as per the analysis.
- 32% of the respondents agreed that there is lack of information about green marketing and green products, 42% said green products are expensive, 32% agreed that it is hard to find in stores, 36% said it is not promoted properly. 30% said that green products taste bad but at the same time 38% of the respondents disagreed.

SUGGESTIONS

- Lack of information is the main problem in this study. People must be given more

information about what green marketing and green products is as most of them are not aware about it in Chennai city.

- Steps must be taken by the government and marketers in promoting the green products.
- The marketer must use the right source of information so that it reaches large number of people.
- Students must be educated in schools and colleges about the importance of green marketing and benefits of using green products, so that they also convey it to their family and make them aware as well.
- The barriers must be taken into consideration and try to solve it so that the consumers can enjoy their green lifestyle.

CONCLUSION

As part of the research it was helpful to know more about green marketing and green products. The study also helped to understand that green marketing and using of green products saves us and environment from various problems. The research also helped to analyse the buying behaviour of the consumers and challenges faced by them to move towards green movement. There are also different green products like solar panels, solar water heater, etc., which are recyclable and reusable. This research will help in future study and motivate people to buy green products to lead a quality and satisfied life. If the suggestions are followed green marketing and products will be ruling the industry in upcoming days.

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