



A STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS IN COIMBATORE CITY India

KEYWORDS

Green Marketing, Green Products, Green Consumer, Consumer Behaviour.

Mrs.B.Devipriya

Assistant professor, Department of Commerce, Sri Ramalinga Sowdambigai college of science and commerce, Coimbatore-109 .

Dr.M.Nandhini

Assistant professor, Department of BcomBPS, SNR&sons College (Autonomous), Coimbatore

ABSTRACT

"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 (Mudhassir, 2010). .Green consumers can be defined as one:-"Who is mindful of environment related issues and obligations, and is supportive of environmental causes to the extent of switching allegiance from one product or supplier to another even if it entails higher cost". Thus the purpose of the research was to explore the concept of green marketing, or green products in relation to consumer behaviour. Samples were selected through random sampling.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the increased importance of green marketing to market success, firms continue to launch various forms of green packaging programs through the introduction of recyclable and reusable packages. Green marketing is considered as one of the major trends in modern businesses. Today, environmental or green marketing, a strategic marketing approach, is a recent focus in business endeavours .Consumers are therefore, becoming more sensitive in their environmental attitudes, preferences, and purchases. The desire of consumers to purchase eco-friendly products and services is rising. Many are more aware of environmental issues and consequently choose products that do not damage the environment over less environmentally friendly products, even if they cost more. Firms today are faced with consumers who are environmentally conscious when making a purchase. Environmentally preferable products are sometimes more expensive to purchase than other alternative products. Green consumers have been shown to be willing to pay a higher price for environmentally friendly products, which is a huge opportunity for companies as well as governments looking to make eco-friendly policy changes. Thus, the increasing number of consumers who prefer and are willing to buy ecofriendly products are creating opportunity for businesses that are using "eco-friendly" or "environmentally friendly" as a component of their value proposition. Businesses that offer products which are manufactured and designed with an environmental marketing mix have a long term competitive advantage. A better understanding of consumers' buying behavior will allow businesses to acquire more market-applicable approach to sustain in the competitive market. Behavior has a strong influence in terms of consumer purchases. They are the main triggers in the consumer purchasing process and also influence the perception of a product. This complicated process enables businesses to attract new consumers and adapt their products or services according to their needs and wants or change consumers' behavior towards their products or services. Consumers tend to reduce their impact on the environment by their purchasing decisions. There are various factors that affect the buying-decision process of consumers. A number of Researchers have identified many factors as influencing this process including; environmental knowledge, perceived product price and quality, company's

environmental reputation, environmental concerns and credibility of environmental advertising .It has become very essential to know the factors that create the desire of consumers to purchase a product. Hence, the present study contributes to the field by investigating and exploring the extent of the impact of consumers' buying behaviour towards green products.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ottman (2006) study aimed to evaluate green marketing myopia. The study discussed major challenges faced by the green marketing. It also covers the internal and external opportunities which could be helpful to speed up the expansion of green marketing.

Soonthonsmai (2007) defined green marketing as the activities taken by firms that are concern about the environment or green problems by delivering the environmentally sound goods or services to create consumers and society's satisfaction.

Dutta, B. (2009) in his article on Green Marketing titled "Sustainable Green Marketing: The New Imperative" had mentioned that Green Marketing involves developing good quality products which can meet consumer needs and wants by focusing on the quality, performance, pricing and convenience in an environment-friendly way.

Unruh.G and Ettenson R (2010) in their research article discussed three smart paths to developing sustainable green products. The authors have introduced and described three broad strategies that companies can use to align their green goals with their capabilities: Accentuate: Strategy involves playing up existing or latent green attributes in your current portfolio. Acquire: Strategy involves buying someone else's green brand. Architect: Strategy involves architecting green offerings –building them from scratch.

Mishra and Sharma's (2010) research paper discussed how businesses have increased their rate of targeting green consumers, those who are concerned about the environment and allow it to affect their purchasing decisions. The study identified the three particular segments of green consumers and explores the challenges and opportunities businesses have

with green marketing. The study suggests that marketers also have the responsibility to make the consumers understand the need for and benefits of green products as compared to non-green ones. In green marketing, consumers are willing to pay more to maintain a cleaner and greener environment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Research design is both descriptive and analytical.

Sampling

Purposive random sampling method was followed. A sample of 100 consumers of green products in Coimbatore was selected among green consumers.

Source of data

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires, with the intention of representing the population properly, the sample is distributed among consumers. Secondary data is collected through internet, magazines, relevant books, journals, and newspaper.

Research study area

Coimbatore city was selected as it is a commercially vibrant and industrially progressed city with a well developed agricultural sector also it is the educational hub of Tamilnadu with advanced health care centres. The transport and communication system is a well developed one here. The public are having good purchasing power and have reasonable educational qualification. They are aware of green products and their benefits. Hence this city was selected as the research study area.

Research tools

Descriptive statistics (Mean, Percentile), likert scale technique ANALYSIS. The collected data was analyzed and interpretations were made

Percentage Analysis

Table 1

Socio economic Profile of Sample customers

S.No	Criteria	Number	Percentage
GENDER			
1	Male	49	49
2	Female	51	51
AGE			
3	Below 20	04	04
4	20-30	25	25
5	30-40	49	49
6	Above 50	22	22
OCCUPATION			
7	Business	21	21
8	Government	11	11
9	Private	29	29
10	Housewife	25	25
11	Others	14	14
MONTHLY INCOME			
12	5,000-12,000	07	07
13	10,000-20,000	46	46
14	20,000-30,000	20	20
15	30,000-50,000	16	16
16	Above 50,000	11	11

Table 1 shows that socio-economic profile of sample customers. Majority are Female (51%), hail from 30-40 (49%) age group. Mostly work in private sector (29%) is in the sample. Most of the consumers belong to 10,000-20,000(46%) income group.

Table 2

Source of Awareness

S.No	Criteria	Number	Percentage
1	Friends/Relatives	39	39
2	Internet	21	21
3	Newspaper	20	20
4	TV	11	11
5	Others	09	09

Table 2 shows the source of awareness of sample customers. The major media promoting awareness is through friends and relatives.

Table 3

Type of Purchase of Green products

S.No	Criteria	Number	Percentage
1	Organic foods	42	42
2	Organic furniture	34	34
3	Electrical goods	18	18
4	Herbal cosmetics	03	03
5	Toiletries	03	03

Table 3 shows the purchase of type of green products. Majority of the respondents purchase Organic foods (42%) only.

Table 4

Problems in purchasing green products

S.No	Problems	Number	Percentage
1	High price	49	49
2	Lack of awareness	21	21
3	Poor promotions	17	17
4	Fake certification	13	13

Table 4 shows the problems faced by customers in purchasing green products. Majority of the Respondents say green products price are relatively high.

Likert Scale Technique

Table 5

Green products are Beneficial

S.NO	NO	OPINION LIKERT[X] SCORE[Y]	[X]*[Y]	RANK
1	40	Strongly agree	5 200	II
2	53	Agree	4 212	I
3	6	Neutral	3 18	III
4	1	Disagree	2 0	IV
5	0	Strongly Disagree	1 0	V

Table 5 shows Green products are beneficial. Majority of the respondents (no53-score 212) agree and got rank 1. Around consumers (no 40-score 200) strongly agree and placed in rank II. It shows that 93% are positive, either agree or strongly agree about benefits of eco-friendly products.

CONCLUSION

The study found that Consumers buying behaviour towards green products are relatively high. Public are beginning to realize their responsibilities towards their environment. Although adoption of green marketing may not be easy in the short run, but in long run it will definitely have a positive impact. Consumers are ready to pay more prices for the products which are causing less environmental pollution. They also prefer promotional campaign which protects the environment, and distribution channels which are not causing environmental pollution. Marketers need to understand the implications of green marketing, they include consumer attitude measurement programs in their marketing plan and adopt all aspects of green marketing, and then only they can achieve their goal and fulfil the social responsibility of a business concern.

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