

Consumer Perception And Preferences Regarding Green Marketing (Green Products) Among Women Employees Of Banking Sector

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ABSTRACT

Customer's attitudes are changing towards the environment to encourage innovation for conservation and the benefits from this source of innovation are certain to outlive our current generation. Consumers and manufactures have directed their attention towards environment friendly products that are presumed to be "green" or environment friendly like low power consuming (energy-efficient) electrical appliances, organic foods, lead free paints, recyclable paper and phosphate free detergents. Although a variety of research on green marketing has been conducted across the globe, as such only little academic research on consumer perception and preferences has been carried out in India. The researcher in their study provides a brief review of environmental issues and identifies the green values of the consumers, their level of awareness about environmental issues, green products and practices or using various green services. This paper highlights the consumer's perception and preferences towards green marketing practices and products with the help of a structured questionnaire. The study was conducted to know the significant influence of environmental knowledge and consciousness on consumer environmental attitude. Everywhere now has a real sense that environmental protection is highly necessary.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Consumer Purchase Patterns, Consumer Beliefs, Environmental Behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

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. Marketing products and services based on environmental factors or awareness. Green marketing which is also termed as environmentally or sustainable marketing is the effort made by any business organization large or small to design and promote products that are eco friendly. Green or environment marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilities any exchange intended to satisfy human needs and wants occurs with minimal determinants impact on the natural environment. Green marketing should look at minimizing environmental harm not necessarily eliminating it. Promotional activities aimed at taking advantage of the changing consumer attitude towards a brand. These changes are increasingly being influenced by a firm's policies and practices that affect the quality of the environment and reflect the level of its concern for the community.

Green Marketing & Its Need

It is reported that, approximately two million people worldwide die from air pollution each year. According to data collected by the WHO from nearly 1,100 cities across 91 countries, elevated level of fine particle pollution, which could cause heart diseases, lung cancer, asthma and acute lower reparatory infections, are common across many urban areas, with some cities registering pollution levels 15 times as much as the WHO guidelines.

India is one of the most vibrant and largest economics in the world and will continue to be so for the next two decades. The Indian economy has been growing between 7 to 8% a year since long and is likely to grow for the next two decades. India is likely to have a GDP of USD 4 trillion and a population of 1.5 billion by 2030. The trend of economic growth is a good sign for the developing country like India.

However, India would face major challenges includes rising consumption and demand for energy, increasing greenhouse gas emissions; and constraints on critical natural resources such as land, water and oil along with the growth and development.

Enormous economic and population growth worldwide in the second half of the twentieth century have threatened the health of the planet – ozone depletion, climate change, depletion of forest cover, fouling of natural resources, and extensive loss of biodiversity and natural habitats.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Oyewole, P. (2001), Social Costs of Environmental Justice Associated with the Practice of Green Marketing. This paper presents a conceptual link among green marketing, environmental justice, and industrial ecology. It argues for greater awareness of environmental justice in the practice for green marketing. In contrast with the type of costs commonly discussed in the literature, the paper identified another type of costs, termed 'costs with positive results,' that may be associated with the presence of environmental justice in green marketing. A research agenda is finally suggested to determine consumers' awareness of environmental justice, and their willingness to bear the costs associated with it.

Sen (2014) studied about the green marketing impact on consumer buying behavior. The main objective of the paper was to evaluate impact of green marketing on consumer purchasing and challenges under it. Data was collected through primary and secondary source. This research was performed in Kolkata. Explanatory research design was adopted in the study. For selecting sample convenience sampling design was adopted. Total 100 respondents were selected as sample under the study. Mean, S deviation, percentile and t- test were used to analyze the data. They found that consumer were ready to adopt green products even at high price to save the environment. Better design, better management and better adoption were the excellent concept of green marketing.

BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS – GREEN PRODUCTS

McKinsey Quarterly, Mar 2008 report based on the survey conducted in Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, United Kingdom and the United States has revealed that, consumers say that they are concerned about the environment and worried about the air pollution, depletion of natural resources, hole in the ozone layers, shrinking of animal habitat etc.

Further to this, the report in their study has indicated that, 87% of these consumers are concerned about the environmental and social impacts of the products they buy. However, when it comes to actual purchase, the purchase behaviour differs from what they say.

It may be because of consumer's laziness, not sincere towards environment. But, it may not be the only reason for not buying the green product. It may be consumers are not properly educated about the benefit of green products or it may be firms are not been able to make the green products which can satisfy consumers by fulfilling their needs.

Many customers buy Green Product for non-green reason without even knowing that they are green or not necessarily for environmental reasons while buying the product. For example, recycle or biodegradable paper products like napkins, towels, computer paper etc.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the present study are

1. Consumer's beliefs and attitudes on green products.
2. To study the impact of green marketing on consumer buying behaviour.
3. Consumer perception towards environmental friendly products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the research objectives, both secondary and primary data have been collected and analyzed. The first stage of the research process was an extensive search of articles, reports and professional information concerning eco-consumer studies and eco-marketing strategies in general using the internet and academic databases.

The analysis of secondary information provided the general context for initiating the collection, analysis and the interpretation of primary data. The study was carried among women employees of banking sector in Kanniyakumari district. A convenient sampling design was followed and intercept method was used for data

collection. The primary data was collected through questionnaire among 125 women employees working in banks and they were approached with a structured questionnaire. The collected data were tabulated and analysed through percentage analysis, Garrett ranking, and Likert’s 5 point scaling technique.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

1. Socio-economic background of the Respondents

The following table shows the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table-1: Demographic profile of the Respondents

Particulars		No of Respondents	Percentage
Marital status	Married	74	59
	Unmarried	51	41
Total		125	100
Age	Up to 25 yrs	48	38
	Above 25 yrs	77	62
Total		125	100
Educational qualification	Under Graduate	70	56
	Post Graduate	35	28
	Others	20	16
Total		125	100

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it is clear that 59 percent of the respondents are married. 62 percent of the respondents belong to the age group of above 25 years and 56 percent of the respondents are under graduate.

2. Impact on using Green products and services

A person who is socially conscious or eco friendly in nature can bring major changes in the life of the society. She can be a role model to others in following the new way of doing and being. The following table clearly depicts the impact of green marketing on consumer buying behaviour.

Table-2: Impact on using green products and services

S. No.	Impact	Total score	Mean score	Rank
1	Unplug when not in use	477	3.98	VI
2	Use less water, every drop counts	500	4.17	III
3	Switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs	477	3.98	VI
4	Choose products with less packaging	472	3.93	VIII
5	Buying organic and local food	510	4.25	II
6	Walk and use bicycle	451	3.76	X
7	Avoid polythene covers and bags	499	4.16	IV
8	Buying recyclable and reusable products	539	4.49	I
9	Switch on to non-conventional energy like solar power	479	3.99	V
10	Avoid purchasing junk food	470	3.92	IX

Source: primary Data

Table 2 indicates that out of ten statements the sample respondents have given first rank to ‘Buying recyclable and reusable products’ with the mean score of 4.49, second rank to ‘Buying organic and local food’ with the mean score of 4.25, and third rank to ‘use less water’, every drop counts’ with the mean score of 4.17. It is observed that now-a-days the respondents have environmental concern and health conscious, so they choose organic and local food and recycled products for their consumption. The last three ranks are given to ‘Choose products with less packaging’, ‘Avoid purchasing junk food’ and ‘Walk and use bicycle’, with the mean score of 3.93, 3.92 and 3.76 respectively. It is inferred that the respondents are lacking awareness and knowledge with regarding to this and they do not aware that how these elements bring injury to the health and well being.

3. Outcome of Perception regarding green products and services

The perception and preference of something good enable the person to implement those aspects into their personal and household environs. The following table clearly depicts the outcome of perception of green products and services in the study area.

Table-3: Outcome of perception regarding green products and services

S.NO.	Outcomes	1	2	3	4	Total
1	Reducing Pollution	35	32	36	32	125
2	Ozone Friendly	36	28	30	28	125
3	Bio-degradable	25	40	32	40	125
4	Reduce the Toxins	29	25	27	44	125
	Total	125	125	125	125	

Source: Primary Data

Mean score Analysis

Garret Ranking Technique will be used to analyse the variable on the basis of mean score. The highest mean score variable occupy the first rank.

Outcomes	Garret Mean Score	Rank
Reducing Pollution	27	IV
Ozone Friendly	44	III
Bio-degradable	73	I
Reduce the Toxins	56	II

Source: Computed Data

From the above table it reveals that, ‘Bio-degradable’ gets the first rank with the mean score of 73, ‘Reduce the toxins’ gets the second rank with the mean score of 56 and ‘Ozone Friendly’ gets the third rank with the mean score of 44 and ‘Reducing Pollution’ gets the last rank with the mean score of 27. It shows that majority of respondents do believe that the green products help them to protect the environment and they also perceive that green products are of better quality than non green products.

CONCLUSION

Developing environmentally friendly goods and service is critical to the success of the firms that are attempting to create innovative products to meet the needs of the ever increasing environmentally conscious consumer. The development of green products, whether in the context of human resource operation or marketing requires new ideas while dealing with added constraints of environmental and consumer pressure. From basic domestic products like LCD and refrigerator to clothes consumer are using eco friendly products that suit their economy and that are less harmful to the Mother Nature, the people will maintain this spirit when the marketers will provide these products at affordable rates and will create more awareness through various means of communication. The researcher found out that there is growth in environmental literacy among customers and they are considerably well aware of green products but not loyal entirely towards it due to a host of factors like expensive, not much difference when compared to traditional products in terms of performance and quality etc. To attract customers towards more green products, the marketer must create promotions which are both realistic and have moral values and the product availability in terms of volume and variety.

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