

Consumers Awareness towards Green Marketing - A Study of Srinagar City

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(Received on 15 June 2013 and accepted on 26 August 2013)

Abstract – Because of the concern shown by the society towards natural environment, businesses have begun to modify their behavior in an attempt to address society’s “new” concerns. Some businesses have been quick to accept concepts like environmental management systems and waste minimization, and have integrated environmental issues into all organizational activities. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Many firms are beginning to realize that they are members of the wider community and therefore must behave in an environmentally responsible fashion. This translates a belief into firms that they must achieve environmental objectives as well as profit related objectives. Governmental regulations relating to environmental marketing are designed to protect consumers in several ways ensure that all types of consumers have the ability to evaluate the environmental composition of goods. Governments establish regulations designed to control the amount of hazardous wastes produced by firms. While firms must bear much of the responsibility for environmental degradation, ultimately it is consumers who demand goods, and thus create environmental problems. Green marketing requires that consumers want a cleaner environment and are willing to “pay” for it, possibly through higher priced goods, modified individual lifestyles, or even governmental intervention. It needs coordination between consumer and organization which can lead the green marketing revolution.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Green Products, Eco friendly Products

I. INTRODUCTION

As the world’s economy is rapidly developing, the global environment is increasingly deteriorating. Protecting environment, creating a safe living environment has become one of the most important concerns of consumers. Green marketing generally aims to promote environmentally friendly products and a safe environment where people could stay. According to the American Marketing Association green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. At present green marketing is widely becoming a phenomenon throughout the world as concerns towards environment have begun in the past few decades. Every year the populations of people who are turning towards green brands or environmental friendly products are increasing thus magnifying the phenomenon. The need for sustainable business practices by corporations around the world is identified to be a result of overall increase in the consumer awareness of lack of environmental protection and social inequities. Thus, businesses in almost every industry nowadays are flaunting the “green” features of their products and services in every chance they get. The success of any green marketing strategy is heavily dependable on its target consumers. Green marketing dates back to 1980 when the concept of green marketing emerged as a result of the shift in the consumer’s attention towards green products during those times green marketing research concentrated on the shift in consumer’s consumption of green products. There was a great deal of empirical research carried out to identify interest among consumers in using and purchasing green products (Mintel 1991). Due to increase in the level of awareness among the consumers a positive change towards environmental products has been seen in the

behavior of consumers. Such changes contribute towards green revolution that aims to reduce the further harm on the environment by the products. The growth of green revolution and green consumers is perceived as the biggest opportunity for business enterprises and invention to the industrial world (Cairncross 1992: 177). A green consumer can be identified to be one who avoids any product which may harm damage to any living organism, cause deterioration of the environment during process of manufacturing or during process of usage, consume a large amount of nonrenewable energy, involves unethical testing on animals or human subjects (Elkington, 1994). 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 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). Growing need is felt to shift over to the green products and services both by the companies and consumers. Even though the shift towards green marketing will be expensive to both the company and consumers it will benefit both in the long run. There are a number of literatures that focus on various aspects related to green marketing and also write into the various inter relationships between the customers attitudes and environmental strategies in relation to the organizations use of marketing. Environmental issues are addressed in green marketing efforts.

The core idea of green marketing is to create awareness among people on the environmental issues and how consumers would be helping the environment if they switch over to green products. Thus green marketing aims to provide more information to people and also gives those more choices to switch over to green lifestyle. Driven by the green consumption enterprises begin to take customer as the guide of the green marketing strategy. In the marketing process, they pay attention to the balance and coordination between enterprise and the consumer social and environmental, as well

as the sustainable development of the enterprises. 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). Thus corporations are becoming more aware of their responsibilities towards the environment. This has forced the law makers, environment groups, consumers, financial institution insurers and the organization's own employees to become more aware of environmental aspects and this in turn has led to an increase in the number of policies and schemes and regulations at both the national and international levels.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Green marketing has been defined 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' by Polonsky (2011). Over the years there has been a subtle shift from practicing environmental marketing practices as a result of compulsion identified as a result of legislations and pressure from environmental groups to genuine efforts to improve sustainable marketing plans and behaving in an eco-responsible manner (Polonsky and Rosenberger, 2001). Gladwin (1992, pg.1) emphasized "If goals of sustainability are to be achieved, firms must be reformed, redesigned and restructured to minimize the negative ecological impacts". Miles and Covin had the same opinion with Gore and continued the discussion emphasizing requirements which are agreeing to simultaneously improve environmental and financial performance so as to persuade different companies to hunt for innovative techniques to make use of green marketing and management as the primary tool to improve their company's reputation, increase competitive advantage and eventually boost financial performance (Miles and Covin, 2000, pg.299). The growth of green marketing and green consumer is "perhaps the biggest opportunity for enterprise and invention the industrial world has ever seen" (Cairncross 1992: 177). A green consumer can be identified to be one who avoids any product which may harm damage to

any living organism, cause deterioration of the environment during process of manufacturing or during process of usage, consume a large amount of nonrenewable energy, involves unethical testing on animals or human subjects (Elkington, 1994). There have been a number of different factors which are instrumental in promoting green consumers to purchase green products. Extensive research over the years identify that heightened awareness of green issues; increased level of information availability on environmental sustenance green advertising by corporations; increased concern for the environment; increase in popularity of green products by social and environmental charities as some factors. This overwhelming increase in the overall environmental consciousness among different consumer profile there have been efforts undertaken by firms to “go green” by presenting the concept of corporate environmentalism (Banerjee, 2003; Hay and Lichter 2000). Today green development are identified as opportunities by business firms as opportunities to improve their marketing niche rather than just actions which need to be carried out. Although public opinion say that consumers would like to purchase a product which is environment friendly over the product that is less friendly to the environment when all other things are equal, those “other things” are rarely equal in the minds of consumers. It is thus that companies should keep inn their mind that consumers are unlikely to compromise on the traditional attributes of the product such as price availability price quality and performance. It is however true that there is no single green marketing strategy that is right for every company. Managers who understand these things and formulate strategies according to the underlying reasoning behind it will be better prepared to help their companies benefit from an environmentally friendly approach to marketing.

III. RESEARCH METHEDODOGY

A descriptive research was undertaken to meet the objectives of this study with the collection of both secondary and primary data. The primary data was collected from respondents in Srinagar city through a questionnaire designed for a sample of 100 respondents, samples from Srinagar city representing, both genders, different age groups, education level, and monthly income. A structured questionnaire with a five point balanced likert scale for measuring consumer

attitude towards green marketing has been used. The data collected from the respondents are tabulated and analyzed into logical statements using percentage and mean score analysis. Secondary data was collected from the available literature, journals and web search.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE I BELIEVE IN THE CONCEPT OF GREEN MARKETING

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	73	4.59
4	Agree	20	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	
2	Disagree	3	
1	Strongly Disagree	2	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation table I clearly depicts that Respondents said *strongly agree* that they believe in the concept of green marketing as the computed mean score is 4.59. From this table we can infer consumers do have a strong belief about green marketing.

TABLE II AWARE OF COMPANIES GOING GREEN

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	67	4.51
4	Agree	25	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	
2	Disagree	4	
1	Strongly Disagree	2	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation table II depicts that Respondents Strongly Agree about the awareness of companies goinggreen as the mean score is 4.51. This implies that consumers keep eye on the companies going green.

TABLE III AWARE ABOUT THE ADVANTAGES OF USING GREEN PRODUCTS

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	50	4.27
4	Agree	35	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	
2	Disagree	2	
1	Strongly Disagree	3	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretations Table III depicts that Respondents strongly agree that there is an advantages of green products as the mean score is 4.27. We can infer that consumers associate their beliefs with the advantages of green products.

TABLE IV REGULAR MARKETING TECHNIQUES HARM THE ENVIRONMENT

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	62	4.4
4	Agree	27	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	5	
1	Strongly Disagree	3	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table IV depicts that Respondents strongly agree that the regular marketing techniques mayharm the environment as the mean score is 4.4. So we can infer that respondents believe that regular marketing techniques are not environmental friendly.

TABLE V GREEN MARKETING CONCEPTS IS EXISTED FOR LONG TIME BACK BUT IT IS NOT IMPLEMENTED BY MANY COMPANIES

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	55	4.27
4	Agree	32	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	
2	Disagree	9	
1	Strongly Disagree	3	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretations Table V depicts that Respondents strongly agree that green marketing existed a long time back but it is not implemented by many companies as the mean score is 4.27. So we can infer that respondents have been aware of green marketing concept before companies implemented it.

TABLE VI PRODUCTIVITY CAN BE IMPROVED DRASTICALLY BY USING GREEN MARKETING

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	76	4.7
4	Agree	20	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	
2	Disagree	3	
1	Strongly Disagree	1	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table VI depicts that Respondents strongly agree that the productivity can be improved drastically by using green marketing as the mean score is 4.7. Respondents are of the view that green marketing can improvise on productivity.

TABLE VII COMPANIES ARE RELUCTANT IN IMPLEMENTING GREEN MARKETING CONCEPT

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	45	4.04
4	Agree	32	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	
2	Disagree	8	
1	Strongly Disagree	5	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretations Table VII depicts that Respondents agree that companies are reluctant in implementing green marketing as the mean score is 4.04. so we can infer that companies follow a reluctant approach in implementing green marketing.

TABLE VIII DIFFICULT FOR ALL THE COMPANIES TO IMPLEMENT GREEN MARKETING

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	66	4.59
4	Agree	30	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	
2	Disagree	1	
1	Strongly Disagree	1	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table VIII showing Respondents Strongly Agree that it is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketingas the mean score is 4.59. So we can say respondents are of the view that there is difficulty in implementing green marketing.

TABLE IX HUGE INVESTMENTS IS REQUIRED TO DEVELOP GREEN PRODUCTS

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	52	4.27
4	Agree	37	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	2	
1	Strongly Disagree	6	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table IX clearly indicates that Respondents strongly agree that huge investment is required to develop green products as the mean score is 4.27. We can infer that to develop green products we need to work upon investment avenues.

TABLE X GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE INITIATIVE IN MAKING COMPANIES TO GO GREEN

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	81	4.73
4	Agree	14	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	1	
1	Strongly Disagree	1	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table X clearly indicates that respondents Strongly Agree that government should take initiative in making companies go green as the mean score is 4.73. We can infer that government has a dominating role in promoting green companies.

TABLE XI EVERYONE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCCESSFUL GREEN MARKETING

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	73	4.63
4	Agree	21	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	
2	Disagree	4	
1	Strongly Disagree	0	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table XI clearly indicates that respondents strongly agree that everyone is responsible for successful green marketing as the mean score is 4.63. We can infer that it is the responsibility of every citizen to promote green marketing.

TABLE XII GREEN MARKETING IS JUST AN OLD CONCEPT

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	6	2.96
4	Agree	12	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	62	
2	Disagree	12	
1	Strongly Disagree	8	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table XII clearly indicates that Respondents indicated that they neither agree nor disagree that green marketing is just an old concept as the mean score is 2.96. This table infers that respondents are neutral in view about green marketing being an old concept.

TABLE XIII INTERESTED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT GREEN MARKETING

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	75	4.35
4	Agree	7	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	
2	Disagree	8	
1	Strongly Disagree	7	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table XIII clearly indicates that Respondents strongly agree that they are interested to know more about green marketing as the mean score is 4.35. This indicates the interest of respondents towards green marketing.

TABLE XIV BELIEVE IN THE CONCEPT OF COMPLETE GREEN MARKETING CONDITIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

RATING SCALE		PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE
5	Strongly Agree	44	3.97
4	Agree	31	
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	
2	Disagree	8	
1	Strongly Disagree	7	
TOTAL		100	

Interpretation Table XIV showing Respondents agree that they will believe in the concept of complete green marketing conditions throughout the world as the mean score is 3.97. This implies that respondents have a belief about green marketing throughout the world.

V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings are tabulated using likert scale for measuring the awareness of consumers towards green marketing . (Highest Rating is 5-Strongly Agree and 1-Strongly Disagree)

TABLE XV THE COMPUTED MEAN SCORES OF THE RESPONDENTS

CONSUMERS AWARENESS TOWARDS GREEN MARKETING		
S.No.	DESCRIPTION FILLED BY RESPONDENTS	MEAN SCORE (5) IS CONSIDERED AS HIGHEST VALUE
1	I believe in the concept of green marketing	4.59
2	I am aware of companies going green	4.51
3	I am aware about the advantages of using green products	4.27
4	I feel that regular marketing techniques harm the environment	4.4
5	Green marketing concept is existed for long time back but it is not implemented by many companies	4.27
6	Productivity can be improved drastically by using green marketing	4.7
7	Companies are reluctant in implementing green marketing concept	4.04
8	It is difficult for all the companies to implement green marketing	4.59
9	Huge investment is required to develop green products	4.27
10	Government should take initiative in making companies to go green	4.73
11	Everyone is responsible for successful green marketing	4.63
12	Green marketing is just an old concept	2.96
13	I am interested to know more about green marketing	4.35
14	I believe in the concept of complete green marketing conditions throughout the world?	3.97

After having understood the concept of green marketing this paper highlights a thought for the marketers about the potential for the green products and need of significant changes to be brought in green marketing concept for the proper utilization of resources and the final product which a company develops should be less detrimental to environment.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The current consumption levels are too high and are unsustainable. Therefore there is a need for green marketing and a need for a shift in the business organizations behavior and attitude towards providing more environmental friendly products. In this study consumers have shown deeper 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 by green revolution. 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 data analysis in table XV we can infer from the results of data analysis given in table XV 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 organization are beginning to realize their role and responsibilities towards the environment. Although this change is not happening quickly, it is happening. Businesses are looking towards gaining an edge in the green market industry by trying to re-package their products into a more environmental friendly product. They are cutting down on extras and wasted materials and turning their operations into more efficient and green operation. Companies are also starting to educate the masses with an increase in advertising that puts emphasis on green products and how they are more beneficial for the consumers. This kind of advertising goes a long way in educating the masses and promoting the concept of green products among the people.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Green marketing is a continuous process that requires constant inputs from the suppliers, government legislations and policies and the people. This is required so that the businesses green marketing strategy can be aligned to the target markets and so it can gain a sustainable competitive advantage. It is important that strategies and policies in relation to green products be developed and implemented so as to guide and help the retailers and customers towards a green change. Businesses should concentrate on focusing on developing a green product that have a demand from the general public and which also aligns to the company's core positioning. Businesses should strive in gaining an edge in the green market industry by trying to re-frame their products into a more environmental friendly product. Furthermore businesses should also present efforts in a manner that reduces the risk related to costs. Since the success of green products depend on the consumers adopting or changing their attitude and behavior towards such products, it is imperative that green marketers identify all the factors that encourage cooperation. Thus the green marketers should aim at developing a marketing strategy that brings cooperation among organizations and consumers to seek the value of collective gain over self-interest.

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