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**THE EMERGENCE OF GREEN MARKETING STRATEGIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON
TRADE PERFORMANCE**

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ABSTRACT

Green marketing is a progressive issue that most of its dimensions are unknown or intangible for consumers. A majority of people believe that green marketing refers solely to the promotion or advertising of products that are environmental friendly. In late decades, manageability has turned into a need for buyers, who are progressively watchful for items that are high caliber, reasonable and ecologically well disposed. This has driven organizations to devise green item and marketing strategies. Based on the results of marketing surveys, research responses and the study of available resources, we concluded that there is no comprehensive green marketing implementation model linking environmental consumer behavior with a link to the company's marketing strategy. The contribution could help the Industry to present requirements to the government and help create incentives for the alternative vehicle market, and our findings could be incorporated into the creation of companies' strategy. The study focuses on the conditions that increase the potential for consumers to act in an ecologically responsible manner, but it has been found that there is a marked variety among consumer's interpretations of this responsibility.

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INTRODUCTION

Green marketing is on the rise and a rather new area acknowledged for research. There is not one universal definition of green marketing and the definition generally varies according to the researcher's viewpoint. Ottman (2011)ⁱ have characterized green marketing as an integration of ecological concerns into marketing aspects including production, distribution and logistics, promotion and packaging along with marketing communications. Green marketing associates with identifying the consumer needs and satisfying those needs in valuable and sustainable mannerⁱⁱ. For this research, the definition adopted states that green marketing can also be used as a strategy that points the consumers towards the benefits of environmentally friendly products to influence their purchasing patternsⁱⁱⁱ. Green marketing helps in brand differentiation of companies that in turn focuses on the environmentally aware consumers willing to buy green products^{iv}. It can

be inferred from various literature that green marketing basically bridges the communication between environmentally conscious firms and consumers, in turn strengthening their relationship. A green consumer, as stated by Elkington (1994)^v, is indulgent in using environmentally friendly products including the ones using green manufacturing and production methods and the ones that are against animal cruelty and so on. Such green consumers are compelling companies to differentiate themselves by going green and consequently making a new market segment adding to the economies of different nations globally.

The Emergence of Green Marketing

The role of the marketing function is to implement the “Green strategy” which is key to affecting the business performance because marketing ensures that the preferences of the consumers are reflected in corporate actions and can assist in balancing financial performance objectives and environmental product quality of the company. In the context of green marketing strategy an approach called as triple bottom line (TBL) concept reflects the more balanced organizational responsibility De Giovanni, et al (2012)^{vi}. As green marketing strategies become increasingly important for companies which are adopting triple-bottom line approach of performance evaluation, so this study also tries to conceptually understand the role of “green” as a marketing strategy and how does it affect the performance of the business. Green marketing strategies are designed to help the companies in contributing to the environmental friendliness by formulating the environmental friendly strategies, so that their activities do not harm the well-being of the planet. Green marketing strategies incorporate marketing practices, policies and procedures that align with overall corporate strategy of the company which heed to consumer and society concerns about the environment while focusing on the overall business performance of the company Leonidou, Katsikeas and Morgan (2013)^{vii}.

The beginning of environmentalism can be referred to the 1960s and early 1970s with increasing concern about the impact of consumption and production patterns on the environment due to debates about health effects and the impact of economic and population growth^{viii}. But, despite some attention during this time the real idea of green marketing emerged in the late 1980s with an increase in green consumerism. Environmental awareness, increasing interest of consumers in green products and the willingness to pay for green features led to corporate interest in green marketing, initiating major changes and innovations. Green was “in” during the 1990s and the green market was growing remarkably. But despite this optimism, a significant gap between concern and actual purchasing has been identified. Many companies launched their own green product ranges, but the substance was missing and many of those early green products failed because they were expensive, hard to find and lacked functionality. This reduced the demand for green products, being displayed by the decline of green marketing and pessimism about green products, claims and the companies behind them. Many companies have to rethink in order to concentrate more on sustainable issues and not only to exploit green agendas for commercial ends. The marketing philosophy and process is “[...] built around the customer and the relationship between the company and the customer”^{ix}. If the relationship is characterized by distrust and pessimism, companies will not be able to acquire customers through the changes required to shift towards sustainability. This old marketing approach could be seen as image washing of companies, constructing brands for industrialized manufacturing businesses by adding attractive cultural images, personalities and descriptions. But active customer engagement is necessary as well as knowing exactly which products consumers want, which price-performance trade-offs they are willing to accept and what marketing approach they will respond to. Companies have to establish a significant market presence in the long-term and successfully research, understand and educate their customers in order to build brands, products and services helping green things to find mainstream acceptance. As there are many unnecessary, inefficient, wasteful and harmful products and processes in everyday life, there is quite plenty space for improvement in order to meet peoples’ actual needs and aims in a better way. Therefore, business success depends on the ability of marketing to make green alternatives appear normal and acceptable and to innovate in different ways. Customer requirements and needs can often be effectively met when creating environmental improvements by innovations in market structures and in supporting services. The importance of customer focus also in green marketing activities becomes crucial. This is an orientation that was mostly not addressed before.

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The scope of the study is to understand the concept of green marketing and green marketing strategies and specify the needs and requirements of strategic decision making within organizations. The purpose is to help the consumers make informed decisions about choices that influence the environment. The study demonstrates that providing environmental solutions to the consumers would be one of the biggest areas in the emergence of business leadership. Since innovation in the area of green marketing plays an important role in enhancing the competitiveness of the company therefore the understanding of various factors of adoption of green product and the green marketing strategies and their impact on business performance becomes important. The limited knowledge about the concept of green marketing by the consumers as well as the companies in Indian context is the biggest limitation faced during the study. The knowledge regarding the overall development of the perception for green products provides the companies with the facility to identify and implement strategies that may influence the change in the attitude of consumers towards green products. Companies can also benefit from the identification of the information required to enable management of the companies which can influence their process, strategy, and policy formulation of the companies

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The need and motivation for the current research can be summarized in the following points: Currently, India is highly vulnerable to environmental degradation due to unhealthy practices followed in the industries as well as by the end consumers. Not enough attention has been paid by academic researchers in the direction of environmental sustainability in India. Green marketing is still a new field of research and still today various concepts of it are under scrutiny through retesting and cross cultural testing.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is a lot of published literature in the area of green marketing and consumer behaviour, although the consumer purchasing patterns influenced by different green marketing strategies for developing countries is yet to be discovered in detail. Therefore, to bridge this literature gap, taking up the current research may lead to consumer perceptions and comprehensions that would be of interest. It would be interesting to look at socio-demographics to see if there are any associations with respect to consumers' beliefs.

In order to understand the concept of green marketing, it is necessary to understand a green consumer. Elkington (1994) defines a green consumer as an individual who indulges in avoiding the use of products that endanger the environment due to their manufacturing or disposing methods, or products that involve animal cruelty or products that are obtained from threatened species. Numerous green marketing research papers, which are based on consumer behaviour, include factors that impact green purchase, different consumer segments in green marketing, consumer's decision based on their willingness to pay and consumer profiling (Peattie, 2005). Ravetz et.al (2000)^x advocates that governments seldom impose environmental sustainability, and even if they wanted to, but still are not sure how to enforce it? (Barr, 2003)^{xi} argues that sustainability initiatives cannot be implemented from above, i.e. from the policy side alone. He argues that public participation is must for addressing this issue. Olander and Thøgersen (2002)^{xii} have professed that consumer behavior is a prerequisite to environmental protection and sustainability. Sutcliffe et al. (2008) conclude that in order to promote environmental sustainability, the concerned actors would have to find ways to inspire the relevant changes in the individual behavior. Further, Choy and Prizzia (2010)^{xiii} also argue that consumer behavior plays an important part in improving environmental quality. Therefore, it becomes necessary to examine the key areas of green products adoption process of individuals.

Research Objectives and Hypothesis

- To understand the perspective of Green marketing and Green marketing Strategies of selected organizations.
- To understand the specific aspects of marketing process related to Green marketing as understood by the organizations.
- To understand the association of green marketing applications and strategies hence defined by the organizations with the elements of the complete supply chain system of those organizations.

- To study the process of Green marketing strategy implementation of the organizations.
- To study the parameters of Business performance measurement applied by the organizations in relation to the Green marketing Strategies adopted by them.

Hypothesis: a) There is a significant relationship between green products and Eco-labeling in the customer satisfaction. b) There is no significant relationship between Customer product modification for green effect and age. c) There is no significant relationship between Customer product modification for green effect and education. d) There is no significant relationship between Customer product modification for green effect and occupation. e) There is a significant relationship between supply chain initiatives and customer adoption of green products.

Profile of Respondents: The Respondents consisted of people of age group 20-60 years with some knowledge of green marketing. Preferable respondents were chosen with some academic background. Maximum respondents were youths and male.

Sampling and Sample type: According to many studies when the field of inquiry is very large, then sampling method of data collection is the most convenient way of conducting the survey keeping in mind the constraints of time and money. The following subsections outline the sampling plan of the present study.

Research methodology : Natural and sequential presence of reflexive and Hypothetico deductive approach led to an amalgamative methodology in terms of Qualitative as well as Quantitative conduction process where in detailed Interviews in an unstructured format were then supported by structured Schedules and subsequently the Quantitative analysis. All these constructs were measured on 5-point Likert scale (1 = highly disagree, 5 = strongly agree, 3 = neutral). The interviews were conducted to understand the concept of Green marketing as understood by academia and corporate. The interviews were spontaneous and took place in corridors or over coffee. These interviews had the advantage of allowing free-ranging responses and conversations that were natural. The interviewee felt at ease and does not realize that they are being interviewed. Lots of effort was made to obtain useful data as opposed to extraneous general comments. Few issues got crystallized that universalisation of Green marketing and Green marketing Strategies requires key words which has to be complimented by hypothesis and specific questions to be asked in specific contextual reference therefore the following objectives emerged

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The results are compiled in the following sections.

Sampling Analysis

		Age group	Education	Occupation
N	Valid	150	150	150
	Missing	0	0	0

From the figure above out of the total 150 respondents i.e. 100% :: 46% of the respondents are professionals having/pursuing post-graduation in business management degrees. 24% respondents are undergraduates with basic idea on commerce and the remaining are postgraduates with science and technology, common public. With reference to Occupation, Of the 150 respondents 65% of the respondents are professionals working with the corporate sector or multinational companies 15% respondents are in to the profession of Academics/Teaching/Research and the remaining 20 % are Students. Finally with reference to Age group, Of the 150 respondents 70 % of the respondents are in the age group of 20-45. This age group comprises the maximum number of respondents because this age group is more exposed to the outside world via internet and other technological means. 18% respondents are less than 18-20 years of age 12 % of the respondents are in the age group of >55 years.

Interpretation of Answers to the interview questions

76 of the respondents out of 150 are aware of the green products when they go for purchase of the product. That is out of the 150 respondents 72% of the respondents are aware of the green products. This shows that there is awareness about the green products in most of the consumers especially the young generation is more inclined towards the green products. A total of 68 respondents of the respondents out of 150 identify the overall environmental preference of a product based on life cycle consideration from

procurement of raw materials to disposal of the used products. This means that the customers understand that the green marketing is a holistic term which involves every aspect from procurement to disposal. 49 of the respondents out of 150 agree that Ecolabels are informative policy instrument about the green product, so ecolabels can be used as a credible tool to promote the green products. But more number of respondents does not consider Ecolabel as an important purchase criterion. They go for product features and attributes while purchasing the product. So, ecolabels alone cannot motivate the customer to purchase the green product. 67 of the respondents out of 150 agree that they can easily find information about Ecolabels from different sources like Internet, Media, Television and Newspaper. 61 of the respondents out of 150 agree that protection of the environment is taken as the main concern when they buy green so the environmental protectionism can be used as an attribute to promote the green products because a good number of respondents feels the same way. Pricing is an important issue when adoption of the green products is concerned as most of the respondents replied in negative when asked about this question They were unwilling to pay a higher price for a product if a cheaper better of non-green product is available. So, the pricing strategies of the green companies should be major focus area. 81 of the respondents out of 150 agree that they are aware about the distance a product travels to reach in the hands of the customer comes under supply chain. A good number of 86 respondents out of 150 agrees and believes that the cold chain initiatives adopted by many companies are anti-environmental. A whopping number of 89 respondents out of 150 agree that Information technology is an effective tool for reducing the environmental impact of supply chain, which means that the Information technology can play a major role in reducing their environmental impact by curbing the use of diesel and reducing pollution due to vehicular traffic. A good percentage of 91 of the respondents out of 150 agree that large warehousing is a good supply chain initiative. 76 of the respondents out of 150 believe that the initiatives such as packed food, packed hot tea are environmental initiatives. Only 72 of the respondents out of 150 consider buying products via the green supply chain, which primary means online shopping when it comes to adoption of green products.

64% of the respondents out of 150 agree that the maximum number of green products purchased by them in the last three months were related to Health care. 21% of the respondents the health care products occasionally whereas 22% purchased them in average quantities, and the remaining 16% did not or purchased a very less health care products in green product category. In the cosmetics category the preference of purchasing Green products is only 60% the remaining percentage 40% purchased the green products in cosmetics category once in a while only that means the frequency of purchase is very less? In the organic and personal care category the preference of purchasing Green products is good as compare to cosmetics category 60% of the respondents agrees to purchasing the organic and personal care products frequently whereas only 40% of the respondents purchased the green products in organic and personal care category. In the house hold products category the preference of purchasing Green products is only 43 % and the remaining 67% of the respondents purchased house hold products such as Bulbs etc. occasionally.

Testing of Hypothesis

The hypothesis testing in the current study was done by employing chi square test as the data is not normally distributed.

Research questions led to the evolution of following Hypothesis:

- H1. There is a significant relationship between green products and Eco-labeling in the customer satisfaction.
- H2. There is no significant relationship between Customer product modification for green effect and age.
- H3. There is no significant relationship between Customer product modification for green effect and education.
- H4. There is no significant relationship between Customer product modification for green effect and occupation.
- H5. There is a significant relationship between supply chain initiatives and customer adoption of green products.

Hypothesis in this research work as evident emerged with a perspective of relational assumption between green products (Green as contextually described in literature and evolved through interviews) with attributes like eco labelling viz a viz customer satisfaction. Another aspect which emerged in the initial phase of

conceptual development was quite naturally the age, which signifies the change in the preferences of the consumers as revealed in literature, hence the hypothesis no. 2 which seeks to test a relational chord between age and customer product adoption for green effect i.e. what if 'green' as a modification grows amongst products, so, does it has to do something with age also because it is an acknowledge fact that awareness even in children is rising but simultaneously several other attributes are prominent amongst them. While thinking about demographics education is an important aspect presumably because it seems to have an association with environmental consciousness, hence alongside the fact that as level of education grows consciousness may drive the intensity of preferences, hence hypothesis no 3. Further the next hypothesis takes in to consideration the occupation which actually is also the basis for market segmentation and hypothesis 4 as is evident wants to justifiably see that if at this stage products should or are looking for occupation driven segmentation for driving/marketing green products. Now comes the requirement for looking at the adoptions of customers which actually may change the marketing scenario and the landscape, but then it has to be correlatively seen across whole of the supply chain especially the change initiatives which are directed towards the former so as to strategically propel such actions or to exit from those not working effectively.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to investigate issues that determine the long-term efficiency of green marketing. To fulfill this purpose, the paper is based upon a sound theoretical framework and literature, which were combined in thorough analysis of the empirical findings. After having analyzed the topic carefully, the underlying research questions can be answered.

The conclusions which emerged in due course of time evolved through the data analysis as well as the reflexive understanding of the researcher are as follows:

- Green Marketing in itself is a terminology yet to reach towards a universally understood and interpreted concept.
- Marketing Process has been generic, matured and well understood. The thought and sequence of this process is associated with creating, communicating, delivery offerings which have value. But now the question arises where to put Green in the sequence.
- The research witness an important conclusion which is oriented with the reflexive understanding of the researcher rather any substantial research outcome and that is the marketers in past few decades have been strongly focusing upon their functions which has taken them away from the required intimacy with other functions in the value chain.
- Intra industry communications also is highly accommodative of sales based marketing efforts rather than going for a prospective integrative plan for futuristic green marketing
- Business performance measurement practices of the organization in relation to general marketing processes and strategies are largely associated with either the industry benchmarks of visionary industry leadership or technologically imposed practices or are based on subjective criteria of marketers understanding.

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