



GREEN PRODUCT AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

A green product is a sustainable product designed to minimize its environmental impacts during its whole life-cycle and even after it's of no use. Green products are usually identified by having two basic goals – reducing waste and maximizing resource efficiency. With growing markets and increasing consumer volumes, the production, as well as consumption patterns are degrading the environment drastically. The government, consumers and producers have realized the worth of this issue. The research and development department of industries are continuously working to develop products that are environment-friendly and cause less environmental destruction. Products which are capable of being recycled, and possess healthy disposal are often termed as green products. The manufacturing, marketing, and consumption of such products are being promoted by the government as well as non-governmental organizations. Environmental sustainability and personal consciousness of consumers are found to be motivating factors while unavailability and unawareness are deemed demotivating factors along with the cost of installation / usage. Consumers are intended to purchase green products irrespective of their demographics.

KEY WORDS-*Consumer Behaviour, Green Marketing, Green product*

INTRODUCTION

The terms “green” or “sustainable” often refer to products, services or practices that allow for economic development while conserving for future generations. We prefer to describe a green product as one that has less of an environmental impact or is less detrimental to human health than the traditional product equivalent. While on the topic of defining a green product, you must realize that almost no product will ever be 100% “green,” since all product development will have some impact on the surrounding environment. It all comes down to degrees of impact

and as we discussed above, trading off between impacts.

A green product is a sustainable product designed to minimize its environmental impacts during its whole life-cycle and even after it's of no use. Green products are usually identified by having two basic goals – reducing waste and maximizing resource efficiency. They are manufactured using toxic-free ingredients and environmentally-friendly procedures and are certified by recognized organizations like Energy star, Forest Stewardship Council, etc. Some of the characteristics of a green product are:



- Grown without the use of toxic chemicals and within hygienic conditions
- Can be recycled, reused and is biodegradable in nature
- Comes with eco-friendly packing
- Uses the least resources
- Is eco-efficient
- Has reduced or zero carbon footprint
- Has reduced or zero plastic footprint

In the usual scenario, brands producing green

To understand the trade-offs you should realize that there are select attributes that describe green products and services; we list them below to help you further understand what a green product truly is. Green products are...

- Energy efficient, durable and often have low maintenance requirements.
- Free of Ozone depleting chemicals, toxic compounds and don't produce toxic by-products.
- Often made of recycled materials or content or from renewable and sustainable sources.
- Obtained from local manufacturers or resources.
- Biodegradable or easily reused either in part or as a whole.

ENERGY STAR: A labeling program for energy efficient homes, building products, electronics and appliances. ENERGY STAR is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy helping protect the environment through energy efficient products and practices.

Green Seal: Green Seal Certification ensures that a product meets rigorous, science-based leadership standards. It is a lifecycle assessment based labeling program for building products, green operations and maintenance procedures. A green seal can be found on anything from a coffee filter to a hotel.

Green products are now mainstream, whether you are looking for a new home, automobile or even just some vegetables for a salad, there is a green product alternative available. It is up to you to weigh your options and identify what attributes of a green product is important to you; though make sure you are fully informed and aware prior to making the purchase. We applaud your commitment to sustainable living and look forward to building a greener future.

Brand Knowledge

Branding is one of the most important aspects of any business, the process involved in creating a unique name and image for a product in consumers' mind.

Brand Image

Brand image is defined as the subjective impression in the consumers' mind about a brand [9]. Brand image reflects consumers' perception about a brand and the manner in which a specific brand is positioned in the market

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which a brand is recognized by potential consumers, and is correctly associated with a particular product. Brand awareness can influence consumers' perceived risk assessment and their confidence in the purchasing decision, due to familiarity with the brand and its characteristics. Consumers show a strong tendency to use brand awareness as a heuristic for a common or repeat purchase. In summary, brand awareness has an effect on consumer decision process. Green marketing can help companies in increasing brand awareness and building positive image in the minds of the consumer's. Consumers who have environmental concerns, their purchasing decision is positively affected by green product, and brand image awareness.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chakrabarti, S. (2010) in his research article has explained the comprehensive research work on consumer buying behaviour in organic food category. Affective commitment was considered to be an important construct which consumers develop towards the brand or its provider over a period of time which drives them to loyalty. The importance of affective commitment dimension was considered relevant in organic food purchase given that the category has association with health and nutrition benefits. For marketers, understanding the process of emotional bonding with regular buyers may be quite critical. The study also identified the factors limiting more organic food usage among regular buyers in India. The three most important reasons were cited as expensive, taste related reasons and the limited availability of the products which marketers need to address on to ensure more regular usage in the category. Stores also need to engage in personal interaction with the customers to develop trust and long term relationships with them. Superior customer value would increase their level of affective commitment towards the store.

Azad, P. (2011) in his article has discussed the notion of green marketing, its initiatives, challenges and probable strategies. This was



in the wake of mounting awareness on disturbed ecological balance and environmental consciousness which has changed the behavioural patterns both in the individuals and businesses across the world. The broadening gap between the scarce resources and infinite human wants has augmented the interest regarding fortification of environment and this is felt all over the world.

Vazifehdust, H & Asadollahi, A. (2011) in their article have attempted to describe what is meant by social responsibility and explain its relation to green marketing, take a closer look at green marketing and also the ways of implementing the green marketing concepts in some of Iran's industries. Social responsibility transcends the positive environmental approach since it takes into account every angle of consumers' consumption. Today, Iranian consumers care more about their health and environment than ever. In this context, this paper has highlighted some of the areas like product design, product positioning, packaging material and design, advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, services where the companies could focus on by re-engineering their production processes, product design and service position, in order to solidify their positions in the competitive market, otherwise being left behind in the green trend. To establish competitive advantage, the paper suggested greening in the production process and reduced expenditure which will cause an enhanced image of the company in the customers' eyes and increased loyalty.

Sharma, Y. (2011) has focused on the changing consumer behaviour towards the usage of green products. The article has explained the four stages of lifecycle of green products – development, production, consumption and disposal. After explaining about the green marketing mix, the article has suggested that companies hoping to embed sustainability have to reframe their strategies. Connecting sustainability with the core business operations and consumers means that the CR team must work with other parts of the business, including brand, marketing and R&D. This enables opportunities for innovation. Green marketing has to be pursued with much great vigour, as it both

environmental and social dimensions.

OBJECTIVES

- To Understand the concept of Green product
- To Identify the Consumer Perception and awareness of Green Product
- To Find the Relationship of Green Consumption behavior with consumer demographics

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the literature review, the current study develops a research framework consisting of different attributes, such as brand image, brand awareness, country of origin, perceived quality, and purchase intention. Specifically, brand image and brand awareness are both used as the independent variables, country of origin image as a moderator, perceived quality as a mediator, and purchase intention as a dependent variable.

Data Collection Method

The method selected by the researcher for exploring the consumer perception and behavior towards online shopping is survey research. The research starts with identification of different variables related to responsible for building consumer perception. Research included both primary and secondary data. Primary data for this study was collected.

Research Methodology:

Both Primary data and Secondary data are used in this research study

Research Instrument:

The structure build questionnaire is used as the research instrument for the study.

Liker 5point scale (very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied and very Dissatisfied)

Convenience sampling method:

The researcher used convenience sampling method for data collection. The samples were Collected among various areas in and around Coimbatore.

Statistical tools used for data analysis

- ✓ Percentage analysis
- ✓ Chi square

**Table showing the respondents on respondents on the basis of gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	134	53.6
Male	116	43.4
Total	250	100

CHI SQUARE TEST:

Table showing that the gender and shop online:

HYPOTHESIS:

HO 2a: There is no significant association between gender and shop online.

HI 2a: There is significant association between gender and shop online.

Cross tabulation:

I

SHOP Green Product						
Gender	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
MALE	34	47	42	10	5	134
FEMALE	33	30	22	19	9	116
Total	66	77	64	29	14	250

CHI SQUARE TESTS

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.166a	4	0.529
Likelihood Ratio	3.164	4	0.532
Linear-by-Linear Association	.028	1	.867
N of valid cases	250		

A.0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.50.
P=0.532>0.05

Ho-Accepted, H1-Rejected

The Chi Square value between gender and shop online factor is 3.156a and P value is 0.532 Which is not significant at 5% level. Thus there is no association between genders and shop online factor.

more for the green products to protect their environment. Consumers are motivated to buy green products not only because of their concern for the environment but also because they believe these can be healthier option for them.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the present study can be used by marketers, manufacturers as well as the government to promote green products efficiently. Unawareness and unavailability of the green products should be countered so as to remove the obstacle in its usage. It is evident that the purchase behavior and customer satisfaction towards green products is not influenced by age, gender, income or educational qualifications of the consumers. Purchasing behavior of consumers depends on their level of satisfaction towards the products. The concern for environment has been found to be more among the young consumers. Consumers regard the features of the green products to be most important while purchasing them. They are even willing to pay

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