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A Study on Consumption Preferences and Attitude Towards Green Products: A Green Marketing Concern

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Abstract

Green marketing plays a pivotal role in today's time. It is indeed necessary to know about how consumers perceive and behave towards Green Products. This study emphasises on Preferences and Attitude of Consumers towards various Green Products on a sample from the city of Surat in Gujarat state of India. Overall, it was found that people have highly favourable attitude towards green products and are ready to purchase / are purchasing green products. 5-point Likert scale was used to study attitude of consumers towards these products.

Keywords: *Green Products, Green Marketing*

INTRODUCTION

Concept of Green Marketing

The holistic marketing for identifying, anticipating and satisfying the requirements of customers and society in a profitable and sustainable way. – **Peattie, 1995 Green** marketing refers to the process of selling products and/or services based on their environmental benefits. Such a product or service may be environmentally friendly in itself or produced in an environmentally friendly way, including:

- Being manufactured in a sustainable fashion.
- Not containing toxic materials or ozone-depleting substances.
- Able to be recycled and/or is produced from recycled materials.
- Being made from renewable materials (such as bamboo, etc.).
- Not making use of excessive packaging.
- Being designed to be repairable and not “throwaway”.

As society becomes more concerned with the natural environment, businesses have begun to modify their behaviors in an attempt to address society's new concerns. Some businesses have been quick to accept concepts such as environmental management systems and waste minimization and have integrated environmental issues into all organizational activities.

- Green marketing is environment friendly, sustainable and socially responsible. According to the American Marketing Association, ‘green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe’



History of Green Marketing

- Late 1980s: Green **Marketing** beginning
- 1987: **Sustainable Development** concept (United Nations)
- 1992 & 1993: Green marketing **reference books** by Ken Peattie then Jacquelyn Ottman.
- The term Green Marketing came into prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The American Marketing Association (AMA) held the first workshop on "Ecological Marketing" in 1975. The proceeding of this workshop resulted in one of the first books on green marketing entitled. Ecological Marketing
- The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Reports started with the ice cream seller Ben & Jerry's where the financial report was supplemented by a greater view on the company's environmental impact. In 1987 a document prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as meeting "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need", this became known as the Brundtland Report and was another step towards widespread thinking on sustainability in everyday activity. Two tangible milestones for wave 1 of green marketing came in the form of published books, both of which were called Green Marketing. They were by Ken Peattie (1992) in the United Kingdom and by Jacquelyn Ottman (1993) in the United States of America.

Objectives of Green Marketing

Green Marketing is important for a number of reasons, from eliminating wastefulness to educating consumers about how a company is maintaining eco-friendly measures. Here are some objectives to consider when thinking about green marketing.

1. Avoiding waste: Whether it's creating biodegradable product packaging (meaning it can be broken down by biological means), cutting down on water consumption, or reducing the amount of trash that goes into landfills, green marketing is just as concerned with avoiding waste as putting forward an eco-friendly face to the public.
2. Reinventing products: Products themselves can be modified to lessen the impact on the environment. For example, Method sources its ingredients from many plants-derived ingredients, which means its safer for humans, not toxic to family pets who might accidentally ingest it; and more environmentally-



friendly by being water-soluble and dispersing safely into the environment.

3. Making green while being green: Of course, companies that promote green products want to not only be good stewards of planet Earth but make a profit while doing so. Green marketing allows businesses to capitalize on the subset of the population willing to pay a little more to lessen their footprint on the environment and protect the atmosphere.
4. Changing processes: Consumers aren't the only ones that need to be concerned with environmental impact. Green marketing also encourages businesses to properly utilize resources such as water consumption and electricity. Changing processes also means looking for renewable materials, using alternative energy sources and finding ways to deliver products in a more fuel-efficient manner.
5. Creating eco-friendly messaging: Green marketing's biggest "marketing" accomplishment might be in messaging. Green marketing works to help consumers understand a product's green benefits and a company's commitment to the environment. It's also an important avenue in which to educate people about sustainability and the environment.

Some more reasons for Green Marketing:

1. Opportunities available and competitive advantage.
2. Corporate social responsibility on the part of companies.
3. Government regulations.
4. Competition with other responsible companies
5. Goodwill of the company.
6. Environment conscious consumers.
7. For conserving scarce natural resources.

Advantages

Companies that develop new and improved products, and services with environment inputs in mind give themselves access to new markets, increase their profit sustainability and enjoy a competitive advantage over the companies that are not concerned for the environment.



Some of the advantages of green marketing are as follows:

1. It ensures sustained long-term growth along with profitability.
2. It saves money in the long run, although initial cost is more.
3. It helps the companies to market their products and services keeping the environment aspects in mind. It helps in accessing the new markets and enjoying competitive advantage.
4. Most of the employees also feel proud and responsible to be working for an environmentally responsible company.
5. It promotes corporate social responsibility.

The marketing strategies for green marketing include the following points:

1. Marketing audit (including internal and external situation analysis). Develop a marketing plan outlining strategies with regard to the four P's of marketing.
2. Implementation of the marketing strategies.
3. Proper review of results.

Challenges

1. Green products require renewable and recyclable material, which is costly.
2. Problems of deceptive advertising and false claims.
3. Requires a technology, which requires huge investments in research and development.
4. Majority of the people are not aware of green products and their uses.
5. Majority of the consumers are not willing to pay a premium for green products.
6. Educating customers about the advantages of green marketing.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Maheshwari, February 2014) 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. This research investigates consumer beliefs and attitude on environment protection and their purchasing behavior of eco-friendly products. (Tiwari) Increasing awareness on the various environmental problems has led a shift in the way consumers go about their life. There has been a change in consumer attitudes towards a green lifestyle. People are actively trying to reduce their impact on the environment.



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However, this is not widespread and is still evolving. Organizations and business however have seen this change in consumer attitudes and are trying to gain an edge in the competitive market by exploiting the potential in the green market industry. **(Sarkar, September 2012)**In the modern era of globalization, it has become a challenge to keep the consumer in fold and even keep our natural environment safe and that is the biggest need of the time. Green marketing is a phenomenon which has developed particular importance in the modern market and has emerged as an important concept in India as in other parts of the developing and the developed world and is seen as an important strategy of facilitating sustainable development. **(Sen, April 2014)**With the emergence of a large number of environmental problem all over the world, there arises a need to preserve and protect the earth's natural environment and finite resources. Both the marketers and the consumers are nowadays focusing on green products and services. Green marketing is still in its infancy in India and more research needs to be undertaken on different aspects of green marketing to explore its potential to the maximum possible extent. **(Shahi, 2015)**Green marketing is a tool used by many companies in various industries to follow this trend. However, this is not widespread and is still evolving. The current study introduces the concept of green marketing and looks into the various ways in which the different consumer attributes are related to the concept of green marketing. Finally, consumers, industrial buyers and suppliers need to pressurize effects on minimizing the negative effects on the environment. **(Jacob, September 2012)**People are actively trying to reduce their impact on the environment. A conceptual framework is presented and the information is analyzed on the basis of the framework. One thing that is being reiterated is that 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 consumer's behavior and attitude towards more environmental friendly lifestyles. The current study is a compilation of various aspects related to green marketing. **(Chitra, 2015)**Green marketing should not neglect the economic aspect of marketing. Marketers need to understand the implications of green marketing. If marketers think that customers are not concerned about environmental issues or will not pay a premium for products that are more eco-responsible. In spite of its growing popularity, the green marketing movement faced serious setbacks in the 1980s because many industries made false claims about their products and services. **(Katiyar, February 2015)**Green marketing is a phenomenon which has developed particular important in the modern market and has emerged as an important concept in India. In this study, the main emphasis has been made of concept, need for and importance of green marketing. It will come with drastic change in the world of business if all nations will make strict roles because green marketing is essential to save world from pollution.**(Singh, July 2013)**Generally marketers don't talk about ethics too much. Marketers can often drive human desires and



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behaviors, getting people to buy things that they may or may not need, making them feel better or worse about them in the process. Although the government and many private companies have been making an effort to bring about a green mindset among the people and promote green products, a lot still need to be done to make green products truly viable and workable in India. Activeness about green marketing by government, companies, customer, and society as a whole should be amplified as environment should be top management priority. (M.K. Sharma, August 2015) Green marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities including product modification, changes in production process, sustainable packaging as well as modifying advertising campaigns. The study is an attempt to provide a platform to understand the awareness level, their perception, the parameters considered for buying the green products. With the ill effects of global warming, green marketing has become almost compulsory for all the organizations. It should not be a matter of choice to adapt to green marketing rather it should be compulsory for the consumers, industrial buyers and suppliers. Government should make the strict rules to save the world from pollution and its negative effects. (R., 2008) had an article which stated that, Green Ventures India is a subsidiary of New York based asset management firm Green Ventures International. The latter recently announced a \$300 million India focused fund aimed at renewable energy products and supporting trading in carbon credits. Cateora Graham, in International Marketing, has drawn a parallel line between Green Marketing and Product Development. The author has cited a variety of examples where the importance of Green Marketing has been laid focus on. Green marketing is a term used to identify concern with the environmental consequences of a variety of marketing activities. It is very evident from the author's research and examples the packaging and solid waste rules are burdensome but there are successful cases of not only meeting local standards but also being able to transfer this approach to other markets. Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller in Marketing Management has initiated the topic by discussing about the relevance of green marketing in the past few decades and has also discussed the explosion of environmentally friendly products. However, according to the author from the branding perspective green marketing programs have not been very successful. Marketers tried and failed with green sales pitches over the last decade because of certain obstacles which the movement encountered. The consumer behavior is such that most consumers appear unwillingly to give up the benefits of other alternatives to choose green products.



METHODOLOGY

Problem Statement

Environmental concern is very big concern nowadays. Due to excessive amount of urbanization and industrialization, environment is getting contaminated continuously. It is now utmost necessary to preserve the environment and in this direction it would be utmost beneficial if people start using eco-friendly products i.e. Green Products. Hence, studying awareness and consumption of green products and studying attitude towards green products is the major concern of this research.

Research Objectives:

- To study awareness of people regarding green products.
- To study usage of various green products by people.
- To study purchasing habits of people towards buying green products.
- To study attitude of people towards green products.
- To study overall opinion and satisfaction of people regarding green products.

Research Design

After framing the Problem statement the author used the **Descriptive – Cross-sectional Research design**. It describes the phenomena under study. Now research design becomes descriptive cross sectional as it will now describe the awareness, usage of green products and attitude towards green products and one respondent was surveyed only once.

Sampling Plan

SAMPLING PLAN	
Sample Unit	People of Surat who are using green products
Sample Size	151
Sample Site	Surat
Sampling Method	Non-Probability Convenience Sampling



Data Collection

Primary data were collected through direct interview with the respondents who are using green products. The secondary data for the survey was collected from the books, journals, websites etc. For the research I have selected the method of "Personal Interview" with the people at Surat who are using green products. Questionnaire was used as a means of Data Collection and as a research instrument. The Questionnaire was mainly consisting of different kinds of questions which are as follows.

- Dichotomous Questions
- Multiple Choice Questions (Single Response and Multi Response)
- Likert Scale Questions

DATA ANALYSIS

Frequency of Purchase			
		Frequency	Percent
Options	Once a week	20	13.3
	Every fortnight	20	13.3
	Once a month	53	35.3
	Not sure	57	38.0
	Total	150	100.0

From the above table and figure it is clear that 13.3% (20) respondents purchase green products once a week, 13.3% (20) respondents purchase green products every fortnight, 35.3% (53) respondents purchase green products once a month and 38% (57) respondents are not sure about their purchase of green products.



Source_Knowledge Frequencies			
		Yes	
		Frequency	Percent
Source of Knowledge about Green Products	Television	115	20.4%
	Magazine	61	10.8%
	Advertisement Hoardings	118	20.9%
	Internet	77	13.6%
	Friends, Family & Relatives	89	15.8%
	Books	69	12.2%
	Newspapers	31	5.5%
	Peers	4	.7%
	Others	1	.2%

Awareness and Usage of Green Products

Majority of the respondents are knowledge regarding green products from advertisement hoardings, television and friends, family and relatives.

Green Products		Awareness		Usage	
		No	Yes	No	Yes
Clothes made from Recycled Fabric	Frequency	89	61	106	44
	Percent	59.3	40.7	70.7	29.3



Organic Towels	Frequency	95	55	107	43
	Percent	63.3	36.7	71.3	28.7
Woollen Footwear	Frequency	118	32	125	25
	Percent	78.7	21.3	83.3	16.7
Ballpoint Pen	Frequency	122	28	140	10
	Percent	81.3	18.7	93.3	6.7
Reusable Cups	Frequency	122	28	129	21
	Percent	81.3	18.7	86.0	14.0
Organic Pillow Case	Frequency	74	76	87	63
	Percent	49.3	50.7	58.0	42.0
Recycled Toilet Tissue	Frequency	122	28	122	28
	Percent	81.3	18.7	81.3	18.7
LED	Frequency	40	110	37	113
	Percent	26.7	73.3	24.7	75.3
Reusable Organic Cottons Napkins	Frequency	118	32	122	28
	Percent	78.7	21.3	81.3	18.7
Green Tea	Frequency	51	99	46	104
	Percent	34.0	66.0	30.7	69.3
Biodegradable Waste Bags	Frequency	124	26	131	19
	Percent	82.7	17.3	87.3	12.7



Tupperware Container	Frequency	105	45	103	47
	Percent	70.0	30.0	68.7	31.3
Reusable Sandwich Wraps	Frequency	142	8	141	9
	Percent	94.7	5.3	94.0	6.0
Jute Bags	Frequency	143	7	145	5
	Percent	95.3	4.7	96.7	3.3
Others	Frequency	0	0	0	0
	Percent	0	0	0.0	0.0

Attitude Towards Green Products

Statements		SDA	DA	N	A	SA	Mean	Int.
Are good for the environment	Freq	0	1	35	113	1	3.76	Agree
	%	0.0	0.7	23.3	75.3	0.7		
Are healthy	Freq	0	1	15	133	1	3.89	Agree
	%	0.0	0.7	10.0	88.7	0.7		
Have a good quality / performance	Freq	0	2	13	135	0	3.89	Agree
	%	0.0	1.3	8.7	90.0	0.0		
Have a better quality / performance than conventional products	Freq	0	1	20	129	0	3.85	Agree
	%	0.0	0.7	13.3	86.0	0.0		
Have a good taste and/or	Freq	0	1	33	115	1	3.77	Agree



smell	%	0.0	0.7	22.0	76.7	0.7		
Have a reasonable price	Freq	1	0	22	127	0	3.83	Agree
	%	0.7	0.0	14.7	84.7	0.0		
Are well promoted	Freq	2	26	90	31	1	3.02	Undecided
	%	1.3	17.3	60.0	20.7	0.7		
Are accessible / available in the shops / supermarkets	Freq	0	12	74	64	0	3.35	Undecided
	%	0.0	8.0	49.3	42.7	0.0		
I understand the information provided on the green products	Freq	0	16	66	67	1	3.35	Undecided
	%	0.0	10.7	44.0	44.7	0.7		
I believe in the information provided on the green products	Freq	1	19	40	90	0	3.46	Undecided
	%	0.7	12.7	26.7	60.0	0.0		
I am willing to pay a premium price for green products	Freq	0	18	49	81	2	3.45	Undecided
	%	0.0	12.0	32.7	54.0	1.3		
I pay attention to green advertising	Freq	1	22	51	75	1	3.35	Undecided
	%	0.7	14.7	34.0	50.0	0.7		
I believe in the advertisement of green products	Freq	4	28	45	72	1	3.25	Undecided
	%	2.7	18.7	30.0	48.0	0.7		
I know where the green products are displayed in the shops I purchase from	Freq	2	30	48	67	3	3.26	Undecided
	%	1.3	20.0	32.0	44.7	2.0		



I can easily find the green products in the shops / supermarket	Freq	2	24	48	73	3	3.34	Undecided
	%	1.3	16.0	32.0	48.7	2.0		
I hear and pay attention to my friends/family opinions concerning green products	Freq	2	25	44	75	4	3.36	Undecided
	%	1.3	16.7	29.3	50.0	2.7		
I recommend green products to my family/friends	Freq	6	12	35	92	5	3.52	Agree
	%	4.0	8.0	23.3	61.3	3.3		

FINDINGS

Findings from demographic profile

- Maximum 30.7% respondents in the age group of 19-30 years, 27.3% respondents in the age group of 41-50 years, the least 7.3% respondents in the age group of less than 18 years.
- Maximum 59% are females and 41% are males in the sample.
- 23.3% are 10+2 pass outs, 60.7% are graduates, 12.7% are post-graduates, 3.3% are professionals.
- Maximum 36% are students, 18% are businessmen, 14.7% are farmers and housewives, 12% are service persons, 4.7% self-employed.
- 48% respondents are having annual income less than Rs. 5 lacs, 35% respondents are having income between Rs. 5 Lacs to Rs. 10 Lacs, 17% respondents are having income more than 10 Lacs.

Findings from research questions

- 15.3% (23) respondents are having very low awareness level, 14.7% (22) are having low awareness and 28.7% (43) respondents are having high awareness level regarding green products.
- 28% (42) respondents have purchased green products whereas 72% (108) respondents have not purchased green products.
- 13.3% (20) respondents purchase green products once a week, 13.3% (20) respondents purchase green products every fortnight, 35.3% (53) respondents purchase green products once a month and



38% (57) respondents are not sure about their purchase of green products.

- 48.7% (73) respondents said that green products are beneficial to environment, 24.7% (37) respondents said they are not beneficial to environment and 26.7% (40) respondents said that green products are sometimes beneficial to the environment.
- 20% (30) respondents said that green products are worth, 57.3% (86) respondents said they are not worth and 22.7% (34) respondents said that green products are sometimes worth.
- Majority of the respondents are knowledge regarding green products from advertisement hoardings, television and friends, family and relatives.
- Green Products having maximum awareness are LED, Green Tea, Organic Pillow case, Clothes made from recycled fabric and organic towels.
- Green Products having maximum usage are LED, Green Tea, Organic Pillow case, Tupperware container and Clothes made from recycled fabric.
- 46.7% (71) respondents use own recyclable bags and 52% (79) respondents use whatever shopkeeper provides.
- 44.7% (67) respondents are willing to pay 5 to 10% extra for green products, 12.7% (19) respondents nothing extra for green products, 20% (30) respondents are willing to pay up to 5% extra for green products, 21.3% (32) respondents are willing to pay 10 to 15% extra for green products and only 1.3% (2) respondents are willing to pay more than 15% extra for green products.
- 49.3% (74) respondents are satisfied with green products, 49.3% (74) respondents are satisfied with green products, 31.3% (47) respondents are highly satisfied with green products, 18.7% (28) respondents are neutral with green products, 0.7% (1) respondents are dissatisfied with green products and no respondent was highly dissatisfied with green products.
- 54.7% (82) respondents will recommend green products to others, 28.7% (43) respondents will not recommend green products to others and 16.7% (25) respondents are unsure about recommending green products to others.
- 68.7% (103) respondents say that government should promote green products, 26% (39) respondents say that business and industry should promote green products, 2.7% (4) respondents say that environmental groups should promote green products and 2.7% (4) respondents say that citizens should promote green products.



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- 80.7% (121) respondents say that environmental issues are very serious and they should be given priority and 19.3% (29) respondents say that environmental issues are not very serious and other issues should be given priority.

Conclusion

People are having good awareness and significant amount of usage of green products. People are having positive attitude towards green products. People believe government should take actions to promote green products and they are having very high concern about green products. Overall, they do have serious concern about environment as far as green products are concerned.



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