

A Study on Customers Perception towards Green Marketing and Products with Special Reference to Thiruvananthapuram City

Vinod.S

Department of Commerce, Emmanuel college of B.Ed Training, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

Abstract: The paper aims to understanding the benefits of green products and its marketing in the present scenario. The motivation behind this study was the uncomfortable life situation of people day by day. The products like unhealthy foods, cosmetics, other needy things would lead to harmful health problems including life style diseases. Emerging trends in the industrialisation do not notice such things. Commonly industry does not keep the business ethics as whole. The relevance of green marketing comes in to the existence of such areas where the products are deal without any caution about the use of customers. This study focus on the present customers perception towards new trends known as green marketing and products. The main areas in this paper covered by the uses, importance and the preference of customers in connection with green products and it's services.

Keywords: Green products, Green Marketing, Perception of customers, eco friendly, re-cycling.

1. INTRODUCTION

Eco-friendly products are products that do not harm the environment, whether in their production, use or disposal. Some of these going green products when in use, help conserve energy, minimize carbon footprint or the emission of greenhouse gases, and does not lead to substantial toxicity or pollution to the environment. Other green products are biodegradable, recyclable or compostable. Hence, they do not harm the environment or upset the ecological balance when they are disposed off. Look at the world's consumption rate today. Things are being produced, used and then discarded at a super rapid pace. If we make no attempts to switch to green alternatives now, in no time to come, we will be surrounded by the pollution and toxins caused by producing, using and disposing these non-green items. How you consume, use, and purchase determines what's manufactured. Remember learning about supply and demand in elementary school? In your purchasing, from groceries to cars, from cat litter to homes, remember that everything you buy has a price - not just in terms of what it costs you, but what it costs the environment to be manufactured. Buying only eco friendly products and services is our trump card for controlling global warming, and for giving the planet a chance to heal. If we focus our purchasing power on buying products made from recycled paper for instance, the demand for those products will escalate...actually promoting businesses producing products made from recycled paper, and forcing other companies to reconsider making their less environmentally sound products. Buying an eco friendly product from eco-friendly companies will force others to compete for our business by also making products from recycled paper.

It seems that we have forgotten somewhere along the way that we, the consumers, actually have the power over what is made and purchased. We have allowed big business media to drive our purchasing...but that can no longer be the standard to which we hold ourselves. Demand eco friendly products and services...do your part to save the planet. Don't be part of the herd. Demand what you know is best for you, your family, the economy and the planet. Choose the products you buy wisely and with a firm commitment to buying green, local and sustainable. You'll feel better...we'll all feel better, and our planet can begin to heal. We hope our eco products definition has made clear what to look for in a green

product. Earth friendly simply means being friendly to nature. Earth is the only planet where human beings can exist. We need to be eco friendly to save our planet Earth and environment as well as making it a better place to live in. Million tons of waste is produced in the world every day. If not much we can make little efforts to help planet Earth. A person being eco friendly not only helps his surrounding to be less harmful, but also helps the fellow human beings and the animals around him. One should know the importance of being nature friendly. Nowadays, eco friendly products are readily available; one can be earth friendly by using these products and by using organic chemicals instead of harsh ones for their purposes. To be very precise, being earth friendly or eco friendly has become a necessity, that everybody should take part in.

Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally preferable to others. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, sustainable packaging as well as modifying advertising. Yet defining green marketing is not a simple task where several meanings intersect and contradict each other; an example of this will be the existence of varying social, environmental and retail definitions attached to this term. Green, environmental and eco-marketing are part of the new marketing approaches which do not just refocus, adjust or enhance existing marketing thinking and practice, but seek to challenge those approaches and provide a substantially different perspective. In more detail green, environmental and eco-marketing belong to the group of approaches which seek to address the lack of fit between marketing as it is currently practiced and the ecological and social realities of the wider marketing environment. The past decades has shown that harnessing consumer power to effect positive environmental change is far easier said than done. The so-called "green consumer" movements in the U.S. and other countries have struggled to reach critical mass and to remain in the forefront of shoppers' minds. While public opinion polls taken since the late 1980s have shown consistently that a significant percentage of consumers in the U.S. and elsewhere profess a strong willingness to favour environmentally conscious products and companies, consumers' efforts to do so in real life have remained sketchy at best. One of green marketing's challenges is the lack of standards or public consensus about what constitutes "green," according to Joel Makower, a writer on green marketing.¹ In essence, there is no definition of "how good is good enough" when it comes to a product or company making green marketing claims. This lack of consensus—by consumers, marketers, activists, regulators, and influential people—has slowed the growth of green products, says Makower, because companies are often reluctant to promote their green attributes, and consumers are often skeptical about claims.

Despite these challenges, green marketing has continued to gain adherents, particularly in light of growing global concern about climate change. This concern has led more companies to advertise their commitment to reduce their climate impacts, and the effect this is having on their products and services.

Definitions:

According to the *American Marketing Association*, 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.

The products those are manufactured through green technology and that caused no environmental hazards are called green products. Promotion of green technology and green products is necessary for conservation of natural resources and sustainable development.

Objectives of the study:

1. To know the various attitude of customers who are using green products
2. To know the relevance of the concept green marketing in the field of green products.
3. To identify the role of green marketing executives in the city
4. To analyse the various quality of eco friendly products.
5. To know the importance of green products in the modern market
6. To identify various shops/ bazaars in the area which promote green products in the city.
7. To know the scope and limitations of green products and green marketing in this scenario.

Methodology:

The methodology adopted in this study depend on a particular research problem depends to a great extent upon the objective of the study. This study made on the basis of both primary and secondary data which are collected from various sources especially from the customers who are using green products in the city.

Collection of data and sample of the study:

This study based on the data collected by the customers through interview and questionnaires. Sample took for this study mostly lying on the people residing in Thiruvananthapuram city and includes 70 numbers from the total distribution.

Hypothesis:

Ho: There is no relationship between customers preference and green marketing

H1: There is a relationship between customers preference and green marketing

Limitations of the study:

1. As city like Thiruvananthapuram it is very difficult to find out the people, who are aware about green products and green marketing,
2. The sources related with secondary data about this problem was limited.

2. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted among the consumers who are aware about Green products and Green Marketing. The first rule of green marketing is focusing on customer benefits i.e. the primary reason why consumers buy certain products in the first place. Do this right, and motivate consumers to switch brands or even pay a premium for the greener alternative. It is not going to help if a product is developed which is absolutely green in various aspects but does not pass the customer satisfaction criteria. This will lead to green myopia. Also if the green products are priced very high then again it will lose its market acceptability.

Advantages of green products marketing:

- Products those are originally grown,
- Products those are recyclable, reusable and biodegradable,
- Products with natural ingredients,
- Products containing recycled contents, non-toxic chemical,
- Products contents under approved chemical,
- Products that do not harm or pollute the environment,
- Products that will not be tested on animals,
- Products that have eco-friendly packaging i.e. reusable, refillable containers etc.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A brief summary of reviews are presented related with the study

Samir K.Srivastava study focused to know the growing need for integrating environmentally sound choices into supply-chain management research and practice. Perusal of the literature shows that a broad frame of reference for green supply-chain management (GrSCM) is not adequately developed. Regulatory bodies that formulate regulations to meet societal and ecological concerns to facilitate growth of business and economy also suffer from its absence. A succinct classification to help academicians, researchers and practitioners in understanding integrated GrSCM from a wider perspective is needed. Further, sufficient literature is available to warrant such classification. This paper takes an integrated and fresh look into the area of GrSCM. The literature on GrSCM is covered exhaustively from its

conceptualization, primarily taking a 'reverse logistics angle'. Using the rich body of available literature, including earlier reviews that had relatively limited perspectives, the literature on GrSCM is classified on the basis of the problem context in supply chain's major influential areas. It is also classified on the basis of methodology and approach adopted. Various mathematical tools/techniques used in literature *vis-à-vis* the contexts of GrSCM are mapped. A timeline indicating relevant papers is also provided as a ready reference. Finally, the findings and interpretations are summarized, and the main research issues and opportunities are highlighted

According to Hawken (Ecology of Commerce, 1995) business has three issues to face. These are what it takes, what it makes and what it wastes. What it takes is materials from the environment, (its ecosystem) through extracting, mining, cutting, hunting and other means. What it makes is the products of commerce, goods and services that are derived from the natural environment through the process of conversion and transformation. What it represents eco-costs arising from garbage, pollution and destruction of natural systems, which are the consequences of taking and making processes. And these costs are not internalized in most of the accounting symptoms so far.

4. EMPIRICAL CASES AND EXAMPLES OF GREEN MARKETING IN INDIA

1. Digital Tickets by Indian Railways. :- Recently IRCTC has allowed its customers to carry PNR no. of their E-Tickets on their laptop and mobiles. Customers do not need to carry the printed version of their ticket anymore.

2. No Polythene carry bags for free :-Forest & Environmental Ministry of India has ordered to retail outlets like BigBazar, More, Central, D-Mart etc that they could provide polythene carry bags to customers only if customers are ready for pay for it.

3. Green IT Project: State Bank of India:-By using eco and power friendly equipment in its 10,000 new ATMs, the banking giant has not only saved power costs and earned carbon credits, but also set the right example for others to follow. SBI is also entered into green service known as "Green Channel Counter". SBI is providing many services like; paper less banking, no deposit slip, no withdrawal form, no checks, no money transactions form all these transaction are done through SBI shopping & ATM cards. State Bank of India turns to wind energy to reduce emissions. The wind project is the first step in the State Bank of India's green banking program dedicated to the reduction of its carbon footprint and promotion of energy efficient processes, especially among the bank's clients.

4. Lead Free Paints from Kansai Nerolac:- Kansai Nerolac has worked on removing hazardous heavy metals from their paints. The hazardous heavy metals like lead, mercury, chromium, arsenic and antimony can have adverse effects on humans. Lead in paints especially poses danger to human health where it can cause damage to Central Nervous System, kidney and reproductive system. Children are more prone to lead poisoning leading to lower intelligence levels and memory loss.

5. Wipro's Green Machines:-Wipro Infotech was India's first company to launch environment friendly computer peripherals. For the Indian market, Wipro has launched a new range of desktops and laptops called Wipro Green ware. These products are RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances) compliant thus reducing e-waste in the environment.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

I. Uses of Green Marketing in the perspective of customers response:

TABLE-I

<i>Preferences</i>	<i>No of Respondents</i>
Reliable	20
Easy to operate	9
Facility of purchase return	17
Saving of time	15
Availability of refund	9
Total	70

(Source: Primary Data)

LINE CHART

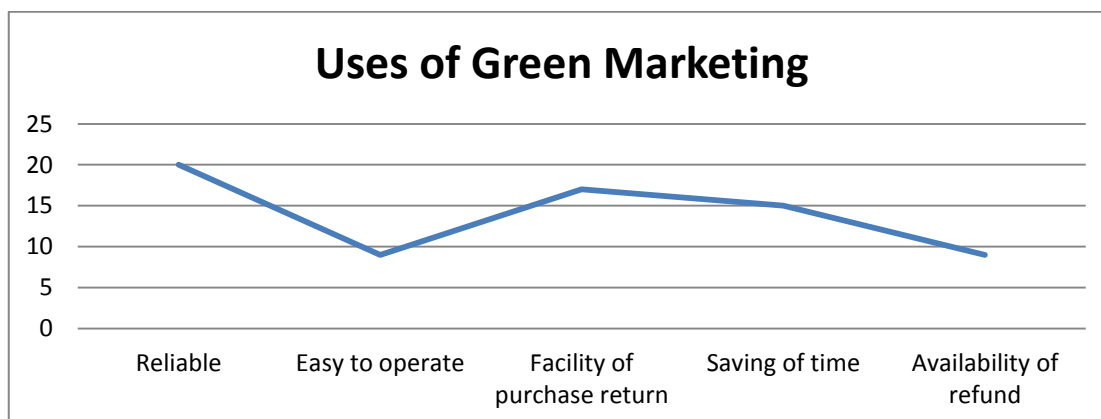


Fig.1: *Interface*: This showing that most of the people follow green market because of its reliability and faith to use and operate.

II. Reason for the purchase of green products:

TABLE II

Reasons	Types of response		
	Yes	No	Total
Availability of fresh products	8	2	10
Re-usage/Re-cycle	3	3	6
Healthy and economical	17	1	18
Eco-friendly	13	4	17
Low wastage	9	3	12
Availability of Nearby Market	5	2	7
TOTAL	55	15	70

(Source: Primary Data)

BAR CHART

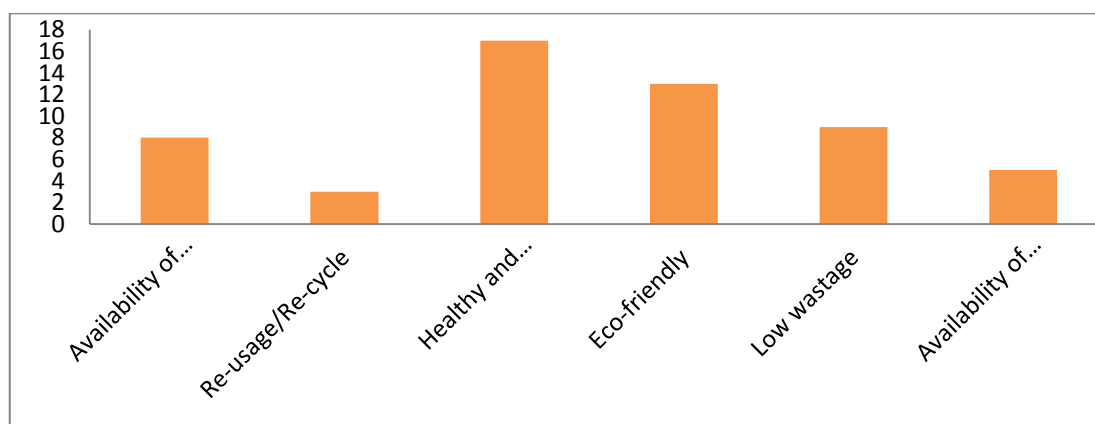


Fig.2: *Interface*: This showing that most of the people think that green products are healthy and economical in the market so they prefer those products.

Chi-Square Test Result

Value of Chi-square-16.866

Degree of freedom - 4

Table value at .05 level of significance- 9.488

Interface: Calculated value is greater than the table value. Therefore there is no goodness of fit between the observed frequency and expected frequencies.

6. FINDINGS

1. Nowadays customers are mostly like green products and materials.
2. Due to the green marketing in the world it seems to reduce the wastage and stagnation.
3. It is found that the people who are being with green products are healthy than others.
4. It is found that green marketing chain globalise the present market with green products.
5. Openings of new green product shops are one of the main result of green marketing.

7. SUGGESTIONS

1. Government can implement new policy in connection with green marketing of product and services.
2. There is a need of green shops in all cities.
3. The new entrepreneurs should take the advantages of green product business.
4. Organisations should provide the needs of green products and marketing towards their regular customers.

8. CONCLUSION

Green marketing must satisfy two objectives: Improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction. Corporations are increasingly recognizing the benefits of green marketing, although there is often a thin line between doing so for its own benefit and for social responsibility reasons. We can hope the green market and its affiliated products should keep our nation greenly and eco-friendly.

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