

Impact of Green Marketing on Consumer Buying Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Consumers have directed their attention toward environment friendly products that are presumed to be “green” or environment friendly like low power consuming (energy-efficient) electrical appliances, organic foods, lead free paints, recyclable paper, and phosphate free detergents. Indian marketers and consumers are also realizing the importance of the Green Marketing Concept. This paper examines consumers’ perceptions and preferences regarding green marketing practices and products using data collected through a structured questionnaire. The study was conducted on a sample of 100 respondents. Findings indicate a moderate level of awareness about green marketing practices and products, and respondents exhibited average levels of green values. The research provides useful insights for marketers of green products and highlights the need to design effective marketing communication campaigns that promote green products, given the relatively high green value observed among consumers. The results further reveal that overall green values, awareness of green products and practices, and perceptions of companies’ commitment to green marketing have a positive and significant impact on consumers’ willingness to purchase and prefer green products over conventional alternatives.

INTRODUCTION

Green Marketing refers to the process of promoting and selling products or services based on their environmental benefits. A product or service may be considered environmentally friendly either because it is inherently eco-friendly or because it is produced using environmentally responsible practices. Examples include: Being manufactured in a sustainable manner, not containing toxic materials or ozone-depleting substances, being recyclable and/or produced from recycled materials, being made from renewable resources (such as bamboo), Avoiding excessive or non-biodegradable packaging, being designed for durability, repairability, and reuse rather than disposable or “throwaway” use.

Green marketing is generally practiced by companies committed to sustainable development and corporate social responsibility. An increasing number of organizations are adopting sustainable business practices as they recognize that such efforts not only make their products more appealing to environmentally conscious consumers but also help reduce operational costs, including those related to packaging, transportation, and energy or water consumption. Businesses are increasingly discovering that demonstrating a strong commitment to social and environmental responsibility can enhance brand loyalty among socially conscious consumers, and green marketing serves as an effective tool to achieve this.

An underlying assumption of green marketing is that potential consumers will perceive a products’ or services’ environmental friendliness as a valuable benefit and will factor this into their purchasing decisions. A less obvious assumption is that consumers are willing to pay a premium for green products compared to similar, less eco-friendly alternatives. Evidence suggests that this assumption holds true.

The 2014 Nielsen Global Survey on Corporate Social Responsibility, which surveyed 30,000 consumers across 60 countries to assess sustainable purchasing preferences, reported the following findings:

- **55%** of consumers were willing to pay extra for products and services offered by companies committed to positive social and environmental impact (an increase from 45% in 2011).
- **52%** had made at least one purchase in the past six months from a socially responsible company.
- **52%** routinely check product packaging to ensure sustainable impact.

Significance Of The Study

- . It reduces the use of plastic and plastic-based products.
- It increases the consumption of natural products and reduces chemical products.

- A company can enter new markets when it brings attention to positive environmental impact.
- Gain more profit from green marketing
- Green marketing brings a competitive advantage
- Raise awareness on important environmental or social issues

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research aims to examine the impact of green marketing on consumers' purchasing patterns. A review of relevant literature reveals several positive as well as negative effects associated with green marketing practices. Previous studies provide extensive insights into this topic, highlighting how consumer behavior is influenced by environmental awareness and the perceived benefits of green products. Current trends indicate a growing awareness of environmental issues and an increasing recognition of green marketing initiatives. As a result, many modern consumers are more informed and make conscious, deliberate choices regarding the brands, products, and services they use.

1. Jeevarathnam P. Govender L. Govender, South Africa (2016):

Green marketing has increasingly become a central focus for both companies and society at large. This study emphasizes that the primary objective of green marketing is to promote and sell products that are harmless to the environment, while simultaneously encouraging consumers to engage in environmentally responsible behavior (Stern & Ander, 2018). Another key objective highlighted in the study is the need for businesses to transform their operational practices and offer products that contribute positively to environmental sustainability.

2. Aditi Jaju (2016):

In this study, the researcher investigates the impact of green marketing on consumer purchasing patterns, with the aim of understanding how green products can become a more mainstream market segment. The study identifies key factors that influence green behavior among consumers and evaluates the extent to which green marketing efforts are successful in shaping such behavior. Primary data was analyzed using correlation coefficients and regression techniques. The findings highlight the relationship between various environmental belief factors and corresponding environmental behaviors, indicating how consumers' attitudes toward the environment influence their purchasing decisions.

3. Mayank Jain & Amit (2013):

This study identifies three distinct stages in the evolution of green marketing. The first stage emerged in the 1980s, when the concept was initially introduced and began gaining attention. The second stage appeared in the 1990s but faced significant backlash, leading the researchers to conclude that environmental concerns at that time did not strongly influence consumer behavior. Since the early 2000s, green marketing has entered its third stage, characterized by renewed momentum driven by advancements in technology, stricter government regulations, and increased global environmental awareness.

4. Aysel Boztepe (2012):

This research study examines consumer reactions toward green marketing. With increasing globalization, consumers have become more concerned about the environmental impacts of the products they use. The study emphasizes that in order to attract consumers, companies must develop environmentally friendly products that cause minimal harm to the environment, while also ensuring reasonable and affordable pricing. The primary objective of the research was to determine consumers' reactions to green products compared to conventional alternatives.

Objectives Of Research Study

- . To find out the consumer purchasing patterns in green marketing and decision making in India
- . To analyse the relationship between gender and Green Marketing tools and their purchase behaviour.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The type of research employed in this study is descriptive research, aimed at examining and analyzing consumer behavior in relation to green marketing.

The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no relationship between gender and the influence of green marketing tools on actual purchase behavior.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between gender and the influence of green marketing tools on actual purchase behavior.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. AGE:

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Below 15 years	-	-
B) 16-30 years	99	99%
C) 31-45 years	1	1%
D) 46 years and above	-	-

The study surveyed a total of **100 respondents**, of whom **99%** were in the age group of **16–30 years**, while the remaining **1%** fell within the **31–45 years** age category.

2. Gender:

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Female	54	54%
B) Male	46	46%
C) Other	-	-

Out of the total **100 respondents**, **54%** were **female** and the remaining **46%** were **male**.

3. Occupation

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Student	89	89%
B) Business	7	7%
C) Professional	2	2%
D) Other	2	2%

Out of the total **100 respondents**, **89%** were **students**, **7%** were engaged in **business**, **2%** were **professionals**, and the remaining **2%** belonged to **other categories**.

4. AWARENESS of GREEN marketing.

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Yes, completely aware	30	30%
B) Partially aware	63	63%
C) Not at all aware	7	7%

Among the **100 respondents**, **30%** were **completely aware** of the concept of green marketing, **63%** were **partially aware**, and **7%** were **not aware at all**.

5. Awareness of Green Products and Eco friendly product

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Yes	90	90%
B) No	8	8%
C) Maybe	2	2%

It is encouraging to note that the majority of respondents are aware of green and eco-friendly products, which can have a positive impact on the environment. **8%** of respondents were unaware of green products, while **2%** were uncertain about their awareness.

6. Factors/ Features attracted the Customer to buy a Green Product.

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Product features and packaging	8	8%

B) Advertisements	3	3%
C)Environment protection	40	40%
D)All of the above	49	49%

Among the respondents, **49%** are motivated to purchase green products due to a combination of product features, eco-friendly packaging, advertising, and concern for environmental protection. **40%** buy green products primarily to protect the environment, **8%** are influenced by attractive eco-friendly features and packaging, and **3%** are motivated mainly by promotional activities.

7.Source of Awareness of green products/Eco-friendly products.

Source of Awareness	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Internet	56	56%
B) Advertisement	19	19%
C) Family and friends	15	15%
D) Other	10	10%

The large amount of percentage became aware through internet, whereas Advertisement also plays an important role as 19% of the whole are aware through advertisements. 15% of the whole know about it through family and friends and 10% know about it through other sources.

8. Preference for eco labelled products.

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Always	27	27%
B) Often	62	62%
C) Rarely	10	10%
D) Never	1	1%

Among the respondents, **27%** always use eco-labelled products, **62%** use them often, **10%** use them rarely, and only **1%** reported that they never use eco-labelled products.

9.Opinions on harmfulness of Packaging to the environment (Like using tetra pack milk rather than single use plastic pack milk)

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Always	48	48%
B) Sometimes	44	44%
C) Never	2	2%
D) Not sure	6	6%

Among the respondents, **48%** always use products with environmentally friendly packaging, **44** use them sometimes, **2%** never use such products, and **6%** were not sure.

10. Information availability about the green features when customer buy a product.

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
A) Fully disclosed	8	8.1%
B) Partially disclosed	67	66.7%
C) Not disclosed	11	11.1%
D) Can't say	14	14.1%

Regarding the disclosure of green features on products, **66.7%** of respondents stated that such information is **partially disclosed**, while **11.1%** felt it is **not disclosed at all**. **8.1%** of respondents indicated that green features are **fully disclosed**, and **14.1%** were **unsure** about the level of disclosure.

FINDINGS

The detailed study conducted above leads to the conclusion that gender does not have a significant impact on consumers' purchasing patterns for green products. The primary objective of this research was to determine whether gender influences the purchase of green products available in the market. While the study found no significant relationship, it also highlighted certain previously unexplored aspects of consumer behavior that could be investigated further in future research.

The study also revealed that while consumers are not fully aware of the concept of green marketing, they generally prefer purchasing green or eco-friendly products. This trend is particularly prominent among the 16–30 years age group, which largely comprises students. This demographic tends to be informed about green products primarily through the internet, followed by advertisements. Their motivation to purchase green products is driven by the products' ability to reduce environmental harm, the influence of green marketing, and the eco-friendly features and packaging of the products.

Interestingly, the study found that consumers are likely to stop purchasing products from companies that do not follow eco-friendly practices. They tend to gravitate toward eco-labelled products and consistently prefer products with environmentally friendly packaging as well as those labelled 'Organic' or 'Paraben- and Sulphate-free'. Respondents were divided on the issue of price: some were hesitant to buy green products if they were slightly more expensive than conventional alternatives, while others did not consider higher prices a barrier to purchasing environmentally friendly products. The majority of respondents believe that green products fulfill their needs and values just as effectively as conventional products. However, the research also revealed a concern among consumers: while they are willing to purchase green products, many feel that companies do not provide sufficient information regarding the composition, ingredients, and packaging of these products.

The research also revealed that consumers are making efforts to reduce their use of plastic, particularly single-use plastic, and are attempting to switch to more sustainable alternatives. However, the majority of respondents are not aware of emerging plastic-positive brands and have limited knowledge of the companies offering such eco-friendly solutions.

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that more than half of the population is partially aware of the concept of green marketing, eco-labels, and green products. These consumers are making conscious efforts to contribute positively to the environment by making small but meaningful lifestyle changes. Examples include car-pooling, using steel or bamboo straws, switching to wooden toothbrushes, using public transportation, and reducing participation in fast fashion industries, among other actions. These environmentally conscious behaviors were observed regardless of gender.

CONCLUSION

The studies found that consumers' awareness of green products is relatively high; however, many are unaware of green initiatives undertaken by government and non-government agencies, highlighting the need for increased efforts by organizations in this area. The internet emerged as the primary source of information for most respondents, suggesting that it should be leveraged more effectively to educate consumers about green products and practices.

Overall, responses indicated a moderate positive attitude toward green products, showing that consumers are generally trusting of organizations' green claims and are concerned about the present and future state of the environment. This underscores the growing demand for green products and sustainable practices. Marketers have an opportunity to develop new green products and effectively communicate their environmental benefits to consumers.

With increasing awareness and environmental concern, consumers are likely to prefer green products over conventional alternatives as a way to protect the environment. Consumers not only care about the state of the environment but also expect organizations to adopt green practices in their operations.

These findings have important implications for durable goods manufacturers, particularly regarding the implementation of green marketing strategies. Marketing communications should emphasize both the message and the medium, highlighting the environmental benefits of products and practices. Advertising that effectively showcases green initiatives is likely to appeal to consumers' emotions and drive persuasion. Additionally, it is crucial for marketers to achieve top-of-mind recall among consumers to maximize the impact of their green brand positioning. Constant and

continuous communication from organizations is essential to create a distinct green positioning in the minds of consumers. The study found that consumers generally have a positive attitude toward green products, but they are also concerned about the availability and pricing of such products. This implies that marketers should focus on ensuring easy accessibility of green products, as consumers have demonstrated a willingness to purchase them when they are available. As consumers become more aware of the adverse environmental impacts of manufacturing and consumption, they may be more inclined to purchase green products if marketers effectively communicate their benefits, especially given that consumers often perceive green products as being more expensive than traditional alternatives. The study found that the proportion of consumers who buy exclusively green products is relatively low, presenting an opportunity for marketers to expand their product portfolios and position themselves as environmentally responsible brands.

This research has significant implications for both marketers and consumers, highlighting the emergence of green marketing in India. However, since the study was conducted in a limited geographical area, its findings have limited generalizability. Nevertheless, it provides valuable insights into consumer behavior toward green products. Future research could explore psychographic segmentation to assess consumers' green values and preferences more deeply. Additionally, replicating the study on a larger scale would offer broader insights into consumer behavior and contribute to a better understanding of the green marketing phenomenon.

SUGGESTIONS

It will be very good if the Government Increase awareness programs and implements strict rules and regulations on green products and industries. It will also be very good if the government makes it mandatory for all industries to adopt eco-friendly processes and sustainable manufacturing practices and also Single-use plastics may be completely banned to reduce environmental harm. Also, Consumers should become self-aware and modify their lifestyles, purchasing habits, and consumption patterns to support sustainability.

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