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AWARENESS OF CONSUMERS TOWARDS GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES

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Abstract

Green marketing is the marketing of environmentally friendly products and services. It is becoming more popular as there is an increasing concern for environmental issues and consumers want to spend their money on the products that are friendly to the planet. Due to the growing consciousness among consumers regarding health and various factors affecting the ecological balance, consumers are willing to prefer environmentally safe products. Reusing and recycling the products helps the environment. Many firms are beginning to realize that they are members of the wider community and therefore must behave in an environmentally responsible fashion. This translates a belief into firms that they must achieve environmental as well as profit related objectives. Governmental regulations relating to environmental marketing are designed to protect consumers in several ways, ensure that all types of consumers have the ability to evaluate the environmental composition of goods. Government establishes regulations designed to control the number of hazardous wastes produced by firms. Green marketing requires that consumers want a safe environment and are willing to “pay” for it, possibly through high priced goods. It needs coordination between consumers and organizations which can lead the green marketing revolution. The present study was focused to know the consumer awareness towards green products that are recyclable and reusable. Data was collected from 40 management graduates using questionnaire with 5-point Likert scale and Descriptive Statistical Techniques were used to analyse the data. From the analysis it was identified that the people were aware of green products and they expressed their willingness to purchase green products.

Keywords: Consumers Awareness, Green Marketing, Recyclable and Reusable products.

INTRODUCTION

The green marketing has evolved over a period of time. The term Green

Marketing came into prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The evolution of green marketing has three phases. First

phase was termed as "Ecological" green marketing, and during this period all marketing activities were concerned to help environment problems and provide remedies for environmental problems. Second phase was "Environmental" green marketing and the focus shifted on clean technology that involved designing of innovative new products, which take care of pollution and waste issues. Third phase was "Sustainable" green marketing. It came into prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000.

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.

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. 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. Other similar terms used are Environmental Marketing and Ecological Marketing.

Green Marketing in India

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. Evolution of Green Marketing is the term that was first discussed in a seminar on "Ecological Marketing" organized by American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1975 and took its place in marketing terminology. It was concerned with developing the products that meet the criteria of quality, performance, pricing and convenience in an eco-friendly way. Green Products can be defined as "Products which have minimal impact on the environment".

There are significant alterations for activation in the business world in relation to the importance towards the environment and the society. Corporate ethical code of the 21st century is being green. Without a doubt, the main objective of companies is profitability but it is highly difficult for companies with the particular objective of making profit to achieve sustainability. Companies should be mindful of their duties towards the environment and the community similarly as towards customers, workers and shareholders. Climate change, environmental problems and social problems will confront the leaders of future generation for engaging effective and inclusive determinations. In the practice of engaging these determinations, the first concern of business society should be placed on the key of conserving the environment instead of improving the profitability of the business (Boztepe, 2012). In order to improve profitability, which is a direct

advantage for the business itself, green marketing can advantage society by promoting not only the communication but also the practice of green business process. The companies actually have a strong possibility to enhance their attitude if they engaged in environmental business activities. This is because to allege that their products are eco-friendly, they have to absolutely assess the product in a way that matches valid requirements to acquire certified eco-labels.

Nowadays consumers gradually acknowledge the need to take care of the environment and become more culturally responsible. Therefore, accountability of companies to consumers' inclinations for environmentally harmless or neutral products is essential (Saini, 2013). Consumers prefer every new and positive concept, so that innovator plays an essential role in this segment. A successful product that fulfils consumer satisfaction will definitely have an increase in sales and revenue. Second important benefits are reduced cost. In green marketing, the cost of raw materials is low thus it will increase the production. On top of that, green marketing can build brand value. A great green practices company will get a good brand value in the heart of the consumers. Another important benefit of green marketing is getting tax breaks and loans from government because those innovative companies which help the nation who are living in a rural or unemployment will bear uncertain risks. Besides, they save environment and health of nation so they receive subsidies from government. Lastly, the most crucial advantage of green marketing is world salvation. Disposal and treatment of wastage, production process of companies will produce emissions of several greenhouse gases which contribute to global climate change which can causes

greenhouse effect. By following a great way of green practices, the companies could save the world in the way of saving the health of peoples and the environment.

Green business, commonly known as sustainable business, is a fast-growing aspect of the business world wherein a triple bottom line is incorporated. Rather than a traditional bottom line consisting of the financial side of a business, the triple bottom line brings social, financial, and environmental concerns in establishing business practice. What the triple bottom line entails is an evaluation of the financial impact of a business decision, how that decision affects the society around the business, and whether or not the decision is beneficial or neutral to the environment. Having a business founded on the triple bottom line means a commitment not only to financial success, but to the success of the surrounding community and the environment. The focus is not solely on making money, but being socially and environmentally responsible. In terms of consumer preference, a product's "greenness" is becoming a strong qualifier for consumer purchases. Although greenness isn't the driving factor behind consumer purchasing, the result is that consumers want products that have chemicals that are safer in a home. Rather than purchasing a chlorine-based product from Clorox, consumers are able to purchase non-chlorine-based products that have the same use. This allows them to be confident in the effectiveness of the product, as well as the safeness.

Review of Literature

Sourabh Bhattacharya (2011) states that the green marketers in India should carry out heavy promotional campaigns, because majority of the Indian consumers are

price-sensitive and are not sure about the quality of green products.

Selvakumar and Rajesh Pando (2011) indicated that green marketing is not all about manufacturing green products and services but encompassing all those marketing activities that are needed to develop and sustain consumers’ eco-friendly attitudes and behaviours in a way that helps in creating minimal detrimental impact on the environment.

Amitabha Ghosh (2008) has examined the strategies in green marketing highlighting the history, growth and challenges of green marketing in India and abroad. He also mentioned some of innovative techniques of regulation on corporate environmental planning at various levels.

Objectives

1. To understand the green marketing initiatives in India.
2. To study the consumers’ awareness towards green products.

Methodology of the study

The purpose of the study was to know the consumers’ awareness towards green products that are recyclable and reusable. A questionnaire with 5-point Likert scale was administered to extract data from the consumers. Data was collected from 40 management graduates by using Simple Random Sampling technique. Descriptive statistical techniques like Mean, Standard deviation and Coefficient of Variation (CV) were applied for analysing the data.

Scope and Limitations

1. Management students studying in one of the reputed colleges in Vijayawada were considered for the study.
2. The extent of level of awareness towards green products was considered for the study.

Analysis and Discussion

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation (CV)
S1: You believe in the concept of Green Marketing	4.47	0.5986	13.39
S2: Are you aware of companies going Green?	4.025	0.6975	17.32
S3: Regular Marketing Techniques harm the environment.	3.625	0.8969	24.74
S4: We should use environmentally friendly products as they are less polluting.	4.525	0.7156	15.81
S5: Most of the products we use are environmentally unsafe.	4.025	0.9195	22.84
S6: Everyone is responsible for Green Marketing.	4.175	0.8129	19.47

S7: All Green Products are made environmentally friendly.	4	0.8164	20.40
S8: Green products cause lesser damage to the environment	4.25	0.7762	18.26
S9: Green Products are Reusable and Recyclable	4.025	0.8316	20.66
S10: People around you are using Green Products.	3.525	0.8469	24.02

The above table depicts that, the statements S1(13.39), S4(15.81), S2(17.32), S8(18.26) and S6(19.47) low coefficient of variation value was observed from the respondents, which shows that respondents are having positive opinion towards concept of green marketing, they would like to use environmentally friendly products as they are less polluting, respondents were aware of green marketing concepts implemented by various companies, they are of the opinion that green products cause lesser damage to the environment and everyone must be responsible for encouraging green marketing. The highest coefficient of variation value was observed for the statements S10(24.02), S3(24.74) and S5(22.84) which depicts that majority of the consumers in their neighbourhood are not using the green products, respondents opined that regular marketing practices harm the environment and most of the products available in the market are environmentally unsafe.

Conclusion

Respondents were aware of the environmentally safe products and are showing a positive attitude towards green marketing and green products. The respondents also felt that there is lack of awareness in their neighbourhood towards

environmentally safe products. Therefore, constant efforts should be taken up by the Government, NGOs, Educational institutions and Business houses to create awareness among the consumers at large to use green products for sustainable environment and save the mother earth.

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