

Green Marketing and Sustainable Development: Marketing Professionals Attitude Towards Green Marketing

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ABSTRACT

India is developing significantly with a good pace in industrialisation but this development is leaving behind a curse to the nature. People are now conscious about the environmental depletion, which the industrialists have been serving along with the bundle of utilities. Social movements, media, NGOs are also nowadays enhancing consumer's attention towards the environmental effects a product may have. To cope with these changes in the society, marketers have adopted green marketing concept in order to sustain in the market. In order to achieve sustainable success, marketers have to reassess their strategies and make them environment-friendly. The companies who are using these green practices in their functioning will achieve the sustainable success as people these days have a positive attitude for green products. This research is an attempt to measure the attitude of Indian marketing professionals towards green marketing practices. Are they enthusiastic to adopt green practices to gain competitive advantage and will it ensure sustainable success? Before collecting the primary data from marketing professionals, researchers did an exhaustive literature survey and identified 13 variables for the study. To find out the underlying dimensions, factor analysis was used. The result shows a positive attitude of marketing professional, towards green marketing.

Keyword: Green Marketing, Environmental Marketing, Marketing Professionals' attitude

INTRODUCTION

Increasing population and industrialization are exerting too much pressure on environment, infrastructure and the available natural resources. These environmental issues have influenced all activities but very few marketers inculcate green issues in their practices (Saxena and Khandelwal, 2010). Incorporating green practices in marketing strategy is broadly termed as green marketing. In 1980s a drastic change in consumer behaviour towards eco-products was observed with the emergence of green consumers provoking market mechanisms for environmentally genial organisations (Ottman, 1993). As a result, an increasing number of consumers eagerly seek environment-friendly commodities. The last decade had witnessed an arrival of green brands in the market due to consumer demand thus permitting green marketing to emerge into a multidimensional strategic and tactical process. According to Mishra and Sharma (2012), green

marketing is related to activities like product modification, fair –trade practices, adopting eco-friendly production process and packaging. In order to get sustainable success marketers have to adopted green marketing techniques. The companies who are using these green practices in their functioning will achieve the sustainable success as people these days have a positive attitude for green products. This research is an attempt to measure the attitude of Indian marketing professionals towards green marketing practices. Are they enthusiastic to adopt green practices to gain competitive advantage and will it ensure sustainable success?

Polonsky (1994) defined green marketing as “set of all the activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occur, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment.” This definition shows green marketing is a business practice that considers

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consumers concern about preservation of the natural environment. However, Coddington (1993) defines this practice “as consumers concerns with regards to reservation and conservation of the natural environment” which shows this practice is based on consumers only. Pandey (2011) considered green marketing as philosophy to “Reduce, Reuse and Recycle”-reducing the environmental deterioration and energy consumption, increasing the repeated use of a product and recycling the product for the development of a new product.

GREEN MARKETING AND SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

There is no general census over the word ‘sustainability’ researchers and academicians defined sustainability according to their viewpoint. Ehrenfeld (2008) pointed sustainability as the medium through which human and other life will flourish on the earth forever. According to USA National Environmental Policy Act (1969) sustainability can be defined as “Create and maintain conditions under which [humans] and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans”. This definition of sustainability provides a deeper understanding of sustainability.

Green marketing is a much broader concept, which encompasses all marketing activities that are developed to stimulate and to sustain consumers’ environment-friendly attitudes and behaviours (Jain and Kaur, 2004). To become a sustainable organisation, business organisation must have to use the resources in such a manner that can serve the humans everlastingly. Hence, for sustaining success marketers have to intend towards sustainable consumption and tries to protect the environment. Saxena and Khandelwal (2010) segmented sustainable development into three constituent parts: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and socio-political sustainability.

Sustainability is the most common word nowadays in the environmental and economic research. Certainly, the idea of sustainability has become increasingly popular in the contemporary world. Majority of researches show that there is consensus over corporate sustainability constitutes a firm’s efficient use of natural capital. This

eco-efficiency is usually based on the economic value added by a firm in relation to its aggregated ecological impact (Schaltegger, S. and Sturm, A. 1998). This idea has been popularized by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) under the following definition: “Eco-efficiency is achieved by the delivery of competitively-priced goods and services that satisfy human needs and bring quality of life, while progressively reducing ecological impacts and resource intensity throughout the lifecycle to a level at least in line with the earth’s carrying capacity” (DeSimone and Popoff, 1997).

GREEN MARKETING AND MARKETING PROFESSIONALS ATTITUDE

Consumer environmentalism has been more widespread in the last two decades while consumers are aware of the environmental problems in the world and therefore, consumers become more willing to purchase products which are more environment-friendly (Krause, 1993). In order to serve these demands, companies can utilize the idea of green marketing to generate and to facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy customers’ environmental needs or wants (Polonsky, 1994). Singh and Pandey (2012) argued that companies have been adopted green marketing activities under the pressure of legislative measures. But they again added that today’s customer is more informed and even aware regarding green marketing initiatives therefore companies are shifting their perception about green marketing from legislative paradigm to customer satisfaction paradigm. Green marketing is not only limited up to customer perspective. Fraj-Andrés, Salinas, and Vallejo (2009) argued that company’s performance and environment-friendly practices are positively correlated to each other and these practices can provide a competitive and distinct image to the firm. In the same pace Fraj *et al.* (2011), interlinked marketing professionals and green marketing practices by arguing that green marketing should be taken as an excellent strategy by the managers, because it optimizes their results, reduce costs, increases resources productivity, and create differentiation advantages to the firm. Thus, we can say that green marketing is not only important for customers’ and legislative purpose but also related to companies’ productivity and competitive advantage. Baker and Sinkula (2005) also acknowledged the fact that internal rather than external forces drive environmental marketing formation. It highlights the significance of companies’ internal culture for effective

green marketing practices. But things are not so easy because there are some lacuna from the side of marketers as far as green marketing is concerned. Rojsek(2001) argued that environmental marketing initiatives are related to long term sustainability and corporate managers are often prefer to allocate available resources to more tangible and immediately pressing issues. It indicated the managers are not too much impressive at the front of green marketing. Mohanasundaram(2012)also stresses on the fact that marketers should praise eco-friendly exercises to avail long-term benefits. Rojsek (2001) in his research that was conducted in Slovenia, do not find an encouraging finding about attitude of managers towards environmental marketing. Burritt and Schaltegger(2001) also emphasize on the role of managers in eco friendly practices. Cherian and Jacob (2012)opined that employees' awareness about green marketing is very important to formulate appropriate strategies/policies. Zahedi(2012) argued that employees' awareness is a key factor for ecofriendly practices. Cronin, Smith, Gleim, Ramirez, and Martinez (2010) argued that nowadays employees of the firms are showing interest in the area of green marketing practices and its impact on triple bottom line but there is scarcity of researches in this area. Now, where majority of world is showing interest in green marketing initiatives to build their competitiveness, differentiation and grab customer satisfaction, there has been a very few research work done in developing countries like India. Hindol(2013);Saxena and Khandelwal(2012) also acknowledged this fact and argued that there have been a number of studies regarding green marketing initiatives and social economies in developed countries, and there is lack of such studies in fast developing Asian countries like India.

Concerning this gap, the proposed study is an attempt to measure marketing professionals' attitude towards green marketing practices in Indian context. Based on such review of literature, researcher(s) were able to identify the objectives of the research:

1. To measure the marketing professionals' attitude towards green marketing
2. To identify the underlying dimensions of the attitude towards green marketing

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The target population for the study comprised of marketing professionals working in different organisations situated in

Delhi and NCR area of the country. Thereof the sampling unit was consisting of marketing professionals at various levels in different companies, selected by following the Judgmental sampling method. Finally, the questionnaires were sent to 130 individuals, out of whom 92 replied. With this figure, we had response rate of 70.76%, which seems to be quite impressive. 50% response rate is sufficient for analysis and reporting (Babbie, 2008).

The objective of the research is to identify underlying dimension of marketer's attitude and assess the overall attitude towards green marketing.

There is lack of studies in Indian context which are related to green marketing (Saxena and Khandelwal, 2012), therefore we don't have a versatile scale for measuring attitude towards green marketing. Under these circumstances, researchers have identified several variables to measure marketing professional attitude towards green marketing by considering the scale items of Hemantha (2012) and Vashisht *et al.* (2012), as well as incorporating the outcomes of exploratory interview. In exploratory interview, there were three experts from the industry and two experts from academics. Questions were reviewed by these experts and pretested to avoid misinterpretation. Finally, we came with a scale having 13 items (Annexure 1). The survey instrument had three demographic (gender, age, monthly income) and 13 green marketing related questions. Data were collected by using 5 point likert scale (5=strongly agree, 4 =agree, 3 = neutral, 2= disagree, 1= strongly disagree). To check the scales reliability Chronbach's α was used. The value of Chronbach's α (based on 30 responses), was 0.737. For identification of underlying dimensions, Factor analysis technique (Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation) was used. To identify whether the scale items were suitable for Factor Analysis or not we relied on two statistical tests: one is Bartlett's test of Sphericity and another one was Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) test. Bartlett's test of sphericity was used to check scale items correlation. As for factor analysis the scales items should be correlated to each other, therefore to make sure about the correlation among scale items this test was used. Bartlett's test of sphericity hypothesizes that the correlation matrix of the scale items is unity matrix (H_0 : Scale items are not correlated significantly with each other), whereas the KMO test was used to check the sample adequacy to conduct factor analysis. A high value of KMO statistics (0.5 to 1) indicates appropriateness of

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

<i>GENDER</i>				
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Male	76	82.6	82.6	82.6
Female	16	17.4	17.4	100.0
Total	92	100.0	100.0	
<i>AGE</i>				
<i>Age Categories</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Below 25	54	58.7	58.7	58.7
Between 25-40	36	39.1	39.1	97.8
Above 40	2	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	92	100.0	100.0	
<i>MONTHLY INCOME</i>				
<i>Income Categories</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Below 25k	53	57.6	57.6	57.6
Between 25k-40k	24	26.1	26.1	83.7
Above 40k	15	16.3	16.3	100.0
Total	92	100.0	100.0	

factor analysis. KMO value below 0.5 is not acceptable; it should be above 0.5 for factor analysis. Determining the number of factors to be extracted for the analysis was guided by eigenvalue criteria. Eigen value ≥ 1 was used for determining the number of factors (Sharma, 1996). Model's acceptability was based on two criteria (Schene, Wijngaarden, and Koeter, 1998). One criterion is that each variable in a factor should be a loading ≥ 0.5 , and another one is that variable should have less than ≤ 0.4 loading with other factors. To assess attitude towards green marketing, arithmetic mean was calculated for every element of the scale, which was based on 5 point Likert scale. Thereafter a grand average of all the scale elements was calculated, a mean value between 2.5 to 3.4 represents a neutral attitude, mean value between 3.5 and 5.0 represents a positive attitude while a mean value between 2.4 and 1.0 represents a negative attitude (Manoah, Indoshi, & Othuon, 2011).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Collected data were analyzed by using SPSS software. Table 1 provides brief information about respondents' profile. 82.6 % of the respondents were male and 17.4% respondents were female in the present study. Additionally, 58.7 % respondents were below 25 years, 39.1% were between 25 -40 yrs, and only 2.2 % were above 40 yrs.

There were 57.6 %, 26.1 %, and 16.3 % respondents whose monthly income was below Rs. 25000, between Rs. 25000 to Rs. 40000 and above Rs. 40000, respectively.

The mean of scale item means is 3.652 (Table 2), which represents a positive attitude of marketing professionals towards green marketing (Manoah, Indoshi, and Othuon, 2011). It implies that on an average basis marketing professionals possess positive attitude towards green marketing. Majority of the respondents were below 40 years, and they possess a positive attitude towards green marketing, which shows an encouraging scenario of eco-friendly exercises in Indian context. While dealing with multiple variables, one of common problem faced by researchers is multicollinearity. Multicollinearity represents excess correlation between variables under study. For implementing factor analysis there should be no multicollinearity in the data set. To check multicollinearity, determinant of the correlation matrix is widely used indicator. According to Field (2006), if the determinant of the correlation matrix is greater than 0.00001, then there is no multicollinearity. In the present study, its value is 0.126, which shows absence of multicollinearity. Therefore, as far as multicollinearity is concerned there is no problem in implementing factor analysis.

Before conducting factor, we need to first check whether factor analysis can be applied on the concerned data set or

Table 2: Summary Item Statistics

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Maximum / Minimum</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>N of Items</i>
Item Means	3.615	2.576	4.543	1.967	1.764	.427	13
Item Variances	.765	.361	1.087	.726	3.013	.051	13
Inter-Item Covariances	.064	-.263	.311	.574	-1.179	.013	13
Inter-Item Correlations	.094	-.315	.394	.709	-1.252	.023	13

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.635
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	177.642
	Df	78
	Sig.	.000

not. These tests are just like qualifier test for conducting factor analysis. These tests are KMO test and Bartlett's test of sphericity. From Table 3, the value of KMO test is 0.635, which is above 0.5. The KMO value indicates the adequacy of sample size for conducting factor analysis. KMO value, which exceeds the level of 0.5, implies that the existing sample size is appropriate for conducting factor analysis. While implementing factor analysis one of the dominant condition is that variables should be adequately correlated to other, to make sure this degree of correlation Bartlett's test output is very significant. In

the study, Bartlett's test of sphericity implies the rejection of null hypothesis of correlation matrix is unity matrix, which represents that scale items are adequately correlated to other. Based on outcome of these two tests it is obvious that factor analysis is an appropriate tool for analyzing data.

To extract the factors, principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used. The result of extraction generates four factors; by following Eigen value ≥ 1 . The total variance explained by these factors was 54.003 % (Table 4).

Table 4: Total Variance Explained

<i>Component</i>	<i>Initial Eigenvalues</i>			<i>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</i>			<i>Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>
1	2.700	20.772	20.772	2.700	20.772	20.772	2.031	15.623	15.623
2	1.642	12.628	33.400	1.642	12.628	33.400	1.842	14.166	29.789
3	1.436	11.044	44.444	1.436	11.044	44.444	1.588	12.219	42.007
4	1.247	9.589	54.033	1.247	9.589	54.033	1.563	12.025	54.033
5	.980	7.538	61.571						
6	.930	7.156	68.727						
7	.806	6.203	74.930						
8	.789	6.068	80.998						
9	.625	4.804	85.802						
10	.549	4.227	90.029						
11	.471	3.624	93.654						
12	.435	3.344	96.997						
13	.390	3.003	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 5: Extracted Factors

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Component</i>				<i>Mean</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	
Need to pay more attention	.757				4.3913
Bridges the gap between society and business	.718				3.9565
More government initiatives	.535				4.5435
RRWS		-.728			2.7174
More effective than regular market		.613			3.9239
My firm differ from other firms		.564			3.9674
Ethical in nature					
RREXE			.758		2.5978
RRCI			.657		2.5761
Positive response			.537		3.7391
Easy implementation				.758	3.4674
Improved productivity				.660	3.9239
Marketing professional awareness				.659	3.2283

In this model (Table 5), for each factor there are three variables having loading above 0.5, which shows models acceptability.

The first factor consists of three items, i.e. need to pay more attention, bridges the gap between society and business, and requires more govt. initiatives. Grouping of these items in a single factor implies majority of respondents agreed that green marketing efforts can bridge the gap existing between society and business, but there should be much more focus on it as well as on more government initiative. Second factor consists of three items, i.e. work schedule gets affected, more effective than regular marketing, my firm differ from other firms. Clubbing of these items into single factor implies that green marketing practices do not adversely affect the working schedules of employees; rather practice of such activities is more effective than traditional approach of marketing and works as an effective tool of differentiation. Concisely, we can say that green marketing practices bring more effectiveness and differentiation to the firms without adversely affecting the working schedule of employees. The third factor consists of items like not easy to execute, increases cost to business, and customer give positive response. Composition of these items into a single factor implies that a green marketing effort does not prove costly to the businesses and their execution

can be easy. A customer perceives these kinds of exercises into a positive way. Therefore, researchers can conclude that marketers acknowledge the fact that green marketing practices positively affect customers without making any trouble at the front of cost and execution. Fourth factor is composition of easy implementation, improved productivity, and marketing professional awareness. Majority of marketing professionals show their neutral response towards variable like awareness regarding green marketing, but many of them somewhat agreed with the fact that these kinds of practices can make firm more productive and implementation of such activities is a matter of trouble. In this regard, we have given name to the factors as, Attention, Differentiation, Economical, and Execution.

CONCLUSION

Business will survive and be sustainable only when marketers understand the changes in the market. In future, more and more consumers will prefer green products and they feel that in future, the companies having green image will be preferred over the others (Saxena and Khandelwal, 2009). In the same context, this study has performed on Indian marketers at all level across industry. Indian marketers reflect positive attitude towards green marketing shows the great and sustainable future of Indian marketing firms. The first implication of this study reveals

that most of the marketers acknowledge the fact that there is requirement of more government initiatives in this area. This gives the picture that existing government policies are not enough to promote green marketing. Hence, it is necessary to take some strong and industry-benefit action by the government in order to implement green marketing in India. They also consider green marketing initiative as tool through which they can differentiate their firms against competitors. Majority of them have agreed upon the statement that green marketing initiative increase firm's productivity.

The outcome of factor analysis identified four underlying factors, Attention, Differentiation, Economical, and Execution. The total variance explained by the extracted factors was 54.033. Habing (2003) argued that any decent model of extracted factors should extract at least 50% variance in the variables. Marketer attention and their approach were come as an important factor in implementing green marketing. Researchers and marketers may use these factors in future researches for measuring consumer attitude towards green marketing.

This study justified the fact that green marketing is the path of sustaining success. In the same context, Cherian and Jacob (2012) explained people are beginning to realize their role and responsibilities towards the environment. This kind of change is not happening quickly, it is ongoing process. Marketers have to understand these changes and should try to make their products green. Greening the products is also not a single step process. Companies have to move towards green gradually stepwise and adopting green manufacturing, green product, and green communication and so on.

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ANNEXURE

1. There is a need to pay more attention on green marketing. (need to pay more attention)
2. Green marketing bridges the gap between society and business.(bridges the gap between society and business)
3. Government should take more initiative to promote green marketing practices.(more government initiatives)
4. Employees in any organisation feel that their work schedule gets affected by implementing green concept.(RRWS; reverse coded)
5. Green marketing is more effective than regular marketing.(more effective than regular market)
6. Green marketing efforts makes my firm differ from other firms.(my firm differ from other firms)
7. Mostly green marketing practices are ethical in nature.(ethical in nature)
8. It is not easy to execute green marketing practices. (RREXE; reverse coded)
9. Green marketing practices increases cost to business houses.(RRCI; reverse coded)
10. Customers give positive response to green marketing efforts.(positive response)
11. Every firm can implement green marketing.(easy implementation)
12. Productivity can be improved drastically by using green marketing.(improved productivity)
13. Majority of marketing professionals are aware about green marketing concept.(marketing professional awareness)