ABSTRACT

Green Marketing incorporates greening products and greening firms. The increasing exposure of global market products and environmental issues like global warming, impact of environmental pollution in turn has raised the green sensitivity of consumers for being eco-friendly and green marketing oriented. However in recent past green consumerism also has been gaining its lime light, Green consumerism has started playing a substance role in ushering corporate environmentalism and constructing business firms green marketing oriented. 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 a modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising.

“Green marketing is defined as "Green or Environmental Marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment." This definition incorporates much of the traditional components of the marketing definition that is "All activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants"

Today Green marketing has become common worldwide, as environmental issues are globally noticed. The paper is based on the emerging opportunities and challenges in green marketing. Through this will be able to identify the threats which the market is facing now and can introduce eco-friendly products in to the market.

Key words: Global Warming, Environmental pollution, Green consumerism, Eco-friendly products.


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1. INTRODUCTION
Over the past few decades, concern about the environment has become not only a significant public issue, but also a crucial topic in academic research. A sharp rise in environmentalism has emerged in most part of the world. A positive change within consumer behaviour towards environmentally related products can be seen due to the increased level of environmental awareness since the 1970s. This change contributed to the start of the green revolution to prevent further damage to the environment. Indeed green marketing is a type of marketing that aims to reduce our affects on the Environment by design, produce, packaging, labelling and consumption. Green marketing has concentrated on product (packaging and labelling) and incentive strategies in recent years. Assessing universal incentives to be green are necessary because it can show us how green marketing in all organizational activities can be carried out. Companies apply a strategic approach to environmental and entrepreneurial parts of industry to create the possibility of modifying consumer satisfaction through new and green products. This can also create a competitive advantage and reduces the pressure of competition. Purchasing behaviour generally consists of several parts: the discovery of the need to seek solutions, evaluate solutions, decision to purchase and post-purchase behaviour. Factors like socio-cultural, psychological-individual, marketing and mixed situations all of these influence purchasing behaviour. Organizations and consumers should have a responsibility towards environmental issues and by the purchasing of green products they participate in this process. Although the reasons to participate in green activities and their commitment to the environment is different, the green consumer has a vital role in helping the environment. Generally, these consumers will not buy products that endanger human health, have associated risk during the production process, cause any serious damage to the environment, inflict serious damage to the environment during the production process, produce excess waste, are involved in the extraction of raw materials, damage endangered plant and animal species and/or a natural resource. Applying these policies plays an essential role in switching consumer purchasing behaviour to buy environmentally friendly products, therefore, reducing the negative impact of synthetic products on the environment; however the findings often contradict each other. Therefore, research may only be relevant in certain cultural, time and geographical contexts. Certain studies have investigated the change in consumer’s behaviour, where those who worry about the environment will indicate their concerns through different behaviours, such as checking the products they will purchase to ensure they are buying ethically. In this study the effects of green marketing tools on consumer purchasing behaviour were examined.

2. WHAT IS GREEN MARKETING?
Marketing is both a discipline and a set of practices to appeal to consumers and entails the operations organized around a product or service, from concept to sales and through the design, price setting, promotion and availability. The term “green marketing” first surfaced in the late 1980s as an extension of what the American Marketing Association referred to in 1975 as “ecological marketing”. There is no single definition accepted universally, but in 1994 Polonsky stated: “Green or environmental marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment.”

The United Nations Environment Programme defines it as “a marketing which encompasses all communication operations undertaken to promote a product on the basis of its environmental properties or of its social qualities. It is about selling products on an ethical platform.” The distinctive features of green marketing are its commercial dimension coupled with the reference to the values of consumers who want to act in an environmentally conscious and socially responsible manner with the purchases they make.

3. NEED OF GREEN MARKETING
WHY IS GREEN MARKETING CHOSEN BY MOST MARKETERS?
Issues like Global warming and depletion of ozone umbrella are important for the healthy survival. Every person rich or poor would be interested in quality life with full of health and vigour and so would the corporate class. Financial gain and economic profit is the main aim of any corporate business. But harm to environment cost by sustain business across the globe is realized now though off late. This sense is building corporate citizenship in the business class. So green marketing by the business class is still in the selfish anthropological perspective of long term sustainable business and to
please the consumer and obtain the sanction license by the governing body. Industries in Asian countries are catching the need of green marketing from the developed countries but still there is a wide gap between their understanding and implementation.

Green marketing has been widely adopted by the firms worldwide and the following are the possible reasons cited for this wide adoption. There are basically five reasons for which a marketer should go for the adoption of green marketing. They are Opportunities or competitive advantage, corporate social responsibilities (CSR), Government pressure, Competitive pressure and Cost or profit issues.

As demands change, many firms see these changes as an opportunity to be exploited and have a competitive advantage over firms marketing non-environmentally responsible alternatives. All been said one more reason to state is that, the mankind has limited resources on the earth, with which she/he must attempt to provide for the worlds' unlimited wants. In market societies where there is “freedom of choice”, it has generally been accepted that individuals and organizations have the right to attempt to have their wants satisfied. As firms face limited natural resources, they must develop new or alternative ways of satisfying these unlimited wants. Ultimately green marketing looks at how marketing activities utilize these limited resources, while satisfying consumers wants, both of individuals and industry, as well as achieving the selling organization’s objectives.

4. GREEN MARKETING – GETTING SUCCESS

To be successful green marketing companies there are a few fundamental rules that will go a long way in shaping the future of the business in the coming years. The fundamental strategy is to use the Four P’s suitably modified to meet the needs of Green Marketing, but there are a few points that are needed to be stressed on before embarking on Strategy.

They are:

1. **Need for standardization**: There is no standardization currently in place to certify a product as organic. Unless some regulatory bodies are involved in providing the certifications there will not be any verifiable means. A standard quality control board needs to be in place for such labelling and licensing.

2. **New concept**: Indian literate and urban consumer is getting more aware about the merits of green products. But it is still a new concept for the masses. The consumer needs to be educated and made aware of the environmental threats. The new green movements need to reach the masses and that will take a lot of time and effort.

3. **Patience and Perseverance**: The investors and corporate need to view the environment as a major long term investment opportunity, the marketers need to look at the long-term benefits from this new green movement. It will require a lot of patience and no immediate results.

5. RULES OF GREEN MARKETING

**Price**

Pricing is a critical element of the marketing mix. Most customers are prepared to pay a premium if there is a perception of additional product value. This value may be improved performance, function, design, visual appeal or taste. Environmental benefits are usually an added bonus but will often be the deciding factor between products of equal value and quality. Environmentally responsible products, however, are often less expensive when product life cycle costs are taken into consideration.

**Place**

The choice of where and when to make a product available has a significant impact on the customers being attracted. Very few customers go out of their way to buy green.

Products merely for the sake of it. Marketers looking to successfully introduce new green products should, in most cases, position them broadly in the market place so they are not just appealing to a small green niche market. The location must also be consistent with the image which a company wants to project. The location must differentiate a company from its competitors. This can be achieved by in-store promotions and visually appealing displays or using recycled materials to emphasize the environmental and other benefits.
6. PROMOTION

Promoting products and services to target markets includes paid advertising, public relations, sales promotions, direct marketing and on-site promotions.

Smart green marketers will be able to reinforce environmental credibility by using sustainable marketing and communications tools and practices. For example, many companies in the financial industry are providing electronic statements by email, e-marketing is rapidly replacing more traditional marketing methods, and printed materials can be produced using recycled materials and efficient processes, such as waterless printing.

Retailers, for example, are recognizing the value of alliances with other companies, environmental groups and research organizations when promoting their environmental commitment. To reduce the use of plastic bags and promote their green commitment, some retailers sell shopping bags, under the banner of the Go Green Environment Fund.

The key to successful green marketing is credibility. Never overstate environmental claims or establish unrealistic expectations, and communicate simply and through sources that people trust.

Promote your green credentials and achievements. Publicize stories of the company’s and employees green initiatives. Enter environmental awards programs to profile Environmental credentials to customers and stakeholders.

7. GREEN MARKETING- CHALLENGES

Although a large number of firms are practicing green marketing, it is not an easy job as there are a number of problems which need to be addressed while Implementing Green marketing. The major challenges to Green marketing which have to be faced are:

New Concept- Indian literate and urban consumer is getting more aware about the merits of Green products. But it is still a new concept for the masses. The consumer needs to be educated and made aware of the environmental threats.

Cost Factor- Green marketing involves marketing of green products/services, green technology, green power/energy for which a lot of money has to be spent on R&D programmes for their development and subsequent promotional programs which ultimately may lead to increased costs. Convincing customers-The customers may not believe in the firm’s strategy of Green marketing, the firm therefore should ensure that they undertake all possible measures to convince the customer about their green product, the best possible option is by implementing Eco-labelling schemes. Eco-labelling schemes offer its —approval to —environmentally less harmless products. In fact the first eco-label program was initiated by Germany in 1978. Sometimes the customers may also not be willing to pay the extra price for the products.

Sustainability- Initially the profits are very low since renewable and recyclable products and green technologies are more expensive. Green marketing will be successful only in long run. Hence the business needs to plan for long term rather than short term strategy and prepare for the same, at the same time it should avoid falling into lure of unethical practices to make profits in short term.

Non Cooperation- The firms practicing Green marketing have to strive hard in convincing the stakeholders and many a times it may fail to convince them about the long term benefits of Green marketing as compared to short term expenses.

Avoiding Green Myopia- Green marketing must satisfy two objectives: improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction. Misjudging either or overemphasizing the former at the expense of the latter can be termed —green marketing myopia.

In short firms using green marketing must ensure that their activities are not misleading to the consumers or the industry, and do not breach any of the regulations or laws.

8. STRATEGIES FOR GREEN MARKETING

Social marketing focuses on designing and implementing programs that increase the acceptability of a social idea, cause, or practice in (a) target group(s) (Kotler, 1994). Ken Peattie (1999) defined environmental marketing in terms of customer satisfaction in a sustainable fashion which refers as ‘the holistic management process responsible for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying the requirements of the consumers and society, in a profitable and sustainable way’. It implies that organizations
(governments, businesses and non-profit organisations) need to determine the needs of target markets and to deliver the desired satisfactions in a way that enhances the consumers and the society's well being. Green marketing involves focusing on promoting the consumption of green products. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the companies to adopt creativity and insight, and be committed to the development of environment-friendly products. This will help the society in the long run. Companies which embark on green marketing should adopt the following principles in their path towards "greenness." Adopt new technology/Process or modify existing technology/Process so as to reduce environmental impact.

- Establish a management control system that will lead to adherence of stringent environmental safety norms.
- Explore possibilities of recycling of the used products so that it can be used to offer similar or other benefits with less wastage.
- Using more environment-friendly raw materials at the production stage itself
- The marketing strategies for green marketing include the following,
  - Marketing Audit (including internal and external situation analysis)
  - Develop a marketing plan outlining strategies with regard to 4 P's
  - Implement marketing strategies
  - Plan results evaluation

There are few examples of firms adopting both strategies.

- Body Shop heavily promotes the fact that they are environmentally responsible.
- Coca-Cola, Tata group, Colgate Palmolive etc. have invested large sums of money in various recycling activities, as well as having modified their packaging to minimize its environmental impact.

Different ways in which business can move towards greenness are through Green initiatives that include changes in the value addition processes, changes in the management systems and changes in the products or modification of inputs. Changes in the value addition processes would include introduction of new technology for production, or modification of existing methods of production to reduce their environmental impact. Firms can also establish and ensure implementation of management systems designed to promote environmental, health and safety norms. Further several benefits are offered due to implementation of green marketing strategies such as reduction of trade barriers, few health and safety impacts; improve community and employee relation, environmental improvement and accurate information (Kuhre, WL, 1995) In this context, Menon and Menon (1997, p. 54) suggest that firms could adopt entrepreneurial marketing strategies. The processes for formulating and implementing entrepreneurial and environmentally beneficial marketing activities with the goal of creating revenue by providing exchanges that satisfy firms economic and social objectives. According to Charter (1992) several other green measures are possible at the product level. These include product repair or product reconditioning to extend its life, designing the product so that it can be used several times, recycling the product so that it can be used as raw-material, or reducing the product such that it can offer the same benefits but use fewer raw materials or generate less waste.

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 into firms that believe they must achieve environmental objectives as well as profit related objectives. It can also be argued that while green marketing initiatives are linked to specific product improvements, corporate-level initiatives are linked to the overall management of the firm’s reputation. Thus, in some ways, green marketing at the corporate level overlaps with the strategic management function with minimum side effect and nutritious and natural foods) would have higher acceptability. According to Fuller (1999, p.39), companies that do not implement innovative green marketing strategy will struggle to tough emerging global market and moreover viewed as uncompetitive and unresponsive. Study by Jacquelyn Ottman (1993) revealed that practicing green marketing helps the companies to increase their market share and also gain more profit. The development of green marketing strategy to a company is complex. According to Fuller (1999, p.39), companies that do not implement innovative green
marketing strategy will struggle to tough emerging global market and moreover viewed as uncompetitive and unresponsive.

9. CONCLUSION
Consumers today are much more concerned about climatic changes than they were even few years ago. Moreover, they are expecting their favourite brands not only to share their concern but to take action to mitigate it. The earlier perception of industry towards green marketing was that the pressure for making business environment green and behaving in a more responsible manner especially comes from Government and its legislations. Now that old perception is changing throughout the globe as studies performed on consumers reflect that in most countries consumers are becoming more aware and willing to act on environmental concerns. There is a radical change in consumer preferences and lifestyles. Due to this shift from traditional marketing to green marketing, companies these days are facing many new challenges.

This can also be viewed as a source of new opportunities to grow in today’s highly competitive global environment. A 2008 survey by the National Geographic Society and Glob Scan on consumer choice and the environment reported on current behaviour in fourteen countries (including Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Russia, the UK and the US). The study found signs that consumer in all countries “feel empowered when it comes to the environment and are taking some action in their daily lives to reduce consumption and waste.” A global survey conducted in 2007 in association with Aegis, and repeated in 2008 in association with BBC World, also found that consumers in most countries are becoming more aware and willing to act on environmental concerns. Most of such studies on green philosophy and green marketing are done in developed countries but such studies however, remain conspicuously missing in the context of developing economies like India. Green marketing is still in infancy stage & lot of research needs to be done by the companies to project a green Corporate Image rather than focusing on the environmental benefits. In future only those companies will reap the greatest reward that innovates with new products, materials, technologies which are eco-centric and address the challenge by walking their talk and they will be also able to carve the name for protecting the environment for the future generation.

REFERENCE