

Green Marketing a Journey Driven towards Sustainable Development

PriyankaMahanta^a, Dr.Amit Kumar Singh^b

^aPh.D. Scholar, Department of Management, Mizoram University

^b Associate Professor & Head Department of Management, Mizoram University

Abstract

Protecting environment has become an essential and important issue for all, as there is an increase in carbon emission and pollution of the environment. Now even the consumers are aware of the environmental issues and are trying to adopt green so that it is less harmful and help protecting the environment for its sustainability. Environment marketing lots of important elements which works towards sustainability, Green Marketing is also a part of it where it has become a important concept for sustainability towards the environment and marketers are adopting this strategy to get the market as customer's mindset also have shifted towards 'green'. It is a strategy where the marketers need to satisfy or fulfil the needs of the customer alongside taking care of the environmental issues. In this research paper the objective is to study the importance of green marketing for sustainability and also to study the threats towards adoption of green marketing practices. Data has been collection from various books, journals etc. This paper tries to explore the different issues related to green marketing practices and how it can be a tool towards sustainable development

Keywords: Green Marketing, Sustainability, Environment, Marketing mix

1. Introduction

Green marketing can also be termed as environmental marketing, which aims at providing eco friendly products and which have minimal negative effect to the environment. As environmental issues have now became the biggest concern, and it has become necessary for the marketers to shift towards "Green" so that they can succeed in the market, as the green products gets more consumer response than the non- green products. Environmental issues have become increasingly relevant in both business and public life around the world. Not only are leaders worried about the worsening of the situation but every average citizen is conscious of the importance of the oxygen level in our atmosphere. Carbon pollution, environmental effects, and ecosystem imbalances are the main environmental problems that have occurred so far, in addition to human activities (Sharma, 2011). Our country's people, as well as the rest of the world, are worried about global warming which is a well-known threat. As a result, in this global concern situation, corporate also have taken step towards green

marketing to help reduce the harmful impact to the environment. To meet customers' needs and preferences, green marketing focuses on environmentally sustainable products (Akhil et al.,2016). It may be expensive to shift towards green in the short term, but in long run it will be cost effective. Shifting green may not be easy there may be many opportunities for the marketers as well as lot of threats to the marketers.

(Emery,2012) explains the Sustainable Marketing model where the author exposes the importance of three P's "people, profit and planet" and the three E's "economic, environment and equity" this model is also known as Triple bottom line. The Triple Bottom Line system helps businesses to measure their progression toward sustainability by evaluating overall organizational efficiency, which includes social and environmental efficiency as well as financial performance.



Figure 1 Triple Bottom Line by Emery 2012

EVOLUTION OF GREEN MARKETING:

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the concept "green marketing" became popular. In Austin, Texas, the American Marketing Association (AMA) hosted the first conference on "Ecological Marketing" in 1975. The result of this conference was brought up as Ecological Marketing, which is one of the first green marketing books and the first aspect of green marketing began in the 1980s. Green marketing has achieved meaningful results in the form of two published books both titled "Green Marketing". Jacquelyn Ottman (1998).According to Peattie (1999), mainly there are three aspect of green marketing, the first one was called "Ecological" green marketing, and all marketing efforts during this period were focused on solving environmental issues and have solutions to environmental issues, the second point is that the emphasis was on 'Environmental', green marketing during this period shifted to clean technology, which included the construction of fresh goods that are environmentally friendly and creative issues with waste .The 'Sustainable' green marketing process was the third phase. It became popular in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The importance of green

marketing has shifted the marketing landscape. The businesses have now begun to work together promoting their goods by claiming that they are environmentally friendly.

4 P'S OF GREEN MARKETING MIX

Product- Concerns about the climate have prompted certain existing products to be updated, and in some cases, the nature, composition, or manufacturing of the products has been altered (Peattie & Charter, 2003). Designing goods with ecological goals in mind reduces resource use and waste while increasing productivity. Green products aid in the preservation and improvement of the natural world significant decrease or omission of the use of hazardous products, pollution, and wastes (Ottman et al., 2006).

Price- Price is one of the most crucial and important element of marketing mix as customers somehow is more conscious regarding price of a product. One of the most challenging aspects of green marketing is green pricing. Manufacturers would be motivated to build more sustainability if social and environmental costs are exposed in the pricing of the product and the buyer agrees to pay the given price. Corporate entities that incur such costs and pass them on to consumers face two risks: being accused of misusing customers' preferences and seeing their prices rise compared to their rivals (Durning, 2011)

Place- Making products available to the customers in a affordable manner is another important factor for the growth of the company. They should try to provide the goods in the right place at a right time and also in a efficient manner where there is less harm to the environment.

Promotion- Promoting the product in a effective way is the key towards success, green promotion here refers to that the company should try to advertise or promote the products where they lay down their concern for environment. This is normally accomplished by stressing the interpretation of the firm's promotional strategies, as well as by collaboration and association with social or environmental organizations (Wong & Stoneman, 2009).

2. Review of Related Studies

Shabbir (2020) in his study examined the impact of green marketing practices and consumer behaviour towards environment, the researcher suggested that eco labelling, green branding, pricing element, green packaging etc affect the consumer behaviour. The study concluded that environmental concern and beliefs have a positive influence on the customer in UAE. The study also suggested different guidelines to improve the green marketing and provide a positive attitude towards society.

Chandra (2019) in his "A conceptual understanding of Green marketing in the Indian context" he discussed how green marketing evolved in India. Customers' cognitive attitudes toward the environment are becoming more concerned, putting consumer demand pressure on nature-friendly goods. Green marketing is a philosophy developed by organizations and businesses to quantify and design green products, green brand experience, green brand image, green confidence, and green satisfaction into one.

Reddy et al., (2017) in his paper “Impact of green marketing on sustainable development” entails about removing or substantially minimizing negative effects on the climate and natural resources. Firms that are environmentally conscious of environmental assets for business and benefit make a huge contribution to sustainability. As a result, green marketing is becoming one of the most important business tactics for businesses these days. There is a triple bottom line – people, earth, and benefit – with the people part of the equation taking precedence. Marketers must also recognize that green marketing is not just virtuous - it can also be profitable.

Sharma et al., (2015) believe that in the current climate, it is critical to inform and raise customer consciousness about environmental issues. The corporate responsibility, also known as Corporate Social Responsibility, is to teach the community about environmental hazards. This does not happen right away, but it will happen over time. Young people today are much more conscious of the environmental protection. They want to lessen the negative effects of using services and products that are harmful to the environment.

In her article "How to Boost Your Brand's Eco-friendly Image," Watkins.J(2016) proposed some useful tips to help a company boost its eco-friendly image. The following are a few of them: Use recycled practices, make recyclable goods, mark them with acceptable sustainability symbols, inform consumers about the advantages of eco-friendly commodities, use recyclable and reusable packaging materials, raise awareness of the company's environmental activities, and get customers interested in the company's efforts.

Khan.J (2013) in his article "A Report on Consumers Attitude toward Green Marketing and Green Products." Consumers are unaware of the advantages of green goods, organizations are not seeking to produce more environmentally friendly products and packaging. People are becoming more aware of their roles and obligations in relation to the community. Companies must use ads to inform customers about the benefits of green products. Consumers are willing to pay a higher price for environmentally friendly goods. Green marketing's effectiveness is measured by customers' perceptions and behaviours toward green goods.

In his research in the United Kingdom, Donaldson (2005) found that consumers' attitudes toward the environment had improved in general. Consumers' strong confidences in well-known commercial brands, as well as their feeble actions in response to “green” arguments, were the primary reasons for consumers' inability to perceive their concerns outside the atmosphere in their behaviour, according to this report.

P. Oyewole, (2001). He makes a conceptual connection between green marketing, sustainable development, and industrial ecology in his paper. It claims that in the practice of green marketing, there should be a greater sense of environmental justice. Finally, a critical discussion is proposed to decide whether consumers are mindful of environmental justice and are able to absorb the expenses involved with it.

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this paper is to study the importance of green marketing for sustainability and the threats towards adoption of green marketing practices

4. Research Methodology

The present study is an exploratory research and researchers used the descriptive literature survey methods for and all the information collected from journals, books, newspaper, reports and other sources

5. Green Marketing for Sustainability

Meeting current needs without jeopardizing future generations' ability to meet their own needs is what sustainable development is all about the World Commission on Environmental Development (WCED) says (1978). The importance of incorporating economic and environmental considerations into decision-making through regulations that preserve the value of agricultural activities in developing countries and also towards protecting environment is a common theme throughout this sustainable development strategy. Green marketing's end product is environmental protection for current and future generations. Corporates that are more involved towards social responsibility are more into green marketing, they try to use the green marketing practices to have a healthy growth and also provide sustainability. Companies are gradually finding that displaying a high degree of social responsibility boosts brand recognition among socially conscious consumers, and green ads can help them do so. The major threat towards sustainable practices is the cost of "greenness" which does not incorporate for short-term goals.

Social Responsibility- Corporations' social responsibility is a term wherein they consciously address social and environmental issues in their operating processes and interactions with their stakeholders. To put it another way, social responsibility is the openness with which companies manage environmental, economic, and social issues in order to enhance relationships among workers, consumers, and beneficiaries (Jones, Clarke & Hillier, 2007). In order to explicitly answer to their beneficiaries, prominent companies, as responsible corporations, follow a very ethical process. The company with the largest market share benefits from economies of scale, brand validity, sales channel control, and, most likely, a specific marketing mix. Indeed, high-market-share corporations may vary from low-market-share corporations in terms of various aspects of market share, since high-market-share corporations may have better management or experience than others. High experience, the right business, and the right products can lead to increased market share and profitability.

6. Threats to Green Marketing Practices

Green washing – It is a practice adopted by the firms in order to show environmental friendly to just gain customer attention and are just making false and misleading statement to the public and exploiting the customers for their own profit, as green products get more attention than non green products and sometimes the customers get exploited thinking it to be green products

Lack of standardization- There is lack of standardization in this green marketing process, where there is no control board to keep a check on the proper adaptation of green marketing practices by the firms and that's the reason why there is more of green washing practices going on, as there is no standardization of products being green or not.

Initial cost- The cost for green marketing adaptation is high in short run so many firms are not still adopting this practices and due to its high cost of installation many firms are lacking behind.

New Concept- As it is an emerging concept in developing country like India, customers are not aware of the concept, but still many urban customers are aware of the merits of green products. Customers needed to be educated about it so that they can understand the usefulness of it. Indian customers have already adopted in a greater way towards herbal products and ayurvedic products where there are no harmful chemicals used and save for use.

Preventing Green Myopia- Focusing on customers is the first law in green marketing. The main reason why people purchase such goods in the first place is because of their advantages. If it's right, one can persuade customers to switch brands or even pay more for the greener option. It won't help if a product is produced that is completely green in every way but fails to meet customer satisfaction requirements. Green myopia can result as a result of this. Furthermore, if green goods are priced too high, they will lose consumer acceptance.

7. Discussion

As green marketing is a new concept, customers needed to be educated about the positive impact of it towards the environment and help them to change their mind towards eco friendly products. As we have seen that there are lots of challenges that the marketers need to come through while adopting green marketing practices. Achieving sustainability through this practice where the ecology and economy is binded together is challenging but will have a positive impact in the near future.

There are also false display of green is going on which is green washing, where the firms try to mislead the customers by featuring that they are eco friendly and using all the green marketing practices but actually are not, so this may mislead customers, so there is a necessary to have a proper standardization of green products where the firms need to get certified about their products that they are actually green and eco friendly. There is a need to have a board that may look against such issues so that the firms don't exploit the customers.

8. Conclusion

Green Marketing is a mechanism to achieve sustainability, where sustainability has become a great issue in the world and the world has become more conscious towards the environment protection. Green marketing is still in the evolving phase in India, but there are lots of opportunities laying down for the marketers to use this practice, it can surely make a big change if there is a strict layout or protocol to be followed for green marketing and whole if the world uses that protocol.

Green Marketing A Journey Driven towards Sustainable Development

Even if marketers are clever enough to persuade the customers to buy the products but they should not only see from one dimension as green marketing is much wider concept than just marketing, as here it involves lot many dimensions like eco friendly, social responsibility, sustainability etc so, it has a lot of dimension to look over. As there is no such government protocol for green marketing there can be some protocols to set up so that the marketers turn green and even the customers can pressure the marketers to be eco friendly. As Indian customers are somehow aware of green products and also accept products that are chemical free and have no harmful effect, but there is a need to change the customer buying behaviour so that they shift their mind towards eco friendly products. Customers needed to be well educated about the merits of green products so that they can have a better understanding

References

- [1]. Akhil, A., (2016). Green Marketing to Meet Consumer Demands and Sustainable Development-Challenges and Opportunities. *International Journal of Advanced Trends in Engineering and Technology (IJATET)*, 1, pp.271-284
- [2]. Chandra, S., (2019). A conceptual understanding of Green marketing in the Indian context. *International Journal of Commerce and Management Research*, 5(3), pp.80-87
- [3]. Donaldson, R. H. (2005), —Green brands, *NZ Marketing Magazine*.
- [4]. Durning, A.T. (2011). *How much is enough?* Earthscan, London.
- [5]. Emery, B. (2012). *Sustainable Marketing*. England: Pearson.
- [6]. Jones, P., Clarke-Hill, C, Comfort, D., & Hillier, D. (2007). Marketing and corporate social responsibility within food store, *British Food Journal*, 109(8), 582-593
- [7]. Khan J. (2013) A study on Consumers attitude towards Green Marketing and Green Products, *International Journal of Advanced Trends in Computer Science and Engineering*, Vol. 2, Issue- 6, pp. 258-268
- [8]. Ottman, J. (1998). *Green marketing: Opportunity for innovation*. USA: NTC Business Books.
- [9]. Oyewole, P. (2001). Social Costs of Environmental Justice Associated with the Practice of Green Marketing. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 29(3), Feb, pp. 239-252
- [10]. [10]. Peattie, K & Martin, C. (2003). *The Marketing Book*, Butterworth Heinemann, Publication.
- [11]. [11]. Peattie, K. (1999). *Green marketing*. London: Macdonald & Evans.
- [12].
- [13]. [12]. Reddy, D.K. and Reddy, M.S., (2017). A study on Impact of Green Marketing on Sustainable Development (With Reference to Khammam District). In *National Conference on Marketing and Sustainable Development*, 13, pp.
- [14].
- [15]. [13]. Shabbir, M.S. et al., (2020). Green Marketing Approaches and Their Impact on Consumer Behavior towards the Environment—A Study from the UAE. *Sustainability*, 12(21), pp.8977
- [16].
- [17]. [14]. Sharma Y (2011). Changing consumer behaviour with respect to green marketing—a case study of consumer durables and retailing. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 1(4), pp.152-162
- [18].
- [19]. [15]. Sharma, N.K. Pandey, N. and Rubina Saji (2015). Green Marketing: A Study of Emerging vs Opportunities and Challenges in Indian Scenario. *International Journal of New Technology and Research*, 1(4):51-57.
- [20].
- [21]. [16]. Watkins Jeriann (2016) How to Boost Your Brand's Eco-friendly Image, *Marketing Prof.* vol. 1, pp-1-5
- [22]. [17]. Wong, V. Turner, W. & Stoneman .P. (2009). *Marketing Strategies and Market Projects for Environmentally Friendly* . *Consumer Product British Journal*