

A Study on Perception and Preferences Towards Green Marketing, It's Influence on Consumer

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Abstract

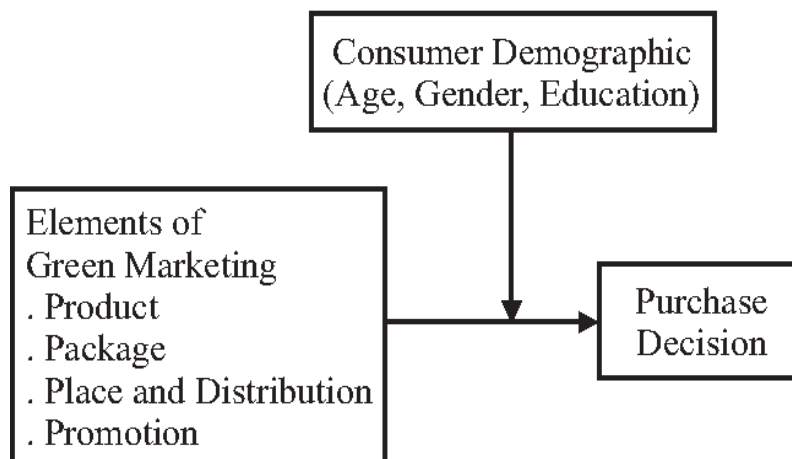
In today's environmentally-conscious society, green marketing—a strategy emphasizing the environmental attributes of products—has become increasingly significant. Consumer perception towards this approach often leans positive, especially among the younger demographic that values sustainability and eco-friendly practices. Many consumers view green marketing as an alignment of their personal beliefs with purchasing behavior, often associating it with health benefits, ethical consumption, and a reduced carbon footprint. However, skepticism also permeates, as accusations of "green washing" (where companies exaggerate their green initiatives) have made buyers more discerning. Thus, while the preference for eco-friendly products is evident, brands must uphold authentic sustainable practices to genuinely appeal to the modern consumer's environmental sensibilities.

Keywords: Perception, preferences, Green Marketing, **Environmental Concern and social image**

Introduction

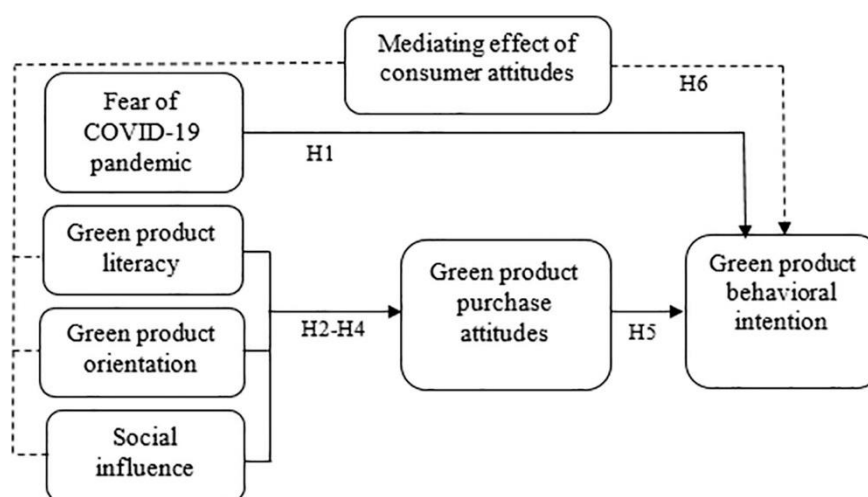
By emphasizing environmental core values, green marketing aims to go above and beyond standard marketing in the hopes that customers would connect their beliefs to the firm or brand. Since customers are more concerned with the environment and are prepared to pay more for such things, marketing their goods as environmentally friendly has a positive effect on sales. Recently, a new client segment has emerged in the market that is more concerned with the environment and believes it is their job to do their part to protect it.[8] The manufacturing of products and the provision of services have a significant influence on environmental concerns, and as a result, there are several methods for businesses to promote their eco-friendliness. A product's ability to save water, lower greenhouse gas emissions, limit harmful pollutants, improve indoor air quality, and/or be readily recyclable are just a few of the concerns that green marketing may target. Businesses gain credibility by demonstrating to customers that they share their customers' concern for the environment by employing green marketing strategies to save resources in manufacturing, packaging, and operations. [2]In order to safeguard the environment, the government has also made legislation pertaining to green marketing. Since everyone is reliant on the environment, protecting it is their personal duty, making the value of green marketing very vital till the end of time. The green marketing phenomenon is an emerging trend in marketing and a key area of interest for marketers as a result of increased consumer awareness and their shifting preferences towards green products. This is demonstrated by the review of the literature that was done. Going green from a commercial perspective, however, requires substantial expenditures in terms of technical advancements, altering product designs, influencing customers to make green purchases, and several other connected tasks. The demand for green goods is stronger in industrially developed countries than it is in emerging ones. Research on consumer preferences for green marketing has been undertaken relatively little in the context of emerging economies like India. Additionally, the found discrepancies in the attitude-behavior relationship in the context of environmental marketing do indicate the necessity for a research to examine the elements that persuade customers to purchase green goods.[7]Green marketing offers a pathway for businesses to align profitability with sustainability. In a world facing unprecedented environmental challenges, the fusion of business and ecological interests is not only commendable but essential. Businesses that recognize the value of green marketing are likely to be at the forefront of their industries, leading the charge towards a more sustainable and prosperous future.

Figure 1
Conceptual Model



Concept of Consumer Preferences

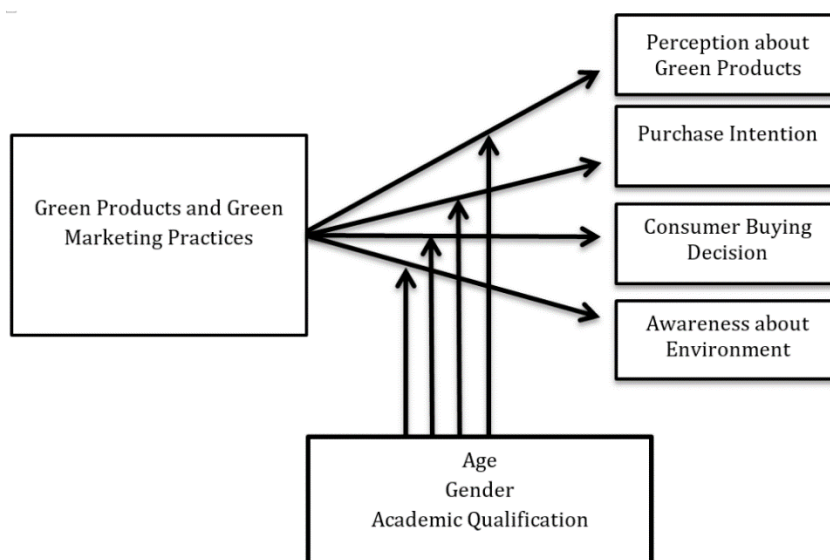
Consumer preferences refer to the subjective tastes of individual consumers, characterized by their likings or dislikings for certain goods or services over others. These preferences dictate their purchasing behavior and the choices they make in the market. Formed by a combination of intrinsic personal tastes, cultural influences, societal trends, advertising, and personal experiences, consumer preferences can vary widely from individual to individual and can evolve over time. They play a fundamental role in shaping demand curves in economics, influencing product design, marketing strategies, and even entire industries.[1] In essence, understanding and predicting consumer preferences is crucial for businesses to deliver relevant products, tailor effective marketing campaigns, and maintain a competitive edge in an ever-changing market landscape.



Attitude-Behavior Dynamics of Consumers in Context of Green Marketing

In recent decades, green marketing has attracted a lot of interest. Businesses are actively advertising their environmentally friendly goods and services as awareness of environmental deterioration and the real effects of climate change grows. However, customer attitude-behavior dynamics are a key factor in determining the effectiveness of green marketing. The difficulty of converting pro-environmental views into dependable green shopping are explored in this article along with how consumer attitudes towards environmental issues impact their purchasing behaviour.[9] Fundamentally, attitude may be defined as one's positive or negative evaluative response to something, often based on ideas and sentiments, which can then be shown via predispositions or behavioural intents. The problem occurs when attitudes (what customers think or feel) and behaviour (what consumers actually do) are out of sync. An interesting gap between customers' stated environmental concerns and their actual purchase behaviour has been highlighted by green marketing. While numerous polls show a favourable attitude towards environmentally friendly items and a willingness to prioritize sustainability, there is still a void when it comes to actual purchase choices. Price sensitivity, where financial concerns take precedence over environmentally good goals, and a lack of clear information regarding the real environmental effect of items are some of the causes of this discrepancy. Furthermore, although peer pressure might promote green buying, it can also encourage feigned concern, in which consumers make green decisions to win friends and admiration rather than out of true care. Bridging this attitude-behavior gap and providing

customers with the information and incentives they need to act on their environmental convictions are essential if green marketing is to succeed. The way that firms address these challenges is being closely examined in an era when climate change and environmental degradation are among the top global concerns.[4] Green marketing is a tactic that promotes goods and services depending on how environmentally friendly they are. But is green marketing an authentic representation of a company's dedication to sustainability, or is it just a marketing fad that preys on customers' concerns about the environment? This article explores the fundamentals, advantages, difficulties, and possible dangers of green marketing.

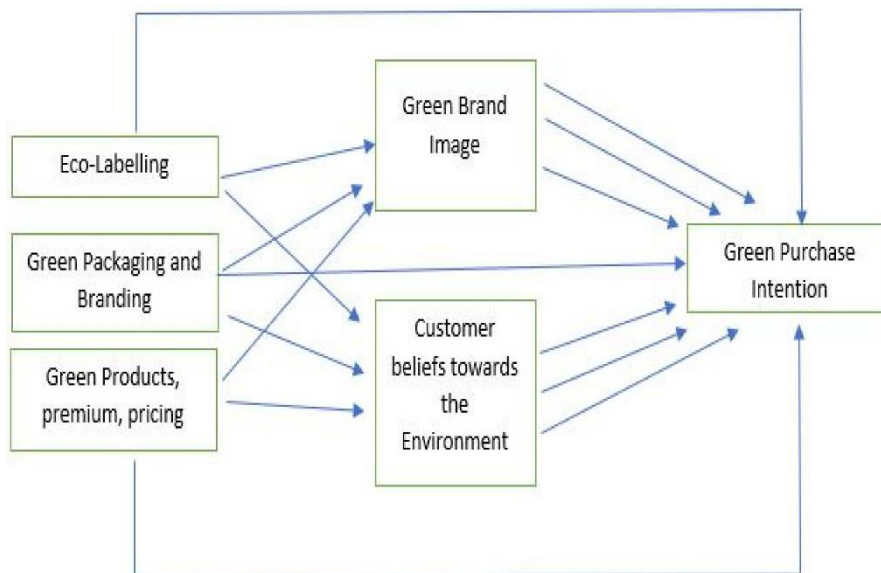


Navigating the Future of Green Marketing: For green marketing to retain its credibility, it's essential for businesses to be transparent and authentic in their claims. Third-party certifications, verifiable metrics, and transparent supply chains are ways to ensure accountability. Moreover, green marketing shouldn't be a standalone strategy but integrated into a broader commitment to sustainability across all business operations. This means considering the environment in every business decision, from product design to distribution. The 21st century has ushered in an era of heightened environmental consciousness. This awareness, spurred by the tangible impacts of climate change and the deterioration of natural habitats, has given rise to a new paradigm in marketing – green marketing. Businesses, both large and small, are pivoting towards more sustainable practices, and green marketing stands at the forefront of this shift. Green marketing, often referred to as environmental or sustainable marketing, involves the promotion of products or services based on their environmental benefits. This can pertain to the product itself, its manufacturing process, its packaging, its distribution, or even the ethos of the company producing it. In today's global marketplace, the confluence of business and environmental concerns has given rise to a novel paradigm. This phenomenon stems from an increasing awareness among consumers and businesses alike about the ecological consequences of their choices.

Perception and Preferences towards Green Marketing: It’s Influence on Consumer Behavior

In the modern era, where sustainability and environmental responsibility have become buzzwords, businesses are constantly evolving their strategies to meet these demands. A significant impetus behind the surge of green marketing is the evolving consumer mindset.[3] As global environmental crises intensify, from climate change to plastic pollution, consumers are becoming more ecologically

conscious. They demand transparency, authenticity, and sustainability from brands. This shift in consumer preference is driving companies to adapt and innovate, making green marketing not just an ethical choice but a strategic business move. However, green marketing is not without its challenges. Moreover, the term "green" can be vague and ambiguous. What's green for one might not be for another. Standardized guidelines and certifications can help, but businesses must also be proactive in educating their consumers about what makes their products or services truly eco-friendly.



The emergence of Green Marketing may be attributed to its adoption as a new marketing philosophy by consumer groups that want ecologically friendly goods. This approach is seen as a significant means to address the difficulties posed by global warming in the current century. The evaluation and investigation of contemporary marketing trends are vital in order to comprehend the dynamic patterns of customer behaviour.[5] Consequently, corporate firms must adapt their product and service offerings appropriately. In contemporary times, customers possess a comprehensive understanding of the potential adverse effects on the environment resulting from the use of various products and services. This inquiry pertains to the observable alterations in climate patterns resulting from global warming and the escalating contamination of air, water, and land. Green marketing, often referred to as environmental marketing or ecological marketing, is a concept that encompasses several strategies and practices aimed at promoting products and services that are environmentally friendly.[6] In the present century, the Earth is confronted with an unprecedented array of environmental challenges, hence necessitating that firms adopt and promote environmentally conscious practices. The use of green marketing as a promotional approach is gaining prominence due to heightened consumer awareness and apprehensions. The notion of green or ecological marketing is the adherence of firms to ethical and environmentally-friendly practices in their interactions with consumers, suppliers, dealers, and staff. Many organisations have adopted a marketing strategy that positions themselves as environmentally conscious or "green" enterprises. The findings revealed that consumers in developing economies, such as India, Brazil, and China, obtained the highest scores, whereas industrialized nations ranked at the lower end of the spectrum. The countries that exhibited the most significant growth in ecologically sustainable behaviour among consumers were India, Russia, and the United States. In order for a firm to achieve success in green marketing, it is imperative that they demonstrate a steadfast commitment to conducting their operations in an ecologically sustainable manner.

Prerequisite for the Study

Green marketing has emerged as a prominent topic of interest for marketers because to its potential to provide competitive advantages. Nonetheless, it requires allocation of resources towards enhancing processes, advancing technology, and effectively communicating the benefits to consumers, among several other factors. As a consequence of recent governmental regulations and evolving global consumer tastes, several Indian enterprises are progressively adopting a marketing approach that emphasizes their commitment to environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, there has been little research undertaken on the subject of green marketing in India, leaving a gap in our understanding of client awareness about environmentally friendly products. The behaviour of Indian consumers towards environmentally friendly products remain uncertain and their interrelation remains ambiguous. It is important for marketers to possess a comprehensive understanding of the factors that impact consumer decision-making, since the principles and strategies used in green marketing diverge from those utilised in traditional marketing approaches. The primary objective of the article is to address the research question pertaining to the factors that influence consumer decision-making in relation to the purchasing of environmentally-friendly products.

Green Marketing as Competitive Advantage

Newspapers should be used more often to tell customers about green practices and goods as they continue to be the primary source of information for the majority of respondents. Responses were on a somewhat favourable level, and we may infer that customers are not dubious of the organizations' claims to be environmentally friendly and that they are worried about the current and future status of the environment, necessitating the use of green practices and goods. Marketers have the capacity to create novel environmentally sustainable products and effectively communicate their benefits to consumers. Consumers may choose for environmentally friendly products instead of traditional ones as a means of protecting the environment, driven by their enhanced awareness and care. An increasing number of individuals expressed concerns on the issues of global warming and ozone depletion. Customers express concerns over the current state of the environment and have expectations that firms would adopt environmentally friendly practices in order to protect and preserve the natural surroundings. The consequences of the results are relevant for manufacturers of durable products, specifically in relation to the practice of green marketing. Marketing communications supporting environmentally sustainable practices should allocate more emphasis and consideration to the choice of topics and messaging strategies. The use of eco-friendly items and processes in advertising appeals has the potential to evoke emotional responses and effectively influence persuasion. For markets to effectively capitalize on the strategic positioning of their environmentally conscious brands, it is imperative that buyers retain awareness of these brands. In order to effectively promote and maintain an environmentally sustainable stance, it is essential for enterprises to engage in consistent and ongoing communication. Despite concerns over the accessibility and affordability of these goods, customers have shown a positive disposition towards environmentally friendly products. This implies that marketers should ensure the availability of environmentally friendly goods to customers, since research indicates that consumers are more likely to acquire such products when they are readily available. Consumers who demonstrate concern over the adverse environmental implications associated with production and consumption may choose to purchase environmentally-friendly goods, provided that marketers effectively persuade them of the benefits of such products in comparison to conventional alternatives, even in cases when they perceive green products to be more costly. Based on empirical evidence, it has been shown that a minority of customers exclusively engage in the consumption of ecologically sustainable products. This is an opportunity for marketers to diversify their product

portfolios and establish a reputation for being environmentally conscious. The study has relevance for both consumers and marketers, providing significant evidence for the emergence of a green marketing era in India. The limited scope of the research hinders its capacity to be widely applicable, but, it still provides valuable insights into customer perceptions of environmentally friendly products. Future research might focus on the examination of consumer psychographic segmentation as a means to assess their ecological values and preferences. The value of this research is in its potential for replication on a broader scale, which would provide more insights into consumer behaviour and the green phenomenon.

Measurement and methodology

Green marketing has emerged as a prominent focal point for marketers because of its potential to provide competitive advantages. Nonetheless, it requires investment in other aspects such as process improvement, technological advancements, and effective communication of customer benefits, among other factors. As a result of recent governmental regulations and evolving worldwide consumer expectations, a growing number of Indian enterprises are actively positioning themselves as environmentally conscious entities. However, there is a dearth of research on green marketing in India, and the extent of client awareness of environmentally friendly products remains uncertain.[5] The perception and alignment of Indian buyers towards green products remains a subject of debate. It is essential for marketers to possess a comprehensive understanding of the factors that impact client decision-making, since the practice of green marketing diverges from conventional marketing strategies. The primary objective of this study is to address the research question pertaining to the factors that influence consumer decision-making in relation to the purchasing of environmentally friendly products.[2] The study examines the perceptions and preferences of customers about green marketing practices and goods via the use of a structured questionnaire. A research investigation was carried out using a sample size of 250 participants. The study revealed that consumers exhibited a significant degree of knowledge about green marketing practices and goods. The author has provided valuable insights for marketers of environmentally-friendly goods, indicating the need of developing marketing communication strategies that promote these items. This is attributed to the significant value that customers place on environmental sustainability.[3]

Analysis, discussion and Conclusion

i) Correlation between the perception towards green marketing and the age level

Age level is an evolving dynamic, influenced by several factors including societal values, educational exposure, and life experiences. Growing up in the age of information and heightened awareness about climate change, Gen Z individuals tend to be more conscious about environmental issues. They have a natural inclination towards brands that are ecologically responsible and often consider the environmental footprint of their purchases. Green marketing strategies that emphasize transparency, authenticity, and genuine commitment to sustainability resonate most with this age group. Often credited with pushing sustainability into the mainstream, many millennials demand that companies be environmentally responsible. They value brands that offer sustainable solutions without compromising on quality or aesthetic appeal. This generation, having witnessed the early stages of global environmental movements, tends to be more skeptical about green claims. While they appreciate sustainability, they often need more convincing than younger generations. For them, green marketing must be backed up by concrete actions, clear results, and third-party validations. The difference in their opinion across their age group is compared with the help of ONE WAY ANOVA. The result is given below.

Table 1
Difference in the green marketing according to the age

Skills		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Environmental Concern	Young	87	3.7584	0.68572	0.168	0.864
	Middle	101	3.3258	0.84257		
	Old	62	3.0584	0.87952		
	Total	250	3.3025	0.81258		
Social image	Young	87	3.1587	0.83258	0.312	0.731
	Middle	101	3.0325	0.78954		
	Old	62	3.1752	0.87521		
	Total	250	3.0258	0.90062		
Health Consciousness	Young	87	3.3259	0.71582	0.061	0.946
	Middle	101	3.5251	0.8456		
	Old	62	3.0897	0.80124		
	Total	250	3.1020	0.78245		

The Table 1 reveals that 87 respondents are from the young age group, 101 from middle age group and 62 belong to the old age group. The mean of the young age group respondents is high (3.7584) for the **environmental concern**, the mean of the middle age group (3.5251) for the **health consciousness** and the mean of the old age group respondents (3.5251) for the social image are higher. The result from the ONE WAY ANOVA shows that the calculated value of F for **Environmental Concern** (0.168), Social image (0.312) and **health Consciousness** (0.061) are insignificant. The values of significance are more than 0.05. **Environmental Concern**: As awareness about global challenges like climate change grows, many consumers opt for products that claim to have a lower carbon footprint or are made with sustainable practices. **Health Consciousness**: There's a prevalent belief that 'green' or organic products are healthier, leading many to prefer them over conventional alternatives. **Social Image**: In some circles, buying green products is seen as trendy or status-enhancing, thus influencing purchasing decisions. Green marketing, sometimes referred to as environmental or ecological marketing, is the strategic process of creating and endorsing goods or services that include ecologically friendly attributes or are manufactured using environmentally conscious methods. In light of the escalating global recognition of environmental concerns, including but not limited to climate change, pollution, and resource depletion, individuals are progressively exhibiting heightened awareness and mindfulness in relation to their consumption choices. Business enterprises are modifying their operational approaches in order to align with the evolving demands of consumers.

Conclusion

Green marketing, when executed with authenticity, represents more than a trend; it's a reflection of a business's adaptability to a changing world and its commitment to future generations. However, it requires more than just green labels and eco-friendly packaging. True green marketing encompasses genuine efforts towards sustainability, transparent communication, and a deep understanding of consumers' evolving expectations. As society progresses, it's clear that only those businesses that align profitability with responsibility will thrive in the long run. Green marketing has undeniably influenced consumer behavior, with a growing segment of the population prioritizing sustainability in their buying decisions. For businesses, it's imperative to ensure the authenticity of their green claims, as modern

consumers are not only environmentally conscious but also well-informed and discerning. The success of green marketing, therefore, lies in the delicate balance between genuine sustainable practices and effective, transparent communication. At its core, green marketing involves emphasizing the environmental attributes of a product, be it in its production, packaging, distribution, or disposal. This could range from using biodegradable materials, reducing carbon footprint, conserving resources, or supporting environmental causes. The success of green marketing is largely attributable to the emergence of the eco-conscious consumer. Growing awareness about the state of the planet has nudged consumers to reflect on their purchasing choices. For many, buying green products serves as a means to endorse sustainable practices and reduce personal environmental impact. This shift in consumer behavior has, in turn, pushed brands to either adopt or promote sustainable practices.

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