Awareness Level of Consumers towards Green FMCG Products with Special Reference to Coimbatore District

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Abstract: In recent days, environmental issues have received a great deal of discussion in the field of marketing. When the society becomes more concerned with the natural environment, businessmen have begun to modify their behavior to address the society’s new concern. With the growing awareness about the implication of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc, both marketer and consumers are switching to eco-friendly products and many companies have accepted their responsibility not to harm the environment and not to waste the natural resources. The research study took place in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu. A questionnaire is designed in order to find out the awareness level of consumers towards green FMCG products in order that 100 respondents were taken for the study.

Key words: Eco-friendly products, consumer awareness, eco-label, social responsibility.

Introduction:
Due to increase in global warming and climate change the public concern for environmental issues is gradually increased over the past decades. The customers are started demanding eco-friendly products and they pay more attention to the environment, wealth and health. The companies are started adopting green marketing practices in their activities as a part of social responsibility and they were trying to reach the customers with their green messages. The “Green movement” then has entered the mainstream status in many developed countries, where eco-friendliness is becoming a major consumer preference among the best living in such nations. But though in India, the green movement has started in the late 1990s and 2000s, it was still in the infancy stage. Eco-friendly products are those products that will not pollute the earth or deplete natural resources, product which can be recycled or conserved, products with natural ingredients, products containing organic elements and products contents under approved chemical.

Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) is considerably a large sector in the Indian economy. FMCG also known as Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG), are products that are sold quickly at relatively low cost. Though the absolute profit made on FMCG products is relatively small, they generally sell in large quantities, so the cumulative profit on such products can be large. In India the FMCG sector has to open their eyes on eco-friendliness.

Consumer Awareness is defined as the way that customer usually known about certain services and products.

Literature Review:
Environmental marketing is also known as Green Marketing, sustainable marketing and ecological marketing. The American Marketing Association (AMA) “Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. It incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising”. Worldwide evidence indicates people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behavior accordingly (Polonsky, 1994). (Brudtland commission, 1987), development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Rowell, 1996). Green or environment marketing consist 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 (Polonsky 1994). (Peattie (2001), described evolution of Green marketing in 3 phases. First phase is termed as “Ecological” green marketing and during this period all marketing activities are concerned to help environmental problems and provide remedies for environmental problems. Second phases “Environmental” green marketing and the focus shifted on clean technology that involved designing of innovation new products, which take care of pollution and waste issues. Third phase was “sustainable” green marketing came into prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000. “Product that incorporates the strategies in recycling or with recycled content, reduced packaging or using less toxic materials to reduce the impact on the natural environment is known as Green products or eco-friendly products (Elkington, 1999). There is a growing interest among the consumers all over the world for protection of the environment. The green consumers are the main motivating force behind the green marketing process. It is their concern for environment and their own well being that drives demand for eco-friendly products, which in turn encourages improvements in the environment performance of many products and companies (Sudir Sachdev,2011). FMCG sector is a considerably large sector in the economy which has to open their eyes on eco-friendliness. The FMCG sector is one of the growing industries that concern about the green marketing issues (Ramanakumar, 2012). Green marketers can attract customers on the basis of performance, money savings, health and convenience or just plain environmental friendliness, so as to target a wide range of green consumers.

**Objective:**

The main objective of the study is to know the level of awareness of customers regarding green FMCG products.

**Hypothesis:**

1. H1: “There is a significant relationship between personal factors and sources of awareness towards green FMCG product”.
2. H2: “There is a significant relationship between personal factors and media of awareness towards green FMCG products”.

**Methodology of the study**

**i) Area of the study:** Area of the study refers to Coimbatore city which is known for development of various industries such as motors, pumpsets, wetgrinders, textile mills etc. The city has become a hub of educational institutions attracting many numbers of students across the country and the world.

**ii) Sources of data:** The study involves primary data only. For the purpose of the study, the data were collected from 100 respondents who are using green products.

**iii) Sampling design:** For the purpose of the study, 100 respondents were selected using convenience sampling method.

**iv) Tools for analysis:** Percentage analysis, Chi-square analysis, Average score analysis, Multiple regression analysis and Analysis of variance are the statistical tools used in this study.

**Results and Discussion:**

The findings of the study are summarized below:

**Personal profile of the respondents**

- Majority (51.8%) of the respondents selected for the study are male.
- Maximum (49.6%) of the respondents selected for the study belonged to the age group of 25-40 years.
- Majority (50%) of the respondents selected for the study are college level.
- Maximum (29%) of the respondents selected for the study are doing business.
- Maximum (46.7%) of the respondents selected for the study belonged to the income level of below 20,000.
- Majority (62.6%) of the respondents selected for the study are married.
- Maximum (44%) of the respondents selected for the study have one child in the family.
- Maximum (47.3%) of the respondents selected for the study have family size of five & above members.
Results of descriptive analysis
- Majority (56.2%) of the respondents came to know about green products through advertisements.
- Most (47.9%) of the respondents came to know about green products through newspapers & magazines among advertisements.

Results of Chi-square analysis
- All the personal factors except gender have significant influence on the source of awareness about green products.
- All the personal factors except gender, age group, income level, number of children in the family and size of the family have significant influence on the media of awareness about green products.

Results of Average score analysis
- Majority of the respondents irrespective of their personal classification have high level of awareness about stationeries among the various green products.

Multiple Regression analysis
- Among the various factors stationary explains the maximum of (35.8%) on the variations of a dependent variable, total awareness about green products.

Analysis of Variance
- There is a significant difference between the personal classification of respondents such as gender, educational level, occupational status, income level, marital status, number of children in the family and size of the family in respect of the level of awareness about stationeries among green products.
- There is a significant difference between the personal classification of respondents such as gender, educational level, income level, marital status, number of children in the family and size of the family in respect of the level of awareness about personal care products among green products.
- There is a significant difference between the personal classification of respondents such as gender, educational level, income level and number of children in the family in respect of the level of awareness about food & beverages among green products.
- There is a significant difference between the personal classification of respondents such as age and income level in respect of the level of awareness about cleaning products among green products.
- There is a significant difference between the personal classification of respondents such as educational level and occupational status in respect of the level of awareness about grocery items among green products.
- There is a significant difference between the personal classification of respondents such as income level and number of children in the family in respect of the level of awareness about vegetables & fruits among green products.
- There is a significant difference between the occupational status of respondents in respect of the level of awareness about health products among green products.

Conclusion:
Going green has become the new success mantra and is being discussed by people from all walks of life. The above study indicates that the consumers of Coimbatore district of Tamilnadu are aware about the eco-friendly FMCG products and they have more concern for eco-friendly products. The study shows they are identifying the eco-friendly FMCG products through the eco-label and therefore it can be considered as a major tool for Environmental marketing. The government, the organization and the customers has to put hands together in creating awareness of eco-friendly products.
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