

# GREEN MARKETING: A STUDY OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION AND PREFERENCES IN GWALIOR CITY

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## ABSTRACT

Concerns have been expressed by manufacturers and customers about the environmental impact of products during recent decades. Consumers and manufacturers have directed their attention toward environment friendly products that are presumed to be “green” or environment friendly like low power consuming (energy-efficient) electrical appliances, organic foods, lead free paints, recyclable paper, and phosphate free detergents. Indian marketers are also realizing the importance of the Green Marketing Concept. Although a variety of research on green marketing has been conducted across the globe; little academic research on consumer perception and preferences has been carried out in India. This research provides a brief review of environmental issues and identifies the green values of the consumers, their level of awareness about environmental issues, green products and practices. This paper highlights the consumers’ perception and preferences towards green marketing practices and products with the help of a structured questionnaire. High level of awareness about green marketing practices and products was found among the consumers. Green values were also found to be high among the respondents. Research has given good insights for marketers of the green products and suggests the need of designing the marketing communication campaigns promoting green products due to high green value among the consumers.

**Key Words: Consumer, Environmental Pollution, Green Marketing, Perception.**

## INTRODUCTION

Green marketing is the marketing of environmentally friendly products and services. It is becoming more popular as more people become concerned with environmental issues and decide that they want to spend their money in a way that is kinder to the planet. Green marketing can involve a number of different things, such as creating an eco-friendly product, using eco-friendly packaging, adopting sustainable business practices, or focusing marketing efforts on messages that communicate a product’s green benefits.

Since society becomes more anxious with the natural environment, businesses have started to adjust their behavior in an attempt to address society's "new" concerns. Some businesses have been quick to accept concepts like environmental management systems and waste minimization, and have integrated

environmental issues into all organizational activities. People are conscious about the less environment friendly product due to their own welfare that is why this issue is very modern topics for India. This paper tries to unearth consumer attitudes and perceptions towards eco- friendly products in FMCG sector and their willingness to pay on green products.

**Basically, green marketing concerns with three aspects:**

1. Promotion of production and consummation of pure/quality products,
2. Fair and just dealing with customers and society, and
3. Protection of ecological environment.

**CHALLENGES OF GREEN MARKETING**

Implementing Green marketing is not going to be an easy job. The firm has to face many problems while treading the way of Green marketing. Challenges which have to be faced are listed as under:

Green marketing encourages green products/services, green technology, green power/energy; a lot of money has to be spent on R&D programmers. Thus practicing green marketing initially will be a costly affair.

- ❖ The customers may not believe in the firm's strategy of Green marketing, the firm therefore should ensure that they convince the customer about their green product, this can be done by implementing Eco-labeling schemes. Eco-labeling schemes offer its "approval" to "environmentally less harmless" products have been very popular in Japan and Europe. In fact the first eco-label programmed was initiated by Germany in 1978.
- ❖ Initially the profits will be very low since renewable and recyclable products and green technologies are more expensive. Green marketing will be successful only in long run.
- ❖ Many customers may not be willing to pay a higher price for green products which may affect the sales of the company.
- ❖ The firm may give up on Green marketing concept or be forced to practice unfair means to cut cost to sustain in the competition and thus the entire idea of going green will be a farce.
- ❖ The firms practicing Green marketing have to strive hard in convincing the stakeholders and many a times there may be some who simply may not believe and co-operate.

## **Importance of Green Marketing:**

Green marketing affects positively the health of people and the ecological environment. People are aware of pure products and pure methods of producing, using, and disposing the products. It encourages integrated efforts for purity in production and consumption as well,

## **THE GREEN CONSUMER**

There is 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 environmental performance of many products and companies. Thus, for a marketer it is important to identify the types of green consumers.

## **THE COSTUMER PERCEPTION**

The ultimate aim of every business is to increase sales by finding out the factors that drive consumer's buying decisions. Consumer perception theory tries to analyze and explain consumer behavior. The perception of the same product or service by different consumers would vary. This is exactly what consumer perception theory analyses by finding out what exactly motivates or influences a consumer behavior in purchasing or not purchasing a specific product.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Maheshwari Aditya, Malhotra Gunjan (2011)** revealed that Around 3 out of every 4 people (75%) surveyed said that they know about Green Marketing, whereas when informed about what green marketing is all about the percentage of people who believed in it increased to 91%. This shows that most of the consumers believe that companies are trying to attract them by labeling the product as environment friendly.

**Peattie Ken, Crane Andrew (2005)** revealed in their research that much of what has been commonly referred to as “green marketing” has been underpinned by neither a marketing, nor an environmental, philosophy. Five types of misconceived green marketing are identified and analyzed: green spinning, green selling, green harvesting, and marketing and compliance marketing.

**S. Pradeep , C. Vinod Kumar (2011)** have given a concept of 4E's for the recent marketing mix techniques. The 4E's given are Enticing, Economic, Environment and Emerging Trends.

They have given an overview of how these four factors affect the marketing mix and how the business gets changed by these factors. The companies can also gain a competitive advantage over other companies

through these techniques. It is important for a company to use these factors appropriately to achieve competitive excellence.

**Saxena Ravindra P., Khandelwal Pradeep K. (2010)** concluded in their study that the term green marketing or green business strategy evoked visions of fringe environmentalism and adding cost to existing normal goods. Most of the industries had the perception that consumers are willing to buy products at best competitive prices and associate no value for environmentally friendly products.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the awareness of consumers about green products and practices.
2. To study the preferences of Indian consumers about green products.
3. To identify the factors that persuades the customer to purchase green products.
4. To understand the challenges of green marketing practices.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this study the unit of analysis is Consumer Level. Questionnaire survey was conducted in this Study to collect information from the consumers Analysis was conducted from information Collected through questionnaire.

## **PRIMARY DATA**

The research has been developed through observation and collection of data through questionnaires. Theory is developed on the basis of field visits, feedback obtained through email, queries solved through telephonic conversation and result of the data analyzed.

## **SECONDARY DATA**

Theory is developed referring secondary data like books, journals and magazines, websites, and News papers.

## **SAMPLE SIZE**

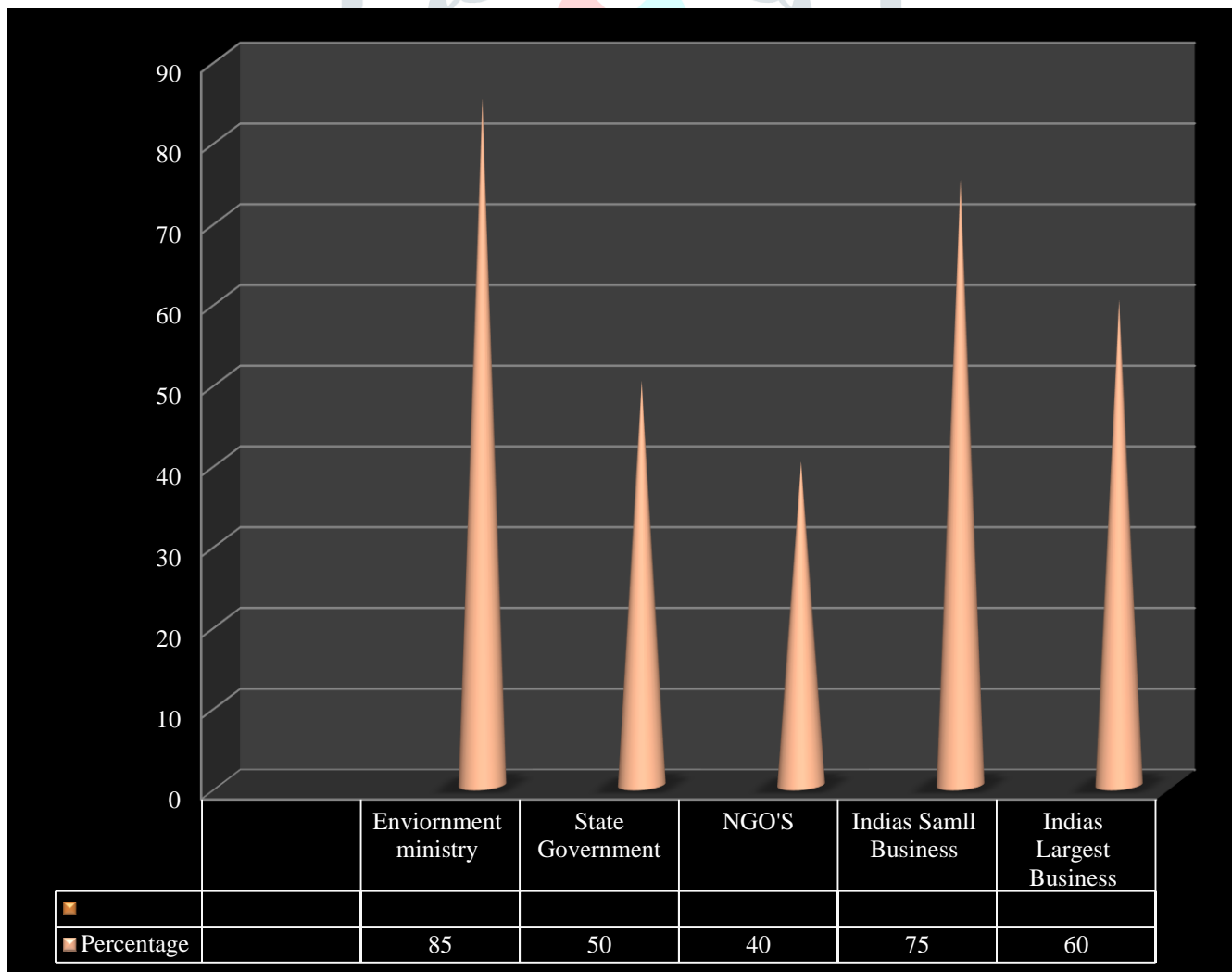
The questionnaire was given to 60 samples. Data was collected from 60 consumers who are frequent purchasers. Non probability sampling techniques was used. The various tests like percentage analysis, correlation, and weighted average method are used. Questionnaire is constructed in simple language in order to reduce the risk of ambiguity.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is focused only to respondents of Bangalore City.
- The duration of project is very short period.
- The study is focused only to the perception of consumers on green products due to lack of time.

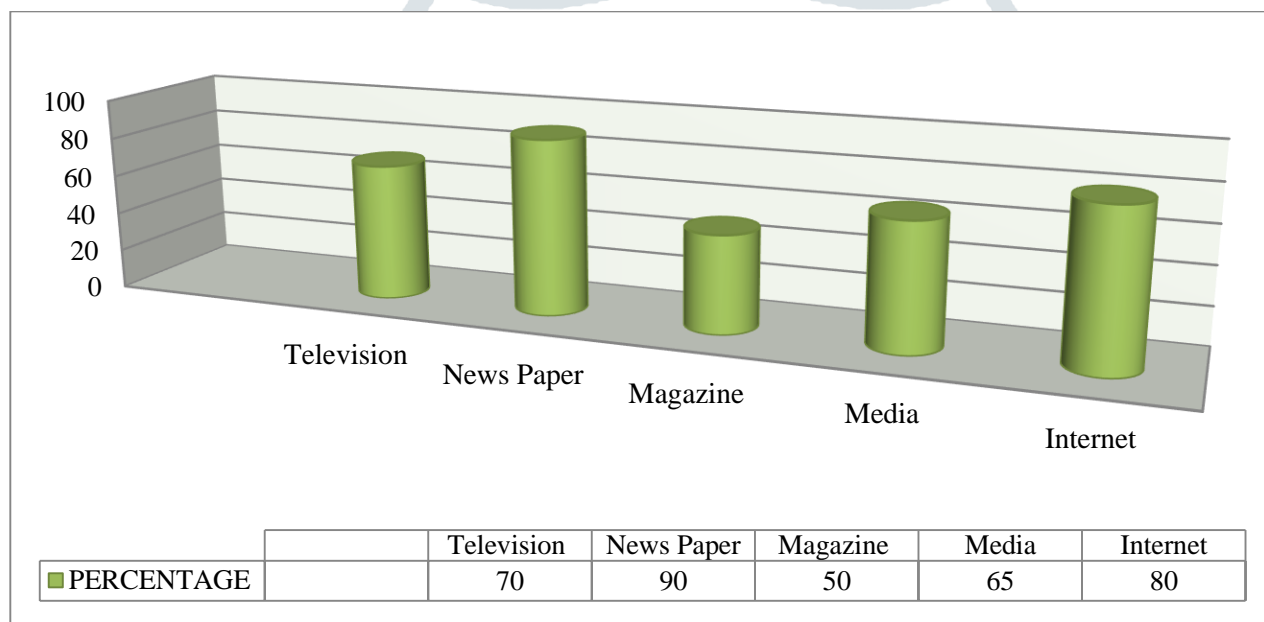
## INITIATIVES TAKEN FOR PROMOTING GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES BY THE AGENCIES

AGENESIS	PERCENTAGE
Environment Ministry	85
State Government	50
NGO'S	40
India's Small Business	75
India's Largest Business	60



## SOURCES OF GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES

Source	PERCENTAGE
Television	70
News Paper	90
Magazine	50
Media	65
Internet	80



## SUGGESTIONS

Measures have to be initiated to increase the practices of green marketing. Better marketing communication is needed from Agencies to communicate customers about their green initiatives. Let customers aware that the organization cares about the environment by focusing on green product advantages and eco-friendly business practices in their marketing messages and strategies. Organizations have to include consumers for their green marketing initiatives. The firms should work constantly to find out the green material, methods of making green finished product which are commercially viable.

## CONCLUSION

In India Green Marketing is in initial stages. Government has to impose stringent Laws which make Firms and Consumers to use environment free Products. Consumers are not aware about green initiatives undertaken by various government and non-government agencies signifying need for more efforts from

organizations in this regard. Internet and newspapers remains leading source of information for most of the respondents and should be utilized more for reaching out to the consumers regarding green products and practices.

Green marketing has to be pursued with much greater vigor as it has environmental and social impact. With global warming looking largely, it is important that green marketing becomes the norm rather an exception, or just a fad. From the marketing point of view, a good marketer is not only satisfying the consumer needs but also produce and supply products according to the choice of the consumers. Green Marketing should help protect environment for future generation.

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