

Emerging Green Consumerism in India: A Study of Green Awareness, Perception & Green Brand Preferences

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Abstract – World over, economic growth has come at the cost of environment only. Global warming, an outcome of greenhouse gas emission, is the price the world pays for its over ambitious progression. Where previously environmentalists saw excess consumption as central to the problem, green consumerism now places consumption at the heart of the solution. As the Green lifestyles and ethical consumption have become increasingly popular strategies in moving towards environmentally-friendly societies and combating global scarcity. More and more business and industries are joining in the green movement, either out of a real interest in saving the planet or a desire to capitalize on the growing consumer demand for greener ways. In India, though consumerism is gaining momentum after 1991, when India threw her doors open to international trade, and the situation changed dramatically and so did consumerism in India, but green consumerism is not getting due priority. Government, business organizations and consumers are arpeggios for green consumerism in India. Though Government of India has already taken initiative by imposing many rules and regulations regarding environmental preservation but there is need to play the role on marketing green ideas more intensively to make people more aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues and problems, so that there will be a new breed of green minded consumers to keep themselves healthy as well as there will be a great contribution to preserve our planet healthy for our next generations. The study seeks to critically analyze the factors contributing to the rising green consumerism and to further study the governmental interventions which can effectively benefit both the marketers and consumers as well.

Keywords: Green Product, Green Awareness, Green Consumerism, Environmental Consciousness

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1. INTRODUCTION

As it is said that the green consumer is someone who is environmentally and socially conscious and which leads him/her to purchase the products that are eco-friendly. Over the last few decades, it is being observed that people are changing their trends and lifestyle in a more environment conscious way paying more responsiveness towards green oriented behavior worldwide. The study and research about green consumerism has been interesting due to growing green awareness and significance of green orientation in the consumer purchasing process globally.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Green marketing was given prominence in the late 1980s and 1990s after the proceedings of the first workshop on Ecological marketing held in Austin, Texas (US), in 1975. Several books on green marketing began to be published thereafter. According to the Joel makeover (a writer, speaker

and strategist on clean technology and green marketing), green marketing faces a lot of challenges because of lack of standards and public consensus to what constitutes "Green". The green marketing has evolved over a period of time. According to Peattie (2001), the evolution of green marketing has three phases. First phase was termed as "Ecological" green marketing, and during this period all marketing activities were concerned to help environment problems and provide remedies for environmental problems. Second phase was "Environmental" green marketing and the focus shifted on clean technology that involved designing of innovative new products, which take care of pollution and waste issues. Third phase was "Sustainable" green marketing. It came into prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000. The idea of green consumerism is very much important in this decade to popularize among all sections of society to save the planet Earth. Green consumerism is a movement to encourage people to buy food and other products such as organic food, lead-free petrol etc. which are considered as

environmental friendly. It refers to recycling, purchasing and using eco-friendly products that minimize damage to the environment. More and more business and industries are joining in the green movement, either out of a real interest in saving the planet or a desire to capitalize on the growing consumer demand for greener ways. In India, though consumerism is gaining momentum after 1991, when India pitched her doors vulnerable to international trade, and the situation changed vividly and so did consumerism in India. Over the years various studies have investigated the concept of green consumer behaviour and have listed out factors that work as either barriers or enablers when it comes to consumer adoption of environmentally sustainable products or lifestyles. (Vishnu Nath, Rupesh Kumar, Rajat Agrawal, 2013)

3. OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:

1. To study the conceptual framework regarding green awareness and green marketing and green consumerism
2. To study the changing perception of consumers towards green products in Rewari District.
3. To study the consumer awareness and brand preferences towards green products.
4. To identify and evaluate the factors influence consumer buying behaviour towards green products.
5. To find out the level of consumer's satisfaction towards green products

3.1 Hypotheses of the study

The study set to test the following hypotheses:-

H01= There is no significant difference between men and women awareness towards green products.

H02= There is no significant difference in satisfaction between respondents of different income group

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The focus of this study is to understand the factors influencing consumers green buying behaviour and further to know the customer perception towards green products in Rewari city. **The research design is exploratory cum descriptive.**

Primary and secondary data have been collected; Primary data has been collected through a structured questionnaire, personal interviews and observation.

Purposive sampling method is adopted for the study. The study is confined to Rewari district only.

The sample size is 200 respondent consumers. The data has been collected with the help of structured questionnaire and through discussions with these respondents. The questionnaires were processed for coding the data in the computer. SPSS package was used for processing, classification, tabulation, analysis and interpretation of data. The following **statistical techniques** were applied depending on the nature of data collected from the respondents:-

T test: It is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the means of two groups. With all inferential statistics, we assume the dependent variable fits a normal distribution.

- **ANOVA:** Analysis of variance is used to test differences between two or more means. The name is appropriate because inferences about means are made by analysing variance.
- **GARRET RANK METHOD:** this method is used to assign a rank to the factors according to response of the respondents.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR: GARRET RANK METHOD

Section C of the questionnaire belongs to the factors, in this section there are seven factors. These factors were designed to examine the opinion of respondents about the factors and assign rank (1 to 7) according to their importance. To find out rank between the factors assigned by the respondents to factors, Garret rank method is used (To identify and evaluate the factors influenced consumer green buying behaviour).

The reliability and validity test was conducted using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

Table 1: Basic profile of the respondents

	Category	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	88	55
	Female	72	45
Age	15-25	44	27.5
	25-35	68	42.5
	35-45	24	15
	Above 45	24	15
Educational qualification	Primary	30	18.75
	Secondary	45	28.125
	Under graduate	30	18.75
	Under graduate	30	18.75
	Post graduate	55	34.375
Marital status	Married	120	75
	Unmarried	40	25
Occupation	Employee	72	45
	Own business	32	20
	Student	24	15
	Other	32	20
Income (P.A)	Less than 250000	88	55
	250000-500000	40	25
	More than 500000	32	20

Source: primary data and calculation through IBM SPSS (version 21)

5. ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION:

Data which are collected through primary source were systematically tabulated, processed and made suitable for analyses and interpretations of the data.

5.1 Consumer Awareness - Gender Wise Analyses:

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between male and female awareness towards green products.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is significant difference between male and female awareness towards green products.

Table 2: Responses regarding green awareness and products (Mean & Standard deviation)

Sr. No.	Statements	N	Mean	Std. dev.
1	Clarity on imaging the green brand in mind	160	4.62	.487
2	Easily reliable green brands	160	4.03	.816
3	Comes first in my mind	160	3.49	1.070
4	I am aware about all green products	160	3.38	1.186
5	Green provide herbal products with different choices	160	3.63	1.063
6	Recognize the green brand among other competing brands	160	3.73	.995

Source: primary data and calculation through IBM SPSS (version 21)

Table 2.1: Responses regarding green awareness and products (Gender wise analysis)

Clarity on imaging the green brand in mind	Gender	N	Mean	Std. dev.	t sig.		Result
	Male	88	4.63	.487	.179	.858	Not significant
	Female	72	4.61	.491			
Easily reliable green brands	Male	88	4.01	.750	-.233	.816	Not significant
	Female	72	4.04	.895			
Comes first in my mind	Male	88	3.57	.968	1.055	.293	Not significant
	Female	72	3.39	1.181			
I am aware about all green products	Male	88	3.49	1.194	1.344	.181	Not Significant
	Female	72	3.24	1.169			
Green provide herbal products with different choices	Male	88	3.51	1.145	-1.501	.135	Not significant
	Female	72	3.76	.942			
Recognize the green brand among other competing brands	Male	88	3.81	.981	1.062	.290	Not significant
	Female	72	3.84	1.011			

Source: primary data and calculation through IBM SPSS (version 21)

As per the significance value of responses related to different statements, which shows the results according to gender indicates that there is no significant difference between responses of male and female consumers. There are six statements regarding consumer green awareness and green brand preferences towards green products and all reveal the same positive result. Value of t statistics of all the statements is more than 0.05. So genders do not impact on awareness of consumers, as responses of male and females are not significantly different. Hence null hypothesis is accepted.

5.2 Level of Satisfaction towards Green Products (Based on Different Income Groups)

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in level of satisfaction between respondent of different income group.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is significant difference in level of satisfaction between respondents different income group.

Table 3: satisfaction level towards Green products (mean & std. dev.)

Sr. No.	Statements	N	Mean	Std. dev.
1	Green Products are good herbal products.	160	4.54	.571
2	The green brand is safe to use	160	4.20	.612
3	The green brand is well priced	160	2.59	.927
4	I always use the green brand	160	2.82	.808
5	I will recommend the products and green brand to others	160	3.88	.642
6	Green products are good for health.	160	3.86	.894
7	I am very loyal for the green brand	160	2.98	.820
8	Green products are cheapest as compared to other brands of herbal products	160	2.78	.945
9	Best products I could have bought.	160	4.02	.639
10	The green products are exactly what I need	160	3.60	.877
11	Sometimes I have mixed feeling about keeping green products	160	3.86	.722
12	I am satisfied with my decisions to buy green products.	160	3.76	.860

As per the mean value of the responses regarding various statements which are to show the level of satisfaction of consumers and brand preferences towards green products, out of total twelve statements, three statements have shown positive response i.e. agreement of the respondents as their mean values lie between five and four which represent either strongly agree or agree. Five statements have shown neutral response i.e. they are indifferent regarding these statements as their mean values lie between three and four. Four statements have shown negative response i. e .disagreement of the respondents as their mean values lie between two and three. Overall it may be viewed that respondents are not fully satisfied regarding green brands.

Table- 3.1. Satisfaction Level towards Green Products (Annual Income Wise Analysis)

Statements		sum of square	df	Mean square	f	Sig.	Result
Green Products are good herbal products.	Between group	.845	2	.423	1.303	.275	Not significant
	Within group	50.930	157	.324			
Green brand is Safe to use	Between group	.182	2	.091	.240	.787	Not significant
	Within group	59.418	157	.378			
This Green brand is Branwell priced	Between group	3.327	2	1.663	1.957	.145	Not significant
	Within group	133.448	157	.850			
I always use the green brand	Between group	.651	2	.325	.495	.610	Not significant
	Within group	103.093	157	.657			
I will recommend the green product to others	Between group	.984	2	.492	1.197	.305	Not significant
	Within group	64.516	157	.411			
Green products are good for health.	Between group	.227	2	.357	.528	.591	Not significant
	Within group	126.748	157	.677			
I am very loyal for green brand	Between group	.714	2	.357	.528	.591	Not significant
	Within group	106.230	157	.677			
Green products are cheapest as compared to other brands of herbal products	Between group	2.034	2	1.017			Not significant
	Within group	139.866	157	.891	1.142	.322	
This is one of the best products I could have bought	Between group	.014	2	.007	.017	.983	Not significant
	Within group	64.944	157	.414			
The green products are exactly what I need	Between group	.343	2	.171	.220	.802	Not significant
	Within group	122.057	157	.777			

A one way ANOVA test was performed on these mean scores obtained for the attributes to show the level of satisfaction towards Green products based on different income groups. P value of every statement is more than 0.05. Overall, a respondent which belongs to different income group do not make any difference in responding towards satisfaction; as responses of different income group are not significantly difference.

6. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

6.1 Findings Related to Customers Demographic Profile-

- In the present study male respondents (55%) are more in number than female respondents. It shows that male candidates preferred more the green products as compare to female.
- Age group of 25-35 years (42.5%) have more preferred green products in comparison to other age groups Though the other age groups are also interested in it but they show less interest than 25-35 years age group.
- Age group of 35-45 years and above 45 (15%) is not much in favor of green products. They also believe that green products are very costly in comparison to chemical based product and the effect of green product is very slow.
- The result reveals that post graduate respondents (34.37%) like more the herbal products compared to other respondents which are followed by the graduate respondents (28.8%). It shows that qualified

respondents are more health conscious and avoid chemical based products.

- Employees (45%) are in more favor of green products than the other category.
- Out of total 160 respondents, 120 respondents are married and remaining unmarried. It shows that married people like more green products.
- This study find that mostly respondents (55%) lie 'less than 250000' income group. It shows that middle class people prefer green products.

6.2 Findings Related To Consumer Awareness towards Green Products-

- In most of the respondents families all the members used green products so these families know more about the benefits of green products as they are using the green products.
- More than 50% of the respondents are using green product since less than one year period. It indicates that recently consumers are more aware regarding green products

6.3 Findings Related to Consumers Green Awareness-

- Out of the total six statements regarding consumer awareness towards green products, two statements give positive response as the mean lie between four and five which shows that respondents are agree with these statements but for the other four statements, respondents are indifferent as the mean between three and four. It shows that consumers are not fully aware now regarding green brands.
- To check out the various responses on the various statements t- test is performed and result indicate that significant value of t-statistics of all the statements is more than 0.05 so gender of the respondents have no impact regarding awareness. Further we can say that male and female are equally aware regarding this brand.

6.4 Findings Related To Consumers Satisfaction towards Green Products-

- There are twelve statements regarding customer satisfaction in which only three statements have shown positive response i. e. agreement of respondents as their mean value lie between four and five.

Mean value of five statements lie between three and four i.e. respondents are indifferent regarding these statements and other four statements give negative response as their mean value lie between two and three.-

- The statement 'this brand is well priced' has shown lowest mean value (2.59) and standard deviation (.927) is very high. It shows that respondents are not satisfied regarding the price of Green products. Overall consumers are not fully satisfied regarding this brand.
- To look out the responses on various statements according to the different income group, ANOVA test is applied and result showed that income of respondents does not make any difference in responding towards the satisfaction of respondents.

6.5 Findings Related to Customers Satisfaction towards Patanjali Products

- To know the preference of consumers regarding different factors, Garret rank method is applied on the selected seven factors and result showed that product benefits is most important factor regarding green brand that is highly influenced the consumers of green products.
- Product quality is also very important in the case of personal care products hence respondents give second rank to it.
- Product price and product packaging of green brand do not come up the expectations of consumers of green products.

7. CONCLUSION

In the era of cut throat competition, it is very necessary to understand the behaviour of consumers as their needs, wants desires are changing very frequently. Now a day's consumers are more health conscious and prefer green products. The present study attempts to examine the perception of consumer and brand preferences towards green products in Rewari city. This study concludes that there is no significant difference between male and female awareness towards patanjali products but consumers are not fully aware regarding green brands. This study also reveals the truth that there is no significant difference in satisfaction between respondents of different income group but consumers are not fully satisfied regarding price of green products. Product quality and product benefits are main factors which influence respondents buying behavior towards green products. The study since

focused on a limited geographical area has limited generalizability but provides good insights regarding behavior of consumers towards green products. The marketing communication regarding green practices need to focus more on theme and message. Advertising appeals using green products and practices are likely to move emotions and result in persuasion. It is important for markets to be in top of mind recall of consumers to gain maximum from their green brand positioning. Constant and continuous communication from the organizations' side is required to make an impact and create a distinct green positioning and ultimately resulting a rise in green consumerism.

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