

A STUDY ON MARKETING STRATEGIES IN GREEN CONSUMERISM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHENNAI CITY

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Abstract

The rising environmental concerns and growing consumer awareness have led to a significant shift in consumption patterns, giving rise to green consumerism. Green marketing, as a strategic approach, aims to align business objectives with environmental sustainability by promoting eco-friendly products and practices. This study explores the effectiveness of marketing strategies in influencing green consumer behaviour in Chennai, a rapidly urbanizing metropolitan city in India. The research investigates key marketing elements – including product positioning, pricing strategies, promotional efforts, packaging, and distribution – and how these influence consumer attitudes and purchase decisions towards green products. A mixed-method approach was adopted, comprising quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with consumers across diverse demographic segments in Chennai. The findings reveal that while awareness of green products is increasing, actual purchase decisions are often moderated by price sensitivity, perceived product value, and trust in environmental claims. Effective strategies identified include transparent eco-labelling, health-centric messaging, and social influence through digital platforms. The study highlights the need for targeted, culturally contextual marketing efforts and suggests that businesses must balance profitability with authenticity and accessibility in their green marketing initiatives. These insights provide actionable implications for marketers, policymakers, and sustainability advocates aiming to foster green consumerism in urban India.

Introduction

As a phenomenon, which incorporates environmental awareness into the purchasing decision, green consumerism has become extremely popular over the last few years. With climate change, pollution, and sustainability being the major issues of public interest, the demand to buy products that imply an ethical, ecological, and health-aware approach increases among consumers. It is on this increased demand that businesses have turned into green marketing, where marketing behavior is geared towards environmental sustainability.

In cities such as Chennai, the consumer is undergoing a transformation due to the increase in the level of environmental consciousness, health consciousness, and global influence. Nevertheless, the shift to popular green consumerism is yet to come, and there are numerous issues regarding price, low supply and distrust in ecological statements. This paper creates an examination of the success of new marketing techniques that are used in the marketing of the green products in the city of Chennai and how companies can modify their operations to satisfy the environmentally aware buyers.

Scope of the Study

This paper aims at examining how the marketing strategies can affect consumer attitudes and behaviours towards green products in Chennai city. The scope is limited to:

- Consumer based in the city of Chennai.
- Green consumer goods, such as organic food, ecologically-friendly packaging, environmentally-responsible personal care, and low carbon products.
- Marketing components like product design, price, promotion, distribution and packaging.
- Investigating the perception, motivation and highs of consumers regarding green purchases.

Review of Literature

Yamuna, J. (2023). Influence on the consumer perception of green marketing in FMCG considering Chennai in particular. *Journal of Innovation*, 9 (3), 45-52. This paper examines consumer response towards green marketing by the Chennai-based consumers in the FMCG industry. It established that the packaging, labeling and eco-claims of products had a great impact on purchase intention.

Parthiban, A. (2023). Consumer attitude on the green marketing: A research under particular consideration of Chennai city. The paper is published in the *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Development Studies (IJMDS)* 10(2) 78-85. The article examines the perception of green marketing activities by consumers in Chennai. The author identifies a discrepancy between the knowledge of consumer and actual purchase based on the issue of pricing and mistrust.

Vijayalakshmi, A., & Raman, P. (2022). Perception of green products by consumers -A case study of Chennai city. *CIBGP Journal*, 23(1), 112-120. The authors focus on the effect of the demographic and marketing cues on the consumption of green products in Chennai. Eco-friendly packaging and social awareness were identified as the driving forces.

Snekha, S., & Sreeya, B. (2022). Research regarding the factors affecting consumer buying behaviour with special consideration to Chennai - Organic foods. *Journal of Applied Zoologists*, 18 (4), 65-71. This research paper is devoted to green consumerism in organic

food in Chennai. Results showed that visual perception of products, labeling and word of mouth affect the buying process.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education. The work by Kotler and Keller is still a reference in the context of emphasizing the need to incorporate environmental and ethical concerns into the more traditional marketing strategies to be able to reach out to the modern consumers who are eco-sensitive.

Peattie, K. (1995). *Environmental marketing management: Green challenge met*. Pitman Publishing. Peattie describes green marketing development and presents such frameworks as the Green Marketing Mix (4Ps + People, Planet, and Profit) which can be very relevant in such an urbanized market as Chennai.

Ottman, J. A. (2011). *The new rules of green marketing: Tools, strategies and inspiration of sustainable branding*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers. Ottman offers tactic to counter the environmental issues with the idea of brand authenticity to enable marketers to evade greenwashing and reach out to environmental-conscious customers.

Kumar, P. (2016). Green marketing research: State of literature and classification (1990-2014): Literature review. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 34(1), 137-158. An extensive literature review on green marketing research that provides information about trends, effectiveness, and consumer response would be useful - useful in comparing the situation in Chennai to the trends being observed in the rest of the world.

Objectives of the Study

The key aims of this study are:

- To establish how much Chennai consumers are aware of green products and their perception of these products.
- To analyze the marketing (product, price, promotion, place, and packaging) effects on consumer buying behavior.
- To determine the major drivers or inhibitors of the adoption of green products.
- To measure the performance of green marketing campaigns and messages.
- To give practical recommendations to businesses and policymakers in order to facilitate green consumerism in Chennai.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research is mixed because it uses both quantitative and qualitative data gathering.

Data Collection

Primary Data:

- Two hundred consumers in different locations of Chennai (Adyar, T. Nagar, Velachery, Anna Nagar, etc.) were surveyed using a structured questionnaire.

- Ten marketing professionals and 15 consumers who purchase eco-friendly products on a regular basis were interviewed in depth.

Secondary Data:

- Academic journals, industry reports, market analyses and government publications were examined.

Sampling Technique

- Quantitative surveys were done through random sampling.
- Qualitative interviews were embraced through purposive sampling.

Tools for Analysis

- Descriptive statistics (mean, percentages, frequency).
- Chi-square test
- Cross-tabulation
- Qualitative responses of thematic analysis.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

| Demographic Variable | Category | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Age | 18–25 | 50 | 25% |
| | 26–35 | 60 | 30% |
| | 36–45 | 40 | 20% |
| | 46–55 | 30 | 15% |
| | 55+ | 20 | 10% |
| Gender | Male | 94 | 47% |
| | Female | 106 | 53% |
| Occupation | Students | 40 | 20% |
| | Working Professionals | 100 | 50% |
| | Homemakers | 30 | 15% |
| | Retired | 10 | 5% |
| | Others | 20 | 10% |
| Monthly Income | ₹20,000–₹40,000 | 60 | 30% |
| | ₹40,001–₹60,000 | 50 | 25% |
| | ₹60,001–₹80,000 | 40 | 20% |
| | ₹80,001–₹1,00,000 | 30 | 15% |
| | Above ₹1,00,000 | 20 | 10% |

Interpretation of Demographic Analysis

Age:

Most of the respondents are within the age range of 26-35 years (30%), then 18-25 years (25%). This implies that the youthful adults are more actively involved in the issues related to green consumerism.

Gender:

The gender proportion is also relatively equal, with 53 percent of the female and 47 percent male respondents. This implies that the green marketing approaches should also focus on both sexes equally.

Occupation:

The sample is comprised of working professionals (50%), then students (20%). These groups stand a better chance of possessing disposable income and digital exposure thus they are the best targets of marketing green products.

Monthly Income:

A majority of 55% of respondents have an income ranging between [?]20,000 and [?]60,000 per month which implies that there is a middle-income consumer base. It is in this regard that the issue of affordable pricing strategies in green marketing is of essence.

Awareness of Green Products

Table 2: Awareness of Green Products

| Awareness Parameter | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Heard of green or eco-friendly products | 156 | 78% |
| Could accurately identify green certifications | 104 | 52% |
| Could not accurately identify green certifications | 96 | 48% |

Green products awareness interpretation.

A considerable one-third of the participants have heard of green or eco-friendly products, which means that the idea is familiar to urban consumers in Chennai. The respondents had a poor showing on recognizing the green certifications which included India Organic, FSC, and Eco-mark at only 52 percent. This indicates a disparity between awareness and understanding which means there must be educational marketing and improved labelling by companies. Green marketing activities are supposed to not only

advertise the benefits, which are eco-friendly, but also inform consumers on the certifications and authenticity to gain trust and credibility.

Purchase Behaviour

Table 3: Purchase Behaviour

| Purchase Behaviour Parameter | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Purchased green products in the past 6 months | 124 | 62% |
| Not purchase green products in the past 6 months | 76 | 38% |
| Category of Green Products Purchased | | |
| Organic Food | 90 | 45% |
| Personal Care Products (e.g., shampoo, soaps, cosmetics) | 60 | 30% |
| Home Cleaning Products (e.g., detergents, disinfectants) | 50 | 25% |

Interpretation of Purchase Behaviour

Encouraging Adoption:

The positive trend towards green consumerism in Chennai is that 62 percent of the respondents had bought green products within the past 6 months. This means that there is an increasing readiness to help environmentally friendly decisions amongst urban consumers.

Popular Green Categories:

Organic food is the most popular category of purchased green goods (45%), and then it is the personal care goods (30%), and the last category is the home cleaning goods (25%). This is an indication that green products are adopted through everyday and health-related products.

Marketing Implication:

Marketers must target organic food and personal care markets and emphasize on their health benefits, safety, and natural ingredients. In addition, developing awareness and affordability of home cleaning products would bring more adoption in the category.

Need to Convert Non-buyers:

The businesses should overcome the price barrier, trust, and accessibility to convert the segment, considering that 38% of the consumers have not yet purchased green products.

Influencing Factors Purchase Decisions of Green Products

Table 4: Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions of Green Products

| Factor | Influence Level | Assigned Value (1-5 scale)* |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Health Benefits | Very High | 5 |
| Environmental Concern | High | 4 |
| Brand Trust | High | 4 |
| Price | Moderate to High (Barrier) | 3 |
| Availability | Moderate | 3 |
| Packaging Appeal | Medium | 2 |

Interpretation:

Most Influential Factor (Score: 5) Health Benefits.

The health benefits are seen by the respondents as the most significant factor in the purchase of green products. This implicates that a message that revolves around personal health and natural products is the best in shaping the purchase decision.

Environmental Concern and Brand Trust- Great Strength (Score: 4)

The ratings of environmental concern and brand trust are high, indicating that consumers are driven by the values of sustainability but, at the same time, require to see the genuine and believable branding which can support the statements.

Price - Moderate to High Barrier (Score: 3)

Although people are interested in green products, the issue of price sensitivity is a problem. Numerous consumers are disposed but are reluctant to accept premium prices particularly in lower or middle-income groups.

Availability - moderate influence (Score: 3)

The availability of green products in stores and online is a factor that contributes to purchase. The unavailability may decrease the frequency of buying or may cause brand switching.

Packaging Appeal- Low to Medium Influence (Score: 2)

Even though appealing and environmentally friendly packaging can contribute to the product visibility and communication, it numerous factors are second-order when compared with health and trust.

Perception of Green Marketing

Two-thirds of them reported reading environmental friendly messages in advertisements.

54 percent were more persuaded by digital campaigns over traditional advertisement. A quarter of the respondents believed that most green statements are not credible (greenwashing concerns).

Findings

Rising Consciousness but Paucity of knowledge: The awareness of the consumers on green products is on the rise but there is lack of comprehension of the certifications and true eco-claims.

Health as a Core Motivator: Health is a more effective incentive than the environmental benefits.

Price Sensitivity Is an Investigative Inhibitor: Although a significant number of consumers have a positive attitude towards sustainability, the cost makes them unwilling to purchase green products regularly.

The Digital Marketing Is More Effective: It is the influencer marketing and online materials (e.g., Instagram Reels, YouTube reviews) that drive purchase decisions more than TV/radio.

Packaging Matters: Environment-friendly, informative and attractive packaging is very positive.

Doubt of Green Claims: Customers are suspicious of unverifiable, vague brands.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- Transparent Communication
- Trust and develop trustworthiness and prevent greenwashing through the use of certified eco-labels and clear product information.
- Health-Centric Messaging
- In all marketing activities emphasize the health benefits of green products.
- Green Alternatives That are affordable.
- Create product lines that are cost effective to reach the price sensitive markets without compromising on quality.
- Leverage Local Influencers
- Work with local creators and influencers that will promote products in Tamil and English.
- Improve Availability
- Increase distribution by use of supermarkets, online shops and local stores in order to make them easily accessible.

- Packaging Innovation
- Apply biodegradable or reusable packaging with appealing and educative outlook.
- Support and Policy by the Government.
- Incidentally, promote green buying habits through government efforts such as tax breaks, subsidies or a green buying campaign.

Conclusion

The green consumerism in Chennai is increasing with a base that is majorly fueled by the environmental awareness and health related issues. Nonetheless, positive attitudes are still not translated into real purchasing behaviour because of price obstacles, lack of trust, and product unavailability. In the attempt to influence consumer behaviour, marketing tactics that emphasise on open communication, health benefits, cultural relevance, and online interactions are more bound to succeed. Businesses should take a holistic, authentic and accessible green marketing strategy and the policy makers should establish an environment that encourages sustainability in consumption. Promoting green consumerism is not merely a business but also a social requirement in the context of environmental challenges in the world.

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