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GREEN MARKETING: AN APPROACH TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract

With the implementation of the Sustainable development goals it is our responsibility as responsible citizens of the country to contribute the little we can. We all play the role of a consumer in our everyday lives. As consumers we can avoid so many mistakes like exchanging plastics bags while shopping by replacing them with reusable cloth bags. Just as the action of a consumer makes a difference so does knowledge. The main objective of his research is to establish the growth in awareness of sustainability and eco-friendly behavior by comparing the consumer response of different age groups using the Goodness of Fit test. At the end of the test we have been able to conclude that with growing impact of severe ecological conditions consumers are changing their decision-making process and focusing on eco-friendly purchases. The present paper will assist the companies to market their sustainable goods to the correct target audience based on consumer preferences.

Keywords - Green Marketing, Sustainability, Green Product, Green Service, Sustainable Development

Introduction

As consumers we must find opportunities to help retails and producers become cautious while selling their products. Just when we order fresh fruits and vegetables from online grocery stores like "BigBasket" we are given carton boxes that can be returned back for reuse. But the question is how many of us take the initiative of giving just one call? One small step from our side can help us follow "SDG 12- Responsible Consumption and Production". In the same way organizations taking globally responsible steps also known as Green Companies are the ones that plan their business activities in a way that is secure for the planet over just short-term profit goals. These business face challenges like upfront cast of research and development for using eco-friendly materials in their production and packaging as the consumer do not order sustainable products just to unwrap them from a non-recyclable material.

With growing awareness regarding the alarming condition of our environment we notice many small changes towards converting the world into a sustainable place to live in. There has been a change in the attitude of consumers with respect to a green life. The conscious consumers are actively trying to bring down the impact of their carelessness on the environment. Business and organization want to gain competitive advantage in the market by exploiting the potential in the green market industry now a days.

They are trying to cope up with these changes by inculcating greener and healthier ways of selling and buying. Marketing strategy plays a vital role in developing business activities through a strong and impactful marketing approach as marketing is the backbone for survival of any business.

According to the a report by Harvard business review- "One recent report revealed that certain categories of products with sustainability claims showed twice the growth of their traditional counterparts. Yet a frustrating paradox remains at the heart of green business: Few consumers who report positive attitudes toward eco-friendly products and services follow through with their wallets. In one recent survey 65% said they want to buy purpose-driven brands that advocate sustainability, yet only about 26% actually do so". Going green does not only aim at corporate sustainability aims but also for a safer planet.

Research Gap

As we take a lead into a more environment conscious world it becomes important for companies to select their target audience first and their go ahead with their advertising campaign. For the same purpose it is very essential to divide the market on the basis of the awareness level regarding sustainability and green product development. Our research focuses on the fact that awareness depends on the age of the person. The current century is a better aware than the previous one. Hence it becomes the primary need of a business to target the correct group with a suitable campaign in order to encourage consumption of environmentally safe products. In a similar manner it has been observed that t eco-friendly decisions are based on gender. These are a few problems where the market fails to reach the correct audience and the research will help in establishing the above stated facts.

It is safe to say that due to India's relative newness to this concept, not much has been examined about the same in the country. Indian citizens adopt new styles and preferences due to their social media exposure. Indian marketers must grab this opportunity and serve such new buying patterns that also fulfill a social cause. It may be observed that due to conscious purchases in the developed countries, Indian consumers try imitating such purchases. To recognize these handful consumers and spread awareness should be the objective of a marketer. In order to facilitate such recognition among common marketers this research bridges the gap between whom to market and how to market the green products.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out who are the target markets of green marketing with special reference to age.
- To understand whether people would choose expensive eco-friendly products over cheaper non-sustainable products.
- To check whether decision of purchase involves factors like sustainability.

Literature Review

Going back to the late 1990's people started learning more about environmental degradation. They were made aware about the Ozone Hole, increasing natural disasters, deforestation and climate change. The first workshop was held by The American Marketing Association (AMA) on "Ecological Marketing" in the year 1975. The first book on Green Marketing entitled "Ecological Marketing" was then found.This literature review is being done by reading and understanding the previously researched related topics articles and books.

According to the author of "The New Rules of Green Marketing: Strategies, Tools, and Inspiration for Sustainable Branding" Mr Jacquelyn Ottman, from the point of view of an organization, marketing is one subject in our day to day lives and if environmental considerations are integrated with marketing environmental issues will be balanced with consumer needs.

In their research, "Green Marketing-A study of consumer perception and preferences in India"(2013) Mayank Bhatia and Amit Jain concluded on grounds that "Consumers have shown positive attitude towards green products at the same time they are concerned with the availability and price of such products. This implies that Marketers should make the green products available to the consumers for their consumption as customers have shown willingness to buy green products if it is available"

Belz and Peattie (2008), In their research established that there are customers who would opt to pay a premium price for an eco-friendly and sustainable product.Sweta Gupta, Deepak Singh, C S Thakur (March 2003) express their views on the fact that in order to pull consumers towards green practices the company has to first act in an environmentally conscious manner. It is the action of the marketer that will induce a positive reaction among the consumers.

Hence by this research we will establish the findings that with changing times attitudes towards an eco-friendly business system are also growing. The journey of going green from the 20^{th} to the 21^{st} Century is drastic.

Research Methodology

This research paper has been done on the basis of mainly 2 data types-

Primary Data- The statistical tests performed was based on the raw data collected through questionnaire circulated among the masses of India aged 10 and above being the targeted

population. The survey was divided basically into two groups consisting of age groups below 45 and above 45. This was helpful in data collection of their awareness and perception about green marketing. This shows the consumer buying decision and their interest in the eco – friendly products according to their age classes.
Secondary Data- For comparison purpose and for in-depth knowledge of the subject, material data has been collected from various articles, journals, research papers which have also been mentioned under their respective credentials in this paper.

Sampling Method- The sampling method which has been chosen for this research paper is random and convenience sampling. Random because the selection can be made in any basis. Hence the sample can be diverse and the impact of age on the knowledge of green marketing amongst the population can be determined.

Questionnaire Design- Data has been collected from the Indian consumers to express their choices with reference to green products and green marketing.2 sets of Questionnaire were circulated using "Linktree", for 2 different sets of age group. It was a multiple choice based questionnaire consisting of 6 questions each with one common question as the comparison parameter.

Sample Size-The sample size of the primary respondents has been **221** respondents from Kolkata.

Analysis Tools and Techniques

A detailed and developed questionnaire was prepared so that the questions are comfortable with all the age groups. It was imperative to use primary sources of data collection to improve the validity, reliability and survivability of the data collected. For better responses, people were given enough time to fill the questionnaire so that they can do in their own leisure time. Questionnaires are easy to form, handle and get responses.

Inferential Statistics

Analysis like Goodness of Fit test, Chi-Square test and Hypothesis testing was performed using MS Excel (Calculations) and the process was done manually

THE TESTS

We will perform Goodness of Fit test to test whether Knowledge depends on age or not. So here we take,

$H_0: Knowledgedoesnotdependonage$

$H_1: Knowledgedependsonage$

Goodness of fit is a statistical test which is carried out to test how well the sample fits a particular distribution. To be more specific, it is used to test whether the sample data fits a population from

Normal Distribution or Weibull Distribution. It is used to examine whether the sample data represents the entire population or not.

Two tables are made, one of the observed data and the other of the expected data. Then the summation is taken of the square of the difference between the observed and the expected divided by the expected value. This value is the test statistic which is compared to the critical value of the Chi-square with a specified degrees of freedom.

For coming to the conclusion of this test, we will be taking up three questions from the questionnaire on which we will base our final interpretation, that is, we will be carrying out test from three different data sets.

TEST 1

H_0:People are not aware of the green products

H_1: People are aware of the green products

OBSERVED

	Yes	No	Total
10-15	1	0	1
15-25	140	10	150
25-35	12	0	12
35-45	6	1	7
45-55	39	7	46
55-65	0	0	0
65-75	1	1	2
75-85	2	1	3
Total	201	20	221

EXPECTED

	Yes	No	Total
10-15	0.909502	0.090498	1
15-25	136.4253	13.57466	150
25-35	10.91403	1.085973	12
35-45	6.366516	0.633484	7
45-55	41.8371	4.162896	46
55-65	0	0	0
65-75	1.819005	0.180995	2
75-85	2.728507	0.271493	3

Total	201	20	221

Combining the first two cells and the last three cells, since the values are very small, we get

EXPECTED

	Yes	No	Total
10-25	137.3348	13.66516	151
25-35	10.91403	1.085973	12
35-45	6.366516	0.633484	7
45-55	41.8371	4.162896	46
55-85	4.547511	0.452489	5
Total	201	20	221

The expected value is calculated as

$$\frac{rowtotal * columntotal}{grandtotal}$$

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

$$= \frac{(141 - 137.335)^2}{137.335} + \frac{(12 - 10.91)^2}{10.91} + \cdots + \frac{(10 - 13.67)^2}{13.67} + \cdots + \frac{(2 - 0.45)^2}{0.45} = 10.45308$$

$$Degreesoffreedon = (r - 1) * (c - 1) = (5 - 1) * (2 - 1) = 4$$

On carrying out a one-sided Chi-Square Test, value of the test statistic, 10.45, is exceeding 9.488, the upper 5% of the χ_4^2 distribution. Hence. Since we have sufficient evidence, we must the null hypothesis. Therefore, we conclude that people are aware of the green products.

TEST 2

H_0: People do not choose expensive eco-friendly products over non-sustainable cheaper products

H_1: People choose expensive eco-friendly products over non-sustainable cheaper products

Here, based on our study we are taking an assumption that 80% of people opt for expensive eco-friendly products and 20% of the people opt for cheaper non-sustainable products.

We are taking this assumption because in this modern era more and more people are moving towards eco-friendly products.

OBSERVED

	Expensive	Cheap	Total
10-15	1	0	1
15-25	112	38	150
25-35	10	2	12
35-45	7	0	7
45-55	43	3	46
55-65	0	0	0
65-75	0	2	2
75-85	2	1	3
Total	175	46	221

EXPECTED

	Expensive	Cheap	Total
10-15	0.8	0.2	1
15-25	120	30	150
25-35	9.6	2.4	12
35-45	5.6	1.4	7
45-55	36.8	9.2	46
55-65	0	0	0
65-75	1.6	0.4	2
75-85	2.4	0.6	3
Total	176.8	44.2	221

Combining the first two cells, the next two cells and the last three cells, since the values are very small, we get

EXPECTED

	Expensive	Cheap	Total
10-25	120.8	30.2	151
25-45	15.2	3.8	19
45-55	36.8	9.2	46
55-85	4	1	5
Total	176.8	44.2	221

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i} = \frac{(113 - 120.8)^2}{120.8} + \frac{(17 - 15.2)^2}{15.2} + \cdots + \frac{(38 - 30.2)^2}{30.2} + \cdots + \frac{(3-1)^2}{1}$$
$$= 13.80683$$

$$degreesoffreedom = (4-1) * (2-1) = 3$$

On carrying out a one – sided Chi-Square test, our observed value of the test statistic is 13.81 which is exceeding 7.815, the upper 5% of the χ_3^2 distribution. Since we have sufficient evidence we must reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we conclude that people choose expensive eco-friendly products over non-sustainable cheaper products

TEST 3

H_0: Decision of purchase does not involve factors like sustainability or environment friendliness

H_1: Decision of purchase involve factors like sustainability or environment friendliness

Here, based on our study we are taking an assumption that 60% of the people say Yes, 10% of the people say No and 30% of the people sometimes based their purchase decision on these factors.

We are taking these assumptions because as most of the people are aware of the green products and most of them choose expensive eco-friendly products over cheaper non-sustainable products, people are likely to base their purchase decision on these factors.

OBSERVED

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Total
10-15	0	0	1	1
15-25	54	7	89	150
25-35	6	1	5	12
35-45	6	0	1	7
45-55	35	2	9	46
55-65	0	0	0	0
65-75	1	0	1	2
75-85	2	0	1	3
Total	104	10	107	221

EXPECTED

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Total
10-15	0.6	0.1	0.3	1
15-25	90	15	45	150
25-35	7.2	1.2	3.6	12
35-45	4.2	0.7	2.1	7
45-55	27.6	4.6	13.8	46
55-65	0	0	0	0
65-75	1.2	0.2	0.6	2
75-85	1.8	0.3	0.9	3

Total	132.6	22.1	66.3	221

Combining the first two cells, the next two cells and the last three cells, since the values are very small, we get

EXPECTED

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Total
10-25	90.6	15.1	45.3	151
25-45	11.4	1.9	5.7	19
45-55	27.6	4.6	13.8	46
55-85	3	0.5	1.5	5
Total	132.6	22.1	66.3	221

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i} = \frac{(54 - 90.6)^2}{90.6} + \cdots + \frac{(7 - 15.1)^2}{15.1} + \cdots + \frac{(2 - 5)^2}{5} = 69.502$$

$$Degreesoffreedom = (4 - 1) * (3 - 1) = 6$$

On carrying out a one – sided Chi-Square test, our observed value of the test statistic, 69.502, is exceeding 12.59, the upper 5% of the χ_6^2 distribution. Since there is sufficient evidence, we must reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we conclude that the decision of purchase involves factors like sustainability or environment friendliness.

FINDINGS

From the above three test, we conclude that our test statistic is much greater than the upper 5% value of the χ^2 distribution. Having sufficient evidence, we must reject the null hypothesis and be in favour that people are aware, people choose expensive eco-friendly products and base their purchase decision on the factors that consists of sustainability. These tests were carried out to test whether the knowledge of the people depends on age on not. Hence, we reject our original null hypothesis. And, conclude that the knowledge of the people depends on their age.

Corresponding to the objective 1 of this research it is concluded that- The age group **15-35 should be the ideal target** market while marketing green products and services. With regard to objective 2-We can draw the conclusion that the knowledge of people depends on their age. People are moving towards eco-friendly products irrespective of its higher cost. As we can see the trend, more people will be knowledgeable regarding this in future. Due to exposure to social media, awareness of sustainability goals the younger generation is a much conscious buyer than the previous generation. Covering our objective 3- From the tests it can be observed that majority population from a higher age group consent to choose price over sustainability. This is because of the earlier established fact due to the awareness gap. The lower aged group choose vice versa. The modern

day buying trends reveal that people do not only weigh their purchase with the money spent but also give weightage to factors like quality, sustainability and appearance suitable to their respective standards of living.

Limitations

Here, we have minimal information about the age groups 10 - 15 and 55 – 85 and also very less information for the age group 35 – 45. Extending our survey to a larger group of people, would help us get adequate data for different age bands.

As the survey was made within a limited range of people, we have got only 221 responses. We would get better results if the survey was extended to 1000 people. For our simplicity we have taken various assumptions while performing the above tests. There are limitations of Goodness of fit test. These are:

a. The test is sensitive to how binning if data is performed
b. It requires sufficient sample size so the that minimum expected frequency is five

- Descriptive Analysis-

1. Does **awareness** depend on age?

Observed

YES		**NO**	
Mean	40.2	Mean	4
Standard Error	25.99115234	Standard Error	1.923538406
Median	12	Median	2
Standard Deviation	58.11798345	Standard Deviation	4.301162634
Sample Variance	3377.7	Sample Variance	18.5
Kurtosis	3.740229772	Kurtosis	-1.681519357
Skewness	1.932120844	Skewness	0.754038738
Range	138	Range	10
Minimum	3	Minimum	0
Maximum	141	Maximum	10
Sum	201	Sum	20
Count	5	Count	5
Confidence Level(95.0%)	72.16300769	Confidence Level(95.0%)	5.340598792

Expected

YES		**NO**	
Mean	40.2	Mean	40.2
Standard Error	25.21044	Standard Error	2.508502
Median	10.91403	Median	1.085973
Standard Deviation	56.37227	Standard Deviation	5.609181
Sample Variance	3177.833	Sample Variance	31.46291
Kurtosis	3.472387	Kurtosis	3.472387
Skewness	1.87776	Skewness	1.87776
Range	132.7873	Range	13.21267
Minimum	4.547511	Minimum	0.452489
Maximum	137.3348	Maximum	13.66516
Sum	201	Sum	20
Count	5	Count	5
Confidence Level(95.0%)	69.99542	Confidence Level(95.0%)	6.964718

The observed and the expected mean number of people aware about green marketing is same that is 40.2

Mean number of people, both expected an observed, not aware of green marketing is very few with the same magnitude of 4

The Standard error and the median of the observed and the expected values is slightly different.

The standard deviation, that is, the deviation from the mean for both the observed and expected values has only a slight difference.

The sample variance for the people aware of green marketing is extremely high. This variance can be reduced by increasing our sample population to say 1000 respondents

As per our observation 141 out of 221 people are aware of green marketing. This constitutes a good proportion of our sample population.

This has a positively skewed curve.

2. Choice of Purchase-

Observed-

Expensive		**Cheap**	
Mean	43.75	Mean	11.5

Standard Error	24.58785269	Standard Error	8.836477
Median	30	Median	3
Standard Deviation	49.17570538	Standard Deviation	17.67295
Sample Variance	2418.25	Sample Variance	312.33333
Kurtosis	1.6322506	Kurtosis	3.986047
Skewness	1.346450514	Skewness	1.995705
Range	111	Range	36
Minimum	2	Minimum	2
Maximum	113	Maximum	38
Sum	175	Sum	46
Count	4	Count	4
Confidence Level(95.0%)	78.24952095	Confidence Level(95.0%)	28.12161

Expected-

Expensive		***Cheap***	
Mean	44.2	Mean	11.05
Standard Error	26.42499	Standard Error	6.606247044
Median	26	Median	6.5
Standard Deviation	52.84998	Standard Deviation	13.21249409
Sample Variance	2793.12	Sample Variance	174.57
Kurtosis	2.62939	Kurtosis	2.62939039
Skewness	1.624464	Skewness	1.624463788
Range	116.8	Range	29.2
Minimum	4	Minimum	1
Maximum	120.8	Maximum	30.2
Sum	176.8	Sum	44.2
Count	4	Count	4

Confidence Level(95.0%)	84.09611	Confidence Level(95.0%)	21.0240265

The observed mean number of people who choose expensive eco friendly product is 43.75 the expected mean number of people are 44.2. Here, the expected is more than the observed. Out assumption was that 80% people opt for expensive Eco-friendly products. So, here our assumption is somewhat not consistent with the results. The observed mean number of people who choose cheap non - sustainable products is more than the expected ones. The standard error for the observed values is more than the expected ones observed Median for the people choosing expensive products is more than the expected ones. While the expected median for the people choosing cheap products are more than the expected ones. Standard deviation and the sample variance is more for the expected number of people choosing expensive products while the observed number of people is more choosing cheap products. We need to change our assumption to say 70% people opt for expensive eco - friendly products and 30% people opt for cheap non - sustainable products.This has a positively skewed curve.

3. Does **purchase decisions** include factors like sustainability –

OBSERVED

Yes		*No*		*Sometimes*	
Mean	26	Mean	2.5	Mean	26.75
Standard Error	11.51086443	Standard Error	1.554563176	Standard Error	21.13202546
Median	23.5	Median	1.5	Median	7.5
Standard Deviation	23.02172887	Standard Deviation	3.109126351	Standard Deviation	42.26405092
Sample Variance	530	Sample Variance	9.666666667	Sample Variance	1786.25
Kurtosis	-2.351619794	Kurtosis	2.7039239	Kurtosis	3.909386344
Skewness	0.4245374	Skewness	1.597077983	Skewness	1.97232141
Range	51	Range	7	Range	88
Minimum	3	Minimum	0	Minimum	2
Maximum	54	Maximum	7	Maximum	90
Sum	104	Sum	10	Sum	107
Count	4	Count	4	Count	4

Confidence Level(95.0%)	36.63270799	Confidence Level(95.0%)	4.947313834	Confidence Level(95.0%)	67.25153635

Expected-

Yes		***No***		***Sometimes***	
Mean	33.15	Mean	5.525	Mean	16.575
Standard Error	19.81874113	Standard Error	3.303123522	Standard Error	9.909370565
Median	19.5	Median	3.25	Median	9.75
Standard Deviation	39.63748226	Standard Deviation	6.606247044	Standard Deviation	19.81874113
Sample Variance	1571.13	Sample Variance	43.6425	Sample Variance	392.7825
Kurtosis	2.62939039	Kurtosis	2.62939039	Kurtosis	2.62939039
Skewness	1.624463788	Skewness	1.624463788	Skewness	1.624463788
Range	87.6	Range	14.6	Range	43.8
Minimum	3	Minimum	0.5	Minimum	1.5
Maximum	90.6	Maximum	15.1	Maximum	45.3
Sum	132.6	Sum	22.1	Sum	66.3
Count	4	Count	4	Count	4
Confidence Level(95.0%)	63.072079949	Confidence Level(95.0%)	10.51201325	Confidence Level(95.0%)	31.53603974

Here we see than the expected values is more than the observes values for people agreeing and disagreeing and observed value is more for people responding sometimes to our question. The assumption was that 60% of the people say Yes, 10% of the people say No and 30% of the people sometimes based their purchase decision on these factors. Our expectation is higher than the observation. We need to change our assumptions so that the values are in line with each other. When it comes to standard error, our observation is same as that of mean. Standard deviation and sample variance is more for expected people saying yes, no and the observed number of people saying sometimes. The sample variance is huge in case of observed people responding sometimes. This needs to be rectified as it is giving vague results. This has a positively skewed curve.

Recommendations

The corporations and companies should segment their target audience based on the knowledge and the age of the consumers. The consumers should be made conscious not only for the profits of business but also for the betterment of the environment. This will require special efforts from corporates and business houses in marketing wisely the green ideas and attracting customers towards such buying practices. Consumers need to be educated on the alternative products that can be used from their usual purchase. Government intervention shall slightly be effective. Incentives can be given to those consumers who choose green products over others. Initially the marketers can choose to play with the "snob effect" by creating a hype in the market. Once the demand starts to rise they can settle for the next social class of the society. The major India population consists of the social class belonging to a middle-income group who is stuck between wanting to look rich by screening themselves using luxurious goods whereas their affordability is lesser than portrayed. This can be taken as an advantage to enter the Indian market as an expensive green product and then gradually push the concept into the common mass that is going to have a wide impact of the market and purchase trends.

Conclusion

Green marketing and green product purchase holds a great opportunity and scope in the present day. With the current generation who is better aware of environmental issues makes the trends of purchase follow a different pattern. Since the ancient times when factors like price and quality were of major importance sustainability is becoming the 3rd important factor. From times, when eco-friendliness was associated with feminine characteristic it now becomes the choice of people. It is not gender specific.Green Marketing is a revolutionary concept that will make use of hostile advertising campaigns in a positive way to advertise a social idea. The reforms in the market will not only bring monetary benefits but will also help to incorporate "Sustainable Development Goals" in our day to day purchases. It plays a twin role for the benefit of the economy as well as the environment.It is very important to note that apart from the above questions that have been statistically compared the Set B questionnaire that focusses on the age group above 45 contained a question-

"When you were in your 30's were you aware of sustainability/reusable products?"

35.1% of the respondents said a No. The population age group who said no belonged to the age group 65-75 and 75-85. Hence it is a prima-facie observed that at a higher age level the knowledge of environmentally friendly is comparatively lower.

Consumers as well as businesses should act responsibly towards nature by adopting green measures in the regular habits. If consumers show such interests, marketers will immediately be compelled to switch their offerings. Hence, we conclude that the knowledge gap is due to rising awareness in the current day. Consumers make careful and wise choices that are beneficial to the environment. One step from each citizen can help our country achieve the Sustainability Development Goals. The greener, the better

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