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Green marketing as a tool for environmental sustainability in developing economies: A study focused on rural areas of Jaipur district

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Abstract

The concept of green marketing primarily focuses on the protection of the ecological environment. The term “green” symbolizes purity in quality and fairness or ethical practices in business dealings. Green marketing involves a broad range of activities, including modifying production processes, improving product designs, changing packaging, and updating promotional strategies. It also contributes to raising awareness about collaborative marketing practices among industries. From a corporate perspective, green marketing is seen as an opportunity to leverage the shift in consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products and brands. As consumers become more environmentally conscious, it encourages innovation in conservation, and the benefits of such innovations are likely to extend beyond the current generation. This study specifically examines consumers’ beliefs and attitudes toward environmental protection and their purchasing behavior of eco-friendly products in the rural areas of Jaipur District. Primary data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire, supplemented by secondary data. The research aims to highlight the level of awareness regarding green marketing and consumers’ perceptions and beliefs about environmentally friendly practices.

Keywords: Green marketing, ecological environment, promotional strategies, environmental protection

Introduction

Green marketing means promoting products or services that are good for the environment. It involves making, selling, and advertising products in a way that shows they are:

- Eco-friendly (not harmful to nature),
- Made from natural or recycled materials, or
- Help reduce pollution or waste

Definition: Green marketing refers to the practice of promoting products or services based on their environmental benefits. It includes everything from eco-friendly production, sustainable packaging to advertising that highlights a product’s positive impact on the environment.

American Marketing Association (AMA): “Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe.”

Green product: Green products are eco-friendly products designed, produced, packaged, and promoted in a way that reduces pollution, conserves resources, and supports sustainability.

Features of Green Products

- **Environmentally Safe:** Made with non-toxic materials.
- **Energy Efficient:** Consume less energy during use (e.g., LED bulbs).
- **Biodegradable or Recyclable:** Can decompose naturally or be reused.
- **Sustainable Production:** Produced using methods that do not harm nature.
- **Minimal Packaging:** Uses less plastic, more recyclable or biodegradable packaging.

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Why it's important

Green marketing helps:

- Protect the environment,
- Make people aware of eco-friendly choices,
- And encourage businesses to act more responsibly.
- Minimizes Waste and Pollution
- Supports Global Environmental Goals

Literature Review

The idea of green marketing became widely recognized in the late 1980s and early 1990s. However, its roots go back to a workshop organized by the American Marketing Association in 1975 and a book published in 1976 titled *"Ecological Marketing."*

Mokha (2017) ^[2]: The Author collected data from 152 respondents through a questionnaire to analyze whether they are aware of green products and also to determine their usage of eco-friendly products. The study was conducted to find the relationship between the mean usage of eco-friendly products across the various age groups and the educational level of the respondents.

The study was conducted to find the relationship between the mean usage of eco-friendly products across the various age groups and the educational level of the respondents. From the survey, it is found that the consumers are aware of the eco-friendly products, and nearly half of the respondents agreed on the fact that eco-friendly products are important to protect the environment, and almost one-third of the respondents considered these products while making their purchase.

Cynthia Milagros Apaza-Panca *, Lucy Anamelva Flores Quevedo, Luz María Carranza Reyes (2024) ^[4]: In this research, more than 50% are interested in knowing about the generation of waste from the products they consume. In addition, more than 70% are not interested in using products that can be recycled, this being a non-determining factor for the purchasing process; a situation that contrasts with the habits that a green consumer should have. However, aspects such as green product innovation are of interest to more than 70% of the participants, which would open up a new market segment.

Deshmukh, P., & Tare, H. (2022) ^[3]: As per the author, green marketing is not going to be a simple idea to understand. The company must first plan and then do research to determine whether or not the venture is viable. Because green marketing is still in its infancy, it will need to develop over time.

Objective of the study

- **Environmental Protection:** To reduce harmful effects on the environment by promoting eco-friendly products and sustainable business practices.
- **Customer Awareness:** To educate and encourage consumers to make environmentally responsible purchasing decisions.

Types of research

- Descriptive Research

- Exploratory Research

Study Design and Methodology: The universe of the study is the selected rural areas in Jaipur district in Rajasthan. The sampling size of the respondents is 200. The respondents were randomly selected from the selected areas. The study has been conducted using primary data. To get a broad knowledge about the study, the survey method has been adopted. Information has been gathered by an interview schedule specially designed for the purpose. Accordingly, the spot observations and discussions were also used for verifying the information. The primary data collected on various aspects has been organized in tabular form. Such organized data has been analyzed with the help of different statistical tools like percentages, averages, etc., for drawing meaningful conclusions. Along with the primary data, secondary data has been collected from newspapers, books, and the internet.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Showing the Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	114	57
Female	86	43
Total	200	100

Interpretation: The table shows the gender distribution of the 200 respondents who participated in the study. Out of the total, 114 respondents (57%) are male, while 86 respondents (43%) are female. In the context of green marketing, this gender distribution suggests that men constitute a larger proportion of the individuals whose attitudes, awareness, or purchasing behaviors toward environmentally friendly products are being examined.

Table 2: Age Group Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25 years and below.	80	40
26-35 years.	48	24
36-45 years.	44	22
Above 45 years.	28	14
Total	200	100

Interpretation: In the above table data show that out of 200 respondents, the largest proportion (40%) is aged 25 years and below, followed by 24% in the 26-35 years category, 22% in the 36-45 years category, and 14% who are above 45 years old. This indicates that younger individuals (below 25 years) form the majority of respondents in the study on green marketing. Their strong representation suggests that the youth segment is more actively engaged and aware of environmental issues and may be more responsive to green marketing initiatives.

Meanwhile, the moderate involvement or moderate exposure to green marketing trends of respondents aged 26-45 years. The smaller percentage (14%) of respondents aged above 45 years suggests that older consumers may be less involved or less exposed to green marketing trends, possibly due to established consumption habits or limited awareness of sustainable alternatives.

Table 3: Respondents Categorized by Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
10 th	68	34
12 th	40	20
UG	40	20
PG	36	18
Diploma	16	08
Total	200	100

Interpretation: The above data indicate that among the 200 respondents, the largest proportion (34%) have completed 10th standard (SSLC), followed by 20% each who have completed 12th standard (PUC) and undergraduate (UG) degrees. Additionally, 18% possess postgraduate (PG) qualifications, while 8% hold a diploma. In the context of green marketing, the educational background of respondents plays a crucial role in shaping their awareness, attitudes, and purchasing behavior toward environmentally friendly products. The relatively high percentage of respondents with secondary-level education (10th and 12th) suggests that a significant portion of consumers may have moderate awareness of green products but could benefit from greater exposure to environmental education and sustainability campaigns.

Table 4: Showing the geographical area of the respondents

Area	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	100	50
Urban	32	16
Semi-Urban	68	34
Total	200	100

Interpretation: The table shows that out of 200 respondents, 50% belong to rural areas, 34% to semi-urban areas, and 16% to urban areas. This indicates that the majority of respondents are from rural regions, followed by a considerable proportion from semi-urban localities.

Table 5: Showing the ways through which the respondents are Aware of Green marketing

Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Television	92	46
Newspaper	64	32
Friends and relatives	44	22
Total	200	100

Interpretation: The data show that out of 200 respondents, the majority (46%) became aware of green marketing through television, followed by 32% who learned about it through newspapers, and 22% who gained awareness from friends and relatives. This indicates that mass media—particularly television—plays a dominant role in spreading awareness about green marketing and environmental sustainability.

Table 6: Showing the number of respondents aware of and using green products

Aware of Green Products	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	132	66
No	68	34
Total	200	100

Interpretation: The data reveal that out of 200 respondents, 132 (66%) are aware of and use green products, while 68

(34%) are not aware or do not use them. This indicates that a majority of consumers have knowledge of eco-friendly products and are actively engaging with green marketing initiatives.

Table 7: Showing Green Products will become a part of the protection of the Environment

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	40	20
Agree	108	54
Neutral	28	14
Disagree	24	12
Strongly disagree	Nil	Nil
Total	200	100

Interpretation: The data indicate that out of 200 respondents, 40 (20%) strongly agree and 108 (54%) agree that green products contribute to environmental protection, making a combined 74% of respondents supportive of this view. 28 respondents (14%) remained neutral, while 24 respondents (12%) disagreed, and none strongly disagreed. This suggests that a majority of consumers recognize the role of green products in protecting the environment, reflecting a positive perception toward sustainable consumption.

Findings

- The findings indicate a predominance of male respondents
- The data show that respondents under 25 years of age constitute the largest group in the study on green marketing.
- The findings indicate a diverse educational background among respondents, with a significant representation from secondary and higher education levels, suggesting that green marketing awareness and preferences are likely influenced by varying educational attainment.
- This suggests that green marketing awareness and adoption are reaching beyond urban centers, highlighting potential opportunities to promote eco-friendly products in rural and semi-urban markets.
- The majority of respondents (46%) became aware of green marketing through television, making it the most influential source of information.
- A majority of respondents (66%) are aware of and use green products, showing active engagement with eco-friendly products.
- The findings highlight a favorable perception of green products and suggest that green marketing initiatives are well-received among consumers concerned about environmental protection.

Suggestions

- Target Youth and Male Consumers
- Leverage Educational Influence:
- Expand Rural and Semi-Urban Reach
- Utilize Television and Mass Media
- Promote Active Engagement with Green Products
- Highlight Environmental Benefits
- Continuous Education and Awareness:

Conclusion

Green marketing is a branch of marketing that holds significant importance from social, economic, and ethical

perspectives, as it aims to raise awareness among people about environmental issues. It contributes to keeping the environment clean and sustainable by promoting the production and use of eco-friendly products. This study highlights the gap between environmental values and actual consumer behavior, showing that although consumers value green practices, their actions may not always align. The research demonstrates various aspects of consumer behavior and indicates that consumer preference for green products can be influenced through effective marketing strategies.

Overall, it is evident that companies should adopt the green marketing approach to support environmental protection. The study also suggests that leveraging brand marketing for eco-friendly products can encourage greater adoption of green products among consumers.

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