

# Investigating the Consumer Attitude toward Green Marketing

Dr. Monire Panahi<sup>1</sup>, Azar Keivandarian<sup>2</sup>, Ali Azizi<sup>2</sup>

1. Professor Assistant, Shahid beheshti university, Iran, Tehran

2. Master of business management, Ershad university, Iran, Tehran

## Abstract

Recently climate change issues have come to the forefront. Climate change is a global challenge. It is a threat to social and economic stability and sustainable human existence. There is no doubt that climate change affects the fundamental requirement for health – clean air, safe drinking water, sufficient green food and secured shelter. Many measures have to be planned for and taken into account when adapting to climate changes. As a third world country Bangladesh can place a good phenomena in climate change through adapting consumer attitude towards green marketing. According to the study, consumers are very much sensitive in a few factors. These factors are consumer's loyalty about green product, Global warming and environmental safety, quality of product, concern about extra price and Luxury and Environmental awareness. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing data. And we distribute 120 questionnaires among the people. And for analyses the data, we use correlation and regression, according to that all of the hypotheses accepted.

**Keywords:** Green product, Green consumer, Corporate Social responsibility, Green marketing.

## Introduction

Many people believe that green marketing refers solely to the promotion or advertising of products with environmental characteristics, especially in his buying decision. Green marketing or environmental marketing refers to ecological products such as healthy food, Phosphate Free, Recyclable, Refillable Ozone friendly, and environment friendly. There are some of the things consumers most often associate with green marketing.

In general, green marketing is a much broader concept that can be applied to consumer goods, industrial goods and even services. For example, around the world there are resorts that are beginning to promote themselves as "ecotourism" facilities, i.e., facilities that specialize in experiencing nature or operating in a fashion that minimizes their environmental impact. Thus, green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. However, to define green marketing is not a simple task. The terminology used in this area has varied; it includes Green Marketing, Environmental Marketing and Ecological Marketing. While green marketing came into prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s it was first discussed much earlier. The American Marketing Association (AMA) held the first workshop on "Ecological Marketing" in 1975. The proceedings of this workshop resulted in one of the first books on green marketing entitled "Ecological Marketing". "Green or Environmental Marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment."

This definition incorporates much of the traditional components of the marketing definition, that is "All activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants" Therefore it ensures that the interests of the organization and all its consumers are protected, as voluntary exchange will not take place unless both the buyer and seller mutually benefit. The above definition also includes the protection of the natural environment, by attempting to minimize the detrimental impact this exchange has on the environment. This second point is important, for human consumption by its very nature is destructive to the natural environment. So green marketing should look at minimizing environmental harm, not necessarily eliminating it. According to Pride and Ferrell (1993) Green marketing, also alternatively known as environmental marketing and sustainable marketing, refers to an organization's efforts at designing, promoting, pricing and distributing products that will not harm for the environment.

Polonsky (1994) defines green marketing as all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment.

Elkington (1994: 93) defines green consumer as one who avoids products that are likely to endanger the health of the consumer or others; cause significant damage to the environment during manufacture, use or disposal; consume a disproportionate amount of energy; cause unnecessary waste; use materials derived from threatened species or environments; involve unnecessary use of, or cruelty to animals, adversely affect other countries.

## Literature Review

Environmental marketing, more popularly known as green marketing or sustainable marketing can be defined as the effort by a company to design, promote, price and distribute products in a manner which promotes

environmental protection (Polonsky, 2011). Green marketing has been defined as 'all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment' by Polonsky (2011). In this paper, green marketing covers the overall brand of marketing activities undertaken by companies in a manner that they promote manufacture of products which have a positive impact on environment or alternatively reduce negative impact on the environment. Today green marketing is a vital component of marketing research which began due to increasing media exposure and pressure on firms to present eco friendly behavior. The growth in green marketing over the years has been promoted by adoption of product packaging and presenting to the public these improvements. Over the years there has been a subtle shift from practicing environmental marketing practices as a result of compulsion identified as a result of legislations and pressure from environmental groups to genuine efforts to improve sustainable marketing plans and behaving in an eco responsible manner (Polonsky and Rosenberger, 2001).

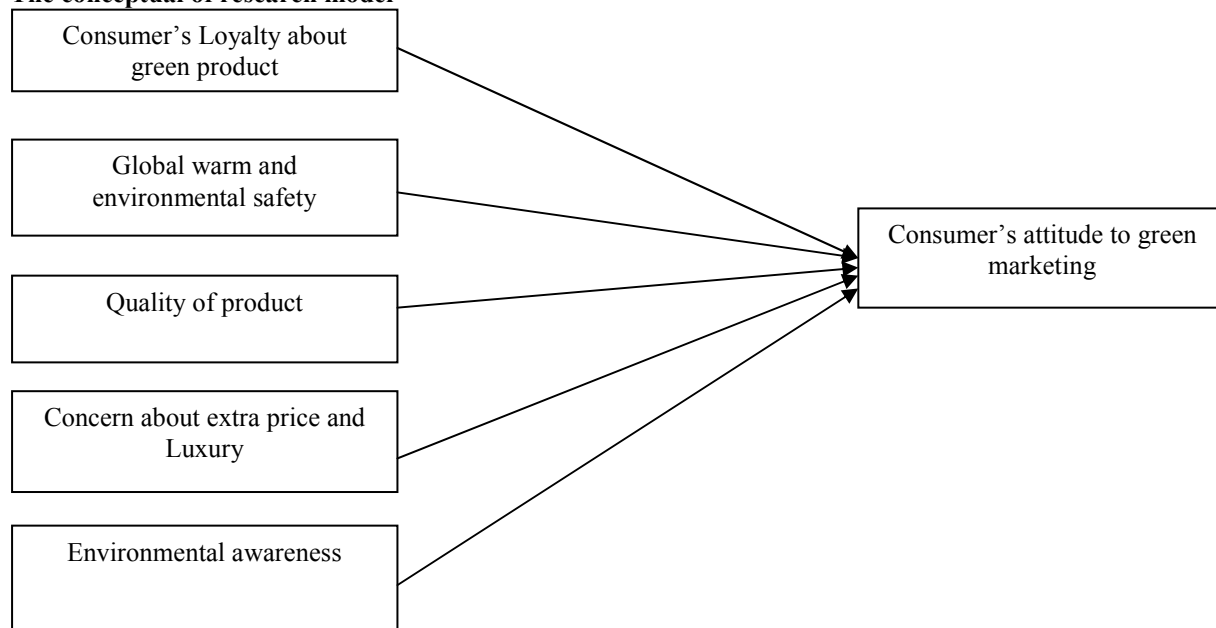
Consumerism can perhaps be identified as a movement which initially began as a process which was presented to protect consumers against practices of unethical marketing. Over time this has extended and become broader in nature. When today's agenda with regards to consumer activism is taken into consideration it can be observed that protection of the environment is the most vital aspect (Dono et al., 2010). There is a resultant increase in the concern expressed towards environmental protection leading to "green consumerism" (Eriksson, 2002). The growth of green marketing and green consumer is "perhaps the biggest opportunity for enterprise and invention the industrial world has ever seen" (Cairncross 1992: 177). A green consumer can be identified to be one who avoids any product which may harm damage to any living organism, cause deterioration of the environment during process of manufacturing or during process of usage, consume a large amount of non renewable energy, involves unethical testing on animals or human subjects (Elkington, 1994). There have been a number of different factors which are instrumental in promoting green consumers to purchase green products. Extensive research over the years identify that heightened awareness of green issues; increased level of information availability on environmental sustenance; green advertising by corporations; increased concern for the environment; increase in popularity of green products by social and environmental charities as some factors. This overwhelming increase in the overall environmental consciousness among different consumer profile there have been efforts undertaken by firms to "go green" by presenting the concept of corporate environmentalism (Banerjee, 2003; Hay and Lichter 2000). Today green development are identified as opportunities by business firms as opportunities to improve their marketing niche rather than just actions which need to be carried out. Environmental attitude is identified as the judgment an individual has towards the protection and promotion of the environment. Conflicting results have been published with regards to the relationship that currently exists between attitude towards the environment and the resultant behavior (Kotchen and Reiling, 2000). There has been other empirical research which has concluded that the relationship is moderate at best (Davis, 1995). Green marketing depends on the consumer's attitude towards the environment. If there is no strong demand for such a shift in consumer attitude, businesses will not put in the extra effort to move towards introducing green products and services. Based on this evidence three different aspects can be arrived at in terms of identifying the relationship between environmental attitude and behavior:

- 1) Need for more specific studies identifying the relationship between attitude and behavior.
- 2) Need to identify other variables which have a mediating effect on both these attributes

#### **Definition of green marketing**

Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Yet defining green marketing is not a simple task where several meanings intersect and contradict each other; an example of this will be the existence of varying social, environmental and retail definitions attached to this term. Other similar terms used are environmental marketing and ecological marketing. Green, environmental and eco-marketing are part of the new marketing approaches which do not just refocus, adjust or enhance existing marketing thinking and practice, but seek to challenge those approaches and provide a substantially different perspective. In more detail green, environmental and eco-marketing belong to the group of approaches which seek to address the lack of fit between marketing as it is currently practiced and the ecological and social realities of the wider marketing environment.

### The conceptual of research model



**Figure 1: the research model**

The first factor of consumer attitude towards green marketing is consumer's loyalty about green product was formed by the three variables such as suggestion, Social benefit and Future generation benefit. These variables have higher level of factor loadings that indicates that the variables forming the factor have higher level of correlation with the factor.

Two variables relating to the motivation to buy green product and the variables formed a factor global warming and environmental safety. The variables are global warming and also environmental and physical safety standard. Factor loadings are also very high of these variables.

Another variable shows that one variable, quality is relating to the motivation towards green marketing formed a factor quality of product.

And two variables influence the consumer to buy green product and the variables formed a factor concern about extra price and luxury. The variables are extra price Luxury and showing off.

One variable influence the consumer towards green marketing and the variable formed a factor environmental awareness. The variable is environmental awareness.

### Methodology

This study attempts to realize consumer attitude towards green marketing in Bangladesh. To conduct the study, primary and secondary sources of information were used. Secondary data has been collected from journals, articles, books and websites as well. Primary data was collected from the different types of consumer on different geographic location in Bangladesh. However, this study interviewed 120 sample respondent consumer with a structured questionnaire where 60 were male and 60 were female for giving the equal emphasis on gender. Random sampling method is used to select the respondents.

In analyzing data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. For describing the overall situation of consumer attitude towards purchasing green product in Iran, descriptive statistics like simple percentages were used. For identifying the factors relating to purchase and buying decision of green product by consumer, factor analysis was performed.

### Demographic Characteristics of Consumers

Table 2 gives information on the demographic characteristics of consumers. Majority of the respondents were females constituting 50%, and males constituted 50%. The table also shows that majority of the consumers were within the ages of 21 - 30 years (65%), while 25% representing 102 consumers were within the ages of 31-40, and 8% under 20 years, and also just 2% between 41 to 50. Information on the education of consumers depicts that 49% had bachelor education, 6% had primary school education, 37 % had post-primary education, and 8% had Phd education, while 6.8 had postgraduate qualifications.

**Table2: Demographic Characteristics of Consumers**

Demographic	category	percentage	Count(n)
Gender	Male	50%	60
	Female	50%	60
AGE	Under 20	8%	2
	21-30	65%	100
	31-40	25%	10
	41-50	2%	2
	Upper50	0%	0
Education	Bachelor	49%	90
	Primary	6%	4
	school education		20
	Post-primary Education	37%	
	phd	8%	6

**the result of testing hypotheses**

hypotheses	INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	DEPENDENT VARIABLES	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig	result
H1	Consumer's Loyalty about green product	Consumers attitude to green marketing	0.732	0.535	81.394	0.000	Accepted
H2	Global warm and environmental safety	Consumers attitude to green marketing	0.744	0.553	152.092	0.000	Accepted
H3	Quality of product	Consumers attitude to green marketing	0.444	0.197	28.804	0.000	Accepted
H4	Concern about extra price and Luxury	Consumers attitude to green marketing	0.529	0.280	47.800	0.000	Accepted
H5	Environmental awareness	Consumers attitude to green marketing	0.618	0.381	45.133	0.000	Accepted

As mentioned before, based on a comprehensive survey of the literature, five hypotheses were developed in this study. According to the statistical analysis of hypotheses examined the correlation between the variables in all of the hypotheses were confirmed. With the difference that the dependent variable intensity and the effect of independent variables on them, varied. However the of a look at the re to test this hypothesis, we note hypotheses and results.

The results of our hypothesis tests have shown, the effect of knowledge on various aspects of customer relationship management is different.

In the first hypothesis, consumers loyalty about green product and has a coefficient of determination of 0.398 that is to show a high impact on Consumers attitude to green marketing

The second hypothesis, global warm and environmental safety has a coefficient of determination of 0.553 that is to show a high impact on Consumers attitude to green marketing.

The third hypothesis, quality of product has a coefficient of determination of 0.190 that is to show a less impact on Consumers attitude to green marketing.

The fourth hypothesis is the effect of extra price on Consumers attitude to green marketing.

The fifth financial is the effect of environmental awareness on Consumers attitude to green marketing.

**Limitation**

At the time of writing this article I faced some hazard. These are:

1. Insufficient and rare information about the green marketer and service provider in Bangladesh.
2. Recent Government information is not adequate.
3. Publication and report on green marketing policy and practices are insufficient.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study was conducted to understand the consumer attitude towards green marketing and identify the factors related to the belief and motivation to purchase green product by the multi characteristics consumer of Bangladesh. Majority of the people are not aware of green product and their uses. Positive attitude towards green marketing is 53.417% and also negative attitude is 46.583%. Male are more aware and positive minded than female in respect of different issues of green marketing in Bangladesh. Study identified five factors. Consumer's loyalty is the most important factor used to take decision for purchasing green product by the consumer. Though it is not clear to the general people what kind of benefit are involving in environmental friendly products but the study reveal that due to global warming consumer are interested to purchase green product. The other factors are quality of product, extra price, use as luxury or showing off nature and environmental awareness etc. We can motivate our consumers towards green marketing by different awareness program. For green marketing to be effective we have to maintain three things; be genuine, educate our customers and give them opportunity to practice.

Marketers need to understand the implications of green marketing. If we think customers are not concerned about environmental issues or will not pay a premium for products that are more ecoresponsible, think again. We must find an opportunity to enhance product's performance and strengthen our customer's loyalty.

Green marketing is still in its infancy and there is an ample scope to conduct study further on another group of people to identify more influencing factors in this regard. Green marketing is a continuous process that requires constant inputs from the suppliers, government legislations and policies and the people. This is required so that the businesses green marketing strategy can be aligned to the target markets and so it can gain a sustainable competitive advantage. It is important that strategies and policies in relation to green products be developed and implemented so as to guide and help the retailers and customers towards a green change. Businesses should concentrate on focusing on developing a green product that have a demand from the general public and which also aligns to the company's core positioning. Furthermore businesses should also present efforts in a manner that reduces the risk related to costs. In conclusion, creating and implementing a green marketing strategy is not straight forward because it is not only complex, but also a relative concept that continuously varies over time.

The framework that is presented in the current paper is based on the need to explain inconsistencies in attitudes and behaviors that have been revealed in past researches. The current framework will be framing the gap between the attitudes and behaviors as a social dilemma and also attempts to understand the gap by trying to identify individual factors by using the reference group theory. Furthermore the framework also tries to recommend certain ways to cover the research gap. The current study will provide a valuable insight to both practitioners and theoreticians who want to understand environmentally conscious individuals. Since the success of green products depend on the consumers adopting or changing their attitude and behavior towards such products, it is imperative that green marketers identify all the factors that encourage cooperation. Thus the current study will also be of benefit to the green marketers as it aids in developing a marketing strategy that persuades consumers to seek the value of collective gain over self-interest.

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