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“Emerging Challenges Before Green Marketing”

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ABSTRACT

Green marketing is a new phenomenon which has developed in the modern market. Today environment is changing very rapidly and there is need to make aware people about changing environment. The people are not using the nature properly and hence a number of environmental problems arise. Green marketing is one of the important tools to solve these problems. Green marketing involves manufacturing of environmentally safe products. Now – days the consumer attitudes have been changed and they are eager to use green products. It is the responsibility of the firms to make available ecological and economical viable green products so that middle and low income groups afford it. The present paper highlights the concept of green marketing and the various challenges associated with different aspects of green marketing.

KEY WORDS:

Green marketing, Green products, challenges.

I) INTRODUCTION:

A man has been using natural resources selfishly since the era of industrial revolution. This has led to create many environmental problems and environment destruction. The famines, floods, drought etc. are the examples of human carelessness. But, now the people are more aware about various environmental problems. They have changed their attitudes towards nature and wanted to accept green lifestyle. The people are trying to reduce their impact on the environment. On this background the concept of ‘green marketing’ has been emerged.

Green marketing is a phenomenon which has developed particular important in the modern market. Green marketing is the process of developing products and services and promoting them in such a way that, they are less harmful to the environment and society as a whole. As today’s consumers are becoming more conscious about the environment, green marketing plays an important role in satisfying the needs of consumers. Hence, many companies in India and abroad have been using the strategy of green marketing in order to fulfil their social obligation and responsibilities.

II) OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present paper is aimed to cover the following objectives.

- 1) To understand the concept of green marketing.
- 2) To identify the challenges before green marketing.

III) RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The entire paper is based on secondary sources of data. The main focus of the study is to identify issues and challenges in green marketing. The required information has been collected from books, research journals and websites.

IV) THE CONCEPT OF GREEN MARKETING:

The term ‘Green Marketing’ came into existence in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s. In those days some products

were found to be harmful to the environment and the society at large. Accordingly new types of products were created, called “Green Products”.

The American Marketing Association (AMA) organized 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”. Then Kenpeattie (1992) in the U.K. and Ottoman (1993) in the U.S.A. had written books on green marketing.

According to peattie (2001), the evolution of green marketing has three phases. The first phase was termed as ‘ecological green marketing’, in which all marketing activities were concerned to help the environmental problems and provide remedies for them. Second phase was called as ‘environmental green marketing’, which focused on designing new innovative products, which take care of pollution and waste issues. The third phase came into prominence during the late 1990s and early 2000. This phase was called as ‘sustainable green marketing’. This phase was concerned with developing good quality products in an environment friendly way.

According to the American Marketing Association, ‘green marketing is the marketing of product that are presumed to be environmentally safe : Polonsky (1994) said that ‘green marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy human needs and wants such that satisfaction of those needs and wants occur with minimal detrimental impact on the environment’.

Thus, green marketing involves a wide range of activities including modification in product, changes in production processes, changes in packaging as well as modifying advertising.

V) CHALLENGES BEFORE GREEN MARKETING:

Green Marketing has been widely adopted by the firms worldwide due to government pressure, competitive pressure, social responsibility and cost of profit issues. Green Marketing is also an opportunity to get competitive

advantage. However, practicing green marketing is not an easy job as numbers of problems are associated with this term. These problems need to be addressed while implementing green marketing.

The major challenges before green marketing are as follows.

1) New Concept: Green Marketing is new concept. Only literate and urban consumers are more aware about the merits of green products. This concept has not yet reached to the masses in rural area. There is need to educate rural masses about environmental threats so that they should go for green products. In urban area the new green movements have been started. But it will take a lot of time and efforts to reach those movements to rural area. It is the need of hour to reach masses residing rural area and telling them about green products.

2)Need for Standardization: It is observed that, very few marketing messages from "Green" Campaigns are true regarding authenticity which they claim. There is no standardization to authenticate these claims. There is no yardstick to certify that the product is organic. Unless come regulatory bodies are involved in providing the certification, we could not verify the product as green product. Thus, standard quality control board should be set up for labeling and licensing.

3)Patience and Perseverance: The investors and corporate need to view the environment as a long term investment opportunity, because immediate results can not be achieved through green marketing. The marketers of green products have to keep patience because projects related to green marketing have a long gestation period. The marketers need to look at long term benefits of green products. It will require a lot of patience and this is a challenge before green marketing.

4)Avoiding Green Myopia: The first rule of green marketing is customer satisfaction. Green marketing must satisfy two objectives : improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction. Misjudging or overemphasizing the environmental quality at the cost of customer satisfaction can be termed as green myopia. If the product is absolutely green in various aspects but not fulfill the consumer needs and satisfy them, it will lead to green myopia. Similarly, price of the green products should be low because consumers will not be ready to pay high price for green products.

5)Green Dilemma; There is lack of standards or public consensus about what constitutes green. This lack of consensus by marketers, consumers, regulators and influential people has slowed the growth of green products. On one hand companies are reluctant to promote their green attributes and on the other hand consumers are always doubtful about claims.

6)Cost Factor: The firms adopting green marketing have to spent a lot of money on research and development programs because green marketing involves marketing of green products or services, green technology, green power or energy etc. Similarly green products require renewable and recyclable material, which is costly.

7)Convincing Customers: Convincing the customers about green products is another big challenge before green marketing. The customers may not believe in the firm's strategy of green marketing. They are not sure about the quality of green products. It is the responsibility of the firms to ensure that they undertake all possible measures to produce green products.

8)Sustainability: As green products require renewable and recyclable material and green technologies which are more

expensive, initially the profits are very low. The strategy of green marketing will be successful only in the long run. It is very difficult to convince the stakeholders about the long term benefits of green marketing. Hence firms should plan long term strategy for green marketing and at the same time it should avoid unethical practices to make profits in short run.

V) CONCLUSION:

Nature has given us good gifts but we could not use it properly. So, today we are facing number of environmental problems. Green marketing is one of the important strategies adopted by the companies through which we can save our earth from pollution. Green marketing is a tool for protecting the environment for future generation. So, it is everybody's responsibility to give response to green products. It is also responsibility of the firms to make aware the masses about green products. If it happens, the day will come when we live in pollution free environment and it is good for our health and life.

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