

ECO-FRIENDLY STRATEGIES WITH RESPECT TO CONSUMER SATISFACTION: A STUDY

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Abstract

The world has currently evolved into a global village where pollution, disasters, and diseases have spread to a maximum range. During this variety of turmoil, it is must to conserve the planet and all the living things that survive on it. Pollution is the universal drawback that we have to face. In response to this pollution havoc, the present business are currently focusing a lot of on eco-friendly ways and thus showing concern of environment. The most important findings of this study are the shoppers feel pleased with the product they purchase from eco-friendly firms. The customers additionally show loyalty for those products wherever the businesses are concerned about green practices. The priority for green practices and green product there's no gender bias.

Introduction

In the present day world, consumption of products has augmented worldwide dramatically and leading to depletion of natural resources, loss of biodiversity and swift ecological turn down. Endless needs and wants of the consumers and mass production is the key reason for environmental harms. Mankind has limited resources on the earth to cater these unlimited needs. Environmental deterioration and global problems have together paved the way for the emergence of green marketing, resulting in huge influx of eco friendly products. However there are some misconceptions in green marketing (Peattie, K. and Crane, 2005). As society becomes additional involved with the natural surroundings, businesses have begun to switch their behavior in an effort to handle society's new issues. Firms are moving from non-green product to green product, from standard technology to green technology, from unsafe production to safe and green production, from excessive and toxic packaging to minimal toxic and bio-degradable packaging. The strategic alliances have to be made with those partners (environment group and companies) were objective has to be similar, (Polonsky M, 2001). Responsible marketing, however, is destined to dominate twenty-first century business.

Research Gap and Research Problem

Many studies have been undergone on green marketing, green products and consumer preference, gender based preferences, company performance (Lee, K. 2008, Rahman, Y. 2016, Ghodeswar, P. 2015, Brough A et al 2016, Fraj, E. et al 2011) however the gap was found in identifying the consumer preferences in contrast with selected companies and studies on customer loyalty and satisfaction were not discussed at large. In this study the green practices awareness and its impact on product preferences, loyalty, satisfaction, esteem feelings, concern for ecology, company image all are taken into consideration.

Objectives

This study is aimed to find the i) consumers awareness, knowledge on eco-friendly practices (Wahid, E. 2011), also how ii) customer perceives or believes that the company is following the green practices, the iii) preferences of products (Nilsson, U. 2016) it also attempts to find the eco sensitiveness of consumers.

Methodology

In this study seven eco practices were identified namely, 1) Water harvesting, 2) Water Recycling, 3) Plastic or paper recycling, 4) Water treatment 5) Organic ingredients 6) Non chemical or eco colors and 7) Green buildings. These were chosen as these were more relevant to selected companies namely Coke, Pepsi, Dominos and Mc Donald's. To identify the customer's impact to green practices the following five parameters were chosen, 1) Extend of purchase influence due to eco practices, 2) Loyalty behavior or high frequency purchase, 3) Impact on company due to green practices, 4) Sense of esteem feelings due to concern for environment and 5) Impact on satisfaction level. The study was based on the primary data captured through a questionnaire. The content of the questionnaire is as follows; 1) Respondent's age, sex and education. 2) The respondent's awareness regarding the green strategies 3) The purchase influence by companies green practices 4) The frequency of purchase of green products 5) The impact of eco friendly practices on image of the company 6) Respondents esteem feeling by use of green products and 7) Sense of satisfaction by use of eco friendly products. All the parameters were rated on 1-5 continuous scale. Analysis was done by administering spearman's co-relation for identifying the consumer perception regarding the eco friendly practices (Joseph, L. 2013, Rana, J. 2012). One way anova was used to find the difference of opinion between different companies and gender on selected five parameters.

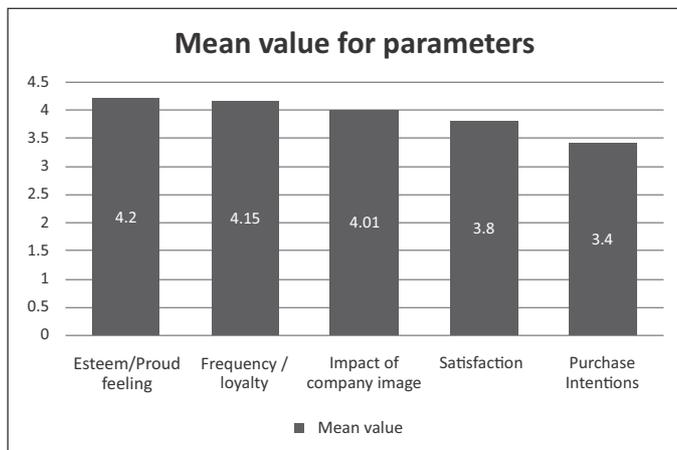
Data analysis and Results

Respondents were aware for plastic or paper recycling at the highest level. It was followed by water treatment and recycling, use of chemical free colors, water harvesting, organic ingredients and least awareness parameter was of green buildings. To establish the relationship or association of eco practices the spearman's co-relation was administered and two striking concerns were indentified. Customers perceive that if companies follow water harvesting then they also go for water treatment but not necessarily they use organic ingredients. The soft drinks companies are known for water recycling and customers of these companies believe that the products are made by use of chemical based colors. But, if companies recycled (paper /plastic), customers believe that they do not use chemical based ingredients. Food companies are known for recycling and users of these companies also believe that the companies will use natural or eco colors in the food products.

Among all the selected parameters the feeling of esteem by using the products of eco friendly companies got the highest ranking followed by loyalty, company image, satisfaction and least scorer was purchase intention itself. It would indicate that customers are inclined towards the green practices and green products however their purchase intention they have some ambiguity. Customer behavior on green products indicated that customers have got the inclination for green products in their purchase intentions (mean value 3.4). The Mc Donald's customers have rated high in their influence at 3.6 mean value. In next parameter on frequency of purchase the value scored is 4.15; this indicates the customers are loyal as they are influenced by eco friendly practices. In loyalty parameter Dominos customers rated high at 4.4. On impact of companies image boost the customers have rated high at 4.01. On esteem feelings by use of eco friendly products at the customer level the respondents rated at 4.2. Coke customers have rated very high at 4.5 mean.

Anova was administered to find the respondents' opinion in regard to difference between the selected companies on chosen five parameters. On the first parameter i.e. purchase intentions data ($F=1.23$ & $P=0.30$ values) it indicates there is no difference between the selected companies. Customers are equally having good intentions for

buying from all the companies. In next parameter frequency of purchase it is noticed from the data ($F=2.3$ & $P=0.78$) which clearly states there is significant difference in selected company customers. Customers are not showing equal loyalty for selected companies, this might be product preference or loyalty for one company is high compared to other companies. When anova was administered for the difference of opinion on selected parameters for gender, the views were gender neutral on any of the parameters.



Conclusion and Implications

The customers are inclined towards the green practices and green product but for their purchase intention they have some ambiguity, they're not assured enough to rate high for purchase intentions. The shoppers do feel proud by consumption of green product as they exhibit concern for the environment. The respondents additionally believe that the corporate image can get a boost by the green practices. These results will be accustomed to understand how the customers behave for green practices or products. The green marketers can use this study to create plans and focus on the customers.

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