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Review Research Article

Customer Attitude towards Green Practices adopted by Retailers

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ABSTRACT

What is the most important thing in green practices is the meaning of green in retailing. The term green refers to a category of such products and services that are less harmful, eco-friendly and do not cause irreplaceable damage to the environment and at the same time these are capable enough of satisfying consumer's need by offering a good return on investment to retailers. The objective of the study is to seek to explore the consumer attitude towards green practices in the retail industry for sustainable development and also to explore the consumers' intentions to pay for these practices. The research study is based on primary data, which is collected by surveying the consumers of Ujjain City. The focus of the study is on the measurement of consumer attitude towards green practices adopted by retailers. In this study we discuss about the green practices adopted by retailers and its impact on consumers' attitude. The result will help the retailers to examine the results, after measuring them; can be used to supplement the retailing strategies for green products. The paper provides both researcher and retailer with a better insight and customer attitude towards green practices adopted by retailers.

Introduction

In this time, we have exploited the natural resources optimally to fulfill our needs. In this process we have achieved a lot but we have destroyed a lot as well. Some of these damages are irreparable and even irrecoverable. Loss to the environment and related objects is immense. Since environmental issues have an impact on human activities, so society at large is more concerned with the natural environment and businesses are experiencing pressure to offer more and more eco friendly products and services to deal with society's concerned for the environment. There are very few academy areas which, integrated environmental concerns into their subject matter. Green practices are the requirement of modern retailers to go green with eco-friendly concepts in retail industry. Green retailing is the modern concept to protect our environment through each customer approach, although lots of environment friendly practices adopted by retail businesses but these practices are working at business level. Now time has to come to adopt the green practices by customer and we all know the customer is the main element is retail business chain. This is the reason that our customer must aware with the green practices adopted by retailers.

Green Retailing refers to the management of environment protection through organized relating and reduces the waste, increase the efficiency and also minimize the cost. Therefore, it is the need of today's era. It increases the importance of customer awareness towards green practices adopted by retailers. Green Retailing is one of the subjects from the field of business management which not only highlights environmental issues through these issues but also tries to find solutions to these issues. All these have led to the emergence of Green retailing. Most people believe that green retailing exclusively to the selling of eco friendly products but it is a broader concept which includes large range of activities such as product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes and modifying etc. Green retailing is also termed as ecological retailing. Another way to define Green retailing is to green retailing consists of all retail activities designed to generate and facilitate many ways to exchange intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of such needs or wants occurs with less detrimental impact on the natural environment. In this research paper we take the concept of green retailing from green skills. The definition of Green Skill is given by United Nation Industrial Development Organization. "Green skills are the knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes needed to live in, develop and support a sustainable and resource-efficient society."

Customer Attitude: Customer attitude is combination of a customer's beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions toward something. Consumer attitudes can be affected by number of factors. Green Practices: There are various types of practices adopted by retailers like: Plastic packaging to eco-friendly packaging, more focus on selling loose products instead of packaged goods,

don't single use plastic, recycling programs against plastic waste, coupons against old clothes, use of solar panel, customer willingness to pay more eco friendly products.

Retailers: Retailer is the last person in distribution channel. Retail industry is one of the most developing industries in India.

Ujjain City: Ujjain is a religious city. The population of Ujjain district is around 6 lacks. The study is focused on urban area only.

Review of Literature

Dabija Dan-Cristian, bejan Brîndu Mariana, Grant David B (2018) found that customer loyalty programs help the retailer to adopted green practices to motivate customer to buying green products. The key elements for promoting green practices like sustainable products, pursuing responsible consumption, getting involved in environmental protection activities and preserving resources. These key elements of sustainability are crucial in retailer strategies for approaching customers, strategies encompassing both communication and well-structured offers of sustainable, green and environmentally friendly products to gain customers' loyalty and assist them in adopting green consumption behaviors. This may not be the case in all retail markets or sub-markets.

Prateek priyam & Pabalkar Vanishree (2020) mentioned that hotel industry is one of the users of single use food packaging products in form of straws, spoons, cups, plates, carry-bags and containers etc. but some of them have switched to forks and spoons made from bamboo and straws made from paper. This study more focus on customer attitude towards green initiative adopted to reduce single use plastic but cost is borne by customer only and it perceived differently in tier-1 and tier-2 cities. With increasing environmental concern, not only customers but hotel industry is also move towards reduction of single use plastics in hotel industry all over the world.

Dutta Kirti and Singh Swati. (2013) focus on the relative influences of corporate social responsibility practices on the consumer's perception and intention to purchase from organized retailers in the Indian market.

Manaktola Kamal and Jauhari Vinnie. (2007) The study seeks to explore the factors which influence the consumer attitude and behavior towards green practices in the lodging industry in India and also to explore the consumers' intentions to pay for these practices. The consumers using hotel services are conscious about environmentally friendly practices in India. They patronise the hotels that have adapted green practices though not compromising on service quality. The consumers would prefer to use lodging that follows these practices but are not willing to pay extra for these services. Indian hotels have the competitive advantage over similar products if they follow green practices.

Mahapatra Sabita (2013) focused that last three decades have seen a progressive increase in worldwide environmental consciousness due to rising evidence of environmental problems. Environmental protection is increasingly becoming a necessity and part of a bigger agenda in the urbanising world of developing countries. Given the increasing deterioration of the environment, India as a developing country need to prevent pollution and preserve its natural resources. Environmental attitudes constitute a significant part of environmental consciousness. The study focus to better understand consumers' environment conscious behaviour, for developing effective environmental policies required to reinforce green purchase. Moreover, companies will have insight about how to profile green consumers in India, to develop effective messages that will functionally and emotionally appeal to their target customers.

Aims/ Objectives

The objective of this research study is to understand and analyze the customer attitude toward green practices with reference to Ujjain city. These products are such as CNG, CFL, natural colors, biogas, solar panel and heaters, carry bags. In addition to the aforesaid objective this study intended to find out the factors which consumer consider important while deciding on green products.

Methodology

This research is a descriptive investigation wherein data has been collected from respondents of Ujjain city through a questionnaire. The respondents were selected on the basis of convenient sampling. This study exam each component of attitude toward green practices and tries to provide the solution for research problem.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was personally distributed to consumer through hard as well softcopy. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) was used for obtaining responses. Convenience sampling method was used to collect the data from respondent. Finally, 190 questionnaires were considered for data analysis.

Attitude and its components

An attitude is an enduring organization of motivational, emotional perceptual and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of our environment. It is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object. Thus, an attitude is the way one thinks feels and acts toward towards some aspect of his or her environment such as a retail store, television program or product. An attitude has three components cognitive (beliefs) effective (feeling) and behavioral (response tendencies).

Cognitive component: The cognitive component consists of a consumer's beliefs about an object.

Effective component: Feelings or emotional reactions to an object represent the effective component of an attitude.

Behavioral component: The behavior component of an attitude is one's tendency to respond in a certain manner towards an object or activity.

Measurement of attitude components

The purchase and use behavior about of eco friendly products can be predicted most accurately by overall measures of product liking or affect. The components of attitudes are the integral part of retailing strategies so it is important that retailers must measure each component.

Results and Discussion

In order to measure the customer attitude for the eco-friendly products like CNG, CFL, natural colors, biogas, solar panel and heaters, carry bags, more price for eco-friendly products, safety, performance and availability of goods at store were designed in questionnaire.

As per the responses for questions related to cognitive components in questionnaire show that the average score of for the attributes i.e., price, safety, performance and availability of green products are 3.1 4.3 4.2 and 2.8 respectively. It means the respondent believes that green products are economic, offer better safety and perform up to the mark but are not easily available in comparison to non-green products. To evaluate effective components, different statements were designed to measure the feeling of respondents toward the green products by using Likert scale. The responses of respondents for these statements are shows that majority of respondent feel green products are economic, safe and perform up to the mark but raise the objection of unavailability of green products. Behavioral components at the time of measuring the response tendency i.e., behavior components, we find that 57% respondent are ready to buy where is 43% or confused in various degree due to lake of awareness.

Conclusion

The assessment of an overall attitude of the respondents, there must be consistency in three components of attitude. This has been confirmed by this research paper by receiving approximately similar outcomes on the questions related to these components. Respondent is considering green product as a substitute of non-green product while keeping price, quality and availability in mind rather than eco-friendliness. To make green products a natural choice of a customer, an awareness campaign should be designed and executed by the Government, NGO and Industry through disseminating information about positives of green product. All efforts should be made to educate the customer about benefits of green products if we really want to make the environment neat and clean. The demographic data of respondents can be used to design segments of customers who are more prone towards green products than others, which would help in effective formulation and implementation of Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning strategies.

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