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A Review of the Mediating Effect of Environmental Knowledge on the Effects of Green Marketing on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

Using environmental literacy as a lens, this review investigates how "green marketing" influences consumers' purchasing decisions. Products and brands that show they care about sustainability are becoming more popular as people become more concerned about the environment. One of the most important ways to influence customer decisions is through green marketing, which highlights environmentally friendly products and practices. Green marketing strategies, including eco-labeling, sustainable packaging, and ecologically conscious advertising, are examined in this review that synthesises previous research to determine their impact on customer behaviour. The function of environmental knowledge as a go-between in this connection is paramount. Green marketing campaigns are more likely to be successful with environmentally conscious consumers, according to the analysis. It implies that customers are more likely to buy and remain loyal to a company when they have a deep understanding of the environment and can articulate the value of eco-friendly goods. Businesses should prioritize green marketing tactics and increase customer knowledge on environmental issues, according to the research. Companies may influence consumer behavior and encourage sustainable consumption habits by helping people understand the effects of their purchases on the environment. At the end of this review, we suggest some avenues for future research that could help us better understand the interplay between green marketing, consumer behavior, and environmental awareness. We also call for more holistic strategies that merge environmental education with green marketing to create long-term changes in the market.

1. Introduction

The concept of "green marketing," which is gaining traction, is intriguing many. Despite the lack of consensus on a single definition, the term "green marketing" is used synonymously. Green marketing, for instance, takes environmental concerns into account in every step of the marketing process (Tsen et al., 2006; Wahid et al., 2011). The term "green marketing" refers to strategies employed by businesses to differentiate themselves from rivals by addressing consumers' environmental concerns (Juwaheer et al., 2012). The term "green marketing," as defined by Chan (2004), is used in this thesis to describe an approach to advertising that aims to meet the demands of environmentally concerned consumers by supplying them with goods that meet their needs.

The phrase "green marketing" is used since it encompasses both environmental awareness and the subject of this study, which is to analyze how it influences consumer purchasing behavior. Consumers' environmental literacy is the primary determinant of green marketing's ability to influence purchase behavior (Chowdhury, 2013). A widespread lack of environmental literacy compounds the problem of ineffective green marketing in developing countries (Sinnappan & Rahman, 2011). Green marketing rests on three pillars—eco-labeling, green branding, and green advertising—according

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to recent study. Businesses that voluntarily work to reduce their environmental impact are referred to as eco-labels. Brands are currently "going green" by portraying themselves as environmentally conscious and emphasizing the eco-friendliness of their products (Grimmer & Bingham, 2013). Finally, according to Kotler and Armstrong (2008), green advertising aims to persuade people to buy eco-friendly products. Polonsky and Rosenberger (2001) found that environmental activism has gone from being a choice activity to a legally required one over the world, especially in developed nations. A consumerist movement that emerged to protect buyers from unethical marketing saw a significant boost with the advent of green marketing. "Green consumerism" and other eco-friendly advertising campaigns have made it mandatory to protect customers' natural spaces (Dono et al., 2010). A "green consumer" is someone who avoids purchasing goods that are either overly reliant on fossil fuels, have an adverse impact on other forms of life during production, or have been subjected to animal or plant testing without proper authorization (Eriksson, 2004).

A lot of factors influence consumers to buy environmentally friendly products. Lots of studies have shown that companies should "go green" to show their support for corporate environmentalism. Asgharian et al. (2012), Menck & Filho (2014), and Dahl (2010) all point to the fact that customers are very environmentally sensitive, and that corporations spend a lot of money advertising green products. Companies can now zero in on their own marketing niche thanks to advancements in this area (Wahid et al., 2011).

Environmentally conscious ads have generally been more well-received in recent years. The global green marketing sector was estimated by Global sector Inc. in 2011 to be worth \$3.5 trillion by the end of 2017. Much of the responsibility may be attributed to the increased environmental consciousness among consumers, government agencies, and corporations alike. Consequently, it is considered as necessary to switch to eco-friendly items now, even though they are more expensive (Sustainability Edge Solutions, n.d.). Increasing consumer awareness of environmental issues and encouraging them to make a switch to green products is the cornerstone of eco-friendly marketing. It has dual purposes as a marketing tool and a social contribution because it highlights the negative effects that non-green products have on the environment. There is a large body of work covering many different subjects related to green marketing and its influence on customer behavior. The environmental psychology guidebook by Moser and Uzzell (2003) states that in this area, consumers use the media's depiction of environmental issues to shape their views on the subject.

When trying to influence consumer spending habits, green marketing is a must-have. However, studies have usually taken a corporate social responsibility (CSR) stance on the subject, rather than a business one. Knowing what factors influence customers' purchasing decisions is, thus, crucial. This information is vital for making a bigger splash when trying to influence consumers' buying habits (Khare et al., 2013). Because of this, further studies are required to fully understand the potential of this new field of green marketing. Furthermore, developed countries, and the US market in particular, have funded most studies addressing this topic (Leonidou et al., 2013). In contrast, the situation is likely different in developing nations due to differences in purchasing habits and socioeconomic conditions. There is a lot of literature on green marketing and its effects on customers in developed nations, but there is a dearth of research on the necessity of green marketing tactics to influence consumer buying behavior in developing countries (Juwaheer et al., 2012).

One important factor in consumers' tendency to buy eco-friendly products is their degree of environmental knowledge. Companies' eco-friendly advertising initiatives may have a greater impact on consumers who are more concerned about the environment.

2. Environmentally Friendly Marketing

The term "green marketing" was used by Polonsky (2011) to describe an eco-conscious strategy for advertising and product creation. The system is open to any and all distribution and manufacturing techniques.

Maheshwari (2014) argues that green marketing presents an opportunity for organizations to innovate while simultaneously making a positive difference. Thus, green marketing is a production strategy that places an emphasis on making items that are safe for both the environment and consumers. In keeping with previous research (Rahbar & Wahid, 2011; Zandhessami et al., 2016; Sarkar, 2012), this study has investigated green marketing through eco-labeling, green branding, and green advertising.

2.1 Environmental Certifications

When businesses do their share to preserve the environment, they can get an eco-label and be recognized by an independent body. According to Ng and Wong (2015), firms can gain an advantage in the market and obtain eco-label certifications by showing consumers that their products are healthier and less destructive to the environment. According to Bernard et al. (2015), eco-labeling serves as both a marketing strategy and an effort to address climate change and global warming.

2.2 Sustainability in branding

At its core, every marketing plan revolves around branding. In the interest of long-term prosperity, the firms work to place their brands in favorable positions. In response to growing consumer awareness of environmental issues, many brands are working to position themselves as "green"—that is, as products that are good for the environment and people's health—in the minds of its target audience (Grimmer).

The goal of "green" advertising is to increase sales of eco-friendly goods. Put another way, to implement advertising campaigns that encourage consumers to buy products made using eco-friendly procedures and minimal waste (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). There has been a recent uptick in "green" advertising, which aims to attract eco-conscious shoppers (Peter & Olson, 2010).

2.3 The purchasing habits of consumers

How people act when making a purchase is known as consumer buying behavior. The term "green marketing" refers to an approach to advertising goods and services that prioritizes minimizing negative impacts on the environment (Herring & Sorrel, 2009). In general, consumers are proud of their eco-friendly purchases. Green advertising, eco-labeling, and green branding are all strategies for getting people to buy products with less environmental impact (Akenji, 2014).

2.4 Understanding the environment

More and more, individuals are confronted with environmental problems that have an impact on their daily life as time goes on. People need to know how to deal with environmental challenges if they want to deal with them effectively (Wole, 2009).

2.5 The value of eco-friendly advertising

One of the primary goals of green marketing, as stated by Sarkar (2012), is to reduce the bad effects on the environment while simultaneously establishing the company as environmentally conscious and responsible. It is a novel concept that helps companies achieve their ultimate aim of increasing their consumer base. As a marketing strategy, eco-innovation is gaining traction for many companies. According to Singh and Pandey (2012), sustainable production practices give enterprises a marketing advantage by encouraging consumers to buy environmentally friendly products. Legislators and regulators are putting more and more pressure on businesses to implement eco-friendly practices that are good for the world and their customers' health (Sarkar, 2012). All of these initiatives have one common goal: to increase sales of environmentally friendly items so that more people can live healthier lives.

The potential reputational benefits of eco-labeling are becoming increasingly apparent to forward-thinking businesses. The environmental labeling of products helps bring consumers and producers on an equal footing in terms of information (Okada & Mais, 2010). Customers can generate educated judgments about the companies because their environmental credentials are explained in detail (Mishra & Sharma, 2010). Recent studies have demonstrated the significance of eco-labels. To prove the importance of eco-labeled items, Esteves et al. (2017) compared the buying behaviors of New Zealand customers towards eco-labeled and non-eco-labeled products. The authors stated that eco-labeled products are vital and that detailed descriptions of items' environmental credentials increase market competitiveness (Esteves et al., 2017).

Modern companies that cater to eco-conscious consumers in cutthroat markets are also starting to understand the benefits of green branding (Suki, 2016). Companies are reaping many benefits from effective green branding, including higher brand equity, better competitive positioning, and positive consumer reviews compared to competitors (Suki, 2016; Raska & Shaw, 2012). Green advertising, which aims to influence consumer behavior through this medium, has increased in popularity across all sectors, just like green branding. Several research have shown that successful green advertising methods have a favorable impact on customer purchasing behavior across several industries (Chan, 2004; Tariq, 2014; Habib et al., 2010).

2.6 Comprehending the purchasing habits of consumers

One way to study consumer buying behavior is by applying Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior. This theory aims to explain why customers act a certain way by looking at elements including intentions, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral controls. According to this notion, consumers' intentions greatly impact their behavior. A person's attitude is shaped by their evaluations of other people's behaviors and their expectations of the results of those acts. For example, if a buyer believes that supporting environmentally conscious products would benefit both themselves and society as a whole, they are more likely to actually make that purchase. In contrast, normative views refer to the ways in which an individual is expected to behave by their family, friends, or spouse. An individual's propensity to purchase environmentally friendly goods may be impacted, for instance, by peer or family pressure to do so. Lastly, customers' perceptions of the product's affordability and the perceived ease or difficulty of purchasing it are examples of perceived behavioral restrictions. For instance, the buyer may question if he or she can really afford to purchase environmentally friendly goods because of their higher price tag. Thus, individual goals, subjective standards, and perceived behavioral controls all play a substantial role

in molding consumers' purchasing habits (Ajzen, 2011). By utilizing all the strategies outlined in the theory of planned behavior, green marketers aim to persuade consumers to buy environmentally friendly items.

3. Green marketing and consumer purchasing habits

Affordability is a major factor that influences people to choose environmentally friendly items. Manaktola and Jauhari (2007) conducted a survey in India and discovered that environmentally conscious items are preferred by 67% of high-income consumers, 65% of upper-middle-income consumers, 59% of middle-income consumers, and 48% of low-income consumers. Since fewer people are expressing a preference for eco-friendly goods, it follows that low-income people often cannot afford them (Purohit, 2012). Companies often charge more for their environmentally friendly products even though they save money in the long run (Boztepe, 2012).

Additionally, researchers have utilized behavioral theories to create a relationship between consumer behavior and attitude. This means that customers' positive attitudes about certain products influence their purchasing decisions. The link between environmentally conscious actions and customer sentiment is weak, according to Ottman (2011). Albayrak et al. (2011) investigated the impact of environmental literacy on Turkish consumers' purchasing decisions. Green customers are similar to "confused consumers," according to their findings. This is due to the fact that they lack the ability to define "green," making it much more challenging to develop an attitude towards green items.

Companies are engaging in green manufacturing and green marketing, as mentioned by Spanos (2008), in response to rising regulatory restrictions and consumer demand for environmentally friendly products. Purohit (2012), in subsequent research, made similar claims, arguing that customers are socially pressured to purchase environmentally friendly products, and that this shift in attitude and practice leads to actual purchases.

Nowadays, individuals and businesses alike are just as much to blame as organizations when it comes to protecting the environment through eco-friendly purchases. According to Boztepe (2012), people in Turkey are more likely to purchase environmentally friendly products when they feel pressured to do so by societal norms. But, this social pressure is distinct and changes as a result of changes in demographics. To back this viewpoint, research conducted in the Korean context by Lee et al. (2012) indicated that different demographic factors, such as age, education level, and income, influence customer behavior when it comes to purchasing environmentally friendly products.

Environmentally friendly products are being offered by numerous companies in an effort to protect the environment (Renfro, 2010). There are a number of elements, according to earlier studies, that affect consumer behavior when it comes to buying environmentally friendly products. Environmental protection behavior and social norms pressure in Turkey (Boztepe, 2012), gender, age, education level, and income status in Korea (Lee et al., 2012), and consumer income class and social norms in India (Purohit, 2012) all play significant roles in the purchase of green products. When it comes to the reliability of purchasing environmentally friendly products, psychological and social factors have a far stronger impact on consumer behavior than demographic factors (Pickett et al., 1995). According to Laroche et al. (2001), green consumers tend to be better off financially and educationally, but their purchasing habits are becoming more accessible in North America and Europe. Animal welfare, health, and the quality of organic products are additional factors that motivate the purchase of green marketing items (Raska & Shaw, 2012). One of the strongest predictors of green marketing purchasing behavior is parental opinion. Concerned about their children's health and safety, parents often give preference to organic products when shopping for environmentally friendly items. According to Renfro (2010), organic consumption has a significant impact on customer behavior when it comes to making purchases. Additional elements that impact customer purchasing decisions include consumer ethics, environmental consciousness, product expertise, and the consumer's view of environmental protection (Rashid, 2009).

This point to the fact that not all customers' purchasing habits are the same when it comes to these environmentally friendly goods and services. Though demographics may play a role in amplifying or dampening the effect of green marketing on consumer purchasing behavior, existing research has only looked at the direct effects of green marketing on this behavior. In many consumer goods industries, numerous prior research (e.g., Purohit, 2012; Spanos, 2008; Boztepe, 2012; Lee et al., 2012) have suggested that green marketing tactics of firms either directly or indirectly impact consumer buying behavior.

4. Ethical advertising by means of eco-labels

As a means of demonstrating their commitment to producing and distributing goods in an ecologically responsible manner, marketers may employ eco-labeling. According to Okada and Mais (2010) and Mishra and Sharma (2010), these products have certification from third-party organizations that guarantee they are eco-friendly. According to research by Ng and Wong (2015), eco-labeling is widely utilized in the Hong Kong construction industry. This strategy is said to have a good impact on marketing efforts, leading to more environmentally conscious product purchases by consumers. In it, the author begs readers to shell out more cash for a higher-end item. Similarly, Rashid (2009) discovered that eco-labeling

works to influence consumer behavior in Malaysia when it comes to green items. In addition to Kwak et al. (2014) and Chkanikova & Lehner (2015), additional researches have shown that ecological production processes are highly beneficial for promoting eco-friendly products and shaping consumer inclinations to purchase them. This lends credence to Rashid (2009). In a similar vein, Jarvi (2010) discovered that eco-labeling appears to significantly influence customer purchasing behavior in Finland. On the other hand, Leire and Thidell (2005) found conflicting results, demonstrating that customers are aware of eco-labeling but that it does not always influence their purchasing decisions. Additionally, customers may not necessarily believe and depend on eco-labeling, according to Cherian and Jacob (2012), who utilized meta-analysis to support their findings. The root causes of this mistrust, however, remain unclear. According to another study, eco-labeling makes ecological statements about products more transparent and trustworthy, which makes them more appealing to consumers (Iraldo et al., 2005).

The product's consumption patterns are also made more vulnerable by eco-labeling (Sitarz, 1994). Eco-labeling allows buyers more financial leeway in making purchases (Grunert & Wills, 2007). Products with an eco-label are better for the environment than those without (Loureiro et al., 2001; Gallastegui, 2002). According to Daugbjerg et al. (2014), customers' purchasing decisions are influenced by products that have an eco-label. Several factors, such as health concerns, food safety issues, and higher product quality, contribute to the preference for eco-labeled products over non-labeled products from China, according to the literature (Yi n & Ma, 2009). Prior studies indicated that consumers' worries about food production issues, such as safety, quality, environmental effects, sustainability, and animal welfare, are heightened by eco-labeling (Wessells & Anderson, 1995; Salladarré et al., 2010; Jaffry et al., 2004; Sogn-Grundvåg et al., 2013; Verbeke et al., 2007). The compliance of consumers is crucial to the success of eco-label products. According to Thøgersen (2000), the willingness of consumers to buy the environmentally branded goods is a measure of the product's success.

Promoting environmental sustainability through eco-friendly brand identity

In the realm of environmentally conscious advertising, "green branding" is another key factor. According to Suki (2016), a brand's image can be enhanced through green marketing. When it comes to environmentally conscious branding, green positioning is king (Raska & Shaw, 2012). Emotional or functional positioning is used. Emotional positioning aims to appeal to consumers' wants, while functional positioning appeals to rational minds by providing thorough information about the products' environmental benefits. For example, an emotional brand strategy highlights the societal well-being as a result of environmentally friendly production processes, whereas a functional brand strategy emphasizes the products' relevant environmental benefits, such as more environmentally friendly production processes and sound product attributes. Michaud and Llerena (2011) discovered that emotional branding outperformed functional branding. Sarkar (2012) corroborated the findings of Michaud and Llerena (2011) by studying the effectiveness of emotional branding through the use of various appeals to emotions, such as altruism, emotional wellness, and other nature-related appeals, as part of positioning brand strategies. Research conducted in Spain by Hartmann et al. (2005) demonstrated that companies can increase product value through the use of a green branding strategy. One of the most effective ways to promote a brand might be this. Green brand positioning techniques significantly affect customer purchasing behavior, according to research by Suki (2016), who used findings from Hartmann et al. (2005) to examine the effect of green brand positioning on Malaysian consumers' intentions to buy. Also, in Taiwan, green branding significantly affects consumers' inclinations to buy environmentally friendly products (Huang et al., 2014).

On the other hand, a green brand positioning strategy has been questioned by Raska and Shaw (2012). A study conducted on customers in the US revealed that skepticism towards companies' environmental initiatives can impact their purchasing decisions. In conclusion, a meta-analysis by Cherian and Jacob (2012) on the topic of brand positioning and consumer buying behavior revealed that green brand positioning does influence consumers' perceptions, but found little proof that this impression influences consumers' actual purchasing behavior. In order to delve deeper into this matter, and considering the studies that suggest a correlation between environmentally conscious branding and consumer spending habits in industrialized nations, we have formulated the following hypothesis to examine the outcomes in a developing nation.

5. Environmentally conscious advertising

Green advertising is the third crucial factor in green marketing. Promoting environmentally conscious content and long-term environmental sustainability is a part of it. International regulations for environmentally friendly products in the 2000s gave the idea a boost, but it had been there since the late 1960s (Yi n & Ma, 2009; Frank-Martin & Peattie, 2009). Advertising plays a significant role in influencing consumers to make purchases. According to Maheshwari and Malhotra (2011) and Leonidou et al. (2013), it facilitates the journey from consumers' impressions of environmentally friendly items to their actual purchasing decisions.

Green advertising has an effect on consumers' purchasing behavior and happiness in Pakistan, according to Tariq (2014). But eco-friendly ads didn't sway every buyer. Similarly, just 70% of consumers were swayed by eco-labeling and green

advertising messaging, according to Kordshouli et al. (2015), who investigated the green response of consumers to environmentally friendly corporate actions in Mashhad, Iran. In addition, half of the people who took the survey said they usually ignore environmentally friendly ads because they don't trust them. Factors such as the manufacturer's perceived lack of eco-friendliness or their inability to fulfill consumers' demands contribute to green advertising's poorer trust in the Chinese market, according to Chan (2004). He discovered that in the Chinese market, 70% of consumers' behavior changed after seeing adverts for environmentally conscious actions. Environmentally conscious advertising in Malaysia may fail to pique consumers' interest, according to research by Rahbar and Wahid (2011).

Green advertising has a significant impact on consumers' environmental attitudes and understanding due to its cognitive orientation (Stone et al., 1995). Even among those who are ignorant of environmental issues, Ling-yee (1997) found that there is a significant desire to see the planet protected. According to studies on green advertising and consumer behavior, new items pertaining to energy resources, climate change, eco-labeling, and other environmental issues are tapping into new areas of green advertising (Rowlands et al., 2002). Studies conducted in Pakistan have also shown that customers' purchasing intentions were impacted by green advertising, which was exposed to them through print and electronic media (Habib et al., 2010). People in Malaysia began to think about issues related to environmentally friendly products and choose green items as a result of eco-label and green advertising awareness (Rashid, 2009).

5.1 "Green" marketing, eco-conscious consumer practices, and ecological literacy

More and more, people nowadays are interested in learning about the world around them. Concerns about climate change and other greenhouse gas emissions have galvanized the public to take action in defense of our planet, leading many to back the green movement's call for a behavioral shift (Khare, 2015).

More environmental information may lead to eco-friendly actions, according to the research. According to research by Matthes and Wonneberger (2014) on customers in the United States and Austria, those customers who are better informed about environmental issues are more likely to take action that benefits the environment. Kianpour et al. (2014) looked further into the Indian context to study the relationship between consumer buying behavior and environmental understanding. The researchers came to the conclusion that consumers' environmental knowledge had a favorable impact on their purchasing behavior, leading them to choose green items. According to Singh and Pandey (2012), who studied the Indian market, Indian customers have low levels of environmental understanding yet have a preference for purchasing green items. This lends credence to the findings reported in Pickett-Baker and Ozaki (2008). Researchers Han et al. (2010) found that customers' favorable perceptions of eco-friendly hotel advertising are reinforced by their growing familiarity with environmental concerns and eco-friendly goods.

The situation appears to be different in industrialized nations. The general public in industrialized nations has a better understanding of environmental issues, but their purchasing habits vary even more (Dahlstorm, 2011). One such study looked at how people in Greece and the UK made purchases (Alevizou et al., 2015). Social pressures impact purchasing decisions, even for environmentally friendly products, according to the study's findings, which show that the majority of UK customers base their purchases on societal standards and acceptance from society at large. On the other hand, Kronin et al. (2011) found that consumers' beliefs and behavioral controls had a more significant impact on their purchasing decisions in Greece. This means that, instead of being influenced by social pressures, consumers in Greece base their purchases on their own beliefs. Going green encompasses a wide range of actions, such as cutting back on power consumption while actively seeking out renewable energy sources, recycling more, conserving paper, and making more use of biodegradable goods, organic food, aerosols, etc.

A limitation to this was pointed out by Chowdhury (2013) and Lee et al. (2012), who argued that consumers' socially responsible behavior is also affected by their level of environmental knowledge. This is due to the fact that, owing to egocentric actions, even consumers with extensive environmental education may fail to make the necessary purchasing decisions. While some studies have found negative effects of green marketing on customer purchasing behavior, the majority of studies have found that environmental information plays a significant role in influencing this behavior. Consequently, prior research has largely reached a consensus regarding the positive correlation between consumer purchasing behavior and environmental knowledge, as well as the role that environmental knowledge plays in the correlation between green marketing and consumer purchasing behavior.

The conclusions are mixed for developing nations, which have received less research, but they do hold for industrialized nations overall. Conflicting findings in the context of poor nations inspired the present investigation. A number of research have demonstrated a favorable correlation between consumers' environmental knowledge and their purchasing behavior (e.g., Conraud & Rivas, 2009; Khare et al., 2013).

6. Limitations and directions for further studies

Whether consumers have prior environmental education or not, this study examines how green marketing campaigns affect their purchasing decisions. Furthermore, it has only covered a subset of green marketing. These considerations limit the scope of the present investigation. In order to have a better understanding of the country's response, future studies can expand their sample size to include more people, evenly split between urban and rural locations. In order to examine how customers respond to all aspects of green marketing, it might incorporate additional factors that measure green marketing activities.

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