

Chapter 12

A Study of Consumer Switching Behaviour in the Indian Context With Respect to Recycled Products

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the need of every corporation to address the environmental issues has grown multifold. The corporate social responsibility concerns are growing, and it has become an indicator to judge a business performance. In the context of increasing environmental concerns where issues of pollution, generation of wastes, use of toxic substances for packaging, etc. are gaining strong ground, the consumers have also become alarmed and they fully understand the implications of such issues both on nature and earth. The chapter aims to study the behaviour and the change therein of Indian consumers. It is true that all the efforts and policies targeted towards initiative of green marketing cannot be realised if it is not received by the consumers. The chapter proposes to cover the concept of green marketing and its relation to the circular economy, the green marketing practices in Indian context, the attitude and preference of the Indian consumer towards green products, and the switch in the purchase pattern of the Indian consumers with respect to green/recycled products.

INTRODUCTION

The business organisations globally have become very sensitive to the environmental concerns. Not only has the realisation to save the Earth dawned on the business corridors, these issues have found their presence in all aspects of business functions, be it production, packaging or advertising. In recent years the

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need of every corporate to address the environmental issues has grown multifold. The Corporate Social responsibility concerns are growing and it has become an indicator to judge a business performance. In the context of increasing environmental concerns where issues of pollution, generation of wastes, use of toxic substances for packaging etc. are gaining strong ground the consumers have also become alarmed and they fully understand the implications of such issues both on nature and Mother Earth. Green Marketing is a practice where the companies strive for sustainability and adopt environment friendly practices and methods for production, packaging and distribution of their products.

Bhattacharya (2011) The paper discusses the today the major issue confronting the business world is to maintain the ecological balance because the world has already reached the threshold where the limits are alarming and resources are fast diminishing. The negative developments like generation of e-wastes and its poor management, the biodegradable pollutants are shooting. Amidst all such issues Green Marketing can be one such imitative which can bring about a change. The terms like re-use, re-cycle and re-generate are keywords of future and can bring back the environment to friendly terms. However, the term Green Marketing should not be limited to mere products alone the purview can be extended to services also.

Wastes and pollution do not happen by chance rather they are the result of the decisions taken at the product design stage. From the time when the economy witnessed the Great Industrial Revolution where goods were being produced in masses as the labour was cheap and the resources were infinite to till date where this mass production has brought extensive depletion of the natural resources. The situation has even endangered the future generations where they might be completely devoid of these resources. Basically, this functioning of the production mechanism works on Linear Economy which is based on three principles of TAKE-MAKE-WASTE, which simply put means the resources are taken from the nature, made or converted in to goods and then when they are no longer in use they are wasted or dumped. This process is subsequently followed by the similar pattern of TAKE-MAKE-WASTE. The need of the hour is a complete turnaround from the concept of Linear Economy to Circular economy.

WHAT IS CIRCULAR ECONOMY

As per the World Economic forum Circular Economy is defined in the following way.

“A circular economy is an industrial system that is restorative or regenerative by intention and design. It replaces the end-of-life concept with restoration, shifts towards the use of renewable energy, eliminates the use of toxic chemicals, which impair reuse and return to the biosphere, and aims for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, systems, and business models.”

Simply put, a Circular Economy does not believe in wastes. As per Ellen Macarthur

“A circular economy is based on the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems.”

A circular economy believes that wastes and pollutants should not be created in the first place, the design phase should harness the materials and technology in such a way that there is no creation of wastes. Secondly products or components should be such that they be reused, re-manufactured and repaired. It is here that the concept of recycled products come into picture. Recycling is simply turning waste

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