

## **CONSUMER AWARENESS TOWARDS GREEN MARKETING: IMPACT OF INFORMATION SOURCES, EDUCATION, AND GENDER DIFFERENCES**

**Ranjit Kaur**

Research scholar, RIMT University , Mandi Gobindgarh.

**Shipra**

Associate Professor, RIMT University, Mandi Gobindgarh

**Yashmin Sofat**

Assistant Professor, PG Department of Commerce, A.S.College, Khanna

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study examines consumer awareness regarding green marketing in Punjab's Ludhiana area. Promoting products and/or services on the basis of their positive environmental impacts is known as "green marketing." Such a product or service must either be made in an eco-friendly way or be ecologically beneficial in and of itself. The promotion of sustainable or eco- friendly goods, services or methods is known as green marketing. It involves communicating a company's dedication to lessening its environmental impact and promoting eco-friendly products or practices. Green marketing strategies are increasingly popular as consumers awareness of environmental issues grows and businesses seek to differentiate themselves in competitive markets. Green marketing strategies in the automobile industry are essential as the sector faces increasing demand to lessen its environmental impact pressure from consumers, authorities and environmentalists. The automobile industry in Punjab has a diverse presence, from tractor manufacturing to two-wheelers and auto components and the state plays a key role in the Indian automobile supply chain. While there are challenges, the sector continues to grow, especially with emerging opportunities in electric vehicles and exports. This research sought to offer empirical proof about consumer awareness towards green marketing. 200 consumers in the Ludhiana district can provide the data. The respondents and district are picked using the random sampling approach. The SPSS software will be used to analyze the data. The study showed both men and women are indifferent regarding the impact of education on the awareness level of consumers. It also shows that out of various informational sources, television and radio plays a supreme role while on the other hand sales persons play little a less role. The study examined the various informational sources which aware the consumers about green marketing strategies. The study presented above shows that both men and women are indifferent regarding the impact of education on the awareness level of consumers. Additionally, it is seen that customers are significantly affected by television and radio basically referred as broadcasting media in their awareness level. In this regard, it might be suggested that the marketers should review its policies because they have been found to be ineffective according to today's scenario. It is recommended that the marketers should review its policies meant to enhance the awareness among consumers about green marketing strategies because they have been found to be ineffective according to today's scenario. Further, the more focus should be given to employee training and education so as to develop eco- friendly skills among them.

**KEYWORDS:** Consumer awareness, Environmental friendly, Green marketing, Planet saving techniques

## INTRODUCTION

Over the years, India's automobile industry has undergone tremendous change, developing from a little, emerging sector to one of the biggest and most vibrant in the world. India's automobile industry has transformed from a largely controlled sector into a vibrant, competitive market with a mix of domestic giants, international players and emerging electric vehicle makers (Bora 2011). With its large consumer base, growing economy and ongoing investments in new technologies, the Indian automobile sector is expected to continue expanding and evolving in the years ahead.

In today's business climate, environmental issues are important. Environmental issues are a concern for most countries. In today's business world, environmentally sustainable development has become a big concern. Green marketing is therefore one of the strategies a business may employ to achieve this. In today's environmentally conscious society, the term "green" has become more and more widespread. Green issues are becoming more and more well-liked by the public, making green marketing beneficial for sales and public relations.

Nonetheless, one of the core tenets of green marketing is that consumers are willing to pay more for "green" products. Assessing customer awareness of and inclination to buy environmentally friendly products is the aim of the current essay.

Terms like global warming, carbon credits, ozone depletion, environmental risks and environment impact assessment have become widely used in the twenty-first century which is a sign of an ecologically concerned culture. When the negative repercussions of environmental deterioration are felt by society, environmental concern increases. Problems caused by the widespread manufacture, use, and marketing of ecologically irresponsible items are among the causes of this deterioration. "What is green" and creating and selling items that consumers would appreciate. Conventional marketing focuses on selling goods and services that meet customer demands at reasonable rates.

Green marketing, commonly referred to as environmental marketing, encompasses a variety of actions, such as changing the production method for products, changing the packaging, and changing advertising. "Green or environmental marketing," In the words of Tapan K. Panda, "Green or Environmental Marketing encompasses all activities intended to generate and facilitate interactions intended for meeting human requirements or desires such that the fulfillment of these needs or wants occurs with little negative effect on natural environment."

When discussing environmentally friendly items, it is crucial to remember that in order to be considered really "green," a product must make the claim that it is "less environmentally harmful" than it is environmentally favorable. Therefore, minimizing adverse environmental effects should be the main goal of environmental marketing. Convenience, affordability, performance, and environmental compatibility are all balanced in eco-friendly products. They should be made of materials that are recyclable or decomposable and should be robust, recyclable, and non-toxic. The packaging for these items should be as little as possible, and they should use little energy.

We are all aware that human desires are insatiable and that the earth's resources are limited. Therefore, in order to achieve the objectives of the company, marketers must use resources effectively and efficiently. Customers around the world are growing increasingly concerned about environmental preservation. There is evidence from all across the world that people are

concerned about the environment and are acting differently as a result. Green marketing has emerged as a result, reflecting the growing demand for environmentally friendly and sustainable products and services.

Business has entered the "green market" as discussions about how to deal with the effects of human activities on the environment, such as the global warming discussions that rule political circles, continue in full force. Businesses often offer eco-friendly items to customers or implement green business practices. However, some businesses also commit to eco-friendly production and/or eco philanthropy while concurrently selling eco- or green products. In a wide variety of businesses and to solve a wide range of environmental challenges, green business methods have emerged. Hybrid cars, eco-friendly paint, organic food, recycled copy paper, and eco-friendly cleaning supplies are a few examples of green items. Businesses may also highlight their recycling initiatives, usage of wind energy, or other environmental protection measures.

Government laws and customers are the main influences influencing the consumer products sector, and businesses in market economies base their production and marketing decisions on these two variables. Government regulations and consumer preferences for eco-friendly products offer incentives for businesses to include environmental and other green goals in their profit-maximizing decisions. While some businesses take actively steps to make their goods more environmentally friendly, for others, eco-friendly practices are an unintended consequence of their cost reduction approach.

The desire and capacity of customers to purchase green products and spend more for them is a crucial component of green marketing. For instance, there are 3.5 million proven green customers in the US market, and there is a demand for green products in Europe as well.

The current era of green marketing reflects the rise of digital technologies that help consumers access more information about product sustainability. Social media platforms have given consumers a voice, enabling them to hold companies accountable for their environmental claims. Furthermore, the concept of "greenwashing" has gained prominence, as companies face scrutiny over misleading claims about the sustainability of their products.

Consumers today are increasingly demanding that businesses not only offer sustainable products but also demonstrate long-term commitments to sustainability through tangible actions, such as supply chain transparency and reducing their environmental impact (Bennett, A., &Kottasz, R. 2020).

Green marketing has evolved from being a niche practice to a mainstream strategy that many businesses now adopt to engage environmentally conscious consumers. This evolution has been driven by growing environmental concerns, consumer demand for sustainability, and the development of regulations that encourage businesses to reduce their environmental impact. Today, it is not only about the environmental impact of a product but also about how businesses integrate sustainability into their business models and brand identities.

In recent years, automakers have shifted focus toward more sustainable practices, including manufacturing fuel-efficient vehicles, promoting electric and hybrid models and reducing emissions across their supply chains.

However, there is a dearth of information about the Indian customer base, including their desire and capacity to spend more for environmentally friendly goods. The goal of the current article is to investigate consumer awareness among residents of Ludhiana district of Punjab state.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Although consumers are generally aware of green products, implementing green marketing strategies into daily corporate operations is challenging (Juwaheer, 2005). According to Antonio et al. (2009), studies on environmentally conscious buying will be the primary focus in the future, leading to the identification of consumer attitudes, behaviours, and intentions. This is because environmental consciousness has grown through time. In their 2011 study of Ghanaian customers, Braimah and Tweneboah-Koduah discovered that consumers' buying decisions were influenced by their lack of awareness of green marketing issues. It was also shown that one of the factors influencing the purchasing of green products is their price. However, it was discovered that younger customers are more inclined to be swayed by environmental concerns. According to Cherian and Jacob (2012), organizations are still not putting much effort into advancing the creation of green products since consumers lack information about the environment.

Numerous academics have recognized a number of problems and difficulties with regard to green marketing (Welling and Chavan, 2010). As it promotes green products and services, green technology (acquiring new technology or modifying existing technology), and green power and energy, practicing green marketing at first may prove to be a costly business. To increase public knowledge of green products and their benefits, significant financial commitment is needed in marketing campaigns. Many consumers might not be eager to pay more for eco-friendly goods, which could have an impact on the business's sales. By using the numerous platforms available for integrated marketing communication, it is necessary for businesses to thoroughly inform clients about the existence and advantages of green marketing. Environmental labeling may be a useful tool for persuading buyers to buy environmentally friendly goods. If consumers see additional benefits associated with the product (such as high-quality, ecologically safe products, fuel-efficient automobiles, and non-hazardous products), they may be prepared to pay a higher price. Green marketing can assist businesses in gaining a competitive edge and a solid customer base. (2010) Renfro, L. A.

Joel Makower (quoted by Shafaat & Sultan, 2012) claims that the absence of public consensus and norms around what is truly "green" is another issue for green marketers. Green marketing is still becoming more and more popular in spite of these obstacles, especially as awareness over climate change grows on a global scale. Businesses are stepping up to demonstrate their pledges to lessen the negative climatic effects of their goods and services. Sustainable growth can benefit greatly from green marketing, thus businesses need to use creative strategies to stay afloat in the cutthroat market.

Joel Makower (quoted by Shafaat & Sultan, 2012) claims that one of the difficulties facing green marketers is the absence of standards and a general understanding among the general public regarding what exactly qualifies as "green". Despite these obstacles, green marketing is still on the rise, especially in light of the growing concern over climate change on a global scale. Businesses are stepping up to demonstrate their dedication to minimizing the damaging effects of their goods and services on the environment. Businesses must use new strategies to survive in the competitive climate since green marketing can be crucial to sustainable development. Krizanovae *et al.* (2013) emphasized on green marketing as a tool of competitive advantage in the transport business of automobile sectors. The data was collected from 420 consumers of Slovak. The findings of the study showed that green marketing had positive and significant impact on the competitive advantage to the companies. The research further suggested to reduce environmental degradation the companies should more opted green marketing strategies. Lin *et al.* (2014) carried research on green innovation in the automobile

industry to examine the market demand's effect on a company's environmental performance and green innovation. The sample was selected by using random sampling technique and analyzed by using Structural Equational Model. The findings showed that the impact of market demand on environmental performance was insignificant. On the other hand, impact of market demand on firms' performance was significant. The research further suggested that firms should make greater efforts to understand the needs of customers.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### OBJECTIVES

- To study the awareness level among consumers towards green marketing.
- To study the role of various informational sources on awareness level of consumers.
- To study the impact of education on consumer awareness towards green products with respect to gender.

### RESEARCH DESIGN

Data have been gathered for the study project from both primary and secondary sources. A thorough questionnaire was used to gather primary data from the respondents, which was then disseminated to the district of Ludhiana's consumers. Secondary data was gathered from a variety of published sources, including books, journals, magazines, research papers, the internet, etc.

### SAMPLE DESIGN

**Target population:** The research effort includes the district of Ludhiana in order to address the study's research topics. District of Ludhiana is selected at random. Among the 23 districts in Punjab, Ludhiana, a district of the Municipal Corporation, is the biggest in terms of both land and population. In addition to this, those who live in this area are well aware consumers. This survey has 200 investors in total.

**Sampling technique and statistical tools:** The respondents for the current study project are chosen by a random selection approach. The weighted average score (WAS), percentage method, and 5-point Likert scale were all used to scale the data. The chi square test was also used to further analyze the data.

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1**  
**Demographic Profile of Sample Respondents**

PARAMETRES	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
<b>GENDER</b>	Men	120	60%
	Women	80	40%
<b>AGE</b>	Below 20 years	40	20%
	20-40 years	125	62.5%
	Above 40 years	35	17.5%
<b>EDUCATION</b>	Up to Sen. Secondary	82	41%
	Graduate	73	36.5%
	Post Graduate	30	15%
	Professional and	15	7.5%
	others		

<b>OCCUPATION</b>	Government Service	50	25%
	Private Service	70	35%
	Business	45	22.5%
	Professional	20	10%
	others	15	7.5%
<b>Annual Income</b>	less than 1 Lakh	68	34%
	1-4 Lakh	72	36%
	4-8 Lakh	40	20%
	More than 8 Lakh	20	10%
<b>Family type</b>	Nuclear	125	62.5%
	Joint	75	37.5%

The demographic breakdown of the consumers is shown in Table 1. 60% of the respondents are men and 40% are women, according to the gender breakdown. The age distribution of the respondents reveals that 20 percent of them are under 20 years old, 65 percent are in the 20 to 40 age range, and 17 percent are over 40. Most respondents are educated, according to the statistics on respondents' levels of education. 41% of them, or the majority, has completed the Senior Secondary. According to the sample data's classification of its participants by occupation, businesspeople make up 22.5%. In addition, 36% of respondents, the majority, fall into the 1–4 lakhs income bracket. Last but not least, the sample's distribution of respondents by family type reveals that 62.5% of respondents are from nuclear families and 37.5% are from joint families.

**Table 2**  
**Role of various informational sources on Consumer Awareness**

<b>Rank →</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Tot al</b>	<b>WA S</b>	<b>WA S Avg .</b>	<b>Ra nk</b>
Maga zine	15	18	15	13	22	32	14	10	18	19	24	200	115 6	5.78	9
Poster s	18	15	16	12	34	20	12	16	24	10	23	200	118 5	5.92 5	6
News paper s	13	12	20	22	32	11	19	20	14	20	17	200	118 3	5.91 5	7



Websites	15	16	32	16	22	10	20	13	29	19	8	200	1240	6.2	4
Television	14	35	22	24	20	18	15	14	18	10	10	200	1357	6.785	1
Mobile (text messages)	22	21	11	20	18	19	16	23	17	25	8	200	1232	6.16	5
Radio	32	10	20	25	18	20	21	21	11	16	6	200	1338	6.69	2
Family/friends	19	15	16	10	5	19	30	25	28	16	17	200	1115	5.575	10
Social media	24	26	17	20	12	12	22	28	19	12	8	200	1304	6.52	3
Reference groups	10	23	25	24	8	16	15	20	11	29	19	200	1174	5.87	8
Sales person	18	9	6	14	9	23	16	10	11	24	60	200	916	4.58	11
<b>Total</b>	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200				

This section examined how different information sources affected consumers' awareness of green marketing. Without these sources, consumers would be unaware that green marketing even existed. These sources include radio, social media, newspapers, reference groups, television, magazines, posters, salesmen, and cell phones, among others. The pertinent literature is where these reference sources were found. The respondents were asked to rate the various informational sources they believed will be used to notify them about green marketing in this section. The respondents' rankings ranged from 1 to 11, with 1 representing the most favored source and 11 representing the least liked source. The relevant weights (which ranged from 11 to 1) were supplied for each of the aforementioned unique ranks, and WAS were calculated.

Table 2 displays the WAS for each informative source, which was derived using the rankings provided by the respondents.

According to the respondents' rankings of the various informational sources on green marketing, Table 2 displays the overall perceived ranks generated from the weighted average score (WAS). The category "Television" had the highest weighted average score (WAS 6.785), demonstrating the crucial impact that television plays in educating customers about green marketing strategies. With a WAS of 6.69, "Radio" was discovered to be the second most influential source, clearly indicating that radio also informs customers about the availability of green marketing strategies.

With a WAS of 6.52, "Social media" was found to be the third-most significant information source, suggesting that social media and the internet may potentially interact with one another to affect customer decisions. The respondents' degree of knowledge regarding the availability of green marketing strategies was again the focus of the next favorite source, "websites." "Mobile (Text messages)" ranked fifth in terms of information dominance with a WAS of 6.16. The respondents also used posters, newspapers, posters, reference groups, magazines, and other printed materials as information sources. With a WAS of 5.575, "family/friends" was the tenth informative source to have an impact on the respondents. This suggests that the influence of salespeople on customers' awareness levels is not very important. With a WAS of 4.58, "Sales Person" was the informative source that had the least impact.

**Table 3**

**Impact of Education on awareness level of consumers towards green marketing**

SEX	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Men	120	60%
Women	80	40%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

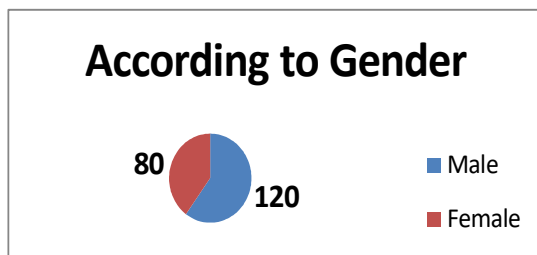


Table 3 depicts that out of 200 investors 120 are males and 80 are females. In other words, 60% of the consumers are males and 40% of the consumers are females.

**Table 4**

**ANALYSIS WITH CHI-SQUARE TEST**

	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dis-Satisfied	Highly Dis-Satisfied	Rows Total
Male (observed)	65	35	14	4	2	120
Male (expected)	63	36	13.2	4.8	3	120
Female	40	25	8	4	3	80



(observed)						
Female (expected)	42	24	8.8	3.2	2	80
Column total	105	60	22	8	5	200

Chi-squared test is used to examine the relationship between gender and the influence of consumer awareness.

H0: Let's assume the null hypothesis, according to which there is no discernible difference between gender and the influence of education on consumer's awareness towards green marketing.

#### MALE CHI- STATS

	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dis-satisfied	Highly dis-satisfied	
(O-E)	2	-1	0.8	0.8	1	
(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	4	1	0.64	0.64	1	
(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E	0.0634	0.0277	0.0484	0.1333	0.333	0.6058

#### FEMALE CHI- STATS

	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dis- satisfied	Highly dis-satisfied	
(O-E)	-2	1	0.8	0.8	1	
(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	4	1	0.64	0.64	1	
(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E	0.0952	0.04166	0.0727	0.2	0.5	0.90956

Chi- squared statistic	1.51536
DOF	4
Level of significance	0.05
Critical value	9.488

Where, E= expected values =  $(N_r * N_c) / N$

O = observed values = actual values,  $N_r$  = Rows total,  $N_c$  = Columns total, Degree of freedom =  $(r-1) * (c-1)$ , Level of significance = 0.05

Our hypothesis is accepted since the chi-statistics (1.51536) is less than the critical value (9.488) at degree of freedom = 4 and level of significance = 0.05. Therefore, the influence of education on consumer awareness is unimportant to both men and women.

## FINDINGS

The study showed both men and women are indifferent regarding the impact of education on the awareness level of consumers. It also shows that out of various informational sources, television and radio plays a supreme role while on the other hand sales persons play little a less role.

## LIMITATION OF STUDY

The study's focus was exclusively on consumers. Furthermore, the study was limited to the Punjabi province's Ludhiana District. Furthermore, only 200 people were included in the sample size. The sample size must be increased in order to obtain results that are more reliable and representative. Another restriction that contributes to inadequate data is time. Some respondents were also reluctant to complete the questionnaire.

## SUGGESTIONS

It is recommended that the marketers should review its policies meant to enhance the awareness among consumers about green marketing strategies because they have been found to be ineffective according to today's scenario. Further, the more focus should be given to employee training and education so as to develop eco- friendly skills among them.

## CONCLUSION

The study examines the various informational sources which aware the consumers about green marketing strategies. The study presented above shows that both men and women are indifferent regarding the impact of education on the awareness level of consumers. It is also noticed that consumers are greatly affected by television and radio basically referred as broadcasting media in their awareness level. In this regard, it might be suggested that the marketers should review its policies because they have been found to be ineffective according to today's scenario.

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