Chapter 19

Sustainable Consumption and Green Marketing in Developing Countries: Contemporary Perspective Using Nigeria and Kenya as Case Studies

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides an insight into why Green Marketing (GM) and Sustainable Consumption (SC) are subject of research and discussion in contemporary society. It analyzed the extent of GM in developing countries using cases of Nigeria and Kenya, factors influencing GM, the benefits of GM on the environment and firms, and the challenges. The study is both exploratory with the use of structured literature review of publications in peer reviewed academic journals on GM and SC, and empirical in nature. The findings on respondents rating of factors influencing green purchase behavior showed that concern for health and environment was considered as the most important in Nigeria, while in Kenya it was social awareness and value. For an effective GM and SC, government at all levels has a role of creating awareness to boost green knowledge through educative campaign programs and enforcing green agenda. Government can make regulations relating to GM and ensure SC by lowering the cost when compared to the conventional marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Green, environmental and eco-marketing is fairly a new concept or philosophy in the modern marketing (Kassaye, 2001; Singh & Pandey, 2012) acting as a bridge connecting the corporate, environment and the consumers (Seth & Khan, 2015). The marketing concept emerged due to concerns over issues such as environmental degradation, global warming and the over-use of non-renewable resources (Hartmann & Ibanez, 2006; Tanner & Kast, 2003). Green marketing (GM) is cognizant of making the world green.
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(Shah, et al., 2014) and is a part of the new marketing approaches, which do not just refocus, adjust or enhance existing marketing thinking and practice, but seek to challenge those approaches and provide a substantially different perspective (Ahmad, 2012). It provides the satisfaction consumer needs, wants, and desires in conjunction with the preservation and conservation of the natural environment (Sahu, 2012). GM is now part and parcel of the overall corporate strategy (Menon, 2013), an increasingly interesting research field, and a more viable and sustainable alternative to the conventional marketing (Singh, 2015). The society is becoming more concerned with the natural environment thereby making businesses begin to modify their behaviour as a response to the society’s new concerns (Nandini, 2011). According to American Marketing Association (AMA, 2010), GM is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. As a golden rules of green marketing, the consumer must be aware of, and concerned about the issues that the firm’s product attempts to address. It also educates the customers not only to let people know whatever the company is doing to protect the environment, but also a matter of letting them know why it matters; being genuine and transparent in green marketing campaign and reassure the buyers that the product performs the job and finally give the customers an opportunity to participate. Firms use GM in an attempt to address cost or profit related issues.

People are worried about sustainability-related issues than ever before by been more concerned about the environment (GIA, 2011). The perceived seriousness of environmental problems will therefore contribute to green purchasing behavior (Dagher & Itani, 2014). Influential customers want to do business with companies that have established their green credentials, so companies are launching hefty advertising and web campaigns, publishing extensively documented sustainability reports, cooperating with external sources to communicate transparently, and communicating their efforts internally (Choudhary & Gokarn, 2013). Marketers are now trying to use green marketing concept in developing their strategies to ensure sustainable development, thereby making GM to catch the attention of scholars and practitioners in developing countries. Marketing theory as applied to these issues remains relatively under-explored. Also, green marketing has been widely explored in developed nations of the world but appears to be at a distant dream in developing nation as studies on green marketing are conspicuously missing in the context of developing economies like India, Pakistan, Brazil, Russia, China and most Africa countries (Singh, 2015). The purpose of this study is to bridge this gap, and to advance our theoretical and empirical understanding of Sustainable consumption (SC) and GM in developing countries as a means of tackling problems associated with the impact of economic activity on the environment. This chapter therefore attempts to address the following objectives:

1. Provide a conceptual link between GM and SC;
2. Describes the status of green marketing in Nigeria and Kenya;
3. Assess respondents understanding and awareness of green products, and factors influencing GM in Kenya and Nigeria;
4. Explain reasons and strategies of using green marketing for sustainable development;
5. Analyze the basic challenges of green marketing in developing countries and
6. Suggest the possible ways of overcoming the challenges associated with green marketing and sustainable consumption.