

**Perception and Awareness of Bangladeshi Companies to Go For Green Marketing: A
Study on Mobile Phone Sector**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to assess the perception and awareness of businessmen for Green Marketing in Mobile Phone sector in a developing country like Bangladesh. This is a descriptive and exploratory study. It is done using data from both primary and secondary sources. For primary data collection company's concerned executives have been considered as respondents. Telecom companies were taken as samples. Out of Six major operating companies in the said sector top three companies have been chosen for sample selection. Summing up the findings it can be said that, Bangladeshi companies are realizing the significance of Green Marketing Concept gradually. Majority of the respondents showed very positive attitude and perception towards green marketing. Practical implication of this study is that, it can create a formal movement among the Bangladeshi marketers for being more responsive to the environment. This paper might be useful to academicians, marketers and businessmen to making their business policy according to the perceptions. This research is confined to the mobile telephone industry. Further study can be made taking more samples from cross-industries.

Keywords: Perception, Awareness, Green Marketing, Green Consumer

1. Introduction

From 1990's to present, climate-changing issues have come to the forefront. Climate change is a global challenge. Inconsistent change of climate, particularly due to global warming, is a threat to socio-economic stability and sustainable human existence. Climate changes are affecting the fundamental requirements for health and environment as well – clean air, safe drinking water and sufficient green food and secured shelters.

Manufacturers and marketers have put attention toward eco friendly products that are presumed to be “green” or environment friendly like electrical appliances with energy saving system, lead free paints, recyclable papers etc.

Though a number of researches on this Green Marketing Concept have been performed across the world; in Bangladesh a few academic research papers have been done. But the study on perception and awareness of BD Companies (in Mobile Phone Sector) about Green Marketing has not prepared yet.

Perception is our sensory experience of the world around us and involves both the recognition of environmental stimuli and actions in response to these stimuli. Perception is the process by which we select, organize and interpret information inputs to create a meaningful picture of the world. [Kotler, Keller, Koshy, & Jha, 2009] ‘The point “stimuli” relates with surrounding field which make people to perceive about the upcoming situation, prepare to make proper strategy to handle upcoming situations. In Marketing, perceptions are more important than the reality, as it is perceptions that will affect consumer's behaviour and buying decision as well.

Here Stimuli are Climate Changing Factors (Global Warming). According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), there are 7 **indicators** that would be expected to increase in a warming world (Tropospheric Temperature, Humidity, Temperature Over Oceans, Sea Surface Temperature, Sea Level, Temperature Over Land, Ocean Heat Content), and 3 indicators would be expected to decrease (Glaciers, Snow Cover Area, Sea Ice). Global Warming is the increase of Earth's average surface temperature due to effect of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels or from deforestation, which trap heat that would otherwise escape from Earth. This is a type of *greenhouse effect*. Due to Climate Changes (define as Global Warming) consumers, manufacturers and marketers have put attention toward eco friendly products that are presumed

to be “green” or environment friendly like electrical appliances with energy saving system, lead free paints, recyclable papers etc. Bangladeshi Companies are realizing the significance of Green Marketing Concept gradually.

In general, Green Marketing is a broader concept that can be applied to consumer goods, industrial goods and services even. Due to Globalization, recent changes in socio-economic factors have forces people to adopt new thinking and expectations to life leading to a change in their buying and consuming behaviour as well in Bangladesh. To meet the requirement of customers, number of industrial sectors and their Key people of marketing changing their perception day by day.

2. Related Terms

2.1 Perception

Sensation is the immediate response of our sensory receptors (e.g., eyes, ears, nose, mouth, fingers) to such basic stimuli as light, colour, and sound. Perception is the process by which these stimuli are selected, organized, and interpreted. Like a computer, we process raw data (sensation).

Perceptions vary from person to person. Different people perceive different things about the same situation. But more than that, we assign different meanings to what we perceive. And the meanings might change for a certain person. One might change one's perspective or simply make things mean something else. A motivated person is ready to act. How he or she acts is influenced by his or her view of the situation. In Marketing, perceptions are more important than the reality, because it's perceptions that affect consumer's actual behaviour. General purchase behaviour is driven by an assessment of its benefits and costs that are of immediate relevance solely to the individual consumer performing the behaviour. By contrast, environmentally conscious behaviour is unlikely to deliver instant personal gain or gratification, but rather a future-oriented outcome (e.g. cleaner environment) that often benefits society as a whole [Mc Carty and Shrum, 2001; Kim and Choi, 2005].

2.2 Green Marketing

Green Marketing refers to the process of selling products or services based on the environmental benefits. Such a product or service may be environmentally friendly in it or

produced or packed in an environmentally friendly way.

From a branding perspective 'Green Marketing' programs have not been entirely successful. Two main problems are: 1. Consumers may believe the product is of inferior quality as a result of being green and 2. They may feel the product is not really that green to begin with [Kotler, Keller, Koshy, &Jha, 2009].

The obvious assumption of green marketing is that potential consumers will view a product or service's 'greenness' as a benefit and base their purchasing decision accordingly. The assumption of green marketing is not so obvious that consumers will be willing to pay more for green products than they would for the existing one.

Green marketing can be a very powerful marketing strategy though when it will be implemented by companies. It is characterized by a focus on environmental issues and by an emphasis on reducing environmental damage. Sustainable marketing is the next natural step forwards with an emphasis on progress towards greater sustainability. Sustainable marketing is the process of planning, implementing and controlling the development, pricing, promotion and distribution of products in a manner that satisfies following three criteria: 1. Customer needs are met, 2. Organizational goals are attained and 3. The process is compatible with the ecosystem.

The function of marketing has become a material of discussion as lifestyles and consumption patterns in the developed world are a major creator of environmental damage. Marketing has been criticized also for contributing to the environmental degradation by emphasizing on consumption. On the other hand, marketing can be seen as a significant tool in order to sell new lifestyles and change overall consumption habits, not only to ecologically concerned consumers. Thus, marketing should contribute to more sustainable forms of society.

2.3 Green Consumer

Green consumer refers to consumers who are concerned about environment in their buying decision; activities associated with the marketplace and consumption habits and consider the effect of their behaviour on their surrounding natural environmental. However, these concerns are not only about the goods, but it is possible to influence on how green consumers travel or place they choose for working or vacation. Generally each consumer who shows environmentally friendly behaviour is a green consumer.

2.4 Characteristics of Green Products

We can define green products by following measures:

- Originally grown
- Recyclable, reusable and biodegradable
- With Natural Ingredients
- Containing recycled contents, non-toxic chemicals
- Contents under approved chemical
- Do not harm or pollute environment
- Have eco friendly packaging

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to know the awareness level about green movement and to identify the preparedness of Bangladeshi mobile telephone companies to go for green marketing. We have collected responses from the marketing executives of some selected companies to fulfil the objectives. Some supporting objectives are as follows:

- To examine the knowledge and awareness level of marketing executives working in the telecom industry about green campaign/movement
- To investigate the perceptions of marketing executives in the said industry about green products and green marketing
- To identify the preparedness of telecom companies to launch green marketing and produce green products
- To give recommendations on the basis of findings

4. Methods

4.1 Attributes Selection:

The respondents cited about twenty two attributes, but only twelve attributes like as follows:

- a. Personal effort
- b. Focusing on Green Marketing rather than traditional marketing
- c. Organization's Responsiveness
- d. Consumer awareness
- e. Psychological readiness of consumers

- f. Green Marketing issues will enhance the company reputation
- g. Industry's move
- h. Government Steps
- i. Formulation of Government Policy
- j. Existence of Green Marketing.

4.2 Sample Respondents & Size

Corporate personnel specially related in marketing field have been interviewed in this study. The sample size is 30, though it was 40 by number. But we reduced the number to 30 to avoid the biasness.

4.3 Data Collection Method & Procedures

Data were collected from corporate personnel of 3 companies mainly, Walton Group, Smart Technologies BD Ltd and Grameen Phone Ltd. A set of structured pre tested questionnaires was used. The data were collected from their corporate offices on random basis. The purpose of the study was mentioned in starting of the questionnaire. Respondents were kept informed about the attributes of questionnaire and the objective of the study.

4.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Collected data has been analysed by using statistical tools of Computer program SPSS and Microsoft Excel. The findings of the study presented to satisfy the purpose of the study. The data from the survey were coded and entered for statistical analysis.

4.5 Quality of the Respondents

Quality of the respondents has been evaluated using some questions on a structured questionnaire. It is found that 60% of the respondents have formal education on Marketing; 97% have pretty good marketing experience, 77% have attended training and workshops on Marketing, 93% have sound knowledge on green marketing, 90% are aware and concerned about environment, 100% prefers green products to conventional products while making buying decisions. It is proven as they opined they would love buying energy savings bulb than the conventional ones. 77% of them like paperless (Green) banking. 93% respondents intended to

suggest their friends, families and colleagues to buy green products.

5. Data Analysis and Results

Responses were collected from 30 persons in the status of marketing managers, executives, and officials. Henceforth data were given as inputs to the SPSS and analyses are made on requirement of information shown in tables and interpretations are given just below the tables.

Table 1: Effort for Saving environment from Massive Degradation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	14	46.7	46.7	46.7
	Agree	14	46.7	46.7	93.3
	Neutral	1	3.3	3.3	96.7
	Strongly Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

It is shown in the table 1 that 93% respondents showed very positive opinion regarding their duties in preservation of environment from massive degradation. It was supposed to be 100 percent as we know none should disagree to saving environment from massive harm.

Table 2: Focus for Green Marketing than Traditional Marketing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	8	26.7	26.7	26.7
	Agree	21	70.0	70.0	96.7
	Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Above table (table 2) presents almost cent percent (97%) of marketing people of Bangladeshi telephone companies think it's the high time to switch from traditional marketing to green (environment friendly) marketing.

Table 3: Organizational Responsiveness for Green Marketing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	3	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Agree	7	23.3	23.3	33.3

	Neutral	16	53.3	53.3	86.7
	Disagree	2	6.7	6.7	93.3
	Strongly Disagree	2	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

In table 3, it is noticed that the major portion (53%) of the respondents remained indifferent about their organizations responsibility toward green marketing. Even though 23% of the concerned officials think they are doing something for environment.

Table 4: Introduction of Green Products

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Agree	16	53.3	53.3	60.0
	Neutral	1	3.3	3.3	63.3
	Disagree	10	33.3	33.3	96.7
	Strongly Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

In table 4, it is seen that 60% of the total respondents agreed their companies have started green Marketing through the introduction of green products. It's no doubt a remarkable note and indication in green movement in Bangladesh. 33% of the concerned from sample organization opined their organizations has not started with green marketing or green products.

Table 5: Awareness of the Consumers for Green Marketing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Agree	19	63.3	63.3	70.0
	Neutral	3	10.0	10.0	80.0
	Disagree	5	16.7	16.7	96.7
	Strongly Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

In this table, it is viewed that 70% of the respondents positively opined that the consumers are becoming aware about green product to save the future Generation.

Table 6: Enhancement of Organizational Reputation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Agree	22	73.3	73.3	80.0
	Neutral	4	13.3	13.3	93.3
	Disagree	2	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

80% of the respondents think green marketing may enhance the reputation of their organizations. Though, only a little percentage 6% do not agree with the statement.

Table 7: Sufficiency of the Government Steps

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	4	13.3	13.3	13.3
	Agree	5	16.7	16.7	30.0
	Neutral	4	13.3	13.3	43.3
	Disagree	14	46.7	46.7	90.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

In this table (table 6), it is shown that 57% of the respondents arguing with the statement 'Government is doing sufficiently to increase the awareness about green marketing'. 13% remained neutral in this issue and 13% thinks government's efforts are sufficient.

Table 8: Industry Move for Green Marketing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	1	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Agree	9	30.0	30.0	33.3
	Neutral	4	13.3	13.3	46.7
	Disagree	15	50.0	50.0	96.7
	Strongly Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Through this study, it is found that Industry's move is not satisfactory as 53% argued with the statement 'Industry moves toward green marketing'. On the other hand, 33% opines that

Industry's move toward green marketing is remarkable. In another description it is observed that majority of the respondents think the industry's preparedness is not satisfactory for welcoming green marketing. On the Issue of psychological readiness of the general people to welcome green products 60% respondents agreed that the general people are not ready to consume green products now. More interestingly, 90% of the respondents opined Government should formulate laws to guide companies to go for green marketing producing green products.

In the questionnaire, the last question was set to cross check the concern level of the respondents. There was a statement like 'There is nothing called like 'Green marketing''. 100% of the respondents disagreed with this statement. It tells about the validity of the questionnaire and quality of responses.

6. Limitations of the study

At the time of writing this article we feel some limitations in Bangladesh Perspective. These are: a. Insufficient and rare information about the green marketer and service provider in Bangladesh, b. Government information is not adequate, c. Industries are not liberal to share their opinion to outsiders, d. Consumers are aware about environment issues but they do not engaged seriously with activities and practices to save environment, e. Publication and report on green marketing policy and practices are inadequate. It is also a limitation that most of the respondents (more than 90%) are male.

7. Recommendation and Conclusion

Green business or green marketing movement has been started in Bangladesh in the last decade with driving the polythene bag away from the market officially by the government. Government of Bangladesh enacted law banning polythene bag used as shopping bag. Instead of polythene, Jute-made bags, cotton-made, or recycled paper made bags are now being encouraged to use as shopping bags. Green Banking movement has been started remarkably by the leading banks. Through this study it is observed that marketing executives in the said industry are quite spontaneous for entering into the green era. Majority of them felt and opined that Government's role is still inadequate for green movement. It is a timely demand from every stakes that government should formulate specific policies for sustainable development through green movement. Most of the respondents have the hobby of Travelling and tourism. So there can be a

research in future to find out the relationship in between the personality of the marketing executives and Intention to go for green Marketing.

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