

# GREEN MARKETING STRATEGY FOR EMPOWERING HANDLOOM INDUSTRIES

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## Abstract

Mankind has limited resources on the earth, with which they must attempt to provide for the worlds' unlimited wants. Green marketing is a phenomenon which has developed importance in the modern market. Green or ecological way of marketing is technically a way where the goods and services are produced and advertised on the basis of their positive impacts on the sustainable environment and their benefits to the society. The goods that are produced are considered harmless to the environment and are also considered safe for consumption and hence they are termed as Green Products.

This paper highlights on the features of handloom products. The paper also emphasis on green marketing, its strength and weakness in Indian market and concludes with the suggestions to the handloom industries and their marketers to adopt green marketing strategies for increase in sale and will empower Handloom industries.

Key Words : Green Marketing, Green Products, Empower, Sustainable, Handloom.

## Introduction :

Mankind has limited resources on the earth, with which they must attempt to provide for the worlds' unlimited wants. In market, societies where there is "freedom of choice", it has generally been accepted that individuals and organizations have the right to attempt to have their wants satisfied. As firms face limited natural resources, they must develop new or alternative ways of satisfying these unlimited wants. Ultimately "Green Marketing" looks at how marketing activities utilize these limited resources, while satisfying consumers wants, both of individuals and industry. It also takes into account all those activities that ensure the best of service to the customers and also meeting the needs of the customers in such an efficient and innovative way that ensure that the environment is not under threat in any manner due to the above activities. Ecological marketing, sustainable marketing are some of the terms which are synonymous to the green marketing. As there has been an increase in concerns about the safety and sustainability of environment and society among the consumers the practice of a more sustainable and eco friendly marketing is gaining popularity and acceptance thereby resulting in its application.

Green or ecological way of marketing is technically a way where the goods and services are produced and advertised on the basis of their positive impacts on the environment and their benefits to the society. The goods that are produced are considered harmless to the environment and are also considered safe for consumption and by the mean of this virtue they are appropriately termed as are as Green Products. It is important to identify the products which can be tagged as "Green". It is marketing or selling product / services based on environmental benefits. Handloom industry owners and experts are not much aware regarding green products and green marketing. Hence, an effort has been taken through this research paper to create awareness among handloom owners and marketers about their green products and increase their sale to strengthen and empower handloom industries.

## Review of Literature :

Prothero, A. (1998) introduces several papers discussed in the July 1998 issue of 'Journal of Marketing Management' focusing on green marketing. This includes; a citation of the need to review existing literature on green marketing, an empirical study of United States and Australian marketing managers, a description of what a green alliance look like in practice in Great Britain, ecotourism and definitions of green marketing.

Oyewole, P. (2001) presents a conceptual link among green marketing, environmental justice, and industrial ecology. It argues for greater awareness of environmental justice in the practice for green marketing. A research agenda is finally suggested to determine consumers' awareness of environmental justice, and their willingness to bear the costs associated with it.

Charles W Lamb (2004) explained that —Green Marketing has also become an important way for companies to build awareness and loyalty by promoting a popular issue. By positioning their brands as ecologically sound, marketers can convey concern for the environment and society as a whole.

The study conducted by Selvakumar & Ramesh Pandi (2011) indicated that Green marketing is not all about manufacturing green products and services but encompassing all those marketing activities that are needed to develop and sustain consumer's eco-friendly attitudes and behaviors in a way that helps in creating minimal detrimental impact on the environment.

Moloy Ghoshal (2011) examined that green marketing was still in infancy. In the perception of marketing scholars, green marketing refers to eco-level and market segmentation and the role of structural factors and economic incentives in influencing consumer behavior. The green marketers must understand to satisfy two objectives : improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction.

Sourabh Bhattacharya (2011) states that the green marketers in India should carry out heavy promotional campaigns, because majority of the Indian consumers are price-sensitive and are not sure about the quality of green products.

Joseph & Rupali Korlekar (2012) identified that there is a scope for in-depth studies on green marketing to be conducted in developing countries like India, not only on understanding consumers' perception but to study the detailed profile of such consumers who have a more positive attitude towards green marketing and green products.

## Objectives of the Study :

Following are the objectives framed for the study :

- (i) To review the important features of handloom products.
- (ii) To study the strength and weaknesses of green marketing.
- (iii) To suggest green marketing strategies for empowering handloom industries.

## Features of Handloom Products :

The strength of Hand woven product lies in innovative design, which cannot be replicated by the Power loom sector. Hand woven products are unparallel in its flexibility and versatility, permitting experimentation and encouraging innovation. Handloom products have appealing charm. Weavers with their skillful blending of myths, faiths, symbols and imagery provide the fabric an unique identity. Handloom products are available in a range of cotton, silk, jute, wool and mix blends. Handloom products cater to all sections and offer a range that suits every section of society. There are more than 1500 exporters all over India catering to overseas market of handloom products.

Manufacturing handloom products is completely ecological friendly. The process of making handloom fabrics does not pollute nature by any of the above mentioned types of pollution. Manufacturing handloom products does not contaminate air, water, land nor produces noise. Handloom products are generally made from natural dyes. Natural dyes are extracted from natural materials such as vegetables, bark of trees, flowers, leaves and minerals.

There are mainly four different kinds of environmental pollution. Following table depicts the various categories which cause pollution and harm the green environment of earth generally caused by the various industries.

Source

Sr. No.	Types of Pollution	Causes of Pollution	Effect of Pollution
1.	Air Pollution	Smoke, Harmful Gases like oxides of Carbon, Sulphur and Nitrogen. The burning of fossil fuels, such as Coal, Oil, or Gas.	Air pollution is linked to Asthma, Allergies and other Respiratory Illnesses.
2.	Land Pollution	Misuse of Resources and improper Disposal of Waste. Litter found on the side of the road, Illegal dumping in natural habitats, Oil spills, Use of pesticides and other farming chemicals, Radiation spills or nuclear accidents.	Damage to natural habitat of animals, Deforestation and damage to natural resources.
3.	Noise Pollution	Airplanes, helicopters, and motor vehicles, Construction or demolition noise, Human activities such as sporting events or concerts.	Disruptive to humans' stress levels, Harmful to unborn babies, drives animals away by causing nervousness and decreasing their ability to hear prey or predators.
4.	Water Pollution	Contamination of any body of water (lakes, groundwater, oceans, etc). Raw sewage running into lake or streams, Industrial waste spills, Illegal dumping of substances or items within bodies of water Biological contamination, such as bacteria growth.	These kinds of environmental pollution are linked to health issues in humans, animals and plant-life.

[www.sustainablebabysteps.com/kinds-of-environmental-pollution.html](http://www.sustainablebabysteps.com/kinds-of-environmental-pollution.html)

The above table shows the common types of pollution, causes of pollution and the hazardous impact of pollution on living beings. Handlooms never pollute the environment in any of the mentioned form in the above table. Handloom products are purely environment friendly.

In India, major steps are taken for accepting green marketing. Indian people believe in “Pollution Prevention Pays”. Preventive measures have been adopted to avoid pollution. Green marketing has the following strength and weakness, but if used, can make the customers aware of environment and making it pollution free.

### Strength of Green Marketing :

- a) Green Marketing is self sustainable. It is a breakthrough strategy in the current era where the focus is on adopting practices those are safe on the environment i.e. having least or no negative impact on the environment. This helps in creating a more sustainable and healthy surrounding around us.

The marketer of handloom industry should emphasizes on key aspects that the advertisements comprising of handloom products are safe to the environment as they use natural raw material like cotton, jute, silk etc.

- b) Use of Green Marketing for handloom products saves lot of cost with respect to its manufacturing, packaging and promotion. As they use eco friendly products and also practices 3R's i.e. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle these practices cuts down on a lot of expenditure that otherwise could have taken place.
- c) The ecological way of marketing handloom products is sustainable and creative and can attract lot of consumers towards it. A thoughtful message of "Go Green" is more effective in the perception of the consumers.
- d) Implementation of Green marketing for handloom products is here to stay. As the production is based on an eco friendly process it is sustainable and also ensures empowerment, long term growth and profit to the handloom industries.
- e) Green Marketing is a part of Corporate Social Responsibility activity which should be practiced by marketers of handloom industries. It should be mandatory activity for handloom industries which will strengthen the image handloom industries.

### **Weakness of Green Marketing :**

- a) Green Marketing being a new concept many people are not fully aware of it. There is lack of appropriate knowledge about Green Marketing. Many consumers are not educated enough about green produces. And this lack of knowledge is acting as a weakness for the promotion of green marketing. Handloom industries while marketing their products should concentrate on providing the information regarding the benefits of handloom products and advantages of using them throughout the year.
- b) As sometimes the manufacturing of the green products are expensive it automatically demands a high selling price that is higher than other contemporary substitutive products this may sometimes discourage the consumers to go for green products until they are green customers. Marketers of handloom industries should be able to convince the customers regarding the price of handloom products. They should be able to compare the other products and differentiate the quality and advantages of handloom products they are marketing.
- c) Many consumers are of the belief that the green products are not as efficient as the other competitive products and they also have a perception that the green products are much highly priced. To overcome these beliefs of consumers, marketers should be able to create awareness among the customers regarding the importance of green products and its future benefits.

### **Empowering Handloom Industries Through Green Marketing :**

Indian literate and urban consumer is getting more aware about the merits of Green products. It is still a new concept for the masses. The consumer needs to be educated and made aware of the environmental threats. The new green movements need to reach the masses and that will take a lot of time and effort. By India's ayurvedic heritage, Indian and foreign consumers globally do appreciate the importance of using natural and herbal products. Indian consumer is exposed to healthy living lifestyles such as yoga and natural food consumption. In those aspects the consumer is already aware and will be inclined to accept the green products like handlooms and khadi not in India but globally.

The handloom products are handmade products and are purely green products as they are environment sustainable. They Save lot of Energy, Electricity and Water. No toxic materials are used while manufacturing these products. Handloom products are easily recycled and reused. No excessive plastic packaging is required. Each and every waste material is used for creating a new product. Handloom products are more durable and efficient. Instructions on the finished handloom products are printed or stitched with eco-friendly materials. Costlier handloom products can be preserved and protected by simply keeping them in plain cotton cloth. No extra packaging is required to store handloom products. Thus they are purely eco-friendly and termed as "Green Products".

Handloom products comprise of all the above stated properties. India's handloom fabrics are an integral part of the rich culture and heritage of India, and are appreciated worldwide for their colour, texture and design. The real strength of Indian handloom industry lies in its exquisite designs, unique motifs, and link with culture and tradition on the one hand, and its socio-economic importance in providing livelihood opportunity to lakhs of people living in rural areas, on the other hand. It projects a unique image for improving the green and sustainable environment also.

**Conclusions :**

The following conclusions are drawn from the study :

1. The handloom marketers should highlight on the features and uniqueness of handloom products.
2. As handloom products are available in a natural range of cotton, silk, jute, wool and mix blends, marketer should emphasis on advantages of using handloom products.
3. The marketer should use the green marketing strategies by informing customers about the natural dyes and colours which are made from bark of trees, flowers, fruits, insects, minerals and other natural sources.
4. Marketer of handloom products should use green marketing strategy to create awareness regarding the environment, educate and convince more and more people to buy handloom products which are harmless to the human body and are more comfortable.
5. Handloom apparel products are limited in designs and quantities. The smallest set of waste fabrics is also used to manufacture accessories such as hair bands, necklaces, key tags and home decors so there is not a single waste and by products of handloom industries which is helpful for sustainable environment. This process and procedure should be exhibited through green marketing to the customers.

**Final Words :**

Indian consumers are emotional buyers. It has been studied and proved that Indian consumer does lot of emotional buying. If Indian consumers will become more aware of green product, it will give a great scope for the marketer of handloom industries to use green marketing strategies to expand handloom business. Literate and health conscious customers prefer the industries that provide environmentally safe products. As everybody is aware that handloom products are purely environmental and eco-friendly, handloom industries should take green marketing as a competitive advantage. Handloom industries and their marketers should take efforts to make handloom as one of the 'Green Brands of India' by implementing green marketing strategies for empowering handloom industries.

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