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Green Brand Equity - A Study on Consumer Attitude of Metro and Non-Metro Cities

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to find out the elements of Green brand equity through review of literature and then develop a simple precise model of Green brand equity. Moreover, this paper also measures the impact of Green brand equity on consumer attitude and comparative study of understanding the same in metro and non-metro cities in India. In many ways, consumers in metro and non-metro cities are different in their consumer behavior. Conceptual framework of factors affecting green brand equity is developed by examining the theoretical groundwork of green brand equity which includes- Green brand image, Green brand satisfaction, Green brand trust, Reference group, Green brand loyalty, Green brand advertisement. Z-test and multiple regressions are used to measure the impact of these variables on consumer attitude and difference in metro and non-metro customers respectively.

Keywords: Green Brand Equity, Consumer Attitude, Reference Group, Green Brand Image, Green Brand Satisfaction, Green Brand Trust, Green Brand Loyalty, Green Brand Advertisement.

1. INTRODUCTION

The companies want to develop green marketing because of following reasons: agreement with environmental force; the companies want to enjoy competitive advantage; environmental concern will help in enhancing company picture; pursuing current markets or chances; and improving the cost of a product. This research tells that giving more focus on green marketing will help the corporate to enhance its hypothetical brand equities. The customers are motivated by many companies to buy their product because they are offering the products which are eco-friendly. The customers are now ready to buy environmental products even at double price. Companies want to enhance their brand equity as a brand which is fulfilling the needs of

customers but giving more attention to environment. The companies want to acquire a position in the mind as well as in the heart of customers also as a green brand. The market is become green market the products we purchase they are eco-friendly as the product is always known because of its brand and a brand is always known because of its quality and the way the brand offer its product as same recently the companies want their brand will earn name and fame in the market and position by offering environmental products. Green Brand Equity: Companies can utilize the idea of green marketing to generate and to facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy customers' environmental needs or wants (Polonsky, 1994).

Therefore last many studies have focused more on the specific reasons of brand image, satisfaction, and trust and brand equity concerning the environment issues. This report focused on 6 novel variables:- green brand image, green satisfaction, green trust, green loyalty, green advertisement and reference group and talked about their importance in the area of green marketing Eventually, buyers are becoming day by day more responsible to buy the commodities which are environment friendly. The attitude and preference of buyers is changing they are giving more preference to the company or brand who is offering environmental products.

In the 1980s, a sudden change in the behavior of customer noticed towards environmental products, with the evaluation of buyers giving more importance to the green products for environmentally amiable firms (Ottman 1993). In the act of this the conclusion the number of buyers increases regarding purchase of green products or commodities. The past era was a proof an occurrence of green firms making their image as a green brands in the market because of the buyers desire, so allowing eco-friendly products marketing to come in a multifaced role and smart ways. Considering buyers will perpetually have more environmental concerns (Peattie 1992), there will be a lateral increase in green advertising, and relatedly that will rise consumers interest in buying green or eco-friendly products more (Carlson, Grove & Kangun 1993).

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the factors that marketers can consider while devising green brand equity strategies.
2. To find out the difference in degree of green brand equity and its impact on consumer attitude in metro cities and non metro cities
3. To measure the impact of green brand equity on consumer attitude.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Gap

Many industries claims that they are environmental friendly and having concern for society are known as green industries. The marketing philosophies they use are termed as green marketing and their products which are environmental friendly are called as green products. it is also believed by the companies that if they will offer green products that will help them to get a competitive advantage over their competitors as people these days have a positive attitude for green products. Many studies on this topic have been performed in Developed countries, but there still is a need to perform such studies in the developing countries. This research is an attempt by the authors to understand the attitude of industries towards green brand equity.

3.2. Theoretical Model Of Green Brand Equity And Its Impact On Consumer Attitude

On the basis of expanded review of literature, we have analyzed six variables on green brand equity and their effect on consumer attitude. Figure 1 show this proposed model of mapping consumer attitude. In this study a scale was also made which deals with all the items of individual variables systematically. The questionnaire was constructed for the present study this study have 6 different variables and their different sections; these sections correlate to those six variables which we have taken for the survey through explored literature survey. For checking the reliability of all the sections, Cronbach alpha was used. The Cronbach alpha test of reliability was subjected with the every statement of each section; the each section of Cronbach alpha statistics is shown in Table 1.

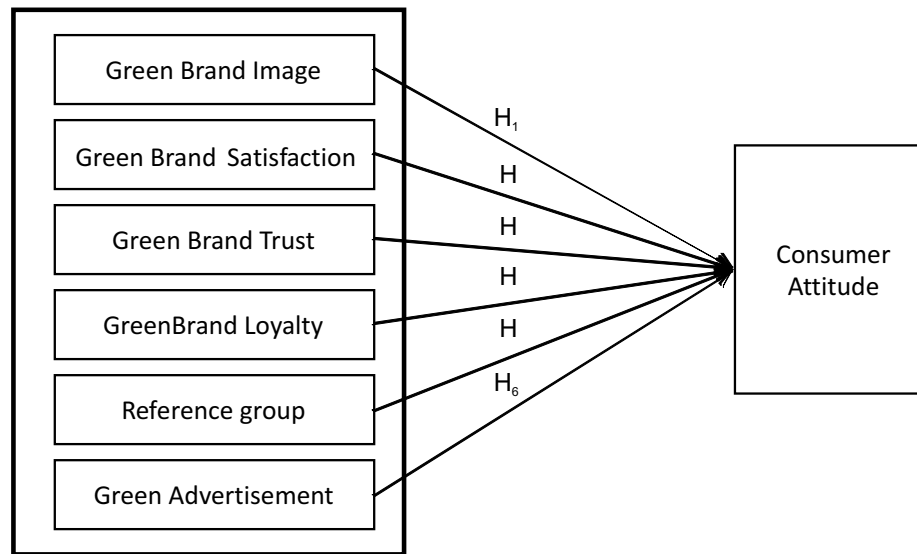


Figure 1: Proposed Model of measuring the impact of Green Brand Equity on Consumer Attitude

3.3. Sample and Sample Profile

1. **Metro city samples:** Delhi
2. **Non-Metro city Samples:** Mathura, Agra
3. **Sampling Method:** Convenient Sampling
4. **Sample Size:** 155 respondents

3.4. Tool and Design

The six variables are gathered from literature that has already been figured in the last section. Each variable is evaluated using seven-point semantic scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'.

For evaluating the difference between means in metro and non-metro cities, \bar{z} -test for the two populations is employed. Linear impact of the combination of all the variables on consumer attitude is measured by employing the multiple regression technique.

Table 1
Cronbach Alpha Statistics

<i>Variable Number</i>	<i>Variables taken for the study</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha Statistics(non-metro)</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha Statistics(metro)</i>	<i>No. of items</i>
1.	Green brand image	0.748	0.909	5
2.	Green brand satisfaction	0.767	0.726	4
3.	Green brand trust	0.738	0.725	5
4.	Reference group	0.753	0.841	8
5.	Green brand loyalty	0.761	0.8	4
6.	Green advertisement	0.711	0.886	5

The six variables are taken from the literature review these are green brand image, green satisfaction, green trust are used by chen(2009) in its research paper and chang & fong (2010) adopted scale including green loyalty. Reference group bajpai & khandelwal (2013) referred this variable in their paper. Green advertisement was adopted by Zinkhan & carlson(1995) and many more.

3.5. Hypothesis

3.5.1. Positive Effect of Green Brand Equity on Green Brand Image, Green Brand Satisfaction, Green Brand Trust, Green Brand Loyalty, Green Advertisement, Green Reference Group

Brand image has a very crucial role in the market where it is hard to differentiate according to its tangibility of products and services “Mudambiet al, 1997”. Green brand image fulfills consumer’s environmental wants and also reduces the arising problems. Brand image is a image for a imitated brand by recognitions of brand for customer “Cretuand Brodie; 2007; Keller; 1993”. That’s why “Park et al. 1986” questioned that brand image includes experimental advantage, functional advantage and symbolic advantage. As related to the definitions which is discussed above brand image in a consumer’s mind tells about the environment up gradation and environment safety. Consumers can pay high amount of money for the same quality because of brand of the product “Bello and halbrook, 1995”. “Aaker”(1991) referred brand equity as “the brand assets and liabilities which are associated with its logo, name and goodwill to gain or loss from the amount of value which is given by its product and services to its consumers.” Previous researches tells that exploring brand image is useful for the up gradation of brand equity “Fair cloth et al; 2001”. In respect, “Biel”(1992) assumes that brand equity is guided by brand image. With respect to the argument above, this study advised the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Green brand image is positively associated with Green brand equity : Satisfaction is that level of gratifying utilization which satisfy and fulfills consumers wants, objectives, needs and so on “Oliver, 1994; Olsen; 2002”. The most widely and broadly used topics these days is customer satisfaction in the field of marketing “oliver,1996”. For instance, previous researches has showed consumer satisfaction can take to customer purchase intentions “Mai and Ness,1999; Martenson, 2007”, and purchase behavior “Chang and Tu, 2005”. The most satisfied consumers with a brand may recall its

name directly by comparing with the less satisfied consumers. The taste, preference, behavior and attitude can be showed by brand equity accurately “Yasin et al; 2007. With the inclusion, brand equity is a set of institutes which is made between the brand aspect and the benefits received by its consumers “Keller, 1993; Krishnan,1996”. Satisfaction for a brand has a positive impact on the power and linked of institute in the minds of the customers “Pappu and quester,2006”. Hence, there is always a healthy and positive relationship between customer satisfaction with a brand and its brand equity “Pappu and Quester, 2006”. However, “kim et al.” (2008) said that customer satisfaction positively affects brand equity and showed that brand equity differentiate with consumer satisfaction. However, the more the green satisfaction the more the level of green brand equity .Hence, this study implied the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2(H2): Green brand satisfaction is positively associated with Green brand equity :

Trust is the crucial factor through which a strong relationship is fixed. Many academic institutions and groups have been attracted through trust. This is because of the fact that trust is checked as a planning action in the field of marketing and a important item for the accomplishment of goal and building of relationship “Flavian et al., 2005;Moorman et al., 1992”. Trusting a brand blindly shows the high level of probability to its customers through which the brand will get positive result. Including brand trust as expectancy, which is totally based on customer’s belief that the brand is reliable, flexible, consistent, competent, honest and responsible “Doney and Cannon, 1997”.Brand equity is taken as a relational market-based asset and it is related to a brand and shows relationship with consumers “Srivastava et al.,1998”.Previous studies showed that brand trust is very crucial for developing the brand equity and showed the positive link of brand trust with brand equity “Delgado-Ballester and Manuera-Aleman, 2005;Ganesan,1994;Morgan and Hunt, 1994”.That’s why, brand and consumer trust is a developing aspirant of brand equity “Ambler,1997”.Brand and consumer trust affects positively on brand equity “Jevons and Gabbott, 2000; Kim et al., 2008”.Many corporate introduce their innovative products with environmental commitments, and structured the environmental features of their products and so the trust with the consumers for their product will result their brand reputation “Kalafatis and Pollard, 1999”. This study proposed two novel constructs, “green trust” and “green brand equity” in the this hypotheses. Taking the relationship , marketing with a trust-based approach to brand equity in the environmental context, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3(H3): Green brand trust is positively associated with Green brand equity:

Green Advertisement has three features ,to apprise, intimate and assure, the objective of green advertising is to maintain and create attention and acting strong attitudes towards brand and corporate “Adcock,2000”. Many green advertisements shows impact on ‘generous motives’ and attract customer to become busy in eco-friendly pro-environmental behaviors and attitude to build and safety among environment “Iyer, 1995”.Focussing on the wants of eco-friendly customer, it is not easy to achieve the same assumptions and features used for ordinary advertising, as the complexity of eco-friendly advertising is very much because it deals with customers who have started and delicate the environment alertness “Iyer, 2005”. The integrity of green advertising is comprisingly low “Fick, 1974;Kangun,Carlson and Groove, 1991; and Iyer and Banerjee,1993”.The green advertising should be acceptable in the minds of consumers totally based on the marketing manager, with a view of being honest, no biseness and clear. The green advertising as discussed by “banerjee,Gulas and Iyer”(1995) can be a relationship between a product and a eco-friendly environment that completely and clearly focuses; it should have the feature to show and advertise a

eco-friendly lifestyle and explore the corporate social responsibility. Green advertising is known in a two tier way. This two tier way approach focuses green advertising as being green with a 'g' which consider the technical perspective approach and green with 'G' which includes the broader way of efficient resources "Dobson cited in killbourne 1998". Brand equity is planned by adding the value of the brand shown by its symbol, name has explore the meaning to undertake the variety's set that drive through consumers needs "Yoo et al., 2000". "Aaker"(1991) and "Keller"(1993) suggested brand equity from the customer way of mind which focused on customer memory based brand institution or groups. Previous research focused that enriching brand advertising is important for the adding i of brand equity. According to the argument above, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4(H4): Green advertisement is positively proposed with Green brand equity :

Customer loyalty means the intention, attraction and behavior of consumer to retain the relation with an group or association by buying of its product and services "Behara et al.,2002;singh and Sirdeshmukh 2000". Loyalty was a widely made promises to re-buy the convincing product or services "Oliver 1997". There is a healthy and positive relationship towards a product and services in customer loyalty , backed by convincing behavior that indicates to purchase it and suggesting it to others "Backman and Compton 1991,;Martensen et al.,2000".Customer loyalty was a balanced region of revenue for companies, giving at the mean time as an information way that stated informally by suggesting the items or services to relatives "Reid and Reid,1993".This study referred green loyalty as maintaining the relation with the association by the consumer which includes eco-friendly commitments and promises to re-buy a given products using it consistently for many years. It was in the mind to re-buy, the need to suggest, and buy other items with a group. Green loyalty is very important and efficient part to know the green brand equity. The study constructs "green loyalty" and "green brand equity" in the prior hypothesis. The study proposed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5(H5): Green loyalty is positively proposed with Green brand equity :

A reference group may be referred as any individual or group that gives as a point of comparison for an individual in making all type general or specific values, attitudes or specific guides for behavior "Schiff man and Kanuk 2009". "Hyman" (1942) categorize reference group into comparative and normative reference group. Aspirational reference groups have maximum influence on buying decision and also strengthen their power in usage in making and implementing the attitude of people towards eco- friendly behavior "Majlath 2011".Reference group means getting the information through other source which attracts the consumer to purchase the product. Many people suggest the product according to the brand and hence it relates to brand equity. So, green brand equity is directly or indirectly related to reference group. Reference group means getting the information through some individual, newspaper, magazines. Hence, our last hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6(H6): Green reference group is positively associated with green brand equity

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Objective is to find out the difference in degree of green brand equity and its impact on consumer attitude in metro cities and non metro cities. Means are connected through different variables are used for comparing for this study; individually the χ -test has been used.

Table 2
Mean (metro city): Mean (non- metro city): z- value and p-value for all 6 variables

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean(metro)</i>	<i>Mean (non-metro)</i>	<i>Z-Value</i>	<i>P-Value</i>
1.	Green Brand Image	12.08	10.63	2.94	0.0035
2.	Green Satisfaction	10.62	9.42	3.51	0.000436
3.	Green Trust	14.61	13.47	2.58	0.009704
4.	Reference Group	23.9	21.64	3.26	0.001091
5.	Green Loyalty	10.07	10.92	-2.05	0.040193
6.	Green Advertisement	13.8	12.92	1.79	0.07271

It is observed from Table 2 the value of Z is more than 0.05 (level of significance) in all the variables it means there is no enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis that means there is no significance difference in brand image and satisfaction. This helps to establish the effect of brand image and satisfaction of green brand image on consumer attitude.

Table 3
Regression coefficient, t -value, R^2 value, F- value and p - value for the Regression results between consumer attitude and all 6 variables, for Metro City

<i>S No.</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Regression coefficients</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>R² value</i>	<i>f-value</i>	<i>p-value for f-value</i>
1.	Image	0.420	29.145	0.847	849.426	0.000
2.	Satisfaction	0.399	6.781	0.231	45.976	0.000
3.	Trust	0.189	3.439	0.72	11.830	0.000
4.	Reference group	0.088	2.844	0.50	8.087	0.000
5.	Loyalty	0.171	2.925	0.53	8.556	0.000
6.	Advertisement	0.294	8.118	0.301	65.899	0.000

It is observed from the above table that the value of R^2 explains how much of the variation in dependent variable is explained by the combination of independent variable. In this image and trust are greater than 70%, which is an indication of strong predictor model. This indicates the positivity of the model in calculating customer attitude (dependent variable) through the above 6 independent variables. So, companies and researchers use this model to understand the customer attitude of metro consumers through green brand equity. The f -value in all cases is significant – which shows that the overall significance of the regression model. The p -value correlated with the t -value is a sign of good linear relationship between all the 6 independent variables and the one dependent variable that is customer attitude in a metro city.

Table 4
Regression Coefficient, *t*-value, F-value and P-value for the Regression Result between Consumer Attitude and all 6 variables, for Non-metro City

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Regression coefficient</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>R² value</i>	<i>f-value</i>	<i>p-value for f-value</i>
1.	Image	0.566	9.734	0.382	94.758	0.000
2.	Satisfaction	0.719	12.163	0.492	147.930	0.000
3.	Trust	0.509	11.503	0.464	132.322	0.000
4.	Reference group	0.427	17.451	0.666	304.553	0.000
5.	Loyalty	0.404	7.134	0.250	50.892	0.000
6.	Advertisement	0.554	13.159	0.531	173.164	0.000

As the value of R square are less than 0.60 in both metro and non-metro so we used the reference of “Simmmappam and Rahman (2011), Azizian and Suki (2013), Ali and Ahmad (2012) and Tan (2013)”.

The output come from the regression between customer attitude developed with the help of green brand equity (non-metro city) and all 6 variables are considered independently are shown in Table 4. This shows the positivity of the model while calculating customer attitude (dependent variable) from the above 6 (independent variables). Therefore this model of green brand equity helps the companies, marketers and researchers to understand about the customer attitude of non-metro buyers from green brand equity. R² values for these above variables are positive predictor of this model. Standard error is in such cases is comparatively very low. The value of *f* in all cases is significant, which explore the total significance of the above regression model. The value of *p* value related to the *t*-value is a symbol of good linear equation which tells us about the relationship between the dependent (Customer attitude) and independent variable and all the 6 variables are independent in a non-metro city.

Table 5
Regression Result Between customer attitude and all the variables for both metro and non-metro city

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Metro</i>				<i>Non-metro</i>			
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Constant	1.692	0.539	3.142	0.002	1.670	0.799	2.089	0.038
Image	0.038	0.024	1.557	0.122	0.258	0.067	3.844	0.000
Satisfaction	0.194	0.043	4.470	0.000	0.082	0.092	0.886	0.377
Trust	0.113	0.034	3.365	0.001	0.109	0.060	1.806	0.073
Reference group	0.193	0.019	10.174	0.000	0.190	0.053	3.582	0.000
Loyalty	0.181	0.037	4.961	0.000	0.151	0.053	2.839	0.005
Advertisement	0.122	0.031	3.970	0.000	0.106	0.071	1.486	0.139
R ²			0.801				0.636	
Adjusted R ²			0.793				621	
P-value for F value			0.000				0.000	

It is observed from the above that the value of R^2 in case of metro cities is 0.80 means 80% of the variation in consumer attitude can be explained by all 6 variables of Green brand equity and 63.6% in case of non metro cities. Regression is used by considering all the 6 variables as the independent variables and the attitude of customers as dependent variable. Value in both the case metro as well as non -metro is significant, that shows all the 6 variables have the positive impact.

Table 6

<i>Hypothesis No</i>	<i>Hypothesis Statement</i>	<i>Status</i>
H1	H1a : There is no significant difference between the green brand image towards green brand equity in metro and non-metro city.	Rejected
	H1b : Green brand image towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a metro city.	Rejected
	H1c : Green brand image towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a non-metro city.	Rejected
H2	H2a : There is no significant difference between the green brand satisfaction towards green brand equity in metro and non-metro city.	Rejected
	H2b : Green brand satisfaction towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a metro city.	Rejected
	H2c : Green brand satisfaction towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a non-metro city.	Rejected
H3	H3a : There is no significant difference between the green brand trust towards green brand equity in metro and non-metro city.	Rejected
	H3b : Green brand trust towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a metro city.	Rejected
	H3c : Green brand trust towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a non-metro city.	Rejected
H4	H4a : There is no significant difference between the green brand loyalty towards green brand equity in metro and non-metro city.	Rejected
	H4b : Green brand loyalty towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a metro city.	Rejected
	H4c : Green brand loyalty towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a non-metro city.	Rejected
H5	H5a : There is no significant difference between the reference group towards green brand equity in metro and non-metro city.	Rejected
	H5b : Reference group towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a metro city.	Rejected
	H5c : Reference group towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a non-metro city.	Rejected
H6	H6a : There is no significant difference between the green brand advertisement towards green brand equity in metro and non-metro city.	Rejected
	H6b : Green brand advertisement towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a metro city.	Rejected
	H6c : Green brand advertisement towards green brand equity has no significant linear impact on purchase intention in a non-metro city.	Rejected

5. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The above model that we used for study is developed from the literature, in which the 6 variable *i.e.* Green brand image, satisfaction, trust, loyalty, reference group, green advertisement have an impact on customer. It will give some help to one who make policy and researchers to give more attention on these issues in order to influence the customer attitude and other stakeholders.

Green image, green satisfaction, green brand trust, green loyalty, reference group and green advertisement have a significant difference in metro and non-metro regions. The difference should be observed by the marketers and for taking the market advantage or taking the competitive benefits and efficient utilization of resources for the future without harming the present environment, policies and plans should be formulate for these two regions differently.

All the output we get from the regression establishes a positive linear relationship between customer attitude and green brand equity variables considered for the research in both (metro & non-metro). Higher levels of brand image, satisfaction, trust, loyalty, reference group and green advertisement will definitely and independently developed level of customer attitude very high in positive sense. Hence, the marketers have to pay more attention on making a positive edge of the variables that we considered for the study the offerings in the way to receive the same output for customer attitude. At large, the positive customer attitude can be generated through higher levels of green brand equity. Now the customers are more responsible and aware towards their environment and therefore they wish to buy and consume same type of goods and services. Marketers and the policy makers should know the divergence and they should have to shift from old marketing concepts to green marketing.

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