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Do Marketing strategies, COVID 19 Pandemic and Consumer Location Affect Consumer Buying Behaviour? Empirical Study on Oil and Gas Lubricant Industries in United Arab Emirates

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ABSTRACT

For UAE end-users, consumer behavior and purchasing power faced many swings period after Covid 19 pandemic. Recently, changes in sales capacity and customers' preferences for eco-friendly products highlighted the industrial gap for producers before and after the pandemic. Green marketing practices aim to improve customer knowledge to increase consumer loyalty, preserve wealth, and reduce global environmental degradation. The research examines the relationship between changes in consumer purchasing behavior and green marketing strategies following the COVID-19 pandemic in the UAE's oil and gas lubricants industry. It also assesses the efficacy of green marketing in improving the dynamic of organization performance. Stakeholders and three bottom lines theories

formed the theoretical background for this research. The paper's methodology is quantitative with deductive approaches and inferential statistical analysis, while the sampling strategy is a snowball, with 162 respondents, through quantitative methods, most notably surveys. The primary findings of this study established a substantial positive correlation between both study variables and consumer attitudes toward green marketing initiatives. Consumer opinion differs according to geographical ages when developing and advertising environmentally friendly products. Meanwhile, the article examined how consumers' behavior of economic themes changed prior to and following the Covid-19 pandemic epidemic.

Keywords — Business and Management, Covid-19, Consumer behavior, Oil and gas, Marketing strategies, Stakeholders, quantitative, United Arab Emirates

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of "green marketing techniques" is to improve customer knowledge, increase consumer loyalty, preserve wealth, and decrease pollution in the global environment. Green marketing can define as a tool to achieve individual or corporate targets while maintaining environmental conditions (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014). Producing, selling, and providing environmentally friendly services covers a wide range of business activities. These activities vary from modifying a product to become environmentally friendly, changing plastic packaging to sustainable packaging, and modifying advertisements supporting environmentally friendly products (Crane, 2019).

Presently, the environmental topic and how to contribute to saving nature are considered the main goal for most organizations in different industries, particularly after the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, many organizations converted to apply environment-friendly activities to ensure processes, products, and manufacturing are based on the principle of environment safety that is why the research investigated the effect of green marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior after the COVID-19 Pandemic outbreak in the UAE in oil and gas lubricants industry.

Green marketing is founded on the belief that it is beneficial for planned and integrated efforts in marketing to positively impact customer preferences by encouraging clients to purchase environmental and sustainable items (Ayabaca & Villa, 2020). Its mission is to deliver a more integrated marketing mix of innovation to enhance natural resource preservation. The notion of green marketing is centered on reducing the consumption of natural resources and

other raw materials. It is the most appropriate method for meeting environmental requirements and adapting to industrial activities to meet the specific goal of green marketing (Ali, Kaur, Ersöz, Lotero, & Weber, 2019). It improves the oil industry's environmental accountability and evaluation. At the same time, green marketing considers the expected obligations of firms to comprehend the consumer, stakeholder group, and government's attitudes toward green consumerism, the lubricant industry's strategy focused on sustainability (Elsaman & Sergio, 2020). The study examined the implications of implementing a green marketing strategy that manufactured the automobile oil item within the company in UAE.

Business organizations in the lubricant industry utilize green marketing techniques that contribute to an overall improvement in market performance by offering ground-breaking for new green technology that may be applied for the first time in the market in UAE. Additionally, the study described the assessment used to determine the effects of releasing eco-friendly green products for businesses to boost productivity and profitability, considering social and environmental concerns (Ahmed, Sultana, & Khan, 2018).

The European Union's carbon footprint could be decreased by around 25% (3kg). By effectively adopting already-known consumer behavior improvements, the most significant changes are consumption (28 percent of total), usage (26 percent), switching to products with smaller carbon footprints (17 percent), and switching to goods with fewer carbon emissions during operation (17 percent of total) (19 percent). Transportation (39%), buildings (24%), and food supplies continue to have the biggest carbon footprints of consumption (26%). Moreover, assessed and established that 65 of these have a negligible effect on the amount of national carbon footprint effects resulting from 90 behavioral modification side effects discovered in an earlier study. As a result, it is critical to prioritize behavioral adjustments that have the largest potential impact. The individual carbon footprint grows with income even in transportation modes with high-income elasticity, such as travel and automobile use.

Although behavioral change is often discussed as a potentially strong driver of cuts, comprehensive assessments of the chances of such action remained unclear. An exception is an extensive study on consumer options in Austria's consumer to manufacturer supply chains (Steininger, Munoz, Karstensen, Peters, Strohmaier, & Velázquez, 2018). Many studies have been carried out on the effects of household decisions, but these studies were rarely combined and modeled to lead to the understanding of the impact of these actions, in general, on global supply chains and inductive remote emissions, in a macroeconomic context (Newman,

Rand, Tarp, & Trifkovic, 2020; Nunes, Causer, & Ciolkosz, 2020).

Therefore, it is reasonable to concentrate on modifying consumer behavior at the highest income levels to mitigate climate impacts. The study examined the implications of implementing a green marketing strategy that manufactured the automobile lubricant. The UAE was chosen as the location for the research study.

Firms in the lubricant industry employ green marketing techniques that improve overall market performance by providing ground-breaking green technology (Agyeman, 2014; Cherian & Jacob, 2012). Likewise, the study described the assessment used to determine the effects of releasing eco-friendly green products for businesses to boost productivity and profitability, considering social and environmental concerns (Walker, Zang, & Ni, 2019).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study addressed the following objectives, (1) to analyze the effect of green marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior at Oil and Gas Lubricant Industries in the United Arab Emirates, (2) to determine the effect of COVID 19 pandemic on consumer buying behavior at Oil and Gas Lubricant Industries in United Arab Emirate, and (3) to establish the effect of consumer location on consumer buying behavior at Oil and Gas Lubricant Industries in the United Arab Emirates.

FRAMEWORK

Independent Variables:
X1: Green marketing strategies.
X2: Covid-19 pandemic.
X3: Consumer location on GCC.
Dependent variable
Y1: Consumer buying behavior changes.

Consumer Perception for Green Marketing

Consumer behavior can be described as a step forward that began initially as a practice presented to protect customers from immoral business operations, and it has become commonplace and broader (Delafrooz, Taleghani, & Nouri, 2014). Since today's consumer protection agenda is included in the process, it can be understood that environmental protection is the most significant factor

(Agyeman, 2014). Green marketing is the most effective strategy since it is primarily concerned with environmental safety and the performance of various corporate activities (Awan & Raza, 2012). It entails manufacturing, packaging modification, and other forms of green advertising to engage clients' practices and actions regarding environmental stewardship. The oil-based lubricants industry has attracted attention on the effects of business operations on the environment, particularly when the lubricant industry's inadequate response exacerbates environmental issues (Alamri, 2019).

Different oil corporations in the Middle East and Gulf Region are being pressed to manage their ecological imprint, which will attempt to offset sustainable development. Economic growth is critical for managing and regulating total commercial prospects in the oil industry. In comparison, businesses face difficulties implementing green marketing strategies because they are costly and difficult to adopt in the near term. Additionally, the environmental benefits are intangible; for example, buyers may not feel or realize the emission reductions associated with using green products rather than conventional oil in automobiles (Ottman, 2017).

Jacobson, Mazur, and Nader (2019) claimed that green marketing is a subject of advertising, referring to environmental conditions that enable businesses to engage in beneficial activities to resolve environmental challenges and difficulties, the basics of the business show that marketing style places a premium on ethics the oil business benefits from expanding its branches and fields through sustainable development.

The strategy encompasses a broad range of corporate operations to meet client needs while minimizing unwanted effects on the natural environment. Developing and implementing a green marketing plan is not an easy task for the oil sector, as it involves the availability of appropriate resources, aims, and objectives. Businesses must have a clear strategy to easily margin green initiatives to boost corporate profitability in the marketplace because other energy sources, such as crude oil, play a critical role in the lubricant business. Nowadays, various opposing interests exist between oil exploration and environmental protection, increasing the pressure to lessen the environmental effect caused by energy production and use (Samli, 2013).

The Green Marketing in Industrial and Automotive Lubricants

The corporation can enhance income by adopting green marketing. Additionally, green marketing can balance environmental protection and

consumer satisfaction; thus, green marketing considers a purpose to boost an organization's competitive edge (Wooders, Zinecker, & Steenblik, 2019).

Nowadays, individuals are more conscious of leading a healthy lifestyle; therefore, green marketing is an environmental stewardship tool and a marketing strategy; by incorporating innovative eco-friendly concepts, businesses can gain a competitive edge by adopting and implementing a green marketing plan (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014).

To maximize the effectiveness of green marketing, environmentally friendly techniques such as biodegradable labels and ecological advertising should be used in green marketing strategies (Karmakar, Ghosh, & Sharma, 2017). Meanwhile, implementing appropriate marketing strategies to improve customer awareness of the benefits of eco-friendly products fosters more profound perceptions and a favorable impact on that type of modern technology. It modifies customer behavior to shift from conventional and eco-friendly products (Crane, 2019).

Conversely, Kinoti (2011) claims that not all enterprises are interested in using green marketing because the company may have difficulties owing to a lack of technology and the additional expense of new innovative items.

The Green Marketing Strategy is founded on the belief that coordinated and integrated marketing can positively affect customer preference. It strives to give a more integrated marketing mix based on innovation, which may preserve the natural environment (Cherian & Jacob, 2012). Green marketing is a principle used by altering how natural resources and other raw materials are used. It is the most appropriate method for meeting environmental requirements and modifying industrial activities to conform to the specific purpose of green marketing (Ali et al., 2019).

Green Marketing and Organization Stakeholders

Stakeholder approaches can lead to contradictions through the concept of sustainability since they do not entirely mean that all stakeholders will benefit from corporate social policies. Walker et al. (2019) argues that more effort is needed to treat them similarly and ensure that the company generates more value from stakeholders (Walker, Zang, & Ni, 2019). Organizations implement green marketing to control the overall incorporation of the framework in social and environmental terms, intending to increase market efficiency (Hæreid & Indregård, 2015). Thus, Management patterns have implications for management practices, which primarily adopt them to change the organizational environment (Elsaman & Sergio, 2020). This may involve business models and more engagement with

stakeholders to comply with corporate social responsibility requirements.

Consequently, many companies can benefit from implementing eco-friendly measures while still meeting critical business goals and objectives. Recently, stakeholders have become involved in CSR policies, which entail various activities, including identifying environmental issues and stakeholder management (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2019). In this way, it can be decided that green marketing is a vital concept that is always helpful for corporate identification, communication, and developing fruitful interactions with others. Additionally, to ensure long-term growth, it is always worth pursuing corporate strategies that promote the lubricant industry positively, focusing on the existing consumer (Islam & Huda, 2020). This will create jobs and increase profits while growing the enterprise's productivity and profitability in the global marketplace (Srivastava & Shree, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design related to the overall methodology that the researcher decided to apply to ensure that the research problem is adequately investigated, it consists of data collection, measurement, and analysis then the research design can be divided into three types: descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory (Suki, 2013).

In this study, the researcher chose a descriptive research design. Descriptive design requires testing one or more variables, hence identifying the correlation between many variables. It gives more understanding and clarification on existing theory or phenomenon (Rajeshkumar, 2012).

The researcher used alpha Cronbach reliability that ensures no manipulation of any study variables and the data collected simultaneously. Analyzing the relationship between the variables is often referred to as the term correlation to prove the research objectives (Gast & Ledford, 2014). This method is based on procedures and methods helpful for collecting and measuring variables in a specified manner. It can be used as a framework that has been created to answer the research questions (Ledford et al., 2018).

The research questions were identified and formulated precisely to prepare the research design. It helps the investigator to state the conceptual structure within the project. Therefore, it makes it easier, if possible, to be efficient in order to increase the demand for data collection. The relevant evidence related to

the project can be examined while assuming minimum expenditure in terms of money, effort, and time (Venable, Pries-Heje, & Baskerville, 2017).

To investigate the research objectives, the researcher conducted two surveys by answering research questions—first survey concerns lubricant green oil end-users, such as motorists and vehicle owners. The second survey will target experts in the oil and gas industry.

Respondents

A total of 162 respondents from various nationalities in the UAE participated in the study. The researcher discarded 12 responses due to skipping some data or iteration pattern responses.

Data Collection

The data gathering process is defined as a method used to collect various types of research data, and this research survey is based on primary data (Wilson, 2014). The researcher used direct resources to collect data and information in the primary data. The web-based technique is a time and cost-effective process. The researcher collected data directly from key sources through a questionnaire to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of the data. A web-based survey is a source to collect the primary data directly from respondents. The Monkey Survey tool was used to start the questionnaire for the study. Through this approach, it is possible to target many samples.

Different types of information are gathered in this data collection process, which may help the researcher to arrive at a verifying conclusion. A web-based survey adheres to the positivist philosophy approach (Wright, 2005). It, therefore, increases the quality of the analysis. There is no influence on the responses of the groups of respondents (Wilson, 2014).

Ethical Considerations

The study examined certain ethical aspects and identified issues during the analysis. It must ensure that all participants have reported their acceptance of research members (Venable et al., 2017).

The primary objective is to reassure each participant that their confidential information shall be maintained. It can be done when each participant have been fully informed about objectives while ensuring that the correct response is known. On the other hand, it guarantees that not all participants are harassed or hurt by any other individual during the research study. The researcher sought to create a comfortable atmosphere so that the participant would feel at ease.

Data Analysis

Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) software was used to aid in analyzing the correlation between variables and how they are interlinked and between two or more variables by multivariate analysis as a data analysis program. The human and measurement errors were measured using the Alpha coefficient to test the data reliability (Bryman & Cramer, 2012).

Sampling

Sampling is based on the technique mainly used to select the participants within the research project. It depends on the large number of populations being studied (Hickson, 2016). The researcher used a simple random technique that helped select the participants within the population. The first questionnaire was administered to green lubricants end-user and car owners in the geographical area of the UAE.

The researcher chose snowballing sampling technique, which explains the list of target population members. It can contribute to research projects in collecting any information relevant to the research topic. The samples were medium in size, with about 162 respondents, comprising vehicle owners and motorists responding as product end-users; the snowball method is considered the most straightforward strategy, which helps select a wide range of populations. It provides the logic behind the technique, which removes bias from procedures and represents the accurate result or outcome.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Profile Descriptive Analysis Conducted by Author

Profile	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Gender	1.7308	.44499	156
Age	2.7848	.91235	158
Ethic	3.8280	2.15483	157
UAEloc	2.8497	.77605	153
carmodel	3.8839	1.06268	155
buyingdecs	2.2115	.62227	156
greendeal	2.4873	.66522	158
progrentec	2.6688	.57052	157
Consattr	2.5949	.58688	158

Profile	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
sharhlder	2.1146	.87683	157
greenads	2.7070	.55771	157
consperce	2.7197	.50427	157

Table 2. Variables Correlational Coefficient Analysis Conducted by Author

Correlation coefficients		
		Y1
	Pearson Correlation	.280**
X1	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150
	Pearson Correlation	. 193*
X2	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016
	N	150
	Pearson Correlation	.278**
X3	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Source: Author's work.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha

	Cronbach's Alpha
X1	0.830
X2	0.750
X3	0.770
Y1	0.790
Overall Cronbach's Alpha	0.777

Source: Author's work

H1: Marketing strategies have no effect on consumer buying behavior at Oil and Gas Lubricants Industries in the United Arab Emirates

The Pearson r correlation between X1/Y1 .280** indicates a strong and significant relationship between the two variables. That rejects the null Hypothesis H0 and approves the Alternate Hypothesis HA. Buyers are typically

more emotionally attached to companies that are much more environmentally responsible, which enhances the organization's image and increases sales capacity and overall company profitability in the UAE. The result is clearly documented in the analyzed data regarding the organization's performance and the benefits of implementing a green marketing strategy. The survey findings corroborated (Zhang, Oo, & Lim, 2019) academic and recent research on building a firm through a consumer base while adhering to organizational regulations linked to social and environmental issues. Additionally, the study with three bottom lines emphasized that instead of a single bottom line cantered on profit; there should be three: profit, people, and the planet (Trivellas, Rafailidis, Polychroniou, & Dekoulou, 2019). Additionally, the results corroborated the current research findings of Srivastava and Shree (2018) by emphasizing the importance of green marketing in generating more profit while arranging businesses to maximize productivity and profitability in the global marketplace (Srivastava & Shree, 2018).

H2: COVID 19 pandemic has no effect on consumer buying behavior at Oil and Gas Lubricants Industries in the United Arab Emirates

The results spotted a correlation between two variables X2/Y1. This rejects the null hypothesis H0. Consumer purchasing behavior has shifted towards more environmentally friendly options and continues to evolve. Investment-scepticism research indicates that customers are prepared to pay a premium for green products and that sustainability has become a new dimension in quality. When combined with the marketing of luxury products, the objective is to communicate the worth of the products that customers pay either emotionally or as a premium. The benefits of eco-friendly products as a renewable energy source are long-term and extend beyond providing the end-user market with competitively priced products. The world's largest exporter of bioethanol demonstrates the purchasing decision made after the Pandemic association between X2/Y1.193* purchasing environmentally safe and acceptable lubricants versus non-environmentally friendly oil and lubricants. Meanwhile, perceptions of the product or firm are directly tied to the phrases used in promotional materials such as avoiding environmental pollution, keeping safe at home, and taking care of family's health.

H3: Consumer location affects consumer buying behavior at Oil and Gas Lubricants Industries in the United Arab Emirates.

The Pearson r was 0.278** between X3/Y1 approved HA. There is a strong correlation between the location of residents of UAE and consumer behaviour as the UAE is a melting pot of nations from all over the world. It indicates that at 0.0278 significant 95 percent accuracy is associated with consumer location regarding purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, oil and gas purchasing decisions fall into the -.280 level of significance in terms of promoting green technology in the lubricant field in the UAE. It is done by incorporating vegetable oil and eco-friendly additives into motor oil formulas, which adds biodegradability and additional features to the final product, thereby providing a competitive edge in the current pandemic.

Meanwhile, consumers are often more drawn to organizations that are more ecologically responsible, with a correlation coefficient of 0.278 using a two-tailed test and public information about environmental awareness and behaviors in the United Arab Emirates. There is a strong environmental concern in the UAE; governments must ensure that environmental policies are appropriately implemented in the region, even if it is an oil-producing country. Otherwise, there would be a monetary cost due to negligence and ignorance. This demonstrates 0.278** at 0.05 significant relationship X3/Y1 in the UAE region the respondents came from. Meanwhile, the extent to which the COVID-19 epidemic affects purchasing decisions varies.

CONCLUSIONS

It demonstrates that residents of the UAE, regardless of ethnic origin, gender, or age, are already aware and agreeable that promoting green technology in the lubricant industry in the UAE Incorporating vegetable oil and eco-friendly additives into motor oil formulas provide a competitive advantage for the company in the current pandemic situation. The companies' management is completely aware of environmental marketing's influence.

Previously, individuals were unconcerned about the impact of environmental safety, awareness, and practice. However, as a result of educational initiatives accessible in the region, the perception of a product or firm employs terms such as avoiding environmental pollution, keeping safe at home, and taking care of family's health.

The findings indicate a clearer grasp by the public of the environmental concerns and their relationship to economic and social variables. Additionally, citizens are concerned about environmental degradation and resource depletion

and are usually satisfied with the government response. The findings from the survey indicated that the public was willing to promote good change through legislation requiring tighter environmental protection and natural resource conservation, as well as through individual action. Additionally, the study findings showed that consumers are more drawn to environmentally friendly businesses. Environment-friendly activities enhance the organization's image and thus raise sales capacity and total corporate profitability.

The UAE economy continues to face many persistent and growing environmental problems. Production and consumption models, which are at the foundation of environmental problems, garner considerable attention. It is strongly advised that the UAE Ministry of Environment promote the benefits of green marketing throughout the region to save its limited resources.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The findings of the study may be best translated to recommendations for oil and gas companies and oil industry experts; the finding highlighted that the awareness campaigns on environmental measures and products improve the consumers' loyalty and attraction to the organization. Furthermore, it might be more effective if the governmental oil and gas sector adopts the green technology trend for the end-user and the organization itself.

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