

HARA BHARA ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

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Abstract

“AtmaNirbhar Bharat”, which decodes to 'Self-Reliant India' or 'Self-Sufficient India', is the vision of making India "a bigger and vital part of the global economy", pursuing environment-friendly policies that are competitive, efficient, resilient, being self-sustaining and self-generating. Self-reliance is a thought process that differs from concepts of "self-containment", "isolating away from the world" or being "protectionist". India, having the strategic advantage of experiencing all possible climatic conditions, can be the cradle of food for the rest of the world and leader with its Green-initiatives. AtmaNirbhar is largely hinged on business-as-usual practices, striking a balance between local and global – Glocal, where Indian farmers, producers, and businesses preserve our ancient wisdom, rich biodiversity, and sustainable practices, so as to be the torch-bearer for the rest of the world to follow. The key to AtmaNirbhar Bharat lies in sustainable development, which in turn depends on saving natural resources and promoting an environmental-friendly lifestyle. India could be a leader in green technology for delivering green products and services through green processes which would keep the equilibrium of ecology for a better tomorrow. So, AtmaNirbhar Bharat to be imbibed and promoted with the notion of Green Consumerism to the core as Citizens of the Blue planet are waking up to the warm idea of consuming green.

The Green Consumerism will aptly champion the cause of 'Green Growth' for India or "Hara-Bhara AtmaNirbhar Bharat"- India shining and be Grinning paving the Greener pathway.

Keywords:

AtmaNirbhar Bharat, Green Consumerism, Sustainable development, Environment, Ecology

Introduction

'Time for Nature' implies, a reminder in times of the COVID-19 pandemic, that we need to respect and recognize the natural ecosystem of our forests, mountains, lakes, rivers, animal kingdoms, oceans, and life in general while focussing on biodiversity and human development in particular. "AtmaNirbhar Bharat" or Self-Reliant India campaign, been allocated huge funds in tune of approximately 10% of India's GDP, is the mission to serve as a future roadmap with inclusive growth of the country while preserving the environment simultaneously. Amidst the surge of the COVID-19 pandemic in India, the government announced an INR 20.97 Lakh crores package to revive the economy. The underlined objective of this plan is two-pronged. First, interim step such as liquidity infusion and direct cash transfers to the poor will absorb their shocks from acute stress. Secondly, sustainable long-term transformations in growth-critical economic sectors to make them globally competitive and attractive. Indians have to be responsive enough to safeguard the future from the environmental risk country faces from climate change and air pollution by actively participating in a subset of *AtmaNirbhar Bharat - Clean India: Green India* – an initiative under the 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan'.

Green stimulus packages will elongate the objective of being sustainable and self-reliant. Given that the pandemic led to a huge downfall in economic activity; we are experiencing a visible decline in pollution levels and carbon dioxide emissions, which has caused many to

claim, “Nature is healing”. But, as coronavirus driven dip evaporates, economic activity will pick up again and emissions will rebound. Hence, there is a need for a well-conceived long terms strategy towards building climatic resilience and capacity to tackle pandemic shocks coherently. '*AtmaNirbhar Bharat*' would integrate India with the world as the concept envisages an opportunity to paint green the economic sectors that have the maximum impact on sustainable development. Both sustenance and sustainability have to be the cornerstones of economic development henceforth.

Nature is to be preserved and nurtured which citizens of the blue planet are taking cognizance of with each passing day. The current environmental issues and the effects of climate change, with the advent of COVID-19, have added a piece of cloth to their attire; irrespective of age. In efforts to mitigate the ill effects, all are sitting tight and be more vigilant towards the environment, and sustainability is becoming a trend. As a result of which the firms are streamlining the processes and colouring themselves Green. Thus, the '*Green Consumerism*' has sneaked into the mindshare of consumers and all corporations want to bite a pie of it. “*Green Consumerism*” is about using only those products and services that are eco-friendly and do not harm the environment and society; in other words, “green” products are a result of the environmental and social friendly processes.

Companies are increasingly employing green business strategies in order to appeal to the ethical consumerism market, worth billions. Companies are creating more needs and reaching out to new markets that were not available before through meticulous planning of green marketing. The aggregate impact on the environment will not necessarily be reduced through green consumption alone albeit the new way into future beckons that the entire ecosystem has to be painted green.

This paper discusses the green avenues to be traversed towards achieving self-reliance by India. The paper highlights the issues and challenges faced by India while treading the green pathway to be AtmaNirbhar. It tries to find out the possibility of *Green Consumerism*, for India, as a gateway to be a self-reliant economy.

Reviews of Literature

1. **Mostafa, Mohamed M. (2007)**, this paper says, as a result of the increasing number of green consumers, the companies have altogether created a separate segment for targeting such consumers. Recycled materials like paper, bio-degradable plastic goods, water treatment processes, and dolphin-safe tuna are few examples of products and processes sited on the basis of environmental appeal (Banerjee, Gulas & Iyer,1995). Kotler (2000), introduced the term “societal marketing concept” as the ultimate step in product marketing concepts so as to cover the social and ecological responsibilities of companies involved. This paper has been designed to study the Egyptian consumer’s buying pattern. This paper mainly focuses on Values / Knowledge / Attitude / Behavior and concern when it comes to buying eco-friendly products. This paper also talks about the NEO Model which stands for “Natural Environment Orientation, which has a deep root in Islamic culture. The first Caliph Abu Bakr gave the following order to his army commander: “Do not destroy palm trees, do not burn houses or fields of wheat, never cut down fruit trees, and kill cattle only when you need to eat it” (Schwarte,2003).
2. **R. Reshmi; Johnson, B. (2014)**, This paper aims to study the buying behavior of various income groups and discusses the actual factors which influence the pattern of buying behavior of different level of income groups. Here “Going Green” means different meanings such as – energy conservation, waste management, reduce pollution, etc. this paper device the concept of green products. Green products are those products that have

less environment hazardous properties, its recyclable and does not do any harm to human health. It concludes that the people who have low-income levels say below 3 lacs have less awareness about green products and people who have income above 5 lacs have more awareness about green products.

3. **Li, Jia; Moul, Charles; Zhang, Wanqing. (2017)**, This study had been conducted in china targeting the preference of passenger vehicles. The study mainly focused on marketers and policymakers. China was chosen for the study as 16 cities of China are among 20 of the world's most polluted cities. The study shows that there is a direct relationship between consumer purchase behaviour and the environment. This study concludes that the choice of a passenger vehicle has a direct impact on the environment and it affects the buying behavior while purchasing a fuel-efficient car. It is summarised that Chinese consumer behaviour is directed by the prevailing environmental concern.
4. **Viswanathan, Lakshmi; Varghese, George. (2018)**, The rising awareness regarding ecological concern has increased recently which has given a push to the *Green Consumerism* concept. To make it more effective, Government, Consumer, and firms have to collaborate together. This paper highlights that consumers are not solely responsible for Ecological balance. The government can devise new rules, policies to make it right and socially acceptable. This paper talks about three R's Principle – Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. It also talks about the Green Business Concept, which means that the business process which has a less adverse effect on ecology, are considered as Green Business. Consumer increasing demand for green products drives more socially responsible business practices. This concept has opened up a huge gateway for the new entrepreneur to carry out sustainable and eco-friendly business practices. The research method used to reach out to the target segment who are keen to buy eco-friendly products by simply observing or brainstorming them. By targeting this segment market base can be

broadened which opens the scope for companies to expand their product base. Good marketing practices can be carried out even to target those groups who are unconcerned and awareness could be spread through different advertising mediums. Green Marketing is the answer to all the concerns.

5. **Danes, Lisa. (2012)**, Nowadays companies are trying to target Green consumers by making available green products. Marketers need to be cautious while using the word “Green”, it’s not just merely a word when it comes to product, they should avoid “Green-washing”, and the product in all terms should fulfill the criteria of green product, as green products are reusable, decomposable, recyclable and environment friendly. Give the customers an actual picture of the product so that they could easily decide good Vs bad. Before getting into the market try to know and gather information about your green consumers with the help of a questionnaire/ survey etc. It will help to reach target customers. The database which has been used here is U.S customer based and it says that more than 80% of US customers are aware of the green products and its benefits. This paper has discussed different categories of customers, - Lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS), Neutralities, Drifters, Conventional, and Unconcerned. Here **LOHAS** means those customers who are basically sensitive towards Environment-friendly products. They are the customers who highly purchase green products and motivate others. **Neutralities** are the ones who are motivated by health benefits and healthy lifestyles. **Drifters** are basically participating in the green movement but less concerned. **Conventional** are those who are actually sustainable, they use the recyclable bags when it comes to shopping, try to reduce waste, etc. and **Unconcerned** are the ones who are not actively involved in this process yet.

This paper concludes that the marketers should be very much careful while marketing their products and be very much clear in terms of choosing the customer base, like which type of customers they are actually targeting.

Issues and Challenges

A new thought for the future begins with a lot of issues and challenges. It is because of this reason when an idea counters practicality, it provides an insight into the possible proportion of success as envisaged. The world concurs with the notion of sustainable development through greener alleys. European countries, Germany and France especially, have taken the environmental concern above all contemporary issues. The environmental challenges that wrinkle the forehead, include rising sea levels, rising global temperature, accentuated deforestation, and the declining availability of natural resources, which are the result of human consumption. The world now tries to transact with these ecological factors in hindsight.

The aggregated impact on the environment is the product of 3 main pathways: affluence (consumption), population, and technology. Precautionary measures of Lockdown exercised during the COVID-19 pandemic have cleansed the environment. But once the normal pace is restored, the real picture would resurface; unless otherwise green culture is infused with a ripple effect thereon. *AtmaNirbhar Bharat* needs to notably address a few major environmental crises simultaneously: Climate Crisis and Clean Energy, Environmental and Corporate Sustainability, Global Public Health, Marine Conservation, Social Economic Development, Wildlife Conservation.

Adding a tinge of green would surely increase the monthly budget of consumers. Going green is easier said than done, from scratch, with such a huge population at disposal. The other practical issues encompassing the *AtmaNirbhar* campaign could be:

- **Liquidity:** The kitty of INR 20.0 lakh crores embraces both fiscal and monetary infusions. The monetary part would be routed through banks in form of credit guarantees and liquidity infusions and other financial institutions rather than the economy per se. The majority of the package is liquidity measures, transmitted by RBI to Banks and Banks to Citizens. The concern is regarding the smooth transfer owing to the inefficient transmission of monetary policy.
- **Demand:** The demand has taken a severe hit due to COVID-19 related lockdown measures and so a fiscal stimulus to the economy deemed pertinent by the government. However, the infusion of credit revives the economy, with the butterfly effect, only if the demand comes from the consumers. The income across the country, in general, has drastically decreased owing to the restricted movement of the business activities. So, with less money to spend, the demand has taken a hit.
- **Backward and Forward Linkages:** The business activities are inter-related. The movement of product or service in a B2C (Business to customer) realm, it traverses a long chain of B2B (Business to Business) realm. So, the backward demand and supply as well as the forward one are always linked for smoother flow in an economy. The lack of demand has weakened this chain.
- **Burgeoning Fiscal Deficit:** Government has announced a challenging sum of stimulus package which is approximately 10% of India's GDP. However, financing it would be difficult as the government is worried about containing the fiscal deficit too.
- **Difficulty in Mobilising Finances:** The government seeks a disinvestment path to mobilize the finances for the planned pouch. However, the majority of Indian industries are already a bit debt-laden to take up the stake in PSUs. Further, it is

difficult to borrow from the foreign markets, as the rupee with respect to the dollar is at an all-time low.

A series of reports by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and others have warned of the need to keep global warming under 1.5°C since any further increment will be catastrophic. The forest fire, depleted water bodies, melting of glaciers, ferocious cyclones, speedily shifting of earth's tectonic plates and similar extreme weather events could wipe out the entire species.

A Harvard study found that the immunity of the body is affected by long-term exposure to pollutants in air, sound, and water. The *AtmaNirbhar Bharat* plan has to include the problem caused by these hazardous pollutants through some green initiatives.

Research Methodology:

This research paper is exploratory in nature and based on the various reviews on Green Marketing, Green Consumerism, Green Buying Behaviour, and Green Effect. The conclusion has been derived based on various journals, magazines, and websites. The databases like EBSCO, Google Scholar, Research gate, J- Gate were the major source of information.

In this paper, the Green concept has been studied extensively and deeply, which helps various organizations to understand the concept of Going Green, and why the Green has been given so much importance amidst the growing economy and emerging advanced business trends. This study shows how well a green economy can help in the restoration of nature and how vital the investment decision has become now when it comes to Green technology. Further, it has been theorized that for a self-sustained and self-reliant India, *AtmaNirbhar Bharat*, going green is the only way forward.

Discussion:

Any financial stimulus package will fail to reflect the trickle-down effect unless it is backed by reforms in other sectors as well as demand or consumerism to back it. The 5 pillars conceived for being self-reliant are Economy, Infrastructure, Technological Systems, Demography, and Consumers' Demand. To strengthen these five said pillars of Self-Reliant India, an infusion of INR 20 Lakhs Crore has been earmarked.

The vision of 5-pillared growth to self-reliance, in the longest possible run, is incomplete without being sustainable in approach. The sustained growth is possible only with balanced ecology. The consumer, human resource, and earth which constitutes 'Land and Labour' are innate green in nature. The 'Laws and Liquidity' part of the focused approach needs to be painted green.





The creation of job vistas would encourage consumerism and the demand would pick up.

Impact to economic sectors with Stimulus Package in *AtmaNirbhar Bharat* Abhiyaan:

The butterfly effect in economic activities would spur ergonomically-promoted green growth.

Primary Sector: *One Nation One Market would help India become the food factory of the world.* The measures (reforms to amend Essential Commodities Act, Agricultural Produce Market Committee, Contract farming, etc) announced for the agricultural and allied sectors are particularly transformative. These reforms are steps towards achieving the goal of a self-sustainable rural economy. The MGNREGA

infusion of INR 40,000 crore may help in alleviating the distress of migrants when they return to their villages.

Secondary Sector: *AtmaNirbhar Bharat* Abhiyaan has given the importance of MSMEs for the revival of the Indian economy. The campaign has earmarked INR 3.0 lakh crore collateral-free loan facility for MSMEs under the package. It will help this finance-starved sector to provide an impetus to the stalled economy. The MSME sector is the second-largest employment generating sector in India. Thereby, with this master-stroke, a two-way objective will be fulfilled: the creation of labour-intensive jobs and facilitating industries with much-needed capital.

Boosting the self-reliance of domestic defense industries, the import of 101 items has been stopped and the limit of foreign direct investment (FDI) has been increased from 49% to 74%. It will provide a much-needed boost to the production and jobs-scenario while reducing the huge import bill.

Tertiary Sector: The government has adopted a balanced approach to addressing concerns across various sectors. Telecom, transportation, Information technology (IT) and IT-enabled services, education, healthcare are major contributors to the tertiary sector. These industries ride through the green platform- digital wave. The special attention to the development of the renewable energy sector, through various incentive schemes, in *AtmaNirbhar Bharat* Abhiyaan will further promote *Green Consumerism*.

The newly launched e-Vidya program for multi-mode access to remotely connected students to online education through the Greener-Digital platform provides uniform learning for the whole nation. This program would enable schools and universities to stream courses online. Public expenditure on healthcare services will be increased by

investing in grass-root health institutions and ramping up health and wellness centres across the nation.

The promotion of *battery-operated vehicles* with an incentive scheme will fructify the conservation of nature from air and sound pollution. The robust *waste management* through the PPP model (Public-Private Partnership) will cleanse the polluted water. The utilization of *solar system* for energy consumption would preserve the scarce natural resources as well as decreasing global warming. The *Carbon-Credit* scheme would perforce the corporates and firms to pay for the damage done to the environment through the emission of harmful pollutants.

Way Forward

Green Consumerism is the way out and way forward. Lean with Green manufacturing processes, an evolving industrial trend with an achievable and long-term vision for sustainability, rescues the ecological challenges at a systemic level. A common platform and a common agenda are to be developed by the world leaders to combat the eminent climatical crisis. India is a member of such a platform: “The Green Economy Coalition”, (<https://www.greeneconomycoalition.org/>), helps in learning ‘*How a green economy can restore prosperity and nature*’.

The environmental pollution dents the green ecology of the world, the primary and secondary sector being are fore-front culprits. The solution lies in ‘Green’ activities. Green activities are mainly about transforming the existing business and manufacturing activities, as well as the outlook of all the participants, to allay its influence on climate deterrent and other environment-related apprehensions. There are tangible ways to drive sustainable practices both within manufacturing and service-oriented facilities, across the supply chain, and through the customer base.

Emerging Green Technologies (EGTs) are capable of bringing technological changes to the whole world irrespective of boundaries. EGTs are either those which have attained the technologically advanced stage but have relatively low market penetration or technologies that are still in the nascent stage of maturity and already applicable in day-to-day life.

Green processes incorporate the Fourth wave of technical revolution, the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), so as to delve into new avenues for innovations to produce sustainable, environment-friendly ingredients; decarbonize energy; explore the digital concepts for an efficient outcome; and elongate the life-span of products within a “Zero waste to landfill” context. Even the airline’s services display the amount of diminished Carbon emission if a passenger chooses their flight. POLYCAB wires promote their brand with the punchline “Bijli bhi bachein, paryavarn bhi (Save electricity, Save Environment)”.

The reduction in Carbon footprints could be achieved by minimizing the use of natural resources. This coupled with technological advancements, optimizing efficiency, resilience, and sustainability across the complete stage of processes, including the supply chain to build a strong groundwork for a global circular economy. The Green path traversed translates to energy savings. Here, environmental and business benefits go hand-in-hand. We see a bright future for decarbonizing energy. The latest Energy Transitions Commission (ETC) report “Mission Possible” declares that reaching net-zero CO₂ emissions by the middle of the century is a very real target.

The rewards of incorporating eco-friendly green initiatives into production processes have led to cost reduction and higher efficiency. The ecological concern boosts the reputation of the firm and positions the company as a responsible corporate citizen. The consumer finds such firms caring in nature and gets connected at an emotional level. The stark reality is that availability of natural resources and raw materials are diminishing. The need for sustainable methodologies is the way forward. Companies now want to be a part of the circular economy

concept - “Take, Make, and Dispose”. The concept of the circular economy is in line with the green processes where companies keep resources as long as the maximum value is extracted out of it. It is primarily recovering and restoring materials, whenever possible, in a way minimizing waste and emphasizing on renewable resources.

Green Consumerism is a holistic concept of management that satisfies, identifies, fulfills, and anticipates the needs of the stakeholders in maintaining the natural well-being of the environment and one that does not endanger the health of humans.

Green Consumerism promotes prudent packaging solutions. It delves into the social mindset such as the preference to buy products like vegetables and fruits in loose instead of being pre-packaged. At the same time, it boosts the reuse of materials in the packaging of bags and tins to safeguard environmental degradation.

Green Consumerism advocates the efficient use of energy by using LEDs so as to save money, minimize utility bills, reduce emissions of greenhouse gas, and to empower economies to meet the burgeoning energy demands. The introduction of BS-VI standard fuel, thanks to *Green Consumerism*, the emissions from the vehicles have been checked to considerably reduce the air pollution. *Green Consumerism* has led to an increased need for eco-friendly food production as people are gradually preferring organic and local food due to healthier proportions. Food produced through organic farming is cultivated using a minimal amount or no artificial chemical fertilizers, antibiotics, hormones, or pesticides rather natural manures.

The industry will be deriving the biggest benefits from investments into green practices. Commercial centres that implement a forward-thinking approach towards streamlining the processes are saving huge costs. Men, Machines, and equipment are becoming much more energy-efficient and can have a lasting impact on a business's bottom line. A Smart lighting

solution, which can sense the amount of natural light in an enclosed area, illuminates only those areas that require light that too proportionately.

The Reverse Logistics strategy helps in reducing the raw materials required to produce new components or products. Reverse Logistics means traveling of goods/services, at the completion of the life-cycle, in reverse order i.e. from end-user to the producer instead of thrown away as waste. The used product is then reprocessed to obtain the useful remaining of raw material. Reverse Logistics helps in piling-up of land-fills with waste that could have been reused. For example, Paper-based products or Steel are the most common recyclable materials in the world and are obtained by the producer through rag-pickers or ferry-people. Reverse Logistics has two-pronged benefits, the natural resources are protected as well as the profit margin of the producer increases with less outgo on the cost of raw material.

Green manufacturing and business practices lead to a reduction in carbon footprints. In the USA, such business activities are incentivized through tax benefits or suitable rewards. Manufacturers receive additional incentives or discounts for setting-up renewable energy infrastructures like wind turbines or rooftop solar panels. With the business houses public at large is also showing interest in Going Green. A production entity's commitment to ensure the reduction of waste and energy consumption can be showcased through marketing channels so as to attract prospective like-minded consumers.

A completely sustainable large-scale business operation may still be a few years away but this does not mean producers of goods and services can't continue to invest in new green technology. Men and machines together can help reduce energy consumption and a continued effort could lead to greener surroundings every day.

The Green Consumerism, through all the stakeholders, could be an equitable way to make India AtmaNirhar or self-reliant or Self-sustainable or Self-sufficient as it has always been the way of life originally led by the esteemed citizens.

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