

## Content Analysis of Green Advertisement Messages Conveyed by, Small Medium, & Micro Enterprises in Northern Province

Shivany. S

*Department of Marketing, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna*

**Abstract** - Past studies identified the marketing problems of SMMEs (Small, Medium, and Micro Entrepreneurs) in Northern province, which should be solved by relevant marketing strategies. Nowadays green marketing strategies are accepted globally for the recovery of the business successfully. Suitable green advertisement messages stretch identity to the SMMEs. Today the increasing issues of environmental problems, both customers and the companies create awareness on environmental friendly products. Public and private organizations try to provide environmental friendly products and giving green messages to the society, for long term survival and sustainability. In Sri Lanka specially by the end of war, local, small, medium, and micro level Enterprises in Northern Province have been motivated for greener strategies for their successes. Green Message content in advertisements are a competitive advantage strategy to differentiate the Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) in the competitive world. The main purpose of this research is to analyze the green messages designed by SMMEs in Northern province. For this purpose, 42 advertisements (printed) in Newspapers, Broachers, and labels were analyzed Via content analysis method. The findings show that there are not enough green messages in the advertisement and they have to improve their greener message content to make awareness about their product and services to local, as well as the international consumers. Relevant organizations, which are responsible to improve the performance of SMMEs, should assist them to develop these messages, because these green messages pave them a way for sustainable future for their struggling Business.

**Key words** - small, medium, and micro entrepreneurs, (SMMEs) green advertising messages, marketing strategies

### I. INTRODUCTION

Due to 30 Years of Civil war in Sri Lanka. Northern province suffered lot. Many Business Entities mislaid their position and displaced. During post war situation many opportunities have been created to develop Business objects. There are many effect of continuous civil war. People wanted to transform their traditional livelihood to any business form to earn money. Many women headed families mostly depend on the income from their Businesses. End of civil war encourage not only the local business entities but also the outside Business People, who entered into the Northern market and tried to sell their

products. They succeeded well and they captured the considerable market, but still local SMMEs in northern province are rapidly losing their market share. Marketing activities made by the penetrated marketers still effect the local SMMEs in Northern provinces. They really do not know the approaches to capture the market strategically. Therefore, they failed but they have Quality products and services compared to penetrated marketers.

Green customer/ consumer is, One who does not consume goods and Services, which hazards Some one public's Health [1]. Consumers in Northern province, nowadays have more awareness on environmental issues. Due to the adverse effect of war environment for a long period [2]. Many chemical explosions, Land minds, Chemical booms were used during the wartime. There were many harmful events, which destroyed the prettiness of environmental scarcity. Water land and air pollution were identified in Northern provinces [2].

Therefore, consumer feel these environmental effects, and ethical responsibilities are needed in the present environmental scenarios [3]. According to Jain and Kaur (2004) [4], any entity can capture, the consumer who avoids hazards during consumption as a strategic idea, and can be linked with the organizational overall plan. Strong (1998)[5] Said, that, any entity can try to focus green activities as opportunities, from the consumers, who accepts Natural balance for their future generation. Green and environmental. marketing messages inform every customer about the eco- friendly activities on decreasing harmful effect and facilitating the satisfying customers who prefer greener products [6]. Providing a sustainable future for the market and protection for environment is the most important duty as biggest companies and even the researches to make strategies for sustainable world [7]. Story *et al* (2008) [8] said that environment friendly strategies

have twin success for both organization and the environment, and it's not a short term process but it targets for a long journey for future. At the first step it is to make awareness on the greener activities of the companies to the customers [7]. McDaniel *et al* (1993) [9] Open the eyes of the companies by giving a message that any company, which does not consider the environment as important in its agenda, will not be in the market very as soon. According to Papadopoulos (2009)[10] green strategies can be in the product design, production process, distribution, and the consumption, and the after use wastes.

Green messages to the consumers means, that make an awareness or communicating them on the environmental activities done by the companies [11]. It is a fact that if the people think of their future planet in their lives, and the customer/ consumer can reach information about the environmental and ecological problems in the world, therefore customers will be more sensitive to these [12]. Further they found, that even though, the companies have not enough messages to their customers, who are satisfied because, the products are environment friendly. From this study, one important message is derived that, green message is important for survival and differentiation in competitive market place.

## II. RESEARCH GAP

Content analysis of Green claims in advertisements.: a study of Gurbuz *et al*(2012) [12] analyzed the green message content in advertisement in Turkey. Content analysis was used to analyze the green claims that study found that not enough green claims are in Turkey.

Dai *et al* (2014)[13] analyzed the green advertisements in China, This study adopted matrix approach [14]. It mainly analyzed the green washing in advertisements. Akyol and Kilinç, (2014) [15] analyzed how the companies link association with the environments. It's a quantitative study, which analyzed the environmental content, claims, appeals, based on the companies' messages.

Chahal *et al* (2014) [16] studied, greening process, green supply chain management, green strategic

policy initiative, proactive energy conservation and green innovation of green marketing as important dimensions of green marketing orientation (GMO) scale. Dzisi *et al* (2014) [17] studied the Marketing Strategies and the Performance of SMEs in Ghana. Singh, and Singh, (2016) [18] studied the Awareness of Green Marketing in SMEs of Kanpur. Zuhairah, and Noor (2015) [19] studied The Impact of Green Marketing Strategy on the Firm's Performance. Drivers for Malaysian SMEs to Go Green studied by the previous authors. Krishnamoorthy *et al* (2012) [20], Kirushanthy (2015)[21] studied the Factors contributing the failure of the SME scales enterprises. Newaz *et al* (2015) [22], Adoption of E-Commerce by SMEs in Sri Lanka. This research fills the gap by researching green advertising messages of SMMEs in Northern province, Sri Lanka.

## III. UNIQUENESS OF THE RESEARCH

Northern SMMEs, have many marketing problems related to their products. Marketing problems can be solved through green strategies. Green messaging, is a way expressing the green contents' products, what they have to secure the environment and the consumers, who want to consume the products, which never hazards the consumers. It is the best way which is already identified in many countries to secure small and micro level businesses. Identifying the green messages and their inefficiency should be reported by the applied oriented researches to give solution to the underdeveloped sector. No studies focused on the green messages and their contents posted by the SMMEs, which needs a remarkable solution for the rehabilitation of the northern part to reinforce the sector as well. Therefore, Preset study intends to identify the green messages, posted by the SMMEs in Northern province, to give a path to capture a new segment to their business.

RQ: Do SMMEs have enough green message content to capture new market segments

### Research objectives

1. To identify the content, which they have to convey their green messages to their consumers.
2. To suggest the new ideas to have more contents appropriate for the present market for greener perspective.

#### IV. RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the population growth rate and the poor wastage management in some countries causes many environmental related problems. Specially in 21th century mass production, and many competitive marketing activities boom environmental problems and natural disasters. Many wastages, which can not be disposed become a problem for environmental and its health [5]. According to these findings firms as well as consumers will not survive, if they are not concerned on natural environment [7]. Sustainability is a need for everybody, by having strategies to protect the place, where we are in [7]. Now people everywhere know that the environment problems such as water, air, and land pollutions are related to the consumption activities of each and every one [6]. According to his theme, modern marketing has duties to understand the needs of consumers, and to satisfy these needs, and it should be identified via best marketing practices to secure the environment and customers. Because of these activities green customers emerged, who do not consume goods or services which emitted hazardous effects during production, marketing and consuming process, affect other countries badly, contains parts from animals and plants under danger. In any firm manager must identify the physical and ecological environmental protection, in order to compete the market [23], it can be done through making product and services as more step further from, just having a marketing strategies, and to be creator of quality life [24]; [12]. Easty (2009) [25] outlined that a firm should adjoin with the environmental protection projects done by government, Kurtz (2009)[26] expressed that ecology which is the relationship between organism and natural environment, and effected by the day to day production and marketing activities. Even the firms have environmental protection activities within and outside their companies. They fail to inform the green consumers effectively. From the Papadopoulos (2009) [10] point of view, a firm which has greener activities in its product designation, production process, distribution, and consumption activities, can make a profit from environmentally sensitive consumers.

Green advertisement is one of the important tools to promote green awareness about ecofriendly products, and how a firm assists an environmental protection or environmental developments [27]. Green advertisement messages enhance the good name of the companies and their products [28]. Good, steady environmental messages can be efficient for companies' success [29]. At the same time misstrustfulness about green advertisement claims may be caused from embodiments [30]. Strategic marketing are drivers of organizational positioning in a dynamic environment, and that it helps to enhance the development of new product/ service for existing markets. SMEs should thus adopt more modern technological marketing tool to improve on their performance. Green innovation and the green promotion have a positive effect on the firms' performance [19].

The five drivers determine the green behavioral concept application in SMEs, are; economic benefits, financial incentives, stakeholders demand, legislation, resources, motivation and knowledge [20].

The consumers optimistically respond to green advertising, the companies and their products. The firms should stress their environmental actions, which will allow consumers to differentiate between "green" firms and "non-green" firms as green products are in demand. In addition, the application of green methods in production and green product attributes should be emphasized to convince and attract consumers. A green advertising campaign should be associated with a clear, transparent, understandable and concise environmental claim, through which the firms will be able to grab the consumers' attention [31].

#### V. METHODOLOGY

##### Purpose

The purpose of the study is to analyze the greener advertising messages. on the Newspaper advertisements, Broachers and Labels designed by the SMMEs in Northern province of Sri Lanka. This study intends to analyze the text message which

provide a message to answer the importance of environment protection, content and sustainability

**Research Design**

Micro, small and medium level entrepreneurs, who designed environmental related advertising strategy to target greener advertisement were considered in the study. Due to the Limited number of green message on related printed media, newspaper, Broacher and Labels were taken to analyze the content, in the year 2015. From January to November 42 green messages were collected to the purpose of the study.

**Sampling method**

Population of the study was the green advertisements, delivered by the SMMEs. Due to the limited number of green advertisements placed by the SMMEs, in the northern province, to accomplish the purpose of the research, the 42 advertisements, and labels, which match with the objective were collected as, samples for this research.

In qualitative research, there are variety of sampling methods available to answer the complex and simple research questions. The sampling method is hinge on the methodology, which the researcher uses to answer the research questions [32]. According to Saunders et. al (2007) [33], qualitative analysis has no purpose to generalize the findings from the sample to population, it is to explore the in-depth understanding of the phenomena from the richness of data collected from saturating. In practice, judgment sample also known as purposeful sample is the most common sampling technique. The researcher actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research question. This can involve developing a framework of the variables that might influence an individual's contribution and based on the researcher's practical knowledge of the research area the available literature and evidence from the study itself [34]. This study followed the sampling requirements for qualitative study based on the former researcher's perspectives.

**Analysis**

Content analysis is an acceptable method for redeveloping tools and theories [14]. Qualitative content analysis is one of numerous research methods used to analyze text data. Other methods include ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, and historical research. Research using qualitative content analysis focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text [35]. Text data in verbal, print, or electronic form and have been obtained from narrative responses, open-ended survey questions, interviews, focus groups, observations, or print media such as articles, books, or manuals [36]. The goal of content analysis is "to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study" [37]. Present study followed the content analysis to understand the green advertisement messages delivered by Small, medium, and micro level enterprises.

Table 1: Green messages from SMMEs

	messages	Product category	Message category
1	Good product for safety life	Food	Product oriented
2	Green products for Greener environment	Food	Product oriented
3	Green house	Printing	Process oriented
4	Natural ingredients	Food	Product oriented
5	Manual process	Food	Process oriented
6	Hygienic	Food	Product oriented
7	Health and safety first in food	Food	Product oriented
8	100% ground pure natural spices	Food	Product oriented
9	High medical values	Food	Product oriented
10	Good traditional treatments	Food	Environmental reality
11	Anti-inflammatory effects	Food	Product oriented

12	Cancer prevention agent	Food	Product oriented
13	Protects form cardiovascular diseases	Food	Product oriented
14	100% natural cotton	Garment	Product oriented
15	More nutrition	H a n d graft	Product
	Sea-sells make beautiful environment	H a n d graft	Environment re-ality
16	Feel of culture	H a n d -graft	Image oriented
17	Unique flavor	food	Product oriented
18	Social sustainability through Palmira artisans	H a n d craft	Environment re-ality
19	No harmful flavors	Food	Product oriented
20	It is a natural form	Food	Product oriented
21	High content of pure vitamin C	Food	Product oriented
22	Exotic bio fencing	Food	Product oriented
23	Uniquely Yalpannam	H a n d craft	Process oriented
24	Traditionally designs haram	H a n d craft	Process oriented
25	No toxic wastages	G a r -ments	Process oriented
26	Environmental packaging	Food	Process oriented
27	Paper packing	Food	Process oriented
28	Natural Fruit extracts	Food	Product oriented
29	Natural color addition	Food	Product oriented
30	Natural flavors	Food	Product oriented
31	Fat free ingredients	Food	Product oriented
32	Natural digestive components	Food	Food
33	Rebuilding war affected places	Washing products	Environmental re-ality
34	Profit for helping lonely children	Washing products	Environmental re-ality
35	20% profit for youth development in war affected paces	Washing products	Environmental re-ality
36	Eco wash powder	Washing products	Product oriented
37	Natural content	Food	Product oriented
38	Friendly technology	Service	integrated
39	Power saving	P o w e r source	integrated

40	Paperless studies	E d u c a -tion	integrated
41.	Natural atmosphere	Service	Environmental re-ality
42	Organic	Food	Product oriented

Carlson et al (1993) [14] classified the green claim advertisements into five types as 1) Product oriented messages are oriented towards to product's ecofriendly specifications 2) process oriented advertising messages are oriented towards firms' ecofriendly process 3) Image oriented -claims make the company related with common activity or effect which is supported by public 4) environmental reality: green messages related to environmental real problems 5) integrated: any one messages consisted of product, image and environmental reality explained as an integrated message.

Present study selected the green messages from the 98 advertising messages. Then it listed out under the type of product, then based on the Carlson's classification. 42 green advertising messages were classified in table I According to the table, product orientated green messages are great number compared to other categories. This study found that in relation to environmental reality, many firms tried to express their efforts on post war development and rehabilitation under the environmental reality green messages. There are few advertisement messages related to the specified categories. In the war affected Northern province many SMMEs struggle to win the market conditions. Many past studies identified that green promotion messages can be used as a strategy to survive in the market [19].

In the war affected places people have to work hard to protect the environment, and should encourage the customers through effective green messages. In Northern province this study explored that not enough green messages are in the environments. SMMEs have to develop effective green message to attract the local as well as the foreign customers. According to table 1 there are 22 product oriented green advertising messages, 6 process oriented green messages ,1 image oriented green message, 7 environmental reality green advertising messages,

and 3 integrated green advertising messages were identified from the collected advertising messages designed by the SMMEs in the northern provinces. It was noted that not enough green advertising messages are in the provinces. Green messages can be used as some survival strategies in the affected area to capture the consumer minds as position strategy.

### Implication for SMM marketing

Marketing environment in Northern province has undergone deep changes since 1983 to 2009, when internal civil war end was announced. Post war marketing environment, and competition among the SMMEs, and the penetrated marketers has hit each and every category, and therefore local brands had to redefine the norms of existence. Brand communication had to respond to the changes taking place in the product category and the marketing, environment. Thus, it would be interesting to study the content of advertising messaging posted by the SMMEs' commercials and analyze how and in which way the communication has changed for the, product. The researcher did a qualitative content analysis taking narrative analysis to show whether the SMMEs have enough green advertising messages to change the product position in the market place.

Industrial development based organizations and the government are facilitating to innovate new ideas for resolving the marketing problems of SMMEs in Northern province. Compared to the imported products into Sri Lankan market, locally made products are very costly and poor quality in nature due to high cost of production and the lack of finishing technology to reshape the produced products to attract the consumers in the market. It is very difficult to compete with the cost of production of the imported goods, which are not environmental friendly. One way to capture the local and migrated consumers in other countries is to show the green attributes, which are consisted with the products produced by the SMMEs. This research identified that there are no enough green messages available in the market. Process oriented, image oriented, environmental reality oriented, and the integrated

messages are delivered by the SMMEs, who never really know the green strategies in their business. This study gives the implication to the SMMEs, who have the integrated messages to succeed the business. It could be specified that the SMMEs who haven't adopted these strategies in their messages can improve the message in a greener perspectives and can compete with the penetrated marketers.

### REFERENCES

- [1]. Morgan, R.E. and Strong, C.A. "Market orientation and dimensions of strategic orientation", *European journal of marketing*, 32(11/12), pp.1051-1073, 1998.
- [2]. Uthayan, Local SMEs are boycotting against the penetrated marketers an article published on 03/06/2014, a local news paper northern Sri Lanka, 2014.
- [3]. Shivany, S. Velnanpy, T. and Kajendra, K. "The cases of women (Micro) Marketers in Northern Province, Sri Lanka", *Journal of Business Studies Volume1(1)*, Pages 12-23, Published by Faculty of Management studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna, 2015.
- [4]. Jain, S.K. and Kaur, G. "Green marketing: An attitudinal and behavioural analysis of Indian consumers", *Global Business Review*, 5(2), pp.187-205, 2004.
- [5]. Strong, Carolyn. *The Impact of Environmental Education on Children's Knowledge and Awareness of Environmental Concerns*, *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, Vol:4 No:3, p.349-355, 1998.
- [6]. Polonsky, M.J. and Mintu-Wimsatt, A.T. *Environmental marketing: strategies, practice, theory, and research*. Psychology Press, 1995.
- [7]. Vogel, D.J. "Is there a market for virtue? The business case for corporate social responsibility", *California Management Review*, 47(4), pp.19-45, 2005.
- [8]. Story, M., Kaphingst, K.M., Robinson-O'Brien, R. and Glanz, K. *Creating healthy food and eating environments: policy and environmental approaches*. *Annu. Rev. Public Health*, 29, pp.253-272, 2008.
- [9]. McDaniel, Stephen W. David H. Rylander Morgan, R.E. and Strong, C.A., "Market orientation and dimensions of strategic orientation", *European journal of marketing*, 32(11/12), pp.1051-1073, 1993.
- [10]. Papadopoulos, I., Karagouni, G., Trigkas, M. and Platogianni, E., "Green marketing. The case of timber certification. coming from sustainable forests management, promotion", In *Annual International EuroMed Conference Proceedings (Vol. 2)*, Oct 2009.
- [11]. Ahmed, N. *Cross- Cultural Analysis of Advertising from the United States and Indian*, 2000. Available at: [www.dissertstion.com/library/1120842a.htm](http://www.dissertstion.com/library/1120842a.htm)

- [12]. Gurbuz, E., Akin, M. and Karabag, O. "Content Analysis of "Green" Claims in Advertisements", *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 31(1), pp.58-66, 2012.
- [13]. Dai, X., Goh, T.T. and Cheng, S. A Content Analysis of Green Advertising in China, 2014.
- [14]. Carlson, L., Grove, S.J. and Kangun, N. "A content analysis of environmental advertising claims: A matrix method approach", *Journal of advertising*, 22(3), pp.27-39, 1993.
- [15]. Akyol, A.C. and Kilineç, O. environmental claims in the magazine advertisements: a content analysis of ekoiq magazine. *electronic Turkish Studies*, 9(8), 2014.
- [16]. Chahal, H., Dangwal, R. and Raina, S. "Conceptualization, development and validation of green marketing orientation (GMO) of SMEs in India: A case of electric sector", *Journal of Global Responsibility*, 5(2), pp.312-337, 2014.
- [17]. Dzisi, S., John-Engelbert, S. and Ofori, D. "Globalization and SMEs in Ghana: Effects, Challenges and the Way Forward. *Journal of Business and Enterprise Development*", 4(1), 2014.
- [18]. Singh, N. K. and Singh, M. "Awareness of Green Marketing in Smes of Kanpur", *PARIPEX-Indian Journal of Research*, 4(11), 2016.
- [19]. Zuhairah, H. Noor Azman A. The Impact of Green Marketing Strategy on the Firm's Performance in Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Volume 172, 27 January 2015, Pages 463-470. Contemporary Issues in Management and Social Science Research, 2015.
- [20]. Krishna Moorthy, M. Peter y. Mahendra Kumar, C, Lawrence , A. "Drivers for Malaysian SMEs to Go Green", *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, September 2012, Vol. 2, No. 9 ISSN: 2222-6990, 2012.
- [21]. Kirushanthi, K. "Factors contributing the failure of the SM scales enterprises- A survey based study in Mannunnai North divisional secretariat division , Baticaloa District", proceedings, international conference on contemporary management (ICCM), driving through, productivity and innovation , faculty of management studies university of Jaffna, 2015.
- [22]. Newaz, S., Gunapalan, S., Rashika, M. F. 2015. "Adoption of E-Commerce by SMEs in Sri Lanka", Reference to Eastern province. proceedings, international conference on contemporary management (ICCM), driving through, productivity and innovation, faculty of management studies university of Jaffna, 2015.
- [23]. Keller, G.M. *Industry and the environment: Toward a new philosophy. Vital Speeches*, 54(5), pp.154-157, 1987.
- [24]. Emgin, Övgü; Türk, Zehra, "Yeşil Pazarlama", *Mevzuat Dergisi*, Sayı 78, 2004.
- [25]. Esty, Daniel, Winston, Andrew S. "Green to Gold: How Small Companies Use Environmental Strategy to Innovate Create Value, and Build Competitive Advantage", Yale University Press, p. 3, 2009.
- [26]. Kurtz, David L. H., MacKenzie, F. Snow, Kim *Contemporary Marketing, Marketing and Ecology*, Cengage Inc, Nelson Education, Toronto, p.113-114, 2009.
- [27]. Chan, R.Y. "Environmental attitudes and behavior of consumers in China: survey findings and implications", *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 11(4), pp.25-52, 1999.
- [28]. Iyer, E. and Banerjee, B. *Anatomy of Green Advertising*. *Advances in consumer research*, 20(1), 1993.
- [29]. Dorf, R.E. Multifunctional card system. U.S. Patent 6,189,787, 2001.
- [30]. Shrum, L.J., McCarty, J.A. and Lowrey, T.M. "Buyer characteristics of the green consumer and their implications for advertising strategy", *Journal of Advertising*, 24(2), pp.71-82, 1995.
- [31]. Yu, Y., Chen, D., Zhu, B. and Hu, S. Eco-efficiency trends in China, 1978-2010: Decoupling environmental pressure from economic growth. *Ecological indicators*, 24, pp.177-184, 2013.
- [32]. Marshall, M.N. Sampling for qualitative research. *Family practice*, 13(6), pp.522-526, 1996.
- [33]. Saunders, M.A.R.K. and Lewis, P.H.L.L.P. Thornhill. *Research methods for business students*, 4, 2007.
- [34]. Patton, M.Q. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. SAGE Publications, inc, Management: Text and Cases, 7th ed., 1990.
- [35]. Budd, R.W., Thorp, R.K. and Donohew, L. *Content analysis of communications*, 1967.
- [36]. Kondracki, N. L. & Wellman, N. S. "Content analysis: Review of methods and their applications in nutrition education". *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 34, 224-230, 2002.
- [37]. Downe-Wamboldt, B. *Content analysis: method, applications, and issues*. *Health care for women international*, 13(3), pp.313-321, 1992.