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**Diploma Thesis**

**Green Marketing Strategies of the Turkish Dairy Industry  
in Marmara Region**

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# **Green Marketing Strategies of the Turkish Dairy Industry in Marmara Region**

## **Abstract**

The world has become a small society with constantly increasing technology. The new generation is instantly adapting to those changes and globalization has radically changed the traditional consumption conception. Even now, this new trend, which we see in its latest marketing strategies, is pushing companies into the new marketing research (e.g. green marketing) and are often confronted by consumers who are sensitive to global environmental problems. Few of the businesses in Turkish Food Industry performs a variety of sustainable practices in order to ensure the economic development of the green economy. Since it is no longer possible for consumers to remain indifferent to environmental problems, businesses need to develop their strategies in this direction. Businesses related research is limited, so this research offers certain solutions and suggestions for closing this gap further.

**Keywords:** changing consumers, dairy industry, marketing strategies, green marketing

# **1 Introduction**

By the end of the twentieth century, a rapid change has taken place across the world with the growing economy and advancing technologies. As a result, marketing concepts, consumption, production, and lifestyles of societies have changed.

Today's society has turned into a society wherein all economic, cultural and social relations are built around the consumption concept. Consumption has reached quantitatively serious dimensions and the entire system depends on it. Consumers started to convert their consumption habits into personal decisions.

Consumption has become a process which includes sensory perceptions that do not only rely on rational dimensions. This particular circumstance requires a better observation of consumers' behaviour, habits and experiences.

The fact that environmental problems are encountered in consumers' social lives enables them to become more aware of the fact that environmental resources sustain their own lives. As a result, the number of consumers who are aware of their responsibilities towards the environment and who act in line with these responsibilities have emerged. This trend led to the emergence of green consumer and environmentalist consumer concepts. The consumer audience is more concerned about purchasing and consumption processes and is more sensitive to the use of natural resources in production processes and the recycling of products.

Furthermore, young people who are aware of the increasing environmental problems exhibit more responsible behaviours towards environmental problems. For example, generation Y which is thought to shape the consumption society, is the first generation whose real identity is referred to as consumption and known to be influenced by its environment in purchasing decisions, conducts much research before the purchase decision and consults individuals with whom they interact with products and services through social media channels. Therefore, analysis of environmental responsibility and attitude towards green advertising are based on Y and Z generations since they are forming a significant marketing target.

Many scientific studies show continuously increasing trend in global warming, which also causes unfavorable landscape changes at the local level. Although some large-scale enterprises carry out various practices related to the green economy under the names of sustainable production and social responsibility projects, such applications remain generally limited to large-scale enterprises in the Turkish food industry.

## **2 Objectives and Methodology**

### **2.1 Objectives**

This thesis aims to determine the profile of modern Turkish milk consumers. The survey measures the impact of this consumer group on green marketing strategy of the Turkish dairy industry to encourage all dairy industries to develop green marketing strategies. It will end by making recommendations to the Turkish industrialists and identifying foreseen benefits.

### **2.2 Methodology**

For this purpose, a survey is conducted of at least 200 consumers in the 17 to 35 age group from the Marmara region. The attitudes of participants towards the green advertisement and environmental responsibilities are determined. For questionnaire form consists of two parts. In the first part, there are five questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the consumers such as gender, age, educational status, household income and marital status. The second part of the survey consists of 30 questions to determine the environmental responsibilities of consumers and attitudes for green advertising. The answers to these questions are structured with 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = Strongly Agree). SPSS and excel are used for analyzing of data.

### **3 Results and Discussion**

Firstly, it was examined whether consumers' attitudes towards green advertising differ according to their low and high environmental responsibilities. Accordingly, it was found that consumers with high environmental responsibility had more positive attitudes towards green advertisements than consumers with low environmental responsibility.

As per the result of the study, gender does not affect both the environment responsibly and attitudes towards green advertisements. Although participants age scale close to each other (between 17-38 years old), it is clear that 17-25 years old participants are showing more responsible behavior towards environment than other groups. Also, single people are more responsible and sensitive in term of environmental issues then married couples.

It was revealed that the income and education characteristics of the consumers are important variables in terms of both responsible environmental behaviours and positive attitudes towards green advertisements. Results show that highly educated people have different responses to green advertisements than other groups. Furthermore, the income level of consumer differentiates the groups based on environmental responsibility. The common belief about income is that, as individuals' income increases, their environmental responsibilities are improved because they can choose green products with higher costs than other products. On the other hand, results show that the middle class have a different perspective on environmental responsibly. In the meantime, low class and high-class consumers act the same way against environmental issues. Thus it is not accurate to say that people who have low income and high income are not responsible for environmental issues. Because of these complex results at the income level, this situation should be clarified with more data and will be explained in future researches.

## **4 Conclusion and Recommendation**

Finally, regardless of product and service, environmentalism is moving towards a reality that marketing strategies cannot ignore. It is no longer possible for overall society to remain indifferent to global environmental changes, since the agriculture and animal husbandry are among frontiers facing those changes. Sustainability must be at the basis of every successful business. By reducing waste and energy consumption, companies can reduce costs and can search for environmental solutions across the entire production line. Furthermore, green economy practices give enterprises a competitive advantage.

It should be noted that green consumers do not only buy a green product, but also a green image of the business. Therefore; the manufacturer of the green product, the organization, should ensure that all other activities are green. If the green processes do not apply simultaneously as a whole, the message can provide minimum reliability on the customer side, and at the same time, the company is constantly at risk of being criticized by different groups.

My recommendation for the Turkish dairy farms is to produce biogas by using organic wastes in animal husbandry. This system saves energy, reduces the greenhouse effect by preventing pollution in nature, and can also be used for electricity generation and heating. The lack of a wastewater treatment system of most small enterprises should install factories in the same location and connecting them to a single treatment system. Also, small cheese factories usually discard whey which damages the environment. Cheese factories can use the whey to convert them into milk powder can be used in different areas. Collaboration can be made with TetraPak, which has invested in new technology and sustainability. For example, with OneStep processing technology, milk production can be made more efficient by allowing producers to produce ultra-high-temperature (UHT) milk from milk powder in one continuous process.

ESL (Extended Shelf Life) applications should be expanded in Turkey. In this technology, the system allows milk bacteria to be separated from milk at low temperature and provides a shelf life of at least 21 days when stored below 8°C. ESL technology, instead of the traditional pasteurization process, using microfiltration process, the product is prevented from excessive heat treatment, preserves the flavor and nutritional value of milk.

Nevertheless, dairy industries should note that green marketing strategies are the channels used to engage sustainable initiatives of companies to consumers. These strategies are creating an advantage by implement awareness for companies. Product labels and trademarks are the most effective ways to demonstrate companies' actions with sustainable products.

Due to limitation of time, 200 survey could be collected and the territory of Marmara Region, which cannot be extensively studied. Hypotheses should be clarified with more data and will be explained in future researches.



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