Green Marketing and Consumer Behavior: An Analytical Literature Review and Marketing Implications

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Abstract

The article's purpose has been to conduct a comprehensive and critical review of the empirical literature on green marketing and consumer behavior to determine emerging issues and trends. It begins with an outline of the relevant theoretical framework that underpins green marketing and consumer behavior. Next, the paper presents a rigorous analysis of the current scientific literature. This is followed by an assessment of emerging trends and issues derived from the literature review. Lastly, the article draws relevant marketing implications and outlines appropriate recommendations for managerial decision-making.

Keywords: Green, Marketing, Strategy, Environment, Sustainability, Consumers, Behavior, Attitude

1. Introduction

During the past several decades, firms' investments in environmental initiatives have drawn attention from the media and society. Indeed, the media have performed a crucial function in disseminating ecological worries. The significant media coverage of environmental disasters helped to transform many specific problems into major public issues. As a result of the media's emphasis on initiatives related to ecology, environmental protection, environmental degradation, and climate change, consumers are increasingly worried about the earth. This concern has raised ecological awareness levels and influenced how consumers live and the products they buy and consume. Green consumers' orientation has thus increased interest in the relationship between marketing, consumer behavior, and the environment (Paco & Reis,

2012).

According to a past study, 82% of firms plan to spend more on green marketing. Moreover, 74% of these firms planning to increase green-marketing investments plan to leverage the Internet, while only 50% plan to use green advertisements via traditional media (Minton et al., 2012). Green marketing is the incorporation of environmental issues into marketing plans and strategies. Although some research highlighted that the concepts green, eco, ecological, environmental, sustainable, and sustainability related to the term marketing might have slightly different meanings and may reflect a gradual development of the concept over time, this literature review paper uses them interchangeably (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). The purpose of the paper is to conduct an analytical review of the literature on Green Marketing and related concepts.

1.1 Objectives of the Paper

The objectives of the article are to assess and analyze the concepts of green marketing and consumer behavior, the theoretical underpinnings, current empirical literature, emerging trends and issues, and provide marketing implications and appropriate recommendations for managerial decision-making.

2. Research Methodology

A literature review involves searching, assessing, analyzing, and synthesizing the most important and relevant issues evaluated in a field to uncover trends and direction and to develop new theoretical foundations. In the discipline of green marketing, and other social sciences, researchers utilized three main literature review strategies: bibliometric reviews, meta-analysis, and systematic/integrative reviews. Bibliometric studies rigorously analyze past research by deploying statistical techniques to unearth trends and citations of a particular concept by year, author, journal, and research question. Meta-analysis is a quantitative review methodology that seeks aggregate directions and impact sizes by synthesizing findings across research, assessing those results to discover meaningful and methodological study attributes that result in differences in research discoveries and developing and evaluating research hypotheses utilizing data-analytic techniques. Systematic reviews present a critical deliberation on a specific research issue by analyzing and synthesizing extant literature, summarizing past contributions, discovering knowledge gaps, and recommending areas for future research. The research method employed in this paper adopts the systematic literature review process since it allows the author to use a transparent procedure, enabling the researcher to collect the broadest perspective of research in green marketing (Adarkwah & Malonaes, 2022).

3. Theoretical Framework of the Paper

The theoretical framework for this article integrates social judgment theory, self-determination theory, agenda-setting theory, social contract theory, regulatory focus theory, and the theory of reasoned action. According to social judgment theory, the structure of an attitude mirrors the latitudes of acceptance, rejection, and non-commitment. For example, consumers have different reference standards (i.e., anchors) when assessing stimuli

(i.e., persuasive information). The self-determination theory elaborates further on the role of individual differences in ad-based information processing. According to the theory, individuals have intrinsic or psychological needs that drive action (Cho, 2015).

The agenda-setting theory proposes that mass media tells the public what and how to think. The theory was expanded to assert that mass media tells the public what to think about (first-level agenda setting) and influences the public on how to think about issues, people, or objects (second-level). First-level agenda setting is related to the transfer of salience of specific objects (issues, people, companies, activities) from one agenda to another. In contrast, second-level agenda setting is limited to the transfer of salience of the attributes of these objects (Fernando et al.,2014).

The social contract theory for business stipulates that corporations derive their legitimacy from the consent of the society that they serve to abide by their decisions and actions. Society would give this consent in anticipation of some derived social benefits from such business decisions and actions (Oyewole, 2001).

The basic tenet of regulatory focus theory is that individuals attend especially closely to information relevant to the dominant focus and allocate greater weight to product attributes comparable with that focus. In other words, their attitude toward a product is more favorable when its deliverables benefits match their self-regulatory orientations.

Lastly, the theory of reasoned action assumes that individuals consider the consequences of their decision before they choose to engage or not engage in a given behavior. As a result, people form intentions to perform behaviors that stem from a person's attitude toward the behavior and his or her perception of other's opinions. The theory attempts to explain environmental consumer behavior toward environmentally friendly products (Papista & Krystallis, 2013).

4. Review of the Empirical Literature

4.1 Definitions of Related Concepts

The initial definition associated with green marketing can be traced to 1976 when academic scholars emphasized that ecological marketing was focused on all marketing initiatives that contributed to environmental problems and helped provide a solution for environmental challenges. Over the decades, several other definitions have been advanced. The concept has transformed and turned highly structured, as reflected by the definition of sustainable marketing as the sequential activities of planning, implementing, executing, and controlling the development, production, pricing, promotion, and distribution of goods and services in a manner that meets the following three criteria: (1) consumer desires, wants, and needs are satisfied, (2) firms objectives and goals are achieved, and (3) the process is consistent with the environment and eco-system. This definition shows how green marketing is the foundation for environmentally friendly production and business sustainability (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017).

Green marketing is one of the significant trends in modern business organizations. Its

strategic objectives are communicated in more environmentally sensitive advertising activities, and many claims of ecological sustainability are made at the points of sale (Ku et al., 2012). The diamond model of genuine green marketing includes (1) The ability to rise beyond commercial considerations; (2) The ability to design manufacturing processes as a craft; (3) The leveraging of a strong visual identity; and (4) A firm's social network of stakeholders (Parkman & Krause, 2018).

Green products are known as friendly and green for a reason. When consumers purchase a green household cleaner, they anticipate ingredients to be natural, safe, and genuine; the product to be gentle and harmless to children and the environment; and the manufacturing process to be responsible. However, it is exceedingly difficult for advertisers to communicate a product's environmental credentials because this is a relatively complicated product feature. Environmental sustainability complications derive from its subjective assessment and definition and relatively vague future outcomes (Joshi & Kronrod, 2019). Green product concept testing assesses consumer reaction to a green product idea at the beginning of product development (Lee et al., 2014). Green, unlike heavy or small, is a relatively complicated feature related to the product's nonliteral aspects. Consumers anticipate environmental products to contain nonliteral attributes such as equity and environmental harmony, enhanced effective environmental performance, and lower environmental effects (Joshi & Kronrod, 2019).

4.2 Green Brands

The academic literature defines a green brand as a particular set of brand features and benefits associated with the common environmental effect of the brand and the consumer perception as being environmentally friendly. Green product features may result from environmentally friendly manufacturing processes, responsible product usage, or product elimination (Papista & Krystallis, 2013).

4.2.1 Types of Value of Green Brands

Economic Value—Economic value of a green product or a consumption experience occurs when this serves as a way to achieve a consumer's objectives. Alternatively, functional value is used to depict the perceived satisfaction acquired from a brand's ability for functional, utilitarian, or physical performance. Research suggests a positive association between product performance, as assessed based on the perceptions of product quality and consumer value.

Social value is the perceived satisfaction of an alternative's association with one or more particular social groups. Brands can meet the fundamental needs for social acceptance and outward self-esteem and project reference group identity; moreover, the social value of a brand is aimed to add favorably to brand commitment and loyalty. Group identity is also a crucial reference point for developing an ethical consumption lifestyle, as ethical consumption connects consumers to family, friends, society, and the market. Particularly in green marketing, the social rewards and dividends of behaving according to existing social norms promote and foster consumers' involvement in environmentally conscious behavior.

Hedonic Value derives from consumers' self-pleasure in consumption activities valued for

their own sake as ends in themselves. Research also shows that playfulness and aesthetics are sources of value, although the role of these factors in the relationship development with the brand still needs to be researched.

Altruistic Value—Altruistic value involves a genuine concern for how one's consumption habits impact others, where this experience is seen as a self-justifying end-in-itself—as when participating in ethically acceptable behaviors in which virtue is its benefit. Many consumption activities and experiences are imbued with ethical elements, as the self-approval achieved is a strong motivation for ethical practices. Research shows that consumers acquire psychological rewards, such as assisting others in need, through their patronage of ethical products, resulting in a feeling of well-being and contentment (Papista & Krystallis, 2012).

4.3 Green Consumer Segmentation

Research has identified one way of segmenting consumers from a green marketing strategy perspective (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). The Roper survey separates consumers into the following categories:

True Blue Greens (9%): True Blues possess firm environmental values and convictions and take it upon themselves to bring about positive change. They are over four times more likely not to purchase products made by firms that lack environmental awareness.

Greenback Greens (6%): Greenbacks are distinct from True Blues. This is because they need to be more politically engaged. However, they are more willing than the average consumer to patronize environmentally friendly products.

Sprouts (31%): Sprouts believe in environmental causes in theory but not practice. Sprouts will only purchase a green product if it is cheaper than the non-green alternative. However, they can be convinced to patronize green products if targeted appropriately.

Grousers (33%): Grousers are typically not knowledgeable about environmental issues and need to be more confident in their ability to bring about change. They believe that environmentally friendly products are too expensive and inferior to non-green alternatives.

Basic Browns (33%): Basic Browns are too busy with day-to-day responsibilities and do not worry about environmental and social concerns (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004).

4.4 Two Perspectives of Green Marketing

Green marketing is a kind of social responsibility marketing. From a firm's perspective, green marketing is used as a critical mechanism for discovering, monitoring, and delivering on consumer needs and expectations in the context of environmental sustainability. Green marketing incorporates many tasks, such as product design and packaging modification, adjustment to the production stages, and green advertising. From the consumer perspective, green marketing means a convenient and effective way to add to the effort of environmental sustainability cause through patronizing green products. Environmental concern is typically defined as an individual's consciousness of environmental challenges and his/her willingness and ability to be part of the solutions. Consumers more conscious about the environment are

more enthusiastic about buying green products and paying a higher price than consumers who are less concerned (Lee et al., 2014).

4.5 Green Consumers

Green consumers typically seek to fulfill their economic responsibilities by patronizing environment-sustainable products (Lee et al., 2014). Consumers typically opt for more rather than less information on product disclosures. Specifically, research shows that consumers preferred full disclosure to understand sustainability dimensions (e.g., environmental impact and contribution to national wealth). Moreover, consumers preferred complete product lifecycle information instead of information relating to just one or two categories. Similarly, research suggests that if conventional products (non-green) disclosed both the ingredients and the harmful effects associated with those ingredients, consumers would choose green products instead of conventional alternatives (Cho, 2015).

To comprehend and deal with green-related challenges, research on green marketing has seen the development of new concepts such as green image, trust, satisfaction, and brand equity to measure consumer-specific behavior toward green branding activities. Thus, when a consumer contemplates environmentally harmless products, he/she may automatically favor products that express claims on environmentally sustainable attributes. On the other hand, brand signaling theory helps clarify why brand credibility can meaningfully affect consumer attitude towards a brand's green image, its environmentally perceived value, and customer-centric brand equity (Ng et al., 2014).

Past research indicates that environmentally friendly consumption is inspired by one of two rewards. On the one hand, some researchers state that benefits to the natural environment and society drive it. For instance, research claims that socially responsible consumption is socially oriented, not self-centered. Indeed, past studies suggest that consumers trade personal rewards when they purchase environmentally harmless products. Furthermore, environmentally sustainable consumption manifests a transition from decades of marketing strategies that focused on offering consumers instant benefits to offering future rewards to many generations of consumers. This implies that an other-benefit appeal is more appropriate for encouraging environmentally friendly consumption.

On the other hand, other researchers argue that rewards to the self-benefit inspire such behavior. Specifically, research shows that a self-benefit appeal is typically necessary to bring about change among consumers to act when social or environmental good is generated. In addition, research indicates that environmentally friendly products, such as detergent refills, that cost consumers less does well with ease even if their environmental dividends are little. Similarly, in a situation of consumer conservation, saving money represents a powerful alternative rationale for efficient consumption that has no connection to social conscience (Green & Peloza, 2014).

4.6 Green Marketing and CSR

In the previous two decades, firms across the globe have invested a substantial amount of resources in corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication, known as the integrated

advertising strategies intended to project an ethical and socially responsible corporate identity. Many firms have particularly emphasized ethical product differentiation—a specific strategy to CSR communications centered on differentiating a firm's products based on social and environmental sustainability. For example, Tesla and The Body Shop advocate environmental sustainability at the foundation of their positioning strategy. Proactive communication consists of articulating sustainability claims at the outset to safeguard organizational value against the reputational consequences resulting from future negative situations. Proactive environmental communications are thus unique from reactive environmental communications. Reactive environmental communications usually follow environmental damages as a means of reparation (Orazi & Chan, 2020).

4.7 Green Marketing as a Competitive Advantage

Green marketing has achieved wide acceptance among many firms as a credible competitive strategy. In executing green marketing, firms tend to embark on such tasks as (1) using packaging and inputs that are recyclable, reusable, photo-degradable, and biodegradable, (2) pollution-free manufacturing technologies, (3) aerosol-free inputs, (4) pesticides-free farming, (5) less bulky packaging, (6) chemical-free process of food preservation, and (7) natural fertilizer. While all these are crucial to reacting to consumer environmental demands, they emphasize the technical elements of green marketing. Equally significant is the ethical factor of green marketing. Green marketing should not be limited to the environment only but also to all living things in the environment. This is to say that environmental justice should inspire green marketing (Oyewole, 2001).

4.8 Green Marketing and Sustainability

A large number of frameworks depict how firm sustainability strategies evolve. However, all of these frameworks are driven by a similar assumption—that all companies follow a predictable methodology in creating the requisite skills and resources to achieve optimal conduct. Ultimately, a strong commitment should incorporate three primary attributes as follows: (1) It is a central, visible, and integral part of the company's marketing strategy; (2) It is reflected throughout the marketing mix, combining both exploitation-and exploration-oriented learning and innovation mechanisms; and (3) It contains initiatives to adopt business sustainability in marketing that are related to issues and processes involving other functional areas of a firm and its value chain. (Tollin & Christensen, 2019). According to a past study, 82% of firms plan to spend more on green marketing. Moreover, 74% of these firms planning to increase green-marketing investments plan to leverage the Internet, while only 50% plan to use green advertisements via traditional media (Minton et al., 2012).

4.9 Green Marketing Claims and Greenwashing

Green claims should be transparent, authentic, accurate, and reliable. Nevertheless, some environmental assertions pointing to green features must be more transparent and honest. Nowadays, consumers are showing high environmental signals through their buying behaviors. The influence of green purchase compels firms to adjust their marketing strategies. Greenwash is deliberately misleading consumers about a firm's environmental activities and

practices or the environmental benefits of its offerings (Chen & Chang, 2013).

Many companies overly use green claims. Ambiguous, unfounded, and potentially misleading environmental claims firms make are known as greenwashed claims. Greenwashing includes all advertising and marketing claims that intentionally deceive the consumer and the general public about the environmental benefits of a product. Since greenwashed claims are very prevalent, most green activities of a firm tend to be perceived with skepticism and considered deceitful by consumers (Fernando et al., 2014). While green marketing has emerged as a powerful competitive force, many industries need more precise, established regulations or informed customers to enable companies committed to environmentally friendly practices to distinguish themselves from opportunistic, greenwashing rivals (Parkman & Krause, 2018).

4.10 Green Advertising

While mainstream advertising has three main objectives (to inform, remind, and persuade), green advertising seeks to create awareness and favorable perceptions toward environmentally sustainable products and organizations. Furthermore, green advertising aims to educate consumers about the environmental nature of firms' products (da Paco & Reis, 2012). Researchers have explored some advertising strategies that firms can leverage to cultivate sustainable practices in consumers, including the effectiveness of the use of certain emotions in promotional appeals such as optimism; the use of emotions in recycling initiatives targeted at minors; the use of solid rhetoric; and the targeting of messages to consumers who vary on individual differences such as political ideology (Iyer & Reczek, 2017).

Firms can exhibit environmental sensitivity by utilizing several approaches; one of these marketing strategies can be environmental or green advertising. Research suggests that green advertising began in the 1970s due to the recession, driven by high oil prices and the need to address environmental concerns. Firms attempting to follow this green trend started to design and produce environmentally sustainable products to gain a competitive edge centered on this differentiating factor and started pursuing new strategies to connect to the public. As a result, marketers began to incorporate the claim "green/environmentally friendly "in promotional activities. Moreover, green messages grew through other communication platforms, such as word-of-mouth, reference groups, opinion leaders, media activities, advertisement, Internet marketing, and mobile marketing (da Paco & Reis, 2012). Since green advertising uses environmental claims, it is vital to comprehend what it means. An environmental claim is an assertion by a producer about the effects of its product's attributes on the physical environment. Environmental claims include terms such as environmentally friendly, safe for the environment, and environmentally responsible (da Paco & Reis, 2012).

5. Emerging Trends and Issues Supported by Research Findings

One purpose of the paper was to examine the themes and issues arising from consumers' perceptions of corporate environmental practices and to analyze emerging trends that firms should prepare for in the future (Fernando et al., 2014). These emerging trends and issues are discussed below.

First of all, research shows that highly involved consumers are generally more likely to engage in marketing relationships. In the case of green brands, research shows that consumers place less value on the environment and more on the functional performance of a brand when purchasing products. On the other hand, according to research, the attitudes—intention gap occurs more frequently when people are not involved in the purchase process of products (Papista & Krystalls, 2013).

Moreover, findings suggest that sustainability claims and framing effects support the attitude toward a company. This may influence crucial consumer outcomes such as purchase intentions and willingness to pay a premium price. Studies show that making the environmental impact data available along with the sustainability claim enhanced the company's assessment. These findings further suggest that consumers may utilize sustainability information if provided comprehensively yet succinctly (Cho, 2015).

Similarly, findings also support the hypothesis that the effect of green versus nongreen product-related appeal on an individual's perception of the attractiveness of a product and intention to purchase it is moderated by differences in self-regulatory focus. Consumers focusing on prevention generally favored products emphasizing their greenness in the advertising. In contrast, the nongreen headline claims were preferred for those focusing on promotion. The results suggest that product-related attributes, a claim of greenness--appealing as a virtue in its own right—are seen as an asset by prevention-focused consumers but as a liability by promotion-focused consumers (Ku et al., 2012).

Likewise, higher preference is mediated by associating salient brand names with human characteristics, such as patience or humility, linked to environmental friendliness. Market trends indicate that there is a significant economic opportunity for green products. However, in reality, green marketing only sometimes receives the desired positive response from consumers, and advertisers find it particularly difficult to convey product attributes of environmentally friendly products (Joshi & Kronrod, 2019).

Also, the magnitude of willingness to pay for environmental justice is a function of their level of awareness of the risks posed by environmental injustice, on the one hand, and their perception of these risks on the other. Both of these vary according to the socio-demographic characteristics of individual consumers. In one national survey where 1512 respondents were asked to rate 25 potential hazards in order of magnitude of risks posed, it was found that gender determined the difference among respondents' subjective perception of risk, with the males specifying lower risks (Oyewale, 2001).

Lastly, two major common themes in all stakeholders' discussions were related to (a) marketing communication credibility and (b) the impact of the company's action on the natural environment. This signifies stakeholders' skepticism will increase unless companies fulfill their green marketing claims. Although most research advocates using credible green marketing claims to avoid the greenwasher label, researchers emphasize that a lack of commitment toward implementing credible green policies is also considered greenwashing (Fernando et al., 2014).

6. Marketing Implications

Suppose green products are to become well appreciated and desired by consumers. In that case, it is crucial to understand the unique factors that should be included in advertising to promote such goods and services. One critical issue is whether including the environmental benefits of an eco-sustainable product in an ad affect consumer attitude toward the product. Research on this issue does help marketers seeking to create optimal advertising messages for their environmentally friendly products. Furthermore, firms must carefully set prices for green products while considering consumers' sensitivity to cost (Royne et al., 2012).

While green consumers may be more receptive to green marketing and advertising than others, marketing managers should be mindful not to push consumers away by using ambiguous, confusing, or even false messages. Research indicates that skepticism is healthy to a certain degree; that is, consumers should be skeptical about those advertising messages where there is potential to mislead (Paco & Reis).

Companies need to be cognizant of the fact that, irrespective of claim credibility, if their products and practices are harmful to the environment, they are perceived by consumers as green-washers. According to research, consumers' primary concern is the claim's credibility. Consumers see most claims as being exaggerated or dishonest. Green marketers, therefore, need to strengthen the source credibility of their claims—particularly energy, emissions, and packaging claims—to raise the trustworthiness of the advertising messages. Ratification by an independent and credible third party immensely enhances the credibility of claims (Fernando & Suganthi, 2014)

Lastly, given that consumers need to be sufficiently educated about the product life cycles and environmental impacts related to their purchases, disclosing sustainability information would assist consumers in making more informed choices. However, labeling can only be adequate when it gives consumers detailed information relating to their environmental impacts. Also, given that consumers possess an inadequate understanding of sustainability claims and disclosures, providing sustainability claims must enhance their overall understanding of their environmental effects (Cho, 2015).

7. Recommendations for Managerial Decision-making

In addition to doing careful research to guide strategy selection, managers should also cultivate the corporate culture. The organization and its people must support a truly green marketing strategy in order for it to succeed. Managers should encourage all employees' increased participation to generate ideas and increase enthusiasm. They should also remember that most customers and employees get satisfaction from being part of an organization committed to operating socially responsibly (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004).

Another critical element of green marketing strategy is credibility. Having a good reputation to begin with can go a long way in helping to ease customer skepticism. Companies with socially responsible corporate values will appear more credible to target audiences, but it is critical that they also back up environmental claims (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004).

Also, because customers buy products and services primarily to fulfill individual needs and wants, companies should continue highlighting the direct benefits of their products. They should continue to tout the traditional product attributes of prices, quality, convenience, and availability and make only a secondary appeal to consumers based on environmental attributes (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004).

Similarly, supporting the factors that facilitate and remove the barriers restricting environmentally friendly behaviors can promote green consumerism. Empirical results may also reveal the role of alternative value types, such as altruistic value, as essential reflectors of consumer value. Thus, marketing practitioners may be provided with new value-creation opportunities and directions to make their value offerings more attractive to the various consumer segments. Consumer value beyond products and services per se should give way to a broader and more comprehensive basis of satisfying and delighting customers by nesting those brands in the total meaningful customer experience (Papista & Krystallis, 2013).

Moreover, since consumers are not fully aware of the product life cycles and environmental impacts associated with their purchases, providing sustainability information would help them make more informed decisions. However, labeling can only be adequate when it provides them with detailed information regarding their environmental impacts. Also, given that consumers have a limited understanding of sustainability claims and disclosure, it is critical, with the provision of sustainability claims, to improve their overall understanding of their environmental impacts (Cho, 2015).

Likewise, marketers should encode green appeals regarding product-related attributes in their advertising messages to convince potentially prevention-focused consumers that the product has benefits related to gentleness. However, nongreen appeals should be chosen if consumers are likely to be promotion-focused and will, therefore, tend to respond to positive outcomes and value strength as a product attribute (Ku et al., 2012).

Furthermore, managers of eco-friendly products may need to consider the specific product category within the group of environmentally friendly products to craft the sounds of the brand name carefully. In addition, there can be multiple meanings and, consequently, multiple perceptions associated with sounds and products, including certain perceptions that marketers may not want to convey. Therefore, it is necessary for marketers to apply sound symbolism in brand names only after conducting appropriate research (Joshi & Kronrod, 2019).

Lastly, advertisers can prime attributes in green advertisements in local media so that these attributes now become the dimensions of evaluation for the public. Advertisers can emphasize positive credentials in local news media to substantiate environmental claims. Business news and information subsidies are other ways to build corporate agendas. Advertisers can also provide information subsidies to online newspapers to build their agenda before running a green campaign (Fernando et al., 2014).

8. Concluding Remarks

The green market was estimated to include some 52 million households in the USA in 1995. The market is also growing around the globe. Studies show that 88% of consumers in

Germany reportedly said they would switch brands to greener products. Corresponding statistics were 84% in Italy and 82 % in Spain. This need for greener products, the green movement, is spreading from the West to the Pacific Rim, Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Thus, it is understood why firms are implementing green marketing initiatives as a path to sustainable competitive advantage (Oyewole, 2001).

Consumer choices for products branded as environmentally sustainable may be highly diverse and address a wide variety of consumer needs. In the broad domain of green buying, consumers possess a wide range of beliefs and attitudes about any particular product's effectiveness based on its category and usage. In corroboration of this concept, studies found that one heuristic consumer utilized in assessing products were whether it has soft qualities (features) for products such as baby shampoo or hard attributes for offerings such as automobile tires (Royne et al., 2012)

The belief that an individual's actions can contribute to resolving environmental problems (terms PCE or perceived consumer effectiveness) correlates positively with environmentally conscious consumer behavior. Individuals are more likely to engage in environmental behavior when they hold positive beliefs about their PCE. Other research findings, however, show no direct relationship between PCE and behavior. Thus, PCE is often modeled as a moderator of the attitude-intention relationship. Moreover, other research supports the indirect effect of PCE on behavioral intentions, as individuals who believe they lack the necessary resources or opportunities to perform a particular behavior are unlikely to form strong behavioral intentions despite their favorable attitudes and personal/social norms. Transferring these findings into the consumer relational behavior context, individuals with low levels of PCE may also hold weaker perceptions about the ability of a green brand to offer certain types of value, e.g., altruistic, and stronger perceptions about the sacrifice associated with committing to the purchase of green brands, thus reducing the overall perceive CV (consumer value) (Papista & Krystallis, 2013).

Moreover, there is a need for greater awareness of environmental justice in green marketing. This ethical aspect of green marketing should be addressed if consumers are to derive long-term personal benefits from any business actions purported to save the physical environment. It could hardly be said that a company is ethical if its practices systematically worsen the situation of a given group in society while claiming to be green. This is the case if environmental justice is absent in any practice of green marketing. Research shows that environmental justice could only be achieved with costs (both direct and indirect) to the consuming public (Oyewole, 2001).

In conclusion, green marketing has become a successful marketing strategy nowadays. Thus, companies should capitalize on the prevalent green opportunities to distinguish and position their offerings to penetrate the green markets. The primary headwind for firms, though, is how to increase green trust in the popularity of greenwashing (Chen & Chang, 2013). Green marketing still needs to meet the aspirations of many managers and activists. Even though public opinion polls repeatedly indicate that consumers would prefer to buy a green product over a non-green alternative, all other things held constant, those other things are not always

held constant in the customers' minds. Furthermore, enthusiasm for green products has also been impacted negatively by the perception that such products are relatively inferior or do not live up to their environmental promises. While purchasing green may appeal to only some consumers, a sufficient number of buyers are potentially attracted to a green appeal. According to the Roper survey, 58% of U.S. consumers attempt to cut down electricity at home, 46% recycled newspapers, 45% return bottles or cans, and 23% purchase products made from, or packaged in, recycled inputs. Therefore, it is clear that some customers will assist firms in knowing whether greenness is an influential selling feature and how it should be integrated into the company's marketing strategy (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004).

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