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## Green Marketing: An Introduction

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### 1.1 Introduction

The green marketing concept evolved between the 1960s and early 1970s due to concerns about the impact of consumption and production patterns on the environment (Konar & Cohen, 2001). However, from the late 1980s, green marketing received significant attention as green consumerism increased (Mishra & Sharma, 2010). Green marketing involves a series of activities that go beyond the current needs of the consumers,

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taking into consideration the social interest in protecting the natural environment (Chamorro & Bañegil, 2006). Soonthonsmai (2007) defined green marketing as “actions carried out by organisations that are apprehensive about the ecology or green problems by providing the environmentally friendly goods or services to bring satisfaction among customers and the community”.

Rahman et al. (2012) described green marketing as business operations with the motive of decreasing waste through environmentally friendly products, saving energy, and encouraging the environmental health and sustainability of the society. Green marketing, also known as ecological marketing/eco-marketing and sustainable marketing (Katrandjiev, 2016), has ushered in new ways of doing business that is sustainable and profitable. Green marketing has been promoted for various reasons: eliminating wastefulness, educating consumers about eco-friendly measures, and driving the sustainability agenda in emerging markets. The conception and implementation of green marketing practices in emerging markets will require a green marketing orientation that influences organisation actions, processes, performance and improves company image (Mukonza & Swarts, 2019). Green marketing orientation is a firm’s holistic positioning towards the natural environment (Papadas et al., 2017).

According to Li et al. (2018), a number of factors have triggered the adoption of green market orientation by businesses, and these include competitive environment, peer pressure, environmentalist, policies, and legal actions. These factors, in turn, encourage internal green practice,

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strategic green orientation and supplier management. To this end, green marketing has gained momentum, largely with the change in the consumers' attitude and behaviour.

### 1.1.1 Why Green Marketing?

From the economics perspective, human needs and wants are unlimited, yet our resources are limited. This has been compounded by changing climate and depleting natural resources. In this regard, firms and institutions must develop new approaches to doing business. The need of the consumers and the environment must be collectively considered for sustainability purposes. To this end, green marketing encompasses marketing activities that are environmentally conscious while satisfying consumers and industry needs (Bhalerao, 2014).

Green marketing has become a buzzword used in the corporate world, government, and non-profit institutions. Green practices are constantly evolving, adherence to environmentalist dictates and the legal acts by government regulations have been argued for the increased attention on the subject. Given the many definitions of green marketing as alluded to earlier, there is still some confusion about what green marketing is, what are its indicators, and how do we measure green practices? These and many more questions comprise the basic conceptual issues that consumers still struggle to understand in the green marketing discussion. To ensure that the expected goals of the green movement are achieved, all stakeholders must be fully integrated into the green narrative to play active roles.

Green marketing is a crucial aspect of the sustainability practices which businesses are expected to integrate into their strategic and operational activities. With the right green marketing approach, firms would be on the path to contributing immensely to social and economic sustainability.

## 1.2 Issues and Conceptualisation

The argument on whether organisations can be green and profitable at the same time is prominent amongst issues that explain why many businesses in emerging economies are yet to adopt the green marketing practice. Ever since Polonsky and Rosenberger (2001) asked if businesses can be sustainability-conscious and profitable simultaneously, numerous studies have tried to provide answers (e.g. Moravcikova et al., 2017; Stevels, 2001; Syaekhoni et al., 2017; Yadav et al., 2016). It is evident through the findings of these studies that businesses can be sustainable and profitable at the same time. As a result of continuous findings through research and practice, businesses are beginning to inculcate green marketing management practices into the core of their business strategies (Sukhu & Scharff, 2018). To this end, it is not sufficient for businesses to adopt green marketing and management practices, but they must understand the strategic and operational antecedents of green marketing success. The growing environmental concerns affecting the wellbeing of the society, including air pollution, global warming, and environmental degradation which are outcomes of unsustainable business practices, demand that businesses engage in green marketing and implement it successfully (Martinez, 2015).

The drive towards ensuring that green marketing achieves its desired outcomes has led to various studies trying to identify the “what and how” of green marketing success. For instance, Chahal et al. (2014) identified green innovation, green process, green strategic policies, green supply chain management, and proactive energy as determinants of green marketing success in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in India. Yadav et al. (2016) identified green image as an integral aspect of green marketing that significantly affects the corporate image of hotels in India. Researchers (e.g. Sukhu & Scharff, 2018; Martinez, 2015) conceptualised green trust, green image, and green satisfaction as determinants of customer loyalty. Though green marketing has gained traction, some researchers have argued that green marketing practice increases costs and slows down business processes. Resultantly, it has a negative impact on firms’ core competitiveness and economic performance (Ambec & Lanoie, 2008; Naffziger et al., 2003). In addition, cultural dynamics are

considered to be impacting both positively and negatively on green marketing (Papadas & Avlonitis, 2014). More empirical research on the role of culture and implementation of green marketing activities is still needed.

Liu et al. (2012) proposed a green marketing framework based on the six Ps of Product, Planning, Process, People, Project, and Promotion. We posit that two additional Ps of Positioning and Place are also of importance. Under Positioning, effective green marketing communications will enable organisations to position themselves as promoters of green practices and gain competitive advantage. Positioning will create top of mind awareness of the company as a provider of green products and services. Utilising the P of Place will ensure good customer experience through environmentally friendly service delivery platforms. Additionally, channel intermediaries can be encouraged to imbibe green practices. The Ps of green marketing can serve as a benchmark for companies to assess their green marketing efforts.

It is crucial that organisations integrate green marketing into core business activities and ensure that it permeates every aspect of the business (Epstein, 2008). Thus, green marketing must be applied as a strategic and operational component of the business and not a response to societal and regulatory pressures. Singh and Pandey (2012) posit that green marketing implementation and adherence to green practices among corporations were primarily due to government pressure and legislation. Subsequently, these regulations create an environment that promotes going green and green marketing strategies that provide a valuable competitive advantage (Vural, 2015). The conceptual development of green marketing is placed on its role in responding to socio-economic challenges, acting as a vehicle to imbibe the culture of environmental responsibility in businesses which becomes a driver of sustainability practices in the larger society. Studies have established a strong connection between environmental concerns, a green market, ecopreneurship, and sustainable development (Camilleri, 2018; Chen et al., 2015; Mukonza & Swarts, 2019).

To address environmental concerns, key aspects of green marketing such as green packaging, recycling, green operations, green logistics, green advertisement, green communication, and green distribution have emerged. Green marketing has a responsibility to educate, inform,

remind, and persuade consumers so that they can choose discerningly and contribute to a more rational environmental attitude (Kardos et al., 2019). Despite the concomitant benefits of effective green marketing, some firms have been reported to be only undertaking quasi-green marketing (this is when a firm develops a green product but does not apply the principles of green pricing, green distribution, and green promotion) (Agustini et al., 2019). This implies that though an organisation has a green product offering, it does not take advantage and emphasise the green characteristics of the product in its pricing, distribution, and promotion programmes. Therefore, reference to these characteristics is limited in their marketing strategy.

Leonidou and Leonidou (2011) identified three central tenets of green marketing: strategic green marketing, tactical green marketing, and internal green marketing. Strategic green marketing orientation (SGMO) considers the long-term, top management actions and policies specifically focusing on corporate environmental strategy (Banerjee, 2002). Tactical green marketing orientation (TGMO) involves short-term actions that transform the traditional marketing mix of product, price, place and promotion. This dimension includes product-related decisions to reduce the environmental footprint (e.g. Pujari et al., 2003).

Internal green marketing orientation (IGMO) involves the pollination of environmental values across the organisation to embed a broader corporate green culture (Papadas & Avlonitis, 2014). It includes efforts to promote environmental awareness inside the organisation, through employee training. Green strategic, tactical, and operational activities often lead to business development, improvement of the natural ecosystem, and increased quality of life. Green marketing requires marketing and management strategies that can effectively address critical challenges relating to “how we define green, how we develop green products that customers will like, and how we communicate our commitment and initiatives with credibility and impact” (Ottman & Humphrey, 1993).

### 1.3 Strategic and Operational Perspectives of Green *Marketing*

Green marketing is a strategic issue (Donald, 2009), not only because being green makes a firm “good” and because being green pays. A green market orientation influences the degree and extent to which firms adjust their organisational and environmental goals to increase customer satisfaction and have a sustainable competitive advantage (Fraj et al., 2013, Papadas et al., 2017).

Building strong green industrial brands requires green marketing, green operations and green supply chain management. Also, globalisation and inter-national sourcing exert extra pressure on designing and implementing a truly green and sustainable supply chain from a global perspective. Green marketing, green brand image, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are interrelated. Thus, brands established on genuine CSR identity are more likely to change-resistant consumers and invite loyal ones (Pérez, 2009).

Punitha and Rasdi (2013) suggest that since there are a myriad of green initiatives within the industry, future research may focus on green practices employed by businesses, not-for-profit organisations, and communities which can provide more significant insights to the literature on strategic green operations perspectives and sustainable development. Thus, this book seeks to fill the literature gap by highlighting some strategic and operational perspectives of green initiatives. The strategic perspective covers green consumer behaviour, consumer buying behaviour for green products, and green-integrated marketing communication. The operational perspective discusses key aspects such as green product management, green initiatives in logistics social responsibility, green washing and the challenges in being transparent to the consumers, green marketing orientations, and firm performance. Strategic and operational issues are crucial to the success of green marketing, and therefore, require urgent attention in the quest towards sustainable business practices for sustainable development in emerging markets.

## 1.4 Format of the Book Chapter

The book is categorised into four distinct parts to aid the understanding of the discourse in the book.

Part I provides an introduction to green marketing with two chapters. Chipo Mukonza, Robert E. Hinson, Ogechi Adeola, Isaiah Adisa, Emmanuel Mogaji and Ayca Kirgiz, in Chap. 1, examined the concept of green marketing and provided discussions on green marketing practice and issues. Issues such as the adoption of green marketing and the appropriate definition of the concept of green marketing in emerging markets were highlighted. John N. Molepo and Thanyani Madzivhandila examined green business practices in emerging economies in Chap. 2. The authors noted the challenges of non-sustainable practices on business and the larger society and proposed green marketing as a crucial activities that organisations must undertake.

Part II focuses on the strategic perspectives on green marketing. Nathaniel Newman, in Chap. 3, provided an overview of the concept of green marketing. Andrews Agya Yalley and Kojo Kakra Twum in Chap. 4 considered consumer behaviour and green marketing. The authors argued that for effective green marketing of firms' eco-friendly products, there must be an understanding of consumer behaviour in shifting consumer attitudes and behaviour towards purchasing, consumption, and disposal of eco-friendly products. In Chap. 5, Vishal Kumar Laheri and Anuradha Malik examined consumer buying behaviour with regards to green products and related this to the Indian context. The chapter presented an overview of the theoretical outlook on green product management, green products market in India, and green marketing practices adopted by top Indian companies and companies worldwide. The behavioural aspects of consumer towards green products were also discussed with reference to Indian consumers. Kojo Kakra Twum and Andrews Agya Yalley in Chap. 6 highlighted the importance of integrating green marketing communication. Green marketing communication influences consumer behaviour, organisational image, and branding. The authors recommended that green marketing communication should be integrated into marketing activities of organisations in emerging markets.



Part III of the book focuses on green marketing's operational perspective, particularly product management, logistics green marketing orientations, green washing, and firm orientations. Khathutshelo Makhitha, in Chap. 7, examined green product management in emerging markets with perspective from South Africa. Makhitha observed that companies in South Africa need to increase and enhance their marketing efforts to encourage consumers to adopt green products and to increase their awareness of what to look for in green products. In Chap. 8, Berk Kucukaltan empirically examined green initiatives in logistics and social responsibility in Turkish logistics industry. Kucukaltan observed that players in Turkey's logistic industry need to adopt sustainable practices and recommended that the adoption of green initiatives will enhance competitive advantage and sustainable development. Gül Kaner, in Chap. 9, provided a practical example of a case study on green washing which is disinformation about offerings of a company and the importance of transparency in the communication of every stage of green businesses. Ajike Emmanuel and Adefulu Adesoga in Chap. 10 explored literature to provide discussions on green marketing orientations, and firm performance in Nigeria and the authors observed that green marketing orientations affect firm performance in the country.

Part IV concludes the book with Opportunities, Challenges and Implications for theory, practices, and policy formulation. Daniel Ofori, in Chap. 11, discussed the opportunities and challenges of green marketing while Chipso Mukonza, Ogechi Adeola, and Isaiah Adisa highlighted the implications for theory, practice, and policy formulation in Chap. 12.

## 1.5 Conclusion

Green marketing has emerged as a marketing philosophy, with a focus on sustainable growth. Numerous factors have led to the adoption of green marketing practices, such as changing customer preferences, government regulations and the need for organisation to position themselves as environmentally friendly brands. Therefore, green marketing highlights a new dimension of businesses' economic, social, and environmental responsibilities. Green marketing is premised on the knowledge that a

relationship exists between the natural environment and the organisation. This book seeks to understand how to influence consumer behaviour towards sustainability practices, provide strategic and operational perspectives of green marketing, and discuss how companies can promote green products, green innovations, and embark on green awareness campaigns to satisfy customer needs and wants in contemporary times.

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