

Green Marketing Practices and Organizational Sustainability in Corporate Firms in Rivers State

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Abstract: This study examines the impact of green marketing practices on organizational performances. Adopting a descriptive and quantitative design. The study used a structured questionnaire to obtain data from 162 marketing managers and brand ambassador of different organization in Rivers state. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 was utilized for data analysis. Findings from the study revealed that organizations who strategically carry-out green marketing practices by producing and making available green products and services enjoyed high probability and sustained business performance in the market than their competitors, as consumers are beginning to be environmentally conscious and sensitive to green products and services, which gives them extra value and satisfaction, organizations are also realizing the need to embrace green business culture in order to continue to provide customers and consumers with desired value. It was recommended among other things that organizations should adopt and see green marketing practices as a business norm and part of their corporate social responsibility.

Keyword: green marketing, green product, organization

I. INTRODUCTION

The rate of environmental degradation to natural environment in recent years is giving the society much concern than ever. Most of the environmental degradations are as a result of mass production, mass consumption and mass marketing of environmentally irresponsible products. This has cause organizations to strategically make some modifications to their behaviour as a way of addressing the new concern of the society.

In the past few eras, consumers have become progressively attentive to social and ethical considerations in areas such as energy consumption, animal husbandry, and trade (Chen, 2001). This increased concern and feeling of concern for society has led to remarkable growth in the worldwide market for environmentally friendly products (Chung, 2008). The need for sustainable business practices by corporations around the world is identified to be a result of overall increase in the consumer awareness of lack of environmental protection and social inequities. Over the last decade environmentalism has emerged to be a vital aspect due to increasing issues related to acid rains, depletion of the ozone layer, and degradation of the land and many more pressing environmental issues (Janssen & Jager, 2002). This resulted in the increase in consumer concern with regards to restoration of ecological balance by

presenting demands for eco-friendly products in countries around the world (Janssen & Jager, 2002). There is a great deal of depletion of non-renewable energy resources, accompanied by generation of non-bio degradable pollutants led to an increase in consumer and corporate awareness of green marketing issues (Elemeeen, 2015). The first wave of modern environmentalism in the United States came as a result of the efforts of the environmental groups and concerned consumers in the 1960s and 1970s. These groups were concerned with the damage to the ecosystem caused by trio-mining, forest depletion, acid rain, and loss of recreational areas resulting in health problems caused by bad air, polluted water, and chemically treated food (Elemeeen, 2015).

Green product marketing strategy should be a business strategy and not just a marketing gimmick. The society at large needs the environment to survive and if it is completely destroyed by the activities of corporations, then the essence of human existence is threatened. The most thoughtful green marketing strategy and idea is to actually create real eco-friendly selling points for businesses. Determine how you can alter your business practices or the product itself to be greener and eco-friendlier. A strategy may be marketing that your product as a low-energy solution. Having a product or service that uses less energy or produces less waste than a traditional method

Traditionally, marketing entails selling products and services that satisfy consumer needs at a profit but green marketing involves much more than selling products and services, as it entails defining 'what is green' and developing and selling products that provides extra consumers' value. Organizations have realized that there is need for having a healthy environment and lifestyle to create and maintain balance and control the natural situation. Generally, consumers, all over the word are beginning to be more environmental protection sensitive. Green marketing simply means being environmentally conscious during the execution of marketing related activities. Such actions should entail absolute environmental consciousness in product design, production, storage, distribution, transportation, advertisement and communication to consumers.

Researches have shown that current and potential consumers are now more concerned about their environment and are

gradually changing their purchasing behaviour. As reported by Fisk (1974), most environmental issues faced by societies today which are detrimental to human life are due to excessive production and consumption eco unfriendly products. (Sheth & Sisodia, 2015), have suggested that environmental and social issues can be addressed through marketing. Keller (1987) and Shearer (1990) have noted that it is the sole obligation of the organization to serve the society in eco-friendly way.

Taking account of environmental aspects to shape marketing strategy has consequently given rise to the concept of green marketing or otherwise known as ecological marketing. Ginsberg & Bloom, (2004) have noted that most organization have adopted green marketing as a strategic move to leverage competitive advantages. Generally, green marketing ensures those firms are ethically conducting their businesses most especially in conducting business activities with their customers, suppliers, dealers, and employees. Most companies these days have started marketing themselves as green companies.

The concept of green or ecological marketing calls upon businesses to follow ethical and green practices while dealing with customers, suppliers, dealers, and employees. Even the Public Sector Units and state governments are now paying a lot of attention towards environmental issues such as global warming, pollution, or water contamination and have started taking steps to prevent environmental pollution.

There is need for Marketers and organizations to focus on the attributes of eco-friendly products and prices as well as information on consumer benefits. Hence, the need to focus on promoting ecofriendly products in the overall marketing activities. This according to (Lao, 2014), for green marketing to be successful, marketers need to attract consumers, companies and must ensure they must create novel of green products, fashionable and take the lead by adopt innovative ideas during green marketing campaigns. Recently, consumers have started showing interest on products that have less or no harm and effect on the natural environment and human health. The managerial and marketing implication of this will be to develop such green products that are preferred over the others not doing so and thus develop a competitive advantage, simultaneously meeting their business objectives.

From the organizational point of view, every aspect of marking activity as reported by Jacquelyn Ottman, (1998) new product development and communications ought to be integrated with environmental considerations.

This general perspective of Green Marketing means that not only the suppliers and retailers should be taken into consideration but the new stakeholders including educators, community members, regulators, and NGOs should also be taken into consideration. Thus, consumers these days considers purchasing goods and services considered as environmentally friendly and patronize firms who are marketing themselves as green enterprise .

Problem Statement

Recently, organizations are now offering more eco-friendly alternatives for their customers; re-cycled products are one of the most popular alternatives that benefit the environment. It is believed that the adoption of green marketing practices will improve the organizational image and further increase their reputation among their target customers which will have a ripple effect of increasing the revenue of the firms , the efficiency of their resources, their savings, dipping the quantity of input that they make use of in their operations, and increase their level profitability. However, the attitude of consumers especially in Nigeria towards the purchasing of green products and the relationship between the attitude and behavior is found to be a questionable one. As reported by (Tureac et al., 2010), findings from the study have shown that despite consumer preference for eco-friendly products, they continue to experience difficulties in distinguishing a green product from an ordinary product. Hence, putting firms in a disadvantaged position in the market as consumer will only patronize products and services with clearly differentiated to the best of their knowledge. Therefore, firms that adopt green marketing strategies must continuously develop their practices in communicating their product and services to consumers to remain competitive in the market.

Consequently, several research work have revealed that currently consumers are now well informed about ecological benefits derived from consuming product and issues inherent in them, thus resulting to their growing environment concerns (Punitha and Rasdi 2013, Ottman 1993 and Peattie 2001).Regrettably, different studies have suggest that even though consumers are more environmentally concerned, most of them do not necessarily indulge in using green products most at time and this thus affects the survival of most green marketing enterprises who have adopted this strategy. it was base on this background that the study set to investigate the green marketing practices and organizational sustainability.

Objective of the Study

The study objectives are:

- I. To determine the impact of green marketing practices on the profitability of corporate firms in Rivers state.
- II. To investigate the effect of green marketing practices on corporate image a corporate firm in Rivers state.
- III. To determine the impact of green marketing practices on consumer choice of product in corporate firms in Rivers state.

Hypothesis of the Study

The following are the hypotheses of the study

- I. There is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and organizational profitability in corporate firms in Rivers State.
- II. Green marketing practices have no significant effect on corporate image in corporate firms in Rivers state.

III. There is no significant relationship between green marketing practices and consumer choice of product in corporate firms in Rivers state

II. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in rivers state with the use of descriptive survey research design and a well-structured questionnaire to obtain data from 250 marketing managers and brand ambassadors in corporate firms in rivers state.

However, due to unavailability of large population of employees in the firm visited due to the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, a convenient sampling technique was used to select a sample of 9 marketing manager and brand promoter each in twenty (20) organizations and location visited. A total of 180 marketing personnel (Managers, supervisors etc.) were selected from all of the organization visited for this study. However, only 162 respondents were found useful for further analysis. In totality, 162 employees constitute the sample size for the study. The questionnaire was structured in five (5) sections (Section A – E). Section A compose the demographical variables of the respondents, Section B contains five (5) vital questions on green marketing, Section C contains relevant questions on consumer choice in product , Section D contains relevant questions on organizational sustainability , E contains relevant questions on firms profitability .Data was analyzed with the help of SPSS 23.0. Descriptive analysis was adopted to analyze the demographical characteristics of the respondents while simple regression and Pearson Moment Coefficient Correlation and was used to test the three hypotheses of the study.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Statistical Test of Hypothesis

The three hypothesis used for the paper was tested at 95% confidence level (or 5% level of significance) and the probability value (PV). The decision rule is that, if the PV is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate.

Hypothesis One: There is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and organizational profitability in corporate firms in Rivers State.

		Green marketing practices	Organizational profitability
Greenmarketing practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.332**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	162	162
Organizational profitability	Pearson Correlation	.332**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	162	162

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

Pearson correlation Value of hypothesis is 0.332 (33.2%). It shows that there is a moderate and positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables with r value of 0.332(33.2%) with significant level of 0.000 which is greater than 0.05 (5%).Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and organizational profitability in corporate firms in rivers state .

Therefore, the decision would be to accept the alternate hypothesis (H₁). This suggest that for organization o be recording a high performance in terms of profit , an effective green marketing practices need to be adopted as one of the top strategy .This is because customers are sensitive and would prefer the patronage of product with less or no effect both to them and their environment .

Hypothesis Two: Green marketing practices have no significant effect on corporate image in corporate firms in Rivers state

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standard ized Coeffi cients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	3.256	.482		6.749	.000
	Green marketing practices	.672	.051	.697	13.172	.000

a. Dependent Variable: corporate image .b. Independent Variable: (Constant) Green marketing practices

R = 0.697; R² = 0.485; Adjusted R² = 0.483; Sig = 0.000; F Stat = 173.491

Table2 provides an explanation on the results of the regression analysis. The analysis disclose that there is a significant effect of green marketing practices on corporate image in corporate firms in Rivers state; (R = 0.697; R² = 0.485; Adjusted R² = 0.4832; Sig = 0.000). These shows that of the disparity in organizational image, in terms of stakeholders view and its general performance green marketing practices account for 48.5%.Thus, managerial implication of this , will be to ensure that an active and effective green marketing practices is adopted to maintain and sustain the confidence of the stake holders(employees, suppliers, competitors, government etc) as along as the business exist . Thus, a continuous or actives practices will also increase the level of their corporate social responsibility .Also, the F-values statistics (173.491) shows that the overall equation is significant at (Sig. level=0.000; P< 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀) which states that green marketing practices have no significant effect on corporate image in corporate firms in Rivers state, will be rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between green marketing practices and consumer choice of product in corporate firms in Rivers state.

ANOVA ^a								
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R	R Square
1	Regression	224.610	1	224.610	14.877	.000 ^b		
	Residual	2943.969	195	15.097			0.266	0.071
	Total	3168.579	196					
a. Dependent Variable: consumer choice of product								
b. Predictors: (Constant), green marketing practices								

Table3 depicts an explanation on the results of the regression analysis. The analysis suggest that there is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and consumer choice of product in corporate firms in Rivers state; ($R = 0.266$; $R^2 = 0.071$; $Sig = 0.000$). These indicates that of the differences in consumer choices of products in the market for consumption in terms of values, health benefit, storage, color etc green marketing practices account for 26.6%. Therefore, organizations who strategically carry-out green marketing practices by producing and making available green products and services has a high probability to excel in the market compare with its competitor , as consumers are beginning to be environmentally conscious and sensitive to green products and services which will give them extra value and satisfaction. The decision here will be to reject the null hypotheses and accept the alternate hypotheses.

IV. CONCLUSION

Given the rate at which the threat of global warming is affecting both society and the implication it has on businesses both now and in future, it is exceedingly essential that green marketing becomes the norm rather than an exception or just a strategy. From the study it is visible to note that contemporary firms, who are abreast with the happenings in the business world, are now using Green marketing practices as a strategy to be competitive in their environment. Consumers also have shown positive attitude towards green products at the same time they are concerned with the availability and price of such products. It is now the sole responsibility of organizations to make this green products and services available to the consumers to improve sales and performances as they have shown willingness to purchase green products if it is available. Organizational performances will increase when green marketing is considered as a strategy and pursued with much vigor.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore recommended that:

- I. Organizations should adopt and see green marketing practices as a norm and part of their corporate social responsibility
- II. Green product and services should be strategically designed to suit consumers taste
- III. A stiff governmental law discouraging product which are not eco-friendly from getting into the market
- IV. To increase organizational performance, green product should be differentiated and proper product and brand education should be carried out effectively before introduction to the market. Thus, this will ease product identification and encourage patronage of green product and services.

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