

Green Marketing & CSR: A Proactive & Innovative Tool to Gain Competitive Excellence

Makhmoor Bashir*, **Anish Yousaf****, **Aaqib A. Wani*****

**Assistant Professor, School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab India.
Email: makhmor786@gmail.com*

***Assistant Professor, School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India.
Email: anish.18256@lpu.co.in*

****Managing Director, Vgeneuine Solutions Pvt. Ltd, Srinagar, J&K, India.
Email: aqib1204@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This conceptual paper has been designed to discuss the concept of green marketing strategies, and how it could be used as an effective tool for CSR to gain the competitive advantage. It also includes how diffusion of innovation theory can be related to green marketing in a new way. This paper begins with the literature review of corporate social responsibility and green marketing strategies, and value is added to the paper by including the innovation theory to address the gap in the literature. Various strategies that could be adopted by marketers in order to act to the changes in the external environment have also been discussed. Propositions were developed in the current paper to reflect the relationship of green marketing strategies with types of innovations and competitive advantage. In addition, the paper also includes some of the managerial implications which can be used effectively. Managerial recommendations are suggested related to diffusion of innovation characteristics in the study.

Keywords: Green Marketing, CSR, Competitive Excellence, Innovation Theory

INTRODUCTION

Due to change in overall environment, people around the globe are concerned about environment and future of our planet. This has awakened the industrialised nations to be more concerned. This concern has put more pressure on corporations to be more environment-friendly and undertake operations which are safe for the environment. This is where green marketing began to gain impetus among the stakeholders of the businesses. Here the question arises what is green marketing or how can marketing become green? Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe (AMA). Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Green marketing subsumes greening products as well as greening firms. Managers need to identify what ought to be greened: systems, processes or products?

Green marketing refers to any activity undertaken by the businesses in concern to the environment. It is a process of selling products and/or services based on their environmental benefits. Such a product or service may be environmentally friendly in it-self or produced and/or packaged in an environmentally friendly way. Business these days focus even on green supply chain management procedures (Sharma, 2013). Corporations undertake such activities in order to gain competitive advantage and also to be profitable in the long term. Thus obvious assumption of green marketing is that potential consumers will view a product or service's "greenness" as a benefit and base their buying decision accordingly. The not-so-obvious assumption of green marketing is that consumers will be willing to pay more for green products than they would for a less-green comparable alternative product - an assumption that, in my opinion, has not been proven conclusively.

Lately green marketing has been seen important through the eyes of consumers as many researchers have shown that

customers are even willing to pay more for environment-friendly products. While green marketing is growing greatly as increased number of consumers are willing to back their environmental consciousness with their dollars, it can be dangerous. The public tends to be skeptical of green claims to begin with and companies can seriously damage their brands and their sales if a green claim is discovered to be false or contradicted by a company's other products or practices. Presenting a product or service as green when it's not is called greenwashing. With the use of Internet, businesses can become more eco-friendly by using services like online marketing, email, e-newsletters, webinars, online communities, etc.) and mobile marketing (e.g. M-Commerce, M-CRM, SMS, etc.), the companies can promote their products or services in a more eco-friendly way which can be broadcasted to general public in a prompt and inexpensive manner (DiFrangia, 2008a; Standing, McManus, Standing, & Karjaluoto, 2007).

We could see from the above implications that how green marketing is gaining impetus in today's business environment so the main objective of this study will be to determine how innovative theory can be used to develop green marketing strategies in order to meet the customer expectations and overall obligations towards the environment. The strategies will not only help the corporations to become greener but it will also meet their bottom line of becoming economically, socially as well as ecologically sustainable. At first, the overview of corporate social responsibility CSR theories relevant to green marketing is provided. Next, a discussion is included on reactive and proactive green marketing strategies that can be utilised in businesses, and their relationship to degrees of innovation. Further, a review is provided on diffusion of innovation theory and its relationship to business research. Also, five propositions are developed, and a new conceptual model is presented on green marketing innovation strategies and competitive advantage. Furthermore, an analysis is presented on the relationship of diffusion of innovation characteristics to green marketing strategies, and the benefits associated with competitive advantage for organisations. Limitations and managerial implications are discussed, and recommendations are provided for future research.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate Social Responsibility or simply CSR came into common use in the late 1960s and early 1970s after many

multinational corporations formed the term stakeholder, meaning those on whom an organisation's activities have an impact. Corporate social responsibility (CSR, also called corporate conscience, corporate citizenship, social performance, or sustainable responsible business) is a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model. CSR policy functions as a built-in, self-regulating mechanism whereby business monitors and ensures its active compliance with the spirit of the law, ethical standards, and international norms. The goal of CSR is to embrace responsibility for the company's actions and encourage a positive impact through its activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities, stakeholders and all other members of the public sphere. Proponents argue that corporations make more long term profits by operating with a perspective, while critics argue that CSR distracts from the economic role of businesses. Others argue CSR is merely window-dressing, or an attempt to pre-empt the role of governments as a watchdog over powerful multinational corporations.

CSR is titled to aid an organisation's mission as well as a guide to what the company stands for and will uphold to its consumers. Development business ethics is one of the forms of applied ethics that examines ethical principles and moral or ethical problems that can arise in a business environment. Green marketing is one of the important tools of CSR which can increase both profitability as well as the competitive advantage for any business. However green marketing must be genuine and it must reflect the concern of businesses towards their society in particular and overall environment in general. Green marketing can be a very powerful marketing strategy though when it's done right.

Green Marketing, CSR & Innovation Theory

Garriga and Mele (2004) developed four groups of theories based on CSR, they include: instrumental theories, political theories, integrative theories, and ethical theories. They argued that the corporations while adopting the instrumental strategies are basically achieving competitive advantage by making profits and they also help in social causes such as: philanthropic investments, cause marketing activities (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988), and using disruptive innovations to market to the bottom of the economic pyramid (Christensen & Overdorf, 2000; Prahalad & Hammond, 2002). Garriga and Mele (2004) noted that disruptive innovations could achieve social objectives and create a competitive advantage for companies in "telecommunications, consumer electronics

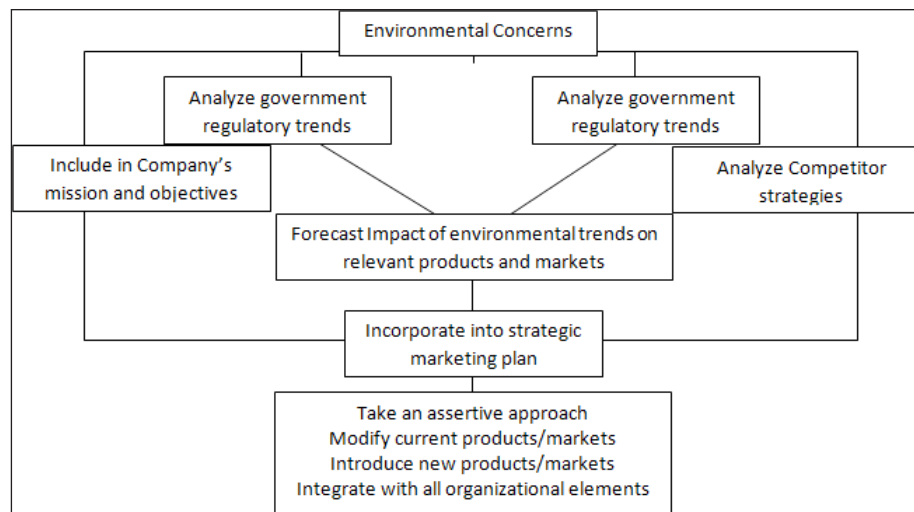


Fig. 1. Strategic Green Marketing Planning Model

and energy production and many other industries” (p.55). (Energy production is an important area of green innovations.)

Political theories advocate that the corporations are being socially responsible because of their power and also they are legally obliged to follow some benchmark to environmental marketing (Menon & Menon, 1997). On the other hand integrative theories focus on stakeholder management, related marketing and innovation theory to social norms (Osterhus, 1997), green marketing (Rivera-Camino, 2007), and to the common good (Argandona, 1998). These theories include those strategies because of the stakeholder’s expectations from the business. Ethical theories focus on doing the right thing for society, and include universal human rights, environmental sustainability, and the common good (Garriga & Mele, 2004). Green marketing has been related to the common good, the tragedy of the commons dilemma (Shultz & Holbrook, 1999) and to environmental justice (Oyewole, 2001). The corporations can adopt any of the strategies to become socially responsible. Each of the groups of theories can be related to firms’ motivations to pursue green marketing strategies and actions, and all four areas are important to a social system (Garriga & Mele, 2004).

From the above literature review, it appears that diffusion of innovation theory on corporate responsibility theories has been overlooked, which could add a valuable perspective to green marketing. This paper has extended the CSR category of instrumental theories to include innovation theory (Rogers, 1962/1983/1995). Though integrative theories have been included which takes into stakeholder management and the common good however,

this paper aligns diffusion theory more closely with instrumental CSR theories, because green marketing is a strategic tool, similar to cause marketing. As we know that green marketing involves new innovations be it products or services, Diffusion of innovation theory shed light on how to increase the rate of adoption of green products, services, and processes to help companies create a competitive advantage, and simultaneously help move the world toward greater ecological sustainability. Diffusion theory explains that how businesses can use their resources in a desired manner so that they can innovate freely, this theory also explains on how to use the different innovative strategies under given circumstances.

As the consumers are becoming more environmental conscious, businesses need to consider environmental consequences into consideration while formulating any marketing strategy. Thus businesses need to formulate their green marketing strategies in accordance with their business strategies. Environmental policies have been measured as the secondary plans until 1980’s and were not considered and incorporated in the overall planning process. But nowadays it has become an essential part of an organisation to be socially responsible as it is considered as a key indicator of determining the market hold of a company. As a result, such a strategic marketing process must be designed where green marketing acts as an integral part. Fig. 1 depicts a model for doing this. The dynamic nature of environmental needs and demands requires constant monitoring along with flexibility to adapt.

We can depict the importance of green marketing strategies for overall advantage of the business.

Corporations always have to respond to the changes in the external environment, thus they need to be proactive to such changes which gives them excellent opportunity to gain competitive excellence.

P1: Businesses need to develop their marketing strategies while taking in account the importance of green marketing which will not only fulfill their social obligation but it will make them profitable in the long run.

Green Marketing: Reactive vs. Proactive Strategies

Whenever a research on general business strategy is conducted it often reflects a dichotomy between reactive and proactive strategies (Aragon-Correa, 1998). Whenever a business responds to any changes, be it external or internal environment, it often uses the reactive strategy (Sandberg, 2002; Bennett, 1996). These strategies are often kept in place whenever some unusual reaction takes place in the external environment, the timing of such strategies is quite important. On the other hand, proactive strategy is being implemented by the businesses before they are forced to respond to any changes in the external environment, thus creating new opportunities in the environment. McDaniel and Rylander (1993) proposed two main approaches to green marketing: the first is a defensive or reactionary approach, and the second is an assertive, aggressive strategy. This paper utilises the term reactive to describe the former approach, and proactive to refer to the latter. A reactive green marketing strategy (also referred to as a compliance strategy) follows regulations of environmental management (Miles & Covin, 2000), requires limited resources, has a low level of organisational commitment, low involvement of top management, and a short-term orientation (Menon *et al.*, 1999).

P2: Reactive green marketing strategies are related to: low organisational ecological commitment and resource allocation and are more likely to develop continuous innovations.

P3: Reactive green marketing strategies can lead to: short-term benefits (e.g. short-run increases in sales and profits), risks of green washing criticisms, and lower levels of ecological sustainability.

Green marketing has failed in the recent times due to so many factors. Thus, it has created a space for more research to be done so that green marketing can be used as an important tool for businesses to be profitable as

well as environment friendly at the same time. According to Peattie and Crane (2005), green marketing has failed because of five problems. The first two problems are related to what is often referred to as “green washing”.

Green spinning was defined as a first problem which is manipulation of green image via publicity and lobbying from “dirty” industries such as oil, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and automotives. The second problem has been termed as “Green selling” where firms do a post-hoc identification of environmental features in existing products, and then opportunistically promote them sometimes with misleading or unproven green claims.

Green marketing has also received lot of criticism by the use of “Green harvesting”. It refers to those firms who pursue short-term cost savings by reducing packaging, increasing energy efficiency, greening their supply chain, using life-cycle pricing approaches, (Peattie & Crane, 2005), designing products for disassembly and selling products at premium prices without perceived added value by customers. Most of these tactics do not address the issue of long-run sustainability. We know that businesses reflect their owners, when the owners lack the green vision the green marketing strategies of firms will not be implemented unless its owners are interested and willing to make it happen. Some firms even fail in the long-term because of their production orientation with a lack of accurate marketing research and ineffective marketing communications to educate customers. Or, perhaps these firms were ahead of their time, and the true era of green marketing may still emerge in the future. The fifth problem is termed as compliance marketing by which the firms act according to certain accepted standards to promote their green credentials. This issue has received lot of criticism from consumers as they see it as a tactic of businesses to show their concern about the environment; however they are actually meeting the legal standard.

Reactive green marketing strategies require less resources which are less risky and inexpensive however on the other hand the proactive green marketing strategy requires greater resources which can be expensive as well as risky at the same time, it also needs high organisational commitment including an out stated environmental corporate policy which reflects high levels of top management and employee involvement, and is more long term in orientation. Whenever a firm is employing its proactive green marketing strategies it takes into account its customers’ needs, the other stakeholders of the company, future potential customers of the business. Not only this, firms tend to meet all these expectations in a most innovative manner, thus creating innovative

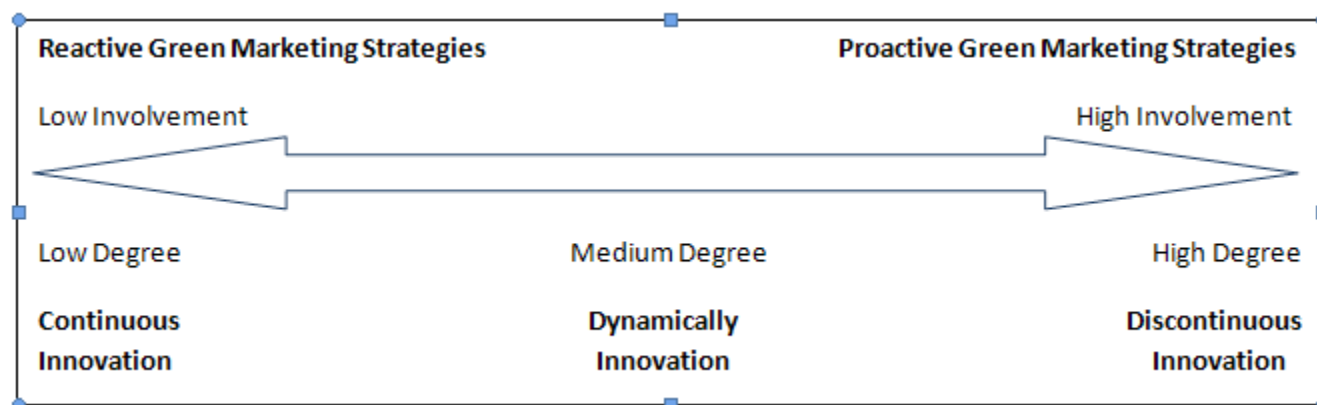


Fig. 2. Green Marketing Strategies and Degrees of Innovation

solutions. Firms always employ those strategies which will enhance their economical sustainability thus the objective of proactive green marketing strategy would ideally address what is referred to as the “triple bottom line” of economic, social, and ecological sustainability. Firms who successfully implement these proactive green marketing strategies would always be among the firms who have achieved what is referred to as “eco-effectiveness.” As Chen, Boudreau, & Watson (2008) noted, “Eco-effectiveness aims beyond merely reducing negative environmental impact by ending ecological degradation. Seeking an ultimate solution for ecological problems, eco-effectiveness oftentimes requires a shift of mindset and transformation of business models” (p. 188).

P4: Proactive green marketing strategies are related to: high organisational ecological commitment and resource allocation and will create more dynamically continuous and discontinuous innovations.

Green Marketing Strategies and Degrees of Innovation

Degree of innovation can range from low to medium to high. This paper also explains the extent of innovation in terms of continuum of degree of innovation from reactive to proactive green marketing strategies. Fig. 2 explains about the two green marketing strategies and the degree of innovation involved among them. We can recognise that the degree of innovation is high in terms of proactive strategies while it is on the lower side in case of reactive strategies. According to Robertson (1971), degrees of an innovation (e.g. a product, service, or process) can range from low to medium to high. A low degree innovation is called a continuous innovation (also known as a “me-too product”) which simply makes small changes (such

as color, style, packaging) to an existing product or service. Continuous innovations may easily be imitated by the competition and can usually only provide short-term advantages (e.g. short-run increases in profits and revenues). Businesses prefer continuous innovations as they are low in risk and are on a positive side since they require very little or no change in buying behaviour.

Continuous innovations are quick to diffuse in the marketplace and can be easily adopted. They are less risky in the sense that businesses do not abruptly change the product or replace it by new one however it is a long time development which takes into account the needs and desires of the consumers. It also analyses the tastes and preferences as consumers tend to change their perceptions from time to time. An example of a continuous innovation in green marketing is when a firm introduces a new “second generation” of an existing product which does not need a totally new manufacturing process, and is a “green” upgrade that can help save more energy, conserve natural resources, or eliminate waste for business customers. At the medium level, a product or product category that is in existence, but that provides a new format which changes customer behaviour (e.g. laptops, mobile phones) is a dynamically continuous innovation. The highest level is a discontinuous innovation (e.g. the Internet, space travel for businessmen) which will change customer behaviour the most, and may take decades to diffuse, unless the diffusion characteristics are positively directed.

If a company proactively introduces a radically different manufacturing process, product, or service that achieves environmental benefits, then it would be a dynamically continuous or discontinuous innovation. Karna, Hansen, & Juslin (2003) asserted that companies can use innovations related to environmental sustainability to create advantages that can be larger (i.e. more proactive

strategy) than simply following and complying with government regulation (i.e. a reactive perspective). However businesses always try to be proactive rather than reactive as their actions are almost neglected by the consumers, for example when a government regulation forces a company to follow a certain standard and the business uses its reactive strategy, the consumers feel that the business only became environmental conscious after the legal factors.

P5: Proactive green marketing strategies can lead to: longer-term financial benefits related to competitive advantage; greater product differentiation and customer brand loyalty; lower costs; enhanced corporate reputation; higher R&D support; and more ecological sustainability for the common good.

(Note: P5 is related to the Model in Fig. 2 and Table 2 shown later in the paper).

Diffusion of Innovation Theory Research

Most technological advancements are irregular innovations which require supplier organisations to be proactive in their strategies. Frambach (1993) declared that technology can be implemented as a tool to add competitive edge. It is one of the main concerns of this learning to explore how green marketing strategies of Corporate Social responsibility are related to competitive advantage in the present world where sustainability is the main focus of most companies. Diffusion of innovation theory has been applied to technological innovations in many researches done by Robertson and Gatignon (1986) and Frambach (1993). High JSIT technology is used to formulate various green marketing innovations; therefore, this paper is a subject of investigating the function of diffusion of innovation to green marketing strategies. Diffusion of innovation theory (Rogers, 1995) is applicable in different disciplines, from sociology to business. From 1970's, diffusion theory has been efficiently utilised in marketing products and services to personal consumers. Technological advancements and innovations has been concentrated as the main focus by the most organisations which has entitled massive amount of researches to apply diffusion theory of marketing in the territory of businesses

Studies have looked at the implementation of: technology by US non-profit hospitals, approval of an ecologically related regulatory alternative by organisational trade centre members (Apaiwongse, 1991), and building of successful new products with a completely new technology

(Woodside & Biemans, 2005). Furthermore, the recent trend has showed the research among the businesses to study the adoption of technology related to the Internet: online trading interactions by small organisations (Quaddus & Hofmeyer, 2007), Technologies to improve securities within the business to business dealing (Carayannis & Turner, 2006), influence of supplier on buyers' online purchasing (Deeter-Schmelz, Bizzari, Graham & Howdysshell, 2001), different e-services from primary generation to multi-channel solutions (Legner, 2008), online reverse auctions for business amongst suppliers for dissimilar adopter categories (Schoenherr, 2008), regional e-market places for small and medium enterprises which are government-supported (Gengatharen & Standing, 2005), and internet markets where business buyers and sellers perform marketing and logistics activities (Woodside & Biemans, 2004).

Elements of Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Diffusion of innovation theory in a social system includes the following elements: an innovation, communicating the innovation, over a period of time, towards social system members. Diffusion theory includes an organisation's buying centre to make a decision whether to adopt or reject an improvement. The next stage involve the size of the organisation, its arrangement or structure, the level of professionalism in it, the corporate culture among its members, etc. followed by know-how of the innovation i.e. marketing communications; environment in which the organisation operates e.g. competition; and the characteristics of the diffusion of innovation (Frambach, 1993). This part of the study primarily focuses on diffusion of innovation characteristics, such that their relationship with the aspect of green marketing strategies can be outlined. Previous research included diffusion characteristics related to the adoption of innovations by personal consumers (Vaccaro & Cohn, 2007; Vaccaro, 2008). The diffusion of innovation has five characteristics that influence whether an innovation must be implemented or not in a social system: relative advantage; observability; compatibility; complexity; and trialability

The degree to which a modernisation is alleged as being better than the idea it communicates is called relative advantage. However, in this paper, relative advantage is defined more generally to exist when an innovation provides better benefits than the existing products offered by that firm or the competition. More the relative advantage, the quicker the new innovation will be adopted. The ease by which the benefits by a product and its attributes are visible and can be communicated represents

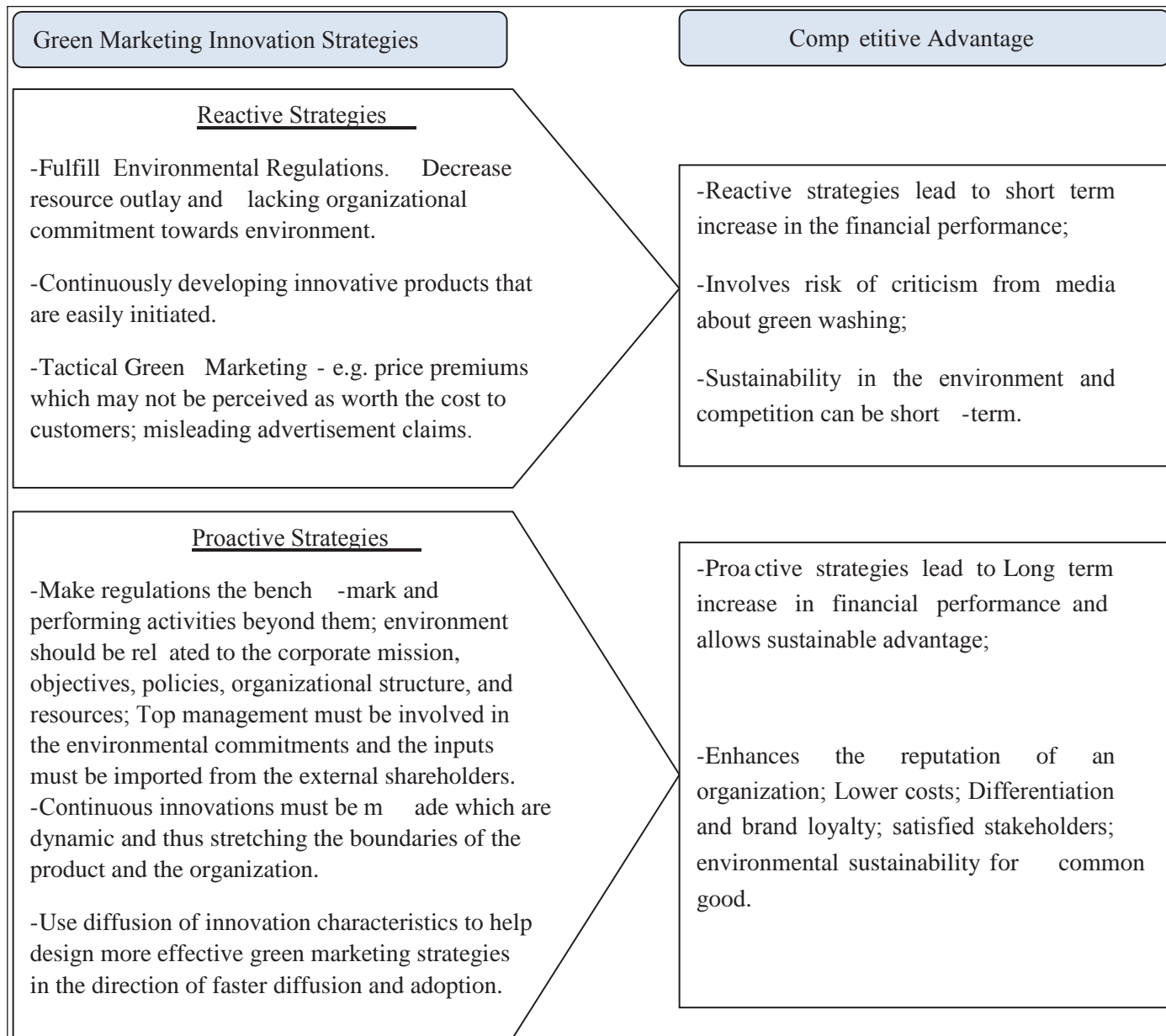


Fig. 3. Green Marketing Strategies and Competitive Advantage

the observability of a new product or service. Therefore, the new products or services with higher social visibility diffuse more rapidly. Compatibility represents the degree of the consistency of a new product or service with the existing customer values and practices or in other words their tradition (i.e. the more the degree of compatibility, the faster the adoption). Complexity is defined as the degree of difficulty a new product or a service has to use it or to understand it. It has an indirect relation with the adoption, i.e., the more complexity carried by a product, more time the innovation will take to get adopted. Trialability is the ability of a new product or service to be tested on a limited basis. The greater the trialability, the

faster a new product or service will be adopted and thus has a direct relationship with the adoption.

P6: Proactive green marketing strategies are most effective when they are related to diffusion of innovation characteristics in the direction that leads to faster rates of diffusion and adoption.

A number of conceptual models have been proposed on the Green marketing and the competitive advantage which it provides (Menon & Menon, 1997; Bansal & Roth, 2000; Menon *et al.*, 1999). However, on the basis of our study and discussion on reactive and proactive strategies, this

paper frames out a diagrammatic representation of a new model of green marketing innovation strategies and the competitive advantage that it provides.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Previous studies have been done on the reactive and proactive strategies under the literature of green marketing by various researchers. This paper reflects the competitive advantage associated with them and is given a tabular shape of green marketing model. In addition to this, the model reflects the short term results associated with the reactive strategies and how proactive strategies afford a competitive advantage through long term benefits which include more sustainable competitive advantage and environmental sustainability. As far as our research is concerned there are four major elements that affect the success or failure of an innovative idea, which are; the innovation, time, communication channel, and a social system. Diffusion is the process by which an organisational/individual's innovation is communicated through specific channels over a period of time among the members of its overall social system. If we look at Table 2, it shows us the relationship of diffusion of innovation characteristics to the potential benefits that we are most likely to get as a competitive advantage, resulting from various proactive green marketing strategies.

In order for managers to speed up our diffusion process and adoption of our green innovation, we need to follow standardised strategies and related diffusion characteristics, already discussed above. Applying strategies like changing production and processes to be more environmentally sensitive (e.g. observability) or even obtaining feedback/ inputs from stakeholders on one's product, communication channels, promotion, and distribution strategies (e.g. trialability), compatibility of our green innovation with environmental values (e.g. compatibility) as well as having an innovation that is very easy to use (e.g. less complexity). All these diffusion characteristics and related diffusion marketing strategies can give us the following associated competitive advantage over our competitors: Increased visibility or even less complexity of an organisation's message will help managers in enhancing corporate reputation for the company and also its alliances, increased brand differentiation and brand loyalty, helping the organisation to have more satisfied stakeholders and the organisation would enjoy cost savings and market gains due to differential advantage and greater ecological sustainability for the common good, for the organisation itself and its stakeholders.

Not only this, successful green marketing can also lead to increased revenues and profits, higher market share and ROI as these are few of many benefits that an organisation gets by going green. Studies that have been done on business-green relationship, have shown that resource-based environmental strategies with top management and corporate cultural commitment, which are difficult to imitate helped companies achieve long-term, more sustainable competitive advantage. Environmental programmes can enhance operational efficiencies, develop new technologies, achieve first-mover competitive advantages, and increase profits. Companies that implement environment favoring strategy report considerable benefit. Human resource employees see improved morale in all the employees and a stronger public image that are the top benefits to an organisation. Companies can gain first-mover advantage, in part by helping shape future regulations. Research has also found higher benefits that an organisation gets in terms of cost savings and market gains due to differential advantage. Other benefits that follow a successful green marketing strategy can be to help the firm generate increased support for research and development, and overall, will help the firm to reach to its mission. The ultimate benefit in implementing a green marketing strategy is environmental sustainability for the common good of society. This particular benefit can be achieved by an organisation by having proactive green marketing strategies that are maximised in effectiveness in relation to the diffusion of innovation characteristics to produce the other aforementioned benefits of competitive advantage.

LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper was mainly concerned with introducing green marketing as an effective tool of CSR to gain competitive advantage. However this study was limited to one main aspect of diffusion theory: diffusion of innovation characteristics. Future research could expand the application of other elements of diffusion theory. Also, this study generated six key propositions related to innovation and green marketing strategies. These propositions, along with the new model, and the relationships referred to in Tables 1 and 2, can be tested in future research with Business firms in case studies and empirical research. There are additional tools of CSR other than green marketing that can be used by a company to gain competitive advantage which can be stated in future. This research used only the main characteristics

of diffusion theory and in future these characteristics can be determined and used according to the various environmental traits that will confine the research to smaller groups and will help to develop strategies to be used according to these targeted groups. This study found seven areas of green marketing strategies related to five diffusions of innovation characteristics, which can ultimately produce 11 different benefits of competitive advantage. In future, other aspects of diffusion theory can also be used to uncover the areas of innovation and the degree of innovation required to increase the participation of a company towards society so as to ensure the long term benefits and competitive edge provided by it.

As the green marketing has gained lot of impetus due to the growing concerns for environment, so it opens a space for further research in this field. Future research can find some other ways or more green marketing strategies which can not only fulfill the obligations of businesses but also make them profitable in the long run. One such research can test other diffusion characteristics suggested by Gatignon and Robertson (1985, 1991), Frambach (1993), and Robertson and Gatignon (1986), as well as variables such as organisational psychographics (Robertson & Wind, 1980). Also, research by Wind, Robertson & Fraser (1982) found separate diffusion patterns among different target markets adopting an industrial innovation. Future research might also test for differences between market segments with diffusion characteristics and green marketing strategies. Further, research can also test diffusion characteristics with green marketing strategies targeting personal consumers with variables such as global consumer values, consumer trust of marketers, and consumer perceived risk of products and services.

CONCLUSION

Businesses in today's world operate in ever-changing environment be it economically or ecologically. Nowadays, competition with others firms is not the only purpose, it's also about surviving in the ever changing market, dynamic environment. Businesses nowadays use green marketing strategies that they use as an effective tool of corporate social responsibility in order to get economic, social as well as ecological sustainability. The purpose of this research was to find out major concepts of green marketing strategies, and how they could be used as an effective tool for CSR to gain the competitive advantage. The strategies will not only help the corporations to become greener but it will also meet there bottom line of becoming economically, socially as well as ecologically sustainable. This research primarily focuses on diffusion

of innovation characteristics, such that their relationship with the aspect of green marketing strategies. Diffusion theory explains how businesses can use their resources in an efficient and desired manner so that they can innovate freely. This theory also explains how to use the different innovative strategies under given circumstances. In addition, the study demonstrates the value of applying diffusion of innovation theory in achieving our green marketing objectives. We classify these strategies into two major categories – reactive and proactive – which are part of a continuum that can be related to degrees of innovation. Whenever a business responds to any changes; be it external or internal environment, it often uses the reactive strategy. On the other hand Proactive strategy is being implemented by the businesses before they are forced to respond to any changes in the external environment, thus creating new opportunities in the environment. Further, a unique model was developed of Business green marketing innovation strategies and competitive advantage. In the research we found that organisations which prefer and utilize proactive green marketing strategies related to the diffusion of innovation characteristics rather than being reactive in approach are more likely to achieve long-term competitive advantage and produce ecological sustainable goods or provide services. Proactive green marketing strategies that we will opt for in order to fulfill our goal should effectively increase the rate of adoption of new products, and services, and processes, so as to achieve competitive advantage, stakeholders' satisfaction, and also help the world but making it a better place to live in.

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