

Green Marketing: Environmental Concern and Customer Satisfaction

Zainab Zulfiqar

The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Department of Management Sciences
zainab.zulfiqar@hotmail.com

Misbah Shafaat

The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Department of Management Sciences
mysbashafaat@hotmail.com

Abstract

Green marketing has played an important role in satisfying the needs and desires of the customers and keep the company responsible in maintaining long-term social and environmental gains that they could earn through effective green marketing. The purpose of the study is to explore that whether the consumers are aware of green marketing and whether green products are fulfilling their needs apart from benefiting their living environment and to create awareness about green products and green marketing. Quantitative technique has been used in which questionnaire method is adopted. The findings of the study showed that people are less aware about the green product qualities so there is need for better green marketing but at the same time they agreed to the importance of green products and they want to purchase green products at any cost as they are concerned about their environment. Various recommendations have been provided by the researchers that what could be done to create more awareness. The study will be beneficial in creating awareness among people about green marketing. Moreover, the study will contribute to green marketing research.

Keywords: Green products, Green Marketing, Environmental friendly, Eco friendly products, Environmental marketing, Environmental safety, Social responsibility.

Introduction

Green marketing is a an emerging marketing strategy that includes a wide variety of tasks and activities like fair-trade practices, product modification, production process and packaging that are eco friendly (Mishra & Sharma, 2012). Green marketing consist of an extensive range of activities like production process, change in product, packaging change even change in advertising.

American marketing explains green marketing as the product marketing is presumed to be environmental friendly (Yazdanifard & Mercy, 2011). There are numerous meanings interconnect and contradict, yet it's not easy to define green marketing; example of this can be the presence of changing environmental and social and retail definitions attached to this term (Mishra & Sharma, 2012).

The objective of green marketing is to satisfy the needs and desires of the customers and keep the company responsible in maintaining long term social and environmental gains that I could earn through effective green marketing (Szuster, 2008). Our whole economy is affected by green marketing, it just not only provide environmental protection but also generate job opportunities and construct a new market (Yazdanifard & Mercy, 2011). Growing concerns of humanity by firms can be satisfied by adopting strategies that are resource supportive and environmental friendly in entire steps of the value chain of the firm (Johri & Sahasakmontri, 1998).

Marketers have realized the need and value of green marketing due to pubic concerns over the environmental decline in the past years. The purpose of this research is to investigate the environmental problems facing the world today for sustaining development (Kinoti, 2011). Organizations just not need regulatory compliance for green marketing, they had to go forward to include theoretical tools like pollution prevention, product stewardship and corporate responsibility (Chang & Fong, 2010). There is a misconception about green marketing, majority of people take its definition critically, though explaining green marketing is not an easy task. There are various types of terminologies used in defining green marketing including environmental marketing and ecological marketing but in this article, the term green marketing will be used (Kinoti, 2011). Green marketing is rapidly growing and is expected to get bigger in the years to come (Dangelico & Pujari, 2010).

Typically, people think that green marketing is only related to advertising and promotion of product having characteristics of the environment. Terms like Phosphate Free, Recyclable, Refillable, and Ozone safe and friendly to the environment are the effects customers most regularly relate with green marketing. In general, green marketing is a broader term that can be practically applied to industrial goods and services (Kinoti, 2011).

Why Green Marketing

Increased awareness all over the world regarding eco friendly products and green marketing has changed the customer perception now people desire to hand on a clean earth to their children (Mishra & Sharma, 2012). The debate starts when green marketing is actually studied and to know the best way to employ it. Green marketing is appeared by way of “marketing of products that are assumed to be environmentally safe”. This simple description provides flexibility for companies to take advantage of green marketing (McClendon, 2010).

Consumers are ready to pay extra for green products; rapid growth has been observed in green marketing. There is a little impact observed on consumers of this new market and environment up till now. All areas of our economy are affected by green marketing, it just not lead to protection of the environment but it also develops job opportunities and new market (Yazdanifard & Mercy, 2011).

Literature Review

Environmental issues has been a major concern for the most advanced companies that have allowed them to control efficiently the depletion of natural resources through the adoption of new management practices (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995). Firm’s responsibility towards environmental issues has been conceptualized and concepts like green marketing or environmental marketing has been brought into academia (Fuller, 1999).

Herbig et al (1993) refers green marketing as the products and packages that are less toxic, extra durable contain materials that are reusable and recyclable.

According to Polonsky (1994) with the negligible unfavorable effect to the natural environment, all the activities intended to create and simplify any interactions proposed to gratify human requirements such that the fulfillment of the desires and needs occur is defines as green marketing.

In Green marketing, while protecting the environment all other marketing activities are focused. Sharma, Iyer, Mehrotra & Krihnan (2010) illustrates that to minimize consumption, recycled materials or the implementation of productive systems is used for the designing and manufacturing of environmentally friendly products. To reduce the fossil carburant consumption cleaner transportation the firms should select system or the alternative energy sources should be required (Polonsky, 1995). According to Florida (1996), with the help of reverse logistics, products or packaging that can be reincorporated into their processes are recovered by the firm.

To deal with the challenge of sustainability, practitioners and academicians have recommended green marketing strategies. To elucidate the concern for the environment that the world is facing like effluence, acid precipitation, warning to earth ozone layer, accretion of greenhouse gasses, agricultural land consumed by the desserts, vital habitual resources are fastly depleted, rain forests are disappeared and species are lost with an aim of maintainable development green marketing strategies have been used and can be used by the organization (Chandler, 1990).

Now many companies see environmental positioning issue as long term rather than gain in short term (Bond, 1993).

Environmental standards can be properly designed through innovation by which total cost of a product can be lowered or improve companies value making more competitive. The cost of improving environmental impacts is balanced by allowing innovations in the companies more productively use its raw material, energy and labor (Porter and Linde, 1995).

Green marketing strategies Impact should be improved. It is proposed that to improve the reliability and strategic direction should be given to the green marketing programs and the formal and informal alliances with the environmental groups should be made by the companies (Mendleson and Polonsky, 1995).

For green marketing to be more effective different strategies should be developed accordingly. With the passage of time, people are becoming more concerned about their environment. Awareness about environmental problems is increasing day by day. Now people want to use the products that benefit them as well as they are not harmful to their environment. So the companies should develop such strategies that show concern about the customer as well as the environment. Strategies like green marketing mix should be developed, that include products that are based on green promotion, green logistics, green consumption and green pricing. Products that are minimally packaged, made from materials that are recyclable, are nontoxic and are durable are the green products (Ottman, 1997).

A reverse channel system is most common form of green logistics. The use of united system of transportation and the internet, packaging material are reduced to straight or indirectly lower distribution costs are some components of green logistic strategies (Willums, 1998; Polonsky, 2001).

It is assumed by many consumers that the prices of green products are high as compare to conventional products (Peattie, 1999; Polonsky, 2001). It is argued by Peattie (1990) that green products are not unusually expensive, but due to elimination of socio-environmental costs of production, product use and disposal the conventional products are unrealistically cheap.

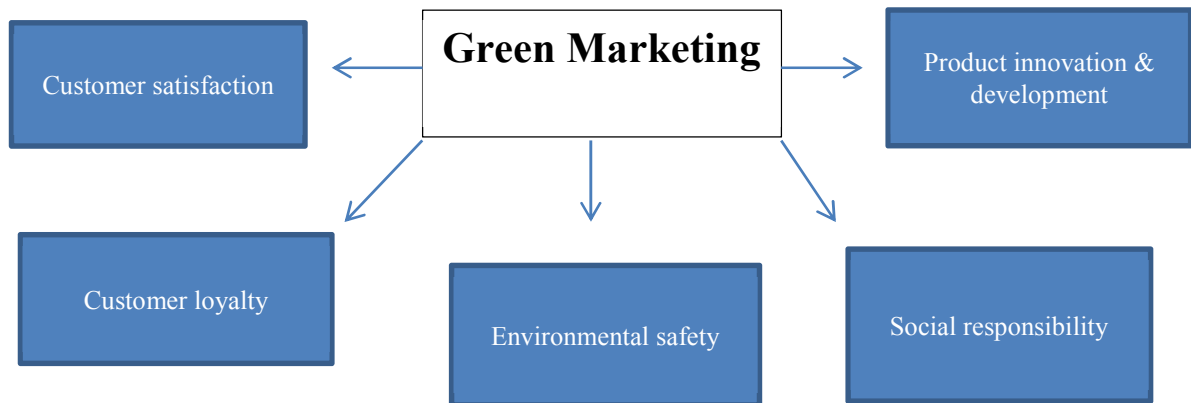
Activity of promoting products in a way that they have such qualities that do not harm the natural environment is green promotion (Polonsky et al, 1997). Several green promotional strategies are proposed by

Ottman (1997). The strategies include:

1. Consumers should be educated on environmental problems
2. Consumers should be empowered with demonstrating the solutions that how green products protect consumers health and the environment should be preserved for future generation
3. Performance reassurance should be provided for green products
4. Suitable mix of media should be considered, direct marketing should be used to convey messages to the consumers
5. Benefits of green products should be communicated to the consumers to appeal their self-interest.

Companies are facing much pressure to become socially responsible and greener. Pressure from stakeholders, government and from customers. According to marketing literature, in an organization and market stakeholders play an important role. To reduce the negative impact on the society and natural environment many stakeholders pose pressure on the companies (Bansal, 2005; Barnet, 2007). Green marketing has great impact on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty. Fulfillment of consumer's consumption goals that are experienced and described by consumers is known as customer satisfaction (Oliver, 2006). Commitment to re-buy a preferred product or service in the future is known as loyalty (Oliver, 1997). It is basically the customer's commitment to purchase the product or service repeatedly. It is the customer's positive behavior in purchasing the product or service and recommending it to others (Backman and Compton, 1991; Martensen et al., 2000).

Some of the factors that are affected by the green marketing are:



Benefits of Green marketing

According to Gupta & Agarwal, (2012) the benefits of green marketing are

- Sustained long-term growth and profitability are ensured.
- Although initially the cost is more but it saves money in long run.
- Keeping the environmental aspects in mind, it helps the companies to market their product and services

Some other benefits explained by Ottman, (1997) are following

- Less waste is created by green products, there is less use of raw material and energy is saved so it is profitable.
- Competitive advantage is enjoyed by the companies that are first to put their environmental innovation.
- There is increased brand loyalty so increased market share is enjoyed by the company.
- Quality of green products is higher in terms of saving energy, performance, convenience, safety etc...
- Benefits of healthier and more fulfilled lives are offered to consumers.
- Better Physical Environment is provided as there is reduced air and water pollution, depletion of natural resources.
- Sustainable development is witnessed.

Problems in Green Marketing

Consumers want to associate themselves with green products as the companies want to turn into green but regarding the credibility of the green products many confusions has been witness. Sothe marketers of the green products need to be transparent to ensure the confidence of the consumers without breaching any laws or standards of products and business practices.

Green marketing strategies are expensive and difficult to implement in short run, benefits of environment are intangible, indirect or insignificant to consumers and difficult to measure and quantify, the cost save through recycling are doubtful (Kinoti, 2011).

Methodology

Questionnaire method was used to identify the variables discuss in the paper. 100 questionnaire were attributed out of which 80 were selected to be used for the study as some questionnaire were not filed completely while some were not returned by the respondents. SPSS software was used to obtain results from the questionnaire and obtain quantities data.

Findings

The findings of the study are discussed below

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid Male	40	50.0
Female	40	50.0
Total	80	100.0

Gender

The study included 80 respondents in total who filled the questionnaires out of which 40, 40 male and female respectively and their results are compiled and analyzed.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid 15-20	10	12.5
21-25	52	65.0
26-30	14	17.5
31 and above	4	5.0
Total	80	100.0

Age:

Most of the respondents are of age 21-25 that is 65% of the total research study sample size.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid intermediate	1	1.3
graduate	20	25.0
masters	35	43.8
m.s	24	30.0
Total	80	100.0

Qualification:

In the research study most of the respondents has done Master's and M.S degree qualification that is 35% and 24% respectively.

1. Statement: People are fully aware about the green features of the product.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	12	15.0
Agree	17	21.3
Neutral	5	6.3
disagree	38	47.5
strongly disagree	8	10.0
Total=	80	100.0

Table display the results that most of the respondents disagree with the statement as respondent think there is less information available about green features. The mean value for awareness of green features is 3.16 which illustrates that respondents are not well aware of the green features of the products. Standard deviation for awareness of green feature variable is 1.297 as the value is greater is shows the difference of opinion and less agreement of the respondents.

2. Statement: Green Marketing is helping to save the environment.

	Frequency	Percent
Valid strongly agree	35	43.8
Agree	41	51.3
disagree	4	5.0
Total	80	100.0

Table shows that 51.3% respondents agree with statement that green products helps to save the environment. Mean value is 1.66 that also depicts the agreeableness of the respondents with this variable. Standard deviation for saving environment is 0.728, as the value shows less difference of opinion that shows respondents are in favor of this question of green marketing and results displays the agreeableness of the respondents.

3. Statement: There is enough information about "Green" features when buying the product.

	Frequency	Percent
Valid strongly agree	12	15.0
Agree	28	35.0
Neutral	3	3.8
Disagree	34	42.5
strongly disagree	3	3.8
Total	80	100.0

Most of the respondents disagree with the statement that there is not enough information available to them regarding green marketing as frequency of disagreement is 34 and its percentage is 42.5%. Mean value also tells the disagreement of the respondents with the statement and its value is 2.88. Standard deviation is 1.233 which also shows disagreement with the statement.

4. Statement: Green features increase the cost of the product, but it doesn't make any difference as I know I'm paying more for the green features.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid Strongly agree	13	16.3
Agree-	37	46.3
Neutral-	6	7.5
Disagree-	24	30.0
Total=	80	100.0

Table displays 46.3 % frequency which is the highest value from all other variables. It states that respondents are ready to pay more for the green product. Mean value is 2.51 and Standard deviation is 1.091 which also display the same results that people are indifferent with the cost factor they just need quality products whether they have to pay more for that.

5. Statement: I can pay more for the product with "Green" features.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree-	10	12.5
Agree-	52	65.0
Neutral-	4	5.0
Disagree-	12	15.0
Strongly disagree	2	2.5
Total=	80	100.0

56% respondents agree with the statement and they are willing to pay more for the green features as they are

concerned about the quality of the product rather than concerning about the price. Mean value and standard deviation is 2.30 and 0.960 respectively which also states the agreeableness of the respondents with the statement.

6. Statement: I am satisfied with the increased price of the green products.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree-	8	10.0
Agree-	39	48.8
Neutral-	4	5.0
Disagree-	21	26.3
Strongly disagree	8	10.0
Total=	80	100.0

48% respondents agree with the statement that they are satisfied with the increased price charged for the green product as they are getting the quality benefit out of it. Mean value is 2.78 which also shows the agreeableness of the respondents but standard deviation is 1.232 that shows the difference of opinion from this statement.

7. Statement: "Green product features are helping to save the environment".

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	36	45.0
Agree-	42	52.5
Neutral-	2	2.5
Total=	80	100.0

52.5% respondent agrees with this statement that green products are helping to save the environment. 1.58 is the mean value which also displays the same result that people think it can save the environment and standard deviation is 0.546 which also tells the less disagreement of opinion with the statement.

8. Statement: "Green" features increase the market value of the product.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid stronglyagree	24	30.0
Agree-	47	58.8
Neutral-	4	5.0
Disagree-	5	6.3
Total=	80	100.0

52.5% respondent agrees with this statement that green products are helping to save the environment. 1.58 is the mean value which also displays the same result that people think it can save the environment and standard deviation is 0.546 which also tells the less disagreement of opinion with the statement.

9. Statement: "Green" features in the product are helping to save resources and manage waste.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid stronglyagree	30	37.5
Agree-	42	52.5
Neutral-	2	2.5
Disagree-	6	7.5
Total=	80	100.0

52.5% respondents agree with the statement that green products help to save resources. Mean value is 1.80 which states that respondents agree with the statement and standard deviation is 0.818 that also show the less difference in opinion of the respondents and the result display the agreeableness of the respondents.

10. Statement: While purchasing, I consider green features to be present in a product.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	16	20.0
Agree-	35	43.8
Neutral-	5	6.3
Disagree-	21	26.3
Strongly disagree	3	3.8
Total=	80	100.0

43.8% respondents agree with the statement that they consider green feature in a product. Mean value is 2.50 which states that respondents agree with the statement and standard deviation is 1.191 that also show the difference in opinion of the respondents regarding this statement.

11. Statement: Environmental friendly product gives a positive message to the customers and help to attract them towards the product

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	29	36.3
Agree-	48	60.0
Neutral-	1	1.3
Disagree-	2	2.5
Total=	80	100.0

60% respondents agree with the statement that green products gives positive message. Mean value is 1.70 which also shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is 0.624 that shows the less difference of opinion from this statement of respondents with respect to the statement.

12. Statement: Would you prefer to buy a product that demonstrates customer as well as environmental concern through its promotion?

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	21	26.3
Agree-	49	61.3
Neutral-	3	3.8
Disagree-	7	8.8
Total=	80	100.0

61.3% respondents agree with the statement that they want to buy a product that is environmental friendly. Mean value is 1.95 which also shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is .810 that shows the less difference of opinion from this statement of respondents with respect to the statement.

13. Statement: Green promotion or advertisement promoting green products plays an important role in developing concern about environment.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	26	32.5
Agree-	45	56.3
Neutral-	1	1.3
Disagree-	7	8.8
Total=	79	98.8
Missing System	1	1.3
Total	80	100.0

56.3% respondents agree with the statement that green promotion plays important role in developing concern for environment. Mean value is 1.86 which also shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is .828 that shows the less difference of opinion of respondents with respect to the statement and display agreeableness of the respondents.

14. Statement: Promoting eco-friendly products is just a method to increase sales.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	16	20.0
Agree-	30	37.5
Neutral-	8	10.0
Disagree-	22	27.5
strongly disagree	4	5.0
Total=	80	100.0

37.5% respondents agree with the statement that by promoting eco-friendly products increases the sale. Mean value is 2.60 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is 1.228 that shows the some difference of opinion from this statement of respondents with respect to the statement.

15. Statement: Customer loyalty could be achieved through Green Marketing.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree-	23	28.8
Agree-	44	55.0
Neutral-	3	3.8
Disagree-	9	11.3
strongly disagree	1	1.3
Total=	80	100.0

55% respondents agree with the statement that customer loyalty could be achieved by green marketing. Mean value is 2.01 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is .948 that shows the less difference of opinion from this statement of respondents with respect to the statement.

16. Statement: Green Product users are more satisfied than people who don't purchase green products.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree-	23	28.8
Agree-	32	40.0
Neutral-	8	10.0
Disagree-	15	18.8
strongly disagree	2	2.5
Total=	80	100.0

40% respondents agree with the statement that green product users are more satisfied than people who don't use green products. Mean value is 2.26 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is 1.145 that also shows the less difference of opinion from this statement of respondents with respect to the statement.

17. Statement: Green Product features attract and retain more customers as people are much aware and want environmental friendly products.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	16	20.0
Agree-	48	60.0
Neutral-	7	8.8
Disagree-	7	8.8
strongly disagree	2	2.5
Total=	80	100.0

48% respondents agree with the statement that green product attract and retain more people as they are aware of the product features. Mean value is 2.14 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is .924 that also shows the less difference of opinion from this statement of respondents with respect to the statement.

18. Statement: Customers are more loyal to green products as compare to an ordinary product.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	20	25.0
Agree-	40	50.0
Neutral-	8	10.0
Disagree-	10	12.5
strongly disagree	2	2.5
Total	80	100.0

50% respondents agree with the statement that green product features attract more loyal customers. Mean value is 2.18 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is 1.028 that shows particular difference of opinion from this statement of respondents with respect to the statement.

19. Statement: Green products add innovation to the product.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	32	40.0
Agree	38	47.5
Neutral	4	5.0
Disagree	6	7.5
Total	80	100.0

47.5% respondents agree with the statement that green products are innovative. Mean value is 1.80 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents and standard deviation is 0.848 that also shows the less difference of opinion from this statement of respondents with respect to the statement.

20. Statement: More the green features in the product more it will be innovative.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree-	23	28.8
Agree-	42	52.5
Neutral-	4	5.0
Disagree-	11	13.8
Total=	80	100.0

47.5% respondents agree with the statement that more green features add more innovation to the product. Mean value is 2.04 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents with the statement and standard deviation

is .947 that also shows the less difference of opinion of respondents with respect to this statement.

21. Statement: I purchase green products and consider it my social responsibility.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree-	15	18.8
Agree-	45	56.3
Neutral-	7	8.8
Disagree-	10	12.5
strongly disagree	3	3.8
Total=	80	100.0

56.3% respondents agree with the statement that they buy green products and feel it as their social responsibility. Mean value is 2.26 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents with the statement and standard deviation is 1.028 which shows a particular difference in opinion of respondents with respect to this statement.

22. Statement: I recommend others to buy green products.

	Frequency-	Percent%
strongly agree-	17	21.3
Agree-	33	41.3
Neutral-	11	13.8
Disagree-	18	22.5
strongly disagree	1	1.3
Total=	80	100.0

41.3% respondents agree with the statement that they recommend others to buy green products... Mean value is 2.41 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents with the statement and standard deviation is 1.099 which shows a particular difference in opinion of respondents with respect to this statement.

23. Statement: I communicate benefits of green products to others.

	Frequency-	Percent%
strongly agree	22	27.5
Agree-	30	37.5
Neutral-	17	21.3
Disagree-	11	13.8
Total=	80	100.0

37.5% respondents agree with the statement that they communicate the benefits of green products to others. Mean value is 2.21 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents with the statement and standard deviation is 1.002 which shows a particular difference in opinion of respondents with respect to this statement.

24. Statement: I give preference to green products over ordinary products.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid Strongly agree-	14	17.5
Agree-	42	52.5
Neutral-	13	16.3
Disagree-	11	13.8
Total=	80	100.0

52.5% respondents agree with the statement that they give preference to green products. Mean value is 2.26 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents with the statement and standard deviation is .910 which also displays less difference in opinion of respondents with respect to this statement.

25. Statement: Using green products can help to reduce environmental problems.

	Frequency-	Percent%
Valid strongly agree	38	47.5
Agree-	34	42.5
Neutral-	2	2.5
Disagree-	6	7.5
Total=	80	100.0

42.5% respondents agree with the statement that green product features reduce environmental problems. Mean value is 1.70 which shows the agreeableness of the respondents with the statement and standard deviation is .848 which also displays less difference in opinion of respondents with respect to this statement.

Recommendations

- It should be ensured that the consumers are well aware about the problems and issues the product agrees and reduce.
- Information regarding green products and their features should be widely provided through promotion.
- The benefits of the green products should be explained
- Credibility of the green products should be ensured through proving enough information.
- Although the cost of the green products are high but reasons for the high prices should be informed as there is increased willingness by the consumers to pay more as they see benefit of their money in terms of good quality. Modern consumers consider it as their social responsibility to purchase green products.
- Consumers should be well educated about their role in protecting their environment.
- The companies should be transparent in describing what they are actually doing for green marketing bad their policies solid be consistent with their work and concern about environmental friendly.
- Government should develop policies to take strict actions for those companies that produce product that are harmful to the environment.

Conclusion

Awareness regarding green products and green marketing is increased and it is becoming more important as now people are more concerned about their environment and becoming more socially responsible. The objective of green marketing is to satisfy the needs and desires of the customers and keep the company responsible in maintaining long-term social and environmental gains. All green marketing activities are focused along with environmental concern in green marketing. A new management practice has been adopted for producing and promoting environmental friendly products as sustainable growth and profitability are ensured. The objective of this research was to satisfy the needs and desires of the customers and keep the company responsible in maintaining long term social and environmental gains that could earn through effective green marketing and to solve the environmental concerns that the world is facing like pollution, acid precipitation, threat to earth ozone layer, accumulation of greenhouse gasses, agricultural land consumed by deserts, vital habitual resources are depleted fastly, with an aim of sustainable development, strategies regarding green marketing have been used and can be used by the organization. Green marketing is viewed as an impact on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty. Fulfillment of consumer's consumption goals that are experienced and described by consumers is known

as customer satisfaction. Green marketing undertakes even more prominence and importance in Pakistan and other countries that are developing.

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