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THE CONCEPT OF GREEN MARKETING AND BRAND PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRACT

In the fierce competitive conditions of the modern age, businesses can only survive if they develop and effectively implement strategies for social issues such as sustainability and green marketing. It is extremely difficult for businesses to survive in today's marketing world without being sensitive to nature and the environment and focusing on long-term social interests rather than short-term interests. From the past to the present, there have been radical changes in the consumer profile. Consumers of this age act much more consciously in their purchasing activities and tend to prefer products that do not harm the environment and nature. In other words, the new consumer profile prefers the products of businesses that show social marketing sensitivity in their purchasing decisions, and wants the products produced to be safer in terms of environmental protection within the ecosystem. Many businesses that want to reach more customers and develop customer loyalty focus on protecting the environment, reducing harmful wastes, producing environmentally sensitive policies, reducing personal carbon footprint, and developing green products to prevent environmental pollution. All these goals are within the scope of green marketing activities, which are among the prominent ones among modern marketing approaches. The purpose of this study is to theoretically examine the concept of green marketing from different aspects and to include sample activities of businesses implementing green marketing. As a result of the conceptual review, it has been evaluated that green marketing activities will provide businesses with various gains such as competitive advantage, increased market share, profitability, sustainable development, customer satisfaction, and positive corporate image.

Keywords: Sustainability, Green marketing, Consumer, Brand

JEL Classification Codes: M30, M31, M39, Q56

SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİRLİK BAĞLAMINDA YEŞİL PAZARLAMA KAVRAMI VE MARKA UYGULAMALARI

ÖZ

Modern çağın çetin rekabet şartlarında, işletmelerin hayatlarını devam ettirebilmesi, sürdürülebilirlik ve yeşil pazarlama gibi toplumsal konulara yönelik stratejiler geliştirmesi ve bu stratejileri etkin bir biçimde hayata geçirmesi ile mümkündür. Doğaya ve çevreye duyarlı olmadan, kısa vadeli çıkarlardan ziyade uzun vadeli toplumsal çıkarlara odaklanmadan bugünün pazarlama dünyasında işletmelerin varlığını sürdürebilmesi son derece güçtür. Geçmişten bugüne, tüketici profilinde oldukça köklü değişimler söz konusudur. Bu çağın tüketicisi satın alma faaliyetlerinde çok daha bilinçli hareket etmekte, çevreye ve doğaya zarar vermeyen ürünleri tercih etme eğilimi göstermektedir. Bir başka deyişle yeni tüketici profili satın alma kararlarında, toplumsal pazarlama hassasiyeti gösteren işletmelerin ürünlerini daha fazla tercih etmekte, üretilen ürünlerin, ekosistem içinde çevre korunması açısından daha güvenli olmasını istemektedir. Tüm bu gerekçelerle daha çok müşteriye ulaşmak ve müşteri sadakatini geliştirmek isteyen pek çok işletme çevreyi koruma, zararlı atıkları azaltma, çevreye duyarlı politikalar üretme, kişisel

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karbon ayak izini azaltma, çevre kirliliğini önlemek için yeşil ürünler geliştirme gibi hedeflerle faaliyetlerini sürdürmeye odaklanmaktadır. Bahsi geçen tüm bu hedefler, modern pazarlama yaklaşımlarından öne çıkanlar arasında olan yeşil pazarlama faaliyetleri kapsamında yer almaktadır. Yapılan bu çalışmanın amacı, yeşil pazarlama kavramını farklı yönleriyle teorik olarak incelemek ve yeşil pazarlama uygulayan işletmelerin örnek faaliyetlerine yer vermektir. Yapılan kavramsal inceleme sonucunda, yeşil pazarlama faaliyetlerinin işletmelere, rekabet üstünlüğü, artan pazar payı, karlılık, sürdürülebilir kalkınma, müşteri memnuniyeti, olumlu kurumsal imaj gibi çeşitli kazanımlar sağlayacağı değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sürdürülebilirlik, Yeşil Pazarlama, Tüketici, Marka

JEL Sınıflandırma Kodları: M30, M31, M39, Q56

1. INTRODUCTION

With the development of technology in the world, production is increasing, and this increase causes environmental pollution. In order to combat pollution in terms of environmental sustainability, various institutions and organizations, especially non-governmental organizations, are making intensive efforts to protect nature and raise environmental awareness. Sustainability is defined as meeting the economic and social needs of the present time without creating a negative impact on the ecosystem and without harming the opportunities of future generations (un.org.2024). Especially because of legal regulations and international quality standards, it is stated that environmental criteria have started to be discussed more within the scope of green marketing literature.

With the development of technology, issues such as using limited natural resources in an optimum way, making intensive efforts to maintain the natural balance, minimizing the level of energy consumption, trying to prevent all possible damage to the environment and reducing environmental pollution have recently been among the priority issues on the agenda of governments, businesses and non-governmental organizations. Environmental pollution is increasing rapidly. Businesses care more about the environmental factor, which is vital for living things, and awareness about sustainability and the environment is increasing. As a result of this situation, businesses revise their goods and services in line with green marketing strategies. For example, environmentally friendly products that contribute to sustainability are being designed and produced more and are offered to consumers within the scope of green promotion activities (Özcan & Özgül, 2019).

Today's consumers want the products they intend to buy to be safer in terms of environmental protection within the ecosystem. Customers who prefer environmentally friendly businesses that cause less pollution and produce more recyclable products demand more use of renewable resources in production activities (Karaca, 2013, p. 99). The number of consumers acting with environmental awareness is increasing day by day. This situation forces business and marketing managers to revise the objectives they want to achieve. For example, goals such as protecting the environment, reducing harmful wastes, producing more environmentally sensitive policies, and producing sustainable products to prevent environmental pollution are prioritized (Armağan, 2014, p. 3). All these goals have an impact on marketing strategies and today more and more businesses are taking important steps to realize production without harming the environment. Many steps such as reducing the use of plastic, placing recycling bins, minimizing waste are within the scope of green marketing activities. In this period of increasing environmental awareness, consumers show a more environmentally sensitive attitude and adopt consumption habits that protect the environment. There are demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, psychographic characteristics such as political tendency, environmental sensitivity and a few cultural factors that affect the purchasing preferences of consumers whose purchasing behaviors have changed (Özcan & Özgül, 2019). Green marketing activities, which have started to be implemented in almost every sector today, are characterized as the idea of investing in the ecosystem and the future, especially in businesses, and much more research is being conducted on the environment and sustainability compared to the past.

Within the scope of this study, the concept of green marketing in the context of sustainability is discussed in various dimensions. In the conceptual framework, the concept of green marketing, green marketing mix and the objectives of green marketing are detailed. Some of the national and international studies on the subject are mentioned in the literature review. In the continuation of the study, sample applications for green marketing strategies developed by brands in a competitive environment are included.



2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Green Marketing Concept

The concept of green marketing, which is referred to by various names, is sometimes referred to as "environmental marketing", "ecological marketing", "sustainable marketing" and "social marketing" in the literature. The concept of green marketing was first defined in 1975. The relevant subject was discussed and conceptualized in the seminar titled "Ecological Marketing" held by the American Marketing Association. According to this definition, ecological marketing is the studies that examine the energy consumption used in marketing activities and the environmental pollution that develops due to this and the positive or negative effects resulting from the consumption of other resources (Keleş, 2007; Leblebici, 2008). The concept of green marketing, which is a broad concept, basically has three components. These components are briefly summarized as being a subset of marketing, evaluating positive and negative activities carried out in marketing and examining environmental problems (Polonsky, 1994).

There are different definitions of green marketing in the literature. According to Hennion and Kinnear (1976, p. 1), which is among the preliminary definitions, the concept is expressed as various marketing activities that cause environmental problems and can serve to provide solutions to environmental problems. In this context, the concept of green marketing consists of three basic criteria. These are briefly meeting customer needs, achieving organizational goals and the process being compatible with ecosystems. Green marketing is also at the center of clean production and corporate sustainability. Green marketing refers to the process of including environmental awareness in marketing management. To ensure that the marketing mix elements are used in an environmentally friendly manner, businesses continue their activities and try to create awareness in this regard. In addition, green marketing practices are among the modern marketing activities that show how to meet the ever-changing demands and needs of individuals with scarce resources (Polonsky, 1994). Green marketing shows how businesses should be intertwined, better and more compatible with the environment in their production activities (Stanton, 1987). Green marketing covers the process of implementing and controlling the marketing mix elements that are prepared to meet customer needs with business objectives that are harmonized with the environment (Fuller, 1999). Green marketing activities are expressed as an important marketing approach in the context of achieving sustainable competitive advantage by prioritizing the environment and creating environmentally sensitive demand management (Sharma, et al., 2010). Green marketing addresses environmental issues such as unnecessary consumption of energy, extinction of species, depletion of resources, and threats to the ecosystem (Papadas et al., 2017). According to Chamorro and Banegil (2006, p. 12), green marketing plays a guiding role in understanding the interrelationships between planning, implementation and control policy within the scope of social responsibility.

Green marketing is a set of activities to make it possible to minimize the damage to the ecosystem in order to meet the changing demands of the customer according to their wishes and needs. In other words, green marketing is a marketing approach that aims to carry out activities that will minimize the damage to the environment in order to meet the changing demands and needs of the customer with environmental awareness. Green marketing offers a perspective that should be considered in the context of social marketing, which requires businesses to focus on long-term interests that reduce the negative effects on the ecosystem in their activities rather than short-term interests.

2.2. Green Marketing Mix

Green marketing aims to meet the demands and needs of the consumer while also reducing the negative effects of efforts towards traditional marketing mix elements on the ecosystem. Within the scope of green marketing, there are four basic elements based on the traditional marketing approach: green product, green price, green distribution and green promotion.

2.2.1. Green Product

Green products are products that do not harm the world, are produced without consuming natural resources, can be recycled, and their value is preserved (Shamdasani, et al., 1993, pp. 488-493). Products that do not contain harmful substances and are packaged with minimum materials are green products (Ottoman, 1998). In other words, green products are products that do not harm any living creature, do not pollute the earth, use natural resources at the lowest level and can be recycled. A green product is a product designed to minimize its environmental impact



during the product life cycle (Albino et al., 2009). Nowadays, when the consumption rate is constantly increasing, the importance of developing environmentally friendly products is increasing more and more. In order to develop environmentally friendly policies and produce green products, businesses should act effectively and decisively, focus on the production of recyclable products that do not harm the natural balance, minimize energy use, and adopt the principle of developing safe production strategies for all living things and the environment (Öndoğan, 2018). Green product is a product that is possible to make non-hazardous materials ready for reuse by carrying out the separation process after the final stage of the product used. Green products are products that do not harm nature, do not contain toxic substances, have a long service life, can be recycled, and are produced with production methods that cause minimum harm to nature and living things (Şua, 2012, p. 22). Green products are also defined as producing recyclable products without harming the environment, without consuming natural resources (Turhan et al., 2015). Green products are products that influence consumers to purchase in order to maintain environmental sustainability and to ensure the formation of much better living standards. Green products, which are generally preferred by consumers with high environmental awareness, are also referred to as environmentally sensitive or environmentally friendly products (Chen, 2010). When the use of green products ends, they can be recycled to the environment by reusing harmless materials with separation technology (Sarıcı, 2022). For example, in green hotel businesses, the preference for recyclable deposit glass bottles with the least harm to nature instead of plastic boxed bottles is considered within the scope of green products. In addition, similarly, sending plastic, glass or recyclable packaged products of different types to recycling by separating them before they are thrown away after use is another example (Ceylan & Kıpırtı, 2021).

2.2.2. Green Price

In its most general form, green price is defined as the price that customers pay for purchasing green products (Peattie & Crane, 2005). Green price is the value given to consumers to benefit from the green products they buy. In terms of green price, the term “premium price” refers to the additional cost that consumers would have to pay to purchase a product with higher environmental performance compared to a conventional alternative (Peattie, 2001). According to the European Commission (2014), the willingness to pay higher prices for green goods and services is observed in developed countries where most consumers strive to buy environmentally friendly products compared to other consumers. A number of studies reveal that individuals are willing to pay higher prices for green goods and services, but the type of product and the benefits perceived by consumers affect the willingness to pay (Essoussi & Linton, 2010; Savaş, 2020). To set a green price, it is important for management to consider the consequences of the company on the environment (Hashem & AlRifai, 2011). Basically, the price of green products is higher than that of regular products. Therefore, businesses engaged in green production should be very careful about setting prices (Shil, 2012). According to Kapelianis and Strachan (1996), there is a significant degree of heterogeneity among consumers in terms of willingness to pay high prices. While some consumers may demand a discount for green products, others are willing to pay an infinite price. However, some businesses make efforts to persuade consumers to pay more to contribute to future generations or environmental sustainability (Dong et al., 2012).

The first and most important problem of businesses adopting green marketing is to decide how the price should be determined. The enterprise should first compare the price of the green product it produces with the normally produced product and decide whether the price should be according to the average (Topuz, 2016, p. 20). Green priced products are more costly than other products. One of the important reasons for this situation is that while carrying out green marketing activities, the additional cost is included in the product cost (Günay, 2017, p. 29). However, investments in environmentalist products increase the cost and sales price of the product. Only customers who have a certain level of income and act with environmental awareness are willing to pay for products that are sold at a higher price with the determined figures. For this reason, it is important to develop different persuasion methods and inform the customers about paying the fee determined for green marketing. For example, consumers should be told about the existence and necessity of green products to live in a healthy and natural environment, and a price policy should be planned so that the consumer can buy them. In addition, it is also an important step to provide more information about the features and advantages of the product to increase the sales of green products despite their high prices (Rizwan, et al., 2014, pp. 290-305). It is stated that the consumer's demand for the green product will increase despite the high pricing created after the information is provided. For example, organic clothes made from natural cotton fibres are sold at higher prices than clothes produced by conventional methods, and despite their high selling prices, they are more in demand than cheaper products. The



reason for this situation is that customers know the price-benefit relationship of these products. It should be aimed at providing consumer awareness for all products produced.

2.2.3. Green Distribution

Green distribution is the distribution channel selected to minimize negative environmental impact (Karaman, 2021: 159). Green distribution represents a process that aims to manage the logistics process and reduce the carbon footprint to minimize transport emissions (Solaiman et al., 2015, p. 94).

Within the scope of green distribution, there are important activities such as being environmentally friendly, ensuring less carbon emission with less energy, and promoting partial transport. Businesses that care about green marketing either act with the aim of carrying out environmentally friendly distribution activities that they will create within their own structure or prefer to work with environmentally friendly distribution companies. Green distribution activities consist of green physical distribution, storage, inventory management, order but and fulfilment, loading and unloading and reverse logistics phases (Erbaşlar, 2012, p. 100).

There may also be businesses that prefer to focus on digital marketing activities. Reverse logistics activities are one of the most advanced distribution practices. Reverse logistics, which is the recycling of wastes such as used packaging and transport containers from consumers, is one of the most widely used concepts under the green distribution strategy. Businesses tend to continue their strategies and long-term plans in this direction after they start to experience the direct and indirect benefits of reverse logistics. Among the brands that successfully use the concept of reverse logistics are "BMW, Delphi, DuPont, General Motor, HP" (Nakıboğlu, 2012).

2.2.4. Green Promotion

Green promotion means defining advertising, sales development, promotion and public relations activities in an environmentally sensitive manner (Biner, 2014, p. 53). Green promotion involves communicating information about environmental commitments and the efforts made by businesses towards consumers (Mahmoud, 2018, p. 129).

Some of the methods used in promotion strategies include environmental advertising, public relations and sponsorship, sales development and direct marketing activities. In this context, businesses should present advertisements that are sensitive to nature and the environment to their target audiences during the content, preparation and presentation of their advertising campaigns and make it clear that they pay utmost attention to the protection of nature and state that this is the basis of their advertising policies. In the context of green public relations strategies, businesses should determine various strategies consisting of offensive, defensive, pre-emptive and opportunistic strategies. Within the scope of sales development, the focus should be on long-term rather than short-term commitments (Erbaşlar, 2012, p. 99). Although green promotion activities can be applied in every sector, the tourism sector is among the leading sectors. It is aimed at creating an "environmentally friendly business" image in the minds of consumers through promotional activities carried out in tourism enterprises. To achieve this goal, promotional activities are carried out through various promotions, public relations activities, advertising campaigns, etc. (Boztepe, 2012, p. 6).

2.3. Purposes of Green Marketing

Green marketing activities are a marketing approach that serves important purposes while offering businesses various advantages over their competitors. According to Miles et al (1997) the two most important objectives of green marketing are to develop environmentally friendly products that are less harmful to the environment and offer them to customers and to create a positive image for the business by creating quality green products. Actions such as designing and producing products that cause the least damage to the environment by considering the quality, performance, reasonable price, etc. requirements of consumers serve extremely important purposes both in raising environmental awareness and in creating positive effects in the minds of consumers (Duru & Şua, 2013, p. 130). Other objectives of green marketing are listed as protecting the natural balance, minimizing energy consumption, minimizing packaging and recycling, making the best use of limited natural resources, encouraging the use of environmentally friendly products, raising social awareness about the environment, and producing alternatives to reduce environmental pollution caused by industry (Yavuzyılmaz & Güney, 2015, p. 239).

Recently, with the acceleration of technological developments, there has been an increase in the production activities carried out by enterprises. As a natural consequence of this situation, consumption activities are



increasing worldwide. Some enterprises engaged in industrial production continue to carry out unconscious production activities with resources that are already scarce in the environment and without concern for the future. Irresponsible production and consumption actions disrupt the natural balance. One of the important environmental problems encountered is the depletion of the ozone layer. Conscious societies that are aware of this situation act with the aim of changing their purchasing decisions with the concern of leaving insufficient natural resources to future generations (Biner, 2014, p. 24). From this point of view, it is very important to instill in societies the awareness of protecting the environment and using natural resources adequately.

2.4. Benefits of Green Marketing

There are many benefits that green marketing activities, which contribute to reducing environmental pollution and create consumer awareness with the principle of sustainability, offer to businesses. Some of these are briefly summarized as follows (Ottoman, 1997; Voon & Yazdanifard, 2014):

- **Profitability:** Green-based products produce less waste, so less raw materials are used in the production of green products and energy is saved.
- **Competitive Advantage:** Companies that are the first to introduce environmental innovations have a competitive advantage.
- **Increasing Market Share:** Brand loyalty is almost at an all-time low.
- **Sustainable Development:** Meeting today's needs without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations is possible with green marketing activities.

In the most general sense, marketing products that can save the environment is the primary benefit of green marketing. Many companies endeavor to be green, and for this purpose they offer green products. Green marketing practices have many advantages such as ensuring profitability as well as long-term sustainable growth, providing savings in the long run, although it may seem too costly at the beginning, helping companies to market their products and services by considering environmental factors, supporting their access to new markets, and at the same time enabling companies to benefit from competitive advantage (Kasliwal & Agarwal, 2019). In addition, other advantages that green marketing provides to businesses are as follows (Nemli, 1998): Ensuring environmental efficiency reduces production costs. By using less raw materials, consuming less energy and incurring lower disposal costs, businesses can provide more economic benefits. Today, consumers demand environmentally friendly products, environmentally friendly packaging, environmentally friendly distribution, and environmentally friendly promotion strategies. These consumers prefer businesses that are more sensitive to the environment. Thus, this demand increases green businesses. Businesses become leaders when they develop unique environmental strategies that are difficult to imitate. It is important for the company to be environmentally friendly in terms of its promotional activities and corporate image, and this feature also affects the company's social responsibility perspective. An environmentally sensitive perspective reduces risks in terms of resource depletion, energy costs, and waste management. The increase in environmentally friendly practices of businesses also provides important gains to society. The decrease in health problems caused by industrial pollution can also reduce expenses. Being environmentally friendly guarantees the business against the law. Being environmentally friendly guarantees the business against the law. The literature also indicates that environmentally friendly practices will offer businesses several external benefits. For example, increase in sales, development of consumer feedback, being close to consumers, superiority in competitive power, and development of a positive image are some of them (Keleş, 2007). In addition to these gains, business managers also want to implement green marketing for reasons such as developing the market, being supported by the state, complying with sanctions, increasing competitive power, reducing waste, and reducing costs by reusing (Durmaz & Yaşar, 2016).

3. LITERATURE

A wide variety of studies have been conducted on green marketing in the world and in Turkey. Most of the studies conducted in Turkey are related to green marketing activities and how they are used in which sectors. The subjects covered in these studies are environmental awareness, green marketing activities of businesses, and consumer green product purchasing behaviors. Some prominent studies in the national and international literature on green marketing activities are summarized as follows:

The aim of the study named "Green Marketing Practices in Accommodation Enterprises: Ibis Hotel Example" conducted by Atay & Dilek (2013) is to contribute to green marketing and green hotel management in the tourism



sector and Ibis Hotel is considered as a sample hotel case. The literature review on green marketing practices was conducted and the website of Ibis Hotels was examined, and it was found that Ibis Hotels contributed to the development of sustainable destinations with their green hotel practices.

The aim of the study named “Examination of Tourists’ Views on Green Marketing within the Scope of Demographic Variables” conducted by Altunöz et al., (2014) is to uncover how green marketing activities implemented in hotel enterprises affect the attitudes and behaviors of tourists. The results of the survey study showed that all tourists participating in the study had expectations that hotels with higher stars should work more sensitively on green marketing.

The aim of the study titled “An Application on Organic Hotels to Examine the Effect of Green Marketing on Purchasing Behaviors in Tourism” conducted by Celiloğlu (2014) was to examine the effect of consumers’ thoughts about green hotels on their intention to stay in these hotels. As a result of the study in which the survey method was applied, it was determined that there was a positive and significant relationship between hotel customers’ thoughts about green hotels and their intention to stay.

In the article titled “Industry Initiatives for Green Marketing in India” prepared by Sharma (2015), businesses that have turned green in India, have high profit rates and provide customer satisfaction were examined and suggestions were developed for companies implementing green marketing. Suggestions such as minimizing waste, reviewing and developing organizational policies, and continuously improving products and processes have been developed.

The main purpose of the study titled “Green Marketing and Green Brand - The Toyota Case” conducted by Simão & Lisboa (2017) is to contextualize sustainability, ensure that business managers draw attention to this issue, and especially emphasize green marketing and green branding. Within this purpose, it has been observed that green marketing, specifically for the Toyota brand, provides many benefits to brands such as reducing costs, increasing profits, improving the production process, and increasing brand awareness.

In the study titled “A Research on the Reasons that Force Businesses to Implement Green Logistics” conducted by Yangınlar & Sarı (2017) in the health sector, green logistics activities in health care businesses were examined and the reasons that force health care businesses to implement green logistics were revealed.

Within the scope of the theoretical framework of the study titled “Lean Production Systematics in Innovative Process Management” conducted by Gök & Arıcı (2017), sustainability and environmental awareness studies in the production management and supply chain literature were examined in detail. As a result of the study, it was predicted that process-based systems and lean production systematics and GCM applications could potentially provide higher benefits rather than modular systems.

The aim of the study titled “Green Marketing Applications in Marina Enterprises” conducted by Erdoğan (2017) was to determine the strategies implemented by marina enterprises to gain environmentally sensitive customers. The interview data conducted with marina managers in Muğla province was evaluated with content analysis and it was suggested that the environmental impacts of marinas should be minimized for sustainable tourism. Marinas need to develop environmentally friendly applications that create a difference to gain a competitive advantage over other marinas. In addition, suggestions were developed for marinas to gain “environmentally sensitive customers”.

The aim of the study titled “A General View of Green Human Resources Management within the Scope of Sustainability” by Uslu & Kedikli (2017) is to emphasize the importance of green human resources management in terms of realizing the sustainability strategies of enterprises. As a result of the study, a contribution has been made to the limited Turkish literature on Green HRM.

In the study titled “Green Marketing Practices in Accommodation Enterprises: Doğa Residence Hotel Example” conducted by Sert (2017), green marketing practices in accommodation enterprises were examined as a case example of Doğa Residence Hotel and the benefits of these practices to enterprises were revealed. As a result of the research, it was concluded that green marketing practices reduce the costs of enterprises in the long term, increase their profitability and gain reputation for enterprises.

The aim of the study titled “Green Marketing Practices in Tourism Enterprises: İzmir Province Example” conducted by Günay (2017) is to investigate whether environmentally friendly products meet expectations, consumers' thoughts on green marketing, and whether green marketing activities implemented by tourism



enterprises are effective on consumer purchasing behavior. As a result, it was found that green marketing activities are effective on consumer purchasing behavior.

The aim of the study titled “Ready-to-Wear Sector and Green Marketing” conducted by Öndoğan (2018) is to emphasize the importance of green marketing in the ready-to-wear sector. In the study, the concept of green marketing is detailed and within the scope of green marketing for the ready-made clothing sector, it is suggested that methods that minimize costs and increase efficiency in green product studies should be developed and encouraged in this regard.

The aim of the study titled “The Effect of Green Marketing on Brand Image and Purchase Decision: Study on Consumer of Starbucks Café Ubud, Gianyar Bali” conducted by Dwipamurti et al. (2018) is to reveal the effect of green marketing on brand image in the Starbucks business and to explain the effect of green marketing on the purchase decision. As a result of the study, it was concluded that the concept of green marketing has a direct effect on brand image.

In the study titled “Green Shares: Social Media Shares of Green Brands” conducted by Kaya (2018), it was revealed how the brands included in the list of the world's greenest brands prepared by Interbrand use social media platforms to carry out corporate communication about their sustainability activities.

In the study titled “Green Marketing Practices in Small-Scale Accommodation Enterprises within the Scope of Sustainable Tourism” conducted by Yetiş (2018), it is aimed to examine the green marketing activities of Fresco Houses, one of the two small-scale accommodation enterprises with an environmentally sensitive accommodation enterprise certificate in Nevşehir province, within the scope of a case study. As a result of the study, it has been revealed that it is not as difficult as it is thought for accommodation enterprises to adopt environmentally friendly practices, that sustainability of tourism is possible with green marketing and that it is also logical in terms of operating costs.

In the study titled “A Hospital Example on the Concept of Green Hospital and the Expectations of End Users in Turkey” conducted by Kılıç & Güdük (2018), literature information about the concept of green hospitals and their practices in the World and in Turkey is included, and the study reveals why the concept of green building has not developed in Turkey compared to other developed countries and the perspectives of the end users of hospital buildings; employees, patients and relatives towards green hospitals are revealed.

In the study titled “Determining the Effect of Green Logistics Applications on Competitiveness and Hospital Performance with Logistic Regression Analysis: Ankara Province Example” conducted by Korucuk (2018), the effect of green logistics applications on competitiveness and hospital performance was determined and as a result of the study, it was understood that green procurement applications have a positive effect on the competitiveness of hospitals.

In the study titled “Conversion of Existing Buildings into Sustainable Green Buildings” conducted by Gelişen and Güzelkokar (2019), information was provided with green building designs and the ways to effectively complete green and sustainable building transformations in Turkey were analyzed.

In the study titled “Green Marketing–Practices and Challenges in the Indian Context” conducted by Mani & Bhandari (2019), examples of strategies used by some well-known Indian businesses for green marketing ideas were given. In this study, which utilized secondary data, some information was presented about the businesses’ websites and green marketing strategies, but it was commented that this information presented was insufficient in terms of green marketing.

In the study titled “Green Activities Marketing Framework Environmental Awareness Applications’ Impact on Environmental Behavior: Düzce Province Example” conducted by Çatı & Öcel (2019), the effect of consumers’ environmental awareness level on environmental behavior within the scope of green marketing was tried to be measured. As a result of the analysis of the surveys answered by 275 people living in Düzce, it was found that the level of environmental awareness and environmental behavior differed depending on the demographic characteristics of the participants.

In the article titled “Examination of the Effect of Green Marketing Strategies on Competitive Advantage: A Research on 4- and 5-Star Hotel Enterprises in Muğla Province” conducted by Akdemir & Akbulut (2019), the



effect of green marketing strategies on companies in terms of competitive advantage was examined. As a result of the study, the finding that green marketing strategies influence competitive advantage was revealed.

Within the scope of the study titled “A Field Research on Green Supply Chain Applications in the Chemical Sector” conducted by Coşkun & Bozyiğit (2019), the green supply chain applications of 25 companies operating in the chemical sector in Mersin province were examined. As a result of the study, it was emphasized that the companies found green applications costly, however, they fulfilled their legal obligations.

The study titled “A Study on Assessing the Relationship between Green Marketing and Brand Loyalty in Manufacturing Sector of Greece: A Moderating Role of Green Supply Chain Practices” conducted by Tanwari (2020) aims to measure the relationship between green marketing and brand loyalty in the manufacturing sector of Greece. As a result of the study, it was revealed that green branding and green supply chain practices have a significant and positive relationship with brand loyalty.

In this study titled “A Study to Determine the Green Hospital Awareness Levels of Healthcare Users” conducted by Mansur & Korkmaz (2020), it was attempted to determine the green hospital awareness levels of healthcare users. As a result of the research, it was revealed that healthcare users had higher awareness levels about the indoor environmental quality of hospitals, material-resources and sustainable site planning-management.

The aim of the study titled “The Impact of Renewable Energy Resources on Employment and Economic Growth in G20 Countries in the Context of Green Jobs” by Karagöz (2020) is to measure the impact of renewable energy production on both employment and economic growth in G20 countries. Within the scope of the study, suggestions that can contribute to the elimination of this deficiency due to the lack of studies conducted within the scope of G20, which will be the basis for green employment policies due to global climate change, were put forward and the importance of G20 countries in global efforts such as economy, energy, employment, and combating climate change was emphasized.

The aim of this study titled “Applications in Cement Industry in Terms of Green Marketing: A Case Study in Elazığ” conducted by Gök & Yüzgeç (2020) was to collect data with in-depth interview technique with the managers of two separate integrated cement factories in Elazığ province and to reveal what was done for green marketing in enterprises. Recommendations were made for regulations and improvements in the specified areas to protect the environment.

The study titled “Green Marketing Activities in Tourism Enterprises: Literature Review” conducted by Ceylan & Kıpırtı (2021) was carried out for the tourism sector. As a result of the study, it was emphasized how hotel service businesses should be followed in the process of becoming a green business and what the environmental documents and criteria for documents that green hotels should have been.

In this study titled “Sustainability in Textiles: Sustainability Strategies of Fast Fashion Brands” conducted by Metlioğlu & Yakın (2021), the focus was on the successful, sustainable textile production and fashion strategies of brands such as H&M and ZARA operating in the fast fashion sector, along with sustainability. The study revealed that these successes of fast fashion brands are due to the fact that more importance is given to the issue of “sustainability” on a sectoral basis.

In the study titled “A Study on Green Building and LEED Certification as a Sustainability Application in the Turkish Construction Sector” conducted by Karademir & Dağ (2021) importance was given to the construction sector, which causes high energy consumption in the world, and sustainability studies. As a result of the study, it was seen that there were 428 projects in Turkey that received LEED certification, including 2020, and an effort was made to raise awareness about sustainability.

In this research titled “Evaluation of Menu Designs in Food and Beverage Businesses within the Scope of Sustainability” by Kızıldemir & Kaderoğlu (2021), it is aimed to teach the concept of sustainability, which has a critical role in the transfer of natural resources to the next generation, and the existing practices in food businesses, to raise awareness by examining sustainable menu sample designs, and to make purchasing decisions by considering sustainability criteria. The importance of shaping the concept of sustainability appropriately in menu design is detailed. The importance of shaping the concept of sustainability appropriately in menu design was emphasized.



The aim of the study titled “Three Priority Strategies for Sustainable Logistics: Green Logistics, Reverse Logistics and Lean Logistics” conducted by Mücevher (2021) is to examine the priority strategies that can be used for sustainability in the logistics sector. To achieve this goal, the concept of sustainability was first addressed, and the issue of sustainability was examined in terms of the logistics sector. As a result of the study, it was concluded that in order for these three priority strategies to be implemented, all employees should adopt a sustainable understanding as a whole.

Within the scope of the study titled “Green Dentistry and Sustainability: The Present and Future of Dentistry” conducted by Bulut & Agaccioğlu (2021), the conditions for green and sustainability in the dentistry profession were explained and suggestions were presented to reduce the harm of clinical practices to nature.

In the study titled “Green Marketing Practices in Tourism: The Effect of Blue Flag and Green Star on Tourists' Accommodation Preferences” conducted by Zeydan & Gürbüz (2021), the effect of the blue flag and green star eco-label on accommodation data was examined. 14 provinces with both blue flag beaches and green star accommodation facilities were included in the study. As a result of the study, positive medium and high correlations were determined between the presence of eco-labels and the number of arrivals to the facility, overnight stays, average length of stay and occupancy rate data. Thus, it was emphasized that tourism activities would be positively affected with the widespread use of eco-labels such as blue flags and green stars.

In the study titled “Ecological Approaches and Green Marketing Practices in the Tourism Sector: Bursa Mövenpick Hotel” conducted by Öncel and Şanlı (2023), tourism activities carried out at Bursa Mövenpick Hotel were evaluated. As a result of the study, it was evaluated that the hotel was sensitive about the environment, followed the developments in green marketing and made revisions regarding sustainable tourism.

The aim of the study titled “Green Marketing in Tourism: A Bibliometric Analysis” conducted by Aslantürk & Baltacı (2023) is to analyze the concepts of “green marketing” and “tourism” with the help of descriptive analysis method and using the document review model and to determine the bibliometric properties of these concepts.

The aim of the study titled “Waste Food Practices of Green Star Hotels: The Istanbul Example” conducted by Sabancı and Onur (2024) is to evaluate the waste food practices of green star hotels operating in Istanbul. The waste food practices of Green Star hotels were detailed with the research conducted within the scope of the study. The main purpose of the study titled “Borusan Port's Environmental Performance and Green Port Practices” by Demirci & Arıcan (2024) is to analyze the change in Borusan Port's environmental performance over the years within the scope of Green Port. It is aimed to contribute to the studies on Green Port through the case study.

The aim of the study prepared by Odabaş (2024) titled “Bibliometric Analysis of the Concept of Green Innovation: An Application in Scopus Database” by Odabaş (2024) aims to analyze the content of articles on ‘green innovation’ through various variables. As a result of the study, it was emphasized that the reflections of the ecological crisis began to be felt in life and the interest of brands in green innovation activities within the scope of social responsibility began to increase.

4. GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES OF BRANDS

Within the scope of green marketing activities, many businesses today are opting for product differentiation, primarily to produce nature-friendly products. In order to differentiate within the scope of sustainability, the green product process has started in most businesses. Businesses that conduct green marketing activities direct consumers to act with green consumer awareness to reveal the differences between them and businesses that do not implement the “green marketing” process (Öndoğan, 2018).

Energy companies are at the forefront of businesses that conduct green marketing. Zorlu Enerji and Enerjisa are two important businesses operating in this field (Önder, 2023). First, Zorlu Enerji aims to leave a more livable world for future generations with its investments in renewable energy. In line with this purpose, it provides 100% of its electricity production in Turkey from renewable resources. Zorlu Energy Solutions (ZES), which is established to implement new generation technologies focused on sustainability, provides services in over 1,100 locations and nearly 1,900 stations for zero-emission uninterrupted transportation. With this investment, the brand owns more than half of the existing electric charging stations in Turkey. Enerjisa, on the other hand, focused on the use of domestic and renewable resources in its production area and commissioned the Erciyes Wind Power Plant with an installed capacity of 65 MW in 2022, and plans to commission a 150 MW hybrid solar power plant by the end of 2024.



Turkcell, a technological communications operator company that carries out all its business processes with a sustainability-oriented environmentalist approach, continues to implement innovative technologies aimed at energy saving. Adding a new one to its existing collaborations with Huawei, one of its technology solution partners, Turkcell has implemented the first example of an artificial intelligence-based energy storage system in base stations in Antalya. Thanks to the storage system, the solar energy obtained is stored in lithium batteries with artificial intelligence technology and the electricity needs of the base station are met from these batteries. In this way, the continuity of services is ensured without energy interruption, while carbon emissions are reduced with the use of renewable energy (Turkcell, 2024).

The number of businesses focusing on green marketing activities is increasing day by day. In this context, one of the important sectors is banking. Green marketing activities are quite developed in the banking sector. For example, Garanti BBVA announced in 2021 that it will not finance coal-related activities. All of the projects it has financed since 2014 consist of renewable energy investments. Another study carried out by Garanti BBVA is the publication of the Climate Change Action Plan in 2015 to support Turkey's transition to a low-carbon economy and the project to combat climate change (Önder, 2023).

In the cosmetics sector, green marketing practices are at least as important as other sectors. The British cosmetics brand Body Shop stands out as a brand that has accepted green marketing as a business culture with a sense of responsibility towards nature and has determined its company policies with this sense of responsibility. With this behavior, it has gained a competitive advantage and increased the awareness of environmentally friendly cosmetic products among cosmetic product options (Bodyshop, 2024).

Both air pollution and wastewater problems in the chemical industry constitute a very big problem. Investments and operating expenses to be made to minimize the impact of these problems on the environment cause a significant cost in the chemical industry. With the development of technology, this problem is tried to be minimized, but it is impossible to eliminate these problems due to the process (Coşkun & Bozyiğit, 2019).

The ready-to-wear store chain LC Waikiki operates with ecologically healthy production methods using natural and colored cotton, which gets its color from vegetable and fruit extracts, and recycled materials, using less water and less chemical energy. LC Waikiki, which has a wide range of product categories, is a brand that stands out with its relatively low prices and therefore positions its Green Collection as low-priced (Yalçın, 2022).

Mavi, Turkey's first fashion brand to open up to the world, has been Turkey's leading jean brand with an 11% market share for the last 18 years. Mavi produces environmentally friendly jeans under the Mavi Organic collection. The collection is sensitive to human health. The brand utilizes 100% first quality natural Aegean cotton in this group of products (Kanat & Atılgan, 2014; Mavi, 2024).

The multinational sportswear brand Nike is the first shoe brand to introduce itself to the world as green. The reduction of toxic substances and hazardous material use in products helps businesses save costs. This has inspired Nike in the context of creating more environmentally friendly products (Anand, 2013; Nurbasari, 2014).

Retail chain Walmart launched the Gigaton Project to achieve zero emissions from its operations by 2040 and reduce supply chain emissions by 1 billion metric tons by 2030. In addition, it also announced its goal to contribute to the protection, sustainable organization or renewal of approximately 50 million acres of land and 1 million square miles of ocean by 2030. In addition, various practices such as zero waste, innovative packaging, humane approach to animals are also carried out (Walmart, 2024).

With their vision of "One Planet One Health", Danone has accepted the protection of the world's resources as its own responsibility. In this context, it aims to return 100 percent of the waste generated during production at the factory to nature by the end of 2020. In order to leave a healthier and greener world for future generations, thousands of trees are added to Istanbul every year and since 2016, 7000 trees have been added to nature in the event held in the Danone Forest in cooperation with the Environmental Organizations Solidarity Association (ÇEKÜD) and Danone has also carried out coastal cleaning on the beaches of Istanbul and recycled kilos of waste (Danone, 2024).

The automotive sector is also among the priority sectors in terms of green marketing activities. The multinational automotive brand Toyota has some priorities in terms of green marketing while carrying out automobile production. These priorities are providing zero carbon emissions when producing new vehicles, using recycled products when producing car parts, providing production with renewable energy, minimizing and optimizing water



use, producing more durable vehicles with recyclable vehicles, and creating a future society in harmony with nature. In line with these priorities, the Toyota Prius produced by Toyota is an environmentally friendly vehicle with hybrid automotive features (Simão & Lisboa, 2017; Zengin & Aksoy, 2021).

Some other practices that adopt green marketing practices are exemplified as follows:

The coffee shop chain Starbucks is a brand that has managed to integrate green marketing into its business culture. Some of Starbucks' self-determined areas of environmental responsibility are summarized as saving water and energy, stopping excessive coffee cultivation, drawing attention to keeping forests clean, using recyclable cups, and encouraging the use of plastic cups made of polypropylene instead of paper (Starbucks, 2024).

The furniture brand Tepe Home has managed to switch its production facilities to 100% green energy as of 2023. Tepe Home, which invested 40 million TL in solar energy panels with an installation power of approximately 3 MWp for a sustainable future, continues its green marketing activities by producing 100% green energy (Önder, 2023).

The Arçelik brand, which has a significant share in the white goods sector, aims to increase resource efficiency in production for a green future. For this purpose, many studies are carried out such as establishing 50 MW renewable energy systems, providing electricity supply in global production facilities from 100% renewable energy sources and investing another 50 million dollars in renewable energy and energy efficiency, increasing the amount of recycled plastic to 40%, raising healthy living awareness in 630 million people, developing technologies and projects that encourage healthy living, creating awareness and providing information about healthy living through education (Arçelik, 2024).

Acting with the principle of reducing plastic bag consumption for a sustainable life, Ikea, the world's largest furniture retailer, is collaborating with the TEMA Foundation for a sustainable life. Various trainings are organized within the scope of the "Our Home is the World" project, aiming to raise awareness among primary school children about correct consumption habits at home, and children are supported to start protecting nature in their own homes (Ikea, 2024).

The French brand hotel chain Ibis Hotel published its own environmental strategy in 2002 within the scope of environmental awareness. These strategies can be listed as; water saving, energy saving and supporting renewable energy, waste separation and recycling, providing education and information flow to increase the environmental awareness of hotel guests and employees. Ibis Hotel became the first international budget hotel chain to obtain the ISO 14001 certificate in July 2004 (Atay & Dilek, 2013).

Some of the other prominent practices of various countries that contribute to green marketing activities are summarized as follows: Huawei, a multinational technology company of Chinese origin, is among the important brands that support green marketing activities with the work it has put forward. A brand for the environment has been created in Luxembourg. The SuperdrecksKëscht brand is a brand created by the Luxembourg government in order to manage waste (EIO, 2018). The Arrow Line brand, which pioneers green marketing activities in the Czech Republic, is interested in obtaining energy from selected components of waste and bio-waste (Arrow Line, 2019). Linde Vitkovice company supplies acetylene bottles and bottle packages produced in accordance with environmental rules to all gas companies (Linde Vitkovice, 2019). Sashimi Royal, one of the Danish brands that pioneers green marketing activities, aims to produce sustainable fish on land (Sashimi Royal, 2018). Genan benefits nature by recycling car tires (Genan, 2019). Carlsberg Circular Community is a partnership agreement between companies that recycle all plastics (Carlsberg CC, 2018; Kocaşahin, 2019).

5. CONCLUSION

Green marketing is a dynamic concept that combines business, customer and environmental elements, focuses on protecting the environment while serving customer satisfaction and profitability, envisages acting with a sense of social responsibility, and puts environmental protection at the forefront of all marketing decisions to be taken by businesses. It is an approach where environmental sensitivity is more important than commercial concerns. This study focuses on the conceptual structure of green marketing within the scope of sustainability and sample marketing practices of enterprises.



Today's consumers are more and more concerned with the environment that is becoming increasingly polluted and the current environmental problems. The inefficient use of resources and the jeopardy of meeting the needs of future generations necessitate the reconsideration of marketing components with an environmental protection perspective.

Green marketing is an important approach that helps reduce the environmental impact of consumption-oriented lifestyles. This approach, which emphasizes active customer participation, is an important strategy that businesses can implement to develop competitive superiority. There are many practices that encourage the creation of a responsible consumer society by companies. For example, encouraging the use of eco-labels, increasing the quality of green products, encouraging the remanufacturing of products, using environmentally friendly recyclable plastic, giving importance to the green image and reputation of the institution, and giving importance to green promotion efforts are just a few of these practices.

Green marketing is an extremely important approach to save the world from environmental pollution. Green marketing practices should be considered as a matter where all nations take on essential roles and act together, rather than a small event with limited brand and country participation, and where the long-term interests of the society are considered rather than personal short-term interests. Especially when evaluated from the perspective of brand managers, green marketing practices should be considered of activities that have an environmental and social dimension, far beyond the sole purpose of convincing the consumer, and should be carried out with great effort and full participation of the society. While the threat of global warming increases day by day, it is very important that green marketing is a long-term approach, especially the systematic recycling of paper, metal, plastic, etc. in a safe and environmentally friendly manner, the use of energy-saving devices, the minimization of greenhouse gases, etc. and similar measures are implemented without delay.

Environmentally friendly practices carried out by businesses in all areas, from the banking sector to the automotive sector, from the tourism sector to health, should be expressed more clearly with promotional activities, not only in a single or limited sector. In this article, the concept of green marketing is addressed from a theoretical perspective, the relevant literature is examined, and examples of green marketing activities of some brands are included. It is thought that this article will contribute conceptually to the rapidly developing green marketing literature. However, the fact that the study only sheds light on the conceptual framework is an important limitation. In future studies, researchers are advised to conduct applied studies using qualitative, quantitative or mixed analysis methods. In the context of sustainability, future studies can examine, for example, the effects of brands' green marketing activities on purchasing decisions, customer satisfaction, corporate reputation management or employee loyalty, separately, and findings can be presented both qualitatively and quantitatively through different field studies.

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