

Implementing Green Marketing Strategy By Processed Food Companies – Can Sustainable Development & Csr Be Used In Marketing?

¹Sabitha Niketh, and ²Dr. M.R. Suresh

¹Research Scholar & Lecturer, ²Research Guide & Professor - Marketing

¹SDM Research Center for Management Studies, SDM Institute for Management Development, University of Mysore, Mysore-570011, India.

“A recognized Research Centre of University of Mysore”

¹Department of Business Administration, Jubail Industrial College, Jubail Industrial City, Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia.

²SDM Institute for Management Development, Mysore – 570011, India.

Email id:

¹sabitha_13@sdmimd.ac.in, sabithaniketh@gmail.com, nikeths@ucj.edu.sa

²suresh@sdmimd.ac.in

DOI: 10.48047/IJFANS/S1/114

ABSTRACT

Green Marketing is about the 4 Ps of marketing mix integrated with the environment. Conceptually, green marketing is discussed in various forums and at different levels. The more it is addressed the message of protecting the environment is spread among the people in the society and community. This encourages the people to bring in the practice of protecting the environment in their consumption and daily life. As the people change in their consumption, this alerts the marketers and manufactures to understand that the consumers are changing and so do their consumption choices. The marketers have to change their marketing strategies, and also ensure to bring the green concept into their marketing initiatives. Thus, the researcher aims to study the effect of the green marketing concept in processed food companies in Indian market, analyze the green marketing strategies, policies, and practices, and examine the implementation of green marketing. An exploratory study is conducted on seven well established processed-food companies indulged in protecting the environment, society, and community through CSR and SD initiatives. Findings indicate that processed food companies market their products based on product attributes such as taste, quality, and affordability. The analysis was conducted based on Porter's Generic Competitive Strategy and Ginberg and Bloom's Green Marketing Strategy Matrix. It is concluded that all the seven processed food companies discussed in the study are Shaded Green using differentiate strategy and indulged in sustainable and CSR activities. But these activities are not integrated in the marketing strategies to persuade the customers. There is scope to implement green marketing strategies by incorporating SD and CSR initiatives and building product brands.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, green marketing, marketing mix, processed-food, sustainability development.

INTRODUCTION

Consumers today are keen on choosing the right product, as they are concerned with the value for their money. This attitude has made the consumers change their preferences. Consumers not only prefer the right product for themselves but also are conscious of eco-friendly products. This is because the consumers' attitude towards protecting the environment for the future generation has increased. Consumers display an attitude of being responsible towards their society. This attitude has compelled enterprises and marketers to dwell on protecting the environment by producing eco-friendly products. Leading to gaining a competitive advantage in the market and creating propaganda on the concept of "Green" in their marketing activities.

The American Marketing Association first initiated the concept of green marketing as "Environmental Marketing" in 1975 at a workshop. The proceedings of the workshop were published in a book named "Ecological Marketing". This ignited the concept of green marketing that gained its prominence in the late 1980s and thereafter. Green marketing referred to the development of goods and services that satisfy the needs of the customers while making them accessible without harming the environment. This led the enterprises to induce the phenomena of environmental protection. This phenomenon of environmental protection has gained momentum worldwide in the last decade, challenging every individual to be concerned about his or her consumption that is safe for the environment. While this phenomenon is gaining significance, it is enforcing the enterprises to develop strategies that focus on sustainability of the enterprises. The sustainability of an organization is associated with the green marketing strategies that induce the strategies of protecting the environment. The concern towards protecting the environment is because of environmental degradation, this matter has become a serious issue worldwide. Since human wants are unlimited, natural resources are utilized to their fullest compelling mankind to think about the repercussions. Thus, environmentalism emerged to address the environmental problems that are rising worldwide. The marketers picked up the environmentalism challenge seriously and addressed this issue by paving the marketing strategies towards green. The green marketing strategies focused on customers and consumers in planning, developing, and promoting products and services that satisfy their needs at an affordable price that does not harm the environment. The manufacturers used raw materials and other resources that are based on the 3 R's – Recycle, Reuse, and Reproduce in their strategies to achieve sustainability by developing green marketing strategies to protect the environment.

The manufacturers develop green marketing strategies by investing in products made from reusable material and are eco-friendly, packaging from recycled material avoids using plastic packaging. Distributing the products in bulk and promoting the products using digital media such that the negative impact on the environment is reduced. The policies and practices of the firms are inclined towards protecting the environment because the consumers are concerned about protecting the environment. Pragmatically the firms aligned their marketing strategies towards reducing wastage, reusing scarce resources, focusing on reducing the budget, recycling material, and creating propaganda to the society and consumers on following sustainable business policies indicating that the firms are going green. The challenge for the marketers is to create demand for the product so that the pricing strategy generates profit by promoting and distributing the products that are inclined towards protecting the environment.

RESEARCH GAP

The green marketing strategies developed by marketers are aiming to convince green consumers. Green consumers practice their lifestyle such that they use recyclable and reusable products and packaging; reduce the consumption of plastic in their day-to-day life. The behavior of the green consumers has to be well understood by the marketers to develop green marketing strategies. The green marketing strategies must focus on the target segment with the marketing mix elements. The basic marketing mix elements that comprise of 4 Ps include product, price, promotion, and place (distribution), while the product can be goods or service. The firms must go green in their marketing mix elements to target the respective green consumers. The challenge lies in bridging the gap between the green marketing strategies and the behavior of the green consumers convincingly.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

The purpose to study the green marketing strategies of the firms is to appreciate the efforts of the firms in understanding the behavior of green consumers and developing green marketing strategies. The impact of the green marketing strategies varies significantly depending upon the green consumer's inclination towards the environment. Green consumers vary in their behavior, and the situation could be such that the marketing policies and practices developed by the marketer may or may not be convincing the green consumers. The focal point of the study is on the green marketing strategies of processed food companies that aim at green consumers.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objective of the research is to study:

1. To study the effect of the green marketing concept in processed food companies.
2. To analyze the green marketing strategies, policies, and practices of the processed food companies.
3. To examine the implementation approach of green marketing among the processed food companies.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The research is conducted using secondary data from the companies' websites, articles, case studies, and peer-reviewed empirical and conceptual research papers published in national and internal journals, newspapers, and magazines. The online database from Google Scholar, academia.edu, Knimbus, Springer, and Research Gate is accessed and reviewed to study multiple perspectives of the green marketing strategies of processed food companies. The events and milestones of the companies are captured to study the development and implementation of green marketing strategies and their implications on society. Over the past years, many companies are indulged in green marketing. The green marketing strategies of the following companies are selected randomly based on the availability of the data in different secondary sources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

MARKETING STRATEGIES

The renowned generic competitive strategies proposed by Porter (1985) to increase the competitive advantage of any organization apply to this day. These strategies indicate the

firm to pave a route towards competitive advantage and develop marketing plans. These generic competitive strategies include three strategies as can be seen in Figure 1 – Overall cost leadership, Differentiation, and Focus. The first strategy is for the marketer to position their marketing strategies by competing in the market either by concentrating on reducing the cost by following economies of scale and reducing the expenses, while the cost of marketing and production must increase the efficiency. The second strategy is to position the product by putting great efforts into having their products and services unique in their creation enabling them to differentiate based on quality, service, and brand image. The third one is for the businesses to focus on the market segment. The firm must expertise in the segment minutely and concentrate on either cost leadership or differentiation.

Ginsberg and Bloom's (2004) proposed a green marketing strategy matrix as can be seen in Figure 2 to segment the companies depending on their belief and involvement with the environment. The company position itself by considering the substantiality of the green market segment and differentiating the greenness to choose the right strategy to enter the green market. Before developing the marketing strategies, the managers must ask themselves the following questions, firstly, whether is a substantial green consumer for the company? Will the company be able to generate revenue by focusing on the perceived greenness? Will the company suffer a financial drawback if the consumers focus on the adequacy of greenness? The market segment has plenty of consumers who are indifferent to the issue of greenness and the company's profitability is not affected. Secondly, is it possible to differentiate the brand or the company based on green dimensions? Is the company having sufficient resources in the industry and an internal commitment to being green? Will it be possible to overcome the competition based on green dimensions, as the environmental issues will be expensive and frustrating? Based on the answers to these questions, the companies can consider any of these strategies.

Lean Green is the corporate citizen, who do not focus on promoting their green initiatives but are interested in reducing costs, improving efficiencies, and creating a low-cost competitive advantage. They focus on following the green regulations but do not view it from the perspective of generating money from the green market segment. They hesitate to promote green activities due to high standards and do not live up to them.

Defensive Green is the marketer who uses green marketing as a precautionary measure by responding to the competitor's actions. The firms recognize that green market segmentation is relevant and it contributes to profit. Hence, they initiate sincere efforts to promote the green concept but are sporadic and temporary. They believe that aggressive promotion is not required and creates expectations that are challenging to meet. The marketers defend themselves when attacked by the activists by sponsoring small environmental events and activities and building public relations. One noticeable act is that the marketer launches their green campaign explicitly when they find that the firm will achieve a sustainable competitive advantage based on greenness.

Shaded green is an organization that invests financially on a long-term basis in eco-friendly processes and is non-financial committed. They concentrate on both innovative developments in products and technology to gain a competitive advantage. The firms have the competency to differentiate themselves based on greenness, however, they do not emphasize greenness, as they can make more profit by concentrating on other attributes of the product. They directly promote the product on tangible benefit while environmental benefits are used as secondary factors.

Extreme Green are the entities that use the green concept on a holistic basis and the philosophy is extremely shaped on greenness. The business strategies and product life-cycle of these companies are completely integrated with greenness. Greenness is the driving force and practices a life-cycle pricing approach, total-quality in managing the environment and manufacturing. They are exclusive as they approach their customers through special channels or boutiques.

By merging the green marketing strategy matrix and Porter's competitive strategy, a new version of the strategy is established as can be seen in Figure 4. It will enable the classification of the firm by combining both the strategies that develop a framework to gain a competitive advantage with green marketing. The green marketing strategy matrix will explain the necessity for the firms to position themselves concerning the substantiality of green market segments and differentiate to choose the appropriate strategy to enter the green market.

In the present years, it is challenging to hold the consumers' loyalty towards any particular brand or company due to their changing attitudes. Moreover, when consumers are inclined towards protecting the environment and eco-friendly products the organizations are exploring green marketing strategies (Kharde, 2016). Green marketing concept and strategy are relevant to retain and attract customers to the organization in the long run (Sharma & Sawhney, 2019). In the case of food and beverage companies, the green marketing strategy implemented using three elements of the marketing mix – price, promotion, and the place has a significant and positive impact on the company's competitive advantage (Amir & Dhyani, 2018). The article discussed the green marketing strategies adapted by the processed food industry by judgmentally selecting a few well-established companies in India. In this category, the list of processed food companies starts with Britannia and moves down to other companies. Randomly, 10 companies are selected to get a broad perspective of the processed food companies towards green marketing concept, green marketing strategies, policies, and practices.

Chintala (2013) conducted a research study to investigate the awareness levels of entrepreneurs and consumers on Eco-labelling. The primary data was collected from Coimbatore, from both consumers and entrepreneurs using scheduled pre-tested interview that was conducted separately. The constructs used to collect data are age, educational status, occupation, Type of family, family size, and factors. The results revealed that the awareness of green marketing is more among young and middle-aged respondents. The most common sources of awareness are Newspapers followed by television. Consumers who prefer green products read the food labels section covering nutrients and ingredients before buying new food products. The respondents find that green food products are safe for human beings to consume. It was opined by the respondents that the companies can enjoy the benefit of competitive advantage by implementing green marketing strategies. 50% of the respondents agreed to buy green food products even if they are priced high. It is perceived that green marketing will enhance the company's image among the consumers and will persuade the respondents to buy the products. The reasons for the respondents to buy our product are quality and availability of the product.

Khan and Ahmed (2014) discussed the managerial issues in the research and observed that the marketers are cognizant of promoting safe and eco-friendly products. Consumers do not give prominence to environmental facts. Hence, the companies producing and marketing green products have to be promoted extensively by building awareness so that the extra dollar

spend on the product is acceptable to consumers. The government has to regulate the food industry to enforce the organization to have standards and implement them through agencies. These standards have to monitor, reduce wastage of resources, and energy and avoid adding the extra cost incurred in the production of the product. Leading, the green products to be suitable for Indian consumers regarding price, promotion, and distribution. The green products must be authenticated with certifications to avoid false claims and differentiate products. The publicity must be convincing to the customers to do a comparative analysis of products. The intermediaries of the distribution channel must comply with the laws and procedures that are verifiable.

BRITANNIA INDUSTRIES LIMITED

The company initiated its humble beginning in 1892 in Calcutta now known as Kolkata, with an investment of Rs. 295 (USD 4.76). Today, it is one of the largest food industries in India, offering a wide spectrum of food products. The company has gained the trust of one-third of India's population and continues to deliver innovative and qualitative products.

According to an article published in the Times of India by Tejaswi (2012), Britannia industries' Corporate started the waste management campaign in 2011. Britannia's office in the Old Airport Road, Bangalore, produces more than 100 Kilograms of waste in a day. The company use to send the entire waste to BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike, an administrative body that takes the responsibility of managing civic amenities in Bengaluru). Khadi Gram Udyog helped in converting the paper and plastic into office stationeries. By this only 10% of the waste goes into the public waste management system. The process started in 2011, when Vinita Bali, Managing Director, had a tour with one of the leaders in Bangalore's War against Waste, Kalpana Kar. During, the tour Vinita decided to take some of her colleagues around the city. On August 28, 2011, she with her heads of HR, manufacturing, bread operations, and finance, and eight employees went out following a garbage trail at 6.30 am along with Kalpana. They visited the dry waste center in Shivajinagar, a recycling center in Koramangala, segregation points, and ragpickers colony. The team decided to manage their garbage as an outcome of the trip. They started a Zero-waste program at the Old Airport Road, Bangalore. Vinita Bali mentioned that her understanding of waste, the life of ragpickers, and the working of the garbage eco-system in the city increased. The company tied up with NGO Saahas to do a detailed analysis and got suggestions and recommendations for waste management. Bali said that the alliance with NGO Saahas contributed to internalizing the problem and solution in a month and a half. This was a beginning Britannia continued since 2011 and made their employees in Bangalore become ambassadors of handling waste.

In a report published by Britannia, The Sustainability Report 2021 concentrated on seven dimensions, energy & water conservation, sustainable packaging, community nutrition, product quality, healthy product portfolio, diversity and inclusion, and health, safety, and wellbeing. The company aims at minimizing its environmental footprints, focusing on efficiency in the use of water, fuel, and electricity, and increase the use of renewable energy. There is a reduction in the use of plastic, eliminating trays and the company has collaborated with urban local bodies and recycling organizations. Managing factory waste, health, safety & wellbeing, and ethical labelling, marketing & influencing is important for both the company and its stakeholders. The company follows with Food Safety & Standards Regulations in India for the product, and the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

while doing brand communication. The company addressed the customer needs while launching products that are convenient, delightful, and nutritious, and by following the policy to be responsible in providing product nutritional information on the packaging of the product. They aim to reduce 8% and 6% in sugar and sodium by the next financial year 2024-24 with the 2018-19 baseline. The labelling is very clear and the information on the packs is in detail to follow the guidelines of nutritional labelling and claims to do "responsible marketing".

HINDUSTAN UNILEVER LIMITED (HUL)

HUL is one of the largest Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies in India that has more than 50+ brands and aims to make sustainability a living commonplace. Packaged food products that are processed are among the various FMCG of the company. Some of the package food products that are processed and launched in the market with the brand names are a range of Broke Bond tea, Lipton tea, Bru coffee, Annapurna Salt, Hellmann's Mayonnaise, a range of Horlicks products, Kissan, Knorr, and Kwality Wall's. As a whole, HUL adopts sustainable living and implements strategies that are towards sustainable living. The multiple actions initiated by HUL are under Planet & Society. The website of HUL explains the strategies and goals towards climate, protecting and regenerating nature, waste management, positive nutrition, employee well-being, health and wellbeing, equity, diversity, and inclusion, raising the standards of living, and respect for human rights and future of work-committed to employment landscape. All the actions and deliverables are responsible for the environment and the stakeholders. The outcome of implementing these strategies is to provide safe products to their consumers and protect the environment.

An article published in the Times of India by Singh (2012) discussed converting the packaging waste into fuel by a process called Pyrolysis in HUL's Pondicherry factory. The company used this fuel to recover the energy used to make plastic in its broilers. On the offset, the parent company Unilever came up with Tresemme shampoo that does not require water to cleanse the hair. Here, the matter of concern was to up-trade the consumers to use an additional product by rolling it out across the globe to cut down the usage of water. Both these examples were innovative business proposals triggered under Unilever Sustainable Living Plan (USLP) to benefit the organizational environment footprint. It was very challenging for the company to address issues such as climate change, scarcity of water health, and hygiene as the company must also check on its financial liabilities. However, the innovations cannot stop; later in 2011, a report revealed that the company was able to reduce the emission of CO₂ by 14.7%, water usage by 21.5%, and waste by 52.8% keeping 2008 as a baseline. It is also challenging for Unilever to change consumer behavior to accept environmental-friendly practices. Nevertheless, the company is trying to develop a model to understand the barriers, triggers, and motivators that are required for the consumers to bring in consumer changes. All these models are accepted as long as they are economically viable, otherwise, they will be rejected.

The highlight of the model/strategy is the case study on Tomato Sourcing –Public-Private Partnership with the Government of Maharashtra. This case study is available on the company's website and depicts the public-private partnership relationship. The purpose of this relationship was to stimulate economic development and reduce poverty. Through this project, the company purchased tomatoes grown by the local farmers by overcoming the lack of quality consistency, availability of products, and price volatility. The project started in

2012 and continued since 2015. This project continued to give a buy-back guarantee for the yield, knowledge, and expertise for the sustainable cultivation of tomatoes. The outcome of this project supported economic growth and the company ensure that the raw material used in the production of Kissan Ketchup is from locally sourced tomatoes. In 2020, over 93% of the tomatoes used in the production of Kissan Ketchup were locally sourced from 10,000 farmers across India.

Business Standard by Pillay (2019) mentioned the campaign run by HUL, "Start a little good". This was an initiative aimed at harvesting and conservation of water, and managing plastic waste. Building awareness of green initiation of HUL among consumers is a challenge to bring in the concept of green branding as mainstream and is a peripheral thing.

HUL has displayed being ethically responsible in developing society and improving the environment. Therefore, sustainable development reflects in green marketing to satisfy the customers and meet the goals of the organization.

PARLE AGRO PRIVATE LIMITED

Parle Agro is a pioneer in the food and beverage industry established in the year 1959. Originally, this company was a Chauhan family-owned business that started in 1929 by the name Baroda Bottling Company with carbonated beverages. Today, it is Rs. 2,200 Crore (USD 364.93 million) organization. The company has embedded itself in four business verticals: food, packaged drinking water, pet preforms, and beverages. Products are offered to its customers with different brand names like Frooti, Frio, SMOODH, Bailey, Bailey Soda, Appy, Appy Fizz, BFizz and Dhishoom.

In an article published on www.business-standard.com (2013), the company launched a pan India campaign to increase the responsibility of children towards the environment. This move was a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative "Parle My Green Planet". The campaign involved school students, environmentalists, and media professionals to educate and empower everyone on the cause of environmental conservation. Through this campaign, the company encouraged planting more trees across the country, conserving water, power, and recycling waste. Over 70+ towns and cities were aimed to reach 5000 schools with objectives of reducing wastage of place, increasing environmental awareness, and converser the ecosystem. "School Giving Program" was an initiative under the Parle My Green Planet campaign. The program was to go green through the plantation and build awareness of being responsible for the environment among children. The school kids were sent to collect wrappers from the streets across the 70+ towns. "Green Class of the School" and "Green School of the City", awards were constituted with wards for the class and school respectively. This campaign coincided with the Joy of Giving Week, which is a big Giving program, initiated by the Give India Foundation. This program initiated the awareness of the fact that if the environment is not taken care of and protected, then there is a potential for disaster in society. These were the small steps initiated by Parle Agro towards Green promotion to make a big difference.

As mentioned on the company's website (2022), Parle Agro, aims in developing new and innovative methods to control the utilization of natural resources manage waste, and reduce its carbon footprint. Because the company believes sustainability, will contribute to long-term success. The company manufactures its PET bottles and paper-based packaging by using 100% recycled material. The company wants to come up with a model to recycle and reuse plastic to ensure sustainability. Ensure 0.01% of raw material and product wastes in their

manufacturing plants by developing new technologies. An investment of Rs. 50 crores are made in the next three years for Plastic Waste Management (PWM) program; aiming to collect and recycle 100% of the PET bottle waste. With a comprehensive approach, the company builds sustainability by addressing environmental issues, skill development, and healthcare through the Prakash Jayantilal Chauhan Foundation. This foundation is named after Shri Prakash Jayantilal Chauhan, the Chairman of Parle Agro.

With all these efforts incorporated towards sustainability, as mentioned in an article published on the website of Economic Times (2022), the company is facing the challenge of replacing plastic straws. The Government of India has given a deadline to the company, to ban the use of plastic straws with effect from July 1, 2022. However, the company has requested to extend the deadline for the next six months, as the company will face a negative impact by calling it to be a “hasty ban”. The company very well accepts the endorsement made by the government but wants the implementation to be postponed by six months. This is because the local manufacturer of biodegradable PLA straws or paper-based straws can produce 1.3 million units/day while the demand is 6 million. This change demands an additional investment for the straw manufacturers and to become cost-effective when the economy is facing inflation. As a substitute, if the company decides to get an imported straw, then it will become expensive by 6 to 8 times and will challenge the affordability of the customers in both urban and rural markets. On the contrary, 50% of the company's turnover is generated from the rural market. If the price is increased, then there is a possibility for the demand to drop. The cost of manufacturing will increase by 122%, but if the companies import then the cost will increase by 259 for PLA and 278 for paper straw. Hence, to replace the plastic straw, the beverage companies require 6-8 months to make necessary changes in the production process concerning the technology used and sourcing of the raw material. This extension period will enable the companies to have a smooth transition to PLA or paper straw. The Schauna Chauhan, CEO, Parle Agro, is supporting the noble idea of the government but has requested the government for postponing the implementation by six months for building appropriate infrastructure, capabilities, and commercialization. This issue, partially indicates, that the government intervention to ban the use of material that is harmful to the environment enforces the manufacturer to think and act green.

MTR FOODS PRIVATE LIMITED

MTR is a household name in the Indian food industry and a market leader in the southern part of India. This brand holds a strong presence across the country. MTR started in 1924 with MTR restaurant, later entered into food market by instant rava idli mix in 1976, commissioned a new production plant in 1991, penetrated the frozen segment in 2001, and has a Pan-India image by 2010. MTR collaborated with Orkla ASA in 2007, a Norwegian conglomerate that operates in the Nordic region, Eastern Europe, Asia, and the USA. There are four business units of Orkla, Orkla Brans International, Orkla Food Ingredients, Orkla Foods Nordic, and Orkla Brans Nordic. This joint venture (JV) has rejuvenated the brand into the instant food category and penetrated the homes of modern Indian consumers with a unique brand appeal.

An empirical study by Udupa and Hiriyappa (2017) was conducted in Ramanagara district, Karnataka with a sample size of 100 to investigate the impact of marketing strategies adopted by MTR Foods Private Limited. The study was conducted using a structured self-administered questionnaire. The results revealed that the price variable attracts the consumer.

Making the product affordable and there is a need to adopt additional marketing strategies to increase sales. Thus, this study gives room for using green marketing concepts to be included while marketing food products. Green marketing concepts can be adapted through the Corporate Social Responsibilities policies.

The company has its own CSR policy through which it is concerned about the environment and social issues to ensure a cordial relationship with the stakeholders and the communities. The company follows the requirements of CSR policy as per the Companies Act, 2013, and was notified on February 27, 2014. The issues covered under CSR activities are focused on:

- Promoting education also includes education and employment with vocational skills for children, women, the elderly, and differently-abled people.
- Maintaining ecological balance by protecting flora and fauna, conservation of the natural resource, sustaining the quality of soil, air, and water, animal welfare, agroforestry, and ensuring environmental sustainability.
- Promote rural sports nationally, Paralympic, and Olympic sports.
- Contribute to central government funds like the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund for socio-economic development and relief and welfare of Scheduled Cast, Scheduled Tribes, and other backward classes, minorities, and women.
- Projects are undertaken for rural development.
- Also participates in the demand for community rehabilitation and empowerment.

Most of the CSR funds are utilized in the state of Karnataka, where the company operations from, basically, all the CSR activities are aimed at the company being socially responsible to the environment where it runs its operations. The company does not explicitly explain the use of green marketing strategies.

HALDIRAM MARKETING PRIVATE LIMITED

Haldiram is well known among the Indian household for sweets, snacks known namkeen, beverages, frozen food, and potato chips. The company was stoned in Bikaner, Rajasthan by Ganga Bishan Agarwal known as Haldiram Ji in 1941. Gradually, the company expanded, and in 2003, it entered the convenience food market, also known as tertiary processed food prepared after processing to optimize the ease of consumption. They are portable; their shelf life is long and includes ready-to-eat (RTE), frozen foods, cake mix (RTC), and snack foods. According to the research study Brand Trust Report conducted by Trust Research Advisory, the brand enjoyed the trust of the Indian consumers in 2014 and was ranked 55th as the most trusted brand. Today, the brand has reached the international market.

As part of Corporate Social Responsibility, the company collaborates with its associates, to create value for its consumers, stakeholders, and communities. The company aims to protect natural resources, promote the environment and initiate socially responsible activities, and maintain transparency and ethical standards in the workplace and for the community.

The company protects the environment by reducing waste and energy by using renewable energy. The production of renewable energy is combining solar power and biomass/biogas energy to reduce carbon emissions. The buildings of Haldiram are LEED Platinum Certified by Indian Green Building Council (IGBC). Over 1000 saplings are planted every year as part of the "Seed to Sapling Program", aiming to go green in the future. Water usage is reduced and recycled during the production process in the future.

To ensure a healthy environment for the employees, they are nurtured with happiness and respect. Employees are encouraged to learn and attend training programs to work as teams

and develop their personalities. Secondly, safety for the employees is a matter of concern; hence, steps are taken towards quality standards, proper sanitation, and protocol are followed during operations, assess the accidental risks, injuries, and hazards at the workplace.

Haldiram is said to be an eco-friendly organization. The company works closely with the farmers to develop an awareness of farming, and develop techniques that will solve agricultural challenges. Ethical practices are used in sourcing the raw material, the sustainable market approach is used to produce and improve the livelihood. Cause-related issues prevailing in society are supported by building awareness, raising funds as donations, and volunteering. NGOs across India are approached to encourage and sponsor philanthropic programs, proudly volunteered in the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, and work on improving the lives of needy people in society.

INDIAN TOBACCO COMPANY LIMITED

A conglomerate company of India, ITC Limited is a most admired company established as Imperial Tobacco Company of India Limited in 1910 at Calcutta (now Kolkata) needs no introduction. In 1970, it was changed to India Tobacco Company Limited, subsequently to I.T.C Limited in 1974. Since then the company has had deep roots in the Indian market. The company has diversified its business into 5 segments FMCG, software, hotels, packaging, paperboards, specialty papers, and agribusiness. The brands under the food category are Aashirvaad, Sunfeast, Bingo! Kitchens of India, Yippee! B Natural, mint-o, Candyman, Jelimals, GumOn, Fabelle, Sunbean, ITC Master Chef, Farmland, and Sunrise.

ITC is a professionally managed company that values respect for people and believes in the empowerment of employees by having a system for corporate governance. Operating for over a century, the company is oriented to the nation with a commitment to value trusteeship, focus on the customer, respect people, and display phenomenal growth. ITC has overcome a long way in challenging threats of global warming, degradation of natural resources, and environmental issues. As part of the sustainable development and corporate social responsibilities, the environmental activities of ITC are as follows:

1. **Afforestation Programme:** Through this program, ITC supports the farmers to convert the non-productive land of about 953, 200 acres into pulpwood plantations by using the R&D of ITC. This encourages the impoverished farmers to have better-living support with training, technology, loans, and subsidized clonal stocks. The plantation is a source of raw material for Indian paper producers and contributes to reducing carbon dioxide, replenishing groundwater, and greening the environment.
2. **Watershed Development Programme:** Due to global warming, there are climatic changes that cause volatility in the rainfall. This program is for those farmers who depend on monsoon rainfall for growing their crops. Through this program, micro water harvesting storage plans are built. Actions are taken to reduce soil erosion and improve the fertility of the soil so that irrigation is made available to grow crops in both quality and quantity that support an increase in income. Farmers are educated to make agriculture secure in the future.
3. **Well-being Out of Waste (WOW) Programme:** The objective of this program is to build awareness of the segregation and recycling of waste by developing effective practices for solid waste management. The company collaborates with the local municipalities and trains the rag-pickers on an efficient collection system of waste from households, schools, offices, hospitals, commercial workplaces, etc. By proper segregation this collected waste

becomes a raw material for industries such as paper, plastic, and glass, eventually increasing the regular incomes and earnings of the waste workers and rag-pickers.

4. Environment, Health, and Safety (EHS) Operation: This operation aims at minimizing the negative impact on the environment by monitoring the utilization of resources according to the internal, national, and international benchmarks that have improved the efficiency of water and waste utilization. The company provides a safe and healthy environment for the employees that creates a culture of responsibility and safety.
 - 4.1. Efficiency in renewable energy: The company has maximized the use of renewable energy and increased the efficiency such that 41% of the renewable energy is generated from biomass, wind, and solar. Some of the luxury hotels owned by ITC get their energy from self-owned wind farms. There is constant enforcement towards deploying cleanliness, and efficient utilization of technology by building awareness and a culture of conservation in the workplace.
 - 4.2. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions & carbon Sequestration: The Company calculates the GHG inventory according to the latest international standard ISO 14064:2018 to measure the GHG emission and its reduction. The aim is to reduce the consumption of energy and use renewable fuels to reduce GHG emissions. The buildings of ITC are certified by LEED Platinum ratings and use the energy from self-owned wind farms. Resulting in the company being carbon positive in the last 16 years.
 - 4.3. Water Security: Every unit of ITC is equipped with the infrastructure for rainwater harvesting to minimize the consumption of water and recycle/re-use the wastewater. There is a system to measure the intake, audit, set targets and assess the consumption of water, and benchmark again at internal, national, and international levels. To reduce the consumption sprinklers and drip irrigation systems are used. Hence, the company has been water positive in the last 19 years.
 - 4.4. Waste Recycling: The waste collected from the paper and packaging units is recycled to avoid the use of virgin raw material. Continuous R&D is done for innovating novel ideas to develop sustainable packaging that reduced the impact on the environment. WOW Programme is established for organizing waste recycling management. For the last 14 years, the company is solid waste recycling positive.
 - 4.5. Safety: The Company has laid guidelines for safety measures and standards are maintained to achieve zero accidents. The safety programs at ITC are to strengthen positive and correct unsafe behavior that involves employees for success that ensures risk assessment workshops and conversations on Safe and Unsafe Acts (SUSA).

Apart from the above-discussed initiatives e-Choupal Eco-system, ITC's Health & Sanitation Programme, Livestock Development, Sustainable Agriculture, Women Empowerment, Primary Education, Skilling & Vocational Training, Health & Sanitation, Solid Waste Management, and Responsible Luxury are other activities undertaken by the ITC as Corporate Social Responsibility for sustainable development. Every year, a Sustainability Report is prepared to disclose, and have transparency in the sustainable programs that are conducted by ITC to be accountable to society and communities, and these reports are accessible to the stakeholders on the company's website.

As per the Business Standard (2013) reporter, ITC launched green paper without releasing any toxic effluents to the environment, named "Paperkraft". This is a premium business paper made by using Ozone Treated Elemental Chlorine Free technology developed by Metso in Sweden. The product of ITC is unique as it is an initiative towards protecting the

environment by avoiding the release of chlorine. The product features are competitive, the paper is bright white and used for business purposes and the life of the paper is long. This was second in line with the previous one that was launched with the brand name "Classmate". According to an article published in the Times of India by Sarkar (2021), Sameer Satpathy, Divisional CEO of Personal Care Product at ITC, talking about home cleaning segment products, mentioned that consumers are developing an affinity towards green brands. Post pandemic, the consumers are conscious of using products that harm the environment and have become health and hygiene conscious. The transformation among the consumers is a beginning and may transfer from niche to the mainstream. Apparently, will this trend be observed in the processed food segment is a challenge, more so, food products have a dimension of taste to the consumers.

The speech delivered by the Chairman & Managing Director Mr. Sanjiv Puri during 111th Annual General Meeting on July 20, 2022, published on the ITC portal discussed the performance and the future of ITC. Among the various issues discussed the highlights related to sustainability are the company's aim to build competitiveness with Robust Triple Bottom Line Performance measuring the enterprise performance on people (People is about measuring the CSR initiatives of the organization), planet (the planet is measuring the responsibilities of the organization towards environment) and profit (profit is measuring the profit and loss of the organization). The company has achieved several milestones in sustainability on global climate, enhancing the green infrastructure capacity and growth with new dimensions. Some of the programs associated with the triple bottom line of the company are Sab Saath Badhein, Atmanirbhar Bharat working with farmers and communities, paperboards, and paper business.

NESTLE INDIA LIMITED

As per the information provided in The Economic Times in Nestle India History, on 28 March 1959, Nestle India Limited was established through a wholly owned subsidiary, Nestle Holdings Limited, and promoted by Nestle Alimentana S.A., a Swiss multinational company. The company was incorporated in New Delhi and is headquartered in Gurgaon, Haryana. Its offerings are confectioneries, chocolate, beverages, and food. The company operates across India with 9 manufacturing units located in Moga, Punjab, Samalkha, Haryana, Nanjangud, Karnataka, Choladi, Tamil Nadu, Ponda, Goa, Bicholim, Goa, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand, Tahliwal, Himachal Pradesh, and Sanand, Gujarat; supported with 4 branch office, Kolkotta, New Delhi, Chennai, and Mumbai.

The various products offered to their customers are branded using an umbrella and individual branding strategies. The beverages include coffee – under the brand of Nescafe, there is a range of coffee varieties offered. Chocolate and confectioneries are branded using individual brand strategies – KitKat, munch, and Milkybar. Nestle breakfast cereals are offered in the category of health products. Dairy products include Nestle a+, cold coffee – Nescafe, and Nestle milkmaid. Food products are offered with the brand name Maggi Nutri-licios, Fusian, Cuppa, Sauces, Pazzta, other Indian cuisines such as masala and coconut milk powder, and nutritional products – Nestle Nangrow, Lactogrow, and Ceregrow. The company is deep-rooted among Indian customers convincingly.

The company creates a shared value and believes that long-term success is in creating value for its shareholders and society. The positive impact is created by offering health and

qualitative lives, along with protecting and developing the communities and earth's natural resources for sustainability.

According to information provided on the company website and an article published in exchange4media (2017), manufacturing environmental initiatives have led to a reduction in energy and usage of water by 47% and 53% respectively, and a reduction in the usage of water and emission of CO₂ both by 55%.

In packing, the company has its policy of Packaging and Design that is based on environmental sustainability guidelines. Through packaging optimization, the company was able to reduce 800 tonnes of packing material in 2016 making it sustainable and committed. The recycle, anti-litter, and recycling logos are put on the labels for the consumers to identify and remind them about disposing of the packaging in an environmental-friendly way. The company visualizes having no plastic included in the Nestle products that create landfills, causing damage to land, seas, oceans, or any waterways. At present, the company is recycling plastic to avoid the usage of new ones. However, by 2025, the company plans to reduce the consumption of virgin plastic by one-third.

Due to the weather changes, the availability of water is reducing, biodiversity loss is increasing and life on earth becomes a challenge. Greenhouse gasses (GHGs) emitted from Nestle's operations is 5%, while 95% is from their supply chain that includes farming or shipping too. Hence, the company is working towards changing the manufacturing and packaging process that contributes to ultimate reductions.

The next milestone, the company aims to achieve is zero level of carbon footprint by 2050. This can be achieved by changing the ingredients that are sourced from regenerative agriculture, and investing in sustainable logistics, packaging, and manufacturing activities by 2030.

The other community services are the Public Health Centre for drinking water to empower the communities. 'Serve Safe Food' program is established to enhance the livelihood to teach the vendors about hygiene, food safety, cart hygiene, garbage disposal, and other issues, and empowering women to entrepreneurship through training are some of the sustainable activities undertaken by Nestle.

While the company is keenly concentrating on sustainability and display environment concerns, in mid-2015, Maggi Noodles was banned from the market from June 5 to September 2015, due to the content of MSG (Monosodium Glutamate). The article published on the web desk of India Today (2021) recollects the memories of the most talk-about controversial case of Nestle – Maggi Noodles. The company promises its customers to offer healthy and nutritional products. The label on Maggi Noodles mentioned that the product does not contain MSG, apparently when it was tested in the Central Food Laboratory, Kolkatta, it was proved that the product contains 1000 times more than that is safe for consumption. Later, the product was brought back into the market as the sale of the product contributes 25% of the market share. The interview was given by Suresh Narayanan, Chairman & MD, Nestle India, in 2017 with Business Today mentioned that this case of Maggi Noodles was a challenging situation to be managed.

Eventually, the article in Business Standard by Pillay (2019) talks about the Wall of Hope that was built in Mussoorie by using 15,000 plastic bottles. The aim of constructing this wall in plastic was to generate awareness on managing plastic waste and building an environment that is free from plastic waste. This initiation of Nestle proves the intention of the company towards environmental concerns. As the customers are becoming more conscious of

protecting the environment, the companies are initiating to woo the buyers and are moving towards building green brands with their products that are safe for the environment and consumption.

ANALYSIS

Green marketing practices in the food processing industry are the efforts of the manufacturers that are focused on designing, promoting, pricing, and distributing products that are safe for the environment and consumers' consumption. Both the production process and the raw materials used in the production of the product are eco-friendly. Promoting the products to the consumers by presenting that the product is environmentally sound and healthy for consumption. Ensuring that the logistics for distribution of the product are free from carbon footprint resulting in protecting the environment. Finally, pricing the product profitably by considering the benefits to the entire stakeholders.

The driving factor for the green marketing initiatives by processed food manufacturers is the consciousness of the consumers demanding eco-friendly, healthy, and nutritional products that are safe for consumption. The green marketing efforts must be incorporated into the marketing portfolio of the organization to be socially responsible by serving the customers with sustainable products. Thus, the green marketing strategies of an organization must be built on the practices of sustainable development and social responsibilities in the products and brands.

Studying the CSR and sustainable development practices adopted by the food processing companies such as Britannia, HUL, Parle, Nestle, MTR, ITC, and Haldiram discussed in this study demonstrates their inclination towards protecting the environment and society.

The CSR and sustainable development initiations of the companies discussed above are analyzed to address the objectives of the research study:

1. To study the effect of the green marketing concept on processed food companies.

All the processed food-manufacturing companies discussed in this research study are involved in CSR and sustainable development practices even before 2000. The various activities that are initiated are conservation of water, harvesting the rainwater, reducing the consumption of water during the production process, ensuring that the natural resources are utilized appropriately by reducing wastage, using renewable energy, using recycled material in the production of the product, solid waste management, empowerment of the society/women, education development, empowering farmers, etc. In the processed food industry, solid waste management, reduction in the consumption of water, reducing carbon footprints, recycling of packaging material, and refusing the use of any raw material that is harmful to the environment are possible. The companies ensure qualitative packaging and avoid using any material of packaging that is harmful to the environment. For Example, Papercraft by ITC is a non-food product that uses recycled material to manufacture a business class high-quality paper that is white.

The green marketing concept is gaining its prominence in 2000. Especially, after the pandemic period caused due to COVID – 19, it is observed that consumers are more inclined towards healthy and nutritional products. Thus, the environmental consciousness of the consumers is the prominent driving force for processed food companies to adopt green marketing strategies. All the companies have displayed their concern for the environment through their activities, either demonstrating their concern towards the stakeholder to protect the environment or becoming obligatory due to the rules and policies imposed by the

government. This is also observed in the rule made by the Government of India, to ban the consumption of single-use plastic from July 2022 as mentioned in Business Standard by Ghanekar (2021). This indicates that food products cannot be packed in any single-use plastic. Secondly, the case of Maggi-Noodles is one such example that portrays the use of unhealthy component MSG in food that is more than the required quantity. Parle Agro is bound to replace plastic straws due to government policy. These examples demonstrate that government plays a vital role in enforcing the green concept that enlightens the consumers to educate themselves in choosing the right meaning of "SAFE" products.

2. To analyze the green marketing strategies, policies, and practices of the processed food companies.

The processed-food companies discussed in this article have policies and practices that are initiated to execute CSR and sustainable development strategies. The companies believe that any business cannot concentrate only on profits by neglecting the society that gives profits. Hence, the corporates ensure to give back to society. It is to be noted that the CSR and sustainable activities are executed by the corporate as a whole. For example, companies use cause advertising that promotes a brand based on a cause. Dettol or Lifebuoy promotes hygiene and good health. Similarly, brands like Horlicks, Nestle's health, and nutritional products are promoted based on their nutrients and health. Nymle is an eco-friendly floor cleaner launched by ITC. On the contrary, processed-food products are packed with eco-friendly packaging. To make eco-friendly processed-food products, the strategies that need to be incorporated are the use of eco-friendly cookware, use of residual heat, going raw, consuming plant-based meals, consuming seasonal food to prevent using preservatives for future use, and stopping products that use plastics.

Zee Zest (2021) has listed a set of 10 Indian brands that are said to be good for consumers and the planet. Among them 8 brands are processed food brands, they are, The Little Farm Co., Zama Organics, OOO Farms, In-season Fish, Pascati Chocolates, Under the Mango Tree, Araku Coffee India, and Taru Naturals. These brands offer homemade, sustainable, and organic products. The marketing strategies are green because the core product originates from being safe for the consumers and the environment. It is very challenging for the companies such as Britannia, HUL, ITC, MTR, Parle, Haldiram, and Nestle to flip their strategies to be complete "GREEN".

3. To examine the implementation approach of green marketing in the companies.

The literature review and the cases of the processed food companies discussed in this research are very much based on Porter's Generic Competitive Strategy and based on the data available the processed food companies follow the "DIFFERENTIATION" strategy. Considering each company individually the analysis is as follows:

- a. Britannia: The company aims to offer products with taste, nutrition, moments of life, and lifestyle in their promotional campaigns. In the advertisements, the benefits of a product are discussed with happy moments. Offering product that is affordable to their consumers. Making the product available to reach their customers. Although the company indulged in CSR and sustainable development activities, it is least discussed to create awareness among the buyers.
- b. ITC: A well-known company in India, that has come a long way with the country's development after independence. The company has contributed to the development of Indian farmers through its CSR activities and sustainable development practices. Talking about the marketing strategies, the company used different marketing

strategies for each of its brands. The product mix of the company has a variety of processed food targeting different segments. Thus, the company has differentiation marketing strategies for the Indian heterogeneity market. Used different marketing campaigns to promote the product such as competitions, advertising, and sponsorships. Not to be left out, is the distribution network, the product is made available for the buyer to access where ever it is possible with an economical pricing strategy.

- c. HUL: Another company not to be omitted, has segmented the market based on demographic, geographic, and behavioral factors. This company also adopts a differentiation strategy to capture different segments of the market. With the assorted product portfolio, the company has a marketing portfolio that aims at the different segments of the Indian market. The marketing campaigns are different for each brand. The sponsor's events based on the brands and product availability are spread across the country.
- d. Nestle: This company has got a hold in the Indian market in different segments of Indian society. It is the Swiss company that got established in the Indian market as an entity and caters to Indian consumers with nutritional and health products that matches their cultural taste. For example, different variety of coffee has replaced traditional coffee to capture the young consumers making coffee with class and style. Nestle, for the last 15 years has contributed to reducing the carbon footprint, but the marketing strategies of Nestle talk less about the contribution made to the environment. Rather focuses, on the benefits of the product to persuade the target customer. Adopting the differentiation marketing strategy, Nestle has put tremendous efforts into convincing the Indian consumers with products of other cultures despite facing challenges, for example, Maggi Noodles.
- e. Summarising the marketing strategies of other processed food companies discussed in this research are Parle Agro, Haldiram, and MTR. These companies also have their marketing strategies for different segments with advertisements for each segment, with different pricing strategies for each product offered. Making the product available such that it is accessible to reach different market segments is the best part to increase sales.

Now looking at the green marketing side of these companies, the companies can be placed on the green marketing strategy matrix proposed by Ginsberg and Bloom's (2004) as can be seen in Figure 2. The companies can be classified as Lean Green, Defensive Green, Shaded Green, and Extreme Green based on the sustainable development practices and differences in the green strategy to capture the market. By understanding the green initiatives of the companies discussed in this research based on the data accessible, these companies do not fall under Lean Green and Extreme Green. The reason that these companies do follow the green regulations implemented by the government under CSR and sustainable development. Do not consider greenness to be a tool for generating money. On the contrary, the products these companies offer to their consumers are not completely green as they do not offer organic products. Organic products can be considered completely Extreme Green. The third category is Defensive Green, processed food companies do not fall under this category. Since these companies are constantly contributing to society as part of CSR and do not defend themselves when anyone is questioned. Neither of these companies launches a green marketing campaign just for the reason to have a sustainable activity for taking competitive advantage.

Lastly the Shaded Green, all the seven companies are shaded green as can be seen in Figure 4. These companies invest in eco-friendly sustainable and CSR activities, they display a strong commitment to society and believe that business is just not about profit but also about sharing profits with the stakeholders. The companies can be differentiated based on their green activities. But the activities in which the companies invest are not considered to be an attribute to persuade the customers. The products are promoted based on the attributes such as taste, nutrients, health, lifestyle, and culture of consumption.

CONCLUSION

It is very much evident that processed-food companies are concerned about the environment. This concern must be translated into building their brands based on the green concept. Positioning the product as "green" and persuading the consumers of the green brand insisting is important. Apart from being healthy and nutritional, the processed-food taste and shelf life of the products also calls for major concern. The wastage of food products can be reduced by ensuring that the products appeal to the cultural taste and expanding the shelf life of the product using innovative technological research and development. It is very challenging for companies to strongly adopt the green concept and become Extreme Green. But to become extremely green, the companies may have to go in for complete transformation by adopting the green concept with all the 4Ps of the marketing mix. Conceptually, the product may not be completely organic it can be a safe product for consumers and the environment, building promotional campaigns not only on the product features but also associating the sustainable activities to the brands, pricing strategy must be competent with the non-green products so that the customers choose the green products over the non-green and make the products available so that it is accessible for consumption.

The reasons for the consumers to choose non-green over green can be discussed in future studies. Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) mentioned that customers will choose a product based on attributes over the environment. Consumers are not interested in sacrificing their preferences and desires for being green. Generally, consumers perceive that green products are of low quality or may not meet the environmental promises sufficiently. Eventually, some people are inclined towards organic foods and are willing to pay a premium as they believe that organic food is healthy, safe, and tasty.

The literature review discussion and the analysis of this research study will benefit future researchers to have insight into CSR and sustainable development initiatives. Since these initiatives are the driving force for the greening of the environment. This is a conceptual study that is limited to seven mutational companies and is purely based on secondary data sources from the company websites, articles, and journals. This research article motivates a continuum study to conduct based on primary data on the behavior of the consumers towards green marketing strategies proposed and implemented by processed-food companies. And also to study the processed-food marketers' perception of green marketing.

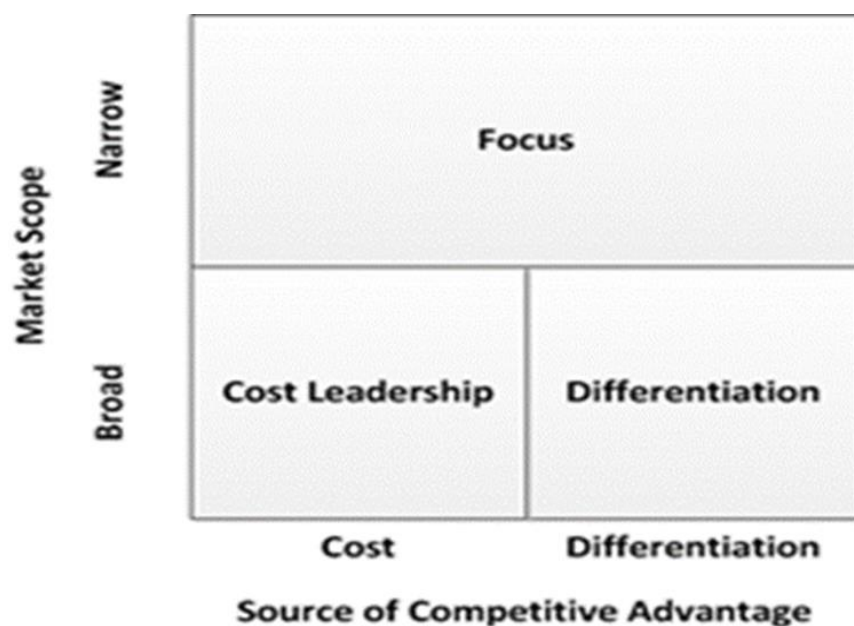


Figure 1. Porter's Generic Competitive Strategy

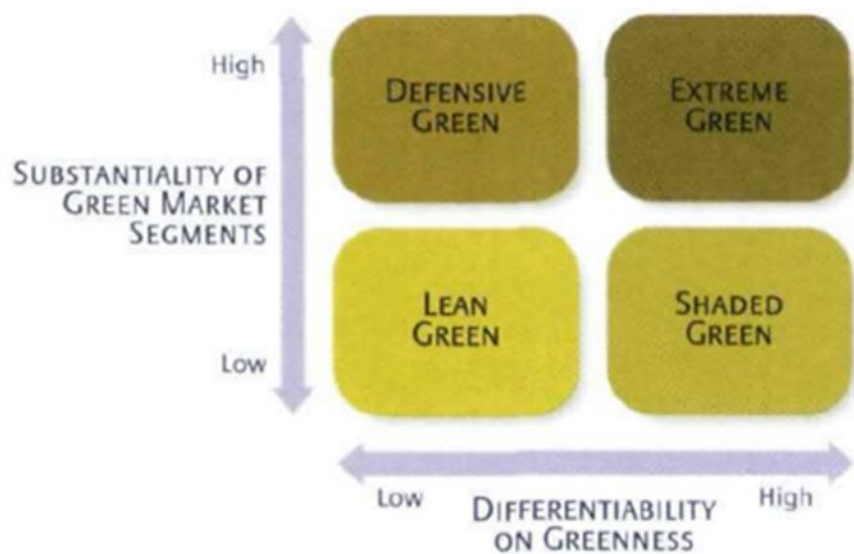


Figure 2. Green Marketing Strategy Matrix

	Product	Price	Place	Promotion
LEAN	X			
DEFENSIVE	X			X
SHADED	X	X		X
EXTREME	X	X	X	X

Figure 3. Green marketing mix strategy - shows the consideration of marketing mix elements by the four green marketing strategies.

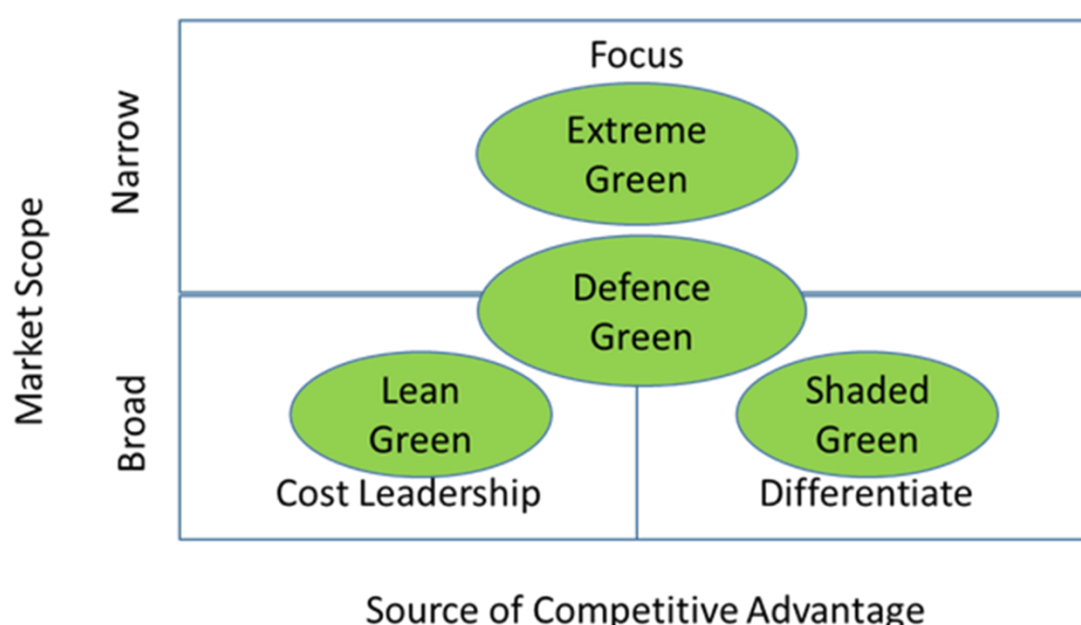


Figure 4. Generic competitive strategy and Green marketing strategy matrix

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