

Green Service

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ABSTRACT

This article gives insight into the development of green service as an integral domain with green marketing that brings much enthusiasm from academicians and practitioners since the 1970s. A concern with the environment has been increasing in line with the industrial revolution after world war two in which the demand for various products brings a negative impact on the environment as an implication of massive economic exploitation. Green is not only mentioned about a specific color (e.g., leaf) but more than that it gives a broader understanding of eco-friendly, social justice, economic development, and provides suitable conditions in our environment. However, not all companies offer green products to the consumer. This article also highlights briefly about several factors that make people refuse or even skeptic and cynical of green practices by the companies, as well as toward the green products (or services) that they produced.

1. Introduction

The concept of green service is inseparable from the development of green marketing studies. The previous studies show that green marketing has attracted the attention of researchers since the 1970s (Lavidge, 1970; Kotler & Zaltman, 1971; Henion, 1972; Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Kinnear & Taylor, 1973; Kinnear *et al.*, 1974; Webster, 1975 and Murphy *et al.*, 1978). In the past, the green marketing concept was still underdeveloped, and the domain of this topic restricted to companies' social responsibility and consumer awareness on the products that environmentally friendly. At present, research and practice on green marketing have been evolving significantly, in which analysis and scope of the topic have become more and more comprehensive. Brennan *et al.* (2003) explained about five principles that would determine customers in choosing their organic products (foods) preference; Marthur&Marthur (2002) described the relationship between green marketing strategy and company's welfare represented by the company's stock price; Leonidou *et al.* (2014) described green advertising in multinational companies from several countries; Johnstone & Tan (2015) and Tan *et al.* (2016) reported comprehensively the reason and obstacle faced by customers when they purchase green products; Wang (2016) was comparing six models of an attitude-behavior gap in green consumption; Liu *et al.* (2017) compared two mechanisms in consuming green products, and Papadaset *al.* (2017) conceptualized a construct of green marketing orientation. Besides, business practices and research on green not only focused on green products but also green service (Grove *et al.*, 1996; Bloemer & de Ruyter, 2002; Lympelopoulos *et al.*, 2012; Chan, 2013; and Cocca & Ganz, 2015).

2. The Definition of Green Service and Green Marketing

Along with the development of business practices and research, this terminology has been transformed with various terms. Some researchers stated green marketing as the marketing of organic products, user-friendly products, natural products, energy-efficient products, healthy products, and sustainable products. The word 'Green' not only

illustrates a specific color but more than that, this word represents a broader concept in which 'Green' means eco-friendly, social justice, economic development, and provide suitable condition in our environment (Wang *et al.*, 2013).

Until now, academics and practitioners have not reached a deal with the definition of green marketing (Kangis, 1992). The dissent of researchers is caused by green marketing that can be seen from multi-perspectives or multi-dimensions. Look at the following definitions of green marketing from various previous research.

- Pride and Ferrell (1993) defined green marketing as an organizational effort in designing, promoting, setting the price, and distributing the products that are not harmful to the environment.
- Peattie (2001) described green marketing as the marketing activities which are promoting environmental products to the customer and reducing the negative impact of products produced in environmentally friendly ways.
- Green marketing is marketing activities or promotion of products focusing on preservation and enhancement of the living environment (Charter & Polonsky, 1999). In addition, Polonsky (2011) also explained that green marketing has to be integrated with values transformation to individual, community, and the environment.
- Green marketing is a marketing process in which the products produced and packaged through environmentally friendly ways that bring benefits to the environment (Shil, 2012).

Along with the rapid development of service industries and the growth of academic interests in studying service marketing, especially green service, several researchers give their opinion:

- Green service is a broader concept, in which service offered or used have to show ecological sustainability as the primary criterion (Cocca& Ganz, 2015). In other words, services can be classified as "green" only if they meet the ecological sustainability criterion in the service delivery process.
- Hsiao *et al.* (2014) stated that green hotels should give services with comfortable and convenient ways, provide a natural, healthy, and secure condition of living environment to the visitor with focus on sustainable development and minimize the negative impacts of environmental damage. In this case, green hotels can save on their energy, costs and preserve a living environment by apply recycling, reusing, and resource-saving methods in the production process.

3. The Development of Green Services

There is a growing interest concerning 'green movement' that this concept is only restricted to specific groups. In fact, almost all industries are interested in and become players in building the initiative to promote 'green movement.' Even though the negative impacts inflicted on services to the environment lower than products (Grove *et al.*, 1996), these do not mean that business has to ignore it. In tight competition and uncontrollable market condition, business is encouraged to transform themselves to find appropriate methods in producing products, create more innovative products, and give excellent service to the customer with emphasize on ethics and awareness(Kreidler & Joseph-Mathews, 2009). For example, the rapid development of hospitality industries

supposed to be responsible for their effect on climate change and environmental damage. Some policies can be applied to hospitality sectors with the implementation of energy use saving (e.g., air conditioner, voltage, and water), pollution prevention, environmental health, reuse, recycle, purchase user-friendly raw materials, and design an environmentally friendly building (Chou *et al.*, 2012). Some other examples of service sectors implementing green service can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Green service practices in several service industries

Service Classifications		Green Service Practices		
Industrial Classifications	Industrial Types	Reduce	Recycle	Reuse
Health Care	Hospital	<i>Reducing</i> water use by using automatic sensor faucets	<i>Recycling</i> infusion bottles and other materials made of plastic	Developing a wastewater treatment system so that water can be <i>reused</i> to rinse the toilet
Finance	Banking	<i>Reducing</i> the size of the proof of payment with a smaller size	Collecting unused papers for <i>recycling</i>	Use printer ink cartridges that can be <i>refilled</i> many times.
Professional	Dentists	<i>Reducing</i> the use of paper forms or medical records with a computerized system	<i>Recycle</i> masks, gloves, and other plastic materials	Sterilize various equipment that can be <i>reused</i> rather than throwing it away.
Tourism and Hospitality	Hotel	<i>Reducing</i> electricity consumption by installing lights and more energy-efficient electronics	<i>Recycle</i> beverage bottles made of plastic, glass, and aluminum	Develop a wastewater treatment system that can be <i>reused</i> for flushing toilets
Sports, Arts, & Entertainment	Golf Course	Using grass that requires <i>less</i> water, fertilizer, and other chemicals	<i>Recycling</i> unused turf into compost	Collecting pencil used to record the score for <i>reuse</i>
Government and Non-profit Organizations	Public Transportation	Using the newest technology vehicles that are more <i>fuel-efficient</i>	<i>Recycle</i> tires that are not used	<i>Reuse</i> spare parts from vehicles that can no longer operate
Distribution, Rental, and Leasing	Department Store	<i>Reducing</i> the use of plastic bags	<i>Recycle</i> damaged packaging boxes	<i>Reuse</i> packing boxes that still fit for use
Education and Research	University	Using street lights with batteries from solar power	<i>Recycle</i> paper that is not used	<i>Reuse</i> of unused paper as an envelope
Tele-communication	Telephone Company	Using fiber optic cables that are more <i>effective</i> and <i>efficient</i>	<i>Recycle</i> cables that are no longer suitable for use	Using cables that are still <i>utilizable</i> former
Repair Service	Automotive Repair Shop	Educate users to use a good exhaust so that air pollution can be <i>reduced</i>	<i>Recycle</i> spare parts that are no longer suitable for use	Using the <i>used oil</i> to remove the rusted chain

Source: Adapted from Grove *et al.* (1996)

Unpreparedness or unwillingness of companies to adapt to the green movement has a negative impact in the medium and long term. Conversely, companies that can change well can gain certainly various advantages, including competitive advantage, increasing corporate image, opportunities to find new markets, and increasingly high product values (Chen, 2010).

Although green services have evolved compared to a few decades ago with the emergence of transportation, restaurant, hotel, banking, retail, and hospital business models that environmentally-friendly, there are three essential things that the service sector faces in responding to environmental concerns (Grove *et al.*, 1996), namely:

- The service economy is very diverse that can be seen from various perspectives such as the level of employee and customer involvement, the quality of the workforce, technology, market segments and targets, and so on. Not all service businesses can implement environmentally friendly concepts quickly and easily in their business models. For example, hotel or hospital services can implement service practices that are more environmentally friendly compared to professional services (accountants, legal advisors, psychologists, and business consultants) because they have a service process that uses a variety of facilities with a higher level of realization (such as building designs and types of equipment that are environmentally friendly).
- Not all service industries can apply environmentally friendly concepts fastly and efficiently in their business model. For example, hotels or hospitals may implement service practices that ecologically friendly compared to professional services (accountants, legal advisors, psychologists, and business consultants). Hotels or hospital services have a service process that uses a variety of facilities with a higher level of realization (such as building designs and equipment that is more environmentally friendly). Conversely, professional services emphasize more on the interaction (dialogue) of service providers and customers with the use of facilities that are not too complex. Environmentally friendly practices in the form of reducing paper used (paperless), air conditioners, and energy-saving lamps.
- Implementation of green services is sometimes a matter that becomes "the horn of a dilemma." For example, disposable nappies are a vital issue for the baby care service business. Dependence this business in using disposable nappies bring an impact to nappies wastes that hard to recycling. Meanwhile, this issue can be solved by using a nappy cleaning service. On the one hand, this solution has a positive impact because disposable nappies can be reused. On the other hand, this makes a new problem because the cleaning process is time-consuming and needs power consumption to produce hot water, detergent, bleach, and produce pollutants.
- Service industries should not miss service excellence to customers. Customers sometimes feel companies' service decreases because of environmentally friendly implementation, so that they will look for other service providers. For example, retail company policies that charge additional fees for plastic bags sometimes encourage customers to find and switch to other retail stores. Likewise, restaurant

policies that do not use drinking straws or disposable plastic cups sometimes make customers less satisfied.

4. Green Service Company Classification

McDaniel & Rylander (1993) classifying green service companies based on their activities, namely the defensive approach, and assertive approach. In a defensive strategy, companies carry out green marketing activities to meet the minimum requirements set by the government to maintain business continuity, avoid penalties, or avoid paying fines. Meanwhile, companies are more aggressive in their operations and take the initiative to implement activities or processes that care for the environment. In this case, companies with an assertive approach in implementing green marketing meet not only regulations but also meet the expectations of stakeholders.

The grouping of different green service companies was also conveyed by Cocca and Ganz (2015). According to them, green service companies can be divided into two. *First*, the company offers services that aim to create a brand image as a green company. In this case, the company designed a green building with more efficient electricity and water consumption, reduced the greenhouse effect, and other green practices. *Second*, the company offers services aimed at other companies from different industries to become green companies.

5. Failure and Rejection of Green Marketing (Service) Practices

The green gap refers to the distance/difference between the level of importance of environmental protection and the actual behavior to protect the environment (Mahoney, 2011). In everyday life, some people, including ourselves, declare that we care about the sustainability (*preservation*) of the earth where we live, but in practice, we are reluctant to support, even indifferent to environmental sustainability. For example, motor vehicle owners know that vehicle fuel oil, like pertalite and pertamax are more environmentally friendly than premium, but in reality, they prefer to buy premium. Likewise, awareness of the dangers of plastic waste, but they still consume (bags) plastic and do not carry bags that are more environmentally friendly. This difference in behavior (*green gap*) is based on the Theory of Neutralization (Johnstone & Tan, 2015) due to:

- **Denial of responsibility.** Consumers refuse to purchase green products (or services) because they consider that green products (or services) are hard to find than those non-green. It is quite challenging to find restaurants that provide brown rice or organic rice, and the customers need extra efforts to find green restaurants. The price of green restaurants and organic foods tend to be more expensive compared to non-green. Other reasons consumers refuse to buy green services because they have limited income, limited time to process information, look for alternative green service options, confusion in understanding corporate communications, and support from the government that is still felt to be lacking, especially concerning regulations. There are two critical dimensions concerning this rejection, namely a) personal reasons and b) confusion, cynicism, and mistrust. In this first dimension, personal reasons that are often cited to justify the refusal to buy green services regarding low purchasing power, lack of knowledge, and many unmet necessities. This second dimension explains the limited knowledge about the environment and the confusion received by consumers who

are trying to buy green services. For example, most consumers find labeling on products often confusing, and they find it difficult to distinguish green products from other non-green products. With these conditions, consumers often claim labels on packaging that are "confusing" as their justification for not buying green products and prefer non-green products. Besides, the cynical attitude that is often shown by consumers due to greenwashing by companies that their products provide benefits for environmental sustainability. The campaign efforts about green or organic products by the company are just a marketing tactic to attract consumers. In the end, consumers mistrust by the companies, and they became skeptical and thought of the green product as a ruse.

- **Denial of injury.** This condition often occurs when consumers feel that the actions they have done are not detrimental to others directly. In other words, consumers do not see the negative impact of using non-green products so that they are not essential to change their behavior to buy green products. Why should I bother to carry or buy environmentally friendly bags if the Alfamart and Indomaret retail stores provide plastic bags? Other illustrations, hotel customers sometimes forgot to close the tap water bath or turn off electronic equipment such as air conditioning, TV, or the lights when they want to get out of the room. Does the customer bear the loss? Customers feel they have paid the price of renting a hotel room, and if they do not turn off the electronic device, it is not their responsibility. Why should they be bothered to close the water tap, turn off electronic equipment, or maintain the cleanliness of the room and the bed? They feel their actions are correct and do not harm others or the hotel. They are not aware that their step is not wise in preserving the environment. According to Polonsky (2011), consumers' ignorance is sometimes caused by their limited knowledge so that they have difficulty in identifying the negative consequences of using non-green products in the future. In Indonesia, education level some people still relatively low that impact on the lack of awareness or ignorance of the adverse effects in using plastic bags, bottles, packaging wrappers, and plastic straws that will be garbage for environmental sustainability. Recently we were shocked by the news of television or print media, as well as viral messages on social media that informed the death of whales and turtles that swallowed plastic waste. The death of these animals caused by the ignorance of our actions that are not friendly to the environment.
- **Achieving more important goals.** In some cases, consumers often rationalize the choices of others as they justify their decision, with the motive that the action is intended to achieve something higher and valuable. As an illustration, low-income consumers don't care about how environmentally friendly the choices they have made if they have to raise their children who still need health services and education. With such conditions, there is no way they can buy green products that are relatively more expensive, even if they want to. According to Peattie (2010), social norms can play a role in influencing one's green behavior because social norms are often seen as "what is considered a general practice by society" and "behavior that is considered morally right or what should be done." Therefore, if green social norms are not strong enough, consumers will be able to rationalize that achieving their individual goals is more important than collective goals.

- **The desire to protect or maintain their own feelings.** For some consumers, there is an urge to control their lives and preserve their lifestyle or identity by regulating their buying behavior. There are two important things related to the desire to protect their own feelings, namely, to make sacrifices and avoid negative self-concepts.
- **Strong brand attachment.** The refusal of consumers to buy green products because they have a strong connection to a brand/product, although the brand/product is not categorized as green products. Some people have a strong relationship with a brand because they are taught by parents (especially mothers) when they are children indirectly. For example, the choice of some consumers for restaurants, hospitals, or doctors inherited from their parents. Likewise, the influence of the preferences of a partner or close friend even though the recommended product is not green products. With this strong emotional connection, even though the product is non-green, consumers see no reason to change their buying behavior to switch to green products.

Green marketing failures can also be influenced by inappropriate company practices (Peattie & Crane, 2005), namely:

- **Green spinning.** A reactive approach/action that is often carried out by the public relations department to reject, or even discredit the public who criticize company practices that are seen as not caring about the environment.
- **Green selling.** An opportunistic approach that companies take by claiming and even campaigning massively that their products are green with the aim of influencing consumers and increasing sales. In fact, this is just a corporate trick.
- **Green harvesting.** Companies only enthusiasm for the environment when green practices have an impact on efficiency. Besides, green practices are chosen not because the companies want to preserve the environment, but they more focus on efficiency. As a result, customers become skepticism to the companies.
- **Entrepreneur marketing.** Companies develop green products that are innovative to the market, while they do not truly understand what customers want. In other words, innovative green products are not truly needed by customers.
- **Compliance.** Companies carry out green practices to meet environmental regulations set by the authority as an opportunity to promote green products without taking initiatives fulfilling stakeholders' interests, such as customers and communities. In this case, consumers see the company only taking normative legal action, without a consistent and robust desire to preserve the environment.

6. Conclusion

Concern from academics and practitioners to environmental sustainability has been increasing due to rapid industrial growth. Decreasing river water quality, air pollution, increasing temperature, lousy soil quality, and irresponsible disposal of hazardous wastes bring great concern to the negative impacts of the industrial growth on environmental quality. The concern arises from the community that asserts companies to participate in green marketing, starting from selecting raw materials, processing, distributing, and selling the products (or services) with responsible ways and ethics. The development of green service cannot be separated from the heightened awareness and attention of the community. Green services not only mean providing services that are

environmentally friendly but show social justice, economic development, and healthier and better conditions by putting them into practice. The companies need to holistically understand the motives or reasons for consumers' rejection of green services so that they can encourage consumers to involve in green concern behaviors.

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