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An Empirical Study of Green Marketing on Perceived Value based on Brand Image in Smart Health Care Industry

Jianqing LI¹

Abstract

Along with emerging international ideological trend of environmental protection, governments in the world also make green regulations. Nevertheless, the promotion of environmental protection should be started from the source prevention. Domestic government therefore positively counsel and encourage enterprises to become green enterprises. Along with the satisfaction with consumer needs, enterprises provide high-quality, environment-friendly, safe & healthy products. In addition, it becomes the indicators for the sustainable management of modern enterprises to promote products and environmental awareness through effective green marketing. Aiming at consumers of smart health care industry in Fujian Province, total 420 copies of questionnaire are distributed, and 325 valid copies are retrieved, with the retrieval rate 77%. The research results are summarized as below. Since smart health care industry would consume a lot of energy and wastes in consumers' consumption or health care process, environmental protection should be taken into account in the operation management in smart health care industry. Promoting the environmental philosophy of smart health care industry with green marketing could match consumers' environmental concept to enhance the brand image of smart health care industry. Green service in smart health care industry adds the green appeal in the original products and service, and the product and service quality would not be reduced for saving resources; the essence and differentiation of products and service therefore become the factors in consumers' choices and perceived value. Smart health care industry, on the other hand could enhance the advantage of products and service for environmental and social appeal. According to the results, suggestions are proposed, expecting to help domestic smart health care industry practice green marketing, lead the public emphasis on environmental protection, enhance smart health care industry, and shape the brand image to maintain the competitiveness of domestic smart health care industry and achieve the goal of sustainable management.

Keywords: smart health care industry, green marketing, brand image, perceived value, education, social development.

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Introduction

In consideration of worsening global extreme climate issues in past years, United Nations proposed the principle with effective execution of environmental protection mechanism and all people participating in environmental protection to facilitate the mutualistic symbiosis among environmental resource protection, social development, and economic development in order to solve environmental protection and economic development problems. Nevertheless, lots of enterprises simply reduced costs, in order to pursue the maximal profits, but ignored the security and rights of the mass society. After a long period of time, several major environmental issues resulted in losses hard to be estimated. To balance environmental protection and economic development, “green economy”, a sustainable economic pattern with mutualistic symbiosis, is promoted to enhance the world transforming into green economy with low carbon and effective resource utilization. Along with emerging international ideological trend of environmental protection, governments in the world also make green regulations. Nonetheless, the promotion of environmental protection should be started from the source prevention. For this reason, domestic government, in past years, positively counsel and encourage enterprises to become green enterprises. Enterprises further provide high-quality, environment-friendly, and safe & healthy products to satisfy consumer needs. It becomes an indicator for the sustainable management of modern enterprises to promote products and environmental awareness through effective green marketing.

The outbreak of several events, such as waste water discharge from factories to pollute rivers, adulterated food running in the market, and insecure product materials, broke the law, destroyed ecology, and endangered human health in past years to enhance people’s emphasis on environmental awareness and health concept. For the goals of sustainable development and environmental protection, environmental education is positively promoted in various nations. It is also indicated in Environmental Education Act that, in addition to seek for technologies, long-term promotion of environmental education to have each person implement environmental protection behaviors from the cognition, value, and attitudes is the solution for such environmental issues. Consumers’ purchase behaviors are correlated with the environmental involvement. Those with higher participation in environmental protection stress more on green marketing with environmental benefits; on the contrary, ones with lower participation care more about green marketing of individual interests. Enterprises being able to effectively apply green marketing to combine individual benefits and environmental benefits could create the maximal effect. Moreover, green marketing could better affect consumers’ environmental protection through open media communications. When encountering problems faced by the environment, enterprises should take actual actions and commitment to benefit the society and environment. It is urgent to deliver the idea of environmental protection through green marketing. On the other hand, a lot more of customers are willing to co-create value with enterprises

to solve the problems encountered in human life. As a result, the effect of green marketing on brand image and perceived value is discussed in this study, expecting to help domestic smart health care industry practice green marketing, lead the public to emphasize environmental protection, enhance smart health care industry, and shape the brand image. It aims to maintain the competitiveness of domestic smart health care industry to achieve the goal of sustainable management.

Literature review

Chen *et al.* (2018) pointed out green marketing as the environment-friendly policy, strategy, and strategic marketing of enterprises as well as the management process which could recognize, expect, and conform to consumer and environmental appeal and result in profits and sustainable management. Teona, Ko, & Kim (2020) regarded green marketing as manufacturers developing safe products conforming to the ecology, recyclable and easily decomposable package, better pollution control, and more efficient energy operation. Wu *et al.* (2018) revealed that green marketing was the marketing integrated into human life in order to protect the environment. When making green marketing plans, enterprises would view the market with a new green perspective. The meaning lied in satisfying consumer needs and developing new markets and business opportunities. Lin & Niu (2018) proposed that, as consumers were guided by green thinking, producers had to produce and sell various green products and enterprises listed environmental protection as a primary management strategy to shape corporate green culture in order to survive in the most beneficial environment. Chinomona & Chivhungwa (2019) mentioned that corporate brand image was the subjective cognition completed by consumption bodies. When enterprises shaped and delivered corporate brand image through various methods, consumers, with the cognition of corporate image conforming to the needs and point of view, would appear consumption behaviors. Green *et al.* (2019) defined corporate image as consumers acquiring relevant information and experience from the products, service, or engagement in social events provided by enterprises to form the special subjective attitudes and impression; it was people's subjective feelings and opinions about enterprises. Amirbagheri *et al.* (2019) indicated that the diversity of green marketing covered product market survey, pricing, advertisement, and promotion focusing on green concept, maintenance of ecological balance, and delivering management thinking in supply chain, considering the future directions of enterprises, and maintaining consumers' benefits and the concept of environmental protection. Moreover, green marketing contained the collection of green information, the discussion of green products, and the creation of corporate green brand image. Consequently, enterprises had to increase the listening and execution in green marketing. The research hypothesis is therefore proposed in this study.

H1: Green marketing shows positive and significant effect on brand image.

Kim *et al.* (2019) stated that customers would acquire added value from brand; added value could be functional, emotional, or symbolic, was closely related to core value and organizational value, and was the important connection between internal and external brand procedures. Teng, Ni, & Chen (2018) regarded brand image as customers' attitudes and belief in a shop or an enterprise based on the past interaction with the shop or acquired experiences. Ellram & Murfield (2019) indicated that successful brand image created value for customers and was further identified by target consumers; for this reason, successfully managed brand image could form obvious segmentation from competitive brands. A lot of domestic and international scholars therefore regarded brand image as the key success factor in products. Iglesias *et al.* (2019) proposed that brand did not simply allow consumers presenting the ownership, but provided market meaning that brand was no longer a name or label, but the relationship with consumers. Balaji, Jiang, & Jha (2019) regarded brand image as the sum of consumers' cognition of brand and the relationship with brand association in the memory reflecting product characteristics or the unique concept of products to present the perception of the core brand of the enterprise. Gan & Nuli (2018) considered that brand image was consumers' overall impression of brand, including the identity or differentiation from other brands, brand personality, and promised benefits. Accordingly, the hypothesis is proposed in this study.

H2: Brand image reveals positive and remarkable effects on perceived value.

Chuang & Huang (2018) defined perceived value that consumers evaluated the overall effectiveness of products based on the received and paid cognition. In other words, consumers would select products or make purchase decisions depending on the perceived value of products. It also revealed consumers' measurement between the acquisition and the loss. Tseng *et al.* (2019) mentioned that perceived value appeared on each stage in the purchase process, including experience before purchase, during purchase, and after use. Each consumer showed distinct acquired and paid cognition, but value stood for the judgment between acquisition and sacrifice. Lim, Perumal, & Ahmad (2019) considered that perceived value was the comparison between perceived quality and perceived price sacrificed. When the perceived quality was higher than the perceived sacrifice, the perceived value would be higher to enhance purchase intention. Customers' perceived value was a critical factor in a company keeping the competitive advantage and differentiation. Amoah, Hughes, & Pomeyie (2018) stated that customer-oriented service industry focused the service on customers; in this case, a platform for customers' participation, exchange, and interaction and customer value monitoring in the service should be established to benefit enterprises collecting, analyzing, and understanding customer related data. It would benefit the successive product and service marketing. The essence and differentiation of service would be

the factors in consumers' choices and perceived value, and enterprises could enhance the service advantage for environmental and social appeal. Jabeen & Kavitha (2019) mentioned that, as green marketing took care of environmental protection, the product production and service provision process would require more careful considerations than general products or service. The reliability of environmental protection behaviors and execution of enterprises would affect consumers' willingness to pay additional prices. Yi, Li, & Jai (2018) indicated that price was the most sensitive factor in consumers' perceived value; reducing product or service costs and prices by expanding production scale, reinforcing green management, and reducing the consumption of materials could enhance consumers' perceived value of green products or service and willingness to consume. Hayat *et al.* (2019) stated that enterprises had to consider the service level provided for customers to set the marketing channels in order to enhance customers' perceived value and purchase intention. Yu *et al.* (2019) regarded the function of green channels to facilitate transaction; on one hand, it provided consumers with information related to green products or service; on the other hand, it allowed product or service manufacturers understanding consumers' green preference. When channels directly faced consumers, enterprises could directly analyze and deliver consumers' needs for and responses to products or service to take suitable strategies for product purchase and service provision. Deng, Xiang, & Yao (2018) indicated that green marketing included the concepts of environmental protection and sustainability in the process of service market, sold and presented green service to consumers with innovative service, and provided relevant green information for consumers' better understanding and affecting the perceived value to expand the market acceptance. As a consequence, the hypothesis is proposed in this study.

H3: Green marketing appears positive effects on perceived value.

Methodology

Conceptual framework of this study

Summing up above literature review, the conceptual framework of this study is drafted (*Figure 1*) to discuss the relations among green marketing, brand image, and perceived value.

Operational definition

Green marketing: Referring to Wang, Ma, & Bai (2019), green marketing in this study is divided into spontaneity and coerciveness: (1) *Spontaneity*: actively promoting environmental protection events, enterprise supervisors assisting in promoting community events; (2) *Coerciveness*: referring to the responsibilities

regulated by the government, such as pollution control and environmental maintenance.

Brand image: Referring to Han *et al.* (2019), brand image in this study is divided into brand value, brand characteristics, and brand association: (1) *Brand value:* related to functional benefits, i.e. the basic condition for a brand; (2) *Brand characteristics:* Brand characteristics are connected with customers' perception to appear differences; (3) *Brand association:* Consumers' brand association would be expanded to other products and service of the brand.

Perceived value: Referring to Ting *et al.* (2019), the items are revised and designed for the discussion in this study.

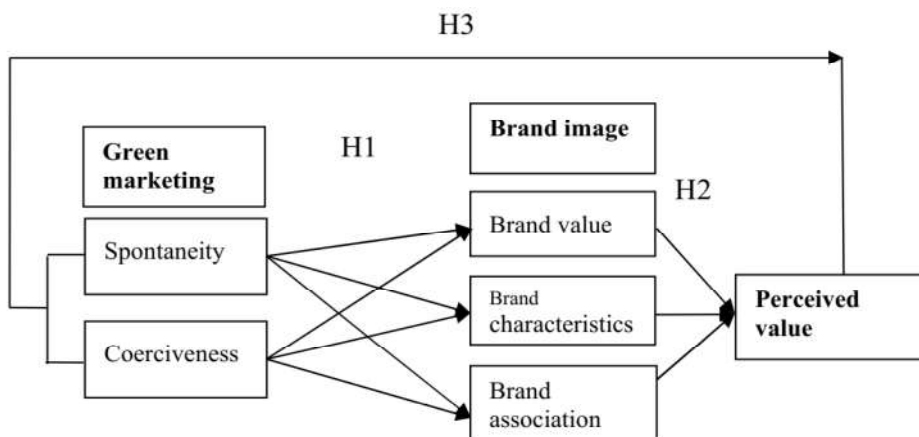


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Research sample and object

Consumers of smart health care industry in Fujian Province, as the research objects, are distributed 420 copies of questionnaire, and 325 valid copies are retrieved, with the retrieval rate 77%.

Reliability and validity test

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is an important part in SEM that the measurement model should be tested before the structural model evaluation in the two-stage model modification. When the measured model fit is acceptable, the second-step SEM is further preceded. In the dimension analysis with CFA, the factor loadings of dimensions appear in .70~.95, the composite reliability appears in .70~.90, and the average variance extracted appears in .60~.80, conforming to the standards of 1.factor loadings higher than .5, 2.compositive reliability higher than .6, and 3.average variance extracted higher than .5. The dimensions therefore present convergent validity.

Results

Structural model analysis

Structural model analysis contains the goodness-of-fit analysis and the overall explanatory power of research model. By referring to scholars' opinions, 7 numerical indices are used for testing the overall model fit, containing chi-square (χ^2) test, χ^2 -degree of freedom ratio, goodness-of-fit index, adjusted goodness-of-fit index, root mean square error, comparative goodness-of-fit index, comparative hypothesis model, and independent model chi-square difference. The overall results are organized in *Table 1*.

In overall, when testing model fit with χ^2 -degree of freedom ratio, the ratio is the smaller the better; the χ^2 -degree of freedom ratio of this research model shows < 3 (1.96). GFI and AGFI are better close to 1, without absolute standards for judging the model fit, and GFI >.9 and AGFI > .8 are acceptable; GFI and AGFI of this research model reveal .96 and .84, respectively. RMSEA in .05-.08 presents a good model with reasonable fit; RMSEA of this research model appears .05. The allowable standard of CFI is >.9; CFI of this research model shows .94. NFI should be at least higher than .9; NFI of this research model reveals .93. Overall speaking, the goodness-of-fit indices conform to the standards, revealing the model being acceptable. The research sample data therefore could be used for explaining the actual observed data.

From previous overall model fit indices, the goodness-of-fit between the model structured in this study and the observed data is favorable, showing that the theoretical model could fully explain the observed data. In this case, the correlation coefficients and coefficient estimates of green marketing to brand image and perceived value could be further understood after the model fit test.

Table 1. Research model fit analysis

Fit Indices	Allowable range	This research model	Model fit judgment
χ^2 (Chi-square)	The smaller the better	15.69	
χ^2 -degree of freedom ratio	<3	1.96	Match
GFI	>.9	0.96	Match
AGFI	>.8	0.84	Match
RMSEA	<.08	0.05	Match
CFI	>.9	0.94	Match
NFI	>.9	0.93	Match

The research data are organized in *Table 2*. The complete model analysis result reveals that two dimensions of green marketing (spontaneity, coerciveness) could significantly explain green marketing ($t > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$), three dimensions of brand image (brand value, brand characteristics, brand association) could remarkably explain brand image ($t > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$), and the single factor of perceived value also presents notable explanation ($t > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$). Apparently, the overall model in this study presents good preliminary fit.

In regard to internal fit, green marketing shows positive and significant correlations with brand image (0.87, $p < 0.01$), brand image reveals positive and remarkable correlations with perceived value (0.90, $p < 0.01$), and green marketing appears positive and notable correlations with perceived value (0.84, $p < 0.01$) that H1, H2, and H3 are supported.

Table 2. Overall linear structural model analysis result

Evaluation item	Parameter/evaluation standard		Result
Preliminary fit	green marketing	spontaneity	0.73**
		coerciveness	0.77**
	brand image	brand value	0.74**
		brand characteristics	0.76**
		brand association	0.72**
	perceived value	perceived value	1.00**
Internal fit	green marketing → brand image		0.87**
	brand image → perceived value		0.90**
	green marketing → perceived value		0.84**

Note: * stands for $p < 0.05$, ** for $p < 0.01$, and *** for $p < 0.001$.

Discussion

Green marketing in the smart health care industry is based on reducing pollution and protecting the environment. It introduces some environmental protection appeal into marketing to make a change and expects that will be helpful in the long run. With consumers' influence, the customer-oriented smart health care industry will increase their brand image and perceived value under environmental circumstances. During this process, consumers are also one of the participants, and their feedback represents the cognition of consumers' perceived value. It pours endless strength into the smart health care industry to develop and improve sustainably in the direction of green innovation. Using green marketing has a significant impact on consumers' brand image and perceived value in the smart health care industry. It's because it brings out an eco-friendly mindset and satisfies

consumers' needs on both quality and functions, thereby building a high-quality image. To sum up, those green products in the smart health care industry are also beneficial while doing green marketing activities. Therefore while manufacturers in the smart health care industry promote green marketing vigorously, they should also pay attention to their corporate brand image to be sure if it has the spirit of continuously bringing new ideas. That way, it could lead to their sustainable development.

Conclusion

The research results reveal that the emphasis on and concern about environmental protection would affect the public and further influence the business in various industries. In terms of smart health care industry, a lot of energy and wastes would be consumed in the process of consumers' consumption or health care that the considerations of environmental protection are included in the business management in smart health care industry. Promoting the environmental philosophy of smart health care industry to consumers through green marketing to conform to consumers' environmental concepts could enhance the brand image. By increasing green appeal in the original products and service, without reducing the quality of products and service for saving resources, in smart health care industry green service, the essence and differentiation of products and service would be the factors in consumers' choices and perceived value. Smart health care industry could also enhance the advantage of products and service for environmental and social appeal. As a consequence, green products and service provided by smart health care industry could take care of environmental protection and energy and resource saving as well as shape good image of social responsibility to enhance consumers' perceived value and repurchase intention. Smart health care industry could provide consumers with information of environmental protection and the behavior of smart health care industry through advertisement, promotion, public relationship, personnel sales, or direct marketing for consumers' better understanding of the environmental protection strategies and affecting and increasing consumers' brand image. In regard to green promotion, smart health care industry should stress on consumers' right to know so that the information between smart health care industry and consumers is symmetric. Well applying promotion tools to deliver the philosophy and actual behaviors of smart health care industry to consumers would deliver the positive brand image of concerning about environmental protection to consumers. Accepting and carefully dealing with consumers' positive/negative evaluation and suggestions could be the reference and revision of green marketing in the future.

Recommendations

From the research results and findings, the following practical suggestions are proposed in this study.

- 1) A part of consumers' cognition of green products comes from the green marketing of smart health care industry. With cognition and identity to green concept, consumers would be willing to purchase such products. For this reason, smart health care industry could enhance brand image from green marketing to acquire consumers' identity and deepen the perceived value of the green products or service.
- 2) The good effect of green marketing and the benefit to the public, through the positive promotion of the government and smart health care industry, could have consumers better understand the practice of environmental protection and green marketing to increase the needs for green products and service and cultivate the environmental habit in the shopping. It would then drive the emphasis of smart health care industry to improve health care products and promote environmental protection. Consumers' real actions would affect the change and innovation of smart health care industry.
- 3) To have consumers appear positive emotions on the cognition of products and service, purchase process, and use, smart health care industry should pay attention to the contact with customers in the green marketing and the ease-of-purchase of green products and service. Good emotional perception of consumers in the products and service selling process and the after-sales service could enhance consumers' perceived value and purchase intention of the products and service of smart health care industry.
- 4) Greening of smart health care industry could save energy, reduce pollution, and properly reduce costs. Moreover, the environmental products or service promoted by smart health care industry might attract consumers' consumption and enhance good brand image of smart health care industry. In this case, smart health care industry should consider reinforcing the practice of environmental protection related strategies in the operating process and actually achieve environmental protection actions with domestic environmental protection marks to drive the internationally emphasized green atmosphere. The environmental protection measures of smart health care industry should also be announced for consumers clearly understanding the environmental protection behavior of smart health care industry and the public inspecting and monitoring the improvement and advance of greening so that the green development of domestic smart health care industry could be more mature.

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