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**GREEN MARKETING STRATEGIES:
IMPACTS TOWARDS CUSTOMERS' PURCHASING PATTERNS IN KUCHING**

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to determine which green marketing strategies has greater impacts towards customers' purchasing pattern in Kuching. Three dimensions of variables based on previous studies have been chosen and tested to achieve the objectives of this research. The said dimensions are green marketing strategies, environmental concerns and beliefs, and environmental behaviours. At the end of this research, this paper will allow researchers to implement the most effective green marketing strategy to persuade customers in consuming green products. The greatest limitation of this study was the ignorance type of respondents in answering the questionnaire. This has made the process of analysing the collected data became much difficult and time consuming. However, this paper fulfils the objectives and it may be an additional reference for future research of similar topic.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER OF SUBMISSION	I
DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK	II
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	III
ABSTRACT	IV
TABLE OF CONTENTS	V
LIST OF TABLES	VII
LIST OF FIGURES	VIII
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of study	2
1.3 Problem statement	3
1.4 Research objectives	4
1.5 Research questions	5
1.6 Scope of study	6
1.7 Significance of study	7
1.8 Limitations of study	8
1.9 Definition of terms	9
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Value of green labelling	11
2.3 The effects of green branding on consumer buying patterns	11
2.4 The effects of green advertising on consumer buying patterns	12
2.5 Customers' responsiveness towards green packaging	12
2.6 Consumers' concerns and beliefs	13
2.7 Consumers' environmental behaviours	13
2.8 Theoretical framework	14
2.9 Hypothesis	15
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Introduction	16
3.2 Research design	16
3.3 Sampling plan	16
3.4 Pilot study	16
3.5 Data collection method	17
3.6 Sampling technique	17
3.7 Sample size	17
3.8 Instruments	18

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The word Green Marketing became popular in late 1980s and early 1990s (Dodds; John 2007). The American Marketing Association (AMA) held the first workshop on "Ecological Marketing" in the year of 1975 (Curtin, Emily 2006). The results of this workshop have made one of the first books on green marketing entitled "Ecological Marketing" (Karl E.; Henion; Thomas C. Kinnear 1976). Since then, a number of books on the same topic have been published (Charter 1992; Coddington 1993; Ottman 1993).

Green marketing has been an important academic research topic for at least three decades (Peattie, 1995; Polonsky and Mintu-Wimsatt, 1995; Schlegelmilch et al., 1996; Fuller, 1999; Kalafatis et al., 1999; Hartmann et al., 2005). As pointed out by Papadopoulos et al. (2010), green consumers have become a driving force behind how companies do business, and these ecological customers are creating a new economy around the globe. Therefore, the "green consumer" concept was the epicentre of the environmental marketing strategies as well as a key concept, on which prominent marketing academicians and professionals focused at the end of 1980s and in the early 1990s (Diamantopoulos et al., 1994; Elkington, 1994; Shrivastava, 1995; Porter and Van der Linde, 1995; Chan and Lau, 2000).

Throughout the 1990s, researchers continued to aver that the "green market appeared to be real and growing" (Menon and Menon, 1997), and "expanding at a remarkable rate" (Schlegelmilch et al., 1996). In a similar vein, many green products have regained consumer confidence in the 2000s (Gura .u and Ranchhod, 2005). According to Gupta and Ogden (2009), the industry for green products was estimated at over \$200 billion in 2006. Various researchers have spurred interest in issues surrounding environmental conservation and protection in the marketplace (Intel, 2006). With the continuous rise of growing global concern about the environmental quality, green marketing has picked up its momentum (Stafford, 2003; Ottman et al., 2006).

In recent times, there are many encouraging indications which show that the demand for greener products is increasing rapidly. Like, according to Natural Marketing Institute reports, more than 200 billion \$ market of Lifestyles, Health and Sustainability (LOHAS) is expected to become double by 2010 and quadruple by the end of 2015 (Widger, 2007). Therefore, understanding consumers' green buying behavior is important not only for academics and practitioners but for marketers, and it is especially critical for environment friendly businesses. In this regard, Theory of Planned Behavior states that intention is seen as the proximal determinant of behavior: the more one intends to engage in a particular behavior, the more likely one is to actually engage in it (Ajzen, 1985; Kalafatis., Pollard., East., and Tsogas, 1999).

In Malaysia, the green awareness among its people can be considered as low. There are still minimal efforts made by both government and private sectors in educating Malaysians about the importance of green practice. Because of lacking in green marketing education, most Malaysians do not possess the optimum concern towards environment and thus, the demand for eco-friendly products are still considered as low in Malaysia. However, with increasing issues on environment, the awareness on the usage of environmental friendly products has grown globally (Nik Abdul Rashid, 2009).

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Green marketing term was first discussed in a seminar on “ecological marketing” organized by American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1975 and took its place in the literature. In this seminar where the impact of marketing on natural environment was analyzed with the contribution of academicians, bureaucrats and other participants, ecological marketing concept was defined as follows: Studies regarding adverse or positive impacts on environmental pollution, energy consumption and consumption of other resources as result of marketing (Cevreorman, 2010).

Green marketing includes a variety of activities such as product modification, changes in the production process, packaging changes and as well as modifying advertising (Polonsky, 1994). Likewise, Peattie (1995) and Welford (2000) described green marketing as being the management process that identifies, anticipates and satisfies the needs and wants of customers and society in a profitable and sustainable way. Corporations will have to find solutions to environmental challenges through marketing strategies to develop ecologically safer products, recyclable and biodegradable packaging, better pollutions controls and more energy-efficient operations in order to remain competitive (Czinkota and Ronkainen, 1992; Richards, 1994; Kotler and Armstrong, 1995).