

# Sustainable Green Marketing Practices Enhance Competitive Advantage in Indian FMCG Sector

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## ABSTRACT

*Green marketing is a trendy expression in the current business situation. Currently, the vast majority of the companies are endeavoring to pick up preferred standpoint over their rivals by utilizing eco-friendly and ecological strategies which improve the intensity alongside the execution of the organization. The point of the present investigation is to measure the impact of green marketing practices on competitive advantage by examining the 73 companies out of 100 ensured and enlisted FMCG companies taken for the sample, has a place with sustenance and refreshment segment in Delhi and NCR region. Green marketing practices and competitive advantage have been evaluated inside the marketing-mix components. The structural equation modeling (SEM) has used to examine the effect of green marketing practices on the competitive advantage and relationship among independent (green marketing practices) and dependent (competitive advantage) variables. The findings reveal that FMCGs companies are yet not getting the coveted advantages through green marketing practices as three components (product, price, and place) found insignificant except the promotional activities which are significant in order to gain an advantage.*

**Keywords:** *Green Marketing, Competitive Advantage, FMCG, Environment, Structural Equation Modeling.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The present market situation investigates that the business, endeavors, and associations are increasingly committed to ecological issues because of more grounded natural enactment, monetary improvement and impact the most grounded populace base. The developing green market has consolidated an extensive variety of exercises which join the item upgradation and also changing the procedure of generation, which will be contributed into great bundling and publicizing Vinayagamoorthy & Somasundaram (2012). The competitive and worldwide surroundings companies need to have a concern for the environment as part of their operations. A large portion of the huge global players in the market are enhancing their organizations and are currently effectively implementing Green Marketing practices.

At present, the vast majority of the organizations know about obligations towards the environment. In this way, they are delivering items which are eco-friendly and changing the production procedure by 'Go Green' concept that they can ensure nature on one hand and increment benefits on the other. A large portion of the examinations found that ecological issues and familiarity with the whole global world have expanded around the globe, which make individuals naturally touchy and carry on in like manner. The consumers are becoming more concerned about the environment and changing behavior according, where

they fulfill their need and requirement of its own current uses. While then again, a considerable lot of the business activities caused from the environmental problems and have also realized that Green oriented business is essential for the sustainable society, organizations, particularly multinationals, assume a critical job in the worldwide economy, and they have additional assets alongside resources to put the environmental solution into green practices.

Several companies have responsible for greater sustainability and greening the entire society. Hence, the companies intend to create markets for more eco-friendly products & services and influence the customer to change their mindset of people to green behavior. Green Marketing is to be anticipated and it is the need of the time, which leads to the opportunity for the creation of core ideas to innovate business to get success in the market. It will more helpful for designing and modifying the process of manufacturing the products which are to be suitable for nature. It refers to the process of buying raw materials, producing, and selling of products or services based on their environmental morals.

Few companies have paved the way and changed their mindset of corporate culture to a more environmentally responsible and friendly manner or to meet the demand of the environmentally conscious consumers. Though, the pressure can be adopted by the marketers for environmental friendly marketing practices in the consumers' goods sector more when compared to other sectors. Keeping in view the above scenarios in the present study green marketing practices considered as an independent variable with the sub-construct of the marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) as intervening variables and the dependent variable is a competitive advantage with the similar components of the marketing mix and investigated the cause-effect relationship between green marketing practices and competitive advantage with the help of sub-construct of the marketing mix.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Green Marketing**

The importance of green marketing practices can immensely be a help to minimize the environmental impact on companies including product and its existence. According to Kotler (2006) depicted that green marketing as the assurance of given by the companies for the betterment and development of an enterprise to protect, ecological goods which are more environmentally friendly. It will be more helpful for the avoidance of pollution and which is efficiently used of energy. It includes Vinayagamoorthy & Somasundaram (2012) incorporated a broad range of activities, including product modification changer to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Therefore, in order to survive in the present era of cut-throat competition, firms need to go greener H. Ramakrishna (2012). Shrikanth & Raju (2012), Bhamini Garg (2014), Manjunath & Gundupagi (2013) also examines the concept of green marketing with adoption the go green marketing strategies of the firms and opportunities & challenges that have to force and include with green marketing activities. Some of the researchers highlights the transformation benefits of green marketing and gain advantages into environmental friendly nature Michael Jay Polonsky (2011). Ko, Hwang & Kim (2013) stated that the relationship among green marketing, corporate image and purchase intention in the retail departmental store in Korea. The study, based on a consumer perspective and has taken only female consumers and the sample was collected from the 389 respondents who were the major customers at the selected retail departmental store by using confirmatory factor analyses and structure equation modeling via LISREL 8.8.

### **2.2 Competitive Advantage**

In the present competitive era of the global world, most of the companies facing challenges due to the changing environment and nature of the business, the pioneer researcher explore

Arseculeratre & Yazdanifard (2014) that how green marketing can create a sustainable competitive advantage for a business and also the importance of competitive advantage for business firms. It exists the strength for the accomplishment of green marketing strategies which has to give glimpses to business in what manner they organize marketing mix in terms of green marketing. Whereas, Gosavi (2013) stated that how cell phone firms can gain advantage from green marketing and try to avoid kinds of hazards arises. Endang Chumaidiyah (2014) also argue that the relationship between the marketing mix importance and contribution of its elements. Whereas, a few of the studies focused on B2B green marketing strategies Dipa Mitra (2014) The study revealed that most efficient organization in automobile and foods & beverage industry in terms of green marketing practices at present among others and on the basis of those findings recommendations have been proposed to recover the situation, the Vaccaro (2009) examines the innovative theory in what way we can use to design more effective. These theories were proactive with B2B green marketing strategies in order to make the triangle of economic, social and ecological sustainability. Moreover, the researcher Eiadat, Kelly, Roche & Edayat (2008) highlights that the environmental innovation strategy with firm's business performance and the strategy are associated with improved perceived firms' business performance and environmental innovation strategy is influenced by certain environmental pressure forces. As the environmental concerns are a major issue now a day's Pujari (2006) also investigate the eco-innovation and new product development in the green environment process have been the major issue of the study. The study explores the relationship and relative impact of eco-innovation activities on Environmental New Product Development (ENPD) performance. The study was conducted in North America wherein impact on the market performance. Hierarchical regression method was used to analysed the result and reveals that the statistically significant relationships between market performance.

### **2.3 Green Marketing & Competitive Advantage**

Hasan & Ali (2014) looked into the conceptual framework and examine the impact of green marketing strategy on the firm's performance through an analysis of the green innovation and green promotion. Conding, Habidin, Mohdzubir, Hashim, Seri and Jevya (2012), Jen Lin, Lunghwa, Chen, Minh HO & Hua (2013), Ing Wu & Ru Lin (2014) explored of green marketing strategies on business performance by contacting of 1287 registered organic farms in Taiwan out of which only 288 valid respondents filled the complete questionnaire. The study revealed that organic farms are able to develop their corporate image through green marketing strategies and therefore improving their business performance.

As far as Kenneth, Pamela, Jeramy & Vikram (2012) investigation related to the impact of green supply chain management practices (GSCM) on performance. The study revealed that incorporate the green supply chain practices that link manufactures with supply chain partners (both supplier & customers) and to support environmental sustainability throughout the supply chain. Green marketing concept explores the benefits of its practices in business and how can a business firm be a more competitive edge over others Shrikanth & Raju (2012). Additionally, the study concludes that green marketing is something that will continuously grow in both practice and demand. Dangelico & Pujari (2010) examined the green product innovation by means of a multiple case study & analysis of twelve small and medium-size manufacturing companies based in Italy & Canada. Nai-Jen Chang and Cher-Min Fong (2010) stated that green product quality could bring green customer satisfaction and green customer loyalty. However, that practice would create a green corporate image contributes to green customer satisfaction and green customer loyalty. The study concludes that CSR is still the most important serious issue in business recently and most of the firm should integrate CSR into corporate culture with this integration, a business can gain competitive advantage & promote social image Chen & Yi Lin (2008). Whereas, Chen, Bao lai & Tung wen (2006), Yu-Shan-Chen (2008) & Yu-Lin & Hui Ho (2008) highlighted the intention to adopt green innovation for logistics service providers with six factors and all these factors was determined with green logistics service provider's dimensions. The result

found that all the factors have positively influenced on intention to adopt green practices and exhibit significant influences on the willingness to adopt green practices.

#### **2.4 Influence of green marketing practices on competitive advantage**

Companies are using green marketing strategies for the development and sustain of business, the researcher investigated that Sitnikov, Vasilescu, Ogarca & Tudor (2015) explored the green marketing are played a symbolic role in marketing for ensuring sustainable business and also concerning the environmental way of strategic decision can influence it. The model is based on the correlation that can be established among generic strategies of competitive advantage and the sample size of the study was taken 34 companies. Whereas the relationship among environmental orientation, green marketing mix strategy Rahmawati, Haiwidjojo & Solimum (2014) and competitive advantage in real estate developer companies in East Java Indonesia. The findings conclude that environmental orientation has no positive influence on enhancing the firm's competitive advantage, but it positively & significantly affects the implementation of green marketing mix strategy.

As far as, the green marketing strategy also engages in CSR strategy tools, the researcher Menck & Filho (2014) focused that how the organization action aimed at environmental protection. Thus, any activity related to environment protection contributes to competitive advantage and assure corporate engagement on green marketing as well as its social behavior in general). However, the researcher stated that Shukla & Gupta (2014) the companies have gained an advantage or benefit while incorporating environmental friendly operation in their system and identifies the segment of green consumers was exploring the opportunities of business with green marketing. The study revealed that consumers or companies prefer to industrial buyers and suppliers need to pressurize effects on minimizing the negative effects on the environment-friendly concerns Ing Wu & Ru Lin (2014).

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study prepared the research hypothesis and framed the study accordingly, which was authenticated by using a structured questionnaire for conducted a survey followed by structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. The study adopted green marketing practices on the basis of the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) as an independent variable and explore the influence of dependent variable competitive advantage in the same four marketing mix. The questionnaire based on a review of literature is mainly divided into three sections. The first section A discusses regarding the companies profile and general information from the company's operational department. Whereas, the second section B consists the statements of green marketing practices based on the following studies Jill Meredith Ginsberg and Paul N. Bloom (2004), Shwu-Ing Wu and Syuan-Ru Lin (2014), Kartik Mehta (2015) and the third section C related with competitive advantage as a tools for gaining more edge and make statements with Michael. E. Porters (1985), Mubeyyen Tepe Kucukoglu & R. Ibrahim Pinar (2015), Cassiano Moro Piekarski, Leila Mendes da Luz, Liadina Zocche & Antonia Carlos de Francisco (2013).

All the items in the questionnaire are in the form of Likert five-point scales. The questionnaire was designed after completing the pilot study among the FMCG companies, especially food & beverage sector in Delhi and NCR region. The convenience sampling as well as picks and drop a method was used for data collection from the companies. These statements were subsequently modified and as per the recommendation is given by the managers, items were deleted. Therefore the Cronbach's Alpha method was used to measure the reliability and validity of each individual statement which was presented greater than 0.7 with eigenvalues and cumulative explained values exceeding 0.5.

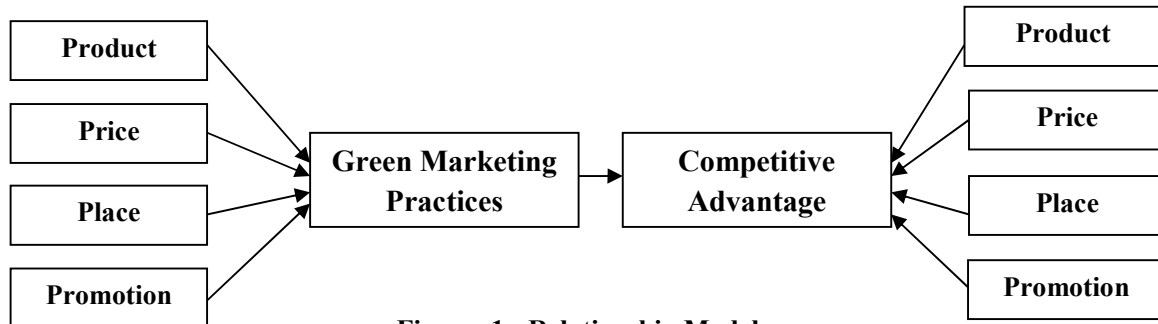


Figure: 1 - Relationship Model

**4. SAMPLING**

This study sample surveyed from the operational manager and senior level manager of 73 verified FMCG companies in Delhi and NCR region over a period of two months, thus samples size supported by Pujari (2006), Sitnikov, Vasilescu, Ogarca & Tudor (2015). We conducted personal approach as well as convenience methods for contacted the appropriate responses from the companies. According to Bentler and Chou (1987), the samples collected should be at least five times against the estimated measurement variables. Therefore the sample sized was acceptable in the present study.

**5. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY TESTING**

The Cronbach’s Alpha result shows that the individual statement value between 0.840 and 0.862 of all items to total coefficient correlations greater than 0.4 of each item. Thus, the overall good result shows the consistency of the structured questionnaire of the questionnaire as shown below table 1. However, the exploratory factor analysis identified the four latent construct of statements associated with green marketing practices and four latent constructs extracted with a competitive advantage. The eigenvalue of each factor was more than 1 and the factor loading of each individual item is more than 0.4. Moreover, the result shows that the relationship of any two perspectives was lower than the Cronbach’s Alpha estimation of any single viewpoint, showing that the discriminant validity was accomplished Gaski & Nevin (1985), Shwu-Ing-Wu & Syuan-Ru Lin (2014).

**Table 1 - Reliability and Validity Test**

Aspect and Items	Items-total Correlation Coefficient	Factor Loading	Cronbach’s Alpha
<b>Green Marketing Practices</b>			
<b>Green Product</b>			
Our company avoids producing waste matter, wastewater, and exhaust gas.	0.941	0.966	0.943
Our company uses the shortest distance between warehouse and customers.	0.782	0.964	
Our company believes to purchase safety certified materials.	0.941	0.880	
<b>Green Price</b>			
Our company creates awareness of green products.	0.569	0.724	

Aspect and Items	Items-total Correlation Coefficient	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Outdoor advertisement of the green product also being done by the company.	0.670	0.706	0.789
We use eco-labeling tags in green products.	0.538	0.545	
We provide more credit time to dealers for enhancing green practices.	0.616	0.439	
<b>Green Promotion</b>			
Our company uses a paperless/waterless printing process.	0.637	0.807	0.748
Our green products attract the consumer's credibility and stability.	0.615	0.711	
Our company uses multi-channel distribution for easy purchasing.	0.485	0.542	
<b>Green Place</b>			
Our company shows the features of the natural ingredient in the labelling of products.	0.543	0.760	0.808
We were positioning our products on green benefits.	0.652	0.692	
In our company transportation of finished products is more eco-friendly.	0.606	0.658	
In our company the general practice of channel members is eco-friendly.	0.547	0.646	
Our company uses multiple green sales channel initiatives effectively.	0.528	0.640	
Our company uses resource preservation and environmentally friendly strategies in all stages of the value chain.	0.538	0.571	
<b>Competitive Advantage</b>			
<b>Green Product</b>			
Company seeks to be unique in its product through green practices.	0.672	0.843	0.788
A low-cost base (labour, materials, facilities) and a way of sustainably cutting costs below those of other competitors.	0.636	0.779	
Recovery of company's end-of-life products and recycling.	0.561	0.769	
Are there any Awards / Recognition/ Benefits related to the green product?	0.523	0.713	
<b>Green Price</b>			
Positive word-of-mouth gains more advantage.	0.624	0.844	
Are there any Awards / Recognition/ Benefits related to green pricing?	0.689	0.810	

Aspect and Items	Items-total Correlation Coefficient	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Strong customer loyalty creates company benefits.	0.492	0.681	0.771
The distinctive green products have a premium price.	0.499	0.601	
<b>Green Promotion</b>			0.803
Company gains a green reputation and brand image to attract a new and larger client base.	0.728	0.809	
High customers satisfaction should be gain more advantage.	0.598	0.791	
The company having good environmental credentials provides a competitive edge.	0.574	0.726	
Are there any Awards / Recognition/ Benefits related to green promotion?	0.581	0.616	
<b>Green Place</b>			0.816
A company using low greenhouse gas release and low green energy consumption for transportation system from its competitors.	0.688	0.880	
Company decreases transport cost and a number of trips by saving fuel and warehouse space.	0.650	0.777	
Using a unique delivery route for reducing energy consumption should be beneficial for the company.	0.667	0.766	
The functioning of the company distribution system use environmental concern and gain more advantage,	0.555	0.615	

The present study likewise utilized AMOS 20 programming conduct confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a specific end goal to decide the effectiveness and construct validity of the estimation for FMCGs companies especially food & beverage sectors. The result reveals that in the below table 2 CMIN/Df is 1.570, Df 97, Goodness of fit indices (GFI) 0.815, Normal fit Indices (NFI) is 0.805, and the comparative fit indices (CFI) is 0.916, root mean square approximation (RMSEA) is 0.089 of all green marketing practices latent constructs. Similarly, competitive advantage models reveal that CMIN/Df is 1.153, Df is 71, GFI is 0.866, NFI is 0.808, CFI is 0.968 and RMSEA is 0.046, therefore all the model indicators met and came close to the antecedents standard Shwu-Ing-Wu & Syuan-Ru Lin (2014), Nie & Purvis (2000), Bentler (1990), Joreskog & Sorbom (1989). Moreover, all the factor loading that is related to the major constructs of the study variables which are measured greater than 0.40 and shows the significant effect, exhibiting the effectiveness and construct validity of each deliberate statement. Discriminant validity was likewise shown by the deliberate measurements and variables Shwu-Ing-Wu & Syuan-Ru Lin (2014).

**Table 2-The Fitness analysis of CFA full model**

	$\chi^2$	df	p-value	$\chi/df$	GFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
<b>GMP</b>	152.300	97	0.000	1.570	0.815	0.805	0.916	0.089
<b>CA</b>	81.849	71	0.178	1.153	0.866	0.808	0.968	0.046

## 6. RELATIONSHIP MODEL ANALYSIS

In the structural equation modeling measure the goodness of fit indices was recognized for the overall effect of the structural model of green marketing practices and competitive advantage to ensure the consistency with the following criteria of the good model (Hu & Bentler, 1999), is CMIN/Df should be less than 3 (Carmines & Maciver, 1981), the RMSEA value should be less than 0.05, and the GFI, AGFI, RFI, NFI, and CFI indicator should be more than 0.9 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988 and Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989a). The findings reveal that the importance of the general model was not near, or not met the perfect standard, subsequently, the exhibiting of the model is satisfactory and significant which is shown the table 3.

**Table 3 -The Fitness analysis of full model**

$\chi^2$	df	p-value	$\chi/df$	GFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
666.142	442	0.000	1.507	0.671	0.596	0.805	0.084

However, the path analysis diagram revealed the following; Green product and competitive advantage of the green product is not positively related ( $p = 0.549$ ), thus not supported H1a. Similarly, green product and competitive advantage of green price, green promotion, green place are not positively related ( $p = 0.396$ ,  $p = 0.419$ ,  $p = 0.909$ ), hence are not supported H1b, H1c, H1d. Therefore, all the hypotheses related with green price and competitive advantage of the green product, green price, green promotion, green place are not positively related ( $p = 0.598$ ,  $p = 0.720$ ,  $p = 0.431$ ,  $p = 0.224$ ), thereby are not supported H1e, H1f, H1g, H1h. Though, the green promotion and competitive advantage of green place are positively related ( $p = 0.023$ ), thus supported H1L. In addition, green promotion and competitive advantage of the green product, green price, green promotion are not positively related ( $p = 0.214$ ,  $p = 0.891$ ,  $p = 0.093$ ), thus, are not supported H1i, H1j, H1k. Moreover, the green place and competitive advantage of the green product, green price, green promotion, green place are not positively related ( $p = 0.159$ ,  $p = 0.468$ ,  $p = 0.833$ ,  $p = 0.346$ ), hence are not supported H1m, H1n, H1o, H1p. Therefore, the overall results reveal that green marketing practices had no positive influence on competitive advantage except green promotion which contributes to competitive advantage.

## 7. INFLUENCE EFFECT THROUGH STRUCTURE EQUATION MODELING OF GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

The structural equation modeling shows in figure 2 that the influence effect of independent and dependent after analyzing the results. The result reveals table 3 that there is no overall significant effect of green marketing practices on competitive advantage. However, the only single variable had the significant effect of green marketing practices on competitive advantage i.e., green promotion on the green place of competitive advantage.



Figure 2-Influence Effect of Relationship Model

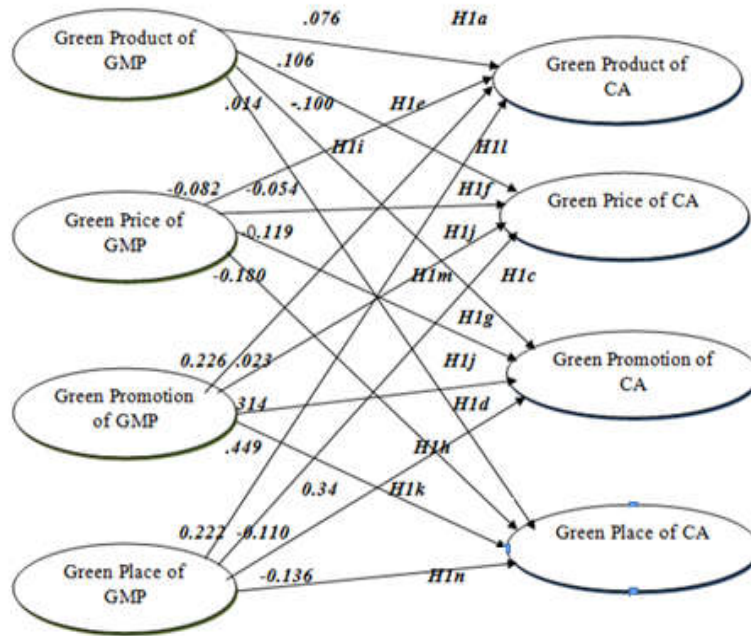


Table 4 - Impact of green market practices on competitive advantage

Path Direction	Standardized Regression Weights	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hypotheses Decision
G.Place_CA <-- GMP_G.Product	.014	.222	.114	.909	Not Supported
G.Promotion_CA <--- GMP_G.Product	-.100	.208	-.809	.419	Not Supported
G.Price_CA <--- GMP_G.Product	.106	.159	.848	.396	Not Supported
G.Product_CA <--- GMP_G.Product	.076	.226	.599	.549	Not Supported
G.Place_CA <--- GMP_G.Price	-.180	.367	-1.215	.224	Not Supported
G.Promotion_CA <--- GMP_G.Price	-.119	.343	-.788	.431	Not Supported
G.Price_CA <--- GMP_G.Price	-.054	.257	-.359	.720	Not Supported
G.Product_CA <--- GMP_G.Price	-.082	.374	-.528	.598	Not Supported
G.Place_CA <--- GMP_G.Promotion	.449	.383	2.269	.023	Supported
G.Promotion_CA <--- GMP_G.Promotion	.314	.332	1.677	.093	Not Supported
G.Price_CA <--- GMP_G.Promotion	.023	.221	.137	.891	Not Supported
G.Product_CA <--- GMP_G.Promotion	.226	.341	1.243	.214	Not Supported
G.Place_CA <--- GMP_G.Place	-.136	.228	-.943	.346	Not Supported
G.Promotion_CA <--- GMP_G.Place	.034	.234	.211	.833	Not Supported
G.Price_CA <--- GMP_G.Place	.110	.165	.726	.468	Not Supported
G.Product_CA <--- GMP_G.Place	-.222	.241	-1.408	.159	Not Supported

## 8. DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Green marketing practices are gradually increasing in the twenty-first century with the rapid pace of development. Many studies have been carried out to know the consumer response and their outlook towards green products, whereas some of the studies are sought to measure the effect on the implementation of green marketing practices in FMCG sector. The present study developed a relationship model between green marketing practices and competitive advantage to investigate the effectiveness and impact of FMCG companies. The finding reveals that the overall relationship between the independent and dependent variables are the insignificant effect on FMCG companies in enhancing their business. Consequently, the green promotions are only of green marketing practices are highly influential and have a positive effect on the green place (distribution) of competitive advantage. It shows that the company's green promotional activities lead to a competitive advantage in the green place, hence on that basis, the industry, especially in the food and beverage sector can formulate their marketing strategies.

## 9. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that to suggest that FMCGs companies need more green marketing practices in order to continue improvement in the performance of business which could be correlated with the findings of Shwu-Ing-Wu & Syuan-Ru Lin (2014), Chen (2006), Dangelico & Pujari (2010), and Chen 2010. The quality control and the CSR practices being adopted by the FMCG companies will enhance their productivity as well as performance, Courtright & Smudde (2009), Nai-Jen Chang and Cher-Min Fong (2010).

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