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Analysis of the implementation of green marketing as an effort to explore sustainable marketing in East Java

Abstract

This study was conducted in response to the increasing demand among companies in East Java to implement green marketing as a sustainable marketing strategy capable of addressing both environmental and market challenges. The urgency of this research stems from the need to develop a comprehensive understanding of the implementation processes and the key factors that determine the success of green marketing initiatives. Accordingly, the research problem focuses on examining how green marketing is implemented, as well as identifying its supporting and inhibiting factors within companies in East Java. A qualitative research design was employed, utilizing in-depth interviews, documentation analysis, and direct observation. The findings indicate that companies have adopted environmentally friendly products, sustainable production processes, and non-polluting packaging. The primary factors contributing to the success of these initiatives include strong managerial commitment and effective internal communication, while the main obstacles consist of limited resources and internal resistance. In conclusion, the implementation of green marketing in East Java contributes significantly to advancing corporate sustainability. However, its optimal execution requires enhanced organizational capacity and stronger collaboration among stakeholders.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Implementation, Marketing, Sustainability

Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilakukan sebagai respons terhadap meningkatnya permintaan di antara perusahaan-perusahaan di Jawa Timur untuk menerapkan pemasaran hijau sebagai strategi pemasaran berkelanjutan yang mampu mengatasi tantangan lingkungan dan pasar. Urgensi penelitian ini berasal dari kebutuhan untuk mengembangkan pemahaman yang komprehensif tentang proses implementasi dan faktor-faktor utama yang menentukan keberhasilan inisiatif pemasaran hijau. Dengan demikian, perumusan masalah penelitian berfokus pada pemeriksaan bagaimana pemasaran hijau diimplementasikan, serta mengidentifikasi faktor pendukung dan penghambatnya dalam perusahaan-perusahaan di Jawa Timur. Desain penelitian kualitatif digunakan, dengan memanfaatkan wawancara mendalam, analisis dokumentasi, dan observasi langsung. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa perusahaan telah mengadopsi produk ramah lingkungan, proses produksi berkelanjutan, dan kemasan yang tidak mencemari. Faktor utama yang berkontribusi pada keberhasilan inisiatif ini mencakup komitmen manajerial yang kuat dan komunikasi internal yang efektif, sedangkan hambatan utamanya terdiri dari sumber daya yang terbatas dan resistensi internal. Sebagai kesimpulan, implementasi pemasaran hijau di Jawa Timur berkontribusi secara signifikan dalam memajukan keberlanjutan perusahaan. Namun, pelaksanaannya secara optimal memerlukan peningkatan kapasitas organisasi dan kolaborasi yang lebih kuat di antara para pemangku kepentingan.

Kata Kunci: Green Marketing, Implementation, Marketing, Sustainability

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1. Introduction

The increasing global awareness of environmental issues has triggered a significant paradigm shift in business practices, particularly in the domain of marketing (Voulvoulis et al., 2022). Green marketing, as a strategic component of sustainable marketing, has become increasingly relevant for companies seeking to respond to market demands that prioritize environmentally responsible products and services. According to Chung (2020b), green marketing constitutes a marketing approach that not only emphasizes economic profitability but also integrates consideration of the ecological and social impacts arising from business activities. In the Indonesian context, including the East Java region, the emphasis on developing a green economy continues to intensify in line with government initiatives that promote sustainable and environmentally conscious development, as articulated in the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) and various national policy frameworks.

However, the implementation of green marketing in practice frequently encounters a range of complex challenges arising from both internal organizational factors and external market and regulatory dynamics. The implementation theory proposed by Volberda et al. (2021) underscores that the effectiveness of executing a policy or strategy is fundamentally determined by the quality of the implementation process, which involves multiple actors and is shaped by a dynamic environmental context. In the realm of green marketing, the implementation dimension becomes particularly critical, as it demands strategic transformation, adjustments in organizational culture, and effective communication capable of influencing consumer and stakeholder behavior. Previous studies, including those by Nekomahmud and Fekete-Farkas (2020), indicate that barriers to green marketing implementation are frequently associated with insufficient managerial commitment, limited organizational resources, and inadequate consumer understanding of green products.

In East Java, as one of the provinces characterized by a relatively high level of industrial and commercial activity, the advancement of sustainable marketing through green marketing holds substantial potential to support economic growth while ensuring environmental preservation. Nevertheless, the existing understanding of how companies in East Java operationalize green marketing strategies effectively remains limited (Santoso et al., 2022). Therefore, this research seeks to conduct an in-depth examination of the processes and key factors that influence the implementation of green marketing in the region, thereby providing a comprehensive depiction of the opportunities and challenges encountered.

The urgency of this research is highly significant given the increasing regulatory pressures and the rising expectations of environmentally conscious consumers, both of which can substantially influence corporate competitiveness. Furthermore, the transition toward sustainable marketing constitutes a strategic initiative that not only contributes to environmental preservation but also stimulates product innovation and strengthens corporate reputation in the public sphere. By comprehensively understanding the green marketing implementation process, companies can more effectively optimize their resources and communication strategies to achieve sustainability objectives while simultaneously enhancing overall business performance.

Interestingly, this study focuses on integrating implementation theory with green marketing within the East Java context, an area that has received relatively limited scholarly attention to date. The qualitative approach employed, through in-depth

interviews, enables the exploration of practical experiences and the underlying meanings perceived by business actors regarding the implementation of green marketing. This approach is expected to generate empirical insights that can serve as valuable references for both academics and practitioners in formulating sustainable marketing strategies in Indonesia. The formulation of the research problems is as follows: 1) How is the process of implementing green marketing undertaken by companies in East Java to support sustainable marketing? 2) What factors influence both the success and the challenges encountered in the implementation of green marketing strategies among companies in East Java?

2. Literature review

2.1 Implementation theory

Implementation theory constitutes one of the essential conceptual frameworks for understanding the processes involved in executing policies, programs, or strategies across various domains, including marketing and organizational management (Weiser et al., 2020). Broadly, this theory examines how a policy or strategy formulated at the macro level can be operationalized and executed effectively at the micro or field level. Hill and Hupe (2021), as key contributors to the development of implementation theory, describe implementation as a complex and dynamic process characterized by interactions among multiple actors, institutional arrangements, and evolving environmental conditions. They argue that the success of implementation is strongly influenced by the degree of alignment between policy design and the contextual realities of execution, as well as the coordination capacity among stakeholders.

Furthermore, Mugambwa et al. (2020) provide a significant contribution to implementation theory by developing a model that integrates two central dimensions: policy ambiguity and the level of conflict among stakeholders. This model differentiates between top-down and bottom-up implementation and highlights that the effectiveness of implementation is shaped by the clarity or ambiguity of the policy, as well as the presence of competing interests among the actors involved. According to these scholars, when policies are characterized by high ambiguity and elevated levels of conflict, the implementation process tends to become experimental and adaptive, thereby necessitating a flexible and collaborative approach.

Key indicators within implementation theory as proposed by Meter and Horn (1975) provide a comprehensive analytical foundation for examining the processes of strategy execution. These scholars identify three principal determinants of implementation effectiveness: (1) the communication process, (2) the capability problem, and (3) dispositional conflicts. Effective communication among implementing actors is essential to ensure coordination, alignment, and synchronization of actions (Gambo et al., 2025). The characteristics of implementers encompass their competence, attitudes, and motivation, all of which substantially influence the quality of execution. This theoretical perspective is further strengthened by the work of Rizza and Lucciarini (2021), who highlight the role of “street-level bureaucrats” as frontline policy implementers possessing substantial discretionary authority. Their behaviors, decisions, and interactions significantly shape the ultimate outcomes of the implementation process.

This underscores the importance of understanding the organizational micro-context and the relational dynamics among individuals involved in the execution of strategies.

Implementation theory functions as a conceptual foundation for analyzing how green marketing strategies formulated by companies are translated into practical actions in the field. Through this theoretical lens, the present study identifies internal and external factors that influence the execution of green marketing, including the constraints encountered and the successes achieved. The theory offers a systematic analytical framework that facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms, dynamics, and complexities underlying the implementation process. Consequently, the findings of this research are expected not only to describe surface-level phenomena but also to uncover the fundamental issues that shape the application of sustainable marketing strategies. Thus, implementation theory serves as a highly relevant and instrumental analytical tool in strengthening the validity and scientific contribution of this research.

2.2 Green marketing

Green marketing is a marketing concept that integrates environmental sustainability values into an organization's strategic and operational marketing activities. According to [Chung \(2020b\)](#), green marketing refers to marketing efforts directed toward products and services that not only fulfill consumer needs but also minimize adverse environmental impacts. Chung further emphasizes that green marketing requires a comprehensive transformation across all marketing domains, including product development, production processes, distribution systems, and communication with consumers. This concept positions social and environmental responsibility as a central element of marketing strategy, rather than merely an additional component or promotional instrument.

The key indicators of green marketing proposed by [Polonsky \(1994\)](#) have become a foundational reference within the green marketing literature. Polonsky identifies several critical dimensions that constitute green marketing, including environmentally friendly products, sustainable production processes, non-polluting packaging, transparent and educational marketing communication, and after-sales services that support environmental preservation. Environmentally friendly products are required to meet sustainability standards through the use of renewable or recyclable materials. Sustainable production processes emphasize energy efficiency and waste reduction as essential components of environmentally responsible operations. Packaging must be biodegradable and environmentally safe to prevent long-term ecological harm. Marketing communication should be transparent and avoid practices of greenwashing, ensuring that consumers receive accurate, credible, and trustworthy information. Additionally, after-sales services play an important role in reinforcing the sustainable life cycle of products by encouraging responsible use, maintenance, and disposal.

This perspective is further reinforced by [Polonsky \(1994\)](#), who argues that green marketing is not merely a marketing strategy but a comprehensive business paradigm that compels organizations to innovate and transform their organizational culture. Polonsky emphasizes that the effectiveness of green marketing is strongly influenced by managerial commitment and the active involvement of all stakeholders in advancing environmental objectives. In a more recent study, [Adanma and Ogunbiyi \(2024\)](#) highlight the necessity

of balancing economic and environmental considerations within green marketing practices, underscoring that such practices must not only deliver added value to consumers but also contribute to the preservation of ecosystem sustainability.

In the context of this study, green marketing serves as the central focus for examining how companies integrate sustainability principles into their marketing strategies, particularly within the East Java region. By employing indicators proposed by leading scholars, this research is able to analyze various dimensions of green marketing implementation, ranging from product innovation and production practices to the communication strategies used in conveying environmental values. This analytical approach facilitates a holistic understanding of both the extent and quality of green marketing practices adopted by business actors. Consequently, green marketing functions not only as the object of investigation but also as a conceptual framework that enables the identification of opportunities, challenges, and impacts associated with sustainable marketing in practical settings. The utility of this theoretical perspective lies in its capacity to provide a robust analytical foundation for evaluating the effectiveness of green marketing strategies and their contribution to the attainment of sustainable marketing objectives.

3. Method

3.1 Types and source of data

The research method employed in this study is a qualitative approach, which emphasizes an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of green marketing implementation as a sustainable marketing initiative in East Java. The qualitative approach is selected because it enables the researcher to explore, in a detailed and contextual manner, the processes, experiences, and perceptions of business actors in applying green marketing strategies. This method positions research participants as primary sources of data with the objective of generating rich, nuanced, and complex information, thereby allowing the study to produce a comprehensive and profound depiction of the phenomenon under investigation (Wasiaturrahma et al., 2024).

In the data collection process, this study employs three primary techniques, namely in-depth interviews, documentation, and observation (Putra, 2023). In-depth interviews are conducted to comprehensively explore information from informants who possess direct experience and relevant knowledge regarding the implementation of green marketing. This technique enables the researcher to obtain open, flexible, and contextually rich qualitative data that align with the dynamics of the interaction (Putra et al., 2024). Documentation is utilized to complement interview findings by examining various related materials, such as company reports, promotional media, and internal policies that support green marketing initiatives. Meanwhile, observation is carried out to directly examine the green marketing practices implemented in the field, thereby providing the researcher with a realistic depiction of actual conditions and enhancing the validity of the data. Further information regarding the research informants is presented as follows:

Table 1. Research Informant

No	Informant Name	Position
1	NA	Finance Director of PT Bumi
2	JS	Branch Manager PT Nzo
3	EI	Production Director of PT Djawir
4	SE	Head of the Transport Unit of PT Petro Karya Niaga
5	CDW	Staff PT Petro Karya Niaga
6	FHR	Staff PT Petro Karya Niaga
7	CH	Indosat Operational Manager
8	DP	Managing Director of PT TAM

The selection of informants in this study employs a purposive sampling technique, namely the intentional selection of participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The informants consist of business actors, marketing managers, and individuals directly involved in the planning and implementation of green marketing strategies within companies operating in East Java. This purposive sampling approach is considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to obtain high-quality and relevant data from sources who possess the necessary competencies and deep insights into the phenomenon under investigation.

3.2 Data analysis methods

The data analysis in this study employs source triangulation (Papavasileiou & Dimou, 2025), which refers to the process of examining and verifying data by utilizing multiple, diverse sources of information. This technique is intended to strengthen the credibility and validity of the research findings by comparing and integrating data obtained through interviews, documentation, and observations. Through the application of source triangulation, the researcher is able to identify consistencies, discrepancies, and the relative strength of the data, thereby producing a more comprehensive and scientifically reliable analysis. This approach also minimizes subjective bias and ensures that the interpretation of data is grounded in robust and consistent evidence.

4. Results

4.1 Interpretation of implementation theory

Informant NA, as the Financial Director of PT Bumi, specifically discussed the communication process aspects in the implementation of green marketing in his company. According to informant NA:

“Effective communication serves as a fundamental pillar in ensuring that green marketing strategies are implemented consistently across all levels of the organization. The company has undertaken various efforts to establish systematic communication channels, including official announcements, cross-departmental coordination meetings, and structured training sessions designed to convey the organization’s sustainability vision and objectives in a coherent manner. Nonetheless, several challenges persist, particularly in bridging communication

gaps between management and operational staff who possess differing educational backgrounds and levels of understanding.” (Interview conducted on February 24, 2025)

The informant emphasized that differences in terminology and variations in the level of technical understanding often hinder the comprehensive delivery of messages; therefore, the company needs to strengthen its communication mechanisms to ensure that information related to green marketing strategies can be properly received and effectively internalized by all employees. Meanwhile, informant JS, who serves as the Branch Manager of PT Nzo, provided an in-depth explanation regarding the indicators of organizational capability issues in the context of implementing green marketing. Informant JS further explained that:

“Adequate resources, both in terms of experts and supporting technology, constitute essential prerequisites for the effective implementation of green marketing strategies. PT Nzo faces limitations related to the availability of personnel with specialized competencies in environmentally friendly technology as well as the insufficiency of supporting facilities that comply with sustainability standards.” (Interview conducted on February 17, 2025)

Informant JS added that the efforts of internal training and recruitment of professional staff are strategic steps for the company to overcome those challenges, while also enhancing the organization’s capacity to adapt to the market’s increasing concern for environmental aspects. From a different perspective, informant EI, as the Production Director of PT Djawir, described the experiences and challenges faced regarding dispositional conflicts within the organization. Informant EI highlighted that:

“Differences in motivation and priority orientation among various work units influence the implementation of green marketing. The production unit, which primarily focuses on operational efficiency and cost reduction, at times encounters tension with the marketing team that places greater emphasis on environmental sustainability values. Such conflict emerges from divergent perceptions regarding the urgency and benefits of adopting green marketing strategies.” (Interview conducted on February 17, 2025)

The informant emphasized that to address this issue, the company actively adopts collaborative approaches and conducts intensive dialogue to align shared objectives, as well as to cultivate an organizational culture that upholds sustainability as a core value. Lastly, informant SE, who serves as the Head of the Transportation Unit at PT Petro Karya Niaga, provided an overview of the capability-related issues from the perspective of the company’s operational transportation activities. Informant SE stated that:

“The informant explained that the implementation of green marketing requires not only the right marketing strategy but also adequate technical readiness and sufficient resources within the company’s operational activities. In the context of goods transportation and distribution, the company faces significant challenges related to the use of environmentally friendly fleets, such as vehicles with low emissions and higher fuel efficiency.” (Interview conducted on April 18, 2025)

Budget and investment limitations constitute the primary obstacles to upgrading fleet technology, compelling the company to optimize the use of existing resources while simultaneously planning for long-term investments. This condition reinforces the importance of organizational capability in supporting the implementation of green marketing at the operational level. Informant JS, the Branch Manager of PT Nzo,

provided a detailed explanation regarding the capability challenges encountered by the company in implementing green marketing strategies. The informant stated that:

“The main obstacle arises from the limited human resources possessing specialized competencies in environmentally friendly technologies and practices. Although the company demonstrates a strong intention to adopt green marketing, the absence of experts who understand the technical aspects of sustainability becomes a significant barrier to effective strategy implementation. In addition, the inadequacy of supporting facilities such as environmentally compliant production equipment and reliable environmental monitoring systems further hinders the progress of green marketing implementation.” (Interview conducted on April 18, 2025)

Informant JS added that the company has undertaken efforts to internally train and develop its human resources, as well as to establish partnerships with external institutions to enhance capabilities in the field of green marketing. However, he acknowledged that this capacity-building process requires considerable time and substantial investment, which continues to pose a challenge for the company. Meanwhile, informant SE, who serves as the Head of the Transportation Unit at PT Petro Karya Niaga, also elaborated on the capability-related issues from an operational perspective. Informant SE stated that: *“In conducting distribution activities, the implementation of green marketing requires the availability of an environmentally friendly fleet, such as vehicles with low emissions and optimal fuel efficiency. The company faces significant investment constraints in replacing or upgrading its fleet to meet environmental standards. As a result, the company focuses on optimizing the use of existing vehicles through intensive maintenance and efficient route management to reduce environmental impact.”* (Interview conducted on April 18, 2025)

The SE informant emphasizes that enhancing operational capabilities that support green marketing requires synergy between financial and operational management so that sustainability investments can be realized sustainably. In the context of dispositional conflict, the EI informant, as the Production Director of PT Djawir, stated:

“Experiences related to differences in attitudes and priorities among work units within the organization have an impact on the implementation process of green marketing. Within the company, tension arises between the production division, which focuses on meeting efficiency targets and reducing operational costs, and the marketing team, which demands the application of stricter sustainability standards. This conflict emerges due to differing perceptions of the urgency and benefits of green marketing strategies, where the production unit considers several sustainability measures as an additional burden that may potentially reduce productivity.” (Interview conducted on April 18, 2025)

To address this issue, the EI informant explained that the company adopts a collaborative approach that includes open dialogue, the dissemination of sustainability values, and the provision of incentives for work units that successfully implement green marketing practices. This approach is considered essential for aligning organizational vision and strengthening the motivation of all stakeholders. Likewise, informant NA, serving as the Finance Director of PT Bumi, provided insights regarding dispositional conflicts that arise from differing interests in resource allocation for green marketing programs. Informant NA explained that:

“Some parties within the company view investments in environmentally friendly technology as a financial burden that does not yield immediate returns, while others regard such investments as a strategic necessity for long-term competitiveness.”

These differing perspectives often result in debates during the decision-making process and consequently influence the level of organizational commitment to the implementation of green marketing programs.” (Interview conducted on April 27, 2025)

Companies must strive to build awareness through data and analysis that show the potential long-term benefits of sustainable marketing, as well as integrate sustainability goals into the company's policies comprehensively. The informant EI, as the Production Director of PT Djawir, detailed the dynamics of dispositional conflicts that arise in the process of implementing green marketing in his company. The informant explained that:

“There are fundamental differences in attitudes and motivations among the divisions involved. The production division tends to prioritize cost efficiency and the achievement of production targets, which at times contradicts the need to apply more environmentally friendly production procedures. This situation generates tensions that are not only technical but also psychological, as some staff perceive that the changes required by green marketing increase their workload and disrupt established work routines.” (Interview conducted on March 27, 2025)

To address this conflict, the company has initiated internal socialization and training programs that emphasize the importance of sustainability as a shared organizational value, while also adopting a collaborative approach that engages all relevant units so that the company's strategic objectives can be collectively aligned. Meanwhile, informant NA, serving as the Finance Director of PT Bumi, highlighted dispositional conflict from the perspective of resource allocation and strategic prioritization. Informant NA stated that:

“There is a persistent disagreement between the finance unit and the operational unit regarding the allocation of funds for green marketing initiatives. Certain parties within the organization perceive investments in green technology and sustainability programs as a financial burden that does not yield immediate profit returns. In contrast, other units regard such investments as a strategic necessity that will strengthen the company's reputation and create new market opportunities in the long term. This divergence in perspectives often hampers the smooth implementation of green marketing initiatives, as it influences the level of commitment and support provided by various stakeholders.” (Interview conducted on February 17, 2025)

To reduce these tensions, the company seeks to strengthen data-driven communication and formulate a business plan that integrates sustainability dimensions with financial performance indicators, enabling all units to clearly perceive the balanced added value generated through green marketing implementation. Based on interviews with key informants representing the three main actors in the implementation framework of [Van Meter & Van Horn \(1975\)](#), the first crucial element is the aspect of internal communication. The presence of structured, systematic, and effective communication channels such as those highlighted by informants NA and JS is essential to ensure that the vision, objectives, and procedural guidelines of green marketing are conveyed comprehensively across all organizational levels. Nevertheless, challenges persist, particularly the gaps in understanding between management and operational personnel, as well as variations in technical expertise among implementing actors. These issues constitute a significant obstacle, indicating the need for more inclusive, dialogic, and adaptive communication mechanisms to support the successful implementation of green marketing strategies.

Second, organizational capability—particularly in the dimensions of human resources and technological readiness—emerges as a dominant constraint, as emphasized by informants JS and SE. The scarcity of personnel with specialized expertise in environmentally friendly technologies, coupled with the inadequate availability of supporting facilities, significantly hampers the effectiveness of green marketing implementation. The company's efforts to strengthen capacity through internal training, targeted technological investments, and the optimization of existing operational resources illustrate that organizational capability functions as a critical determinant in addressing both technical and operational barriers.

Third, dispositional conflict arising from differences in attitudes, motivations, and strategic priorities among work units also exerts a significant influence on the implementation process. As conveyed by informants EI and NA, the contrasting emphasis between cost efficiency and the pursuit of production targets on one side, and the adoption of sustainability-oriented practices on the other, generates internal tensions. These divergences affect decision-making processes and weaken organizational commitment toward the execution of green marketing programs. To address these issues, the company employs collaborative approaches, institutionalizes the socialization of sustainability values, and promotes data-driven communication as key strategies to reduce conflict and foster alignment toward shared organizational objectives.

Overall, the three main indicators in the implementation theory interact dynamically and collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence both the success and the constraints in implementing green marketing within companies in East Java. A profound understanding of communication processes, organizational capability, and dispositional conflict management serves as an essential foundation that companies can utilize as a strategic reference to enhance and optimize their sustainable marketing initiatives.

4.2 *Interepretation of green marketing*

CDW, an informant and staff member of PT Petro Karya Niaga, specifically discussed the aspects of environmentally friendly products in the context of green marketing in his company. Informant CDW explained that:

“The company places significant emphasis on the selection of raw materials by ensuring that the materials used are recyclable and have minimal environmental impact. Every product produced is required to comply with environmentally friendly standards in order to remain competitive in a market that is increasingly attentive to sustainability.” (Interview conducted on February 24, 2025)

The company continually undertakes innovation to ensure that its products are not only of high quality but also capable of reducing ecological footprints throughout their entire life cycle. Meanwhile, CH, the informant who serves as the Operations Manager of Indosat, provided a detailed explanation regarding the indicators of sustainable production processes. Informant CH stated that:

“In Indosat, energy efficiency practices constitute an integral component of the company's production and operational processes. The implementation of structured electronic-waste management, along with efforts to reduce the use of energy resources, reflects the company's strong commitment to environmental sustainability.” (Interview conducted on February 24, 2025)

Informant CH also added that regular environmental audits are carried out to ensure that all production processes comply with established sustainability standards and to serve as a basis for systematic evaluation and continuous improvement. Meanwhile, informant DP, serving as the Executive Director of PT TAM, provided a comprehensive explanation regarding the aspect of non-polluting packaging. Informant DP stated that:

“The company places considerable emphasis on the selection of packaging materials by striving to replace conventional plastics with biodegradable and environmentally friendly alternatives. The adoption of such packaging is carried out not only to comply with increasingly stringent regulatory requirements but also to respond to consumer demands that are becoming more critical of environmental impacts.” (Interview conducted on February 24, 2025)

The informant DP emphasized that the use of environmentally friendly packaging also reinforces the company’s image as an industry pioneer in sustainability-oriented innovation. Furthermore, informant FHR, who serves as a staff member at PT Petro Karya Niaga, provided an explanation regarding the eco-friendly product aspect in the context of the company’s green marketing practices. Informant FHR stated that:

“The company consistently implements a policy of utilizing raw materials derived from sustainable and naturally biodegradable sources. In addition to complying with environmental regulatory standards, the company actively engages in research and product development initiatives aimed at reducing negative impacts on the ecosystem.” (Interview conducted on February 24, 2025)

The informant FHR added that educating consumers about the benefits of environmentally friendly products also constitutes an essential component of the company’s marketing strategy. Furthermore, informant CH, serving as the Operational Manager of Indosat, elaborated on the discussion regarding sustainable production processes. Informant CH stated that:

“The company implements a range of initiatives aimed at optimizing energy consumption and minimizing waste throughout its production processes. Periodic environmental audits are conducted to enable the company to monitor compliance and continuously improve the effectiveness of its environmentally friendly production practices.” (Interview conducted on March 27, 2025)

The importance of the involvement of all work units in maintaining sustainability standards as well as conducting periodic training to increase awareness and competencies of employees in environmental aspects. The informant DP, as the Managing Director of PT TAM, explained:

“The informant explained comprehensively the non-polluting packaging aspect in the implementation of green marketing within the company. The company actively innovates in selecting more environmentally friendly packaging materials by replacing the use of conventional plastics with biodegradable and naturally degradable alternatives.” (Interview conducted on April 27, 2025)

The informant emphasized that this shift is undertaken not solely to comply with increasingly stringent regulatory requirements, but also as a response to the rising consumer awareness regarding the environmental impacts of product packaging. Furthermore, informant DP stated that the adoption of green packaging is also utilized as an effective marketing communication instrument to reinforce the company’s image as an industry pioneer in sustainability-oriented practices.

Based on interviews with informants CDW and FHR from PT Petro Karya Niaga, CH from Indosat, and DP from PT TAM, the implementation of green marketing across

companies demonstrates the integration of three critical components as formulated by Polonsky (1994). First, the environmentally friendly product aspect receives substantial emphasis, in which companies endeavor to utilize recyclable raw materials that comply with sustainability standards while simultaneously innovating their products to minimize environmental impact. Second, sustainable production processes are carried out through initiatives such as energy efficiency programs, systematic waste management, and periodic environmental audits to ensure alignment with green operational standards. Third, the use of non-polluting packaging has become a strategic priority, with companies substituting conventional plastic materials with biodegradable alternatives and continuously evaluating their packaging supply chains to reduce waste generation and carbon emissions. These three components are implemented not only to fulfill regulatory requirements but also as part of a strategic marketing approach to enhance corporate reputation and meet the expectations of consumers who are increasingly aware of sustainability issues. The insights derived from these interviews indicate that green marketing has evolved into an integral component of a comprehensive and future-oriented business strategy.

5. Discussion

5.1 Implementation of green marketing by companies in east java supports sustainability

The discussion of green marketing implementation among companies in East Java in advancing sustainability highlights that this strategy is not merely a promotional activity, but constitutes an integral component of comprehensive business transformation that places environmental responsibility at the core of corporate operations. Findings from the interviews indicate that companies in East Java demonstrate a clear commitment to adopting green marketing practices through product adjustments, environmentally responsible production processes, and the use of sustainable packaging. This commitment is reflected in efforts to provide environmentally friendly products, improve production efficiency in line with sustainability principles, and replace conventional packaging with materials that minimize ecological harm. These practices align with the conceptual framework of green marketing introduced by Polonsky (1994), which underscores the necessity of integrating environmental considerations holistically into all marketing activities. In the Indonesian context, Generation Z tends to be more pragmatic than earlier generations and often expresses uncertainty regarding long-term employment commitments, whether in permanent or temporary positions (Gandasari, 2024). Consequently, companies must adopt strategic and adaptive measures in managing this generational group. One factor that has been shown to strengthen employee loyalty is the implementation of transformational leadership, a style capable of enhancing trust, loyalty, and respectful behavior among employees toward their leaders (Astuti & Heryadi, 2023). Therefore, organizations must understand the unique needs and preferences of Generation Z in order to create a supportive and productive work environment that fosters retention, engagement, and sustained performance.

However, the implementation of green marketing in East Java also illustrates the inherent complexities and challenges associated with executing sustainability-oriented strategies. As emphasized in the interviews, effective internal communication constitutes

a critical foundation for aligning organizational vision and green marketing initiatives across all levels of the company, in accordance with the model proposed by [Van Meter and Van Horn \(1975\)](#). The disparities in understanding between managerial and operational levels identified in this study indicate that the effectiveness of green marketing implementation depends not only on well-formulated strategic plans, but also on the organization's capacity to minimize perceptual gaps and build strong internal synergy ([Jenifer et al., 2025](#); [Vehbi et al., 2025](#)).

Previous research has demonstrated an ongoing debate concerning the extent to which green marketing can genuinely contribute to sustainability. Some scholars, such as [Salirrosas and Eusebio \(2022\)](#), contend that well-executed green marketing serves as a strategic instrument capable of influencing consumer behavior and reducing environmental impact, thereby supporting broader sustainable development goals. Conversely, critics highlight the persistent risk of greenwashing, in which companies claim to adopt environmentally responsible practices without substantial implementation, ultimately generating skepticism among consumers and the public. In the context of East Java, the interview findings indicate that companies generally strive to avoid greenwashing by enhancing transparency, strengthening product innovation, and conducting regular sustainability audits. These efforts collectively reinforce the credibility as well as the effectiveness of their green marketing strategies.

Furthermore, the factor of organizational capability—or the capability problem—also becomes a critical point of discussion in supporting the successful implementation of sustainable green marketing. Limitations in competent human resources and the availability of adequate green technology facilities constitute substantial challenges that must be addressed. The company's efforts to enhance its capabilities through employee training and technology investment, as conveyed by informants JS and SE, illustrate the dynamics of organizational adaptation to the increasingly complex and evolving sustainability demands. This condition aligns with previous research, which underscores that strengthening internal capacity is a fundamental prerequisite for the effective implementation of green marketing ([Roh et al., 2022](#)).

In terms of environmentally friendly packaging, companies in East Java are also demonstrating notable innovations by transitioning to biodegradable and eco-friendly packaging materials. This initiative not only complies with increasingly stringent environmental regulations but also aligns with the preferences of consumers who are becoming more environmentally conscious. Such efforts reinforce the perspective of [Shaukat et al. \(2023\)](#), who argue that green marketing represents a business paradigm that requires continuous sustainable innovation and strong managerial commitment.

Overall, the implementation of green marketing by companies in East Java can be interpreted as a comprehensive strategic effort to support sustainability. Despite encountering various challenges, the companies studied demonstrate consistent commitment and innovation, reinforced through effective internal communication, organizational capacity strengthening, and transparency in the execution of green marketing practices. Thus, the findings of this research offer an empirical contribution that affirms the view that green marketing is not merely a marketing trend, but a fundamental pillar in developing sustainable and socially responsible businesses in the modern era.

5.2 *Success factors and barrier to the implementation of green marketing strategies*

The discussion regarding the success factors and obstacles in the implementation of green marketing strategies illustrates the multifaceted challenges encountered by companies in integrating sustainability principles into their marketing activities. Based on interview findings, it is evident that the effectiveness of green marketing implementation is shaped by a set of interconnected internal and external factors. These factors not only influence the degree of success achieved but also present strategic and operational challenges that companies must address to ensure that green marketing initiatives are both effective and sustainable.

One of the key success factors identified is the commitment of top management in supporting and allocating adequate resources for the implementation of green marketing. This commitment is reflected not only through budget provision, but also through the establishment of internal policies and the encouragement of innovation in environmentally friendly products and processes. Informants from various companies emphasize that management support is essential for driving the implementation process, which aligns with the findings of Gelderman et al. (2021) stating that leadership and strategic commitment constitute fundamental determinants of successful green marketing. Furthermore, the active involvement of all work units, accompanied by effective cross-departmental coordination, serves as an important element in ensuring that the sustainability vision is consistently translated into concrete actions across all operational levels (Akram et al., 2024).

However, the implementation of green marketing is not free from complex and multidimensional obstacles. One of the most significant challenges lies in resource limitations, particularly in terms of expertise, green technology availability, and adequate budgeting for long-term sustainability investments. Informants indicate that these constraints often restrict the company's capacity to innovate and to undertake comprehensive changes within production processes. These findings are consistent with prior research, which highlights that internal capability issues remain a dominant barrier in the effective execution of sustainable marketing strategies (Rozak et al., 2021).

In addition, differences in perception and resistance from various parties within the organization present an equally significant obstacle. The dispositional conflicts described by the informants reveal that the divergence between production units—which emphasize cost efficiency and marketing units which prioritize sustainability values can hinder decision-making and impede the implementation of green marketing strategies. This finding aligns with the argument of Ansari et al. (2021), who emphasize that the attitudes and behaviors of field implementers play a decisive role in determining the outcomes of policy or strategy execution. Therefore, managing these conflicts through open communication, structured socialization of sustainability values, and the provision of appropriate incentives becomes an essential strategy for reducing resistance and fostering collective organizational commitment.

From an external perspective, market-related challenges also constitute obstacles that cannot be overlooked. Although consumer awareness of environmentally friendly products has continued to rise, the relatively higher prices of green marketing products compared to conventional alternatives often hinder broader market penetration. Companies thus face a strategic dilemma between maintaining sustainability standards and ensuring competitive pricing. The debate regarding the effectiveness of green

marketing in influencing consumer behavior remains ongoing among scholars. Several studies, such as [Kiyak & Grigoliene \(2023\)](#), acknowledge that green marketing can encourage behavioral change; however, critics argue that consumers frequently base purchasing decisions on price and convenience. Consequently, companies need to integrate more effective educational efforts and communication strategies to strengthen consumer understanding and increase acceptance of sustainable products.

The success of implementing green marketing is largely determined by the company's ability to manage internal resources effectively, establish strong coordination and commitment among all stakeholders, and address emerging forms of resistance. The existing obstacles—both internal, such as capability limitations and dispositional conflicts, and external, such as market challenges and consumer perceptions—necessitate adaptive and innovative strategies to ensure that green marketing can be executed effectively and sustainably. The findings of this research underscore that developing a green marketing strategy is not merely a matter of adopting sustainability principles, but a complex organizational process that demands synergy, clear communication, and strong commitment from all stakeholders involved.

6. Conclusion

This research demonstrates that the implementation of green marketing by companies in East Java has become an essential component in supporting both business and environmental sustainability. The companies involved have adopted marketing practices through the development of environmentally friendly products, the application of sustainable production processes, and the utilization of non-polluting packaging. Management commitment, effective internal communication, and strengthened organizational capabilities emerge as key determinants of the success of these green marketing strategies. Although various challenges remain such as resource constraints and internal resistance companies continue to pursue innovation and foster cross-departmental collaboration to optimize the implementation of authentic and sustainable green marketing. Nevertheless, this study has certain limitations. The sample is restricted to several companies within the East Java region, which confines the extent to which the findings can be generalized. Moreover, the qualitative approach employed emphasizes the internal perspectives of companies, thereby limiting a comprehensive exploration of consumer viewpoints or insights from other external stakeholder.

7. Theoretical and practical implications

The findings of this study offer substantial contributions to the development of green marketing and sustainability management theory by reaffirming that green marketing is not merely a promotional activity but a strategic organizational transformation that requires top management commitment, cross-departmental coordination, and the strengthening of internal capabilities. The results reinforce [Luo et al. \(2025\)](#) conceptualization of green marketing as a holistic integration of environmental considerations into all marketing activities, while also enriching the literature on the role of organizational capability, internal communication, and strategic leadership in the effective implementation of sustainability-oriented initiatives. Furthermore, this research expands theoretical understanding of internal resistance dynamics, interdepartmental conflicts, and market-related challenges as critical determinants influencing the success

of green marketing strategies. Thus, the study strengthens the theoretical position that successful green marketing is shaped by the interplay of structural, behavioral, and capability-based factors within the organizational context.

Practically, the findings provide actionable guidance for companies—particularly those in East Java—to prioritize internal capability enhancement, strengthen cross-functional communication, and reinforce top management commitment as key foundations for implementing effective and authentic green marketing practices. Companies are encouraged to intensify employee training on sustainability competencies, increase investment in environmentally friendly technologies, and establish coordination mechanisms that align the perspectives of production, marketing, and operational units. Additionally, firms must adopt consumer education strategies to address market barriers related to pricing and perceptions of green products. By instituting these actions, companies can enhance the credibility of their green marketing initiatives, improve competitive advantage, and accelerate the transition toward sustainable business practices that deliver both economic value and environmental responsibility.

8. Limitations and suggestions for further research

This study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research sample consists only of a limited number of companies located in East Java, which constrains the generalizability of the findings to broader industrial or regional contexts. Second, the qualitative design relied primarily on in-depth interviews with internal company representatives, resulting in an emphasis on organizational perspectives while providing limited insight into consumer perceptions or the viewpoints of external stakeholders such as suppliers, regulators, or community groups. Third, the study did not employ longitudinal observation, which restricts the ability to capture dynamic changes in green marketing practices over time. These methodological boundaries suggest that the findings, while insightful, may not fully represent the complexity of sustainability-driven marketing across different environments.

Future research should expand the sample to include companies from diverse sectors and regions to improve generalizability and allow comparative analysis across industries. Scholars are also encouraged to integrate consumer-based and multi-stakeholder perspectives to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how green marketing is perceived and evaluated externally. Employing mixed-method or longitudinal designs would enable researchers to track the evolution of green marketing implementation and assess the long-term impact of organizational capability building, internal communication, and leadership support. Finally, future studies may examine the role of digital technologies, green innovation capability, and circular economy practices as mediating or moderating factors to further enrich theoretical insights into sustainable marketing strategies.

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