



The relationship within green marketing strategies and market performance of Pakistan SMEs

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Abstract- The current study purpose is to investigate the relationship between the green marketing strategies and market performance of Pakistan SMEs. For this purpose, the self-administered administered was distributed among the 300 managers which yield a 71 percent response rate. The study using the quantitative research approach and cross sectional research design. The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) had shown that lean green marketing strategies had a positive and significant relationship with the marketing performance. In addition, green promotion marketing strategies also had a positive and significant relationship with the marketing performance. In the same vein, shaded green marketing strategies also had a positive and significant relationship with the market performance. On the other hand, the defensive green and extreme green marketing strategies had not a significant relationship with the market performance. The current study added a body of literature that could provide help to become a new research area in future. The research limitation and future directions had also discussed at the end of the study.

Keywords: green marketing strategies, market performance, SMEs, Pakistan.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary environment, the performance of the organization is considered to be an important part of the organizations. If the organization could not maintain their performance, then the organization could not achieve their competitive advantage and long term survival. For this purpose, green marketing strategies (GMS) has been defined as a process directed to meet customers' as well as society requirements in a manner that not only achieves profitability but also maintains sustainability. In this regards, this is define as a holistic procedure which consist on entire marketing activities such as pricing, supply, packaging, development, advertisement and promotion of an innovative products (Dief & Font, 2010). In the previous studies of strategic marketing Varadarajan (2010) had explained that the organizational decisions related to choices of marketing activities and resources are embedded in an organization's marketing strategy. When an organization is encouraged to be an environmentally responsible entity, the most crucial term furnished in the context of marketing strategy is green marketing strategy (GMS).

Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) identified four green marketing strategies, which were lean green, defensive green, shaded green, and extreme green. The authors indicated that these strategies can be understood in terms of their emphasis on marketing mix elements; the emphasis of lean green strategy is on the product, while the focus of defensive green is on both product and promotion, in comparison with shaded green that focuses on product, price and promotion. Finally, extreme green strategy pays extended attention to product, price, place and promotion. Cronin, Smith, Gleim, Ramirez, and Martinez (2011) determined three marketing strategies, which were green innovation, firm greening and green alliances. Green innovation is related to innovative products and services that meet customers' requirements and protect the environment. Furthermore, firm greening can be described as management commitment to environmental responsibility, green procedures as well as green supply chain management (GSCM). In this way the green alliances are partnerships formed with other firms to create an environment friendly system. Reasons that stimulate organizations to use green marketing are various. Papadas, Avlonitis, Carrigan, and Piha (2019) argued that an organization uses green marketing as an opportunity to enhance the ability to achieve its goals, as a response to government regulations and competitors, or to reduce costs through waste removal and raw material usage. Despite the importance of the effects of GMS adoption on organizations such as a good position in the market palace, it is necessary to pay close attention to the idea that customers are not interested in eco-friendly products due to environment protection if the products are not suitable for them. However, if the product meets the wants and needs of

customers, and at the same time does not harm the environment, they prefer to use it instead of another product. It was understood that the first priority of interest to the customer is the product or service itself (Cronin et al., 2011).

In order to explore the extent to which green marketing strategies as conceptualized by Alsheikh (2020) in terms of four key strategies: lean green, defensive green, shaded green, and extreme green. In terms of the effect of green marketing strategies on organizational performance, the results were mixed. Hasan and Ali (2015) and Eneizan, Abd Wahab, Zainon, and Obaid (2016b) discovered a progressive and positive influences of the green marketing strategies on the market performance. On the other hand, Kinoti (2017) showed that these strategies have no significant effect on performance related dimensions such as market share or gross profit. As, the previous studies had shown the inconsistent findings that had become the foundation of the current study. Moreover, the previous studies major focused was on four dimensions namely, lean green, defensive green, shaded green and extreme green marketing strategies but had a little attention on green promotion dimension as a GMS. Furthermore, the previous study also had a major focused on the developed economies while had a little attention on the developing economies especially Pakistan SMEs. As, the SMEs are considered to be big contributors in the social and economic development of the Pakistan because this sector had a greater contribution in the employment and GDP perspective. After seeking these previous gaps, the current study purpose is to investigate the relationship between green marketing strategies and market performance of Pakistan SMEs. Carrying out this study should boost practitioners' and researchers' awareness about green marketing strategies that elevate SMEs performance.

The current study was divided in the following subsections, Introductions, literature review, research methodology, data analysis and conclusion.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

In this section, the literature review had been discussed based on the previous studies.

Market Performance

The performance is an essential part of the organization that could provide help to the organization to increase the competitive advantage of the organizations (Alexander & Buchholz, 1978). Therefore, the organization should pay a more attention on the performance to increase the organization survival (Sarkar, Echambadi, & Harrison, 2001). There are various indicators which are used in the extant literature. For instance, the financial and non-financial performance. The financial performance could be measured from the return on assets, return on equity, Tobin's Q, earning per share (Cho, Chung, & Young, 2019; Waddock & Graves, 1997; J. Xie, Nozawa, Yagi, Fujii, & Managi, 2019; X. Xie, Huo, & Zou, 2019). While, the non-financial performance could measure through the perceptual measured in which the data could be collected from the primary sources. There are various studies which had to be used the market performance as a performance indicators (Nordin, Nordin, & Ismail, 2020; Salindal, 2019). Therefore, in the current study, the market performance had used to measure the performance through the perceptual measured.

The Relationship between green marketing strategies and marketing performance

The green marketing strategy has been described by Baktash and Talib (2019) as the most hidden greening strategy used by organizations, since the company is not SMEs in publishing the green initiative it is implementing. For the authors, the reason for this is that the organization does not want to appear as an environmentally conservative organization, which increases the expectations of the public, but in turn the organization benefits by reducing costs. (Jain, Darbari, Kaul, & Jha, 2020) marked lean green strategy as a productintended strategy. According (Zwerg-Villegas, 2008), organizations that use lean green strategy are affected by cost reduction intention and have no aims to maintain sustainability of market segment or differentiate based on greening. Since organizations involved in this strategy do not prefer making their practices of lean green public, it is difficult to recognize these organizations. According to (Chan, 2013), one strategy of green marketing that is used by organizations is the defensive strategy, which refers to a strategy adopted by organizations in which these organizations are adhere to the minimum requirements of green marketing in order to avoid penalties or fines resulting from failure to comply with the government regulations issued for the conservation of the environment. Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) indicated that defensive strategy is concerned with efforts made by organizations in relation to two elements of marketing mix, which are product and promotion. Chan (2013) added that this strategy represents a precautionary way followed by organizations just to respond to another party pressure such as environmental bodies or competitive organizations. Zwerg-Villegas (2008) regarded the defensive green marketing strategy as a situational tactic followed by organizations to cope with external pressures linked with environment protection trends.

Firms that adopt the shaded green marketing strategy often focus primarily on the product's characteristics and then the associated environmental benefits. In spite of the firm's ability to differentiate its products in terms of environmental benefits, it prefers to focus on the attributes of the product (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004). Hence, a key feature of firm's that use the shaded green marketing strategy is that these firms have a high opinion of greening as a strategic orientation (Zwerg-Villegas, 2008). For them, firm's that use extreme green marketing strategy are those involved in greening on a daily basis. This strategy represents an incorporation of greenness into business strategy. Hitherto, little is known about how really firms are involved in adopting green marketing strategies. For the purpose of recognizing the level in which SMEs remain utilizing the strategies of green marketing. Fraj, Martínez, and Matute (2011) examined the influence of the GSM on FP in place of as measured by operational, marketing and economic performance using data from several industries in a European country, as well as discovered a positive and significant influences of GSM on the marketing performance. Confirming this, Olson (2008) specified that an implementation of the green strategy inside of a firm will affect the organizational strategy and its impact including performance management, employment practices, training, and awareness campaigns conducted by the firms to achieve its green goals. Similarly, Cronin et al. (2011) underlined the importance of green strategies in raising FP. Generally, the effect of GSM on FP has been established in numerous studies (Eneizan et al., 2016b; Supaat, Ahamat, & Nizam, 2020). Yet, is there a significant link between using GSM such as "green promotion, lean green, defensive green, shaded green and extreme green strategy" and FP, to say, as represented by marketing performance of SMEs? Answering this question can be completed based on Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) categorization of GSM in accordance with the elements of marketing mix. They stated that "lean green, defensive green, shaded green and extreme green strategies" remain pay more attention on green products. In addition to that, the "defensive green strategy" includes promotion; "shaded green strategy" emphasizes price as well as promotion, while the "extreme green strategy" incorporates price, place as well as promotion. Consequently, the current study conceptualizes lean green strategy as a strategy of green product; defensive green as a strategy of green product and green promotion; shaded green as a strategy of green product; green price as well as green promotion; and extreme green as a strategy of the green supply, green pricing, as well as green products along with the green promotion. There are the following green products philosophy results in improved FP on financial as well as non-financial basis (Eneizan et al., 2016b). In a study by Hasan and Ali (2015) on GSM, green innovation and green promotions were positively associated towards FP, economic and operational performance. In fact, little has been said on the influence of "lean green, defensive, green, shaded green, and extreme green strategies" on the marketing performance, particularly in SMEs. For the purpose of examine the influence of GSM on the marketing performance, on the basis of above discussion following research framework and hypotheses were proposed:

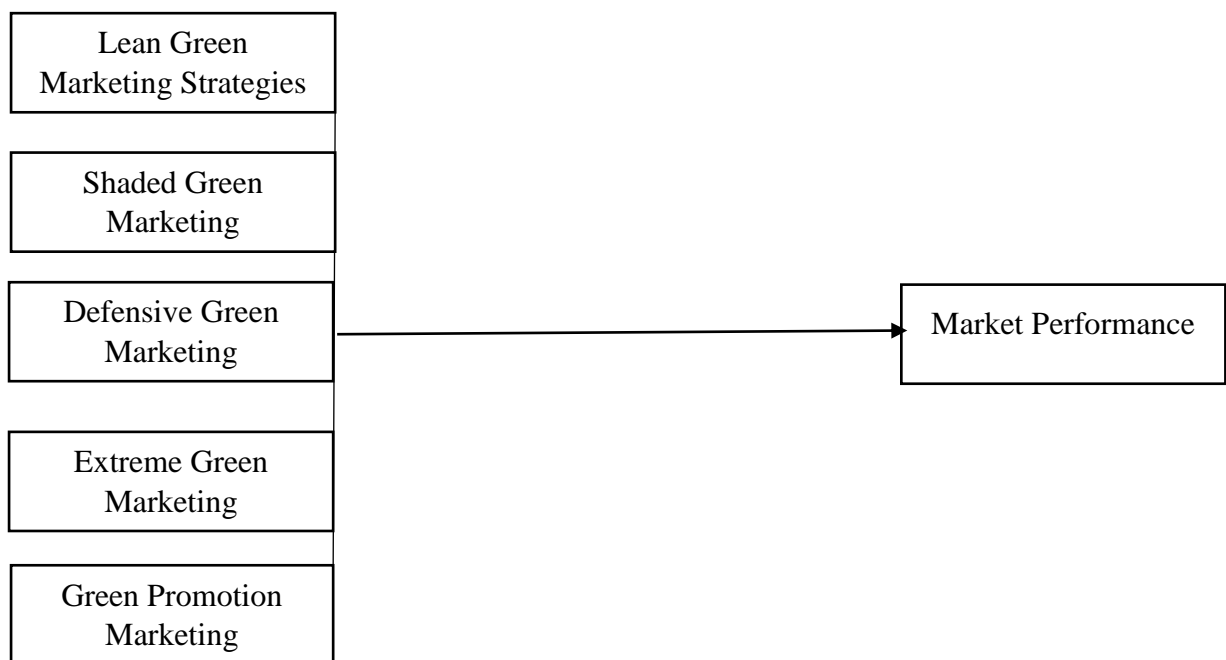


Figure.1: Research Framework

- H1:** The lean green marketing has a significant influence on the marketing performance of Pakistan SMEs.
- H2:** The shaded green marketing has a significant influence on the marketing performance of Pakistan SMEs.
- H3:** The defensive green marketing has a significant influence on the marketing performance of Pakistan SMEs.
- H4:** The extreme green marketing has a significant influence on the marketing performance of Pakistan SMEs.
- H5:** The green promotion had a significant relation with the market performance of Pakistan SMEs.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study purpose is to investigate the impact of green marketing strategies on the market performance of Pakistan SMEs. Based on the current study objectives, the current study had applied the quantitative research approach and is correlational in nature. Moreover, the study had applied the cross sectional research design according to research objective. Therefore, the current study had gathered the primary sources by using a self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study consists of all managers of Small and Medium-Sized of Pakistan counted four thousands eight hundreds and two managers (Small and Medium-Sized Establishments Survey, 2020). A simple random sample was selected from the study population consists of knowledgeable informants, e.g., managers. A total of 300 managers were identified and questionnaires were handed over. Two-hundred and thirteen questionnaires were returned with response rate of 71%. In the green marketing strategies, the main focus of lean green marketing strategy is on the product only (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004). Therefore, it was measured using items related to green products by four items adapted from previous studies such as the introduction of environment friendly products (Dief & Font, 2010), cost reduction based on environmental programs (Shabani, Ashoori, Taghinejad, Beyrami, & Fekri, 2013), reduction of negative effect of materials used in the product and product recyclability (Kalogeris, Baines, Krenz, & Kortheuis, 2012). Defensive green marketing strategy was measured by three items: "Using environmental considerations in product design" and "Employment of green arguments in advertising and promotions" adopted from (Bourthoumieu et al., 2011) as well as "inability to differentiate products based on the environmentally friendly characteristics" (Shabani et al., 2013). Shaded green marketing strategy was measured on the basis of participation in long-term environmental effort (Shabani et al., 2013), lack of focus on green distribution, production of innovative products, and concentration on the product attributes first then the environmental benefits provided (Ginsberg and Bloom, 2004). Extreme green marketing strategy (Ginsberg and Bloom, 2004) was measured by four items: "Using environmental considerations in distribution system", "Combining environment, profitability and product life cycle" (Shabani et al., 2013, P. 1883) as well as customer willingness to pay in addition to the price of eco-oriented products (Martínez, 2015). In addition, the green promotion was being measured by six items that was being adopted from the previous studies. Marketing performance was measured by items related to successful introduction of new products (Fraj et al., 2011; Mohammad, 2020) such as materials used in the product, first to market, product differentiation, sales volume (Al-Hawary & Aldaihani, 2016; Alsheikh, 2020).

Analysis and Interpretation

The current study has applied the Partial Least Square (PLS)-Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) by using a smart PLS 3.2.8. There are various previous studies which had also used the Smart PLS-SEM in their study (R. Ahmad, Bin Mohammad, & Nordin, 2019). In addition, PLS-SEM approach was used to analyze the data which is vitally used and recommended by the past researchers (M. J. Ahmad, Farhan, & Fareed, 2019; N. Ahmad, Ahmad, & Zakaria, 2019; Arshad et al., 2020; Bhatti, Farhan, Ahmad, & Sharif, 2019; Zakaria, Ahmad, & Ahmad, 2020). Therefore, the PLS-SEM is considered to be appropriate for this analysis. In the analysis, the measurement and structural model of the study was tested. The measurement model of the study assesses the reliability and validity of the model while in the structural model we test the study hypothesis. These two models are discussed below.

Measurement model

The measurement model we had assessed the reliability and validity of the model that could be assessed through the convergent and discriminant validity of the study. In the convergent validity fulfill the criteria of Cronbach alpha, composite reliability (CR), factor loadings, and average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014; Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016, 2017). The minimum value for the Cronbach alpha is 0.7, CR is 0.7, factor loadings is 0.5 and lastly for the AVE is 0.5 (J. Hair, Black, & Babin, 2010; J. F. Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). The Table 1 predicted the findings of all these indicators which fulfill all the above discussed criteria's. On the other hand, for the discriminant validity there are three criteria's which are discussed in the extant literature namely, Fornell & Lacker, cross loadings and

HTMT. The Fornell&Lackeris square root of the AVE which have the big values among all the below values. The Table 2 has shown that all the diagonal values are greater than from the below values. Therefore, the Fornell&Lacker Criteria is fulfilled in the current study. On the other hand, for the HTMT the correlational among the construct could not be exceed from the values of 0.85 or 0.90. The Table 3 has shown that all the correlational values are lower than 0.85 which shown that construct has the discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015).The above discussed following results are predicted in the Table 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1: Reliability and validity of construct

Variables	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR
Lean green marketing strategy	LMS1	0.884	0.65	0.88
	LMS2	0.809		
	LMS3	0.741		
	LMS4	0.783		
Defensive green marketing strategy	DMS1	0.911	0.66	0.88
	DMS2	0.837		
	DMS2	0.774		
	DMS4	0.711		
Shaded green marketing strategy	SMS1	0.848	0.68	0.90
	SMS2	0.837		
	SMS3	0.860		
	SMS4	0.755		
Extreme green marketing strategy	EMS1	0.852	0.69	0.93
	EMS2	0.841		
	EMS3	0.820		
	EMS4	0.816		
Green promotion	GRP1	0.904	0.60	0.87
	GRP2	0.894		
	GRP3	0.754		
	GRP4	0.895		
	GRP5	0.873		
Market performance	MP1	0.908	0.623	0.890
	MP2	0.894		
	MP3	0.754		
	MP4	0.873		

Note: LMS- Lean green marketing strategy, DMS- Defensive green marketing strategy, SMS- Shaded green marketing strategy, GRP-green promotion, MP-market performance, EMS-Extreme green marketing strategy.

Table 2: Fornell and Larcker Criterion for Discriminant Validity

	GMS	DMS	SMS	EMS	GRP	MP
GMS	0.710					
DMS	0.568	0.721				
SMS	0.267	0.258	0.738			
EMS	0.010	0.040	0.237	0.875		
GRP	0.504	0.515	0.313	0.194	0.790	
MP	0.604	0.215	0.513	0.394	0.091	0.804

Note: LMS- Lean green marketing strategy, DMS- Defensive green marketing strategy, SMS- Shaded green marketing strategy, GRP-green promotion, MP-market performance, EMS-Extreme green marketing strategy.

Table 3: HTMT Criterion for Discriminant Validity

	GMS	DMS	SMS	EMS	GRP	MP
GMS						
DMS	0.168					
SMS	0.267	0.358				
EMS	0.010	0.040	0.137			
GRP	0.504	0.515	0.313	0.394		
MP	0.604	0.215	0.513	0.394	0.081	

Note: LMS- Lean green marketing strategy, DMS- Defensive green marketing strategy, SMS- Shaded green marketing strategy, GRP-green promotion, MP-market performance, EMS-Extreme green marketing strategy.

Structural Model

After testing the measurement model, the next step is to test the structural model for testing the study hypothesis. For this purpose, the 500 resampling bootstrap was applied for testing the study hypothesis. The key findings of the study had shown that lean green marketing strategies had a positive and significant relationship with the market performance that had supported to proposed hypothesis. In addition, defensive green marketing strategy did not have a significant impact on the market performance that had not supported to the proposed hypothesis. In other words, shaded green marketing strategy had a positive and significant effect on the market performance that is being supporting to the proposed hypothesis. In the same vein, the green promotion also had a positive and significant relation with the market performance that had also supported to the proposed hypothesis. While, extreme green marketing strategy did not have a significant relationship with the market performance that had not supported to the study hypothesis. The findings are further in line with the previous studies (Mukonza & Swarts, 2020; Papadas et al., 2019). Therefore, the above discussed results had shown that SMEs of Pakistan had paid a greater attention on the green marketing strategies to increase their marketing performance. Therefore, the green marketing strategy is considered to be a very important indicator for increasing the SMEs marketing performance. The results of the hypothesis are predicted in the following Table 4.

Table 4: Hypothesis testing results

	Beta	SD	T Statistics	P Values	Results
LMS -> MP	0.552	0.067	8.280	0.000	Supported
GRP-> MP	0.047	0.024	1.963	0.050	Supported
SMS-> MP	0.587	0.052	11.308	0.000	Supported
DMS->MP	0.019	0.048	1.312	0.145	Not Supported
EMS-> MP	0.025	0.016	1.560	0.134	Not Supported

Note: LMS- Lean green marketing strategy, DMS- Defensive green marketing strategy, SMS- Shaded green marketing strategy, GRP-green promotion, MP-market performance, EMS-Extreme green marketing strategy.

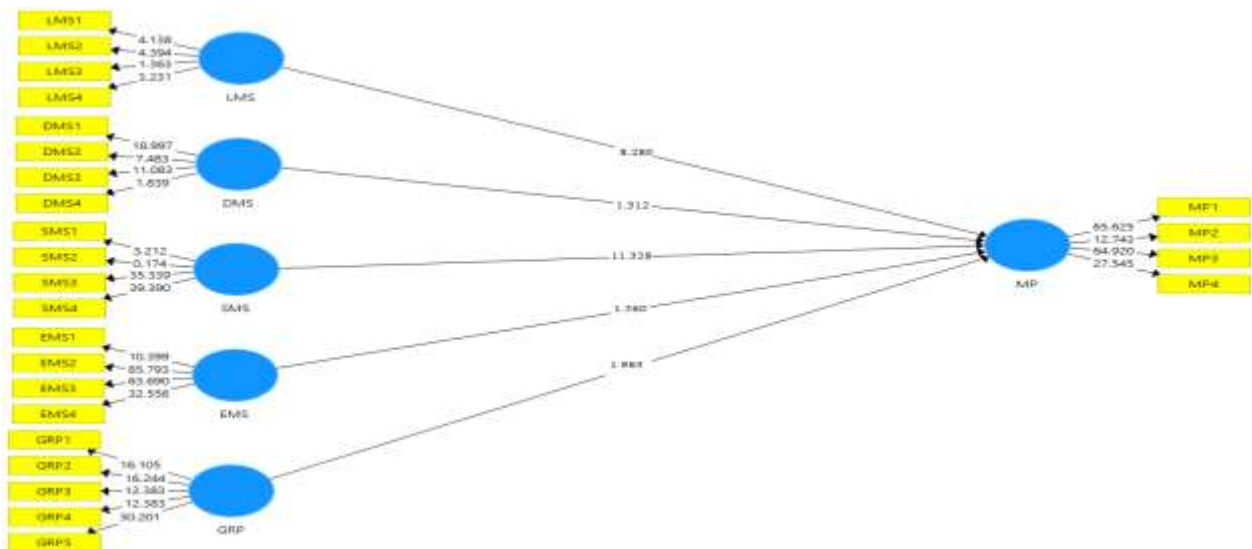


Figure 3.2: Research Framework

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The green extension is describing as an irreversible innovative development trend inside of world. Framework of the strong globalization as well as fossil exhaustion, in this environment harshly damaged by the reason of instant economic advantages without repaying emphasis on the green expansion and sustainable development. Green is an innovative development process which establishes an inclusive, harmonious as well as sustainable development among nature and the peoples. In the different countries, specifically development states, have measured the green expansion as a key driving strength and direction towards drive actions of governmental organizations and peoples. This is not only into the developed countries, the trend is touching from "brown" to "green" have begun to come to be extra pronounced as well as come to be further and further pronounced inside of the developing economies, especially remain countries by significant income level between developing countries. In a one vein of green marketing, the emphasis was on five green marketing strategies related to marketing mix elements; product, price, place and promotion. These strategies are lean green, defensive green, shaded green, green promotion and extreme green. According to (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004) who categorized these green strategies, one strategy, which is lean green, is concerned with the product, while green defensive is about two elements of the marketing mix, which are product and promotion. Shaded green, on the other hand, is attributed to three elements; product, price and promotion. Finally, extreme green covers all the 4Ps of marketing; product, price, place and promotion.

Using a sample of respondents, i.e., managers, from SMES it was found that these SMEs highly adopt lean green strategy in the first place, followed by shaded green and defensive green strategies in moderate degrees. The results illustrate that since shaded green, product, price and promotion are considered, one can conclude that shaded green strategy represents an extension of lean green strategy. Promotion activities are used in SMEs in line with their environments like communities derived by health (Glanz & Hoelscher, 2004).

In the current study, green marketing strategies were assumed to have significant effects on marketing performance as indicated in the literature (Guillaud et al., 2015) and (Eneizan, Abd Wahab, & Obaid, 2016a). The results revealed that lean green strategy was the important one in terms of its significant effect on marketing performance, followed by shaded green strategy. Defensive green strategy and extreme green strategy have no significant effect on marketing performance. Generally, the significant effect of green marketing strategy on organizational performance was originated in several studies (Cronin et al., 2011; Eneizan et al., 2016b). No previous studies found to confirm or reject these results. However, in accordance with Ginsberg and Bloom (2004), all family style restaurants are concerned with their products, prices as well as promotions. When it comes to defensive strategy with least essentials, customers are aware to recognize that defensive restaurants do not do their best to satisfy them. The low level of extreme green adoption resulted in a no significant effect of this strategy on marketing performance. It was concluded that lean and shaded green strategies are strategies that SMES can use to improve their marketing performance. Along with these, the green promotion marketing strategies could also have helped to the organizations to increase their market performance. The current study could add

a body of knowledge in the empirical findings that could become a new area of research in future. In addition, the present study results could also have helped to the owners and policy makers to know about the importance of these variables for increasing their share in the market that could helped to increase their competitive advantage. The current study could also have helped to the researchers for exploring their new research area in future.

One key limitation of this study is that it was conducted using managers' perceptions. Particularly, marketing performance was assessed on the basis of their perceptions. Future studies should consider customers' perceptions instead. In a study of Alsheikh (2020) found a positive link between innovation-oriented organizational culture and performance. Therefore, it was recommended that future study may use organizational culture as a mediator variable in the relationship between green marketing strategies and marketing performance. The study had a limited attention on cross sectional research design, there is also a longitudinal research that can increase the study generalizability, in this regards, a future research could be established on this research design. The study was limited on Pakistan that is developing country, therefore, future study along with this model could be done on other developed countries to know the variation among the results.

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