

Sustainability Marketing and Green Consumer Behaviour: A Study of Emerging Markets

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ABSTRACT

In today's business environment, companies are increasingly adopting sustainability marketing practices to attract environmentally conscious consumers. However, despite its growing importance, several challenges limit its effectiveness. Many organizations face difficulties in communicating their sustainability efforts clearly to customers. Issues such as greenwashing, limited consumer awareness, high pricing of eco-friendly products, and inconsistency between environmental claims and actual practices continue to create barriers in building trust. It examines how eco-friendly packaging influences customer interest and purchase decisions. The research also looks into the role of green advertising and brand communication in shaping customer awareness and engagement. In addition, it explores how ethical sourcing practices contribute to customer trust and impact buying behaviour. The study aims to understand what customers expect from sustainable products and the reasons behind their choices. A descriptive research design was adopted for this study. Primary data was collected from employees using a structured questionnaire, while secondary data was gathered from company records, journals, magazines, and relevant websites. Convenience sampling was used, and the sample size consisted of 120 respondents. Consumers show a clear preference for products that offer eco-friendly packaging, ethical sourcing, and transparent green communication. The use of recyclable, biodegradable, and reusable packaging materials positively affects customer perception and purchase decisions. Moreover, consistent and honest communication about sustainability practices helps strengthen brand image and customer loyalty. In conclusion, the study highlights that integrating sustainable practices into product development, marketing strategies, and communication efforts is essential for building long-term consumer trust and loyalty. Companies that align their environmental initiatives with customer expectations are more likely to succeed in the competitive market while also contributing to environmental sustainability.

Keywords: *Sustainability Marketing, Green Consumer Behavior, Eco-friendly Packaging, Ethical Sourcing, Consumer Preference, Green Advertising Brand Trust*

INTRODUCTION

Marketing can be understood as the set of activities and processes through which organizations create, communicate, and deliver value to customers and society. It is not just about selling products or services, but about understanding customer needs and building meaningful relationships with them. In simple terms, marketing includes all the efforts a company takes to promote its products or services. This involves activities such as advertising, selling, and delivering products to customers, whether they are individuals or other businesses. Companies often use different strategies like promotional campaigns, attractive packaging, slogans, and media exposure to capture the attention of their target audience. Sometimes, even external partners or influencers help in promoting the brand. Marketing is a broad concept that covers everything from identifying customer needs to ensuring customer satisfaction after purchase. It begins with market research, where companies study consumer preferences and trends, and continues through product promotion and customer engagement. The main aim is to convince customers about the value of a product, encourage them to make a purchase, and build long-term loyalty towards the brand. An effective marketing strategy helps increase brand awareness and visibility among the target audience. It also plays a key role in attracting new customers and retaining existing ones. In today's highly competitive business environment, strong marketing efforts are essential for improving market share and staying ahead of competitors. Marketing decisions are largely based on research and data, which help companies design products and services that meet market demand. This approach not only improves customer satisfaction but also enhances the company's return on investment. Furthermore, marketing supports business growth

by helping companies expand into new markets at local, national, and international levels. Overall, the primary objectives of marketing are to increase sales, strengthen customer relationships, and generate new business opportunities. When implemented effectively, marketing strategies can significantly improve profitability and support long-term business success.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Recent studies highlight the growing importance of sustainability marketing and its strong influence on consumer behaviour, particularly in emerging markets. In addition, research by Springer (2026) indicated that green marketing enhances brand loyalty and electronic word-of-mouth, with CSR playing a mediating role in this relationship. Moreover, recent studies suggest that digital platforms and social media have become powerful tools in influencing sustainable consumer behaviour and increasing brand engagement. Rana et al. (2025) further observed that the increasing preference for eco-friendly products is transforming brand strategies, pushing companies to integrate sustainability into their core values. Supporting this, Chea (2024) conducted a detailed review and concluded that green marketing improves consumer perception and has a long-term impact on decision-making. A study published in the *Journal of Cleaner Production* (2024) also revealed a significant rise in sustainability-related research, especially after 2016, reflecting the growing global focus on environmental concerns. For instance, Kaur et al. (2022) found that green marketing strategies play a significant role in shaping consumer purchase intentions, with environmental attitudes acting as an important mediating factor. Similarly, Mahjudin et al. (2025) emphasized that sustainable marketing practices, along with corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ethical communication, contribute positively to building consumer loyalty.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

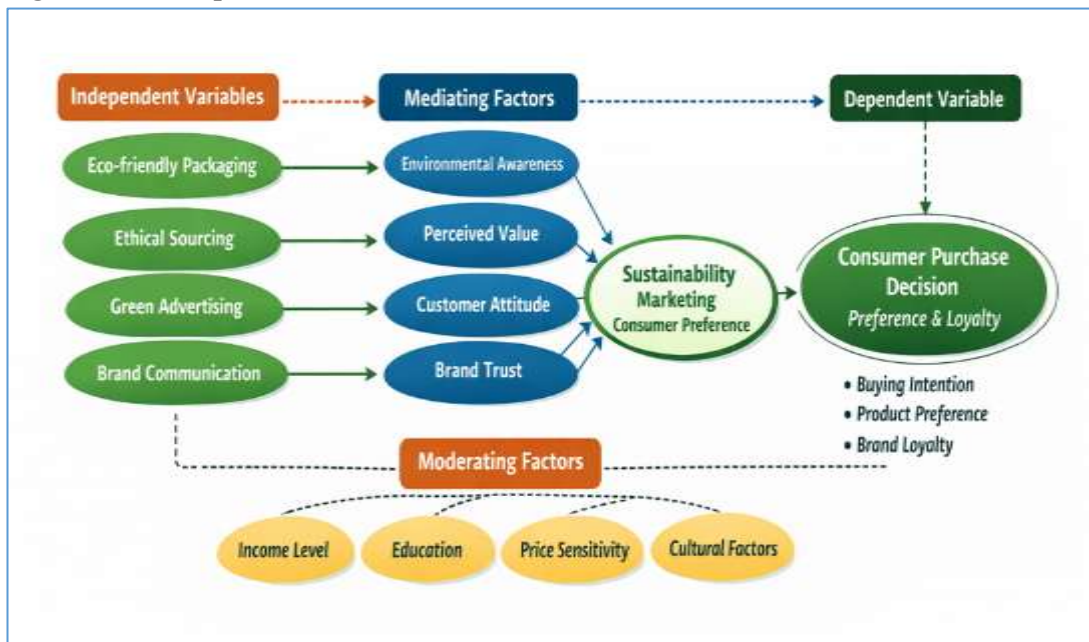
Another important perspective is **Stakeholder Theory**, which emphasizes that organizations should not focus only on profits but also consider the interests of various stakeholders, including customers, employees, governments, and society as a whole. In sustainability marketing, this means that companies are expected to take responsibility for their environmental and social impact. By doing so, they can build trust and maintain long-term relationships with their stakeholders.

Green Marketing Theory also plays a crucial role in understanding sustainable business practices. This theory focuses on promoting products and services that are environmentally friendly. It highlights the importance of designing green products, using sustainable and eco-friendly packaging, and providing clear eco-labels to inform consumers. These practices not only help protect the environment but also attract consumers who prefer responsible brands.

Finally, **the Value-Belief-Norm Theory** explains that consumer behaviour is strongly influenced by their personal values and beliefs about the environment. When individuals believe that protecting the environment is important, they feel a moral responsibility to act accordingly. This sense of responsibility encourages them to make sustainable choices, such as buying eco-friendly products and supporting ethical brands.

Overall, these theories together provide a strong foundation for understanding how sustainability marketing influences consumer behaviour and helps promote environmentally responsible consumption.

Fig No. 1: Conceptual Framework



The study of sustainability marketing and green consumer behaviour is supported by several important theories that explain how and why consumers make environmentally responsible choices. One of the key theories is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which suggests that an individual’s behavior is mainly influenced by their attitude, social influence, and perceived control over their actions. In the context of green marketing, consumers who have a positive attitude towards the environment are more likely to choose eco-friendly products. At the same time, social factors such as peer influence and societal expectations encourage individuals to adopt sustainable practices. Additionally, when consumers are more aware and informed about environmental issues, their intention to purchase green products increases significantly.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data from 120 respondents was analyzed using percentage analysis to understand the impact of sustainability marketing on consumer preferences. The results are summarized below

ECO-FRIENDLY PACKAGING

Statement	Major Response(%)
Recyclable packaging is appealing	45.8% Strongly Agree
Eco-friendly packaging adds value	37.5% Agree
Preference for biodegradable packaging	48.3% Strongly Agree
Reusable packaging improve image	38.3% Neutral

Interpretation: Consumers show a strong preference for recyclable and biodegradable packaging, indicating growing environmental awareness in purchase decisions. However, neutral responses toward reusable packaging suggest limited awareness or convenience concerns.

GREEN ADVERTISING & COMMUNICATION

Statement	Major Response(%)
Sustainability ads attract attention	54.2% Agree
Eco-conscious messaging builds image	33.3% Strongly Agree
Green communication leads to recommendation	35.8% Agree
Eco-labels improve product appeal	33.3% Strongly Agree
Consistent green communication	25% Disagree

Interpretation: Sustainability-based advertisements and eco-conscious messaging positively influence consumer attention and brand image. However, inconsistency in green communication creates doubt, affecting overall trust and effectiveness.

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES & PREFERENCE

Statement	Major Response
Ethical sourcing preferred	Mixed Responses
Environmental responsibility influences choice	Positive trend observed
Sustainable branding increases loyalty	Positive trend observed

Interpretation: Consumers generally show a positive attitude toward ethical sourcing and environmentally responsible products. However, mixed responses indicate that awareness and understanding of sustainable practices are still developing.

DISCUSSION

The results show that consumers are increasingly becoming aware of environmental issues and are gradually shifting their preferences towards eco-friendly and sustainable products. This reflects a broader trend observed in emerging markets, where sustainability is no longer seen as an optional feature but as an important factor in purchase decisions.

One of the key observations from the study is the strong impact of eco-friendly packaging on consumer choice. Customers tend to prefer products that use recyclable, biodegradable, or reusable packaging materials. This suggests that packaging is not only a functional element but also a significant factor in shaping consumer perception and brand image. Similarly, ethical sourcing practices were found to positively influence customer trust. When companies are transparent about their sourcing methods and demonstrate social responsibility, it enhances their credibility and strengthens customer relationships. The study also highlights the importance of green advertising and effective brand communication. Consumers are more likely to engage with brands that clearly communicate their environmental initiatives and sustainability efforts. However, the effectiveness of such communication depends on its authenticity and consistency. Misleading claims or greenwashing can negatively affect consumer trust and reduce the impact of sustainability marketing efforts.

Another important finding is that consumer awareness and attitude act as mediating factors in the relationship between sustainability practices and purchase decisions. Even though many consumers express interest in sustainable products, factors such as price sensitivity and income level can influence their final decision. This indicates that while awareness is increasing, affordability and accessibility still play a major role in shaping consumer behaviour. Overall, the discussion reveals that sustainability marketing not only enhances brand perception but also contributes to long-term customer loyalty. Integrating sustainability into product design, marketing strategies, and communication practices can provide a competitive advantage. At the same time, businesses must focus on maintaining transparency and delivering genuine value to consumers to build lasting trust and engagement.

CONCLUSION

Sustainability marketing plays a vital role in shaping consumer behavior in emerging markets. Increasing environmental awareness and digital influence are driving demand for green products. However, challenges such as high prices, lack of trust, and greenwashing remain barriers. Companies must adopt transparent, authentic, and consumer-centric sustainability strategies to build long-term relationships and promote eco-friendly consumption.

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