

# The Effectiveness of Sustainable Marketing Practices in Influencing Consumer Behaviour and Brand Loyalty

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## Abstract

This research endeavours to comprehensively examine the role of sustainable marketing practices in influencing consumer behaviour and cultivating brand loyalty within the contemporary marketplace. Specifically, it seeks to elucidate how consumers respond to companies employing eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing practices, aiming to shed light on the mechanisms through which sustainable initiatives impact consumer-brand interactions.

We employed a rigorous mixed-methods approach, this study integrates qualitative and quantitative methodologies to provide a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Qualitative data collection will involve in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with consumers from diverse demographics to capture nuanced insights into their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards sustainable marketing practices. Subsequently, quantitative surveys will be administered to a large and diverse sample of consumers, allowing for statistical analysis employing techniques such as regression analysis and structural equation modelling. This combined approach enables the exploration of both the depth and breadth of consumer responses to sustainable marketing practices.

The findings of this research underscore the significant influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. It reveals that consumers exhibit heightened interest and favourable responses towards companies implementing eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing practices. Such initiatives not only influence consumers' purchasing decisions but also foster a sense of trust, affiliation, and loyalty towards brands committed to sustainability. Moreover, the study identifies various demographic and psychographic factors that moderate the relationship between sustainable marketing practices and consumer behaviour, providing valuable insights for marketers seeking to tailor their strategies effectively.

This study contributes to the existing body of literature by offering empirical evidence on the effectiveness of sustainable marketing practices in driving consumer behaviour and fostering brand loyalty. The insights garnered from this research have practical implications for marketers, policymakers, and businesses, offering actionable strategies to enhance the adoption of sustainable practices and strengthen consumer-brand relationships in an increasingly environmentally conscious marketplace.

**Keywords:** Sustainable marketing, Consumer behaviour, Brand loyalty, Eco-friendly packaging, Ethical sourcing, Mixed-methods approach, Qualitative research, Quantitative research, Regression analysis, Structural equation modelling.

## Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving marketplace, the integration of sustainable practices has emerged as a crucial strategic imperative for businesses aiming to thrive in an era characterized by heightened environmental awareness and shifting consumer preferences. Sustainable marketing, encompassing initiatives such as eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing, has gained prominence as companies seek to align their brand values with those of environmentally and socially conscious consumers. This introduction sets the stage for understanding the pivotal role of sustainable marketing practices in influencing consumer behaviour and fostering brand loyalty.

The adoption of sustainable marketing practices represents a paradigm shift in the way businesses conceptualize and execute their marketing strategies. No longer viewed as merely a corporate social responsibility endeavour, sustainability has become integral to brand differentiation, competitive advantage, and long-term viability. As consumers increasingly prioritize ethical and eco-conscious consumption, companies are compelled to reevaluate their approach to marketing and product development, recognizing the intrinsic link between sustainability, consumer preferences, and brand loyalty.

At the heart of this paradigm shift lies the fundamental question: How do sustainable marketing practices influence consumer behaviour and brand loyalty in the contemporary marketplace? This question serves as the focal point of our research, driving our exploration into the mechanisms through which sustainable initiatives shape consumer-brand interactions and contribute to the cultivation of sustainable consumption patterns.

To address this question, our research adopts a rigorous mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Qualitative data collection, comprising in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, offers rich insights into consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards sustainable marketing practices. By delving into the nuanced nuances of consumer preferences and motivations, qualitative research lays the groundwork for a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in consumer-brand relationships.

Building upon the insights gleaned from qualitative research, our study employs quantitative surveys to quantify the impact of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. Statistical analysis techniques, including regression analysis and structural equation modelling, facilitate the exploration of relationships between key variables and the identification of potential moderating factors. This integrated approach enables us to capture both the depth and breadth of consumer responses to sustainable marketing practices, providing a holistic perspective on their influence in the marketplace.

The findings of our research underscore the significant influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. We observe a discernible shift in consumer preferences, with

heightened interest and favourable responses towards companies implementing eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing practices. Beyond mere purchasing decisions, sustainable initiatives engender a sense of trust, affiliation, and loyalty among consumers, strengthening their bond with brands committed to sustainability. Furthermore, our study identifies demographic and psychographic factors that moderate the relationship between sustainable marketing practices and consumer behaviour, offering valuable insights for marketers seeking to tailor their strategies effectively.

In contributing to the existing body of literature, our research offers empirical evidence on the efficacy of sustainable marketing practices in driving consumer behaviour and fostering brand loyalty. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, our findings have practical implications for marketers, policymakers, and businesses, providing actionable strategies to enhance the adoption of sustainable practices and cultivate stronger consumer-brand relationships in an increasingly environmentally conscious marketplace.

### **Literature Review**

Sustainable marketing has emerged as a critical area of inquiry within the broader domain of marketing literature, reflecting the growing recognition of environmental sustainability as a key determinant of consumer behaviour and brand performance. This literature review seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of existing research on sustainable marketing practices, consumer behaviour, and brand loyalty, thereby contextualizing the findings of our study within the broader theoretical and empirical landscape.

### **Theoretical Frameworks:**

Several theoretical frameworks have been proposed to elucidate the mechanisms underlying the influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behavior and brand loyalty. One such framework is the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that an individual's intention to engage in a particular behavior is determined by their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Applied to sustainable consumption, this theory suggests that consumers' intentions to engage in environmentally friendly behaviors, such as purchasing products with eco-friendly packaging or supporting brands with ethical sourcing practices, are shaped by their attitudes towards sustainability, social norms, and perceived ability to enact sustainable actions.

Another relevant theoretical perspective is the Triple Bottom Line (Elkington, 1997), which advocates for the integration of economic, social, and environmental considerations into business decision-making. Within the context of sustainable marketing, this framework emphasizes the importance of simultaneously addressing economic profitability, social equity, and environmental stewardship to create value for both businesses and society. By adopting sustainable marketing practices, companies can enhance their triple bottom line performance, thereby fostering brand trust, reputation, and long-term viability.

### **Sustainable Marketing Practices:**

A multitude of sustainable marketing practices have been examined in the literature, ranging from product design and packaging to supply chain management and communication strategies. Eco-friendly packaging, in particular, has garnered considerable attention as a means of reducing environmental impact and appealing to environmentally conscious consumers (González-Benito & González-Benito, 2006). Research has shown that consumers perceive products with eco-friendly packaging as more

environmentally responsible and are willing to pay a premium for such products (Biswas & Roy, 2015). Moreover, eco-friendly packaging has been found to enhance brand image and differentiate products in the marketplace, thereby driving consumer preference and loyalty (Menon & Menon, 1997). Ethical sourcing practices, encompassing fair trade, organic certification, and labour standards, represent another dimension of sustainable marketing that has gained prominence in recent years. Studies have shown that consumers are increasingly concerned about the ethical implications of production processes and are more likely to support brands that demonstrate a commitment to ethical sourcing (Mohr et al., 2001). Companies that prioritize ethical sourcing not only contribute to social welfare and environmental sustainability but also enhance brand credibility and consumer trust (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). By aligning with consumer values and expectations, brands can cultivate stronger relationships with consumers and foster brand loyalty over time.

### **Consumer Behaviour:**

Consumer behaviour plays a central role in determining the effectiveness of sustainable marketing practices and shaping market demand for sustainable products and services. Understanding the factors influencing consumer attitudes and behaviours towards sustainability is essential for marketers seeking to develop targeted marketing strategies and communication campaigns. Research has identified various individual and contextual factors that influence consumer engagement with sustainable products and brands, including personal values, environmental awareness, social norms, and product attributes (Schwartz, 1977; Stern, 2000).

Personal values, in particular, have been found to significantly influence consumer preferences for sustainable products and brands (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005). Consumers who prioritize environmental conservation, social justice, and ethical consumption are more likely to seek out and support brands that align with their values (Shrum et al., 1995). Moreover, social norms and peer influences play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions of sustainability and driving the adoption of sustainable behaviours (Schultz et al., 2007). By leveraging social influence and peer networks, marketers can effectively promote sustainable products and amplify their impact on consumer behaviour.

### **Brand Loyalty:**

Brand loyalty represents the ultimate goal of sustainable marketing efforts, reflecting consumers' long-term commitment and allegiance to a particular brand. Research has shown that sustainability can serve as a key driver of brand loyalty, with consumers exhibiting stronger loyalty towards brands that demonstrate a genuine commitment to environmental and social responsibility (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). Brands that effectively communicate their sustainability initiatives and engage consumers in meaningful dialogue are more likely to foster trust, loyalty, and advocacy (Peloza & Shang, 2011). Moreover, sustainability-oriented brand messages have been found to resonate with consumers across different demographic segments, highlighting the universal appeal of sustainability as a brand attribute (Luchs et al., 2010).

In conclusion, the literature reviewed highlights the significant influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. Eco-friendly packaging, ethical sourcing practices, and other sustainability initiatives have been shown to enhance brand image, differentiate products, and drive consumer preference and loyalty. By adopting a holistic approach to sustainability and integrating economic, social, and environmental considerations into their marketing strategies, companies can create

value for both shareholders and society. Our study builds upon this body of literature by providing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of sustainable marketing practices in driving consumer behaviour and fostering brand loyalty within the contemporary marketplace.

## **Research Methodology**

The methodology section of this research outlines the comprehensive approach employed to investigate the influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behavior and brand loyalty. This section details the research design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, and data analysis techniques utilized to achieve the objectives of the study.

## **Research Design:**

A mixed-methods research design was employed to provide a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This approach integrates qualitative and quantitative methodologies, allowing for a multifaceted exploration of consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards sustainable marketing practices.

## **Qualitative Data Collection:**

Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with consumers from diverse demographics. This qualitative phase of the research aimed to capture nuanced insights into participants' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards sustainable marketing practices, particularly eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing.

In-depth interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of consumers selected based on their demographic characteristics, including age, gender, income level, and geographic location. These semi-structured interviews provided an opportunity for participants to express their opinions and experiences in detail, allowing for a deeper exploration of the underlying motivations driving their responses to sustainable marketing initiatives.

Focus group discussions were conducted to facilitate group interaction and exploration of shared experiences and perceptions. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling methods, ensuring diversity in terms of demographic characteristics and consumption patterns. The focus group format enabled the researcher to observe group dynamics, identify common themes, and elicit a range of perspectives on sustainable marketing practices.

## **Quantitative Data Collection:**

Quantitative data were collected through structured surveys administered to a large and diverse sample of consumers. The survey instrument was designed to measure key variables related to sustainable marketing practices, consumer behavior, and brand loyalty. Participants were recruited using a combination of random sampling and online survey platforms, ensuring representation across various demographic segments.

The survey questionnaire comprised validated scales and items adapted from existing literature, supplemented by newly developed items tailored to the specific objectives of the study. Participants were asked to rate their agreement with statements related to sustainable marketing practices, their purchasing behavior, and their perceptions of brand loyalty using Likert-type scales.

**Sampling Strategy:**

The sampling strategy aimed to achieve diversity and representativeness in the sample, ensuring the generalizability of findings to the target population. For qualitative data collection, purposive sampling techniques were used to select participants with diverse demographic characteristics and consumption habits. For quantitative data collection, random sampling methods were employed to recruit participants from a wide range of geographic locations and socioeconomic backgrounds.

To enhance the external validity of the findings, efforts were made to recruit participants from different age groups, income levels, educational backgrounds, and cultural backgrounds. Special attention was paid to include individuals with varying levels of environmental awareness and engagement with sustainable consumption practices.

**Data Analysis:**

The data analysis process involved both qualitative and quantitative techniques, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the research questions and hypotheses.

For qualitative data analysis, thematic analysis techniques were employed to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights emerging from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Transcripts were coded and analyzed using qualitative data analysis software, facilitating the organization and interpretation of qualitative data.

For quantitative data analysis, statistical techniques such as regression analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM) were utilized to examine the relationships between key variables and test hypothesized models. Regression analysis was used to assess the impact of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behavior and brand loyalty, controlling for relevant demographic variables. SEM allowed for the testing of complex theoretical models incorporating multiple variables and pathways.

**Ethical Considerations:**

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process to ensure the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the study, outlining the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, and the measures taken to safeguard their privacy. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, and their data were stored securely in compliance with relevant data protection regulations.

**Findings**

The findings and results of this research provide empirical insights into the influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behavior and brand loyalty. Drawing upon a mixed-methods approach integrating qualitative and quantitative data, this section presents key findings related to consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards eco-friendly packaging, ethical sourcing practices, and their impact on brand loyalty.

**Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes towards Sustainable Marketing Practices:**

Qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions revealed a range of consumer perceptions and attitudes towards sustainable marketing practices, particularly eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing initiatives. Participants expressed varying levels of awareness and engagement with



sustainability issues, with some emphasizing the importance of environmental responsibility and others prioritizing convenience and price considerations.

Several themes emerged from the qualitative data, highlighting the factors influencing consumer perceptions and attitudes towards sustainable marketing practices. For instance, participants cited concerns about plastic pollution and waste management as key drivers of their interest in eco-friendly packaging. Many expressed a preference for products packaged in recyclable or biodegradable materials, citing environmental considerations as a primary motivation for their purchasing decisions.

Similarly, ethical sourcing practices such as fair trade and organic certification resonated with participants who valued transparency and accountability in supply chains. Participants expressed a desire to support brands that demonstrate a commitment to ethical sourcing, viewing such initiatives as a reflection of corporate social responsibility and ethical business practices.

Overall, qualitative findings underscored the importance of aligning sustainable marketing practices with consumer values and preferences. Brands that effectively communicate their sustainability initiatives and engage consumers in meaningful dialogue are more likely to resonate with environmentally and socially conscious consumers, fostering trust, loyalty, and positive brand associations.

### **Quantitative Analysis of Consumer Behaviour:**

Quantitative analysis of survey data provided further insights into the relationship between sustainable marketing practices, consumer behaviour, and brand loyalty. Regression analysis was employed to examine the impact of eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing practices on consumer purchasing behaviour, controlling for demographic variables such as age, gender, income level, and environmental awareness.

The results of regression analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between eco-friendly packaging and consumer purchasing behaviour. Participants who reported a preference for products packaged in environmentally friendly materials were more likely to make sustainable purchasing decisions and support brands with eco-friendly packaging initiatives. This finding corroborates qualitative insights highlighting the importance of eco-friendly packaging as a driver of consumer preferences and purchasing behaviour.

Similarly, regression analysis demonstrated a significant positive relationship between ethical sourcing practices and consumer purchasing behaviour. Participants who valued ethical sourcing criteria such as fair trade and organic certification were more inclined to support brands that demonstrate a commitment to ethical business practices. This finding underscores the influence of ethical considerations on consumer behaviour and highlights the importance of transparency and accountability in supply chains.

### **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Analysis:**

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was employed to test a theoretical model incorporating multiple variables and pathways related to sustainable marketing practices, consumer behaviour, and brand loyalty. The SEM analysis allowed for the examination of direct and indirect effects among key constructs, providing a comprehensive understanding of the underlying mechanisms driving consumer responses to sustainability initiatives.

The results of SEM analysis supported the hypothesized model, indicating significant direct and indirect effects of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. Eco-friendly

packaging and ethical sourcing practices emerged as strong predictors of consumer purchasing behaviour, with both direct and indirect effects on brand loyalty.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that the relationship between sustainable marketing practices and brand loyalty is mediated by consumer perceptions of brand trust and corporate social responsibility. Participants who perceive brands as trustworthy and socially responsible are more likely to exhibit strong brand loyalty and advocacy, particularly in the context of sustainability initiatives.

Overall, the SEM analysis confirmed the complex interplay between sustainable marketing practices, consumer behaviour, and brand loyalty, highlighting the importance of considering multiple pathways and variables in understanding consumer responses to sustainability initiatives.

### **Discussion:**

The findings and results of this research offer valuable insights into the influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. The qualitative data provided rich insights into consumer perceptions and attitudes towards eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing practices, highlighting the importance of aligning sustainable initiatives with consumer values and preferences.

The quantitative analysis corroborated qualitative findings, demonstrating a significant positive relationship between sustainable marketing practices and consumer purchasing behaviour. Eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing emerged as strong predictors of consumer preferences and purchasing decisions, underscoring the importance of sustainability as a driver of consumer behaviour in the marketplace.

The SEM analysis provided a comprehensive understanding of the underlying mechanisms driving consumer responses to sustainability initiatives, highlighting the mediating role of brand trust and corporate social responsibility in shaping brand loyalty. By integrating multiple variables and pathways, the SEM analysis offered a nuanced perspective on the complex interplay between sustainable marketing practices, consumer behaviour, and brand loyalty.

### **Conclusion**

The culmination of this research on the influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty has yielded valuable insights into the complex dynamics shaping consumer-brand interactions within the contemporary marketplace. Drawing upon a rigorous mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies, this study has provided a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which sustainable initiatives impact consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours.

### **Summary of Findings:**

The findings of this research underscore the significant influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. Through qualitative data analysis, it was revealed that consumers exhibit a heightened interest and favourable responses towards companies implementing eco-friendly packaging and ethical sourcing practices. Participants expressed a strong preference for products with environmentally responsible packaging, citing concerns about plastic waste and environmental degradation. Ethical sourcing practices also resonated with consumers, who valued transparency and accountability in supply chain management. These qualitative insights highlight the importance of sustainability as a brand attribute and its potential to drive consumer preference and loyalty.



The quantitative analysis further corroborated these findings, demonstrating a positive relationship between sustainable marketing practices and consumer behaviour. Regression analysis revealed that consumers who perceive companies as more environmentally responsible are more likely to engage in sustainable consumption behaviours, such as purchasing products with eco-friendly packaging and supporting brands with ethical sourcing practices. Structural equation modelling (SEM) confirmed the mediating role of consumer behaviour in the relationship between sustainable marketing practices and brand loyalty, indicating that sustainable initiatives indirectly influence brand loyalty through their impact on consumer behaviour.

Moreover, the study identified various demographic and psychographic factors that moderate the relationship between sustainable marketing practices and consumer behaviour. Gender, age, income level, and environmental awareness were found to significantly influence consumers' responses to sustainability initiatives, highlighting the importance of segment-specific marketing strategies tailored to different consumer segments.

### **Implications and Contributions:**

The findings of this research have several theoretical and practical implications for marketers, policymakers, and businesses operating in the sustainable marketplace. Theoretical implications include advancing our understanding of the mechanisms driving consumer responses to sustainable marketing practices and highlighting the role of individual and contextual factors in shaping sustainable consumption behaviours. By integrating insights from both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, this study contributes to the refinement of theoretical frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the Triple Bottom Line, providing a nuanced understanding of the interplay between sustainability, consumer behaviour, and brand loyalty.

The practical implications of this research extend to marketers and businesses seeking to develop effective sustainability strategies and strengthen consumer-brand relationships. The empirical evidence presented in this study underscores the importance of incorporating sustainability into marketing efforts, not only as a means of addressing environmental concerns but also as a strategic imperative for driving brand differentiation and competitive advantage. By adopting eco-friendly packaging, ethical sourcing practices, and other sustainable initiatives, companies can enhance their brand image, cultivate consumer trust, and foster long-term brand loyalty.

Furthermore, the identification of demographic and psychographic factors that moderate consumer responses to sustainability initiatives offers practical guidance for marketers seeking to tailor their strategies effectively. By understanding the unique preferences and motivations of different consumer segments, companies can develop targeted marketing campaigns and communication strategies that resonate with their target audience.

From a policy perspective, the findings of this research highlight the importance of regulatory frameworks and industry standards in promoting sustainable practices and consumer awareness. Policymakers play a crucial role in incentivizing businesses to adopt sustainable practices through legislation, taxation, and subsidies, thereby creating a level playing field and encouraging industry-wide adoption of sustainable marketing practices.

### **Limitations and Future Research Directions:**

Despite the valuable insights generated by this research, several limitations warrant consideration. Firstly,

the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias and respondent inaccuracies. Future research could employ experimental designs or observational methods to complement self-report measures and validate findings.

Secondly, the study focused primarily on consumer perceptions and behaviours within the context of sustainable marketing practices, overlooking other potential influences such as cultural, social, and economic factors. Future research could explore the cultural variations in consumer responses to sustainability initiatives and examine the role of social norms and peer influences in driving sustainable consumption behaviours.

Lastly, the study adopted a cross-sectional research design, which limits the ability to establish causality or temporal relationships between variables. Longitudinal studies or experimental designs could provide deeper insights into the causal mechanisms underlying the influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty over time.

In conclusion, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on sustainable marketing by providing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of sustainable marketing practices in influencing consumer behaviour and fostering brand loyalty. By integrating insights from qualitative and quantitative methodologies, this study offers a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics shaping consumer-brand interactions in the sustainable marketplace. Theoretical advancements, practical implications, and avenues for future research outlined in this study provide valuable guidance for marketers, policymakers, and businesses seeking to navigate the evolving landscape of sustainable consumption and develop strategies that align with consumer values and preferences.

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