



Cause-Related Environmentalism: Understanding The Awareness And Attitude Of Youth Towards Cause -Driven Green Consumables

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Abstract: This study has been undertaken to investigate the determinants of stock returns in Karachi Stock Exchange (KSE) using two assets pricing models the classical Capital Asset Pricing Model and Arbitrage Pricing Theory model. To test the CAPM market return is used and macroeconomic variables are used to test the APT. The macroeconomic variables include inflation, oil prices, interest rate and exchange rate. For the very purpose monthly time series data has been arranged from Jan 2010 to Dec 2014. The analytical framework contains. In the context of eco-friendly products and green efforts, cause-related marketing (CRM) has become a key strategic instrument that connects consumer purchasing behaviour with business social responsibility. The current study aims to identify the awareness and attitude of youth towards green consumables, along with identifying the most preferred causes, taking into consideration, while making such a choice. The results show that customers have a comparatively high awareness of eco-friendly items and a strong preference for companies that actively promote environmental reasons. Particularly among Gen Z and teenagers, consumers exhibit increased awareness of environmental issues and favourable attitudes toward cause-related marketing campaigns. This group exhibits a greater inclination for goods that support social issues, sustainability, and environmental preservation, suggesting that cause-related weighting is a significant factor if its associates with child education and women's welfare, mostly in influencing their purchasing decisions.

Index Terms - cause-related marketing, awareness, attitude, Gen Z, child education, women's welfare.

I. INTRODUCTION

The need for sustainable consumption patterns has increased recently due to social inequality, growing environmental degradation, and concerns about climate change. As a result, companies worldwide are increasingly implementing cause-related and eco-friendly marketing techniques, in which the purchase of a product is directly linked to supporting social or environmental issues. These goods align business goals with sustainable development objectives by minimising environmental harm while simultaneously promoting wider societal welfare. Green marketing and cause-related marketing converge in sustainable, environmentally friendly products that emphasise social responsibility, eco-friendly materials, ethical

production, and a reduced carbon footprint. Customers who want to use their purchases to demonstrate their environmental principles may find these products appealing. The demand for these goods has steadily increased in emerging nations like India owing to growing environmental consciousness, supportive government policies, and the impact of digital media. However, customer knowledge and views of products' influence, value, and authenticity play a vital role in determining how effective they are.

Generation Z (Gen Z)—those born roughly between 1995 and 2010—has become one of the most significant consumer groups in the current era. High levels of internet exposure, social consciousness, and a keen awareness of ethical and environmental issues are characteristics of this generation. Their awareness and perception are important factors in determining their purchasing behaviour. They are also more critical and dubious of overstated or deceptive environmental promises. Even though sustainable and cause-related items have become more popular, there is a clear disconnect between awareness and actual purchasing, particularly among younger customers. Youth's tastes and adoption of these items are frequently influenced by elements like cost, accessibility, veracity of promises, and perceived brand authenticity. While some studies have examined green consumerism and cause-related marketing separately, in the Indian context, very little empirical research has specifically investigated how sustainability and cause-related initiatives affect the awareness and attitudes of the young generation. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the awareness and attitudes of youths with regard to cause-related Green consumption.

Scope and significance of the study

The current study is important because it considers the awareness and attitude of how Generation Z, an emerging but powerful market cohort, perceives and is aware of sustainable, environmentally friendly, and cause-related items. Examining youth customers' awareness and attitude offers important insights into how young consumers view sustainability-oriented and cause-related efforts, since they are increasingly influencing purchasing patterns through their ethical standards and environmental conscience. In the Indian setting, where sustainable consumption is growing but still faces obstacles including price sensitivity, low awareness, and scepticism toward green claims, the study is especially crucial. The study's scope includes assessing customers under the age of 30's awareness, perception, and general attitude towards environmentally friendly, sustainable products.

Objectives of the study

To study the awareness about cause-driven green consumables among youngsters.

To study the attitude towards cause-driven green consumables among youngsters.

To identify the types of environmental causes preferred in the purchase of green consumables.

Hypotheses

H0: The attitude towards CRM does not differ significantly between males and females.

H1: The attitude towards CRM does differ significantly between males and females.

H0: There is no association between the level of awareness and attitude towards CRM among respondents.

H1: There is association between level of awareness and attitude towards CRM among respondents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study uses a descriptive and analytical research design to investigate younger consumers' awareness and perception of sustainable, environmentally friendly, cause-related items. The design is suitable because it allows for the methodical description of current circumstances and the examination of relationships between important variables like awareness, attitude, and demographics.

Sample Design

A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the techniques or the procedure the researcher would adopt in selecting items for a sample, which has to be determined before data collection. In this study, the sampling units are youngsters in Ernakulam district.

Sample Size and method used

The sample size of this study is limited to 100 respondents. The convenience sampling method is used for this study.

Area of the Study

The study focuses on youngsters in Ernakulam district, Kerala.

Variables of the Study

Independent Variables: Awareness of environment-friendly and cause-related products

Dependent Variables: Attitude towards sustainable cause-related products

Moderating Variables: Gender and other demographic factors

Tools used for the study

Tools used for this study are Percentage analysis, Independent sample t-test, Correlation etc.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is confined to youth and may not represent other age groups.
- There are chances of personal biases.
- The use of Convenience sampling may limit generalisation of the findings.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As businesses increasingly connect product consumption with social and environmental reasons, research from 2015 onward shows a growing convergence of sustainability and cause-related marketing (CRM). According to early research, cause-related marketing improves a company's reputation while concurrently solving societal and environmental issues, which positively affects consumer sentiments (Biswas & Roy, 2015; Kotler & Sarkar, 2017). Things that support environmental causes are seen as symbolic of responsible citizenship and ethical consumption, rather than just useful things.

Consumer understanding of environmental issues and sustainability is a recurring theme in the literature. According to studies, consumer impression and purchase intention are greatly influenced by knowledge of eco-friendly features, ethical sourcing, and environmental certifications (Paul et al., 2016). Since 2018, awareness levels have gradually increased in developing nations like India as a result of increasing media coverage, educational programs, and government-sponsored sustainability efforts. However, because of things like price sensitivity and restricted product availability, researchers observe that awareness does not necessarily convert into actual purchasing behaviour (Sharma & Trivedi, 2016).

In post-2018 studies, the role of Generation Z (those born roughly between 1995 and 2010) has received significant attention. According to Francis and Hoefel (2018), Generation Z is a socially and ecologically conscious generation that values social impact, authenticity, and transparency in corporate communication. Research shows that Gen Z customers are more emotionally invested in sustainable and cause-related products than other generations because they see consumption as a way to improve the environment and society (Priporas et al., 2020). According to Indian research, Gen Z is more conscious of ecological issues, yet perceived value and price still play a role in real purchasing decisions (Kumar & Smith, 2018).

Consumer perception, trust, and scepticism regarding cause-related claims are other recurrent themes. Although eco-friendly and cause-related marketing generally enhances brand reputation, some academics warn against growing mistrust brought on by greenwashing techniques (Delmas & Burbano, 2016; Nyilasy et al., 2017). Since 2020, trust has become an important mediator between awareness and positive perception. Customers in Generation Z, in particular, assess environmental claims rigorously and favour companies that offer clear information, third-party certifications, and quantifiable social impact (Mukherjee & Althuizen, 2020).

The connection between cause-related marketing, customer happiness, and loyalty is also well-supported by the research. Research indicates that consumers' pleasure, propensity to make repeat purchases, and long-term loyalty are all improved when they believe a brand and environmental cause are strongly aligned (Vanhamme et al., 2017). Gen Z in India has a favourable opinion of sustainable cause-related products, such organic foods, Khadi goods, eco-friendly clothing, and reusable consumer goods, especially when paired with social welfare storylines (Bhatia & Jain, 2021).

The impact of digital media and sustainability communication on Gen Z understanding and perception is the subject of recent studies conducted between 2022 and 2025. Perceptions of sustainable cause-related products are greatly influenced by social media platforms, influencers, and peer networks. According to research, Gen Z's awareness and positive perception of eco-friendly cause-related firms are greatly increased by digital storytelling, influencer advocacy, and online transparency (Gupta & Singh, 2023). Studies conducted after the pandemic also show that long-term sustainability, community welfare, and environmental safety have taken centre stage in Gen Z's consumption decisions (Kumar et al., 2024).

Overall, research from 2015 to 2025 shows that favourable consumer attitudes and behavioural intentions among the younger generation are favourably correlated with awareness and perception of sustainable, environmentally friendly, cause-related items. However, there are still gaps in empirical studies unique to a given location and in our understanding of how awareness translates into prolonged purchase behaviour, which justifies the current study's significance.

Research Gap

Even while there is an increasing amount of research on sustainability, green marketing, and cause-related marketing, most of it looks at these ideas separately rather than as a whole. Particularly from the viewpoint of young people, there is a dearth of empirical research that precisely tackles sustainable environmentally friendly cause-related items by jointly addressing environmental qualities and cause associations. Furthermore, there is a dearth of region-specific research from India, and many studies focus on industrialised economies. Focused studies examining how Gen Z's awareness translates into perception and

how elements like perceived authenticity, trust, and scepticism toward greenwashing affect this relationship are scarce, even within Indian studies. The current study aims to fill a significant research vacuum that is highlighted by the lack of regional and cohort-specific studies.

Scope for further study

Building on the results of this study, there is a great deal of potential for further research. Future research may expand the analysis to look at repurchase behaviour, satisfaction, loyalty, and purchasing intention in relation to sustainable cause-related products. Research that compares several generations, geographical areas, or urban and rural environments may offer more comprehensive understanding of demographic differences in awareness and perception. In order to evaluate how the younger generation's opinions develop over time as sustainability initiatives and legal frameworks change, longitudinal studies may also be conducted. Future studies could also look at how certification processes, influencer marketing, and digital media can improve confidence and lessen scepticism about cause-related environmental claims.

Table 1

Demographic profile

Basis	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	43	43%
	Female	57	57%
Age	15-20	1	1%
	20-25	81	81%
	25-30	18	18%
	30-35	0	0%
Educational Qualification	UG	36	36%
	PG	59	59%
	Others	5	5%

Source: Primary Data

Table 2

Familiarity about the concept

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	77	77%
No	23	23%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table 3**Awareness about the term**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Highly Aware	5	5%
Moderately Aware	29	29%
Somewhat Aware	43	43%
Slightly Aware	19	19%
Not at all Aware	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table 4**Medium of awareness**

Medium	Frequency	Percentage
Television	1	1%
Internet/ Social Media	45	45%
Newspaper/ Magazines	28	28%
Friends/Family/Colleagues	16	16%
Sign Board & Hoardings	6	6%
Product Package	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table 5**Awareness about CRM campaigns**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
P & G Products: 'Shiksha – Padhega India, Badhega India	11	11%
ITC Classmate Notebooks : 'Let's Put India First'	37	37%
Nestle Maggi, Nescafe, KitKat: 'Nanhi Kali'	33	33%
KFC : 'Add Hope'	23	23%
Tata Tea: 'Jago Re'	8	8%
Mahindra: 'Seed The Rise'	8	8%
Nestle: 'Educate The Girl Child'	24	24%
Whisper: 'Touch The Possibilities'	24	24%
Nivea: 'Moms Touch'	13	13%
Lifebuoy: 'Help a Child Reach 5'	24	24%

Source: Primary Data

Table 6**Preferred environmental causes to use green consumables**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Controlling pollution in the air, water, and soil	35	35%
Recycling and waste reduction	31	31%
Wildlife conservation	19	19%
Protection of natural resources	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table 7**Preferred social causes by the respondents**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Children Education & Welfare, Girl Child support & Women Welfare	54	54%
Water Conservation, Environment Protection/ Pollution Control	34	34%
Poverty & Hunger	4	4%
Heritage, Arts & Culture	3	3%
Hygiene & Sanitation	5	5%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Testing of Hypothesis

H0: The attitude towards CRM does not differ significantly between male and female.

H1: The attitude towards CRM does differ significantly between male and female.

Table 8**Attitude towards CRM based on Gender**

	Gender of the respondents	N	Mean	Std.Deviation
Attitude	Male	43	92.37	2.19
	Female	57	97.57	1.35

Table 8 represents the attitude towards CRM on the basis of gender and in which the mean score for male is 92.37 and for female is 97.57 with std. deviation of 2.19 and 1.35 respectively. It is clear from the table that there is significant difference between male and female.

Table 9**Result of independent sample t-test of attitude towards CRM based on gender**

Awareness score	t-test for equality of mean		
	T	Df	Sig.(two tailed)
Equal variances assumed	-2.112	98	.037
Equal variances not assumed	-2.017	72.411	.047

As shown in the table 9, the t-test is significant at 5 percent significance level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that the attitude towards CRM does differ significantly between male and female. H0: There is no association between level of awareness and attitude towards CRM among respondents. H1: There is association between level of awareness and attitude towards CRM among Table 10 represents the correlation between level of awareness and attitude towards CRM among respondents and in which mean score is 36.41 for level of awareness and 95.34 for attitude towards CRM, with std. deviation respondents.

Table 10**Correlation between level of awareness and attitude towards CRM**

	Mean	Std.Deviation	N
Awareness	36.41	8.83	100
Attitude	95.34	12.41	100

While testing the correlation, Standard Deviation is 8.83 and 12.41, respectively. It is clear from the table that there is no relation between the level of awareness and attitude towards CRM.

Table 11**Result of the correlation test on the level of awareness and attitude towards CRM**

		Awareness	Attitude
Awareness	Pearson correlation	1	.214
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.033
	N	100	100
Attitude	Pearson correlation	.214	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.033	
	N	100	100

As shown in the table 11 the correlation is not significant at 5 percent significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that the there is no association between level of awareness and attitude towards CRM among respondents.

Results and Discussion

Out of 100 respondents 57% are female and 43% are male. Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 20-25 .Majority of the respondents (77%) are familiar about the Cause-Related concept .54% preferred Children Education & Welfare, Girl Child support& Women Welfare as the most preferred social causes for using cause driven consumables.The study shows that young consumers' perceptions of environmentally friendly and sustainable items vary significantly depending on their gender. This finding suggests that respondents' perceptions of green cause products differ between genders. Differences in environmental concern, ethical sensitivity, and emotional involvement—all of which have frequently been reported to be higher among female consumers—may be the cause of the observed gender-based variation. According to previous studies (Biswas & Roy, 2015; Bhatia & Jain, 2021), women tend to show higher pro-environmental sentiments and are more responsive to marketing messaging focused on sustainability. The findings suggest that gender has a significant impact on perception and should be taken into account when creating marketing campaigns aimed at Generation Z that are sustainable and cause-related.

Additionally, the study finds no correlation between young customers' awareness of and attitudes toward products associated to green causes. This finding implies that while Gen Z respondents might be aware of cause-related and sustainable efforts, awareness by itself does not always result in a positive perspective. This discrepancy draws attention to a crucial problem in cause-related and green marketing: awareness does not always result in positive attitudes. The awareness–attitude relationship may be weakened by elements including skepticism regarding green claims, perceived greenwashing, mistrust, and uncertainties about the true impact of cause-related actions. Previous studies (Delmas & Burbano, 2016; Mukherjee & Althuizen, 2020) have revealed similar results, arguing that informational exposure alone is insufficient unless it is supported by trustworthiness, transparency, and perceived genuineness of the cause.

From a discussion point of view, these results highlight the necessity for marketers and legislators to concentrate on trust-based and value-driven communication rather than awareness-building initiatives. Customised messaging methods may be more effective than a consistent strategy when targeting younger generation consumers, as indicated by the considerable gender difference. However, the lack of a correlation between awareness and attitude suggests that rather than depending only on informative content, increasing attitudes toward green cause-related items necessitates bolstering emotional engagement, social evidence, and visible impact. Overall, the findings add to the body of literature by showing how demographic characteristics like gender affect perception, while awareness might not be enough to mould attitudes. This has important ramifications for future studies and useful sustainability marketing campaigns.

Conclusion

The study highlights significant behavioural and demographic subtleties and provides insightful information about young people's understanding and perception of sustainable, environmentally friendly, cause-related items. The results show that although youth exhibit a respectable degree of awareness about green and cause-oriented projects, this awareness does not always result in a favourable attitude toward such products. This highlights the awareness-attitude gap, implying that exposure to sustainability messages alone is insufficient unless they are accompanied by veracity, authenticity, and observable social or environmental impact. The study highlights how important sustainable and cause-related products are becoming in today's marketplaces, but it also warns that real dedication is more important for success than a symbolic message. By concentrating on youth, the study contributes to the growing conversation about sustainable consumption and offers useful advice for social entrepreneurs, marketers, and legislators who want to encourage deep interaction with young customers. Thus, the study comes to the conclusion that developing genuine, open, and impact-driven sustainability programs is crucial to converting awareness into positive perception and enduring support among the upcoming generation of customers.

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