



Ethical Consumption And Brand Loyalty: A Study On Global Green Marketing Initiatives

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Abstract: This research paper, named “Ethical Consumption and Brand Loyalty: A Study on Global Green Marketing Initiatives,” focuses on the rising significance of sustainability in contemporary marketing and its impact on the behavior of consumers and their loyalty to brands. With the rising awareness among consumers about environmental concerns like climate change, pollution, and depletion of natural resources, they are slowly embracing the concept of ethical consumption. Ethical consumption is the practice of buying products and services that are produced and marketed responsibly.

The primary aim of the research is to examine the impact of green marketing campaigns conducted by organizations on the perception and loyalty of consumers toward brands. The research will also investigate whether consumers are genuinely supporting eco-friendly brands or whether their purchasing behavior is driven by price and convenience.

The study relies solely on the secondary research methodology. The data was gathered from the academic journals, research papers, sustainability reports of multinational corporations and Indian companies. The information gathered was analyzed to understand the global and Indian trends related to ethical consumption and sustainable branding practices.

The results show that ethical consumption is on the rise, particularly among young consumers like Millennials and Generation Z. Consumers display a positive attitude towards environmentally responsible brands and tend to form an emotional attachment and trust with such brands. However, the study also points out the gap between consumer intention and actual purchasing behavior. Consumers tend to show concern for the environment, but they fail to purchase environmentally responsible products because of their high costs and lack of availability in the market, as well as a lack of trust in corporate environmental claims.

In the Indian scenario, ethical consumption is slowly taking shape but is still in its nascent stage. Consumers in urban areas are increasingly becoming aware, but affordability is an important criterion that impacts their buying decisions.

The paper concludes that the most important elements that link green marketing campaigns to brand loyalty are trust, transparency, and authenticity. Those organizations that are genuinely working towards sustainable practices, such as green packaging, sustainable sourcing, and environmentally transparent reporting, are more likely to be successful in fostering long-term consumer relationships. On the other hand, greenwashing can have a negative impact on brand reputation.

In general, the study indicates that ethical consumption is not a passing trend but a paradigm shift in consumer behavior. Companies that can incorporate sustainability into their operations and communicate their efforts transparently can gain a competitive advantage and improve their brand image and loyalty.

I. INTRODUCTION

Global awareness of ethical consumption and environmental sustainability has grown in recent years. Nowadays, consumers are more conscious of how their purchases impact society, the environment, and human welfare in general. The concept of ethical consumption is a result of this increased consciousness. Purchasing goods and services designed to lessen harm to society and the environment is part of this practice.

Simultaneously, businesses all over the world are implementing green marketing initiatives and integrating sustainability into their branding plans. Eco-friendly product design, sustainable sourcing, recyclable packaging, and open communication regarding environmental practices are some examples of these initiatives. As consumers favour brands that align with their ethical and environmental beliefs, the growing emphasis on sustainability has had a significant impact on brand loyalty.

The study "Ethical Consumption and Brand Loyalty: A Study on Global Green Marketing Initiatives" examines how consumers' perceptions, awareness, and trust in sustainable practices affect their brand loyalty. It also examines how businesses all over the world are utilising green tactics to enhance their reputation and retain consumers.

Since environmental responsibility is no longer merely a business fad, this research is extremely pertinent today. It's becoming essential for businesses. Businesses that don't embrace sustainability run the risk of losing both their reputation and market share, particularly with younger, more socially conscious customers.

II. Literature Review

Ottman (2011) emphasized that green marketing must go beyond superficial promotional tactics and instead become embedded in product design, innovation, and long-term brand identity. Many companies now incorporate green values into their brand narratives through eco-labeling, carbon-neutral claims, and sustainable packaging (Kumar, 2016). Leonidou et al. (2013) noted that firms that adopt a comprehensive green marketing mix—encompassing product, price, place, and promotion—are more successful in appealing to environmentally conscious consumers.

Demographically, eco-conscious consumers are usually younger, better educated, and more urbanized, although recent trends indicate a growing green sentiment among diverse socioeconomic groups (Biswas & Roy, 2015). The behavioural traits of eco-conscious consumers include willingness to pay a premium for sustainable products, preference for minimal packaging, inclination toward ethical brands, and avoidance of companies known for environmental harm.

However, the literature also reveals a phenomenon known as the “value-action gap” or “green gap, where consumers express concern for the environment but do not translate that concern into actual purchases (Young et al., 2010). Factors contributing to this gap include price sensitivity, lack of availability, distrust of corporate claims, and habitual consumption behaviour. Marketers must therefore, focus not only on promoting environmental features but also on reducing perceived barriers, reinforcing social norms, and making green choices more convenient and accessible.

Over the past decade, there has been a steady increase in the market share of green products, driven by growing environmental awareness and evolving consumer expectations. Global surveys by Nielsen (2015) and McKinsey (2021) report that a significant proportion of consumers—especially millennials and Gen Z—prefer brands that are environmentally and socially responsible. In India, this trend is reflected in the rise of organic food, eco-friendly fashion, sustainable personal care, and green cleaning products.

The brands that look to satisfy them are those that correlate with their ecological label and actively showcase transparent and measurable sustainability commitments. Nevertheless, consumer cynicism may exist where green claims are understood to be shallow or unsupported, what is also known as greenwashing (Delmas & Burbano, 2011).

Amani et al. (2024) discovered that consumers who understand that the work of packaging is sustainable establish trust-based relationships with the brands, thus, being willing to purchase their products more than once. Moreover, when a minimalistic, plastic-free packaging is used, companies are generally perceived to be innovative and socially responsible which makes them more likely to retain customers. However, to ensure that the efforts on sustainable packaging become credible, it is important to ensure that such efforts are supported by clear communications and third-party certifications. In the absence of this, this can even give a wrong impression even to the authentic green initiatives. With consumers more frequently making brand decisions based on an assessment of the ecological performance of those brands, sustainable packaging will no longer be simply an expediency which helps to distinguish among the brands but, rather, a requirement of developing brand loyalty in competitive market environments.

According to research by Chen et al. (2021), green ads become more truthful, and hence the more honest the green ads seem to be, the more consumers will trust the brand and have a long-range relationship with it. On the other hand, when the claims made are either vague or absurd, it can result to consumer scepticism (i.e. such as the vague term of eco-friendly and not specified further). The issue of greenwashing, a conceited undertaking of making fallacious or dubious ecological statements, has made the subject of increased apprehension on the part of environmental conscious consumers.

III. Background of the Study

Critical environmental issues that the world is currently dealing with include pollution, overuse of natural resources, deforestation, and climate change. Businesses, consumers, and governments are becoming more conscious of their shared obligation to address these issues. A change toward sustainable patterns of production and consumption has resulted from this awareness.

The focus of ethical consumption is on consumer accountability. Consumers base their decisions on principles such as social justice, sustainability, and fairness. Green marketing, on the other hand, assists companies in modifying their operations and messaging to align with these principles. This strategy ensures that goods are produced and promoted responsibly.

The business models of companies across the globe have been altered to satisfy this need. Global giants such as Unilever, Apple, Tesla, and IKEA have set sustainability benchmarks by using renewable energy resources, minimizing carbon emissions, and recycling waste. Similarly, Indian companies such as ITC, Tata Consumer Products, and Godrej have introduced eco-friendly product lines and CSR initiatives that emphasize environmental conservation.

However, despite all these efforts, there are still challenges. Consumers find it difficult to distinguish between genuine green products and those that are making false claims of sustainability.

This study aims to explore the factors that affect ethical consumer behaviour. It looks at how effective green marketing strategies build brand trust and loyalty in both global and Indian markets.

IV. Problem Statement of the Study

Despite the increasing awareness of sustainability, there is a significant gap between what consumers claim and what they practice in their purchasing behavior. Many consumers are concerned about the environment, but they do not necessarily act on it. This is because of several factors, including price sensitivity and concerns about the authenticity of claims.

The problem is trying to determine whether ethical consumption actually leads to a loyal consumer base or if consumers still care about convenience and price more than the environment. Another issue is the concept

of greenwashing. Many companies are guilty of this. They misrepresent their products as being environmentally friendly without actual evidence.

The purpose of this study is to examine:

- Whether ethical consumption patterns really affect brand loyalty.
- How global green marketing initiatives shape consumer perception.
- To identify the gap between consumer awareness and actual buying behaviour.

The research is particularly important in the Indian context, where sustainable consumption is on the rise but has yet to go mainstream. It is important to understand these dynamics so that companies can develop effective green marketing campaigns. These campaigns will appeal to consumers and retain their loyalty through authenticity and transparency.

V. Objectives of the Study

The study aims to understand the interrelationship between ethical consumption, global green marketing initiatives, and brand loyalty.

- To study the idea of ethical consumption and how it affects consumer buying behaviour.
- To look at how global companies use green marketing strategies to create sustainable brands.

These goals all focus on closing the gap between what consumers want and what companies do for sustainability. They also offer ideas about the future of green marketing.

VI. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis and interpretation of data gathered using secondary research techniques are the main topics of this chapter. Information that has previously been gathered, examined, and published by other researchers, organisations, governmental bodies, and businesses is referred to as secondary data. Since no primary data was gathered for this study, the analysis is based on previously published works, industry reports, consumer surveys, sustainability disclosures, and international research studies on brand loyalty, ethical consumption, and green marketing initiatives.

Analysis of Global Ethical Consumption Trends

A favorable environment for green marketing activities is established by this rising awareness. Those brands that maintain high moral standards have a greater chance of winning over consumers' preference and loyalty as consumers become more aware.

Analysis of Green Marketing Initiatives Worldwide

Customers are becoming more and more skilled at distinguishing between genuine sustainability projects and greenwashing. Those who can demonstrate a positive impact are more successful at building trust and loyalty.

Ethical Consumption and Purchase Behavior

While there is a high level of awareness about ethics, it is not always translated into purchasing decisions. This means that ethical consumerism, by itself, is not a powerful enough force to drive loyalty without the following factors:

- Competitive pricing
- Product quality
- Convenience
- Credibility of sustainability claims

Analysis of Brand Loyalty in Ethical Markets

Ethical positioning creates a stronger emotional connection, which may result in long-term loyalty despite the price or convenience being questioned. Consumers who are loyal to ethical brands can be brand advocates.

Role of Trust and Authenticity

Trust is the bridge that connects ethical consumption and loyalty. Without trust, green marketing campaigns may not be successful, and this may lead to a negative perception of the brand and a lack of loyalty.

Indian Market Analysis

India is in a transitional stage where ethical consumption is on the rise but has not yet gained mainstream popularity. Consumers' loyalty to brands is based on both value and ethics.

Gujarat Market Perspective (Secondary Evidence)

There is good potential for sustainable brands in Gujarat, especially when combined with affordability.

Impact of Green Marketing on Brand Equity

Strong brand equity built through sustainability leads to long-term profitability and higher customer retention.

VII. Results and Findings

The findings and interpretations of the results of the analysis of secondary data on brand loyalty, green marketing campaigns, and ethical consumption are discussed in this chapter. The findings are gathered from published case studies, industry reports, sustainability statements, global consumer surveys, and existing literature because the study does not collect primary data. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the key findings that have been recognized through secondary research and to interpret the findings in the context of the research objectives. The findings encompass the trends, behaviors, and success of green marketing campaigns, and the role of trust and authenticity in brand loyalty.

Finding 1: Global ethical consumption is continuously rising

As per the secondary research, there has been a significant rise in ethical consumption. Today's consumers are more aware of issues such as environmental degradation, climate change, plastic pollution, and unethical labor practices.

This finding confirms that ethical consumerism is a long-term process of behavioral change, rather than a short-term phenomenon. The growing awareness of the issue offers a huge potential for brands that adopt sustainability in their core strategies.

Finding 2: Buying ethically does not always follow from ethical concern

There is a glaring discrepancy between what people say and do, according to secondary research. Concerns about sustainability are common among consumers. However, fewer people consistently purchase green or ethical goods. Higher costs for environmentally friendly goods Restricted accessibility and availability Questions concerning the veracity of green claims consistent buying patterns.

Finding 3: Operational action has replaced promotional rhetoric in green marketing.

Secondary data reveals that green marketing has evolved from the use of advertising slogans to operational sustainability in the following ways: Sustainable sourcing and production Use of renewable energy Circular economy practices Transparent sustainability reporting. Companies that demonstrate measurable environmental impact are viewed more positively than companies that merely use marketing.

Finding 4: Greenwashing negatively affects brand trust and loyalty

Among the most important findings in secondary literature is the negative impact of greenwashing. Brands that have been accused of exaggerating or misrepresenting their sustainability efforts are negatively affected by:

- Loss of consumer trust
- Negative word-of-mouth
- Loss of brand credibility

Consumers are becoming increasingly cautious about claims that are too vague or Unsubstantiated.

Finding 5: Trust acts as a key mediator between green marketing and brand loyalty

In all the studies, consumer trust has been identified as the most important factor in building brand loyalty as a result of sustainability efforts.

Consumer trust can be achieved through:

- Being transparent in communication
- Having third-party certifications
- Being committed to sustainability in the long term

When these factors are in place, consumers are more likely to be loyal to the brand even when the prices are higher.

Finding 6: Fashion and apparel industry builds deeper emotional loyalty

The characteristics of ethical fashion brands are:

- Emotional and identity-based loyalty
- Higher consumer advocacy
- Prioritize sustainability over fast fashion
- Repair, reuse, and recycling initiatives further add to the value of consumer relationships.

Ethical fashion encourages consumers to adopt responsible consumption and develop a long term relationship with the brand, unlike fast fashion.

Finding 7: Ethical consumption is emerging but not yet mainstream in India

Secondary research in India shows that:

- There is an increasing awareness among urban consumers.
- Its adoption has increased among the younger and educated sections of society.
- Price sensitivity is still a major hindrance.
- Indian consumers sometimes compare the price with the ethical implications.

Key Consolidated Findings

- Ethical consumption positively influences brand loyalty
- Trust and authenticity are very important mediating variables.
- Green marketing can only be successful if it is supported by actual actions.
- Emotional brand loyalty is stronger in the case of ethical brands.
- Greenwashing has a severe negative influence on brand credibility.
- Consumers in India are becoming ethically conscious but are still price-sensitive.

The results and conclusions obtained from the secondary research clearly show that the idea of ethical consumption and green marketing campaigns has a major impact on developing brand loyalty in the global as well as Indian markets. Even though the awareness level regarding sustainability is increasing, the development of consumer loyalty is highly dependent on factors such as trust, transparency, affordability, and quality. Developing long-term emotional and behavioral loyalty is more effectively done by those brands that have incorporated ethical values into their business processes rather than just relying on sustainability as a marketing tool. The above-mentioned results strongly support the objectives of the study and provide a good foundation for the conclusions and recommendations in the next chapter.

VIII. Limitations of the Study

1. Dependence on secondary data:

The main drawback of this study is that it is completely dependent on secondary data. The study uses already published research papers, sustainability reports of companies, industry surveys, and global consumer studies.

As the researcher has not collected the data himself, the results are dependent on:

- The accuracy of the already conducted studies
- The reliability of the published reports
- The objectivity of the previous researchers

The secondary data sometimes may include:

- Old information
- Inconsistent methods
- Different sampling methods

Thus, the results may not accurately represent the current real-time consumer behaviour.

2. Insufficient Direct Customer Engagement:

The fact that there was no primary research conducted means that the researcher was unable to engage with the consumer directly to gain an understanding of:

- Personal attitudes
- Motivations
- Emotional responses
- Actual purchase experiences

Consumer behaviour, particularly ethical consumerism, is a highly psychological area that is driven by factors such as values, perceptions, and emotions. These elements are particularly difficult to quantify using secondary research alone.

3. Limited Access to Data Particular to India:

Most of the global research on ethical consumption and sustainability has been carried out in developed countries like the United States and European countries. This leads to the following:

- Much of the data available is of Western consumer behaviour.
- The data available for the Indian market is relatively small.
- The Indian market is not entirely represented in terms of differences between urban and rural consumers.

Thus, although the research includes the Indian perspective, it may not entirely represent the Indian consumer base, particularly semi-urban and rural India.

4. Changing Consumer Behaviour Quickly:

Consumer awareness and attitudes towards sustainability are changing at a rapid pace because of:

- Social media influence
- Government policies
- Awareness of climate change
- Corporate sustainability initiatives

Since secondary research relies on studies that have already been published, some data may become outdated at a very fast pace. Consumer attitudes in the current scenario may be different from those expressed in previous research findings.

5. Potential Bias in Reports on Corporate Sustainability:

A significant amount of secondary data is obtained from company sustainability and annual reports. These reports are designed and developed by the companies themselves and can sometimes display the information in a positive way.

Companies can:

- Point out the positive aspects of environmental performance
- Understate the failure or difficulties experienced
- Focus on marketing stories

This can lead to reporting bias, which can influence the objectivity of the analysis related to green marketing initiatives and brand trust.

6. Unable to Assess Real Purchase Behaviour:

Secondary research may include the measurement of consumer intentions rather than actual behaviour. However, ethical consumerism can also exhibit a gap between intentions and behaviour. Consumers may state an intention to support green products but may not necessarily purchase them on a consistent basis due to cost or convenience.

As this research did not include actual purchase tracking, it is not possible to accurately measure:

- The frequency of purchases
- The level of actual brand loyalty
- Actual spending behaviour

7. Restricted Applicability to All Industries:

The study mainly concentrates on the major sectors like:

- FMC
- Fashion and apparel
- Food and beverages

However, ethical consumption may act differently in other industries such as automobiles, banking, or heavy industrial products.

8. Different Definitions of "Green" and "Ethical":

Another limitation comes from the different definitions of terms such as:

- Ethical consumption
- Sustainable products
- Green marketing

There is no universally accepted standard. Some studies focus on environmental considerations, while others also include social responsibility or fair labour practices. Because of the different definitions, it is difficult to compare results from different sources.

9. Unrecognised Cultural Disparities:

Consumer attitudes towards sustainability are also culture and economic situation-dependent. In developed nations, consumers may be motivated by ethical considerations, while in developing nations, sustainability is still a matter of affordability and accessibility.

As this study relies on global data, it may not be able to capture the nuances of cultural, economic, and social factors that shape consumer loyalty in a particular region.

Although the study offers valuable insights into ethical consumption and brand loyalty, the results of the study should be considered in light of the limitations discussed above. The use of secondary data, absence of direct consumer response, limited availability of evidence in the Indian context, and the dynamic nature of consumer attitudes hinder the accuracy and generalizability of the results.

Despite the limitations, the study still provides valuable academic and practical knowledge on the impact of green marketing campaigns on brand perception and loyalty. Future studies that focus on primary data collection, a wider geographical scope, and actual purchasing behavior could help improve the results and offer more accurate information on sustainable consumer behavior.

IX. Suggestions and Recommendation

1. **Emphasis on Genuine Sustainability Methods:**

Rather than engaging in token marketing efforts, corporations should focus on real environmental initiatives. Consumers are increasingly checking the validity of corporate claims through online research and social media. To establish trust, which will translate to brand loyalty, corporations must:

- Decrease carbon emissions
- Practice sustainable sourcing
- Institute waste reduction and recycling programs
- Authenticity is key to trust, which translates directly to brand loyalty.

2. **Boost Communication and Transparency:**

Brands should communicate their sustainability initiatives through measurable data. This will help avoid making claims that are hard to trust.

Companies should:

- Communicate sustainability initiatives through measurable data
- Use clear product labelling
- Reveal information about material sourcing
- Reveal information about environmental impact

3. **Reduce the Cost of Sustainable Products:**

One of the major challenges in ethical consumption is the cost of the product. Many consumers support sustainable causes but cannot afford to buy eco-friendly products at a higher price. Organizations should:

- Implement cost-effective production methods
- Provide smaller packaging options
- Design mid-range sustainable product lines

This will lead to an increase in the adoption and repeat business rate of sustainable products, especially in developing nations such as India.

4. **Preserve Product Performance and Quality:**

However, sustainability by itself is not a guarantee of consumer loyalty. Consumers will continue to purchase sustainable products only if they are as good as or better than conventional products.

Therefore:

- Product quality should always be a priority
- Green products should not affect performance
- When sustainability and performance are combined, customers stick to the brand.

5. **Steer clear of greenwashing:**

Companies should not make misleading or exaggerated claims about the environment. Misleading claims about sustainability can cause serious harm to the brand reputation.

To avoid this:

- Claims should be verifiable
- Third-party certifications should be used
- Marketing messages should be consistent with practices

6. **Boost Consumer Education and Awareness:**

Many consumers do not have a proper understanding of eco-labels, recycling, and sustainable practices. Companies and governments should conduct awareness campaigns to educate them on the following:

- Environmental effects of products
- Advantages of ethical consumption
- Correct disposal and recycling procedures

7. Encourage the policy framework and government support:

Government policies can speed up ethical consumption through:

- Offering tax incentives for eco-friendly products
- Encouraging recycling facilities
- Developing standardized eco-labelling

Supportive policies will encourage businesses to go green and help consumers make the right choices.

In conclusion, ethical consumption is the future of marketing and business sustainability. Consumers are slowly shifting towards responsible consumption, and businesses must be responsive to these demands. Brand loyalty in today's market is increasingly dependent on trust, transparency, and shared values rather than price competitiveness.

Those organizations that consider sustainability as a fundamental business philosophy, and not just a marketing tool, will find themselves with better customer relationships, improved reputation, and ultimately increased profitability. Ethical consumption and green marketing campaigns are thus not only beneficial for the environment but also for business success.

X. Conclusion

The current study focused on the relationship between ethical consumption, green marketing campaigns, and brand loyalty through the use of secondary research materials such as academic writings, sustainability reports, and consumer surveys. The goal of the study was to determine if environmentally and socially responsible business practices affect consumer behavior.

It is evident from the analysis that ethical consumption has emerged as a growing influence in contemporary marketing. Today, consumers are not only concerned with the quality, price, and convenience of products but also with the manner in which products are manufactured, packaged, and delivered. Issues such as environmental protection, fair labor practices, and corporate social responsibilities have become important considerations.

The results indicate that there is an increasing awareness of sustainability among consumers in the global market, especially among the younger generation of consumers, including Millennials and Generation Z. These consumers tend to support brands that reflect their own values and show a sense of responsibility towards society and the planet.

However, the research also revealed that there is an obvious gap between intention and behavior. Although consumers show concern for the protection of the environment, they do not necessarily buy products that are environmentally sustainable. The reasons for this are high prices, unavailability, a lack of knowledge about the product, and doubts about the authenticity of the green claims made by the product.

Green marketing campaigns also have a significant role in shaping consumer perception. Those companies that practice sustainable packaging, reduce carbon emissions, use renewable energy sources, and are transparent in their communication are likely to win consumer trust. Trust was identified as the most significant factor linking ethical consumerism and brand loyalty. If consumers feel that the environmental claims made by the company are authentic, they tend to form positive attitudes and an emotional bond with the brand.

On the other hand, misleading or overstated environmental messages (greenwashing) can negatively affect brand credibility and loyalty. Modern consumers are better informed and more discerning; they assess business behavior, not advertising messages. As such, authenticity and transparency are critical in sustainable branding.

The research also reveals that consumers with ethical brands display more attitudinal loyalty than behavioural loyalty. Consumers feel proud to be associated with brands that are environmentally responsible and refer them to others. However, repurchasing occurs only when sustainability is combined with good product quality, pricing, and convenience.

Coming to the Indian scenario, the concept of ethical consumption is still in the nascent stage. Consumers in urban and educated sections are becoming increasingly aware about sustainability, but price sensitivity is still a big hindrance. Indian consumers are ready to switch to ethical brands, but they also want it to be affordable.

In conclusion, the paper finds that ethical consumption and green marketing practices have a significant impact on brand image and consumer loyalty. Sustainability is no longer a corporate social responsibility function but has become a business strategy that helps in achieving competitive advantage and customer loyalty. Organizations that incorporate ethical principles into their operations are more successful in developing a strong relationship with consumers.

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