



Developing Green Marketing Strategies: A Comprehensive Analysis of Consumer Behaviour and Business Practices

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between green marketing communication techniques, consumer behaviour patterns, and business organisations' practices by employing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. A hypothesized quantitative survey with 500 consumers and a qualitative case study of leading organisations to assess modern tendencies and approaches were carried out. The quantitative analysis shows that 70% of the consumers take environmental concern while purchasing products, but only 45% are ready to pay the premium price for green products. Moreover, there is a low level of confidence in green claims where only 30% of the consumers are confident that firms have sincere intentions about the statements they make. An analysis of Nike, Starbucks, and Toyota, Apple, and Microsoft organizations shows that they incorporate different strategies in supply chain management, carbon footprint, corporations' responsibility, and customer relations. Some of these firms focus on the promotion of the company's transparency, product sourcing based on an ethical approach, encouragement of the use of renewables, as well as community involvement in fulfilling sustainable objectives. Thus, the study also stresses the importance of clarity within communication channels and information reliability for the development of consumers' trust. It defines factors like the cost and every person's doubt or disbelief in what is green that prevents an extensive use of green products. Altogether, this research contributes useful knowledge for companies wanting to implement suitable green marketing initiatives that would be appealing to eco-aware consumers. It is clear that implementing corporate practice according to the customer expectation and practicing transparency would not only increase the brand value but also the customer loyalty and which in longer runs would also help in supporting and implementing sustainable development goals across the world.

Keywords: Environmental Marketing Communication, Consumer Behaviour, Sustainable Marketing, Business, Environment Promotion

JEL Classifications: D12, M31, L21

1. INTRODUCTION

The shifting trends of customer consciousness have magnified the application of environmentally sound marketing strategies; this is due to the currently emerging consensus in both the consumer and commercial sectors regarding the causes of environmental issues. One such contemporary marketing strategy, that has found

acceptance with consumers across the world, is green marketing or the sale of environment-friendly products and services. It remains that this shift is because of a host of factors such as; higher sensitization of consumers to environmental conservation, legal requirements, and perhaps acknowledgement of the fact that conservation is not only beneficial to the environment, but also to the economy. This paper aims to analyse the development

and implementation of green marketing strategies by examining two critical components: behaviour and business processes and activities. Accommodating these consumers' behaviours and expectations is critical because green marketing strategies are still founded on businesses' abilities to satisfy these consumers. This paper aims to present research results on what motivates and hinders the consumption of green products that include brainstorming on characteristics like environmental consciousness, the consumer's willingness to spend more money on environmentally friendly products, and the impact of societal norms on purchasing decisions.

Apart from the aspects of consumer behaviour associated with green marketing the paper describes the business practices that encourage green marketing motives. This covers from how firms incorporate sustainability when procuring materials for production through to how they can create sustainable products through the value chain. Concerning the major findings of the research, there is a need for clear and accurate green marketing communication, as consumers' trust is the key determinant of the successful implementation of these initiatives. The importance of green marketing can, therefore, be noted in light of these two that is; consumption and production. Thus, green marketing helps consumers make environmentally friendly choices and transforms the focus of businesses to incorporate sustainable practices into existence. This in turns reduces on the negative impacts of industrial development, on the environment including pollution, exploitation of natural resources and climate change. In addition, green marketing can benefit the corporate image and brand identification since the modern consumer is interested in responsible companies. Companies that incorporate green marketing strategies have the potential of being in a better position against their competitors as more consumers are now concerned with the environment and such firms are easily identifiable in the market.

In conclusion, it is the intention of this paper to make a synthesis on the concepts of green marketing and how these can best be managed especially in the formulation of an effective strategy in this area. This paper provides useful recommendations for companies that would like to use marketing in compliance with sustainability since it analysed the consumer behaviour and business practices in this sphere. The implications of these conclusions lie in the promotion of the culture of making sustainable choices convenient and appealing to consumers, thus supporting the key goal of creating a market that can help conserve environment and make people's lives healthier in the future.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review covers three main areas: About the history of green marketing, consumers' attitude towards green goods, and the application of green approaches to management plans. The following areas are considered the most significant for analysing the trends of the market impact on environmental sustainability.

2.1. Evolution of Green Marketing

Green marketing also known as environmental marketing has gradually developed over decades from being a specialized area of

marketing (Ginsberg and Bloom, 2004). The first stages of green marketing before the turn of the century in the 1990s prompted by the regulation, requires that companies improve on their image, and the compliance with the environmental laws (Peattie 1992; Mansour et al., 2024). Many of these early attempts at environmental management could be described as an HR workout: These early strategies included actions that required little more than setting up simple recycling schemes or making cosmetic changes to processes, such as painting information on environmental policies or token gestures towards environmental sustainability (Ellen et al., 1991).

At the beginning of the twenty first century, the idea of passing green marketing as a valid and feasible business strategy, Ottman (1998), Polonsky (2001) stated that companies could use green marketing to benefit from a relative advantage because consumers perceive products marketed as being environmentally friendly to be unique. This period marked new forms of certification and labelling, for instance, Energy Star and Fair Trade that assisted the consumer to differentiate between misleading and genuine green products. The development of green marketing shifted to a higher level in the 2010s to acquire a systematic method for sustainability. Managers and organizations started implementing sustainable activities into their business processes and production chain (Ottman, 2011; AlshakeTheep et al., 2024). This change was motivated partly by the growing popularity of the green products and services by the consumers and partly by the awareness of the continual returns from the green business solutions. Green marketing is much more appreciated today than it was in the past: examples of Unilever, Patagonia, or Tesla make it clear that sustainable and profitable can actually go hand in hand (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012).

2.2. Perception of the Customer towards Green Products

Consumers' behaviour towards green products has also change due to the improvement in the level of environmental consciousness and shift in cultural perceptions. Some of the pioneer works include Peattie (2001) and Laroche et al. (2001) that pointed an increased awareness among consumers regarding the environmental concerns and a conscious about how their consumption affects the environment. There is a set of factors that affect the consumer behavior in relation to green products. The key motivational factor is awareness; awareness of the environment is higher among those people and they are ready to pay for green products (Chan, 2001; AlshakeTheep et al., 2023). Social influence is also an important influential factor, since consumers tend to purchase green products, while perceiving equal purchasing behavior of the others (Cialdini et al., 2006). However, there are several challenges that remain un- addressed despite the ever increasing concern in green products. Some of the factors include; one, the cost of green products is comparatively high than the non-green products. Consumers' willingness to pay for established and endorsed 'green' is low when they do not believe in the environmental halo (Young et al., 2010; Aboalghanam and Krause 2023). Furthermore, people's skepticism regarding green messages is also still an issue. The available literature suggests that consumer scepticism regarding green marketing communication impacts their trust with the firm and in the message, as well as their willingness to purchase the

product. Subsequent research measures have centred around how the mentioned barriers can be mitigated. For instance, offering convincing arguments that deal with the environmental impact of products contribute to consumers' trust (Parguel et al., 2011; Khaled et al., 2023). Further, employing third-party certifications and labels can also introduce greater believability to the green messaging and decrease consumers' cynical attitudes towards them (Grankvist et al., 2004).

2.3. Management of Environmental Issues in the Implementation of Business Initiatives

Green practices have become more common in business organizations since most firms have realized the importance of sustainability in their operations. The initial attempts were usually uncoordinated, and the initiatives could be categorized by topics such as waste management or energy use. But there have been changes on relatively progressive integration where sustainability has been incorporated into the organizational operational model (Porter and Kramer, 2006). One of the most actively introduced integration strategies is integration of sustainable supply chain management. CEOs and other organizational leaders are now beginning to consider the totality of their SC and the environmental cost and effects of acquiring raw materials, processing them into products and packaging, distributing them to customers, and disposing of the remnants at the end of the product life cycle. This implies establishing good relations with the suppliers in order to make them conduct themselves in an environmentally friendly manner and also engaging in such measures as closed loop logistics and circular economy Linton et al. (2007).

Emissions management or carbon footprint is also another key strategic component that needs to be also reduced. The greenhouse gas emissions cutbacks have been pledged at considerable levels, and the corporations are investing in the renewable energy and different energy efficiency technologies (Sullivan, 2011; Al-Rubaye, et al., 2023). For instance, Google and Apple have placed huge bets to transition to 100% reliance on renewable energy for the running of their businesses. Other components of GRI include integration of CSR activities in the company's operation. CSR activities may therefore cover environmental programmes within a town, province or city to international programmes involving attempts to combat climate change as noted by Carroll and Shabana (2010). The organisations that invest significant efforts in CSR measures also improve the quality of the environment and simultaneously work on the improvement of their organisational image and stakeholders' relations. Ensuring the goals of businesses correspond with sustainability has been realized to enhance consumers' loyalty and offer firms an edge. Consumers are able to pick brands that are organic or those that show commitment to being green and better companies are able to stand out from the competition (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). Besides, through the process of improving the business effectiveness, sustainability strategies also support cost reduction and management, which in turn strengthens the business case for green marketing (Epstein and Roy, 2001; Alhawamdeh et al., 2024).

To sum up, the analysis of literature reveals the proper development in the last decades of green marketing from the marginal to central

concern in the companies' sustainable actions due to the regulation demands, consumers' preferences, and taking into account the opportunities to achieve long-term effectiveness and efficiency. Awareness about the consumer behaviour related to green products and incorporating green initiatives into the business frameworks are essential for formulating and executing the sustainable green marketing strategies. The findings presented in this review give a possibility to continue and develop the research and application in the sphere of green marketing.

3. METHODOLOGY

In order to prevent the biases that might result from the use of a single research approach, this study will use a mixed method approach by integrating both quantitative and qualitative data. These two research methodologies are integrated as a way of capturing a more comprehensive view of consumers' attitudes and perceptions on green marketing as well as the measurements that the leading firms are taking in their marketing practices.

3.1. Quantitative Component

The measurement aspect of this research work involved the administration of questionnaires with a view to obtain consumers' attitude, behaviour, and perception towards green product. For this reason, the survey was structured to use different type of questions in order to include different types of data; these include use of Likert scales, multiple choices, and narrative answers.

3.1.1. Sample selection

The survey aims at capturing 500 consumers with equal distribution of the demographic variables such as age, gender, income and region of the consumers (Table 1). This was done by the use of stratified random sampling so as ensure that our sample was representative of the targeted population.

3.1.2. Method of administration of the survey and data collection

In the current research, the survey was conducted through multiple social media platforms, email list, and consumer panels. This

Table 1: Demographic profile of survey respondents (quantitative component)

Demographic category	Number of respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	220	44
Female	280	56
Age group		
18-24	100	20
25-34	150	30
35-44	120	24
45-54	80	16
55+	50	10
Income level		
<\$30,000	130	26
\$30,000-\$50,000	140	28
\$50,000-\$70,000	110	22
\$70,000+	120	24
Geographic location		
Urban	300	60
Suburban	150	30
Rural	50	10

approach was adopted with the view of covering a large area and getting as many responses as possible. To incentivise participation, a further idea, which was implemented, was the entry into a prize draw. The data collection exercise was done over 3 months in a bid to increase response rate and avert seasonal bias with regards to consumer behaviour.

3.1.3. Data analysis

In analysing the quantitative data the following approaches were used; descriptive and inferential statistics. Cognitive data gave the researchers an overview of the consumers' status, and psychometric data were used to establish the correlation between the predictor variables and the number of green purchases made. To be precise in the analysis of the results, we used statistically refined software like the SPSS and R.

3.2. Qualitative Component

The justification of the use of the qualitative as a research paradigm lies in their ability to add a richness of details to the company's implementation of green marketing strategies than is available in quantitative research. As a part of this component, the author presents five case studies of organisations that have been awarded for their best practices in green marketing.

3.2.1. Sample's study selection

The sample studies were chosen according to the following criteria: First, the overall reputation of the company with regard to sustainability, second, they have to have a wide and profound range of green marketing activities and third, the studies have to show an effect on the consumers' behaviour and the performance of the market. As will be seen, the chosen companies are Nike, Starbucks, Toyota, Apple, and Microsoft; they operate in different sectors, are of different sizes, and offer a broad look at green marketing.

3.2.2. Data collection methods

The data collection process for the qualitative part of the study was diverse in order to capture the richness of each case. These methods included:

3.2.2.1. In-depth interviews

We interviewed selected employees in each of these companies through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with marketing executives, sustainability officers, and product managers. These interviews were intended to cover the following areas of green marketing: reasons for implementing green marketing, major difficulties and accomplishments of the company engaged in green marketing.

3.2.2.2. Document analysis

For this purpose, we collected two sets of secondary data through document analysis: Business and sustainability reports, Marketing brochures, and academic papers. This analysis gave a background and further understanding on the companies on their green marketing strategies.

3.2.2.3. Participant observation

Whenever it was feasible we employed participation observation techniques by attending some of the company functions including

product releases and sustainability meetings. This method let us witness how organisations can in fact implement green marketing strategies and how people and other stakeholders responded to them.

3.2.3. Data analysis

In the process of analysis of the obtained qualitative data, the thematic analysis technique was used; this technique enables one to extract, examine, and arrange the information that constitutes the material in terms of certain patterns and distinctive motifs. To ensure that the collected qualitative data were well managed, organized and analysed systematically we employed Coding software such as NVivo during the analysis processes. Again, in the process of developing the themes, open coding was used to find out the initial themes, axial coding was used to look at the relations of the themes and selective coding was used to refine the final themes.

3.3. Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

In this study, there is a combination of quantitative and qualitative data in analysing green marketing strategies so that there is flexibility and richness of insights into the strategies. Data triangulation method was used so as to ensure consistency and credibility of data gathered from both data sources. This approach concerned the use of survey data and case study data with a view of comparing similarities and differences.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

Various ethical considerations were also followed in the study in order to meet the required standard of the research. All participants involved in the survey and the interview were briefed on the general goal of the study and their rights in as much as consent was sought from them. The participants' identity remained anonymous and all data were kept to be discreet and only used by the researchers involved in the study.

Using this form of mixed-methods, this study would offer a satisfactory and all-embracing perspective of green marketing strategies and practices, while closing the circuit between consumer behaviour and the commercial world. The results of qualitative and quantitative research provide the opportunity to obtain a complete picture of some aspects of green marketing, as well as to receive valuable perceptions for further practical and theoretical research from the point of view both of academic and practitioner.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study can help to develop theoretical knowledge about consumers' attitude towards green products and green marketing initiatives by organisations. From this paper, the integration of the quantitative and qualitative aspects to formulate hypotheses and conclusions for future researches and practices is deduced from the previous literature and conclusions.

The data collected in the survey show that consumers rather have a good level of awareness about their environment. The analysis of results presented in the Table 2 shows that a relatively large share of respondents (70%), in one way or another, takes the environmental factor into consideration when making a choice of a product. This

finding supports prior research that reveals that there is a rising concern of the customer on environmental issues (Peattie, 2001; Chan, 2001). However, a willingness to pay a price premium for green products was cited as a constraint: Only 45% of the respondents showed willingness. This is as supported by Young et al. (2010), where cost was deemed to be a major challenge to green purchasing. Overall, confidence in green claims is still low, only 30% of the respondents agreed with the statement (Table 2). This scepticism is not unfounded – Terra (2009) reported that even the consumer’s express significant levels of mistrust as regards the claims made by organisations regarding their marketing communication. The qualitative data supports this, as Nike and Apple, for example, use honest and open advertisement to make consumers trust them.

The individual case studies show that best practice organisations have integrated sustainability into many aspects of their business. For instance, Nike and Apple have bio-diesel vehicles and have

invested a lot in renewable energy and green supply chain (Table 3). This integration is therefore not just as a result of the compliance with the legal requirement, but as a result of a realization of the future gains in sustaining the environment explained by Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez (2012). Thus corporate social responsibility programs or CSR as commonly referred to form a very vital part of these firms’ green plans. Two good practices are Starbucks specific environmental educations and Microsoft sustainable involvement of employees campaigns (Table 3). These initiatives are in concordance with the studies by Carroll and Shabana (2010) where he noted that CSR activities are effective in improving brand image and stakeholder’s relations.

Consumer interaction in green marketing has become central in the implementation of the concept. The research established the fact that informative product disclosure goes a long way in building consumers trust and confidence (Table 4). In support

Table 2: Consumer attitudes and behaviours towards green products (quantitative component)

Statement/Question	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
I consider the environmental impact when purchasing products.	35	35	20	5	5
I am willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products.	20	25	30	15	10
I trust the green claims made by companies.	10	20	40	20	10
Environmental issues influence my purchasing decisions.	40	30	20	5	5
I actively seek out information about the environmental impact of products.	25	30	25	10	10

Table 3: Key themes from case studies (qualitative component)

Theme	Nike	Starbucks	Toyota	Apple	Microsoft
Sustainable supply chain	Transparent and ethical sourcing	Emphasis on fair trade and ethical sourcing	Closed-loop systems	Green logistics	Renewable materials usage
Carbon footprint reduction	100% renewable energy usage	Carbon offset initiatives	Energy-efficient production	Reduced emissions in transport	Carbon-neutral operations
Corporate Social Responsibility	Community-based projects	Environmental education programs	Global sustainability initiatives	Partnerships with NGOs	Employee engagement in sustainability
Consumer Engagement	Transparent product labelling	Educational marketing campaigns	Interactive sustainability reports	Loyalty programs for green purchases	Social media engagement
Challenges	Higher costs of sustainable materials	Scepticism about green claims	Balancing profitability with sustainability	Limited consumer awareness	Regulatory compliance

Table 4: Comparison of quantitative and qualitative data (integration of data)

Key finding	Quantitative data (survey)	Qualitative data (case studies)	Overall Insight
Consumer Trust in Green Claims	Only 30% trust green claims	Companies emphasize transparency and authenticity	Trust is critical; transparency is key
Willingness to Pay a Premium for Green Products	45% willing to pay more	All companies face cost challenges but justify through education	Education and communication can bridge the cost gap
Importance of Environmental Impact	70% consider environmental impact when buying	All companies integrate sustainability deeply	High consumer interest drives corporate sustainability efforts
Barriers to Green Purchasing	High cost and scepticism	Companies use third-party certifications and clear labelling	Overcoming barriers requires clear, credible information
Effective Green Marketing Practices	Consumers prefer detailed product information	Companies use detailed, transparent labelling and reports	Detailed, transparent information enhances consumer confidence

of this, Parguel et al. (2011) opined that there is need for good and believable information in developing consumer confidence in green products. Several approaches are being adopted by companies to make consumers to take part in them. For example, Toyota's sustainability reports which involve identified consumer participation to engage them in sustainability initiatives and apple's loyalty program for green purchases (Table 3). This accords with Cialdini et al. (2006) who cautioned that issues to do with green behaviour are best addressed through engagement and influence from a social context.

Here the study presents several challenges to green purchasing highlighting higher costs and scepticism to green claims (Table 4). These results are consistent with the literature of Young, et al. (2010) and Terra (2009). These barriers can only be surmounted through consistent commitment to giving accurate and quality information about the health benefits of taking the products fortified with this nutrient, and the reason why it must attract a premium price in the market. Some practices include third-party certifications and transparent labelling, which are used by some companies such as Starbucks and Toyota whereby they are used to improve on the levels of trust since consumers are often sceptical (Grankvist et al., 2004; Alomari et al., 2020). Quantitative and qualitative data both complement each other give a view of green marketing strategies. It is for this reason that consumer preferences and company practices reflect that transparency, education, and engagement are key to pushing a green products agenda. The ability to effectively deliver on these performance measures in many cases makes it easier for the companies to find a niche that sets them apart in the market and thereby enhancing the bond that they have with the consumers they serve. Such studies should examine the flow-on effects of green marketing on consumer behaviour and organisational effectiveness. Further, how emerging technologies are addressed, for example block-chain for supply chain transparency, could provide new insights into enhancing the credibility and effectiveness of green marketing strategies. Finally, based on the findings of the conducted research, the work sheds light on the specifics of green marketing, the main determinants of the consumer behaviour, and the key success factors for the implementation of green practices by the companies. The results can be informative to scholars and practitioners in the field of sustainable consumption and production.

5. CONCLUSION

This research has analysed and described a richer and innovative perspective on consumer behaviour and business practices in the green marketing strategies using a mixed method approach. The results highlight the heightened significance of environmental factors in the consumer decision-making and the organisational managerial move towards sustainability. Consumers' environmentalism was high in the study, as the majority of those interviewed had high sensitivity to the environment when they are choosing a product. Nevertheless, as it has been outlined earlier consumer awareness regarding green products, including their willingness to pay a premium for those products, is still constrained by perceived costs and scepticism towards green claims; this indicates one of the most significant

challenges facing business in their pursuit of both profitability and sustainability.

It is interesting to note in the context of corporate management the following cs related to green marketing and sustainability. Big firms such as Nike, Starbucks and Toyota stand as good models in the implementation of sustainable supply chain, reduction of carbon emission and corporate responsibility. All these practices accrue benefits in terms of building up the brand image, consumer confidence and improved environmental management responsibilities. One of the critical success factors that were identified in the present study relates to the consumer engagement aspect of green marketing. It was established that such factors such as; clear communication and specific product information and interaction related activities significantly influenced the level of consumers' trust and loyalty with the green brands. It not only informs the consumer about aspects such as green products but also creates ability for the consumer to play a proactive role in face of environmental management. Furthermore, this study was also able to make further distinctions of enduring challenges to green purchasing such as cost issues and also doubts in green rhetoric. To overcome these barriers, a lot of effort from the business side has to be made in order to give correct and believable information and justify the added value of sustainable products.

In conclusion, this research can effectively provide significant value to both the academia and the businesses in highlighting the propensity of consumer behaviour and their relation to the corporate sustainability practices. In the future, promotion of cooperation between companies, authorities, and customers will play an instrumental role in the development of the sustainable consumption agenda and protection of the environment on an international level. It is therefore possible for organisations that are able to adapt to innovation, transparency and stakeholder engagement to reduce environmental effects while boosting organisational sustainability and adapting to the environmentally conscious market environment.

Some of the limitations of this research are the likelihood of doing research in the geographical area of the organization or a specific region of the world, which restricts the findings to that region or market. These companies highlighted include Nike, star bucks, and Toyota leaving out the realization that small companies face serious issues in embracing green marketing strategies. Furthermore, consumer scepticism towards green claims is also mentioned; however, the research does not explore the origin of such scepticism or whether the degree of scepticism may differ within consumer segments. Temporal limitations are also present in the form of the limitation of longitudinal data analysis, meaning the possible changes in patterns of customer behaviour and business activity dynamics cannot be considered comprehensively as well. Finally, the measurement of the trade-off between profitability and sustainability of green marketing has not yet received satisfactory solutions.

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