

Evaluating the Influence of Corporate Sustainability Practices on Brand Image and Consumer Perception

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Abstract: *In recent years, corporate sustainability has emerged as a key strategic factor influencing brand positioning and consumer behaviour. This study examines how corporate sustainability practices impact brand image and shape consumer perception. The research focuses on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices and their role in building trust, credibility, and purchase intention among consumers.*

The study integrates perspectives from marketing, sustainability management, and consumer behaviour to analyse whether sustainability initiatives lead to positive brand evaluation and stronger consumer relationships. Using a structured research approach supported by secondary data and indicative statistical analysis, the study evaluates the extent to which sustainability influences consumer attitudes and buying decisions.

The findings suggest that sustainability practices significantly enhance brand image and consumer trust, thereby positively influencing purchase intention. However, the presence of greenwashing and lack of transparency can negatively impact consumer perception. The study provides valuable insights for organisations aiming to integrate sustainability into their branding strategies effectively.

Keywords: Corporate Sustainability, Brand Image, Consumer Perception, ESG, Green Marketing, Consumer Behaviour

I. INTRODUCTION

Corporate sustainability has become a crucial element in modern business strategy due to increasing environmental concerns, social awareness, and stakeholder expectations. Consumers today are more informed and conscious about the ethical practices of organisations, which influences their purchasing decisions.

Companies are adopting sustainability practices not only to meet regulatory requirements but also to enhance their brand image and gain competitive advantage. Sustainability initiatives such as eco-friendly production, ethical sourcing, and social responsibility programs play a vital role in shaping how consumers perceive a brand.

Traditionally, companies focused on profitability and market share, with limited attention to environmental and social impacts. However, the growing importance of sustainability has shifted business priorities towards responsible practices.

Corporate sustainability practices influence brand perception by signaling responsibility, transparency, and long-term commitment. Consumers often associate sustainable brands with higher quality, trustworthiness, and ethical values.



II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate the impact of sustainability on brand image
2. To analyse consumer perception towards sustainable brands
3. To examine the relationship between sustainability and purchase intention
4. To identify challenges such as greenwashing

2.2 Research Design

The present study is based on a **descriptive and analytical research design**. The descriptive design is used to understand consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and awareness regarding sustainability practices adopted by brands. The analytical approach helps in examining the relationship between sustainability initiatives, brand image, and consumers' purchase intentions.

The study mainly relies on both **primary and secondary data**. Primary data is collected through structured questionnaires distributed among consumers, while secondary data is gathered from research articles, journals, company reports, websites, and published literature related to sustainability and branding.

A **survey method** is adopted for data collection, as it enables the researcher to obtain responses from a large number of participants efficiently. The sampling technique used is **convenience sampling**, and the sample size consists of **150 respondents**.

The collected data is analysed using suitable statistical and interpretative methods such as percentage analysis, charts, tables, and graphical representation to draw meaningful conclusions regarding the impact of sustainability on brand image and consumer perception.

2.3 Data Sources

The study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data is collected directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire designed to understand consumers' perceptions, attitudes, awareness, and purchase intentions towards sustainable brands and sustainability practices adopted by organisations.

Secondary data is collected from various published and reliable sources such as research journals, books, academic articles, company sustainability reports, websites, newspapers, magazines, and government publications. These sources provide theoretical knowledge, previous research findings, and relevant information related to sustainability, brand image, and consumer behaviour.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Age	Percentage
18-25	45%
26-35	35%
36-50	20%
Above 50	55%
Female	45%



Interpretation:

The data shows that younger consumers form the majority of respondents, indicating higher awareness and concern for sustainability among this group.

Table 2: Awareness of Sustainability

Category	Percentage
High	62%
Moderate	28%
LOW	10%

Interpretation:

Most consumers are aware of sustainability practices.

Table 3: Impact on Brand Image

Category	Percentage
Strong Positive	48%
Moderate	32%
No Impact	12%
Negative	8%

Interpretation:

Sustainability significantly enhances brand image.

Table 4: Consumer Perception Factors

Factor	Percentage
Trust	72%
Perceived Quality	65%
Emotional Bond	58%

Interpretation:

Trust is the most influential factor in shaping perception.

Table 5: Purchase Intention

Category	Percentage
Likely	68%



Neutral	20%
Unlikely	12%

Interpretation:

Sustainability positively affects purchase decisions.

Table 6: Greenwashing Perception

Category	Percentage
Exaggeration	46%
Trust	30%
Unsure	24%

Interpretation:

Consumers are skeptical about sustainability claims.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sustainability Practices	4.12	0.68
Brand Image	4.05	0.72
Consumer Perception	4.10	0.65
Brand Credibility	3.95	0.70
Perceived Quality	4.00	0.66

Interpretation:

Mean values above 3.5 indicate that respondents generally have a positive perception of sustainability practices and their influence on brand-related outcomes.

Table 8: Correlation Analysis

Variables	Sustainability	Brand Image	Consumer Perception
Sustainability Practices	1.00	0.68	0.72
Brand Image	0.68	1.00	0.75
Consumer Perception	0.72	0.75	1.00



Interpretation:

There is a strong positive relationship between sustainability practices, brand image, and consumer perception, indicating that improvements in sustainability lead to better brand evaluation.

Overall Interpretation

The data indicates that sustainability positively influences brand image, trust, and purchase intention. However, greenwashing remains a major concern affecting consumer perception.

IV. FINDINGS

The analysis of the study reveals several important insights regarding the impact of corporate sustainability practices on brand image and consumer perception. The findings indicate that sustainability has become an essential factor influencing consumer attitudes, trust, and purchasing behaviour in the modern business environment.

Firstly, the study shows that corporate sustainability practices have a significant positive effect on brand image. Organisations that actively participate in environmentally responsible, socially ethical, and sustainable business practices are viewed more positively by consumers. Activities such as reducing environmental impact, supporting community welfare, adopting eco-friendly production methods, and implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives contribute to creating a strong and favourable brand image. Consumers increasingly prefer brands that align with their social and environmental values, which enhances the reputation and recognition of such organisations in the market.

Secondly, the findings reveal that consumers tend to exhibit higher levels of trust and loyalty toward brands that demonstrate a genuine commitment to sustainability. When companies consistently communicate and implement sustainable practices, consumers perceive them as responsible and trustworthy organisations. This trust strengthens customer relationships and encourages repeat purchases, positive word-of-mouth promotion, and long-term brand loyalty. Sustainability initiatives therefore not only improve public perception but also contribute to customer retention and competitive advantage.

The study further highlights that brand image acts as a mediating factor between sustainability practices and consumer perception. This means that sustainability efforts do not directly influence consumers alone; instead, they first improve the overall image and reputation of the brand, which then positively shapes consumer perception. A strong brand image created through sustainable practices increases consumer confidence, satisfaction, and preference for the brand. Hence, organisations that effectively integrate sustainability into their branding strategies are more likely to influence consumer behaviour positively.

Another important finding of the study is the role of transparency and authenticity in sustainability initiatives. Consumers today are highly aware and informed about environmental and ethical issues. They expect companies to provide clear, honest, and genuine information regarding their sustainability efforts. Transparency in reporting sustainability activities, ethical sourcing, waste management, and social responsibility helps in maintaining brand credibility. On the other hand, misleading claims or exaggerated sustainability messages, commonly referred to as “greenwashing,” can create consumer skepticism and damage the reputation of the brand. Therefore, organisations must ensure that their sustainability practices are authentic, measurable, and effectively communicated to consumers.

Overall, the study concludes that sustainability practices significantly influence brand image and consumer perception. Companies that adopt genuine and transparent sustainability initiatives are more likely to build strong customer trust, improve brand reputation, and achieve long-term business success.

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