

# Green Claims or Greenwashing? A Study of Consumer Perception Toward Sustainable Marketing

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<https://doi.org/10.55041/ijsm.v2i5.233>

**Cite this Article:** Yadav, S. (2026). AI-Enabled Remote Patient Monitoring using Wearable Sensors and Edge Analytics. *International Journal of Science, Strategic Management and Technology*, 02(05). <https://doi.org/10.55041/ijsm.v2i5.233>

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## Abstract

This study examines consumer perception toward sustainable marketing practices, investigating the fine line between credible green claims and misleading greenwashing strategies employed by corporations. As environmental consciousness continues to rise globally, businesses increasingly adopt eco-friendly messaging to attract ethically driven consumers; however, the authenticity of such claims remains widely questioned.

Through a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys and qualitative analysis, this research explores how consumers evaluate, interpret, and respond to green marketing communications across various product categories. The study identifies key psychological and informational factors that influence consumer trust, skepticism, and purchasing behaviour in relation to sustainability claims.

Findings reveal that consumers exhibit significant difficulty distinguishing genuine environmental commitments from superficial greenwashing tactics, largely due to inconsistent regulatory frameworks, vague terminology, and information asymmetry. Factors such as brand credibility, third-party certifications, transparency of supply chains, and prior consumer awareness emerge as critical determinants of perceived authenticity.

The research further highlights generational differences in green claim receptivity, with younger demographics demonstrating heightened skepticism yet stronger purchase intention when claims are verified. This study contributes to the growing body of sustainable marketing literature by offering actionable recommendations for marketers, policymakers, and regulatory bodies to foster greater accountability, standardization, and consumer trust in green communications.

**Keywords:** Green Marketing, Greenwashing, Consumer Perception, Sustainability, Brand Credibility, Eco-friendly Claims

## Chapter-1: Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In the contemporary marketplace, environmental sustainability has emerged as a critical dimension of corporate identity and consumer decision-making. The 21st century has witnessed an unprecedented surge in ecological consciousness, driven by mounting evidence of climate change, resource depletion, and the far-reaching consequences of industrialization.

Consumers across the globe are increasingly aligning their purchasing behaviour with environmental values, compelling organizations to integrate sustainability narratives into their marketing strategies.

The proliferation of green marketing defined as the promotion of products, services, and organizational practices on the basis of their environmental benefits has been both remarkable and contentious. Brands routinely leverage eco-friendly claims, certifications, and imagery to signal corporate responsibility and attract environmentally conscious consumers. However, a significant gap frequently exists between the environmental promises made in marketing communications and the actual ecological impact of business operations. This divergence between rhetoric and reality has given rise to the phenomenon of greenwashing.

Greenwashing, a portmanteau of 'green' and 'whitewashing,' refers to the practice of conveying a misleading or unsubstantiated impression of environmental friendliness to gain competitive advantage, without meaningful commitment to sustainable practices. From vague claims such as 'eco-friendly' or 'natural' to selective disclosure of minor initiatives while concealing larger environmental harms, greenwashing manifests across a wide spectrum of deceptive communications. As regulatory bodies and watchdog organizations have begun scrutinizing such claims more rigorously, consumer scepticism toward green marketing messages has correspondingly intensified.

India, as one of the world's fastest-growing consumer markets, presents a particularly compelling context for this inquiry. Rapid urbanization, a growing middle class, increasing digital penetration, and rising awareness of environmental issues have collectively shaped a new generation of Indian consumers who are increasingly discerning about sustainability claims. Simultaneously, Indian brands and multinational corporations operating in the country have amplified their green messaging, creating a complex landscape where authentic sustainability efforts coexist with strategic environmental positioning of questionable integrity.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing body of literature on green marketing, a critical lacuna persists in understanding how consumers cognitively and affectively process green claims particularly in distinguishing genuine sustainable practices from greenwashing. Existing research has predominantly focused on Western consumer markets, leaving an insufficient understanding of how emerging market consumers, with their unique socio-cultural contexts and varying levels of environmental literacy, evaluate and respond to green marketing communications.

The central problem addressed by this research is the erosion of consumer trust that results from pervasive greenwashing. When credible and deceptive green claims co-exist in the marketplace without clear differentiation, consumer ability to make informed, environmentally responsible purchasing decisions is fundamentally compromised. Furthermore, the reputational and financial consequences for genuinely sustainable brands undermined by industry-wide scepticism fuelled by greenwashing represent a significant market failure with both economic and ecological implications.

This study therefore investigates the perceptual mechanisms, cognitive heuristics, and attitudinal responses that consumers employ when evaluating green marketing claims, and examines the extent to which these processes are influenced by demographic variables, environmental awareness, brand trust, and information sources.

**1.3 Objectives of the Study:** The study is guided by the following primary objectives

1. To examine consumer awareness and understanding of green claims and greenwashing practices in the Indian market.
2. To assess the factors influencing consumer perception and scepticism toward sustainable marketing communications.
3. To evaluate the impact of greenwashing on consumer trust, brand loyalty, and purchase intention.

4. To identify the role of demographic characteristics and environmental consciousness in shaping responses to green marketing.
5. To propose strategic recommendations for marketers to build credible, transparent, and authentic green marketing communications.

**1.4 Research Questions:** The present study seeks to address the following research questions

- How do consumers differentiate between genuine green claims and greenwashing in marketing communications?
- What cognitive and emotional factors influence consumer scepticism toward sustainable marketing?
- To what extent does exposure to greenwashing affect consumer trust and behavioural intentions?
- How do socio-demographic variables and environmental literacy moderate consumer responses to green marketing claims?

### 1.5 Significance of the Study

This research holds considerable significance at multiple levels. From a theoretical standpoint, the study contributes to the expanding literature on green marketing, consumer psychology, and corporate social responsibility by offering a nuanced framework for understanding perception formation in the context of sustainability claims. It bridges concepts from signalling theory, information asymmetry, and the elaboration likelihood model to explain how consumers process environmental messages under varying levels of involvement and knowledge.

From a managerial perspective, the findings offer actionable insights for marketing practitioners, brand managers, and corporate sustainability officers seeking to design green marketing strategies that are both commercially effective and ethically defensible. In an era of heightened regulatory scrutiny with institutions such as the European Union, the US Federal Trade Commission, and India's Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) tightening guidelines on environmental claims understanding consumer perception becomes not merely a competitive imperative but also a governance responsibility.

For policymakers and consumer advocacy organizations, this study provides empirical evidence that can inform the development of more robust green claim standards and consumer protection frameworks. Ultimately, by illuminating the dynamics of trust and scepticism in sustainable marketing, this research aspires to contribute toward a marketplace where authentic environmental commitment is rewarded and deceptive practices are systematically identified and deterred.

### 1.6 Scope and Delimitations

The study focuses on adult consumers aged 18 years and above, across urban and semiurban settings in India, with particular emphasis on individuals who have prior exposure to green marketing communications through digital and traditional media. The research encompasses multiple product categories including FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods), personal care, apparel, and household products that have been prominently associated with green marketing claims in the Indian context.

The study is delimited to the assessment of consumer perceptions and attitudes rather than a comprehensive audit of organizational sustainability practices. It does not seek to verify the factual accuracy of specific brand claims but rather to understand how consumers evaluate such claims and the behavioural consequences thereof. Cross-sectional primary data collected through structured questionnaires will constitute the primary empirical basis of the study.

## Chapter-2: Literature Review

1. Carlson et al. (1993) - *“Environmental Advertising Claims: A Matrix Methodology”*

Carlson and his colleagues examined different forms of environmental advertising claims used by companies.

2. Peattie (1995) - *“Environmental Marketing Management”*

Ken Peattie emphasized that green marketing should focus on long-term environmental responsibility rather than short-term promotional benefits.

3. Ottman (1998) - *“Green Marketing: Opportunity for Innovation”*

Jacquelyn Ottman discussed how environmental concerns influence consumer buying behaviour

4. TerraChoice (2007)- *“The Seven Sins of Greenwashing”*

The TerraChoice report introduced the concept of the “Seven Sins of Greenwashing,” explaining common deceptive environmental marketing practices.

5. Gupta and Ogden (2009)- *“To Buy or Not to Buy? A Social Dilemma Perspective on Green Buying”*

The authors analyzed factors affecting green purchasing decisions.

6. Delmas and Burbano (2011)- *“The Drivers of Greenwashing”*

The study concluded that competitive pressure, consumer demand, and weak regulations encourage companies to exaggerate sustainability efforts.

7. Parguel, Benoît-Moreau, and Larceneux (2011)- *“How Sustainability Ratings Might Deter Greenwashing”*

This research examined the role of sustainability ratings in reducing deceptive environmental communication.

8. Chen and Chang (2013)- *“Greenwash and Green Trust: The Mediation Effects of Green Consumer Confusion and Green Perceived Risk”*

The findings showed that misleading environmental claims increase consumer confusion and perceived risk, ultimately reducing trust and purchase intention toward green products.

9. Lyon and Montgomery (2015)- *“The Means and End of Greenwash”*

The authors discussed how firms strategically use environmental communication to create a positive image without making substantial environmental improvements.

10. Atkinson and Rosenthal (2014)- *“Signaling the Green Sell”*

This study analyzed how eco-labels and environmental certifications influence consumer perception.

11. Nyilasy, Gangadharbatla, and Paladino (2014) - *“Perceived Greenwashing”*

The study when consumers believe a company is falsely promoting as environmentally responsible, it creates negative attitudes toward the brand and reduces consumer trust.

12. de Freitas Netto et al. (2020) - *“Concepts and Forms of Greenwashing: A Systematic Review”*

This systematic review identified different forms of greenwashing used across industries.

13. Santos, Coelho, and Marques (2023) - *“A Systematic Literature Review on Greenwashing and its Relationship to Stakeholders”*

The study reviewed the impact of greenwashing on consumers, investors, and stakeholders.

14. Ghobbe and Nohekhan (2023)- *“Mental Perception of Quality: Green Marketing as a Catalyst for Brand Quality Enhancement”*

This research examined the influence of green marketing strategies on perceived product quality.

15. Persakis et al. (2025)- *“Greenwashing in Marketing: A Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis”*

The study analyzed greenwashing research published between 2004 and 2024.

16. AlQahtani (2025) - *“Trust or Trickery? A Systematic Review of Greenwashing and Branding”*

The study explored how deceptive sustainability claims influence consumer trust and brand authenticity.

17. Cleaner and Responsible Consumption Review (2026)- *“Complexity and Consequences of Greenwashing in a SOR Framework”*

This systematic review explained how greenwashing affects consumer emotions, perceptions, and behavioural responses.

### Chapter-3: Research Methodology

**3.1 Research Gap** Despite the growing body of literature on sustainable marketing and corporate environmental responsibility, several critical gaps remain inadequately addressed in existing research:

**I. Limited Consumer-Centric Studies in Emerging Markets:** Most existing research on greenwashing and green marketing perception is concentrated in developed Western economies such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and European nations. There is a significant lack of empirical studies examining consumer perception toward green claims in emerging markets like India, where environmental awareness is rising but regulatory frameworks remain nascent.

**II. Insufficient Focus on Consumer Skepticism:** While a number of studies have examined how companies communicate sustainability, relatively few have deeply investigated the degree of skepticism consumers hold toward green claims, and how that skepticism is shaped by demographic variables such as age, education, income, and prior environmental knowledge.

**III. Absence of a Unified Framework for Greenwashing Identification:** Existing literature does not provide a standardized or consumer-accessible framework through which individuals can identify greenwashing. Most studies approach greenwashing from a regulatory or corporate governance perspective rather than a consumer behaviour standpoint.

**IV. Gap Between Green Awareness and Green Purchase Behaviour:** Prior research acknowledges the existence of a so-called "intention-behaviour gap" in sustainable consumption, yet few studies have empirically tested the mediating or moderating factors that explain why consumers who are aware of greenwashing still engage in purchases from brands accused of such practices.

**V. Lack of Integrated Studies on Trust and Brand Loyalty:** The relationship between perceived greenwashing, consumer trust, and brand loyalty has not been sufficiently explored as an integrated construct. Understanding how misleading green claims erode consumer trust and whether that erosion is permanent or recoverable remains an underexplored area.

This study endeavors to address these gaps by empirically investigating consumer perceptions in the Indian market context, specifically examining how respondents interpret, evaluate, and act upon green marketing communications made by brands across various product categories.

### 3.2 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby ensuring that the research problem is effectively addressed.

**Type of Research:** This study adopts a Descriptive Research Design. Descriptive research is concerned with describing the characteristics, behaviour, and perceptions of a defined population. It is suitable for this study as it seeks to describe the current state of consumer perception toward green marketing claims and greenwashing without manipulating any variable.

**Nature of Research:** The research is Quantitative in nature, relying on structured survey instruments to collect measurable data that can be statistically analyzed. A quantitative approach allows for generalization of findings across a broader population and facilitates hypothesis testing.

**Research Approach:** The study follows a Deductive Research Approach, wherein hypotheses are formulated based on existing theories of consumer behaviour, green marketing, and trust, and subsequently tested using empirical data collected from respondents.

**Population of the Study:** The target population for this study comprises general consumers who have prior exposure to green or eco-friendly product claims through advertisements, packaging, or brand communication. The population includes consumers various age groups, educational backgrounds, and income levels.

**Sample Size:** A sample of 150 respondents has been selected for the purpose of this study. The sample size is considered adequate for drawing meaningful statistical inferences within the scope of this research.

**Sampling Technique:** The study employs a Convenience Sampling Technique, which is a nonprobability sampling method wherein respondents are selected based on their easy accessibility and willingness to participate. This approach is appropriate given time and resource constraints of the study and is widely used in consumer behaviour research.

**3.4 Sources of Data:** The study draws upon two primary categories of data to ensure a comprehensive and well substantiated analysis:

#### 3.4.1 Primary Data

Primary data refers to original data collected directly from respondents for the specific purpose of this research. It is firsthand information has not been previously collected or published elsewhere.

In this study, primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to a sample of 150 respondents. The questionnaire was administered through both online platforms (using Google Forms) and offline distribution, enabling wider reach and diverse representation of respondents across different demographic profiles.

#### 3.4.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to information that has already been collected, published, or presented by previous researchers, organizations, institutions. It is used in this study to:

- Establish a theoretical foundation and review existing literature
- Identify research gaps and situate the present study within the broader academic discourse
- Support and validate findings derived from primary data

### 3.5 Hypotheses of the Study

Hypotheses are tentative, testable statements that propose a possible relationship between two or more variables. They guide the direction of the research and provide a basis for statistical testing and inference. The following hypotheses have been formulated for this study:

#### Hypothesis 1: Consumer Awareness and Greenwashing Identification

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between the level of consumer awareness about green marketing and their ability to identify greenwashing practices.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is a significant relationship between the level of consumer awareness about green marketing and their ability to identify greenwashing practices.

#### Hypothesis 2: Greenwashing Perception and Consumer Trust

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** Perceived greenwashing does not have a significant negative impact on consumer trust toward brands that make green claims.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** Perceived greenwashing has a significant negative impact on consumer trust toward brands that make green claims.

#### Hypothesis 3: Greenwashing and Purchase Behaviour

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between consumer perception of greenwashing and their purchase intention or buying behaviour.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is a significant relationship between consumer perception of greenwashing and their purchase intention or buying behaviour.

### Chapter-4: Data Analysis and Interpretation






#### 4.1 Section A: Respondent Profile

##### 4.1.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

The sample was designed to capture a broad age spectrum to understand generational differences in green perception. As shown in Table 4.1, the majority of respondents fall in the 21-30 age group, reflecting the digitally-engaged millennial and Gen-Z consumer base most likely to encounter and act on sustainable marketing.

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative %
Below 20 years	22	8.8	8.8
21–30 years	98	39.2	48.0
31–40 years	76	30.4	78.4
41–50 years	38	15.2	93.6
Above 50 years	16	6.4	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.0</b>	—

**Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents (n = 250)**

Category	Age Distribution	%
Below 20 yrs		8.8%
21–30 yrs		39.2%
31–40 yrs		30.4%
41–50 yrs		15.2%
Above 50 yrs		6.4%

**Figure 4.1: Bar Chart – Age Distribution of Respondents**

#### 4.1.2 Gender and Educational Background

Gender representation was near-balanced, with females forming a slight majority. Educational qualification of respondents is also reported to contextualise literacy with respect to environmental claims.

Gender	Frequency	%	Education Level
Male	112	44.8	Below Graduate: 14 (5.6%)
Female	130	52.0	Graduate: 98 (39.2%)
Non-binary / Prefer not to say	8	3.2	Post-Graduate: 116 (46.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.0</b>	Professional/Other: 22 (8.8%)

**Table 4.2: Gender Distribution and Educational Background (n = 250)**

#### 4.2 Section B: Awareness of Green Claims and Eco-Labels

##### 4.2.1 Self-Reported Awareness of Green Marketing Terms

Respondents were asked to indicate their familiarity with commonly used green marketing terms such as 'eco-friendly', 'carbon neutral', 'biodegradable', 'sustainably sourced', and 'net zero'. Table 4.3 captures the percentage who claimed awareness of each term.

Green Marketing Term	Fully Aware (%)	Partially Aware (%)	Not Aware (%)	Total
Eco-Friendly	68.4	24	7.6	100
Biodegradable	61.2	28.4	10.4	100
Carbon Neutral	44.8	35.6	19.6	100
Sustainably Sourced	38.4	40	21.6	100
Net Zero Emissions	32	38.4	29.6	100
Cruelty Free	57.6	26.8	15.6	100
Fair Trade Certified	29.6	36	34.4	100
Organic / Natural	72	20	8	100

Table 4.3: Awareness of Green Marketing Terminology (n = 250)

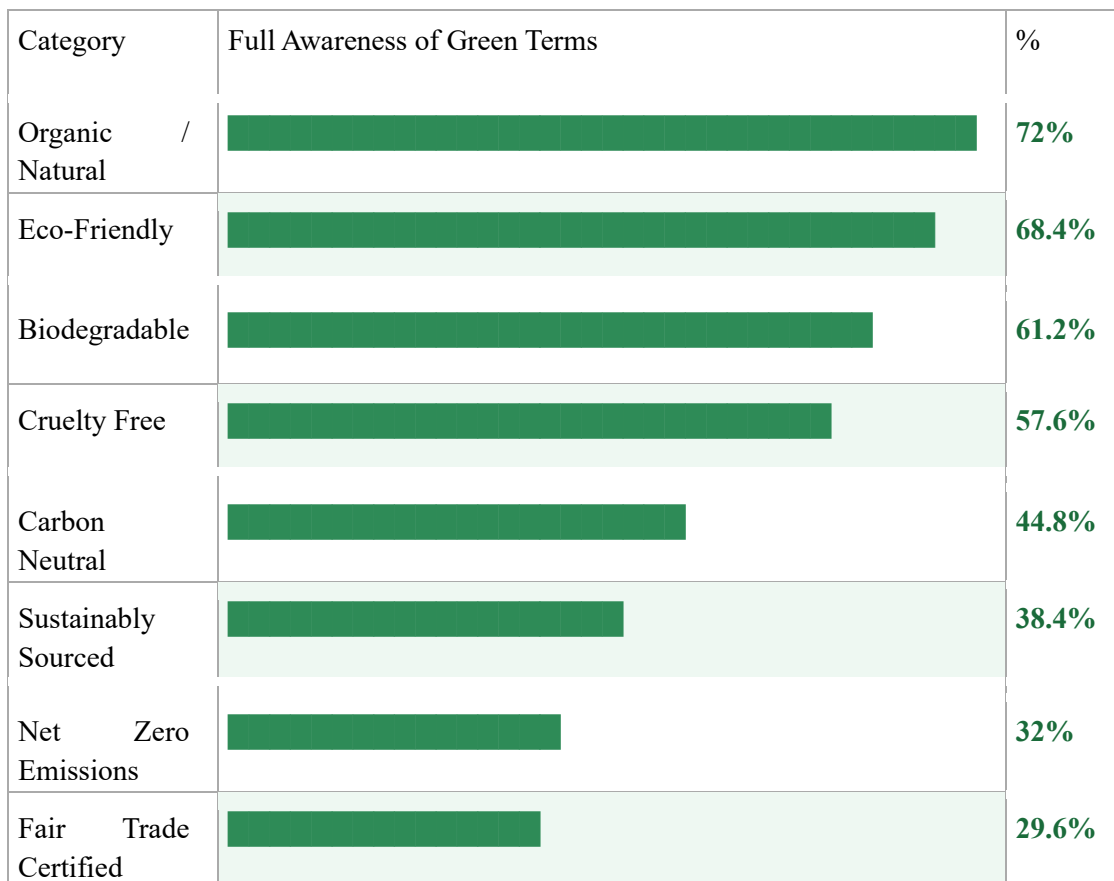


Figure 4.2: Full Awareness Levels for Green Marketing Terms (%)

### 4.3 Section C: Trust in Eco-Labels and Certifications

#### 4.3.1 Most Trusted Green Certification Labels

Certification Label	Rank 1 (n)	Rank 2 (n)	Rank 3 (n)	Rank 4 (n)	Weighted Score
BIS Eco Mark (India)	87	62	55	46	740
FSSAI Organic	68	75	61	46	715
ISO 14001	52	63	74	61	656
Brand Self-Claim (no cert.)	43	50	60	97	539

Table 4.4: Weighted Ranking of Eco-Certification Labels (n = 250)

#### 4.3.2 Perceived Credibility of Green Certification (Likert Scale)

Respondents rated their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) on the statement: 'Eco-certifications on product labels are credible and trustworthy'. Table 4.5 presents the frequency distribution.

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %	Weighted Mean
Strongly Disagree (1)	14	5.6	5.6	—
Disagree (2)	28	11.2	16.8	—
Neutral (3)	62	24.8	41.6	—
Agree (4)	96	38.4	80	—
Strongly Agree (5)	50	20	100	3.56

Table 4.5: Credibility of Eco-Certifications – Likert Scale Distribution (n = 250)

### 4.4 Section D: Perceived Greenwashing by Brands

#### 4.4.1 Respondents Who Have Felt Misled by Green Claims

A critical question asked respondents whether they had ever felt deceived by a company's environmental or sustainability claims. The responses reveal widespread skepticism in the Indian consumer market.

Response Category	Count	% of Total Sample
Yes, definitely misled	94	37.6%
Yes, possibly misled	72	28.8%
Not sure / Uncertain	48	19.2%
No, never misled	36	14.4%

Table 4.6: Consumer Experience of Deception by Green Claims (n = 250)

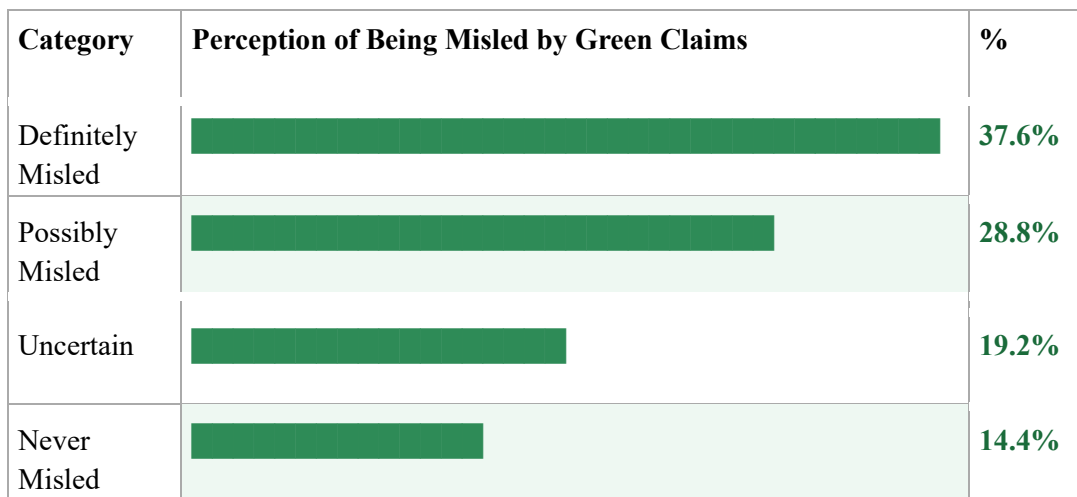


Figure 4.3: Proportion of Consumers Reporting Deception by Green Claims

#### 4.4.2 Most Common Greenwashing Tactics Identified

Respondents who reported feeling misled were further asked to identify the specific tactic they believed was used. Responses coded into five primary greenwashing categories based on TerraChoice's 'Seven Sins of Greenwashing' framework.

Greenwashing Tactic	No. of Respondents	% (of 166)	Rank
Vague / Unsubstantiated Claims	78	47%	1st
Irrelevant Environmental Claims	42	25.3%	2nd
Hidden Trade-Off (partial truth)	26	15.7%	3rd
Misleading Visuals (green imagery)	14	8.4%	4th
False Certification / Fake Label	6	3.6%	5th

Table 4.7: Perceived Greenwashing Tactics Among Deceived Respondents (n = 166)

#### 4.5 Section E: Green Purchase Behaviour and Premium Willingness

##### 4.5.1 Purchase of Green/Sustainable Products in Past 6 Months

Respondents were asked about their actual green purchase behaviour in the preceding six months. This distinguishes attitudinal data from behavioural outcomes, commonly referred to as the 'attitude behaviour gap' in sustainability research.

Purchase Frequency	Count	%	Interpretation
Regularly (5+ times)	44	17.6%	Committed green consumer
Occasionally (2–4 times)	98	39.2%	Situational green buyer
Rarely (once)	62	24.8%	Low green engagement
Never purchased green products	46	18.4%	Non-green consumer

Table 4.8: Green Purchase Frequency in Past Six Months (n = 250)

##### 4.5.2 Willingness to Pay a Premium for Genuine Green Products

Respondents were asked the maximum price premium they would accept for a product genuinely certified as sustainable, compared to a conventional equivalent.

Premium Range	Respondents	%	Cumulative %
Not willing to pay any premium	36	14.4%	14.4%
Up to 5% premium	58	23.2%	37.6%
6%–10% premium	76	30.4%	68%
11%–20% premium	52	20.8%	88.8%
More than 20% premium	28	11.2%	100%

Table 4.9: Willingness to Pay a Green Price Premium (n = 250)

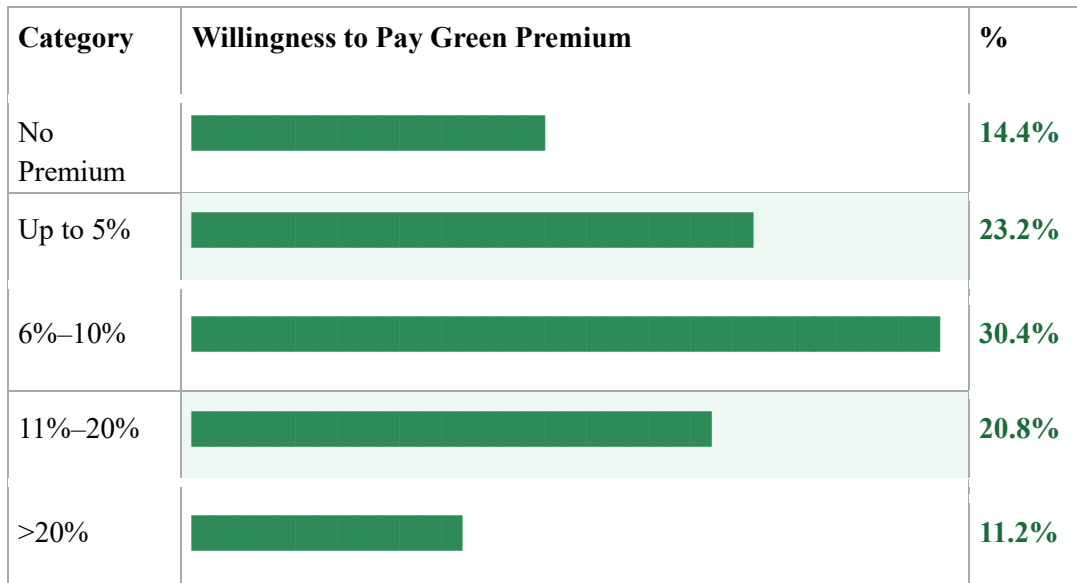


Figure 4.4: Distribution of Willingness to Pay a Green Price Premium

#### 4.6 Section F: Media Influence and Brand Credibility

##### 4.6.1 Primary Source of Green Product Information

Understanding where consumers obtain information about green products is vital for assessing the credibility of green marketing channels. Multiple-response data was collected and frequencies are reported below.

Information Source	Responses	% of Responses	% of Cases (n=250)
Socia Media (Instagram/YouTube)	164	24.9%	65.6%
Product Packaging / Labels	142	21.5%	56.8%
Television Advertisements	108	16.4%	43.2%
Friends / Family / Word-of-Mouth	98	14.9%	39.2%
Brand Website / App	72	10.9%	28.8%
News / Online Articles	56	8.5%	22.4%
Retail Store Staff	19	2.9%	7.6%

Table 4.10: Sources of Green Product Information – Multiple Response (n = 250, Total Responses = 659)








Category	Primary Sources of Green Product Information	%
Social media		65.6%
Product Packaging		56.8%
TV Advertisements		43.2%
Word-of-Mouth		39.2%
Brand Website		28.8%
News / Articles		22.4%
Retail Store Staff		7.6%

Figure 4.5: Sources of Green Product Information (% of Cases, Multiple Response)

#### 4.7 Section G: Cross-Tabulation Analysis

##### 4.7.1 Age Group vs. Experience of Being Misled by Green Claims

A cross-tabulation was performed between age group and self-reported experience of being misled, to examine whether younger consumers are more or less susceptible to greenwashing deception.

Age Group	Definitely Misled	Possibly Misled	Uncertain	Never Misled	Total
Below 20	9	7	4	2	22
21–30 yrs	38	28	18	14	98
31–40 yrs	28	22	16	10	76
41–50 yrs	14	10	8	6	38
Above 50	5	5	2	4	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>250</b>




Table 4.11: Cross-Tabulation – Age Group vs. Experience of Being Misled (n = 250)

#### 4.8 Section-H: Summary of Likert-Scale Attitudinal Statements

Respondents rated nine attitudinal statements on a five-point Likert scale. Mean scores and standard deviations are computed. Scores above 3.5 indicate general agreement; below 2.5 indicate disagreement.

Statement	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Green-labelled products perform as claimed	3.42	0.94	Moderately Agreed
I verify green claims before purchasing	2.88	1.12	Neutral / Low
Eco-certifications build brand trust	3.69	0.87	Agreed
Companies use green claims merely for profit	3.81	0.82	Agreed
I feel responsible for environmental impact	3.74	0.91	Agreed
Green products justify higher prices	3.14	1.03	Neutral
Advertising influences my green purchase	3.28	0.99	Moderately Agreed
Government should regulate green claims	4.12	0.76	Strongly Agreed
I can distinguish greenwashing from genuine claims	2.66	1.18	Low Confidence

Table 4.12: Summary of Likert-Scale Attitudinal Statements – Mean and Standard Deviation (n = 250)

Category	Likert Mean Scores – Attitudinal Statements	/ 5.0
Government regulation needed		4.12/5.0
Companies exploit green for profit		3.81/5.0
Feel responsible for environment		3.74/5.0





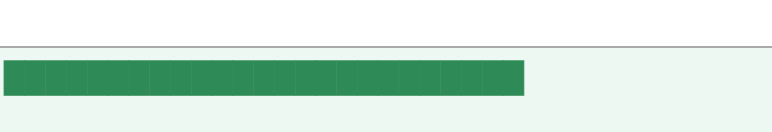
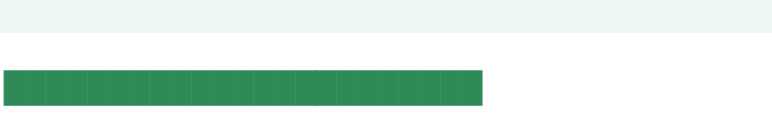
Eco-certifications build trust		3.69/ 5.0
Green labels perform as claimed		3.42/ 5.0
Advertising influences purchase		3.28/ 5.0
Green products justify premium		3.14/ 5.0
Verify claims before purchase		2.88/ 5.0
Can distinguish greenwashing		2.66/ 5.0

Figure 4.6: Mean Scores for Likert-Scale Statements on Green Marketing Attitudes

## Chapter 5: Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

### 5.1 Findings of the Study

#### 1. Awareness of Sustainable Marketing

The study found that most consumers are aware of sustainable marketing and eco-friendly products. Consumers have become more conscious about environmental protection and prefer brands that promote sustainability.

#### 2. Influence of Green Claims on Purchase Decision

Green claims positively influence consumer buying behaviour. Many respondents stated that they prefer products labeled as “eco-friendly,” “organic,” or “recyclable.”

#### 3. Lack of Complete Trust in Advertisements

Although consumers are attracted by green advertisements, a large number of respondents do not completely trust environmental claims made by companies. They feel some firms exaggerate sustainability practices.

#### 4. Growing Concern about Greenwashing

The study identified that consumers are increasingly aware of greenwashing practices. Misleading environmental advertisements reduce consumer confidence in brands.

## **5. Importance of Product Transparency**

Consumers expect companies to provide clear and accurate information about ingredients, packaging, production methods, and environmental impact.

## **6. Preference for Certified Green Products**

The research revealed that consumers trust products with recognized environmental certifications and eco-labels more than ordinary green advertisements.

## **7. Impact of Social Media and Digital Platforms**

Social media plays an important role in shaping consumer opinions about sustainability. Online reviews and awareness campaigns influence perceptions toward green marketing.

## **8. Price Sensitivity among Consumers**

Some consumers are willing to pay higher prices for sustainable products, while others hesitate due to affordability issues.

## **9. Brand Reputation Matters**

Companies with a strong ethical and environmental reputation receive better consumer support compared to brands involved in misleading green claims.

## **10. Need for Consumer Education**

The study found that many consumers still lack complete knowledge about sustainability terms and environmental certifications.

### **5.2 Suggestions of the Study**

#### **1. Provide Genuine Green Information**

Companies should provide truthful and accurate environmental information instead of using misleading claims.

#### **2. Increase Transparency**

Organizations should openly communicate their sustainability practices, sourcing methods, and environmental initiatives.

#### **3. Use Certified Eco-Labels**

Firms should obtain recognized environmental certifications to improve consumer trust and credibility.

#### **4. Avoid Exaggerated Advertisements**

Businesses should avoid false or exaggerated environmental marketing messages that may create negative consumer perceptions.

#### **5. Conduct Consumer Awareness Programs**

Companies and government agencies should educate consumers about sustainable products and greenwashing practices.

#### **6. Strengthen Government Regulations**

Authorities should implement stricter rules and monitoring systems to control misleading green advertisements.

#### **7. Focus on Long-Term Sustainability**

Organizations should adopt genuine sustainable business practices instead of using sustainability only as a marketing strategy.

## 8. Improve Affordable Sustainable Products

Companies should make eco-friendly products available at reasonable prices to encourage wider consumer adoption.

## 9. Utilize Social Media Responsibly

Brands should use digital platforms responsibly to share authentic sustainability information and engage with consumers transparently.

## 10. Build Consumer Trust

Maintaining ethical business practices and delivering actual environmental benefits can help companies build long-term customer loyalty.

### 5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that sustainable marketing has a significant influence on consumer perception and purchasing behaviour. Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of environmental issues and prefer brands that demonstrate genuine commitment toward sustainability. However, the rise of greenwashing practices has created skepticism and reduced trust in certain environmental claims made by companies.

The research highlights that transparency, honesty, and certified sustainability practices are essential for gaining consumer confidence. Consumers expect organizations to move beyond promotional claims and adopt real eco-friendly business practices. At the same time, proper consumer education and stronger regulatory systems are necessary to minimize misleading green advertisements.

Overall, sustainable marketing can create positive brand value and consumer loyalty when practiced ethically and responsibly. Companies that genuinely contribute to environmental protection are more likely to achieve long-term success and customer trust in the competitive market.

### 5.4 Scope of the Research

The scope of this research is to examine consumer perception toward sustainable marketing practices and identify whether consumers perceive environmental claims made by companies as genuine green initiatives or as greenwashing. The study focuses on understanding consumer awareness, trust, attitudes, and purchasing behaviour related to green products and eco-friendly advertisements. It evaluates the impact of sustainable marketing on brand image and consumer decision-making. The research is limited to selected consumers and emphasizes the importance of transparency, ethical marketing, and regulatory measures in promoting authentic sustainability practices among businesses.

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