# Green Marketing: A Review of Strategic Dimensions, Consumer Insights, and Policy Impacts with Reference to India

**Sunit Sharma and Ajaypal Singh***

**Department of Commerce, I.B. (PG) College, Panipat, Haryana, India – 132103**

***Corresponding Author**

## ABSTRACT

Green Marketing, that started as an ethical consideration is now being transformed into a reliable and sustainable business strategy as per global policy needs. The present review attempts to explore the theoretical foundations, consumer behaviour patterns, corporate approaches, regulatory mechanisms, and technological innovations that encompass green marketing. With India being in its regional focus, it draws projections from the existing literature and asserts key developments and identifies strategic pathways for authentic engagement in green marketing pathways. To provide a clearer picture to the research fraternity, entrepreneurs and policy framing organizations, the challenges, limitations, and future directions are also discussed. The ecologically responsible frameworks are suggested.

**Keywords:** Green marketing, sustainable business, consumer behaviour, ecologically responsible

## INTRODUCTION

Climatic fluctuations, environmental pollution, and resource scarcity are the global issues in recent times, and they have made the businesses to rethink and realign their conventional marketing strategies. The call of the hour is to adopt sustainable approaches and for that, green marketing is assuming centre stage. In this type of progressive approach, sustainability is placed at the core of brand communication and corporate practices. The green marketing now is not a visualization of promoting eco-friendly products only, rather it has become a business strategy of entrepreneurs which reflects their commitment to social, ethical and environmental concerns. The businesses now make efforts to resort to such practices where negative environmental impact is minimised. They promote sustainable packaging, responsible advertising and other efforts of marketing which are ecologically less adverse, with a genuine intent towards our society and the ecosystem. This also stems from the fact that the consumers have also begun to favour the companies which understand their responsibilities towards these significant aspects. Thus, practising green marketing is rising above from being merely a choice to become a necessity. In context of India, the entire administrative and socio-economic landscape is creating a promising future for green marketing, as there are many positive factors governing this, like increasing environmental awareness, governmental support and certain campaigns like 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'. Also, the increasing trend of harnessing renewable energy is a sign of our becoming more ecologically conscious. One more aspect, though seemingly minor, is also very significant in Indian context. We have deep rooted cultural values which speak for respect of nature, natural resources and ecosystems, and thereby, lend a support to conservational efforts.

This article reviews the current scenario of green marketing practices in India, including the strategies in practice, the consumer perspective, availability of technological support and the regulatory frameworks in existence. It aims to focus on how the marketing strategies are being developed to address local consumer recommendations and requirements. The efforts are also made to identify the existing hurdles in

implementation as well as to propose some directions for future which may favour to embed green marketing practices more firmly in our country.

# REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The studies on green marketing hitherto focussed on perceptions of consumers vis-à-vis environmental consciousness in context of specific cultural setups where they relate to. In the context of present work, some of the prominent works are being highlighted in the following text, highlighting their major findings from India. However, wherever very relevant, some global contexts are also included. Bhatia and Jain (2013) conducted one of the foundational empirical investigations in India, highlighting consumer preferences toward eco-friendly products, and they also discussed their limited understanding of green branding. From this study, it came to be known that awareness levels are to be enhanced to attain a sustainable purchasing behaviour.

We can take insights from the comprehensive volume of Charter and Polonsky (2017), where they theoretically underpinned the sustainable marketing, synthetically providing global approaches to greener marketing practices. Their work provided understanding on how the ecological considerations are integrated across industries and marketing functions. Govender and Govender (2016) explored the relationship between green marketing and consumer purchase behavior, advocating that eco-conscious branding, along with product credibility can effectively shape consumer intent. Kumar (2016) undertook a systematic review of 25 years of green marketing scholarship, and classified key themes and operating methodologies, along with identifying gaps in cross-cultural research and emerging markets. This work provided many aspects to further work upon. Edeh (2020) while elaborating behavioural dimensions, proposed that considerable purchasing outcomes can be achieved when the green marketing tactics align with consumer values and lifestyle patterns. Nearly similar conclusions were drawn from findings of Jaiswal et al. (2021), who worked through a cluster approach to find insights about the segments of green consumers in the emerging markets, and they emphasized the role of demographic and psychographic profiles in shaping market strategies. Sharma (2021) after synthesis of various studies on consumer purchase behavior within the green marketing domain, identified various psychological, social, and structural factors that influence the relationship between branding and consumer choice. Premi et al. (2021) traced out the evolution of green marketing theory and application in India, when they conducted a systematic literature review on the aspect. They concluded that integration of digital platforms and certification schemes remains inconsistent. Work done by Amoako et al. (2022) bridged green marketing with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), asserting that various brands in emerging markets are increasingly expected to align their messaging and operations with global sustainability frameworks to thrive longer. Sharma and Vohra (2022) analysed various practical factors influencing green marketing adoption. They stressed upon the importance of organizational commitment, customer orientation, and regulatory compliance in the success of green marketing practices. The work of Asif et al. (2022) specifically focussed on the Indian retail firms, examining the combined impact of digital marketing, CSR policies, and green messaging on brand equity. Almost on the similar lines are the findings by Tariq et al. (2022), who demonstrated how digital and social responsibility platforms can integrate their strategies to strengthen consumer loyalty and brand positioning. Sivarajah (2024) in a comprehensive review of psychological and social factors affecting green consumer behavior, found out that the marketers adopt strategies to tailor their messages to strike the cognitive biases, social norms, and emotional behaviours of consumers. The recent work by Ali et al. (2024) analysed the impact of green marketing strategies on both environmental and market performance in the consumer goods sector. They concluded that the branding which is driven by the thought of sustainability provides competitive advantages and improved public perception. Rawat and Pande (2024) identified the challenges like cost barriers, operational inertia, and authenticity concerns, faced by Indian companies in green marketing implementation. They recommend customized frameworks that reflect local contexts while adhering to global standards.

Collectively, all of these and many relevant studies trace the evolution of green marketing from conceptual foundations to empirically grounded strategies. As per these studies, more attention, particularly in India, is to be paid to consumer behavior, technological integration, and to address the regional challenges. The perusal of literature reveals that we have gradually shifted from perception-based analysis towards holistic frameworks that encompass regulation, innovation, and stakeholder engagement.

# DISCUSSION

## Consumer Behavior and Decision-Making

Consumer behavior plays a central role in the success of any marketing practice, and same is true about green marketing. India has a diverse and stratified population, which presents its own unique challenges as well as opportunities. While we have a majority of yet to be conscious consumers, still the environmentally conscious consumers also make a good proportion of our population. Even this fraction can be divided into distinct segments based on levels of commitment and behavior. There are "True Greens", which actively seek sustainable products and even accept premium pricing as part of ethical consumption. The other segment comprises of "Convenience Greens", which support green products only if they are easily accessible and affordable. The segment comprising "Passive Greens" does express interest in sustainability, but it usually fails to adopt follow-through due to limited awareness, logistical constraints, or habit inertia. Another segment may also be highlighted that is made up from "Skeptics", who always express their doubts about corporate environmental claims and demand greater transparency.

In urban India, the green consumption is largely fuelled by rising health considerations, climate anxiety, and social identity among the people. As mentioned earlier, the traditional and religious values and practices also positively align with ecological concerns and continue to reinforce positive attitudes toward nature-centric lifestyles. However, there are clear barriers, which are required to be removed before assuming bigger goals towards sustainability. Significant to mention are mistrust, limited availability of certified products, and price sensitivity etc. They all are some of the prominent forces that work against widespread adoption of green marketing practices.

## Corporate Strategies and Branding Approaches

Indian companies are experimenting and developing varied strategies for pursuing green marketing. These strategies involve almost all the stages of marketing beginning from innovations in product design, branding, packaging, and finally distribution. The major considerations for sustainable product design often involve use of biodegradable materials, minimal load on resources, and enhancing product longevity. Some equally significant considerations include energy-efficient appliances, organic textiles, and cruelty-free beauty products, and such branding is becoming real attraction of consumers.

The state level bans across India on use of single use plastics have raised concerns and awareness about eco-conscious packaging. In wake of this, many Indian brands are adopting recyclable, minimalist packaging and to encourage post-use recycling, reverse logistics is also being worked out. In these scenarios of change, brands are almost compelled to popularise their names through reinforcing their green identity through community engagements, to showcase sustainability efforts taken up by them, and empowering their environmental awareness department. To deliver credibility, the leading brands are frequently publishing environmental performance reports and are also considering partnerships with some NGOs in working in the concerned domains.

With all such efforts the strategic collaboration is also gaining ground, with the companies supporting the initiatives aligned with environmental or social welfare with a target to get benefits in marketing. In Indian context, a good strategy of businesses is to exclusively collaborate with local communities at grass root levels to embed sustainability into their brand ethos. This also resonates in the form of authenticity, a driving force for conscious consumers.

## Regulatory and Ethical Dimensions

The scope and credibility of green marketing are regulated through various policies of the government, as well as prevailing ethical standards. Recently, India's policy landscape has witnessed utmost flexibility and has undergone considerable evolution in this regard. The very pertinent to mention certification by the Bureau of Indian Standards is Eco mark certification, which provides recognition to the products which meet strict environmental criteria. However, the adoption of this certification is currently limited, but this kind of eco-labelling shall be very instrumental in future of green marketing.

As mentioned earlier, many Indian states have strictly banned the use of single-use plastics, the environmental concerns related with regulation of plastic pollution are becoming increasingly stringent. The brands can sustain well by encouraging biodegradable alternatives to plastic.

Despite all the above stated facts, some ethical challenges still have the chances to persist. A very serious threat to genuineness comes from "greenwashing" when the marketer falsely claims a product to be green while it is actually not. Here, the companies may conceal the actual environmental harms of the product by highlighting a positive green message out of proportion. Other accountability issues surround carbon emission data, where many companies seemingly invest in emissions-reducing projects while continuing harmful practices.

However, to authenticate the claims and mitigate the ill-effects of the above factors, certain transparency mechanisms like life cycle assessments, third-party audits, and public sustainability reports can be and are being adopted. These administrative mechanisms play a crucial role in differentiating authentic sustainability efforts from unrealistic branding exercises.

## Technology Integration in Green Marketing

Green marketing is getting considerable advantages from technological tools, and the power of technology is playing role in enhancing transparency, efficiency, and consumer engagement. The use of e-commerce messages through digital platforms is facilitating consumer consciousness to reach to elevated levels. It is also helping in influencer-led campaigns and raising educational content. The easy accessibility to creation of customised websites and mobile apps is also helping by highlighting sustainable features of the products, providing shopping ethics and providing channels for feedback collection.

Blockchain technology has imminent potential for being utilized for the green marketing sector. The structured dataset on labour conditions, carbon footprints etc. of a particular area can be properly utilized through blockchain methodology. In India, however, this technology is in its nascent stage, but the future looks promising, particularly in promoting ethical green marketing practices.

A very significant arena of Artificial Intelligence has entered the scenario quite recently, which supports predictive modelling, carbon tracking, and personalized marketing. The algorithms designed through AI, not only help in identifying green consumer segments and in optimizing resource use but also aid in delivering tailored product suggestions aligning with sustainability preferences.

## Green Marketing in India

India's pro-active approach towards green marketing, its cultural diversity and entrepreneurial spirit, all point to a promising future of this sustainable practice. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan campaign worked directly to change public the attitude toward hygiene and waste, and indirectly to encourage sustainable consumption. Along with this, the National Solar Mission is creating incentives for industries by promoting use of renewable energy sources with objective of turning towards greener and cleaner technologies.

As pointed out earlier in this article, the urban consumers, especially dwelling metropolitan areas, display rising eco-consciousness in food, fashion, and wellness. The upper class people are particularly interested in and respond to sustainability measures, focussing on health and wellbeing. Contrastingly, for the majority of rural segment, the affordability and infrastructure limitations act as constraining factors to adopt these measures, despite local traditions often supporting eco-friendly practices.

Some notable Indian brands have resorted to green marketing in their own innovative ways. No Nasties is a brand that promotes organic, fair-trade, vegan clothing, Paper Boat is a brand of drinks which is ecologically conscious and uses traditional values linking them with recyclable packaging. Similarly, Forest Essentials offers Ayurvedic, nature-sourced beauty products with luxury branding. The very famous Indian brand Amul has adopted solar-powered processing facilities to reduce emissions across its dairy operations.

The role of academic studies in popularising Indian green market practices can also be well placed here. Major studies increasingly focus their themes on the psychological, cultural, and economic dimensions of green consumption. The available research inputs highlight the need for consumer education, region-specific branding strategies, and industry-government collaboration, in order to achieve scalable and positive impact.

## Challenges and Limitations

Green marketing faces persistent challenges in India, despite gaining momentum. One of the major and common concerns is identified as the gap that separates consumer's actual actions from its intentions. It may be highlighted that many consumers express interest in sustainability, but they go back to choose conventional products due to easy availability, cost aspects, or preferences of convenience. It is essential to assert here that the short-term branding campaigns often lack the depth needed to influence consumer behavior to a meaningful extent.

The market penetration of sustainable products is hampered by some significant factors. Firstly, the lack of far-sightedness in the corporate sector results in their prioritizing superficial image management rather than working towards a long term systematic change. Secondly, the sustainable products come with a premium price tag, making them the least preference of lower-income segments, which greatly outnumber high income groups. Additionally, there is a general lack of standardized sustainability metrics, which further complicates product comparisons and reduces accountability.

The geographical and cultural enormity of India brings infrastructure gaps and regional diversity. It is, therefore, of crucial significance to understand local and regional contexts and design customized approaches reflecting local norms and economics. In short, the success of green marketing largely depends on adaptation to cultural practices at regional level, inclusive product design, and long-term strategic planning.

## Future Directions

Green marketing arose as a minor marketing trick in the beginning, but now it is all set to drive en masse as how businesses are to be managed on a long run. To bring this to the mainstream will require companies to integrate sustainability into every aspect of their operations, starting from resource procurement to reaching to the end user. Here, the circular economy principles, namely up-cycling, reuse, and product-as-a-service models are proving to be very effective ways to reduce waste and enhance resource efficiency.

The behaviour of brands will continue to be influenced by youth, as they demand transparency, ethical clarity as well as accountability to the climate. Government can play more vital role by customizing the policies in ways that are rewarding to the sustainable practices on one hand and are penalizing the environmental damage. The corporates will be rightly focussed to shape corporate strategies accordingly and this will also encourage long-term alignment with sustainability. The innovative spirit and evolving policy environment of India places it at a wonderful position to lead in shaping inclusive and scalable green marketing models.

To bring in one more perspective, we recommend that academia and industry should collaborate to bring out customized and regionally significant outcomes.

# CONCLUSION

When there is a convergence of environmental responsibility and strategic business execution, what emerges is known as green marketing. As this review demonstrates, the success of green marketing comes from conjecture of genuine engagement in sustainable practices, credible governance, technological innovation, and carefully observing the cultural sensitivity prevalent in that particular area. As per recent trends in India, the policy initiatives, consumer demand, and entrepreneurial efforts are all accelerating the shift towards sustainable branding. This is a very positive signal towards mitigating ecological challenges posed due to anthropogenic factors. To overcoming the underlying challenges and to upscale the participation in green marketing practices, deeper integration of ethical values, inclusive strategies, and long-term vision are

required. All combined, the erstwhile mere promotional angle of green marketing will lead us into a well sought of and transformative business practice.

# REFERENCES

1. Ali, S., Khan, K., Haider, S., & Rehman, A. (2024). Analyzing the impact of green marketing strategies on the environmental performance and market performance of companies in the consumer goods sector. Journal of Policy Research, 9(4).
2. Amoako, G. K., Dzogbenuku, R. K., Doe, J., & Adjaison, G. K. (2022). Green marketing and the SDGs: emerging market perspective. Marketing Intelligence & Planning, 40(3), 310-327.
3. Asif, S., Sharma, P., & Gorakhnath, I. (2022). Analyzing the role of digital marketing, green marketing and CSR policy in brand development: A study of retail companies in India. Journal of Positive School Psychology, 6(6).
4. Bhatia, M., & Jain, A. (2013). Green marketing: A study of consumer perception and preferences in India. Electronic Green Journal, 1(36).
5. Charter, M., & Polonsky, M. J. (Eds.). (2017). Greener marketing: A global perspective on greening marketing practice. Routledge.
6. Edeh, M. B. (2020). Green marketing as a marketing tool and consumer purchase behavior. Journal of Global Social Sciences, 1(3), 37-54.
7. Govender, J. P., & Govender, T. L. (2016). The influence of green marketing on consumer purchase behavior. Environmental Economics, (7, Iss. 2), 77-85.
8. Jaiswal, D., Kaushal, V., Singh, P. K., & Biswas, A. (2021). Green market segmentation and consumer profiling: a cluster approach to an emerging consumer market. Benchmarking: An International Journal, 28(3), 792-812.
9. Kumar, P. (2016). State of green marketing research over 25 years (1990-2014) literature survey and classification. Marketing Intelligence & Planning, 34(1), 137-158.
10. Premi, H., Sharma, M., & Dangayach, G. S. (2021). Green marketing: A systematic literature review. Indian Journal of Marketing, 51(8), 39-57.
11. Rawat, G., & Pande, M. (2024). Adoption of green marketing strategies and challenges in sustainable business practices: Insights from Indian companies. Journal of Corporate Governance, Insurance, and Risk Management, 11(2), 98-112.
12. Sharma, A. P. (2021). Consumers' purchase behaviour and green marketing: A synthesis, review and agenda. International Journal of Consumer Studies, 45(6), 1217-1238.
13. Sharma, N., & Vohra, T. (2022). Factors Affecting Green Marketing: An Empirical Study. Parikalpana KIIT Journal of Management, 18(2), 7-28.
14. Sivarajah, R. (2024). Exploring the impact of psychological and social factors on green consumer behaviour: a comprehensive review of green marketing tactics. SN Business & Economics, 4(12), 157.
15. Tariq, E., Alshurideh, M., Akour, I., Al-Hawary, S., & Al Kurdi, B. (2022). The role of digital marketing, CSR policy and green marketing in brand development. International Journal of Data and Network Science, 6(3), 995-1004.