

# Navigating the Challenges of Green Consumerism: An Indian Perspective

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## Abstract

This paper explores the challenges and opportunities of green consumerism and sustainable marketing in India. As concern for the environment grows, businesses are adapting their strategies to prioritize sustainability. Green marketing is becoming increasingly important, emphasizing eco-friendly products and practices. Indian consumers are recognizing the value of natural and Ayurvedic products. However, challenges persist, including high prices, limited selection, and inadequate marketing. Businesses must prioritize transparency and sustainability to overcome these challenges. Governments also have a critical role to play in promoting environmental awareness. By working together, businesses, governments, and consumers can create a more sustainable future. Effective messaging, consumer outreach, and company transparency are crucial for overcoming the obstacles of green consumerism.

**Keywords:** green consumerism, sustainable marketing, green marketing, eco-friendly products, environmental awareness, sustainable future.

## 1. Introduction

Manufacturers and customers are worried about how their products may affect the environment as society becomes increasingly conscious of the need to safeguard the environment. Businesses have modified their operations to lessen the adverse climatic impact of their goods and services in an effort to help save the environment as worldwide concern over climate change develops. Emphasize "green" items that safeguard the environment and contribute to sustainable development. Green marketing techniques help businesses and individuals while simultaneously preserving the environment for sustainable growth. Marketers are interested in green marketing because it can give them a competitive edge, as seen by the shifting customer preferences for eco-friendly products, which makes it more significant in the eyes of consumers (Anitha & Srujan, 2024). Taking into account: Customers are conscious of environmental problems including climate change, resource depletion, and global warming. As producers concentrate on creating recycled paper, organic foods, and energy-efficient equipment, environmental safety is a top priority. According to some, green marketing is a means of encouraging sustainable growth. Some businesses have embraced the ideas and incorporated them into their organizational operations (e.g., waste minimization or environmental management systems) (Gautam & Mohan, 2024).

Customers must be informed about the dangers to the environment. It takes a lot of time and work to get this new idea in front of as many people as possible. As noted by Vikas Kumar (2024), green marketing

has become an essential tool for businesses to communicate their environmental commitment to customers. The value of using natural and Ayurvedic products is finally being recognized by Indian consumers. Customers and business users are starting to recognize that their practices are harming the environment. Customers are more demanding than ever for companies and goods that reflect their personal, political, and social beliefs. Businesses must participate in the socio-political arena in addition to offering high-quality products and services. By implementing strategies to satisfy environmental, social, and governance (ESG) requirements, creating new goods that are socially conscious, and publicly responding to landmark legislation, the move urges firms to be more proactive. Speak up and encourage them to take part in social impact activities.

Environmentally friendly product features are now desirable rather than just "nice to have." These expectations also extend beyond the finished product. Because the entire product chain reveals corporate responsibility and transparency. In order to maintain their success, businesses will need to adapt their corporate cultures and acknowledge the growing concerns about sustainability in the years to come. Customers are more inclined to try, purchase, and recommend a business's goods and services if they are aware of its concern for the environment. Although pricing is the most important factor in purchase decisions, many customers claim they are willing to pay more for these goods (Vikas Kumar, 2024). According to Meenakshi et al. (2024), consumers' attitudes towards sustainable products play a significant role in influencing their purchasing decisions. The business continues to encounter difficulties in spite of these encouraging developments or offerings. In general, consumers don't believe that businesses are motivated to implement sustainable practices. The majority of individuals believe that social and environmental concerns are only important when a business is profitable.

Additionally, a lot of people find the message confusing and believe that there are too many certifications and ecostamps. Customers' mistrust will only grow as a result. Gaining consumer trust and implementing a business sustainability strategy are crucial for overcoming these obstacles, and effective messaging, consumer outreach, and company transparency—such as through climate partnerships—are crucial. More and more companies are adopting sustainability as a comprehensive approach to business, even while many can find sustainable measures like waste reduction and energy saving to yield financial gains.

Businesses are better equipped to satisfy customer demands for greater levels of corporate responsibility when they embrace sustainability and implement pertinent sustainability programs throughout their most relevant brand portfolios. Although it might be challenging to gauge the effectiveness of these programs, it is obvious that safeguarding the environment, the planet, and its inhabitants can only have beneficial effects.

Environmental issues are getting worse, and protecting the environment is crucial to preserving life for future generations. Another developing nation that is giving priority to this area is India. This is common in India. Since the majority of Indians live in rural regions and are unaware of all of this. Therefore, it is the government's responsibility to spread environmental awareness and encourage people to buy eco-friendly products. The government is also working to protect the environment through regulations related to environmental marketing and to reduce the production of harmful goods and by-products. They are committed to promoting energy efficient and recyclable products. Many businesses are aggressively recycling and reusing their current products in an effort to promote green marketing, while consumers are

encouraging numerous replacement schemes for these conventional products. Without a doubt, in order to leave a clean environment for future generations, green marketing is essential. Although the product may be expensive at first, it will eventually become less expensive.

Twelve issues have been defined in order to determine the challenges that green consumers confront. Twelve issues, such as high price in comparison to other items, limited selection, ignorance about green products, Inadequate marketing, a dearth of appealing and recyclable packaging, Not fashionable or trendy, marketed as green items, but in reality, Reduced environmental awareness, difficult to access, Lack of knowledge on the part of retail salespeople, No discounts and lack of faith in quality.

## 2. Literature Review

Anitha and Srujan (2024)<sup>1</sup> conducted a study on Exploring Consumer Perception of Green Consumption in India. In their study they found that Trust in green certifications influences individuals' beliefs about the environmental benefits of green products and Different certifications lead to varied perceptions regarding the effectiveness of green products. The concluded that understanding the impact of certification trust on environmental beliefs is essential for both consumers and policymakers aiming to promote and assess the effectiveness of green products.

Gautam and Mohan (2024)<sup>2</sup> analyzed Adoption of Green Marketing Strategies and Challenges in Sustainable Business Practices: Insights from Indian Companies. They critically examined the landscape of green marketing in India, exploring the concept's evolution, its strategic importance, and the challenges faced by businesses in this domain. By analyzing secondary data from academic literature and credible sources, the study provided a comprehensive overview of the current state of green marketing in India. The findings highlight that the integration of green marketing practices not only enhances corporate competitiveness but also contributes to broader environmental goals. They concluded that every incremental effort towards environmental sustainability can significantly impact the resolution of contemporary ecological challenges. As such, the incorporation of green marketing strategies represents a logical and necessary progression for companies aiming to achieve long-term sustainability and societal benefits.

Vikas Kumar(2024)<sup>3</sup> explored the Green Marketing and Its Influence on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in the Indian Market. I his study few respondents expressed willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products, most reported scepticism about the authenticity of green claims. Key challenges include price sensitivity and limited product availability, which hinder green adoption. Despite these barriers, the findings highlight opportunities for businesses to build consumer trust through transparency, eco-labelling

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Anitha BM Dsilva & Mr. Srujan Raj G B, "Exploring Consumer Perception of Green Consumption in India". *International Journal Of Novel Research And Development* Vol.9,issue 8(2024):pp.39-47.

<sup>2</sup> Gautam Rawat & Mohan Chandra Pande, "Adoption of Green Marketing Strategies and Challenges in Sustainable Business Practices: Insights from Indian Companies". *Journal of Corporate Governance, Insurance, and Risk Management* Vol.11,issue 2(2024):pp.98-112

<sup>3</sup> Vikas Kumar, "Green Marketing and Its Influence on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in the Indian Market", *Journal of Management and Entrepreneurship* Vol.18,issue.4(2024):pp.56-73.

practices, and sustainability certifications. Policymakers can leverage these insights to develop regulatory frameworks, incentive programs, and awareness campaigns encouraging sustainable consumption.

Meenakshi et.al.,(2024)<sup>4</sup> analyzed the Role of Consumer's Attitudes towards the Sustainable Products in India. The study revealed that a majority of consumers in India are increasingly mindful of the environmental impact of their purchases. However, factors such as price and availability significantly influence their final buying decisions. As a result of consumers' positive attitudes toward green products, businesses that sell green products will undoubtedly have a competitive advantage over their rivals.

Rashmiranjan and Sasanka (2022)<sup>5</sup> examined Emerging Green Consumerism in India. The study critically analyzed the factors contributing to the rising green consumerism and to further study the governmental interventions which can effectively benefit both the marketers and consumers as well.

### **3. Research Gap**

Most studies focus on urban consumers, leaving a significant knowledge gap regarding awareness and buying behavior among rural consumers.

### **4. Statement of the Problem**

Despite the growing awareness of environmental issues, green consumerism remains a relatively new and evolving concept in India. However, several challenges persist, including Limited awareness and understanding of green products and sustainable marketing practices, High prices and limited availability, Inadequate marketing and promotion, Lack of trust and skepticism and Insufficient government support and regulations.

### **5. Significance of the Study**

This study aims to contribute to the existing literature on green consumerism and sustainable marketing in India by exploring the challenges of green consumerism in Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for businesses, policymakers, and consumers to promote green consumerism and sustainable marketing practices in India.

### **6. Research Methodology**

This study employed a descriptive research design to explore the attitudes and behaviors of consumers towards green consumerism in Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu, India. A convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample for this study. The sample consisted of 200 consumers residing in Nilgiris district. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions, including demographic information, attitudes towards green consumerism, and behaviors related to green product adoption. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents, and their responses were recorded. The data collected for this study was analyzed using the following techniques such as Garrett Ranking Technique. The questionnaire was pilot-tested among 20 respondents to ensure

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<sup>4</sup> Meenakshi Kharb, Pratibha singh & Pooja Singh Negi, "Role of Consumer's Attitudes towards the Sustainable Products in India". *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research* Vol.11,issue.1(2024):pp.204-219.

<sup>5</sup> Rashmiranjan Mohapatra & ,Sasanka Sekhar Swain, "Emerging Green Consumerism In India". *Journal of Nonlinear Analysis and Optimization* Vol.13,issue.2(2022):pp.931-935

its reliability and validity. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to ensure the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

## 7. Objectives of the study

The primary objective of this study is to explore the challenges of green consumerism and sustainable marketing in India, with a specific focus on Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu.

## 8. Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were encountered while conducting this study

1. Sample Size: The sample size was limited to 200 respondents, which may not be representative of the entire population.
2. Geographical Location: The study was limited to Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu, India, which may not be representative of other geographical locations.

## 9. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Sample respondents were asked to rate the strength of each question on the questionnaire and interview schedule. The seriousness of the issue should be indicated by each sample response. For instance, order the most crucial topics first, then the next most crucial issues, and so forth. By using Garrett Table and formula, ranks assigned by green consumers has been covered into score. Table 1.1. Showed that the challenges faced by the Green Consumers.

**TABLE 1.1**  
**CHALLENGES FACED BY THE GREEN CONSUMERS – GARRETT’ S RANKING**  
**TECHNIQUE**

Problems	Rank X	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total score	Mean Score	Rank
		83	73	66	60	56	52	48	44	39	34	27	17			
High price in comparison to other items	f	22	15	16	17	20	17	14	11	22	16	14	15	200	51.12	3
	fx	1817	1131	1040	1025	1121	875	666	482	864	554	389	259	9965		
Limited selection	f	21	17	22	18	14	10	8	17	13	22	20	18	200	50.19	6
	fx	1751	1209	1480	1073	763	528	372	752	500	754	548	309	9728		
Ignorance about green products	f	17	23	19	18	15	17	9	14	18	16	19	15	200	50.68	4
	fx	1396	1657	1251	1089	852	903	423	623	687	536	519	259	9936		
Inadequate marketing	f	23	18	16	11	17	13	21	13	14	18	17	18	200	50.56	5
	fx	1906	1326	1040	673	957	680	1025	564	542	626	469	304	9807		
A dearth of appealing and recyclable packaging	f	17	13	17	16	19	22	17	15	12	14	18	19	200	49.65	9
	fx	1441	955	1110	945	1077	1152	820	658	479	472	497	322	9607		
Not fashionable or trendy	f	10	11	17	19	22	17	13	18	16	21	18	18	200	50.00	8
	fx	842	799	1146	1154	1211	875	602	799	614	717	497	304	9257		
Marketed as green items	f	21	18	19	17	14	15	18	18	17	15	16	11	200	52.04	2
	fx	1729	1345	1234	1025	807	805	884	811	656	499	425	186	10221		
But in reality,	f	12	7	14	17	19	15	19	16	21	22	21	17	200	46.74	12

Reduced environmental awareness	fx	997	526	952	1009	1062	791	910	705	802	735	562	295	9052		
Difficult to access	f	13	17	16	22	13	18	21	18	15	17	18	12	200	50.06	7
	fx	1086	1209	1075	1330	718	944	1013	775	594	572	497	200	9812		
Lack of knowledge on the part of retail sales people	f	16	19	11	14	18	17	17	20	22	7	17	20	200	49.02	10
	fx	1330	1423	740	849	1002	903	833	893	844	254	461	340	9532		
No discounts	f	10	19	18	12	11	20	22	21	16	13	16	22	200	48.24	11
	fx	820	1403	1216	721	628	1028	1051	928	614	436	425	377	9271		
Lack of faith in quality	f	18	22	14	18	18	18	21	18	15	19	4	14	200	52.28	1
	fx	1485	1618	916	1105	1002	916	1000	811	604	645	108	245	10210		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>			

Note: X=Scale value; f=number of green consumers; fx=Score

From the Table 1.1, it is clear that the main factor felt by the respondents is the Lack of faith in quality as indicated by its highest mean score of 52.28, this is followed by Marketed as green items , High price in comparison to other items, Ignorance about green products, Inadequate marketing, Limited selection, Difficult to access, Not fashionable or trendy, A dearth of appealing and recyclable packaging, Lack of knowledge on the part of retail sales people, No discounts and But in reality, Reduced environmental awareness.

## 10. Findings of the Study

It is found that the main issue felt by the green consumers is the ‘Lack of faith in quality’ as indicated by its highest mean score and high cost when compared to other products.

## 11. Implications

These findings have significant implications for businesses, policymakers, and consumers. Businesses must prioritize building trust with consumers by ensuring the quality of their green products. Additionally, businesses must educate consumers about the benefits of green products and provide attractive and recyclable packaging. Policymakers must promote environmental awareness and provide incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices. Consumers must be willing to pay a premium for green products and demand more sustainable practices from businesses.

## 12. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the challenges faced by green consumers in India. The findings reveal that lack of faith in quality, misleading green marketing, high price sensitivity, lack of awareness, and inadequate marketing are the major concerns. The study highlights the need for businesses to prioritize building trust with consumers, educating them about green products, and providing attractive and recyclable packaging. Policymakers must promote environmental awareness and provide incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices. Ultimately, this study contributes to the understanding of green consumerism in India and provides insights for businesses, policymakers, and consumers to promote sustainable practices and mitigate environmental degradation.



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