

How to Cite:

Seker, R., & Vijayakumar, N. (2026). Consciousness and consumer performance towards greenwashing: An empirical study. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20(9), 1000–1006. Retrieved from <https://ijeponline.org/index.php/journal/article/view/1397>

Consciousness and consumer performance towards greenwashing: An empirical study

Dr. Rajini Seker

Assistant Professor of Commerce, BSA Crescent Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai

Email: rajinis14@gmail.com

Dr. N. Vijayakumar

Assistant Professor of Commerce, BSA Crescent Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai

Email: nviji36@gmail.com

Abstract---A number of companies are determined to look up their ecological position by presenting their green efforts to the public by adopting green advertising strategy to help increase viable benefit and demand to environment awareness to consumers. On the other hand, not all green marketing claims truthfully conduct of the concern and can be results as greenwashing. Hence, this paper emphasis the consciousness and consumer performance towards greenwashing and the business ethical code upon them. The study concluding by reviewing and finding from the results and discussion of the companies decision-making to examine and practice the ethical practices in their course of business advertisement.

Keywords---Consumer Consciousness and Performance, Green washing, eco-friendly, misleading imagery, Green ads.

Introduction

Green washing is a deceptive marketing practice in which companies present themselves or their products as environmentally friendly, sustainable, or "green" without substantiating these claims with genuine efforts or actions. It involves exaggerating or fabricating environmental benefits to appeal to environmentally conscious consumers, ultimately misleading them about the true impact of their choices.

As global awareness about environmental sustainability grows, consumers increasingly demand products and services that align with eco-friendly values.

© 2026 by The Author(s).  ISSN: 1307-1637 International journal of economic perspectives is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Corresponding author: Seker, R., Email: rajinis14@gmail.com

Submitted: 09 June 2026, Revised: 18 July 2026, Accepted: 30 August 2026

1000

Companies, in response, use marketing strategies emphasizing sustainability to attract this demographic. However, not all such claims are legitimate; some businesses exploit this trend to enhance their reputation or boost sales without making meaningful contributions to sustainability.

The term "green washing" was popularized in the 1980s and has since become a critical issue in environmental ethics and consumer rights. Examples include vague claims like "eco-friendly" or "all-natural" without certification, misleading imagery such as green packaging or nature-inspired symbols, and irrelevant claims that distract from more significant environmental harms.

Green washing erodes consumer trust, hampers genuine sustainability efforts, and undermines businesses that authentically commit to environmentally responsible practices. Consequently, understanding green washing and its implications is crucial for consumers, regulators, and companies to promote transparency, accountability, and genuine progress toward sustainability.

A type of consumer who buys green products such as ecological, organic or energy-saving products and therefore consumes fewer natural resources. Green consumerism is not just about buying eco-friendly products; it can be practicing recycling, conserving, or using public transportation instead of driving.

Green advertising in general aims to promote products produced in an environmentally-friendly manner, or to promote advertiser's corporate responsibility toward an environment. Examples of green marketing include advertising the reduced emissions associated with a product's manufacturing process, or the use of post-consumer recycled materials for a product's packaging.

Some companies also may market themselves as being environmentally-conscious companies by donating a portion of their sales proceeds to environmental initiatives, such as tree planting

Objective of the Study

- 1) To know the impact of green washing on brand trust.
- 2) To assess the accuracy of recycling labels and their impact on consumer behavior.
- 3) To know the level of consumer trust in companies' claims about eco-friendly actions.

Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive in nature. It is descriptive in the sense that it tries to identify various characteristics of research problems. Also, the data is analyzed to examine consumer perception of environmental claims by companies. Both primary and secondary data were used for data collection. An online questionnaire was prepared and convenience sampling was used. The population is restricted.

Review of Literature

Ajay Patil, A. Abdhul Rahim (2024), Analyzing the Impact and Influence of Green Marketing Communication in Consumers' Green Purchase Behaviour, Journal of Informatics Education and Research, The paper explored the multifaceted impact and influence of green marketing communication on consumers, analyzing the key dynamics that contribute to a more eco-conscious marketplace. The study delves into the role of green marketing in fostering increased environmental awareness, building trust and credibility, shaping consumer perceptions, creating a competitive advantage, influencing purchase intentions, and encouraging broader sustainable lifestyles. Their search seeks to investigate the factors that contribute to successful green marketing communication and its impact on consumers' perceptions and preferences for sustainable products.

Mr. K. Kumar, Dr. Yaaseen Maswood (2023), A Study on Perception and Preferences Towards Green Marketing, It's Influence on Consumer, Journal of Informatics Education and Research, The researcher emphasized the green marketing, when executed with authenticity, represents more than a trend; it's a reflection of a business's adaptability to a changing world and its commitment to future generations. However, that requires more than just green labels and eco-friendly packaging. True green marketing encompasses genuine efforts towards sustainability, transparent communication, and a deep understanding of consumers' evolving expectations. As society progresses, it's clear that only those businesses that align profitability with responsibility will thrive in the long run. Green marketing has undeniably influenced consumer behavior, with a growing segment of the population prioritizing sustainability in their buying decisions.

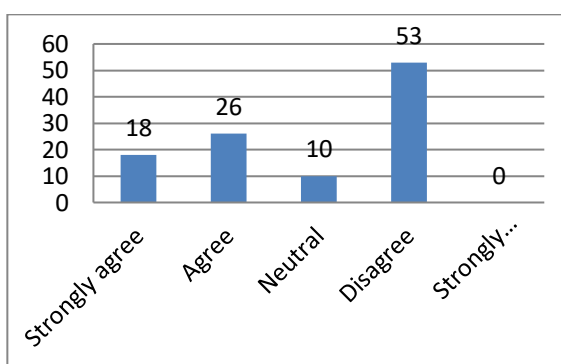
Amju dallus, Anjana P, Anjana P.S (2023) conducted A study on consumer perception of green washing in Ernakulam. This study aims to investigate the consumer perception of green washing, and to explore the impact of various factors on their perceptions as well as purchasing decisions. With an ever-growing interest in sustainability and environmental issues, this study will help to promote more transparent and trustworthy communication on environmental issues Furthermore, this will contribute to increasing the understanding of consumer behavior in relation to green washing.

Khandelwal, M, Sharma, A., & Jain, V. (2019) proposed that green washing is most prevalent in the automobile sector, industrial manufacturing sector, and beauty products/cosmetics sector. Consumers perceive fluffy words such as "natural", "eco-friendly," "organic," etc. as a common tactic for green washing. The lack of a proper regulatory system and compliance from companies' results in poorly researched products and facilitates "green washing. However, once consumers become aware of such deception, they lose trust in the brand that has been built over the years.

Results and Discussion

Table -1
Impact of greenwashing on brand trust

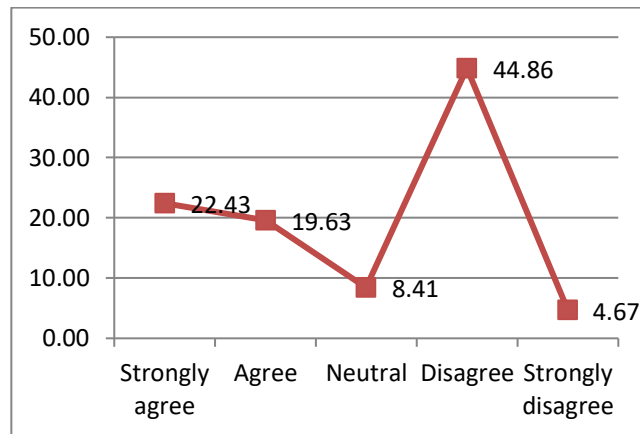
Attributes	Frequency	%
Strongly agree	18	16.82
Agree	26	24.30
Neutral	10	9.35
Disagree	53	49.53
Strongly disagree	0	0.00
Total	107	100%



The above table shows that nearly half of the respondents (**49.53%**) disagree, this indicating that green washing strongly undermines brand trust for a significant majority. Companies need to address green washing concerns to retain consumer trust, as its impact is largely negative.

Table - 2
To assess the accuracy of recycling labels and their impact on consumer behavior

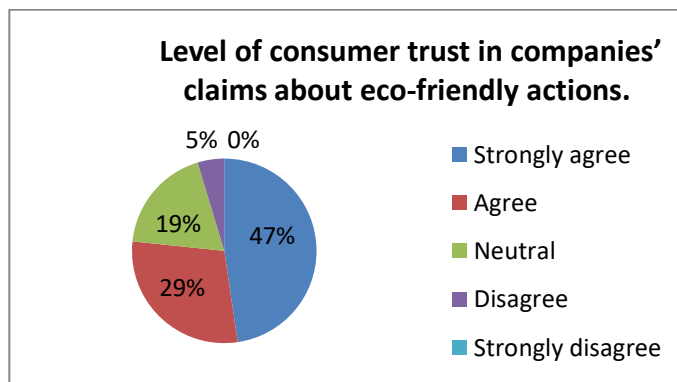
Attributes	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	24	22.43
Agree	21	19.63
Neutral	9	8.41
Disagree	48	44.86
Strongly disagree	5	4.67
Total	107	100%



The above data shows that most of the respondent Disagree (44.86) indicating that the accuracy of recycling labels and their ability is not influences consumer behavior. The recycling label is only on the product but it is not so recycled properly. A moderate proportion of respondents strongly believe that recycling labels are accurate and influence consumer behavior positively.

Table - 3 Level of Consumer Trust

Attributes	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	51	47.66
Agree	31	28.97
Neutral	20	18.69
Disagree	5	4.67
Strongly disagree	0	0.00
Total	107	100%



The data suggests that a large proportion of consumers (about 76.6% combined in "Strongly Agree" and "Agree") believe companies' eco-friendly claims, indicating a relatively high level of trust in these claims. However, there is still a minority (around 23.4%) who express some level of skepticism, whether it's in the form of disagreement or neutrality. This could indicate that while greenwashing may

exist, it may not be perceived as widespread enough to significantly undermine trust.

Finding and Suggestion

- 1) The above table shows that nearly half of the respondents **(49.53%)** disagree, this indicating that green washing strongly undermines brand trust for a significant majority. Companies need to address green washing concerns to retain consumer trust, as its impact is largely negative.
- 2) **The above data shows that most of the respondent Disagree (44.86)** indicating that the accuracy of recycling labels and their ability is not influences consumer behavior. The recycling label is only on the product but it is not so recycled properly. A moderate proportion of respondents strongly believe that recycling labels are accurate and influence consumer behavior positively.
- 3) **Disagree (4.67%)**: A small portion of the population disagrees with the claims, suggesting some level of skepticism or awareness of potential greenwashing, but this group is not large enough.
- 4) Over a quarter of respondents are generally supportive of these claims, though not as strongly as those in the "strongly agree" category. This suggests that a majority of consumers still have a positive outlook on the companies' eco-friendly assertions, albeit with less confidence.

Suggestions

- Businesses should be more honest about their environmental actions. This will help build trust with customers and reduce skepticism.
- There should be rules to monitor and regulate green claims by companies. This will reduce false claims and encourage more honest environmental statements.
- Businesses should focus on educating the public about green washing, its risks, and how to recognize it.
- Consumers should learn to question claims and look for proof. This will reduce green washing and hold businesses accountable.

Conclusion

Consumers are becoming more aware of green washing and the environmental claims made by companies. However, many still trust these claims and don't always change their buying habits. This shows that companies need to be more transparent and ethical to earn consumer trust. The study also emphasizes the importance of educating consumers about green washing, so they can make better decisions. To help both consumers and companies aiming to be eco-friendly, we need more transparency and education. While the fight against green washing isn't over, we can reduce it by addressing false claims step by step.

References

1. Mr. K. Kumar, Dr. Yaaseen Maswood (2023), A Study on Perception and Preferences Towards Green Marketing, It's Influence on Consumer, Journal of Informatics Education and Research, ISSN: 1526-4726 Vol 3 Issue 2.

2. Ajay Patil, A. Abdhul Rahim (2024), Analyzing the Impact and Influence of Green Marketing Communication in Consumers' Green Purchase Behaviour, *Journal of Informatics Education and Research*, ISSN: 1526-4726, Vol 4 Issue 1.
3. Dhansay Kurrey, Bhavna Prajapati (2024), A Study on Impact of E-Commerce on Consumer Buying Behavior: A Focus on Grocery Products in Bilaspur District, *Journal of Informatics Education and Research*, ISSN: 1526-4726, Vol 4 Issue 3.
4. Kajal Sharma, Chanchal Chawla (2024), Shift in Customers Buying Behaviour towards Online Shopping, *Journal of Informatics Education and Research*, ISSN: 1526-4726, Vol 4 Issue 1.
5. Nilesh Anute (2025), The Impact of Targeted Advertising on OTT Platforms: Consumer Perception and Engagement, *Journal of Informatics Education and Research*, ISSN: 1526-4726, Vol 5 Issue 1.
6. S. Md. Shakir Ali, Sajid Shaikh (2024), Investigating How Different Pricing Strategies Impact Consumer Perception and Purchase Behavior in Online Markets with Special Reference to Discounts, *Journal of Informatics Education and Research*. ISSN: 1526-4726 Vol 4 Issue 3.
7. Nyilasy, G., Gangadharbatla, H., & Paladino, A. (2012). Greenwashing: A consumer perspective. *Economics & Sociology*, 5(2), 116.
8. Singhal, H., & Agrawal, A. (2021), Greenwashing: A study on consumer behavior and effectiveness in Rajasthan.
9. Khandelwal, M., Sharma, A., & Jain, V. (2019), Green washing: A study on the effects of greenwashing on consumer perception and trust build-up. *Res. Rev. Int. J. Mult*, 4, 607-612.
10. Kumar, S., Garg, R., & Makkar, A. (2012). Consumer awareness and perception towards green products: A study of youngsters in India. *International Journal of Marketing & Business Communication*, 1(4), 35.