



Empowering Indian consumers with sustainable retail advertising

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the relevance of sustainable retail advertising to Indian consumers. In light of the growing concern for environmental and social issues, consumers are increasingly interested in supporting brands that share their values and contribute to environmental protection. This study examines the implementation of the vital critical principles of sustainable retail advertising, including transparency, authenticity, and responsibility, in the Indian retail market. In addition, it examines additional significant challenges and opportunities of sustainable advertising for brands in India, such as the need for consumer education and awareness-building and the possibility of increased brand loyalty and customer engagement. The paper concludes with some suggestions for brands seeking to adopt sustainable advertising practices in India, which will enhance the user experience and be more environmentally friendly. The following research emphasises the importance of supply chain collaboration and a commitment to continuous improvement and innovation.

Keywords: retail advertising, Indian consumers, green products, and sustainability

Introduction

Sustainability is the capacity of a system or process to be maintained over time without significantly depleting resources or harming the environment, society, or economy. The concept entails the equilibrium of economic, social, and environmental aspects to foster the sustained well-being of individuals and the earth.

Achieving sustainability necessitates a transition towards a more effective and fair utilisation of resources, as well as the creation of novel technologies and frameworks that promote sustainable approaches. Because of this, people may need to adjust their behaviour, businesses, and even government policies.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing climate change, protecting biodiversity and ecosystems, promoting social justice and equity, reducing waste and pollution, and promoting sustainable economic development are essential aspects of sustainability.

Sustainability is a significant concept that acknowledges the interdependence of human welfare, environmental health, and economic prosperity. Promoting sustainability can create a better future for both current and future generations. Sustainable retail advertising prioritises environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical considerations. It involves advertising to promote sustainable products, services, and behaviours while minimising advertising's environmental impact.

Retailers can utilise a variety of strategies to promote sustainable advertising practices. One approach is the environmental impact of advertising materials, such as paper and ink. Using recycled paper and soy-based ink, for instance, can reduce the environmental impact of promotional materials.

Digital advertising methods, such as email marketing and social media advertising, have a minor impact on the environment compared to traditional print advertising. Additionally, digital advertising enables more targeted and personalised messaging, which can be more effective for promoting sustainable products and behaviours. Retail

advertising refers to promoting retailers' products and services to consumers via various advertising channels. It is a crucial component of retail marketing, as it helps to generate sales and drive customer traffic to stores and websites.

The various formats of retail advertising include billboards, print ads, television and radio commercials, online banner ads, email marketing, social media ads, and email marketing. Retailers frequently combine these channels to create a comprehensive marketing campaign and reach their target audience.

Effective retail advertising campaigns typically consist of identifying the target audience, comprehending their needs and interests, and customising the message and creative assets to resonate with them. Retailers may employ various strategies to encourage consumers to make purchases, including discounts, promotions, and loyalty programmes.

According to a few research papers, organic food is a rapidly expanding food industry sector as consumers become increasingly interested in healthy and environmentally sustainable food options. Organic food is grown and produced without synthetic pesticides, fertilisers, or genetically modified organisms. In addition to focusing on soil health and biodiversity conservation, organic farmers practise more sustainable agriculture.

The objective of this methodical review of literature is to present a thorough summary of the current studies on the viewpoints and opinions of consumers regarding organic food. Through a literature review, we aim to identify critical factors influencing consumers' decisions regarding the consumption of organic foods, such as price, availability, labelling, trust, and health and environmental concerns.

Organic food products have gained popularity recently due to their perceived health benefits and environmentally friendly production methods. As a result, there has been a rise in the popularity of organic food items in cities. This trend is not uncommon in the southern Indian city of Mysore. The objective of this study is to examine the attitudes of consumers in Mysore towards organic food

products. The objective of this research is to examine the elements that impact the buying choices of consumers, their familiarity and understanding of organic food items, and the perceived benefits and drawbacks of purchasing organic food products.

Like many other places, the demand for organic food products has risen in Udaipur, India.

According to the market research conducted in Udaipur, there is a variety of organic food products available. These include organic fruits and vegetables, organic pulses and grains, organic dairy products, organic meat and poultry products, and packaged organic foods. The adoption of organic farming practices by farmers in Udaipur has increased the availability of organic food products, a positive trend for consumer health and the environment.

Literature Review

Eco-labels play an essential and direct role in educating consumers about green products. (Khushwala & Singh, 2019). Eco-labelling ingredients package design and green product component awareness. (Kumar, 2013). Long-term and cost-effective production of environmentally friendly goods, in addition to several social factors and engaging advertising. (Tiwari *et al.*, 2011)

According to Sharma and Sanghvi (2018) [17, 18], "green products" are products that focus on preserving or enhancing the environment throughout their lifecycle, including production, usage, and disposal, by conserving resources. This study quantifies how physical and perceptual green product attributes affect consumers' willingness to purchase a green product. (Sharma & Sanghvi 2018) [17, 18].

Customers want to purchase green products because they are environmentally friendly and reduce negative environmental impacts (Ramanan & Ramananakumar, 2014) [14]. Effective online advertising of e-commerce platforms has a long-lasting effect on consumers, resulting in high revenue (Lewis & Reilley, 2011) [4].

Price plays a vital role at the point of sale, but for energy products, the machine's efficiency is more important than the price (Sammer & Wustenhagen, 2005) [5]. It takes work to balance a company's profitability and environmental protection. The product's perceived value should be greater than its attractive packaging. (Pan *et al.*, 2019) [3]

A crucial aspect of green marketing is involving consumers in marketing green products. The public is willing to pay extra to support a cleaner and more environmentally friendly world, and it is important for marketers to educate them on the importance and benefits of eco-friendly products compared to those that are not. In developing nations such as India, green marketing is critical and relevant. (Sarkar, 2012) [8]

Integrated and eco-functional systems, such as land, forests, and mountains, are essential for human survival, and sustainable development is required to conserve natural resources. As defined by organisations such as the Sustainable Packaging Coalition and the Sustainable Packaging Alliance, eco-friendly packaging focuses on effectiveness, efficiency, reusability, and safety. The objective is to reduce natural resource consumption and waste, maximise raw product recovery, and employ restorative materials while employing renewable energy sources and clean production methods. (Nayyar *et al.* 2014) [6]

This study investigates the impact of packaging elements such as colour, price, size, and labelling on millennials' purchasing behaviour and brand recognition. The mixed-methods strategy utilised a survey questionnaire and qualitative interviews to comprehend motivation. 71.4% of respondents acknowledged the significance of colour as a packaging component, indicating that it is a crucial element. Moreover, 53% of millennials find colourful packaging appealing and influential, and 38% consider packaging when purchasing. (Nikita 2021)

Seven case lets have been grouped to highlight nine core groups of green retail practises, demonstrating innovation in retailing-related thought. Business-to-consumer (B2C) leads this research. Observers have noticed that consumers need to provide more information to retailers. (Kumar, 2015) [16] Promotional campaigns that are effective can influence the extent to which customers are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products. (Sharma, 2020)

Green marketing involves advertising and selling products and services that are environmentally friendly and offer ecological benefits. Refuse, Reduce, Recycle, and Rot comprise the five Rs of green marketing. This strategy reduces waste, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, and contributes to global warming mitigation. Although the initial cost of producing eco-friendly products may be higher, the long-term benefits outweigh the costs, resulting in increased company profitability. Green marketing is gaining popularity among producers as it ensures long-term growth and environmental sustainability. (Deeplakshmi, 2019)

To evaluate the effectiveness of retail firms' communication channels in influencing food waste patterns and trends among consumers. (Young *et al.*, 2017) Sustainable development is essential for economic growth, and retail is a vital link between producers and consumers. This study uses secondary data to examine the efficiency and sustainable development practices of 12 retail firms in Romania. The retail industry in Romania is robust, with a slightly expanding market, concentration trends, and average efficiency. However, these companies' adoption of sustainable development principles is low, and they need to view them as business opportunities or competitive advantages. (Bucur & Vasiliu, 2013)

Sustainable consumption and policies have been on the rise due to the COVID-19 pandemic and ecological crisis. Now, conscientious customers are interested in living sustainably and avoiding overconsumption. AI can aid in the implementation of sustainability chatbots (SC) in fast-fashion retailing. MSC combines mindfulness with sustainability and provides a theoretical foundation for SC. The approach helps marketing managers to incorporate sustainability into the strategies of fast fashion retailers and consumer behaviour, thereby encouraging value co-creation. (Prete, 2022).

Research Gap

- A better comprehension of the factors that eco-conscious buyers take into account while making a purchase needs to be derived from the scholarships conducted earlier.
- Further investigation is necessary to evaluate the cost-effectiveness implications of Price and Green Products.
- There needs to be more knowledge regarding the impact of labelling and packaging at the point of sale while purchasing green products.

Objective

- Examine the role of retail advertising in educating Indian consumers about eco-friendly products.
- Examine the preference for the product's eco-friendliness over its price among Indian consumers at the retail counter.
- Examine the impact of environmentally friendly packaging on the purchasing decisions of Indian consumers at retail counters.

Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant influence of retail advertising in creating awareness about the eco-friendly product among Indian consumers.

H0: There is no influence of retail advertising in creating awareness about eco-friendly products among Indian consumers.

H2: There is a significant preference for the eco-friendliness of the product over its price among Indian Consumers at the retail counter.

H0: There is no significant preference for the eco-friendliness of the product over its price among Indian Consumers at the retail counter.

H3: There is a significant influence of green packaging on the purchasing decisions of Indian consumers at retail counters.

H0: There is no significant influence of green packaging on the purchasing decisions of Indian consumers at retail counters.

Research Methodology

The proposed research methodology involves an interview-based qualitative study and a structured questionnaire pilot study. This research will utilise convenient sampling, selecting participants based on their accessibility and availability. The target sample size for this study is 50 individuals between the ages of 18 and 50. We will conduct gender-inclusive research in Gurgaon, India.

We will use a semi-structured interview questionnaire to collect data, allowing us to explore participants' perspectives more flexibly. The interviews will be conducted in person or remotely, based on the preferences and circumstances of the participants. We will analyse the collected data using qualitative analysis software, namely *in vivo*, to aid in organising, categorising, and deriving insights from the interview transcripts.

The research is estimated to be thirty days, beginning in January 2023. This schedule will allow adequate participant recruitment, data collection, transcription, and analysis. The sample will include individuals with varying food preferences (vegetarians and non-vegetarians) and a common interest in shopping and health.

The objective of this research methodology is to obtain a thorough comprehension of the viewpoints of Indian customers concerning eco-friendly retail advertising. How they feel about eco-friendly retail advertising can be accomplished through qualitative interviews and a structured questionnaire.

Findings/ Result

The collected research data was analyzed using descriptive research methodology. The collected information is quantitative data.

Age Group

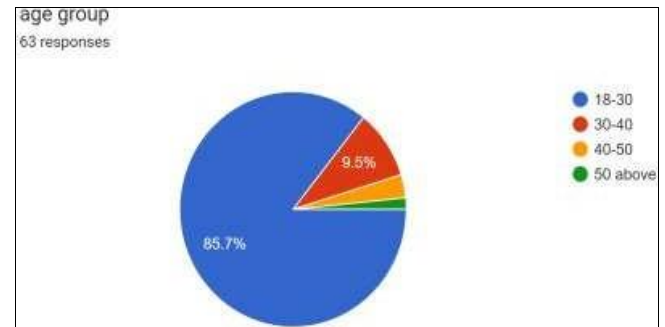


Fig 1

The data shows that most of the participants, specifically 85.7%, belong to the age group of 18 to 30 years old based on the answers provided by the younger generation. At the same time, 9.5% of respondents are between the ages of 30 and 40. Later, there were few responses from people aged 40 to 50 and older.

Gender

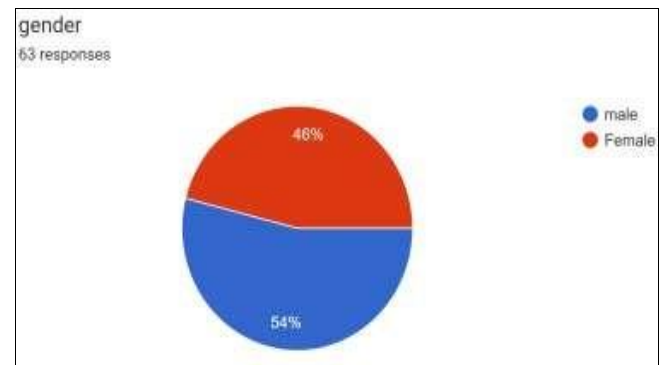


Fig 2

The gender distribution of the respondents shows that 54% were male and 46% were female. This data indicates that males prefer eco-friendly packaging and green products more than females.

Q1. Are you aware about eco-friendly products?

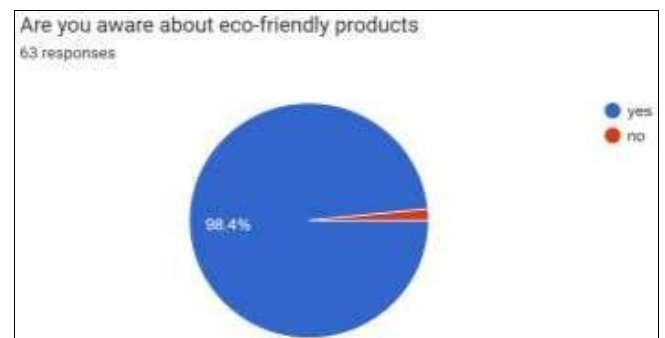


Fig 3

According to the data presented, a vast % of people, 98.4%, are aware of eco-friendly products, while only 1.6% are unaware.

Q2. Before purchasing any product do you check whether the product is eco-friendly or not?

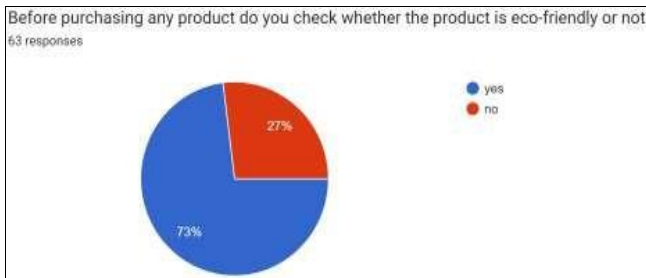


Fig 4

73% of people check whether a product is eco-friendly before purchasing it, while 27% do not.

Q3. Before buying any product do you check whether the packaging is eco-friendly or not?

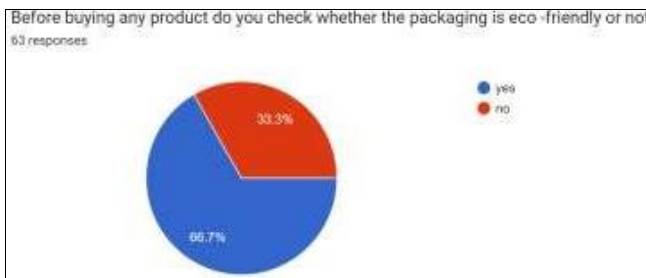


Fig 5

This study reveals that 66.7% of individuals examine a product's packaging to determine whether it is eco-friendly; however, 33.3% do not consider this a significant concern.

Q4. Do you prefer purchasing eco-friendly products?

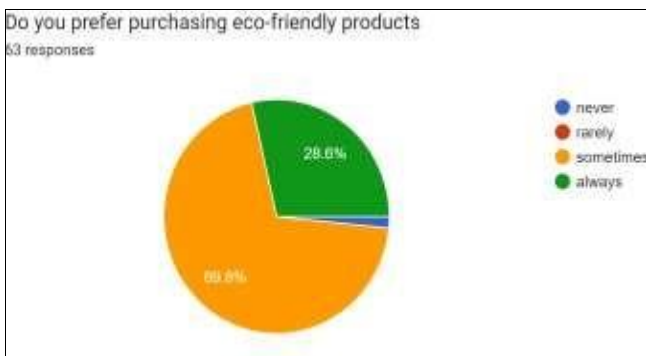


Fig 6

This data indicates that 69.8% of people prefer purchasing eco-friendly products occasionally, 28.6% prefer purchasing eco-friendly products constantly, and a small number of people never purchase these products.

Q5. Do you prefer paying more for eco-friendly products?

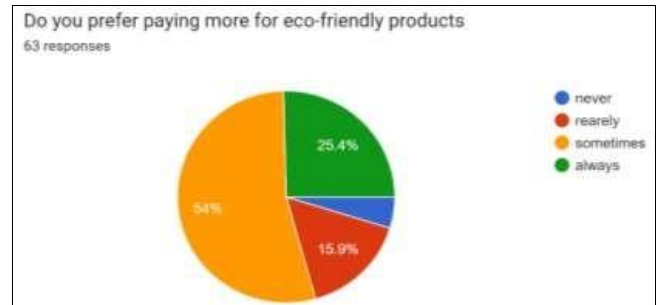


Fig 7

This data indicates that 54 per cent of individuals sometimes prefer to pay more for eco-friendly products, while 25.4 per cent do so consistently and 15.9 per cent do so infrequently.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is essential to note that sustainable retail advertising is a topic that is gaining increasing relevance among Indian consumers. Due to the escalation of environmental and social issues, consumers are more conscious of their purchases' impact and seek out businesses that share their values. Sustainable retail advertising strategies allow brands to strengthen their relationships with consumers, increase repeat business, and promote sustainable growth, authenticity, transparency, and responsibility. This research paper examines three fundamental principles of sustainable retail advertising and their applicability to the Indian retail industry. In addition, we have identified the challenges and opportunities of sustainable advertising for brands in India, such as the need for consumer education and awareness-raising and the possibility of increased client engagement and brand loyalty. In the future, businesses that want to use sustainable advertising techniques in India must prioritise supply chain collaboration, commit to constant innovation and improvement, and focus on customer education and awareness. By taking these steps, they may establish themselves as industry leaders in sustainability, expand their clientele, and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Limitation

- Smaller sample size Interview - The proposed interview will consist of 50 samples. Increase the sample size for future studies.
- Locale Precise - Most of the samples analyzed come from within the city limits of Gurugram. This city offers more opportunities for gathering information, which we will incorporate into our ongoing investigation.
- Focus on food packaging - As the market for sustainable products is vast, we have chosen to concentrate on a small food packaging segment. There is more significant research potential in other areas of sustainability.

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