



# "The Power of Green: Examining the Impact of Eco-Advertisement on Brand Image"

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## Abstract

The aim of this research paper is to study impact of eco-advertisement, a green marketing tool on the image of the brand. In the present times, there has been a growing awareness and interest in promoting eco-friendly products and services. One way companies have sought to capitalize on this trend is by advertising their eco-friendly practices. This study seeks to explore the effectiveness of such advertising efforts and their impact on consumers' perceptions of a brand's image.

The paper works on deep study of literature relating to Green marketing, eco-advertising and brand image. It then presents the results of a survey of consumers' attitudes towards eco-advertising and their perceptions of brand image taken with reference to QSRs. The survey was administered to a diverse sample of 1000 consumers of Urban Punjab, and the data was analyzed using statistical techniques such as SEM.

The results of the study suggest that eco-advertising can have a positive impact on a brand's image, particularly for companies that are perceived as genuine in their commitment to environmental sustainability. Consumers who view eco-advertising as credible and trustworthy are more likely to perceive a brand as socially responsible and environmentally conscious.

Overall, this research provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of eco-advertising in shaping consumer perceptions of brand image. Companies can use these findings to develop more effective advertising strategies that capitalize on the growing interest in environmental sustainability and enhance their brand's image in the eyes of consumers.

Keywords- Sustainable, eco-friendly, brand, deterioration, exploitation, preservation, environment.

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## 1. Introduction

Due to the continuous exploitation of our state of environment, the situation is becoming important to be addressed. The exploitation of the environment and related factors are impacting the individuals and the planet Earth on a very wide scale and impacting all spheres of life in one way or the other. The consequences of such degradation is now visible in our environment wherein concerns have now been raised to save the planet by adopting green marketing strategies. Consumers have now been socially responsible and more rational towards environmental preservation. With rising concern towards environmental protection and growth in

prominence of green movement in recent years, organizations have now begun to recognize the appeal of environment friendly products and strategies. More emphasis has now been given on green strategies both internally and externally in the business operations to recover pollution causing outputs, development of substitutes as renewable inputs and products resigning to decrease energy consumption. As per the emerging concept of stakeholder theory, businesses have now shifted their mindset from only profit making approach to a more balanced viewpoint of considering the multitude of associated stakeholders' factors in decision making to maximize the benefits of representative groups with parallel emphasis on the environmental protection (Freeman, 1984). Since 1970s, there was a beginning of a new era in which it was witnessed that the consumers are concerned towards the products that are environmentally safe and the level of awareness among the consumers were observed to increase (Alwitt & Pitts, 1996). Green revolution was the contribution of such awareness among the general mass. Green marketing has evolved as conscious marketing of socially responsible and sustainable products and services and has now become a new mantra for business organizations to deliver/render products/services to consumers in more social and environment friendly criterion.

The businesses in the present era focus majorly on the communication objective of the organization and spend a lot of money in reaching its prospective customers. One of the most common and popular ways through which an organization provides information about its products, brand and other relevant details to the target set of customers is 'advertisement'. Advertisement not only helps to fulfill the communication objective of the organization but also attain the sales objective of the organization by persuading the prospective customers to buy the product. The conscious set of customers go through the advertising of the products, note the features and make informed and conscious decisions about purchasing or rejecting the advertised goods. Evaluation of advertisements by the target audience has gained importance due to which it becomes important for the advertisers to work hard while making the advertisements. In the recent business scenarios, the advertisers are focusing on highlighting the environmental factors associated with a product with a view point to gain attention of the environmentally conscious class of people. Such advertisements termed as eco- advertisement highlight the eco-friendly features of the product and portray the related brands and organizations as eco-friendly for the environment. This helps them to attract the conscious class of customers and gain a competitive edge over the competitors.

The Quick Service Restaurants often abbreviated as QSRs are the restaurants which are recognized for their fast service, quick food and casual atmosphere. The category of restaurants covered mostly under the QSR category includes the franchise outlets of various food chains, cafes, lounges, highway dhabas, takeaway restaurants, etc. In our country, where a majority of population is young and 45% of it constitutes to be under the age of 25 years, the inclination towards the fast food industry and junk food is growing each day (Garg, 2019). The features offered by such QSRs including competitive prices, quick service, convenient location, quality of food, eco-friendly practices, etc. are become the major factors contributing to the growth of QSR

industry in India. In India, many QSR brands are operational and give tough competition to the local food industry in the real time. The top QSR foreign brands operational in India include Mc Donald's, KFC, Burger King, Dominos, Subway etc. Nero, 2018, highlighted a number of factors which led to the growth of QSRs in our country. Some of them constitute to be the larger market share of unorganized food industry, large young population of the country, change in the consumer lifestyles, more disposable incomes, rising trends towards urbanization, etc.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Green Marketing**

According to Wikipedia, "Green marketing is marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. In simple language, green marketing covers both manufacturing and marketing of those products and services which are organic, eco-friendly and beneficial for the society at a large (Kaur & Kaur, 2018).

Vaitone & Skackauskaie (2019), have divided the evolution of the concept of green marketing in 3 different phases as ecological phase, environmental phase and sustainable phase. This concept of evolution was taken from different studies (Zampese et al., 2016; Lazar, 2017). The initial phase termed as ecological phase was considered to be initiated in 1960's which basically focused on the most damaging industries like industries relating to the chemicals and mining. During this phase, the remedy for all environmental problems were supposed to be the marketing and related activities. Although this phase did not turn out to be very successful as it could not give good results. The only benefit that can be taken out from this phase was awareness and recognition of green marketing by the governments. Then in the late 1980's the second phase came into existence which was the environmental phase of green marketing evolution. This phase focused on both the problems related to the environment and the changes which can be initiated in industries as a measure of change. This phase covered the issues related to decrease in pollution and wastes, saving the eco-system and extinction of species along with designing of innovative products, and initiation of green initiatives highlighting the recycling packaging. It was observed that the trust on such green initiatives was a concern among the people (Papdas et al., 2017). After the year 2000, the new phase called as sustainable phase came up where the focus was basically on the specific requirements of the products. In this phase, such products were considered which bear least impact on the environment. This phase considered the use of materials and processes which are not harmful for the environment and the future generations to come. Different forms of business organizations started to focus on strategies and principles of sustainability (Peattie, 2001).

The current scenarios of business have changed immensely and now the old traditional practices of marketing are no longer acceptable by the customers. To stay competitive in the market, adoption of new strategies is no longer a matter of choice (Suki,2016). This is due to the rise in awareness among the masses, increasing competition, more technological advancement, strict environmental policies, etc. The global environmental problems in the present times, trigger the

consumers to look for greener alternative purchase behavior (Hsieh, 2012; Martinez, 2015). Also due to the interaction of global markets with the traditional markets the factors of sustainability has gained more importance. So in the current scenario the changes in the business prepositions are becoming a necessity rather than being a choice (Ali,2021; Amoka et. Al, 2020). The green marketing practices when adopted by business organizations results to multifold advantages and value addition for the businesses. These practices might appear costly in the short run but they prove to be advantageous and a value addition both cost wise and brand value wise in the long run (Mishra,Sharma, 2014). Due to the environmental initiatives adopted, the business attracts conscious set of customers. Such customers who prefer to make conscious purchasing develop a sense of trust among brands resulting to develop better, strengthened relations with the brand (Zampese et al., 2016). Its provides a competitive advantage to the business as compared to its non-green counterparts (Shi, Yang, 2018; Talebi et al., 2018). This ultimately helps to increase the profitability of the business in the long run and build a strong reputation of the brand among the general masses (Papadas *et al.*, 2017). Also the corporate social responsibility of the organization is fulfilled with green marketing.

## 2.2. Eco- Advertising

In today's era, advertisement is one of the most important sources of creating awareness and promotion among the general mass of people. It can be through use of different mediums which includes digital platforms, television advertisements, newspapers, social media platforms, etc. Most of the organizations spend a huge sum of their budgets to promote their product and create its demand to cater a substantial market share in the industry. "Advertising is a marketing tactic involving paying for a space to promote a product, service, or cause. The actual promotional messages are called advertisements, or ads for short. The goal of advertising is to reach people most likely to be willing to pay for a company's product or services and entice them to buy."([www.shopify.in](http://www.shopify.in)). Eco-friendly advertising is the promotion of products or services emphasizing their environmental characteristics. According to Rahbar & Wahid (2011), environmental advertisement is a technique used by different organizations to introduce their products & processes to individuals, with a view to promote their product through media. The main objective behind Environmental advertisement is to motivate the environmentally responsible consumers to buy their products that are not harmful for the environment and also portray the effect their decision would have on the environment. It is simply a form of communication that strives to highlight the eco-friendly aspects of a product or organization concentrating all its promotional activities centered towards the environment (Shreshtha, 2018). The appeals addressed in eco-advertisement include sustainable, eco-logical and environment friendly messages that hit the environment conscious class of people (Leonidou et al., 2011).

Eco-advertisements have been used as a tool by various government, non-government and private organizations not only to promote their products but also to create awareness among general masses related to environmental concerns. Due to massive use of eco-advertisements, it becomes important for the marketers to study the response of consumers towards the green

strategy of advertisement being adopted by various organizations. According to Suki (2013), environmental advertisement has a positive impact among the people to influence them to make Green purchase decision as such efforts help people to have a better understanding about green products and further make a wiser purchase decision. The Green advertising influences the emotions of the consumers by highlighting the environmental concerns and persuades them to act accordingly. And such emotional concerns lead to a positive response towards the consumer buying behavior (Saleem & Abideen, 2011; Naizi et al., 2012). According to Chase & Smith (1992), nearly 70% of respondents are influenced by eco-advertisements. Many consider that advertisements are just a way to gather information and knowledge about products but it does not influence the behavior of consumers. The main reason behind this is lack of trust in the claims made by the advertisers. At some points, the credibility of the green advertisements is questioned (Chan, 2004; Kilbourne, 1995). The Green claims made merely for selling a product are often taken as a marketing tool to extract more money from the consumers. However, the environmental advertisements by Government and NGO's are considered more reliable as compared to other claims. The environmental advertisement begins with a statement which emphasizes the concern of the organization for the environment. Then the advertisement leads to the transformations being made within the organization in its production processes and related activities to save the environment. And finally the third part involves the results of its actions (Davis, 1994).

### **2.3. Brand Image**

According to Wikipedia, "A brand is a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's goods and services as distinct from those of other sellers. Brands are used in business, marketing, and advertising for recognition and importantly, to create and store value as brand equity for the object identified, to the benefit of brand's customers, its owners and shareholders." Brand helps the organizations to create uniqueness in their products ensuring the trust and confidence of consumers. It is considered to be one of the most important and valuable asset associated with any company (Sasmita & Suki, 2015). According to Kotler (1997), Image is the perception, belief, impression and thought about any object in the mind of the consumer and consumer is supposed to react to the object on the basis of aforesaid image.

Brand image is a well-recognized concept and an important aspect in marketing. In simple words, brand image is the image of the brand in the minds of the consumers. It is the collective components relating to the identity of a brand that leads to formation of a brand image (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). Brand image is basically how a consumer perceives a brand in their own mind. It can be created through promotions, advertisements or word of mouth, etc. It is not an attribute or featured quality possessed by a product (Keller,1993). In a market where it becomes difficult to differentiate a product merely on the basis of its tangible characteristics, brand image can play a significant role (Mudambi et al., 1997). It can be defined as a mental picture of a brand that a consumer possesses relating to the offerings by the brand (Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Keller, 1993). According to Caves & Porter (1977), a good reputation of a

company not only forms an intangible asset but also is a source of strategic advantage which enhances the company's value. The investors are more willing to make investments in the company's possessing a positive brand image due to low risk and high perceived value. Brand image helps to provide broadly three stated benefits:- Functional benefits, symbolic benefits and experiential benefit. As functional benefit, the consumption related issues of the consumers are catered. Such products help the consumers to satisfy their external demands, such as price, packaging, etc. If the product is of perceived quality & able to satisfy the functional needs of the consumers, the attitude towards the brand would be positive. Experiential benefits are related to the internal feelings about the product i.e. "what it felt like to use a product". It relates to the experience of using a product. Symbolic benefits, on the other hand, are not related to the product attributes. It basically relates to the social expression, acceptance or self-esteem. It provides the users with a sense of social superiority or belongingness to a social class. Such benefit leads to the positive image of the brand (Park et al., 1986; Nagar, 2015). A strong Brand Image portrays a better quality and higher value being possessed by the company and helps to gain competitive edge over the competitors (Richardson et al., 1994). It strategically acts as a resource for the organization (Balmer, 2012). The companies having a good brand image, can easily add new products to their product line, or host new brands. This leads to an increase in the sales of both the new product and the current brand (Diallo et al., 2013; Martenson, 2007). Almost all the organizations strive to create a positive brand image in the minds of consumers. Such a positive brand image helps to create brand loyalty and brand credibility which ultimately leads to repeated sales and thus economic benefit for the organization.

### **3. Objectives of the study**

The present study aims to discuss the relationship between one of the green marketing tools 'eco-advertisement' and its impact on the image of the brand. To study this relationship, the Quick Service Restaurants (QSR) are considered and the impact of eco- advertisements by these QSR's are taken in consideration.

### **4. Research Methodology**

Research design is a framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher ([www.questionpro.com](http://www.questionpro.com)). It is a plan that helps us to guide as to how, when and where the data is to be collected and how it is to be analyzed is called as a research design. The research under study will analyze the relationship between eco- advertisement, a green marketing tool and its impact on the image of a brand. The study will be conducted in the top 10 cities of Urban Punjab including the capital of Punjab i.e. Chandigarh. The people of these cities are mostly well-educated and conscious class of people having high per capita incomes and disposable incomes. A sample size of 1000 respondents will be considered for the purpose of the above mentioned study. Renowned authors Zigmond & Uma Sekaran stated that any sample size that is above the figure of 500 can be considered as an ideal sample size in the large surveys. Also, Hassan (2014) used the sample size of 140 and considered it as adequate. However, Hair et al., (2013), stated

that 200-300 sample size is a true representative of the population in a management related study. Further to support it, the authors stated that any sample size above 200 is sufficiently adequate if SEM Technique is used (Hoelter,1983; Belli, 2017). In this study, Purposive sampling technique will be used. In this technique, such respondents are selected that possess the required characteristics according to the judgment of the researcher (Awang, 2012).

To collect the primary data from the respondents, the questionnaire will be used. Questionnaires are a series of pre-determined questions for the purpose of gathering information from the respondents to record findings and used as an important research tool (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). According to Collis & Hussey (2003), questionnaire is an instrument of research that is preferred to record the opinions and choices of respondents in an easy way. In order to measure the variables under study, a 5 point likert scale will be used, ranging from 5- strongly agree, 4- agree, 3- neutral, 2- disagree, 1- strongly disagree. - Structural Equation Modeling will be used to test the relationship for the present study using Smart Pls software. SEM is a technique which is used to test the hypothesized relationships between the constructs. The questionnaire will be divided into two parts. The first part will record the demographic details of the respondents including their name, city, gender, age, etc. along with it the familiarity of the respondents with respect to the QSRs are considered. The second part of the questionnaire includes a set of close ended questions related to the impact of Eco-advertisements on the image of a brand.

#### Questionnaire

Name	
City	
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Age (in years)	
Which of the given QSRs (Quick Service Restaurants) in India are you familiar with?	<input type="checkbox"/> Domino's <input type="checkbox"/> McDonalds <input type="checkbox"/> KFC <input type="checkbox"/> Subway <input type="checkbox"/> Burger King
Which out of the following features of QSR attracts you the most? (You can choose multiple options)	<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of food <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Prices <input type="checkbox"/> Convenient location <input type="checkbox"/> Speedy Service <input type="checkbox"/> Eco-friendly Practices
<b>1. Eco-advertising</b>	

i. Attractive environmental advertisements encourage me to adopt green purchasing patterns	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1
ii. Environmental advertisement enhance my knowledge about green products	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1
iii. Environmental advertisement guide me as a customer to make an informed purchase decision	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1
iv. Green advertisements should promote eco-friendly products in a credible manner	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1
v. The content of environmental advertisements should offer pertinent emotional relevance for green customers	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1
vi. Environmental advertisements are not exaggerated	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1
vii. Green advertising catches my attention	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1
viii. I enjoy watching advertisement focusing on product's environmental values	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1
ix. Attractive environmental advertisement encourages me to buy green products	( ) 5 ( ) 4 ( ) 3 ( ) 2 ( ) 1

## 5. Analysis and Results

To test the hypotheses, bootstrapping procedure was run in the software. The results are assessed based on following criterion:



- 1. T Statistics:** The hypotheses are tested by observing the t-statistics value. The critical value of t-statistics at 5% level of significance is 1.96. If the calculated value of t-statistics is more than 1.96, the null hypothesis is rejected.
- 2.  $\beta$  Coefficient:**  $\beta$  Coefficient depicts the relationship between the constructs. It shows the strength of the relationship in comparison with other constructs in the relationship. The value of  $\beta$  Coefficient is between 0 and 1. The more the value of it close to 1, the stronger is the relationship. It also shows whether the relationship is positive or negative.
- 3. R Square:** The R Square represents the coefficient of determination. It shows the amount of variance explained in endogenous construct by the exogenous constructs. The value of R Square lies between 0 and 1. The value close to 0 is considered as weak and value close to 1 as strong. It can also be expressed in percentage form.

The results of the structural model are given below:

***H(01): There is no significant impact of Eco-Advertisement on Brand Image***

**Table: Impact of Eco-Advertisement on Brand Image**

Hypothesis	Original Estimate	Bootstrap Mean	Bootstrap Standard Deviation	T Statistics	Significance
Eco-Advertisement → Brand Image	0.6882	0.6890	0.0314	21.483	Significant

The obtained value of t statistics for hypothesis 5 (H05) is 21.483 which is more than the critical value. Hence the null hypothesis (H05) is rejected. We can conclude that there is a significant impact of Eco-Advertisement on Brand Image. The value of  $\beta$  Coefficient is 0.6882 and is positive. Hence, the impact of Eco-Advertisement on Brand Image is positive and strong. It shows that Eco-Advertisement plays a significant role in developing the brand image of the company.

## 6. Conclusion & Implications

The present study focuses on the eco- advertisement which is one of the green marketing tool. In the recent times the businesses focus on highlighting the environmental and related aspects among the general masses through advertising. Through such advertisements the environmentally conscious class of consumers are primarily impacted as they tend to have an inclination towards the safety of the environment and the related aspects in this segment. The eco advertisements not only results to an increase in sale of the aligned products but also leads to a positive impact on the minds of people witnessing those advertisements. Such positive impact results to the building of the image of the brand. The eco-friendly advertisement highlighting the environmental features associates to the reputation of the concerned brand as well and portrays the brand as a green brand.

In conclusion, this research paper provides strong evidence to support the positive impact of eco-advertisement on brand image. Our study found that eco-advertising can be an effective way for companies to enhance their brand's image, particularly when the advertising is perceived as genuine and credible by consumers. Consumers today are increasingly conscious of environmental sustainability, and they are actively seeking out products and services that align with their values. Companies that promote their eco-friendly practices through advertising can leverage this trend to strengthen their brand's image and appeal to a growing segment of environmentally conscious consumers. Our findings have important implications for companies seeking to develop more effective advertising strategies. By emphasizing their environmental sustainability practices through eco-advertising, companies can enhance their brand's image and appeal to consumers who value sustainability and social responsibility.

Overall, the positive impact of eco-advertisement on brand image highlights the importance of incorporating environmental sustainability into a company's marketing and branding efforts. As consumers continue to prioritize sustainability in their purchasing decisions, companies that prioritize eco-friendly practices and effectively communicate those practices through advertising will be well-positioned to succeed in the marketplace.

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