

Green Branding and Consumer Trust: A Study on Eco-Friendly Initiatives by Automobile Brands

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: *The purpose of this study is to assess the influence of green branding initiatives on consumer trust in the automobile sector, particularly in the context of increasing environmental awareness and sustainability expectations. As automobile brands adopt eco-friendly strategies in promotion, production, and communication, understanding how these initiatives affect consumer perceptions becomes crucial. This study aims to evaluate the extent to which such green branding practices shape consumer trust, thereby offering insights for marketers, brand strategists, and sustainability advocates in the automobile industry*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *The study follows a quantitative and descriptive research design, using a structured questionnaire to collect data from 100 respondents in Kochi, Kerala, through both online and offline modes. The questionnaire included 10 Likert-scale items—five on green branding and five on consumer trust. A non-probability convenience sampling method was used to select participants familiar with eco-friendly automobile branding practices. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha for reliability, Pearson correlation, and simple linear regression to assess the relationship between green branding and consumer trust.*

Findings/Result: *The study found a moderate positive relationship between green branding initiatives and consumer trust in automobile brands, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.503 ($p < 0.01$). Regression analysis showed that green branding explains 25.3% of the variance in consumer trust ($R^2 = 0.253$), and the regression coefficient ($B = 0.522$, $p < 0.001$) confirmed a significant positive impact. Among the trust-related factors, honesty recorded the highest mean score, indicating its key role in influencing trust. These results support the rejection of the null hypothesis and confirm that effective green branding significantly enhances consumer trust.*

Originality/Value: *The study uniquely contributes to existing literature by empirically demonstrating the significant impact of green branding on consumer trust in the automobile sector, offering practical insights for sustainable brand positioning.*

Paper Type: *Empirical Research.*

Keywords: Green Branding, Consumer Trust, Automobile Industry, Sustainable Marketing

1. INTRODUCTION :

In latest years, growing environmental concerns and elevated consumer focus have led to a tremendous shift in how corporations method branding and sustainability. With weather trade, pollution, and resource depletion at the forefront of global discourse, purchasers are increasingly anticipating businesses to undertake environmentally responsible practices [1-2]. In reaction, many industries, which include the automobile sector, are embracing green branding—the strategic integration of eco-friendly values into their brand identification, verbal exchange, and operations. Automobile brands are specially under stress because of their environmental footprint, and for that reason, green branding has become an essential component for keeping competitiveness and public image [3].

As brands try and align themselves with environmental values, consumer trust becomes a pivotal issue in determining the fulfillment of these green initiatives. Trust is crucial because customers often query the authenticity of environmental claims, main to skepticism about so-referred to as “greenwashing.”[4] For a green brand to be effective, it ought to now not simplest talk its dedication to sustainability but also earn the notion and self assurance of customers [5]. Within the automobile region, where purchases

contain excessive involvement and lengthy-time period use, believe inside the brands integrity, environmental ethics, and transparency extensively affects purchaser conduct. This makes it crucial to recognize whether green branding efforts certainly translate into enhanced patron accept as true with. This has a look at explores the connection between inexperienced branding and client agrees with in the context of eco-friendly initiatives taken by using vehicle manufacturers. The motive is to research how consumers perceive green branding efforts and to what extent these perceptions have an effect on their consensus with trust in the brand. By analyzing key variables including sustainability communication, eco-friendly product features, and brand trust, the study at objectives to provide empirical insights into the effectiveness of inexperienced branding techniques. The findings of this research may be treasured for entrepreneurs, emblem managers, and policymakers in shaping sustainable branding practices that not most effective enhance environmental results but also foster stronger customer relationships in the competitive automobile industry.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM :

In nowadays environmentally conscious world, clients are more and more demanding that businesses take responsibility for their ecological impact. The automobile industry, regarded for its tremendous contribution to pollutants and carbon emissions, is under mounting stress to adopt sustainable practices and communicate them successfully [6]. At the same time many vehicle brands are enforcing eco-friendly innovations and engaging in green marketing campaigns. Still it remains unclear whether these efforts are perceived as genuine by customers or merely as strategic attempts to enhance public picture [7]. This disconnect between company intent and public notion creates an urgent want to assess how consumers interpret and respond to green branding efforts.

Despite the upward push of green marketing, a crucial problem persists—client trust. Many customers remain skeptical about the authenticity of environmental claims made through corporations, particularly in industries with an excessive environmental effect like automobiles [8]. Phrases such as “greenwashing” have emerged, highlighting consumer concern that a few brands exaggerate or falsify their eco-friendly commitments for industrial gain. This skepticism can critically restrict the effectiveness of inexperienced branding projects. Consequently, information whether or not green branding truly enhances consumer trust is essential for each brand credibility and long-term consumer loyalty.

Despite the fact that green branding has turn out to be a common exercise within the automobile enterprise, there may be a substantive lack of empirical research inspecting its direct influence on consumer trust. Most of the present studies focus on popular sustainability tendencies or consumer behavior in isolation, with restricted attention on how precise inexperienced branding strategies affect trust in excessive-stakes sectors like automobile. This look at goals to fill that hole via exploring the connection between purchasers’ perceptions of eco-friendly initiatives and the extent of believe them vicinity in vehicle manufacturers. Identifying this connection will now not only upload to the educational knowledge of inexperienced advertising dynamics however additionally guide brands in growing authentic, trust-building sustainability strategies.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY :

This research contributes to the growing frame of knowledge inside the fields of advertising and marketing, sustainability, and purchaser behavior by using empirically inspecting the connection between green branding and customer believe within the automobile industry. Whilst green advertising has been significantly discussed in literature, the direct effect of inexperienced branding techniques on agree with stays underexplored, especially in environmentally impactful sectors like automobile. By focusing on this linkage, the study offers new insights into how branding efforts aligned with environmental obligation have an impact on customer attitudes. Those findings can enrich educational discourse and serve as a foundation for future research on brand credibility, eco-conscious consumerism, and trust improvement in green markets.

From a practical point of view, the findings of this have a look at hold sizeable value for brand managers, marketers, and corporate selection-makers within the automobile zone. As organizations retain to spend money on inexperienced technology and sustainability communications, knowledge the quantity to which these efforts form client trust is vital for designing effective branding strategies. The outcomes of the study can help organizations high-quality-tune their green messaging, keep away from

perceptions of green washing, and construct lasting trust with environmentally conscious clients. In a marketplace that is turning into increasingly aggressive and eco-sensitive, leveraging genuine, inexperienced branding as a trust-building tool can offer a strategic benefit.

Beyond academic and business benefits the study additionally holds broader societal relevance. As consumers emerge as greater aware of environmental issues, their trust in brands that sell sustainability has the ability to force responsible intake styles. By highlighting the importance of transparency and integrity in green branding, this research can inform public coverage and inspire regulatory our bodies to set clearer guidelines for inexperienced claims and company environmental responsibility. in the long run, the research promotes the idea that client believe is not only a advertising and marketing outcome however also a societal asset which can assist the global motion closer to a more sustainable destiny.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

Green branding refers to the strategic positioning of a brand through environmentally sustainable values, practices, and communication. In keeping with research, green branding not only displays a company's environmental challenge but additionally functions as a differentiating component in fantastically competitive markets [9]. Brands today are integrating sustainability into their marketing through green trademarks or logos, eco-friendly packaging, smooth technology, and environmental certifications—to enchantment to the growing section of environmentally conscious customers. This shift in branding strategy has been particularly significant in industries with excessive environmental impact, together with the automobile industry.

The automobile sector, traditionally associated with excessive emissions and fossil fuel intake, has increasingly more adopted inexperienced advertising techniques to cope with both regulatory stress and customer expectations. Studies show that many car brands are promoting electric-powered cars (EVs), hybrid technology, and carbon-neutral manufacturing tactics as a part of their sustainability messaging [10-11]. Such tasks are regularly marketed through branding campaigns that emphasize the emblem's environmental values. However, the actual effectiveness of those inexperienced branding efforts in shaping purchaser perception and behavior varies relying on how credible and consistent the messaging is.

Customer believes and trust is a crucial factor inside the fulfillment of inexperienced branding. Clients are regularly skeptical of environmental claims until they may be sponsored with the aid of obvious and verifiable facts [12]. Trust is constructed when purchasers think that a logo is clearly dedicated to sustainability rather than the use of it as a marketing gimmick [13]. Numerous researches confirms that authenticity, consistency, and transparency in environmental branding significantly contribute to client trust, which in flip influences purchase aim and brand loyalty [14-16].

Perceived authenticity plays a mediating position between green branding and trust. Schallehn et al. [17] determined that clients evaluate the sincerity of a logo's environmental claims before forming advantageous attitudes or accept as true with. If clients perceive that the brand's environmental initiatives align with its actual practices, they will accept it as true with more trust in the brand [18]. Agan if there may be a gap between what is communicated and what's practiced, the end result is frequently distrusted or backlash, on occasion classified as "greenwashing." therefore, inexperienced brand authenticity is considered a critical antecedent to trust formation [19]. Green branding affects no longer most effective trust but additionally standard consumer conduct. A look at by way of Biswas and Roy [20] highlights that clients are much more likely to pick out and advise a logo they perceive as environmentally responsible. Accept as true with advanced by green branding also enhances logo advocacy and reduces fee sensitivity. but, the impact of green branding is regularly moderated by means of factors consisting of environmental attention, personal values, and earlier logo enjoy, making it important for marketers to tailor their green messages to target demographics [21].

Despite its growing significance, green branding comes with demanding situations. Ambiguity in claims, absence of third-party certifications, and inconsistencies among corporate behavior and branding messages can erode client agree with [22]. Misleading green claims can lead to customer cynicism and lengthy-term damage to emblem reputation [23]. This is mainly relevant in the automobile zone, wherein excessive-stake merchandise and long-term ownership make believe a crucial part of purchase selections [24]. As an end result, the want for clear, credible, and substantiated green messaging is more important than ever.

Whilst several researches have explored green advertising, restrained studies have especially examined the direct relationship among green branding and consumer trust as true with inside the vehicle area. Present literature has largely focused on inexperienced product adoption, environmental attitudes, and client pleasure. This has a look at addressing this hole with the aid of investigating how inexperienced branding elements (inclusive of eco-friendly communication, brand responsibility, and sustainability efforts) affect consumer trust as true with. By doing so, it contributes new insights to both academic literature and practical marketing strategies in a sector striving for environmental transformation.

5. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY :

To determine the extent to which green branding initiatives significantly influence consumer trust in automobile brands.

6. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY :

(H₀): There is no significant relationship between green branding initiatives and consumer trust in automobile brands.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

The study adopts a quantitative and descriptive research design to analyze the connection among green branding initiatives and client agree with in vehicle manufacturers. The research turned into performed among consumers in Kochi, Kerala, who had been familiar with eco-friendly branding practices inside the automobile region. A total of one hundred legitimate responses have been gathered via an established questionnaire comprising 10 Likert-scale objects—5 measuring factors of green branding and 5 assessing dimensions of consumer agree with. A non-probability convenience sampling approach turned into employed to pick contributors based totally on their availability and recognition of environmental projects via vehicle brands. Statistics series become accomplished via each on-line and offline channels, and the responses had been analyzed the use of descriptive facts, reliability evaluation (Cronbach’s Alpha), Pearson correlation, and easy linear regression to test the formulated hypothesis and decide the statistical significance of the connection among the two variables.

8. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS :

This section presents the demographic profile of respondents, descriptive statistics of key variables, reliability analysis using Cronbach’s Alpha, correlation analysis to assess the relationship between green branding and consumer trust, and regression analysis—including model summary, ANOVA, and coefficients—to determine the strength and significance of the relationship.

9. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE :

Table1: Demographic Profile of The Respondents

Variable	Category	(N)	(%)
Gender	Male	54	54%
	Female	46	46%
Age Group	Below 25 years	30	30%
	26–35 years	40	40%
	36–45 years	20	20%
	Above 45 years	10	10%
Education	Undergraduate	35	35%
	Postgraduate	50	50%
	Others	15	15%
Occupation	Student	28	28%
	Working Professional	50	50%
	Business/Self-employed	15	15%
	Homemaker/Other	7	7%
Monthly Income	Below ₹20,000	25	25%
	₹20,001–₹40,000	35	35%

	₹40,001–₹60,000	20	20%
	Above ₹60,000	20	20%

The demographic profile of the respondents exhibits a reasonably balanced representation throughout key categories. In terms of gender, 54% have been male and 46% women, indicating close to-identical participation. Most people of the respondents (40%) belonged to the 26–35 age group, accompanied by 30% under 25 years, reflecting a predominantly younger adult sample.

Educationally, 50% were postgraduates, suggesting a properly-knowledgeable respondent base. In terms of profession, 50% had been working professionals, whilst students accounted for 28%, highlighting that most respondents are both actively employed or pursuing higher education. Regarding month-to-month profits, 35% earned among ₹20,001–₹40,000, observed through 25% underneath ₹20,000, indicating that a widespread part of the sample falls within the middle-income segment. This diverse demographic spread affords a balanced basis for analyzing customer perceptions closer to inexperienced branding and accept as true with in vehicle brands.

10. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS :

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Promotion	100	1	5	3.5	0.959	-0.386	0.606
Sustainability	100	1	5	3.44	0.957	-0.496	0.788
Advertising	100	1	5	3.45	0.77	0.103	0.42
Communication	100	1	5	3.36	0.823	-0.316	0.904
Responsibility	100	1	5	3.42	0.819	-0.132	0.596
Honesty	100	1	5	3.7	0.969	-0.652	0.627
Trustworthiness	100	1	5	3.29	0.977	-0.416	-0.103
Genuineness	100	1	5	3.36	0.99	-0.525	0.214
Confidence	100	1	5	3.45	0.903	-0.268	0.346
Integrity	100	1	5	3.4	1.005	-0.268	-0.193

The descriptive statistics display that respondents typically exhibit positive perceptions toward each green branding efforts and trust-associated attributes of automobile brands. Among the green branding elements, promotion (suggest = 3.50) and Sustainability (mean = 3.44) scored relatively better, indicating that consumers apprehend and moderately believe the brand’s eco-friendly projects and sustainability practices. Further, within the area of client trust, Honesty recorded the highest mean score of 3.70, suggesting that environmental honesty is a key contributor to constructing consumer confidence in green automobile brands.

All variables have mean values above the impartial point (3.0), showing a general settlement with the statements. the standard deviations range between 0.77 and 1.005, reflecting mild variability in responses [25]. Most variables display slightly negative skewness, indicating a moderate inclination toward agreement amongst respondents. The kurtosis values, being close to zero, recommend that the information distribution is about normal for maximum variables, making the dataset suitable for similarly parametric analysis like correlation and regression [26].

Table 3: Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.736	10

The Reliability records display a Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.736 for the 10 items measuring the constructs of green branding and consumer trust. on account that this value is above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, it suggests appropriate internal consistency among the items [27]. this means the questionnaire is a dependable device for measuring the respondents' perceptions concerning eco-friendly branding initiatives and trust with in vehicle manufacturers.

Table 4: Correlations

		Branding	Trust
Branding	Pearson Correlation	1	.503**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
Trust	Pearson Correlation	.503**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis exhibits a moderate positive relationship between Green Branding and Consumer Trust, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.503 and a significance degree of $p = 0.000$. This indicates that as consumers perceive higher levels of green branding initiatives by automobile brands, their trust in those brands also increases. For the reason that p-value is much less than 0.01, the correlation is statistically significant at the 1% degree, confirming that the observed relationship is unlikely due to chance. This supports the hypothesis that effective green branding positively affects consumer trust.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.503 ^a	.253	.246	.51072

a. Predictors: (Constant), branding

The model summary indicates that Green Branding has a moderate positive influence on consumer trust, with an R-value of 0.503. The R-squared value of 0.253 exhibits that about 25.3% of the variance in consumer trust can be explained by their perception of green branding efforts by vehicle brands [28]. The Adjusted R square value of 0.246 confirms the model's consistency after adjusting for the number of predictors. The standard error of the estimate (0.51072) indicates a moderate degree of deviation between the observed and predicted trust rankings. Overall, the model shows that green branding is a significant predictor of consumer trust.

Table 6: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	8.678	1	8.678	33.272	.000 ^b
Residual	25.562	98	.261		
Total	34.240	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Trust

b. Predictors: (Constant), Branding

The ANOVA table tests whether the regression model considerably predicts the dependent variable (consumer trust) based on the independent variable (green Branding). The F-value is 33.272 with a

significance degree (p-value) of 0.000, which is much less than 0.05, indicating that the model is statistically significant. because of this green branding has a significant impact on predicting consumer trust. The variation explained by the regression model (Sum of Squares = 8.678) is substantially greater than the unexplained variation (Residual Sum of Squares = 25.562), confirming the model’s validity in explaining the connection among the two variables.

Table 7: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	1.647	.315		5.230	.000	1.022	2.272
Branding	.522	.091	.503	5.768	.000	.342	.702

a. Dependent Variable: Trust

The coefficients table indicates that green Branding has a positive and statistically significant effect on consumer trust. The unstandardized coefficient (B) is 0.522, which means that for each 1-unit increase in green branding perception, customer trust will increase by zero.522 units, holding all else constant. The t-value of 5.768 and p-value of 0.000 indicate that this effect is highly significant at the 0.01 degree. The constant value (intercept) is 1.647, representing the predicted trust degree when branding is zero. The 95% confidence interval for the branding coefficient ranges from 0.342 to 0.702, which does not include zero, further confirming that the impact is statistically reliable.

Overall, this result supports the hypothesis that green branding significantly and positively influences consumer trust in automobile brands.

11. FINDINGS :

The study aimed to examine the impact of green Branding on consumer trust in the context of eco-friendly initiatives by automobile manufacturers. Based on the hypothesis that green branding positively influences consumer trust, the findings strongly support this assumption. The correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive relationship ($r = 0.503$, $p < 0.01$) between the two variables. Similarly, the regression analysis confirmed that green Branding is a substantial predictor of consumer trust, explaining 25.3% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.253$). The regression coefficient ($B = 0.522$, $p < 0.001$) indicates a substantial positive effect, validating the research hypothesis. therefore, it could be concluded that consumers who understand a brand's green initiatives more positively are significantly much more likely to trust that brand. These outcomes highlight the strategic significance of sustainability-oriented branding in building consumer confidence within the competitive automobile industry.

12. SUGGESTION :

Automobile brands should actively include and promote authentic green practices—which include sustainable manufacturing strategies, transparent environmental communication, and eco-conscious advertising and marketing—to strengthen customer believe. it is also advocated that manufacturers consistently teach clients about their environmental initiatives through multi-channel campaigns to enhance visibility and reinforce credibility inside the market.

13. CONCLUSION :

The study concludes that green branding considerably enhances consumer trust in automobile brands, emphasizing the strategic significance of sustainable marketing practices. As environmental focus keeps forming customer behavior, manufacturers that prioritize authentic eco-friendly initiatives are better placed to gain long-term trust and loyalty in a competitive automotive landscape

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