



6. To Study the Influence of Sustainable Marketing Strategies on Brand Perception with Respect to The Electronics Industry

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ABSTRACT

Customers nowadays are very much aware and conscious about the effects of any product being used by them on the society and environment. In order to survive in the competitive market where new technology is introduced every day, it is becoming inevitable for companies to not only add innovation to their products but also to develop sustainable marketing strategies which talk about how their products, practices and processes contribute to reducing carbon footprints, harmful emissions and increase the use of green electricity, renewable sources of energy, recyclable packaging and other practices to express their social responsibility.

As the customer's interest is growing in digital media, brands are also going digital to promote their products and services on social media platforms. Brands are using these platforms to inform customers about their CSR activities, innovations and practices which makes the brand more responsible towards the society and environment. With rising expectations of customers and access to multiple brands through digital platforms, it often becomes challenging for companies to meet these expectations which build a gap between sustainable marketing efforts and customer demand. Thus, companies with time are realizing the need to invest in sustainable product development and sustainable marketing in order to ensure customer retention and ultimately revenue maximization.

This research paper aims to understand the influence on the customer's perception of brands using sustainable marketing strategies in the electronics industry. The study will also examine different sustainable marketing strategies employed by electronic brands in India and their effectiveness in enhancing brand perception. It will also determine how companies can improve their brand image by incorporating sustainable marketing strategies in their marketing model and evaluate the factors affecting customer loyalty towards electronic goods.

KEYWORDS

Sustainable marketing, carbon footprints, brand perception, eco-friendly, environment, recyclable, renewable.

1. Introduction:

Sustainable marketing is a practice that focuses on reducing manufacturing waste resulting in increased carbon footprints or harming the ecological system of the planet by the means of recycling manufacturing waste or scrap, using compostable materials in manufacturing and packaging processes, educating customers about mindful consumption and environment friendly practices and so on. Electronic industry is one of the biggest contributors to non recyclable commercial waste in India. The increasing awareness of customers about harmful consequences that e-waste has on the environment and need of being socially responsible towards the environment is making the electronics companies adapt sustainable marketing practices such as innovation of bio degradable printed circuit board, using recyclable materials, development of lead free X-ray absorbing coating material for CRT monitors etc. Controlling waste management expenses, reducing energy consumption and eliminating unnecessary processes is enabling electronic companies to showcase their environmental responsibilities and attract potential buyers and investors.

2. Literature Review:

(Rastogi, Agarwal, & Gopal, 2024) Sustainable marketing is a long term strategy which is undertaken by many companies to survive in a market where new innovations are taking place to produce good that are having least possible harmful impact on the environment and helps the companies to make the planet a better place to live for future generations. It can be seen that sustainable marketing strategies have a positive outcome when it comes to brand selection and retention of customers. (Kortam & Mahrous, 2020) Sustainability has become inevitable aspect of business and it will act as a competitive advantage to many organizations in future. Sustainable marketing strategies mainly focus on satisfying the current needs of customers without hampering the resources that will be utilized to fulfill the need of future generation. Government authorities are introducing policies to regulate the harmful emissions and social activist groups are also actively advocating and making consumers aware about sustainable consumption practices.

(Hurth, 2017) In the dynamically changing market, It is an opportunity rather a requirement for the marketing managers to start developing sustainable marketing strategies considering the long term well being of society and acknowledging the adverse impact of under utilizing the resources and adding commercial waste to the environment.

(Reutlinger, 2012) It can be observed that there are companies which look at sustainable marketing as a regular business practice whereas many companies are yet to adapt sustainable marketing strategies in their business. It was found during the study that companies adopting sustainable marketing is not depending on the buying behaviour of the customers but it is a long-term strategy which will help companies to reduce unnecessary expenses and develop products which will have minimal effects on the environment.

(Ottman & Jackqelyn, 2017) For an extended period, marketers promoting sustainable goods and services have concentrated on targeting "deep green" consumers, yielding limited results. In her groundbreaking book, Jacquelyn Ottman explores the evolving landscape of the green market, asserting that marketers can achieve greater success by highlighting the inherent superior value of their offerings. The book draws on examples from both international mainstream brands and niche "deep green" leaders, offering insights into:

1. Framing environmental benefits in a way that resonates with mainstream brands.
2. Communicating with credibility and impact, avoiding the pitfalls of "greenwashing."
3. Collaborating with stakeholders to maximize consumer outreach.
4. Incorporating a life cycle orientation to ensure the integrity of products.
5. Leveraging recent technological advances in social media.

Backed by the latest data from leading researchers and informed by Ottman's experiences, there is a rising need of proactive sustainability approach to stimulate innovation.

(Peterson, Minton, Liu, & Bartholomew, 2021) Though customers are following sustainable consumption practices, researchers suggest that it is important for businesses to create content which will clearly and easily communicate their sustainable practices with audience in an effective way. Customer's preference towards any brand is firstly influenced by the product utility followed by customer loyalty towards the brand and ethical practices being followed by business.

(Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2020) Marketers can look at sustainability as a micromarketing perspective to build the brand image. However, existence of unsustainable products is still a major challenge when it comes to changing the attitude of buyers. More studies and marketing techniques are required to alter the post-consumption behaviour of customers such as disposal of products, recycling or reuse of discarded products etc. Though governments are taking many steps towards achieving sustainable development goals, it is essential for the businesses to focus on solving the societal issues pertaining to environment, climate, socio-economic imbalances and living standards of people around the world.

(Danciu & Victor, 2013) The constant degradation in ecological system in past few years have pushed the necessity of sustainable development which will focus on making profits with less or no harm to the environmental and social aspect of the planet. Sustainable marketing has been proved to be an effective tool in promoting sustainable practices among consumers. Consumers are nowadays more responsible towards buying a product which may have adverse impact on the environment and try to look for substitutes of such products and try to contribute towards sustainable consumption.

3. Objectives:

The primary objective of this research paper is to study the influence of sustainable marketing strategies on brand perception in electronics industry and to evaluate how consumers perceive electronic brands that implement sustainable marketing strategies. This involves understanding whether sustainability practices positively impact brand image, reputation, and overall consumer attitudes.

While the secondary objectives are to analyse the customer awareness about sustainable products and sustainable marketing and to determine the relation of price with buying decision of customers for sustainable electronic goods.

It will assess the impact of sustainable marketing on building brand loyalty and trust among consumers and will assist to analyze whether sustainability practices contribute to fostering long-term relationships between consumers and electronic brands.

4. Scope:

This paper will assess the customer perception of electronics brand considering the sustainable marketing strategies being followed by the organisations. It will also study the awareness among public in general about sustainable marketing and its influence as a factor affecting the selection of products by customers.

The study is limited to the electronics industry and sample studied during the research is within the limits of Pune city distributed majorly on the basis of occupation and qualification. Author will also try to study sustainable marketing practices from customer's perspective.

5. Research Methodology:

Author has used random sampling method to determine the sample and conducted quantitative research. A collective sample size of 90 respondents have been studied to analyse the objectives of the paper.

Primary data has been collected by conducting survey of the sample size with the help of close ended questionnaire which were circulated with the sample and respective responses were collected.

Secondary data was collected through the study of existing literature available in the form of research paper, journal articles, books and online references.

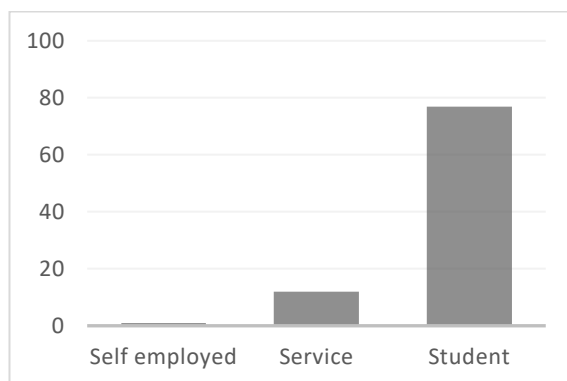
6. Data Analysis:

The primary data collected through customer survey is presented below in the form of tables and graphs for ready reference.

6.1. Occupation of respondents:

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Self employed	1	1.11%
Service	12	13.33%
Students	77	85.56%

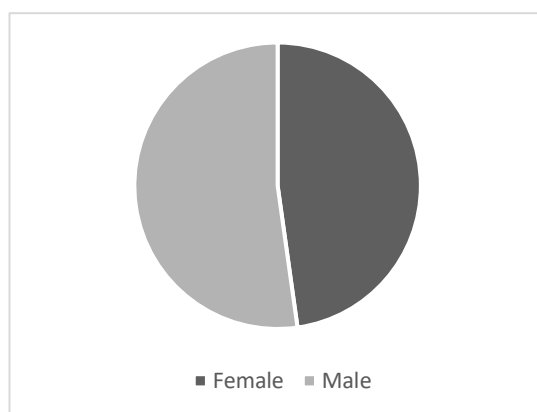
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- It can be seen that most of the respondents are students or young generation which is more curious and aware about sustainable developments. Remaining respondents belong to working category.

6.2. Gender of respondents:

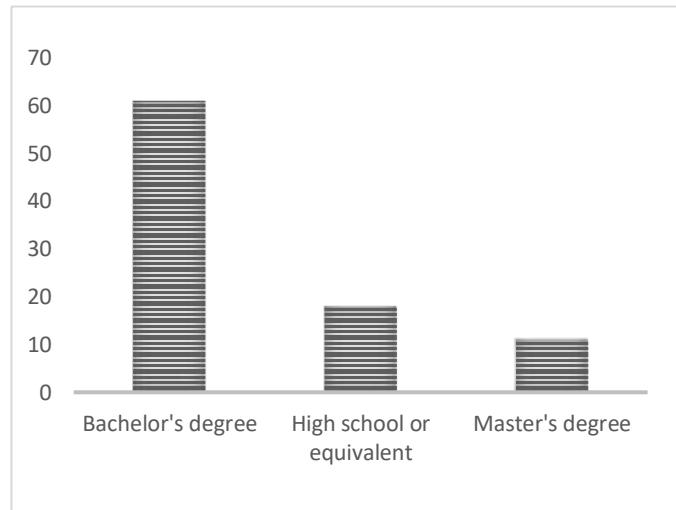
Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	47	52.22%
Female	43	47.78%



- The respondents are 52% males and 48% females which notifies that the views expressed includes perception of both genders.

6.3. Educational background of respondents:

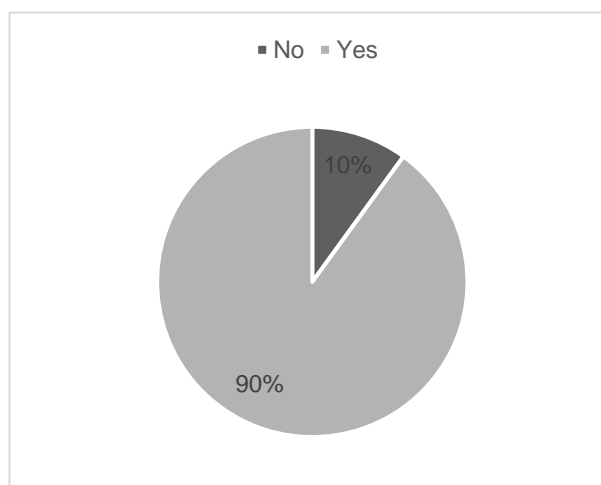
Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Master's degree	11	12.22%
Bachelor's degree	61	67.78%
High school or equivalent	18	20.00%



- Qualification of respondents is taken into consideration as it affects the way a customer perceives a brand. It was observed that 68% of the respondents have completed their graduation whereas 20% have completed their high school and 12% have completed master's degree.

6.4. Awareness about sustainable marketing:

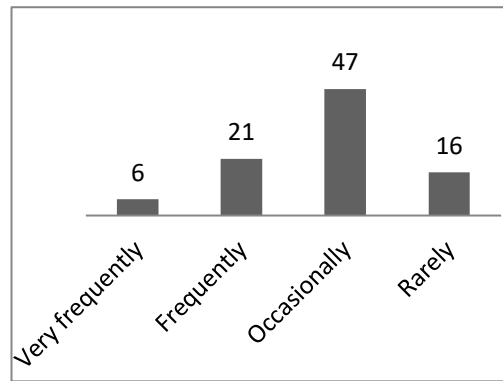
Awareness of topic	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	81	90%
No	9	10%



- During the survey, it was found that 90% of the respondents are aware of the concept of sustainable marketing strategies whereas 10% respondents are unaware about it

6.5. Frequency of purchasing electronic products:

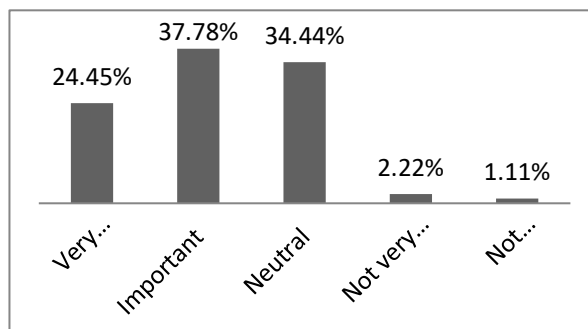
Purchase frequency	Responses	Percentage
Very frequently	6	6.66%
Frequently	21	23.33%
Occasionally	47	52.22%
Rarely	16	17.77%



- Out of 90 respondents, 6.66% buy electronic items very frequently, 17.77% buys rarely, 23.33% buys frequently whereas 52.22% respondents buy electronics items occasionally.

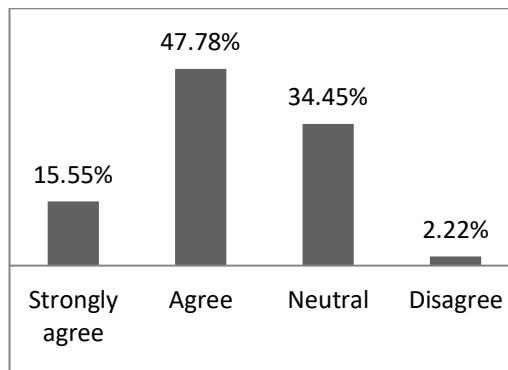
6.6 Importance of brands engaged in sustainable and environment friendly practices while purchasing a product:

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very important	22	24.45%
Important	34	37.78%
Neutral	31	34.44%
Not very important	2	2.22%
Not important at all	1	1.11%



It was observed during the survey that 38% respondents found it important to select a brand following sustainable and environment friendly practices while buying a product, 34% were neutral, 25% found it very important whereas rest did not find it much important.

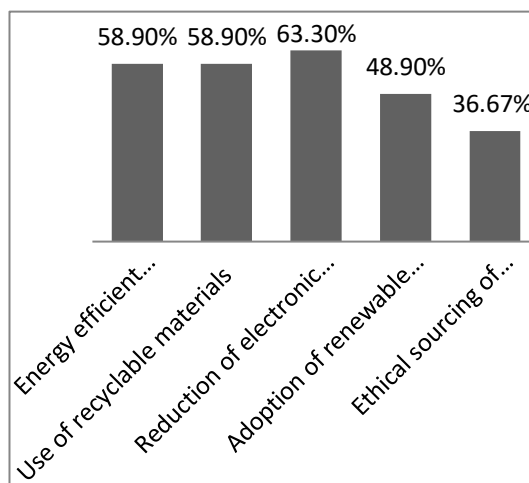
6.7. Electronic brands adopting sustainable marketing strategies are more trustworthy.



- It can be seen that out of 90 respondents 48% agrees that electronic brands adopting sustainable marketing strategies are more trustworthy whereas 34% respondents are neutral, 25% respondents strongly agree and 2% respondents disagree to the statement.

6.8. Sustainable practices that influence brand perception:

Practice	Responses	Percentage
Reduction of electronic waste	57	63.30%
Use of recyclable materials	53	58.90%
Energy efficient manufacturing processes	53	58.90%
Adoption of renewable energy sources	44	48.90%
Ethical sourcing of materials	33	36.67%

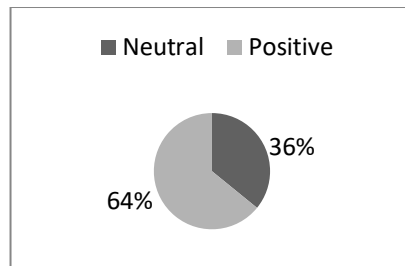


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- It was noted that 63% respondents consider reduction of electronic waste as most influencing sustainable practices that affects their perception towards electronic brand, whereas use of recyclable materials and energy efficient manufacturing processes are considered important by 58.90% respondents. 48.90% respondents stated that adoption of renewable energy influence their perception of brand and 36.67% mentioned that ethical sourcing of materials influence their perception of brand.

6.9. Overall perception of electronic brands that prioritize sustainable marketing practices:

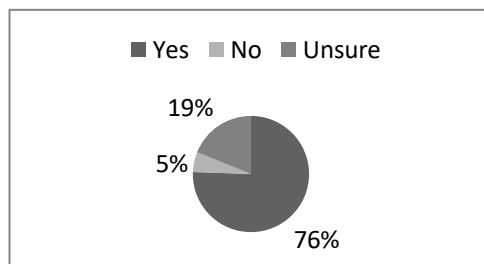
Perception	Responses	Percentage
Positive	58	64.00%
Neutral	32	36.00%
Negative	0	0.00%



- During the survey, it was observed that 64% respondents are positive towards overall perception of electronic brands that prioritize sustainable marketing practices whereas 36% respondents are neutral towards it.

6.10. Strong focus on sustainable marketing positively influences the overall brand image of an electronics company:

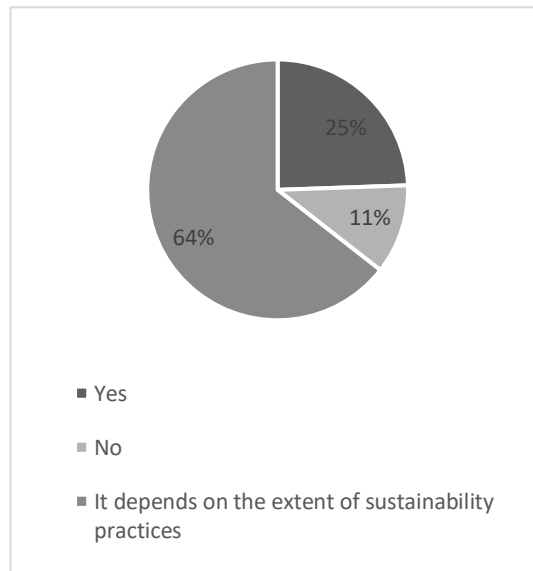
Opinion	Responses	Percentage
Yes	68	76.00%
No	05	5.00%
Unsure	17	19.00%



- It can be noted that 76% respondents agrees that strong focus on sustainable marketing positively influences the overall brand image of an electronics company whereas 5% don't agree and 17% respondents are neutral about the statement.

6.11. Willingness to pay a premium for electronic products from brands with a strong commitment to sustainability:

Opinion	Responses	Percentage
Yes	22	76.00%
No	10	5.00%
It depends on the extent of sustainability practices	58	19.00%

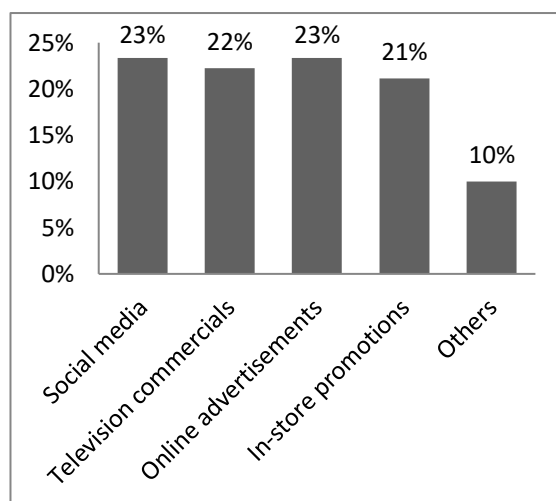


- After conducting survey, it was noted that 76% respondents are willing to pay premium for electronic products from brands with a strong commitment to sustainability whereas 5% respondents are not willing to pay and 19% states that it depends on the extent of sustainability practices.

6.12. Channel through which you usually become aware of a brand's sustainable initiatives:

Mediums	Responses	Percentage
Social media	21	63.30%
Television commercials	20	58.90%
Online advertisements	21	58.90%
In-store promotions	19	48.90%
Others	9	36.67%

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- Through survey, it can be noted that 23% respondents become aware each through online advertisements and social media whereas 22% respondents stated the medium as television commercials, 21% mentioned in-store promotions and 10% become aware from other mediums.

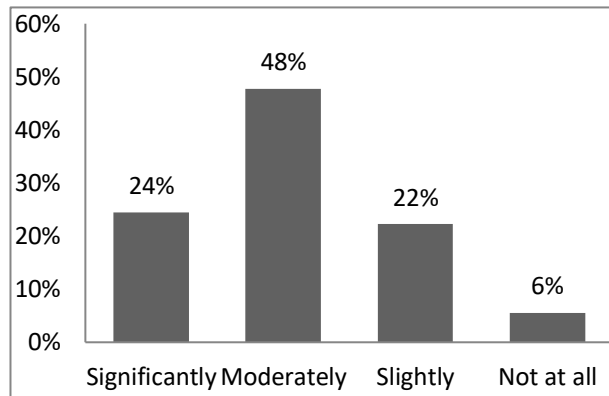
6.13. Influence of sustainability focus marketing on purchase decision for electronic products:

Opinion	Responses	Percentage
Significantly	22	24%
Moderately	43	48%
Slightly	20	22%
Not at all	05	06%

- Through survey, it can be noted that 23% respondents become aware each through online advertisements and social media whereas 22% respondents stated the medium as television commercials, 21% mentioned in-store promotions and 10% become aware from other mediums.

6.13. Influence of sustainability focus marketing on purchase decision for electronic products:

Opinion	Responses	Percentage
Significantly	22	24%
Moderately	43	48%
Slightly	20	22%
Not at all	05	06%



- It was observed that purchase decision of 48% respondents is moderately affected by sustainability focused marketing of electronic products, 24% respondents are significantly influenced whereas 22% respondents are slightly influenced and 6% respondents are not influenced at all.

7. Conclusion:

- Most of the respondents belongs to student category who are graduates and most of them are aware about the concept of sustainable marketing practices being followed by electronics brands.
- It was found that almost half of the sample size (52.22%) buy electronics items occasionally and some respondents buy electronic items frequently. It can also be noted that 6.66% respondents buy electronic items very frequently which notifies that customers are interested in spending money in products having technological advancements.
- It can be concluded that though customers are becoming aware and are giving importance to brands following sustainable and environment friendly practices while buying a product, there is still a need to promote sustainable practices as some respondents do not find it much important.
- Most of the respondents state that they find a brand following sustainable marketing practices more trustworthy and thus, brands focusing on sustainable marketing are having wider scope of customer retention in coming future.
- It can be concluded that though electronic brands are nowadays following multiple sustainable practices to deliver their social responsibility towards the environment, most of the respondents (63%) consider reduction of electronic waste as most influencing sustainable practices that affects their perception towards electronic brand and only 36.67% mentioned that ethical sourcing of materials influence their perception of brand.
- It can be concluded that most of the respondents are positive towards overall perception of electronic brands that prioritize sustainable marketing practices whereas some respondents are still neutral towards it. Thus, there is a need to make customers aware about the importance of various sustainable marketing practices.
- There is a positive relation between electronics brands that have strong focus on sustainable marketing and brand image as most of the customers are willing to pay a premium for brands offering products having minimal harmful impact on the environment.

- Most of the electronic brands make the respondents aware about their sustainable marketing practices through online advertisements and social media platforms whereas some respondents also become aware through other mediums such as television commercials, in-store promotions and other mediums.

8. Recommendations:

- Electronic brands need to focus more on sustainable marketing practices to survive in a market where customers are becoming more aware about the harmful impact of commercial waste on the environment.
- There is a scope for organisations to spread awareness about their sustainable marketing practices through various mediums in order to attract customers who are willing to pay premium for products supporting sustainability.
- It is important for the electronic brands to reduce electronic waste, adopt energy efficient manufacturing processes and use recyclable materials to reduce harmful impact on the environment as it has positive influence on brand perception.

9. Limitations:

- Findings from the study may have limitations in generalizing across all consumer segments or diverse cultural contexts. The extent to which the results can be applied universally may be constrained.
- The electronics industry is highly dynamic, with rapidly evolving technologies and market trends. The study & findings may reflect a specific moment in time and may not capture long-term trends or shifts in consumer behavior.
- Consumer perceptions are subjective and influenced by various factors. While the study can identify trends, it may be challenging to account for individual variations in consumer attitudes and beliefs towards sustainable marketing in the electronics sector.

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