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Title:

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of Green Marketing in Driving
Purchase Intentions: A Study on Customers of Marks & Spencer
(M&S) 'Plan A' Initiative**

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

Green marketing has become a key component of business strategies of the UK retailing market since more customers care about environmental issues and favour green products. In a recent report by Deloitte (2021), it was discovered that a third of consumers in the UK ceased to consume some brands because they had concerns about sustainability. This indicates the degree to which shopping decisions are influenced by environmental awareness. The retailers appeal to these consumers with environmentally friendly packaging, socially sourcing, and carbon control messages (Sharp et al., 2023). The Plan A programme introduced by Marks and Spencer (M&S) In 2007 aimed at waste reduction and fair trade (Marks & Spencer, 2023). Examining the strategy of M&S can be useful to comprehend the impact of green marketing on consumer trust and behaviour.

1.2 Problem Statement

Even though M&S enjoys investing in its sustainability campaign Plan A, it is unclear whether the green marketing activities result in a change of consumer buying behaviour (Pancic et al., 2023). The critical question is how to close the gap between the marketing intention and the consumer action in the retail setting.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

Aim: To examine how M&S's "Plan A" green marketing strategies influence UK consumers' purchase intentions.

Objectives:

1. To identify the key green marketing strategies used by M&S under "Plan A."
2. To assess how these strategies influence UK consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions.
3. To examine the factors affecting the link between green marketing and sustainable buying behaviour.
4. To suggest improvements to enhance the effectiveness of M&S's "Plan A" strategy.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the key green marketing strategies implemented by M&S under "Plan A"?
2. How do these strategies influence UK consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions toward sustainable products?

3. What improvements can M&S make to its “Plan A” strategy to more effectively encourage sustainable purchasing behaviour?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Scope of the Review

Sustainability and green marketing have become the key subjects of the marketing and consumer behaviour research. Within the UK retail sector, environmental responsibility is currently being marketed by several firms. The review addresses new concepts and research regarding the influence of green marketing on consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour, discussing the relationship between sustainability communication, consumer trust, and consumer buying intention.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The present study relies on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by Ajzen to find out the reasons behind the decisions made by people when purchasing sustainable products. The theory states that intention to act is determined by attitude, social influence, and control of behaviour (Ajzen, 2022). When used in green marketing, this implies that consumers will most likely purchase eco-friendly products when they think that it is good, other people expect them to do so, and the product is accessible. This has been demonstrated by researchers like Dougherty and Njagi (2024) who indicate that high environmental messages can be effective in altering attitudes but could not necessarily result in actual behaviour. The TPB presents an efficient foundation of analysing the M&S plan A strategy.

2.3 Key Themes and Findings

Consumer Awareness and Behaviour

Studies have indicated that the awareness of environmental issues is higher and more individuals in the United Kingdom would like to patronize sustainable products. A report by Deloitte (2021) revealed that one out of every three consumers stopped consuming particular brands in the UK as they thought that the brands were not sustainable. This demonstrates the impact of sustainability on shopping decisions. According to Sharp et al., retailers also address buyers with environmental messages, yet it is important to also state that many companies apply words as vague as eco or green without providing proof.

Authenticity and Trust

According to numerous works, green marketing relies on honesty and authenticity. According to Walter and Urien (2024), the more companies demonstrate their sustainability, the better

customers will respond to the new policies. In instances where businesses misrepresent, often referred to as greenwashing, they lose their customers rapidly. According to Martinez, et al., (2023), concise reports on environmental and socials are more trusted by customers, particularly in developed nations like the United Kingdom.

The Attitude and Behaviour Gap

There are a number of studies that demonstrate inconsistency between the words spoken and the actions taken by people. According to Duong (2023), most consumers claim they are concerned about the planet, but they buy cheaper or more convenient products. Li (2025) discovered that the more people know of environmental concerns, the more they tend to purchase green products due to their awareness of its benefits. Sarmah and Singh (2024) further contribute that loyalty is enhanced by sustainability that delivers actual profit like quality or higher health, and not just moral fulfilment.

Green Marketing Strategies

Proper companies are interested in long term sustainability and not in short advertisement campaigns. As it was noted by Pancic et al., (2023), consistent environmental strategies enhance brand recognition and repeat purchasing. As indicated by Marin Garcia and others (2025), innovation and environmental action facilitate the segmentation of customers into those who are more or less concerned about sustainability. This will assist the businesses in formulating marketing approaches that suit every group.

Digital Communication and Social Media

Sustainability is greatly promoted through digital media. Kaur et al., (2023) discovered that social media assists brands to connect to younger customers interested in climate matters. The platforms enable customers to communicate with companies by criticizing and interrogating them. Companies that post honestly about their activities will create a more robust image, whereas those that make false claims will be criticized immediately. According to Dougherty and Njagi (2024), digital platforms are an effective means of reaching customers but also bring pressure on transparency.

The United Kingdom Retail Context

Sustainability is now a national discussion in the United Kingdom. Tesco and Marks and Spencer are among many retailers that advertise eco-friendly policies in their stores. In 2007, Marks and Spencer launched Plan A that eliminated waste, improved the conditions in the workplace, and safeguarded natural resources (Marks and Spencer, 2023). The firm issues periodic reports that indicate its improvements in areas like reduction of carbon and responsible

sourcing. Research conducted by Williams (2024) and Deloitte (2021) indicates that consumers in the UK are very concerned with these reports when making shopping decisions.

2.4 Research Gap

The recent literature mainly explores general sustainability attitudes or targets global brands but has not addressed UK retailers that have a long sustainability programme. The example of the Marks and Spencer Plan A gives a chance to discuss the way a long-established green program can impact consumer attitudes and buying behaviour in a mature market. Previous studies like Pancic et al., (2023) indicate that message credibility and consumer innovativeness determine how a green marketing campaign performs. A deeper analysis of the communication strategies and consumer reactions of the concept of Plan A can provide some useful understanding of the way sustainable marketing is conducted nowadays.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Philosophy and Approach

The study is pragmatic in the sense that it involves seeking practical solutions to an actual business problem. Pragmatism enables the application of various kinds of information to comprehend how green marketing operates in a practical company (Saunders et al., 2019). The study is deductive, i.e., it begins with the concepts and theories of the current literature like the Theory of Planned Behaviour developed by Ajzen (2022) and implements them to the example of Marks and Spencer. This strategy assists in finding how the sustainability messages may be used to affect the consumer behaviour using the available evidence.

3.2 Research Design

The study has a quantitative survey research design. A survey is appropriate as it gathers data of a large population within a limited period and has quantifiable outcomes (Creswell, 2018). The research concentrates on Marks and Spencer clients in the United Kingdom. The objectives are to learn the thinking and feeling of customers toward green marketing messages and how these emotions impact their purchasing decisions. The survey will involve basic questions regarding customer knowledge, trust, and desire to purchase sustainable products at Marks and Spencer.

3.3 Data Collection

The research utilizes primary data via a questionnaire on Google Forms. The questionnaire will include about fifteen Likert questions, with a five-point scale i.e. strongly disagree to strongly

agree. Some of the ideas that will be measured by the questions will include customer attitudes, trust, environmental concern and purchase intention. The survey link will be distributed using social media communities, online shopping forums, and with those individuals who shop at Marks and Spencer. Data gathered directly through customers can provide new information about how they react to sustainability marketing (Dougherty and Njagi, 2024).

3.4 Data Analysis

In the research, a non-probability convenience sampling technique will be employed due to its simplicity and affordability (Sarmah and Singh, 2024). The target market is adults residing in United Kingdom and have shopped in Marks and Spencer within the last one year. Approximately 100 valid responses will be obtained which fits well with small-scale MBA research.

Data will be analysed through Microsoft Excel. Responses will be summarised through descriptive statistics which include mean and percentage. The relationship between the green marketing and purchase intention will be tested using correlation and regression analysis.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Clear information regarding the purpose of the study will be offered to all the participants who will give their informed consent before filling the survey. The answers will remain discrete and confidential as per UWTSD ethical standards.

4. Expected Findings

The research is supposed to demonstrate that the Plan A programme of Marks and Spencer enhances the attitude of customers towards the brand and raises the level of trust. Green communication messages can generate positive intentions but not necessarily to actual buying. Messages with evident outcomes like less waste or source sustainability might make the most sense to customers. Customers are likely to be influenced most by honest and constant communication.

5. Limitations

The sample size in the study is approximately 100 Marks and Spencer consumers which does not necessarily make it representative of all customers in United Kingdom. Only those who have access to internet can participate in the survey since it is an online survey. The response is based on individual integrity and knowledge on queries. The researcher also concentrates on a single firm; thus, the results cannot be transferred to other businesses and sectors.

6. Timeframe

The project will take a duration of sixteen weeks. It will start with planning and data collection, and then analysis, writing, and final review.

Activity	W1-2	W3-4	W5-6	W7-8	W9-10	W11-12	W13-14	W15-16
Topic & Plan								
Literature Review								
Questionnaire								
Data Collection								
Data Analysis								
Results Draft								
Discussion								
Editing & Submission								

7. Conclusion

This study examines the impact of green marketing on consumer behaviour using the Plan A initiative of Marks and Spencer. The research relies on primary sources to investigate the effect of honest and straightforward sustainability messages on customer trust and brand image. The results will indicate that open communication would establish more strong relationships with consumers. The findings can assist UK retailers to enhance sustainability practices and promote more sustainable shopping habits.

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