

Communicating Sustainability through Green Advertising: Analysing its effectiveness in shaping consumer perception

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Abstract: Green advertisements have emerged as a strategic tool for the brands to promote environmental sustainability. The brands advertise their commitment to sustainability and convince the environmentally sensitive customer. However, the consumers skepticism towards green washing might make this effort look like an exaggeration of the environmental claims by the companies. This study aims to understand if the green advertisements are successful in convincing the customers about its credibility and the extent to which it can influence the customer in making sustainable choices. The study analyses the rhetorical elements like ethos, pathos and logos employed in green advertisements to engage the target audience, while also identifying the prevalent themes within these advertisements. The impact of these advertisements and the potential barriers encountered by the consumers in adopting eco-friendly practices was identified through Focus Group Discussion involving participants representing different age groups and backgrounds.

Due to the consumer centric approach it is important for the brands to stay up to date with the consumer trends and behaviour. This study has uncovered the effectiveness of the consumerism tools like green advertisements in promoting environmental sustainability. It will provide valuable recommendations for the brand to build stronger consumer trust.

Key words : Green Advertisements, Environmental Sustainability, Sustainable Communication, Consumer Awareness and Consumer Perception

Introduction and Literature Review

Advertisement, an effective medium for communication

Advertisement is an important tool for communication. It is a strategic communication used to persuade the potential consumer to buy the product and also increase their engagement with a particular product or service (Burde, 2008). The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), the body which represents advertising agencies, defines advertising as "the means of providing the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects at the lowest possible cost". (Philip Kotler, 2010) defines "Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor".

According to the study conducted (Charles T. Salmon, 1985), the credibility of advertisements in comparison with other forms of promotional methods, advertisements were proved to be the most credible form of promotion. It has also been a successful medium to spread awareness

regarding several social, economic and political issues. Various companies, brands and NGO's have started picking up important issues and creating awareness among people. The important motives of corporate were profit and wealth creation but now the corporate houses have engaged themselves in performing the social responsibilities with an intention of doing something good to the society and also help them in building a good bond with the public.

Sustainable Communication through Advertisements

Environmental hazards are the burning problems of today. There are several environmental disasters taking place either by man or by nature. This situation has been brought to the notice of the people by media aggressively so that every consumer is aware of ecological changes. In order to tackle this problem companies have taken this as their social responsibility and try to improve the situation. The companies no longer operate in the conventional mode aiming at "profit, profit, profit" alone. Going green is the growing trend, the customer opts for environmentally friendly products which cause no harm to the humanity and to the nature (Elena Claire Ricci, 2018). The companies along with their profit motives are also tackling the environmental damage.

An important facet of green advertisement is sustainable communication. A corporate commitment to sustainable development means the organisation should be able to plough back what it has extracted, be it human capital or natural resource. In the sense it should leave the resources intact for the posterity. Green advertisements are the communication strategies used by the companies to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability. It fulfils two objectives- informs consumers about eco-friendly options and helps brand establish themselves as environmentally responsible organisations (Subhabrata Banerjee, 1995) and (L Carlson, 1993) Interest in green advertising has existed since the 1970s but it is not until the 1990s that there has been a more dramatic influx of green claims in advertising and similarly a growth in interest from researchers (Kilbourne, 2004).

Green advertising is the use of advertising by a company to promote their eco-friendly policies and products, if any. It is also called green marketing, environmental advertising and ecological advertising. Such a type of advertising can be used to show that companies are adopting practices that are beneficial to the environment. However, there is no definition of green advertising although there are certain parameters that can be included in it. Green advertising is defined as any advertisement that meets one or more of the following criteria (Subhabrata Banerjee, 1995)

- Explicitly or implicitly addresses the relationship between a product/service and the biophysical environment.
- Promotes a green lifestyle with or without highlighting a product/service.
- Presents a corporate image of environmental responsibility.

These advertisements not only induce people to consume sustainably but also make them aware of their duties towards sustainability goals. This connection of the product with wider environmental impacts helps to achieve United Nation's SDGs- Responsible consumption, climate action through green advertising.

Consumer Perception in Green Advertising

Eco-literacy relates to one's perception regarding ecological principles and the understanding of environmental problems that significantly impacts the understanding of consumer about a green advertisement. For example it makes a consumer critically evaluate a claims such as how much carbon the product will save or reduce water usage. Eco-literacy is fostered through education programmes, community outreach and engagement with the informative green campaigns that present suitable practices and their gains (Andika Andika, 2023).

Companies use green advertisements to brand their images along with ecological values and showcase their commitment to environmental stewardship. For example, green advertisements may point to efforts from corporations toward minimising carbon footprints, participating in conservation projects or developing recycling programmes (L Carlson, 1993). The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) provides a useful framework to understand attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioural control that may influence consumer decision-making regarding green purchasing. According to TPB individuals' intentions to perform a behaviour are shaped by their attitudes toward the behaviour, the subjective norms surrounding it and their perceived control over the behaviour (Andika Andika, 2023).

Green advertisement being an effective tool for promoting sustainable practices and brand loyalty despite the challenges. Specific and verifiable claims in green advertisements not only increase consumer trust but also promote behavioural change. The most effective advertisements are those that align with the pro-environmental orientation of consumers, as they influence purchasing decision and create brand loyalty (Subhabrata Banerjee, 1995). Such messages resonate with consumers who are concerned about sustainability which leads to a sense of shared values and trust between the brand and its audience. Research indicates that green advertising is effective when the message connects and engages the target audience. Green advertising with attributes like attractiveness, informatively and reliability have a significant positive effect on the consumer perception (Kim, 2021). Advertisements use both rational and emotional appeals along with being transparent and authentic to connect with the target audience. Appeals develop product oriented claims in regard to eco friendly attributes, process oriented appeals relating to an environmentally friendly method of production or image oriented appeals creating positive linkage between a brand and other environmental values (L Carlson, 1993). Emotions being another important appealing factor, companies associate their products with the preserving of nature and also environmental care (Shrum, 1995). The most effective advertisements are those that align with the pro-environmental orientation of consumers, as they influence purchasing decision and create brand loyalty (Subhabrata Banerjee, 1995). Advertisements can engage consumers that evolve positive emotions and present optimistic call to action. Any advertisement that identifies a problem, offers a solution and promotes hope and empowerment has a long lasting impact.

Green Washing and Consumer Scepticism

The positive is always accompanied with the negative. The advertisements must be able to navigate the fine line of promoting genuine sustainability products and avoid the pit fall of green washing. If green advertising increase the scope of better information of environmentally products, services and brands, greenwashing is one of its biggest

disadvantages. An organisation might not be environmentally friendly, but at the same time, advertise itself as 'green'. False claims that a company may make to paint themselves a green image and spread a lie among consumers that their products do not harm the environment, when they actually do – is greenwashing. Credibility is one of the major determinants of the success of an advertisement. It influences consumer trust, attitudes, and purchase intentions. Green advertising faces significant challenges, including public cynicism and accusations of greenwashing. Research findings has revealed that 58% of environmental advertisements contain misleading claims, which undermines trust. Additionally, the study observed that while green campaigns can shift perceptions positively, they must avoid superficiality to maintain credibility over time (Cox, 2008). Exaggeration and false promises by the companies about their green commitments lower consumers' expectations for green claims, increasing scepticism toward all green marketing approaches (Lynn De Vlieger, 2012) and (Gino Verleye A. D., 2023) This scepticism presents a reason for honesty, clarity and shared values while designing green advertising strategies for a better impact (Aithal, 2023)

For designing campaigns that is effective the pre-existing concern of the audience must be met and advertising strategies must align with the expectations of the consumers. Green advertisement is one medium if effectively used can create public awareness and contribute in stimulating consumer demands for sustainable products leading to sustainable actions. Executing elements like colours, visuals, texts, appeals, narratives, influencers can significantly shape consumer perception. (Belickova, 2023) Green advertisements are the attempt made by the companies to sow a seed of tomorrow's mutual hope, today.

Green advertisements are designed to promote Sustainable Development Goals encouraging substantiality and also presents the steps taken by them to contribute towards better tomorrow (Sigal Segev, 2016). Understanding effectiveness of the green advertisements requires the understanding of the impact of these ads on consumer perception and their contribution to achieve sustainable development goals.

In this study, the effectiveness of environmental advertising in stimulating green behavior will be analyzed, along with rhetorical strategies in green advertisements. These objectives will help raise the knowledge about the role that advertising is playing in influencing such practices and why the consumer will change the behavior.

Method

This is a qualitative study, the effectiveness of green advertisements of global and Indian brands was analysed to study the objectives like the structure of green advertisements, gauge consumer's concern for environment, to evaluate the impact of green advertisements on consumer perception of brand credibility and to explore the potential barriers and challenges encountered by the consumers in adopting eco-friendly practices.

Inorder to analyse the structure of the chosen green advertisements, a total of five green advertising campaigns showing forms of green advertising are selected The selection of green ad campaigns for this research were based on a strategic process. The companies were selected from two prestigious lists: the Forbes 500 for global companies and the Economic Times for Indian companies. The chosen timeline for evaluating these campaigns spans from 2020 to 2025.

A content analysis of the green advertisements using rhetorical techniques approach will be conducted. The analysis of ethos, pathos, and logos will explore how green advertisements establish credibility (ethos), evoke emotions (pathos) and present logical arguments (logos) to persuade consumers. Ethos will assess the brand's reputation and trustworthiness, pathos will examine emotional appeals like guilt or hope and logos will evaluate the use of facts or statistics. The themes within the ads will be identified focusing on messages related to sustainability, corporate responsibility and environmental conservation. This approach will reveal how green ads influence consumer perceptions and behaviour toward sustainability. The other data collection method is Focus Group Discussions, conducted with participants from two generations Generation Z and Millennials. With purposive sampling, ensuring that respondents are relevant to the objective of the study provides rich detail. The study captures perceptions of green advertising across Millennials (28–43 years) and Gen Z (18–27 years), ensuring diverse demographics in age, gender, education (media, nursing, architecture, biochemistry), and income levels. Participants from urban and rural areas were included to reflect varied environmental concerns and access to eco-friendly products.

In the focus group discussion, the participants were shown the five selected green advertisements. This was the stimulus for their discussion. The participants will engage in discussion sharing their perspective on three important aspects of green advertisements-awareness, perception, practice and barrier.

The following green advertisements were shown to the participants

Company Name	Advertising Campaign	Year
Amazon	“Alexa , Lets get sustainable	2021
HDFC	“Parivarthan”	2022
Apple	“Mother nature”	2023
Toyota	“Toyota 2050 challenge, Let’s make a better place”	2024
Reliance Industry	# ImAVantarian	2024

Table 1.0

About the companies

1. Amazon, a well-known global company is taking big steps to protect the environment and create a sustainable future. With more than 600 projects focused on sustainability, Amazon is working hard to reduce its impact on the planet. As part of its Climate Pledge, the company aims to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2040. To achieve this, Amazon is supporting renewable energy projects like solar and wind power, especially in areas with high pollution. Their efforts focuses on six areas which includes driving climate solution, reducing waste and packaging, protecting natural resources, human rights and innovating products and services. These actions show Amazon's commitment to building a better and greener tomorrow. Their advertisement, "Amazon’s Alexa, Let’s Get Sustainable," highlights the company's dedication to sustainability while promoting Amazon Echo devices.

2. HDFC Bank, as part of their sustainability initiative ‘Parivarthan,’ has pledged to become carbon-neutral by 2031-32. Demonstrating their commitment to this goal, the bank has undertaken impactful measures such as more than 17 lakh trees were planted in March 2022. Additionally, they are raising public awareness about the pressing issue of pollution an invisible but significant threat—by encouraging simple yet effective actions like switching off vehicle engines when not in use, promoted under the hashtag Act Now! #EnginesOff. One notable effort to drive this message home is through an engaging and thought-provoking advertisement campaign.

3. Apple is dedicated to protecting the environment and has been working hard to reduce its carbon emissions. Since 2015, they have cut their emissions by 55%, and by 2030, they aim to be completely carbon neutral. Apple has made changes at every stage of their product life cycle, using renewable and recyclable materials for all their products. They also use ocean freight to transport goods, which can cut emissions by 95% compared to other transport methods. Apple shares these efforts through its advertisements, showing how innovation can help create a more sustainable future.

4. Toyota in 2015 introduced its “Environmental Challenge 2050: Steering Towards Sustainability” to help the planet and society. This plan includes six important goals to reduce harm to the environment and create a positive impact. Three of these focus on cutting down CO₂ emissions, which are a major cause of climate change. The other goals aim to save water, improve how materials are used and protect biodiversity. With this initiative Toyota is working towards a future where people and nature live in harmony, showing its commitment to a greener and better world.

5. Vantara, a project by the Reliance Foundation, is dedicated to protecting abused, injured, and endangered animals. It serves as a shelter and rehabilitation centre, offering a safe and nurturing environment for these animals to heal. The project focuses on rescuing and rehabilitating species globally. The #IAMAvantatian advertisement encourages people to join the cause, showing that they share the same goal of protecting nature. It calls on individuals to be protectors of the environment, not destroyers and to support this important initiative.

Findings- Content Analysis

Ethos

Credibility is a crucial factor in determining the effectiveness of green advertisements. Companies strategically build their ethos by showcasing corporate responsibility, measurable sustainability efforts, and associations with trusted figures.

Amazon portrays itself as an eco-friendly company through tangible sustainability initiatives such as establishing windmills, solar farms, and promoting reusable materials. The brand's credibility stems from its large-scale sustainability investments, yet the campaign's emphasis on its own eco-device raises skepticism. While the ad promotes actionable steps to tackle pollution, it also serves as a subtle product endorsement, making it difficult to distinguish

between genuine environmental commitment and commercial self-promotion. This blurring of boundaries can lead to audience distrust, as it may appear that Amazon is leveraging sustainability primarily as a marketing strategy rather than a genuine corporate mission.

HDFC Bank positions itself as an ethical and responsible organization through the #EnginesOff campaign, which educates audiences about reducing pollution by switching off vehicle engines when idle. By advocating a simple yet impactful action, the advertisement fosters public awareness. However, while the campaign builds credibility through its advocacy efforts, it lacks concrete evidence of HDFC Bank's own institutional sustainability practices. The focus on behavioral change among consumers without highlighting the bank's internal commitment to eco-friendly initiatives creates a perception of a one-sided approach, where responsibility is shifted to individuals rather than corporate accountability.

Apple strengthens its credibility through transparency, presenting CEO Tim Cook and other executives in a fictional meeting with "Mother Nature." The advertisement references science-based targets and measurable progress toward carbon neutrality, reinforcing Apple's leadership in sustainability. However, the theatrical representation of the conversation, infused with humor, risks trivializing the seriousness of environmental issues. While Apple's sustainability claims are well-documented, the dramatized approach may detract from the authenticity of its commitment, making it appear more performative than action-driven.

Toyota builds credibility by aligning itself with long-term environmental goals, pledging to eliminate CO2 emissions by 2050. The brand highlights its innovative hybrid and eco-friendly vehicles, such as the Prius and Mirai. While Toyota has a strong global reputation for innovation and reliability, the advertisement's emphasis on product promotion makes it susceptible to skepticism. Viewers may question whether the campaign is primarily a sustainability effort or an attempt to boost sales under the guise of environmental responsibility. Furthermore, the extended timeline of 2050 makes the commitment seem distant and less urgent, potentially reducing audience engagement.

#ImAVantarian relies on credibility through association with celebrities such as Ajay Devgan, Bhumi Pednekar, and K.L. Rahul. The presence of well-known personalities lends authenticity and mass appeal to the campaign, leveraging their influence to encourage eco-friendly behaviors. However, the reliance on endorsements without substantive data weakens the campaign's credibility. Unlike other brands that provide measurable progress reports, this campaign offers no quantifiable evidence of its impact, making it seem more like a promotional exercise than a serious sustainability effort.

Pathos (Emotional Appeal)

Emotional appeal is a powerful tool in sustainability advertising, and each campaign utilizes different techniques to engage audiences.

Amazon creates an emotional connection by depicting a relatable family scenario where a mother uses Alexa to conserve energy, subtly reinforcing the idea that small actions contribute to a better future. The imagery of a growing tree symbolizes hope and incremental progress. The advertisement effectively instills optimism, making environmental consciousness feel approachable and achievable. However, the reliance on a corporate device as the medium for sustainable action may reduce emotional sincerity, as it subtly commercializes eco-consciousness.

HDFC Bank employs a fear-based approach, portraying a dystopian future where oxygen cylinders are necessary for survival. The bleak visuals instill urgency, pushing viewers to take action. However, the stark imagery could have a counterproductive effect—viewers may feel overwhelmed rather than motivated, perceiving the problem as insurmountable. While the ad provides a hopeful solution by advocating small actions, the exaggerated dystopian setting risks being perceived as fear-mongering rather than constructive motivation.

Apple balances humour and seriousness by personifying "Mother Nature," played by Octavia Spencer. The playful yet assertive tone holds Apple accountable for its environmental promises. The ad's engaging format makes the message relatable, but the comedic approach may undermine the gravity of climate change discussions. The light hearted portrayal risks being interpreted as performative rather than an earnest commitment to sustainability.

Toyota focuses on collective responsibility with the tagline "Let's make a better planet." The advertisement emphasizes individual contributions, such as choosing hybrid or electric vehicles, as steps toward long-term sustainability. While the message is aspirational, it lacks immediate impact, as the transition to eco-friendly vehicles is not an accessible option for all consumers. The ad assumes that purchasing power equates to environmental responsibility, which excludes those who may not afford such vehicles.

#ImAVantarian leverages the influence of celebrities, creating emotional resonance by showcasing their personal pledges to sustainability. While the campaign successfully generates engagement through star power, the absence of real-world actions or corporate initiatives weakens its emotional depth. Viewers may be inspired momentarily but lack tangible steps to translate motivation into action.

Logos (Logical Appeal)

Logical reasoning is essential for reinforcing sustainability claims. While some campaigns effectively present data-driven insights, others rely on rhetoric without substantial evidence.

Amazon logically connects small actions, like using Alexa, with broader environmental impact. The ad references Amazon's sustainable initiatives, such as recyclable materials and investments in clean energy. However, the focus on its own device overshadows the broader message, making the logic appear self-serving rather than entirely eco-conscious.

HDFC Bank presents a clear cause-and-effect relationship, linking vehicle emissions to pollution. The ad highlights tangible efforts, such as the planting of over 1.7 million trees. The logical argument is strong, but the campaign would be more effective if it included statistical evidence of pollution reduction due to consumer behaviour changes, reinforcing its call to action.

Apple provides measurable data on its sustainability milestones, showcasing progress in carbon neutrality and material recycling. The inclusion of concrete statistics enhances credibility. However, the ad would benefit from addressing criticisms regarding Apple's manufacturing practices and supply chain emissions, ensuring a well-rounded logical appeal.

Toyota presents a strong commitment to sustainability with its 2050 zero-emission pledge. However, the distant timeline diminishes urgency. The emphasis on hybrid and electric vehicles as a primary solution may also be criticized for excluding lower-income consumers who cannot afford such cars. A more inclusive approach, promoting alternative eco-friendly practices alongside vehicle purchases, would strengthen the logical appeal.

#ImAVantarian promotes sustainable habits like recycling and energy conservation but lacks data-driven support. Unlike other campaigns that provide measurable progress, this campaign relies on rhetoric. The absence of verifiable statistics weakens its logical foundation, making it less persuasive.

Common Themes

- **Commitment to Sustainability:** Each advertisement positions the brand as a champion of environmental responsibility, though some focus more on self-promotion than genuine advocacy.
- **Emotional Engagement:** Emotional storytelling enhances relatability, but excessive dramatization or humor can sometimes undermine credibility.
- **Logical Evidence:** Data-driven campaigns like Apple's and HDFC's strengthen credibility, whereas campaigns lacking statistical support (e.g., #ImAVantarian) struggle to convince rational audiences.
- **Call to Action:** While all campaigns encourage eco-friendly actions, accessibility and feasibility vary, with some promoting high-cost solutions like electric vehicles rather than inclusive, everyday actions.

Findings Focus Group Discussion

1. Understanding Green Advertisements

All seven millennial participants identified green advertisements as a medium to promote eco-friendly products, services, and sustainable practices for a better tomorrow. However, there was evident scepticism among four participants, who viewed these ads as promotional tools designed to enhance a company's brand image rather than genuine efforts toward sustainability. One participant noted that such ads often emphasize high-end and luxury items, promoting consumerism instead of sustainable consumption. Gen Z participants perceived green advertisements as a critical tool for communicating environmental practices and protecting the environment. However, six participants highlighted the prevalence of greenwashing where companies claim sustainability without corresponding actions, this affects the credibility of these advertisements.

2. Defining Eco-Friendly Practices

Among millennials, five participants defined eco-friendly practices as incorporating eco-conscious actions into daily routines, such as turning off electrical appliances when not in use and conserving resources efficiently. Two participants emphasized purchasing products from companies aligned with sustainable goals as an essential aspect of practicing sustainability. Similarly, Gen Z participants unanimously agreed that eco-friendly practices begin at home. They highlighted actions like turning off lights and fans, reusing items, choosing sustainable products, and avoiding overconsumption. Proper waste segregation, including separating e-waste was considered important by all Gen Z participants.

3. Sources of Awareness About Eco-Friendly Practices

Three millennial participants identified social media and advertisements as their primary sources of information on eco-friendly practices. In contrast, others credited friends, family, and school education for shaping their knowledge. For Gen Z, the most significant sources of

awareness were home environments and the people around them. Local campaigns and environmental drives in school and colleges were also noted as impactful. Only, two Gen Z participants mentioned advertisements as a source of eco-friendly information.

4.Perceptions of Sustainable Development Goals

All millennial participants acknowledged the importance of SDGs for a better future. However, three participants viewed them as challenging to achieve, while one considered them ineffective and impractical. Gen Z participants emphasized the necessity of SDGs, advocating for realistic goal-setting to ensure their implementation.

5.Preference for Specific Green Advertisements

Apple was favoured by four participants for its strong environmental message and impactful execution. Two participants appreciated Amazon's engaging graphics, narration, and inclusivity. HDFC was singled out by one participant for its practicality and relatability.

Gen Z participants, on the other hand, favoured HDFC's advertisement for its dystopian approach, which effectively motivated behaviour changes and raised future concerns. Four participants preferred this ad, while two appreciated Apple's logical appeal and its inclusion of themes like workplace equality, racial diversity and environmental issues.

6.Information Promoted in Green Advertisements

Millennials observed that many ads, including those by Apple, Toyota, and Amazon, primarily focused on promoting the company's image and products while subtly incorporating sustainability. These efforts were seen as Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives aimed at enhancing brand image. Four participants noted that ads by HDFC and Reliance highlighted the roles of both consumers and producers in sustainability, empowering audiences to adopt eco-friendly behaviors.

Gen Z participants were more critical, stating that the advertisements primarily served as PR stunts. Concerns were raised about the environmental implications of electric vehicles, doubts about the authenticity of celebrity endorsements and skepticism about companies genuinely adhering to sustainable practices. Debate arose over environmental goal timelines, with one participant advocating for immediate action and another suggesting 2030 as a realistic target.

7.Promotion of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Advertisements

Millennials noted that green advertisements by Amazon, Apple, and HDFC prominently featured Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and Goal 13 (Climate Action). Some participants also mentioned Toyota's focus on Goal 7 (Affordable Clean Energy) and brief references to Goals 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 14 (Life Below Water) and 15 (Life on Land). However, the focus on these goals was minimal. Gen Z participants unanimously agreed that green ads failed to effectively promote SDGs. They criticized the ads for touching only surface issues, lacking depth, and failing to inspire critical thinking. Two participants suggested that companies should shift from merely raising awareness to taking tangible actions to improve the environment.

8.Influence of Green Advertisements on Sustainable Behaviours

Millennials provided mixed responses regarding the influence of green advertisements. Two participants recalled relatable changes, such as using cloth bags and nurturing plants, inspired by ads. One participant highlighted the impact of government campaigns from the early 2000s. However, four participants felt that green advertisements had minimal influence compared to education and word of mouth. Gen Z participants uniformly stated that green advertisements

had not persuaded them to adopt sustainable practices. Instead, they credited their education at school and home for shaping their eco-conscious behaviour.

9.Persuasive Elements in Green Advertisements

Two millennials emphasized the importance of realism and practicality in advertisements, noting that creative visuals do not necessarily drive purchasing behaviour. One participant stressed the significance of credible celebrity endorsements, with alignment between actions and endorsements being vital. Two participants highlighted the tone of voice, particularly the use of fear as a persuasive tool, while two others appreciated emotional appeals through storytelling. Gen Z participants unanimously stated that green advertisements do not persuade them at all.

10.Perceptions of Individual Efforts in Sustainability

All millennial participants agreed that individual eco-friendly actions, when practiced consistently, contribute significantly to sustainability. One participant mentioned the ripple effect, where individual actions inspire broader adoption. Similarly, five Gen Z participants acknowledged the importance of individual efforts, while one argued that companies bear greater responsibility due to their larger environmental impact.

11.Source of Environmental Awareness

Millennials credited signboards with visual appeal, family upbringing, and repetitive school and college initiatives as significant influences on their sustainable behaviors. Others acknowledged programs like Swachh Bharat and NGO efforts. Gen Z participants attributed their eco-consciousness to awareness instilled through school, college, and home environments.

12.Adoption of Sustainable Practices in Daily Life

Millennials mentioned daily practices such as turning off switches, limiting AC use, and conserving water. Two participants emphasized minimizing food waste, reusing plastics, and repurposing items. One advocated for avoiding unnecessary purchases, rejecting fast fashion, and using refillable products. Gen Z participants shared similar habits, including using cloth bags, turning off switches, and limiting water and AC use. Two participants also adopted practices like carrying personal containers and avoiding fast fashion.

13.Challenges in Adopting Eco-Friendly Practices

Millennials cited cost, convenience, and accessibility as significant barriers. Some found eco-friendly products expensive and short-lived, while one participant highlighted the need to choose the least harmful options. Gen Z participants echoed these concerns, criticizing eco-friendly products as expensive and inaccessible. Some viewed them as gimmicks or trends among the elite, expressing scepticism about their feasibility and authenticity.

14. Efforts to Influence Others

Four millennials actively tried to influence others to adopt sustainable practices, emphasizing mutual learning and consistency in advocating for practices they personally follow. Similarly, all six Gen Z participants stated that they encourage others to adopt eco-friendly habits whenever possible.

15. Scepticism Toward Companies Commitment to Sustainability

Millennials about the genuine commitment of companies to sustainable practices, viewing green advertisements as PR stunts aimed at enhancing brand image. One participant noted that such ads often shift the focus onto consumer responsibilities rather than company actions. Gen

Z participants shared similar scepticism using examples like Reliance and Apple to illustrate the lack of credibility in green advertisements.

Analysis and Interpretation

- Participants recognize the potential of advertisements to promote sustainability. Advertisements is also viewed as tools for branding and consumerism where the companies use advertisements to make false sustainability claims to enhance the brand image.
- Participants emphasize individual responsibility in sustainable practices focusing on daily actions like resource efficiency and waste segregation. Millennial also highlights supporting companies with sustainable goals, reflecting consumer-driven advocacy.
- Both groups exhibit awareness of eco-friendly products.
- The response given by both the groups indicates personal and community-based factors have greater effects on enhancing environmental awareness than commercial green ads.
- Both the groups believe SDGs are important. However millennials are more doubtful about how achievable they are, while Gen Z focuses on setting realistic and achievable goals.
- Millennials focused on clear messaging, visuals and relatability emphasising on environmental consciousness, whereas Gen Z liked ads that motivate future change and raise awareness about environmental and social concern.
- Scepticism about the authenticity of these efforts were shared. It was pointing out that companies were using to promote CSR initiatives for image enhancement.
- Millennials acknowledged that Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) was emphasised in all the ads shown, whereas other goals were mentioned, though they were not a primary focus. Gen Z 's labelled the ads as "green-washing" and suggesting that the companies were misleading audiences rather than genuinely promoting sustainable development.
- Both generations agree ads don't drive sustainable behavior; Millennials prefer actionable steps, while Gen Z prioritizes education.
- Millennials emphasized credibility, tone, emotional appeal, and creativity in green ads, while Gen Z questioned their influence on purchases. GenZ suggested a lack of strong engagement in advertisements to influence purchasing behaviour.
- Both Millennials and Gen Z believe individual efforts in sustainability matter but Gen Z highlights corporate accountability emphasizing that companies must take responsibility for their significant environmental impact.
- The groups recognized additional factors such as visual cues, NGO initiatives and government programs like Swachh Bharat as instrumental in influencing their sustainable behaviour. Educational institutions and home were a common factor in promoting sustainable practices
- Both the groups emphasize integrating sustainable habits into daily routines, focusing on conserving resources, reusing materials, and rejecting fast fashion for environmental impact reduction.

- Both Millennials and Gen Z highlighted the challenges of adopting eco-friendly practices, particularly due to cost and accessibility. Participants expressed their scepticism as they viewed sustainable practices as gimmicks or elite trends.
- Both Millennials and Gen Z strive to influence others toward sustainable practices
- Both Millennials and Gen Z expressed scepticism about companies' sustainable practices, viewing green ads as PR tactics. It is also seen as consumer- targeted messaging.

Perceptions of Green Advertisements: A Comparative Analysis of Millennials and GenZ

Theme	Millennials	Gen Z	Key Difference
Perception of Green Ads	Acknowledge eco-friendliness and sustainability but question the motives behind green ads.	View green ads as platforms to promote eco-friendly products but criticize greenwashing and unauthenticated corporate claims.	Millennials are skeptical but relatively open to green messaging, while Gen Z is more critical and dismissive of corporate intentions.
Impact of Green Ads	Limited influence; some inspiration from campaigns.	Attribute eco-consciousness more to education and upbringing than advertising	Gen Z is less influenced by green ads and relies more on pre-existing knowledge and values.
Source of Eco-Consciousness	Influenced by social media, advertisements, family education, and community.	Strongly influenced by family education and community initiatives.	Millennials are more influenced by media and ads, while Gen Z credits family and community initiatives more.
Eco-Friendly Practices	Engage in conserving energy, reducing waste, and avoiding overconsumption.	Follow similar practices but with a more conscious approach to sustainability.	Both generations adopt similar practices, but Gen Z is more deliberate in their sustainability efforts.
Effectiveness of SDGs in Green Ads	Question the feasibility of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) promoted in advertisements.	Advocate for realistic, actionable implementation of SDGs rather than broad claims.	Millennials doubt SDG feasibility, while Gen Z pushes for measurable actions.
Barriers to Sustainable Practices	Cost, accessibility, and skepticism about the authenticity of eco-friendly products.	Face similar barriers, but also show greater distrust in corporate sustainability claims.	Both face the same practical barriers, but Gen Z has stronger concerns about corporate greenwashing.
Individual vs.	Believe companies should take greater	Stress greater corporate accountability but also	Millennials focus on personal alignment with

Corporate Responsibility	responsibility but emphasize aligning individual behavior with sustainability goals.	highlight the equal importance of personal responsibility.	sustainability, while Gen Z demands stricter corporate accountability.
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Table 2.0

Summary

In order to determine the objective, to study the elements of the environmentally friendly advertisements content analysis of five selected environmentally friendly advertisements was conducted. It was based on the ethos, pathos and logos used while crafting of the advertising message. The five advertisements chosen are: Amazon, Alexa, Let's get sustainable, HDFC, Parivarthan, Apple, 'Mother nature', Toyota, 'Environmental Challenge 2050: Steering Towards Sustainability' and Reliance, #IamAvantatian. Efforts are made by the companies to simplify sustainability approach. Different advertisements are promoted by different companies touching all aspects such as innovation, humour, family scenario, emotional appeal by showing everyone has a role to play in environmental protection. Additionally, a sense of shared responsibilities is infused in the people to be the part of this environmental movement. The consumers are informed to make conscious choice, as part of the collective effort they become the focal point and sole selector of the products which are environmentally friendly. Any wrong choice made by the consumer will endanger all the efforts. By connecting to the audience emotionally, logically and adding credibility the companies try to inspire consumer participation and drive meaningful change. There are several factors that might hinder the effectiveness of an ad and cause the audience to doubt the credibility of its claims. When communication falls flat, it results in a failure to motivate the audience to take action. The weaknesses identified in the advertisement include a focus that is too product-oriented, the use of excessive appeals that can distract from the core issue, unrealistic goals and a lack of solid evidence to back up the claims made.

In order to study the other objectives Focus group interview was conducted on Millennials and GenZ participants. During the course of the study it was understood that the respondents are environmentally conscious. It was also proved that these environmentally friendly advertisements have not had a positive impact. Green advertisements are supposed to communicate the idea of sustainability but on the whole appear to be a form of greenwashing. In general, respondents view green advertisements as shallow and rather than communicating the Sustainable Development Goals focus more on advertising the brand. Gen Z is quite cynical and they question the legitimacy of green ads. Millennials are more accepting but still raise their doubts about corporate intent.

Foundational eco-awareness, cultivated through community-driven efforts and personal values emerges as the primary motivator for sustainable behaviour, often rendering the influence of advertisements negligible. While ads with clear messaging, impactful visuals actionable goals can draw the attention of the audience, but it is not seen authentic enough persuade an audience or enhance brand credibility. Many respondents dismiss green advertisements as PR stunt rather than a way to bring sustainability. Despite of being not fully convinced this scepticism, the participants show their dedication to the course of sustainable practices such as conserving resources, reusing materials and

avoiding fast fashion. They also believe in individual actions along with higher corporate participation and accountability. Impediment of high cost, limited accessibility and reasonable doubts about the genuine green initiatives has prevented larger-scale adoption of eco-friendly practices.

The study has just focused on 5 companies which has not widened its perspective to larger spectrum. Therefore, only a limited population has the reflection on this study. Consequentially many participants have not vented their opinion because of others larger group perception.

Conclusion

The role of advertising in creating awareness cannot be under-mined, regardless of what an advertisement is promoting. Several studies have been conducted on the role this particular marketing strategy and even more on how advertisements have been received by the public. Discussions and debates on environmental issues and aspects have been in the frontline for quite a long time, especially since man discovered about the phenomena called global warming. Sustainable development became a thriving field of study and led to many new theories that changed the course of environmentalism.

In this study green advertising in fostering sustainability is undermined due to lack of credibility and corporate action. The actual ability of the brands to influence consumer lies on more than just words, it needs transparency, authenticity and meaningful involvement in sustainability.

However, it must be noted that green advertising should be utilized to give out genuine claims and not mislead consumers and the public at large by giving inaccurate information. It is also important that companies realize the value of responsible environmental advertising so that they can achieve sustainable benefits.

The study provides scope for the future research to evaluate the longitudinal analysis of evolving awareness, study the structure and elements of green advertisements and differentiation of media channel impact on consumer perception on green advertisement. These gap limit understanding of how advertisement influence credibility and engagement across different medium and timeline.

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