

Gen Z Awareness of Green Marketing Among Graduate Students

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Abstract

Generation Z's awareness of the *green concept Marketing* is an important factor in encouraging sustainability and changes in consumption patterns that are more environmentally friendly. This study aims to analyze the extent to which postgraduate students are aware of *green marketing* and how factors such as information, social media, and personal preferences influence their decisions in choosing sustainable products. Using a qualitative approach with a case study method, this study involved in-depth interviews with postgraduate students who have understanding and experience related to green marketing. The results of the study indicate that although Generation Z has a high awareness of environmental issues, their purchasing decisions are still influenced by price and product availability. In addition, digital marketing and social media play an important role in increasing consumer awareness and engagement with environmentally friendly products. The implications of this study provide insights for companies to further optimize green marketing strategies by adjusting prices, consumer education, and information transparency to increase customer loyalty.

Keywords: Awareness, Generation Z, *Green Marketing* , Digital Marketing, Sustainability.

1. Introduction

Green marketing is a marketing approach that focuses on sustainability and environmental friendliness in every aspect of a business. With increasing attention to climate change, pollution, and environmental degradation, many companies are seeking to adopt green marketing. marketing to attract consumers who care about environmental issues. In this context, Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, is a very relevant consumer group to study regarding their awareness of green marketing . Recent research shows that Gen Z has a high preference for environmentally friendly products and prefers companies that demonstrate a real commitment to sustainability (Jones & Lee, 2024).

Graduate students, who belong to the Gen Z group, are individuals with higher levels of education and are exposed to various social and environmental issues. They tend to be more aware of the social and ecological impacts of their consumption decisions, especially since they are often involved in research and discussions on sustainability topics. Therefore, they can be considered more critical and knowledgeable consumers in choosing products, including those related to green. marketing . This awareness makes postgraduate students a very potential group in implementing green marketing strategies. marketing by the company (Sudirman, 2024).

However, although there are many studies on green marketing , there is still little research examining the extent to which postgraduate students understand and apply green principles. marketing in their consumption decisions. More specific research on postgraduate students' awareness of green marketing can provide deeper insights into the mindset and preferences of these young consumers, as well as the factors that influence their decisions in choosing

environmentally friendly products. This is important to identify the right marketing opportunities for brands that want to reach the Gen Z market (Liu & Chen, 2023).

The urgency of this research is increasingly evident with the increasing consumer demand for sustainable and environmentally friendly products. Gen Z is known as a generation that cares more about sustainability issues than previous generations, and they tend to prefer products with clear sustainability values (Smith & Tan, 2023). Therefore, companies need to understand the awareness and preferences of Gen Z, especially postgraduate students, in order to design more effective and relevant marketing strategies. In addition, this study can also serve as evaluation material for companies in determining more sustainable policies and approaches in their marketing activities (Wang, 2022).

Overall, this research will not only contribute to the development of green theory marketing, but also provides practical implications for companies looking to target Gen Z in their marketing campaigns. By knowing the level of postgraduate students' awareness of green marketing, companies can develop more sustainable products and services and develop marketing strategies that can build long-term relationships with young consumers who are increasingly concerned about sustainability (Bui & Nguyen, 2023). Therefore, this research is very important in creating a more responsible market and supporting environmental sustainability.

2. Literature Review

Green Marketing. Green marketing refers to marketing that involves products and services that have a positive impact on the environment, whether in the production, distribution, or consumption process. This concept is increasingly developing in response to increasing public awareness of environmental and sustainability issues (Kotler et al., 2023). Green marketing includes not only the development of environmentally friendly products but also transparent communication about the environmental impact of products or services offered by the company. Research by Liu & Chen (2023) shows that products with environmentally friendly claims tend to be more accepted by consumers who care about sustainability.

The Role of Consumers in Green Marketing. Consumers play a critical role in the success of green marketing. According to research by Wang (2022), more environmentally conscious consumers tend to prefer products with sustainability labels, even if the price of the product is higher. The younger generation, especially Gen Z, is known to be more aware of environmental issues compared to previous generations. They more often choose products that are produced in an ethical and environmentally friendly manner, and prioritize companies that are committed to sustainability (Smith & Tan, 2023).

Gen Z and Environmental Awareness. Gen Z is a generation that grew up with extensive access to technology, which allows them to more easily access information about global issues, including sustainability. They are very concerned about the social and environmental impacts of the products they consume, and are often involved in social movements related to sustainability (Jones & Lee, 2024). Research conducted by Bui & Nguyen (2023) shows that Gen Z tends to be more concerned about their consumption choices compared to previous generations, especially in choosing environmentally friendly and sustainable products.

Green Marketing and Generation Z. In the context of marketing, Gen Z is not only looking for eco-friendly products but also wants companies to demonstrate transparency in their practices.

This means that green strategies Marketing must include tangible evidence of a company's commitment to sustainability, such as reducing its carbon footprint or using recyclable materials. Sudirman (2024) notes that Gen Z prefers brands that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability in a more open and transparent way, compared to simply using an unverified "green" label .

The Role of Postgraduate Students in Green Marketing. Postgraduate students have great potential to become agents of change in the implementation of green marketing . As individuals who are more exposed to academic knowledge and research, they have a deeper understanding of the importance of sustainability in social and economic contexts. They are also often more critical and selective consumers in choosing products. Research by Wang (2022) shows that graduate students, especially those in sustainability-related fields of study, are more likely to support products that are produced in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner.

The Influence of Green Marketing on Purchasing Decisions. Research shows that green marketing has a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions, especially for younger consumers such as Gen Z who are more concerned about sustainability. A study by Liu & Chen (2023) revealed that more than 60% of Gen Z consumers consider sustainability as a major factor in their purchasing decisions. With increasing awareness of environmental issues, companies that adopt green Marketing has a huge opportunity to build brand loyalty among younger consumers who are increasingly concerned about the ecological impact of their consumption choices.

Challenges in Implementing Green Marketing. Although there is great potential in the implementation of green marketing , companies still face challenges in convincing consumers about the authenticity of their claims. Consumers are often skeptical of green claims that are not supported by concrete evidence. Research by Sudirman (2024) revealed that one of the main obstacles in the adoption of green Marketing is consumer trust in environmental claims made by companies. Therefore, it is important for companies to not only market their products as environmentally friendly, but also to educate consumers about how their products are produced and how they reduce their environmental impact.

3. Research Method

This study uses a case study method with a descriptive qualitative approach to understand Gen Z's awareness of green marketing among graduate students. Case studies were chosen because they allow researchers to explore phenomena in depth within a specific context (Yin , 2023). The main focus of this study is to understand how graduate students perceive, understand, and respond to green marketing strategies. marketing implemented by the company.

This research will be conducted in several universities that have postgraduate programs, with the main respondents being postgraduate students who are included in generation Z (born between 1997-2012). The selection of respondents was carried out using purposive sampling techniques, with the following criteria: (1) Active postgraduate student. (2) Aged in the Gen Z range (between 23–28 years old). (3) Have an understanding or exposure to green concepts marketing.

The following is a table of indicators and research questions used in the in-depth interviews:

VARIABLES	INDICATOR	RESEARCH QUESTIONS
GREEN MARKETING AWARENESS	Concept understanding	What do you know about green marketing ?
	Resources	Where did you find out about products or companies that implement green? marketing ?
ATTITUDES TOWARDS GREEN MARKETING	Perception of benefits	Do you think eco-friendly products are better than conventional products? Why?
	Influence on purchasing decisions	Do you prefer products that have an eco-friendly label? Why or why not?
CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR	Frequency of purchasing green products	How often do you buy products with eco-friendly claims?
	Factors influencing decisions	What are the main factors that influence your decision to buy eco-friendly products? Price, quality, or others?
CHALLENGES IN GREEN MARKETING	Trust in product claims	How much do you trust the green claims made by companies? Do you think there is greenwashing ?
	Barriers to purchasing green products	What are the main obstacles you face in purchasing eco-friendly products?

4. Findings and Discussions

A total of 15 participants consisting of postgraduate students from various disciplines were involved in this interview. This interview aims to explore their understanding of *green marketing*, the factors that influence their awareness, and how these concepts influence their purchasing decisions.

Here are some excerpts from the interviews conducted:

- *"I know about greens marketing from social media and digital campaigns conducted by several well-known brands. In my opinion, this concept is important to support environmental sustainability, but there are still limitations in its implementation."* (R, 26 years old)
- *"I tend to choose products that have eco-friendly claims, but sometimes it's hard to find products that are truly sustainable without being too expensive."* (M, 27 years old)
- *"My trust in eco-friendly products still depends on the certification they have. If there is no official label or transparency in the production process, I tend to be skeptical."* (A, 25 years old)
- *"Digital marketing has been very influential in raising my awareness of sustainable products. Advertisements on social media often introduce me to more environmentally friendly alternatives."* (T, 28 years old)
- *"I want more brands to truly implement green principles. marketing, not only as a marketing strategy, but also as a real commitment to the environment."* (S, 24 years old)

From the results of this interview, several key findings that can be identified are: (1) **The main source of information** about *green Marketing* for postgraduate students comes from social media and digital campaigns. (2) **Price is still the main obstacle** in the decision to purchase environmentally friendly products, even though their awareness is quite high. (3) **Trust in eco-friendly products** is greatly influenced by official certification and brand transparency in implementing sustainable practices. (4) **Digital marketing has a huge impact** in increasing students' awareness and interest in sustainable products. (5) **The need for real commitment from brands** in going *green marketing*, not just a marketing strategy to attract customers.

The results of this interview show that Gen Z's awareness of *green marketing* among graduate students is quite high, but there are still challenges such as affordability and trust in sustainability claims. Therefore, brands need to increase transparency, strengthen consumer education, and offer more competitive prices so that green marketing strategies can be more effectively accepted by this market.

Interview results regarding Gen Z's awareness of *green marketing* among postgraduate students shows that although the understanding of this concept is quite high, there are several challenges in its implementation, especially related to the price and trust in environmentally friendly products. This discussion will link the findings with previous theories and research to provide a deeper understanding of how *green marketing* is accepted by Gen Z.

The Role of Social Media in Increasing Green Marketing Awareness. Social media has proven to be a major channel for disseminating information about *green marketing* to Gen Z. This finding is in line with research by Smith & Taylor (2023), which states that social media has become a major platform in shaping young consumers' preferences for environmentally friendly products. Digital campaigns conducted by various brands have been able to raise postgraduate students' awareness of the importance of more sustainable consumption. However, the limited in-depth education about the real impacts of green products is still an obstacle in making purchasing decisions.

Price Challenges in Purchasing Decisions. Although awareness of the importance of environmentally friendly products is high, price constraints are still a major factor inhibiting purchases. Several participants mentioned that products claimed to be sustainable often have higher prices than conventional products. This is in accordance with the findings of Chen et al. (2024), who revealed that although Gen Z has a high awareness of environmental issues, they still consider the economic aspect before making a purchase. Therefore, brands need to develop more competitive pricing strategies to increase the appeal of environmentally friendly products.

Trust in Green Marketing Products and Certification. Many graduate students still doubt a product's sustainability claims if they are not supported by official certification or transparency in its production process. This shows the importance of external validation in building consumer trust. According to research by Zeithaml et al. (2023), environmental certification such as *Ecolabel* or *ISO 14001* can increase the credibility of a product and encourage consumer trust. Therefore, companies must be more transparent in showing their certifications and sustainable business practices in order to convince the Gen Z target market.

Digital Marketing as an Effective Green Marketing Strategy. Interviews showed that digital marketing has a big role in shaping postgraduate students' perceptions of *green marketing*. Social media campaigns, interactive advertising, and educational content about sustainability

can increase their interest in green products. Chaffey & Smith (2024) emphasize that value - *driven digital marketing marketing*) is more effective in attracting young consumers than conventional marketing strategies. Therefore, companies need to continue optimizing digital strategies to strengthen communication about their commitment to sustainability.

The Need for Real Commitment from Brands. Gen Z is increasingly critical of *greenwashing practices* , which are marketing strategies that claim sustainability without actually doing anything. Several participants emphasized that they want brands that are truly committed to the environment, not just using *green. marketing* as a promotional tool. According to Porter & Kramer (2024), an authentic sustainability strategy not only improves brand image but also strengthens customer loyalty in the long term. Therefore, companies need to be more transparent and active in showing their green initiatives, such as the use of environmentally friendly materials, recycling programs, and annual sustainability reports.

5. Conclusion

This discussion shows that although Gen Z's awareness of *green marketing* among graduate students is quite high, there are several key challenges that need to be overcome, such as price, trust in sustainability claims, and the need for real commitment from brands. Digital marketing has proven to be an effective strategy in raising awareness, but it needs to be supported by transparency and clear certification in order to build consumer trust. By understanding these factors, companies can develop *green strategies* more effective and impactful *marketing in encouraging more sustainable consumption behavior among Gen Z.*

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