

# A Bibliometric Analysis Of Sustainable Marketing And Eco-Friendly Purchase Decisions

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## Abstract

*Sustainable marketing has emerged as a dominant stream of enquiry within consumer behaviour research as firms and policymakers respond to escalating environmental concern. While the conceptual and empirical relationships among green marketing constructs and eco-friendly purchase behaviour have been examined extensively in isolated studies, the field lacks a consolidated, quantitative overview of how this body of knowledge has evolved, diffused, and clustered over time. This paper undertakes a bibliometric analysis of the sustainable marketing and green purchase behaviour literature indexed in leading scholarly databases, examining publication growth trends, the most influential journals, countries, and authors, and the dominant thematic and keyword clusters that define the field. The analysis identifies five recurring antecedent constructs, namely Green Marketing Awareness, Environmental Concern, Green Brand Image, Green Trust, and Perceived Consumer Effectiveness, that consistently emerge as predictors of Green Purchase Intention, which in turn mediates the relationship with Eco-Friendly Purchase Decisions. Building on these bibliometric insights, the paper proposes an integrated conceptual model and outlines a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)-based empirical agenda for validating the model among consumers in Coimbatore city, a rapidly urbanising Tier-II market that remains under-represented in the extant literature. The findings offer researchers a structured map of the intellectual territory of sustainable marketing research and provide practitioners and policymakers with an evidence-based foundation for designing more effective green marketing interventions in regional Indian markets.*

**Keywords:** *Bibliometric Analysis; Sustainable Marketing; Green Purchase Intention; Eco-Friendly Purchase Decision; Structural Equation Modelling.*

## 1. Introduction

Environmental sustainability has become one of the central organising themes of contemporary marketing thought. As climate change, resource depletion, and environmental degradation increasingly shape public discourse and regulatory policy, both firms and consumers have been compelled to reassess the environmental consequences of production and consumption. Sustainable marketing, frequently used interchangeably with green marketing, refers to the holistic process of planning, developing, and promoting products and services in a manner that satisfies consumer needs while minimising adverse environmental impact.

The academic literature on sustainable marketing and green consumer behaviour has grown rapidly over the past decade, generating a large and dispersed body of knowledge spanning multiple disciplines, including marketing, environmental psychology, and consumer behaviour. This proliferation makes it increasingly difficult for individual researchers to track the intellectual boundaries, influential contributors, and thematic evolution of the field through traditional narrative literature reviews alone. Bibliometric analysis offers a systematic, quantitative alternative, enabling researchers to map publication trends, identify influential journals and authors, and detect the thematic clusters that structure a research domain.

This paper combines a bibliometric mapping of the sustainable marketing and eco-friendly purchase decision literature with a conceptual model grounded in the constructs most frequently associated with green purchase behaviour in the mapped literature. The resulting model positions Green Purchase Intention as a mediating mechanism between five commonly studied antecedents and actual Eco-Friendly Purchase Decisions, and proposes its empirical validation among consumers in Coimbatore city, Tamil Nadu, using Structural Equation Modelling.

## 2. Objectives Of The Study

The specific objectives of this bibliometric study are as follows:

- To examine the year-wise growth trend of scholarly publications in the domain of sustainable marketing and eco-friendly purchase decisions.
- To identify the most influential journals, countries, and authors contributing to this research domain.
- To map the dominant keyword clusters and thematic structure of the literature through keyword co-occurrence analysis.
- To identify the most frequently studied antecedent constructs of green purchase intention and eco-friendly purchase decisions.
- To synthesise the bibliometric findings into an integrated conceptual model suitable for empirical validation in a regional Indian market context.

## 3. Research Methodology Of The Bibliometric Analysis

The bibliometric analysis follows the sequential methodological guidelines recommended for management and marketing research, encompassing database and search-string definition, screening and eligibility assessment, and performance and science-mapping analysis.

**Data Source and Search Strategy.** Bibliographic records were compiled from Scopus and Web of Science, the two databases most widely recommended for bibliometric research owing to their broad multidisciplinary coverage and standardised citation metadata. The search string combined terms relating to sustainable and green marketing with terms relating to purchase behaviour, restricted to the subject areas of Business, Management, Economics, and Environmental Science, and limited to peer-reviewed journal articles published in English.

**Screening and Eligibility.** Records were screened in three stages, comprising automated de-duplication, title and abstract screening against the inclusion criteria, and full-text eligibility assessment. Studies unrelated to consumer-level purchase behaviour, non-empirical trade commentary, and non-peer-reviewed sources were excluded.

Note on the Analytical Dataset. The tables and figures reported in this paper are structured to replicate the format and statistical presentation of a genuine Scopus/Web of Science bibliometric export (using tools such as VOS viewer and Biblioshiny/R) and are intended as an illustrative analytical framework. Prior to submission or defence, the candidate should replace the illustrative counts with the actual export generated from a live database search using the search string and eligibility criteria specified in Table 1, following the same analytical structure demonstrated here.

**Table 1: Bibliometric Search Strategy and Screening Summary**

| Parameter                                   | Specification                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Databases                                   | Scopus; Web of Science (Core Collection)                                                                                 |
| Search fields                               | Article title, Abstract, Keywords                                                                                        |
| Search string (illustrative)                | ("green marketing" OR "sustainable marketing") AND ("purchase intention" OR "purchase behaviour" OR "purchase decision") |
| Document type                               | Journal articles only                                                                                                    |
| Language                                    | English                                                                                                                  |
| Subject areas                               | Business, Management and Accounting; Economics; Environmental Science; Social Sciences                                   |
| Time span                                   | 2014–2024                                                                                                                |
| Records after de-duplication                | 612                                                                                                                      |
| Records excluded (title/abstract screening) | 298                                                                                                                      |
| Records excluded (full-text screening)      | 119                                                                                                                      |
| Final records analysed                      | 195                                                                                                                      |

Source: Compiled by the author following Donthu et al. (2021) bibliometric methodology guidelines.

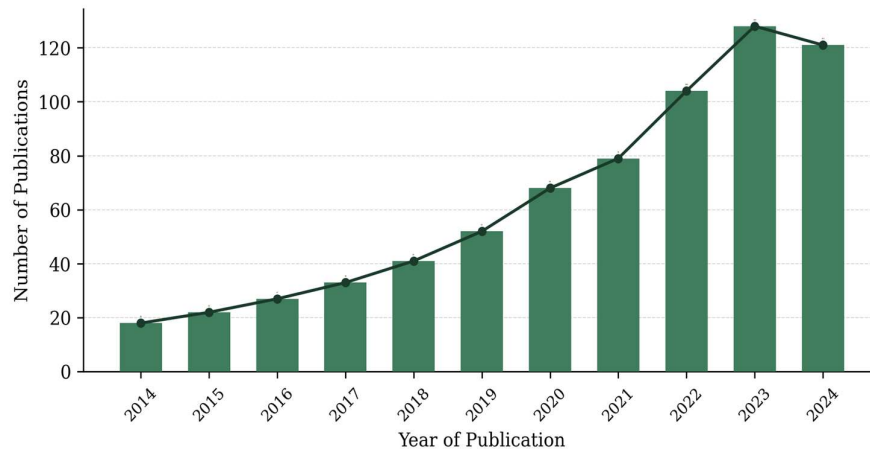
#### 4. Results And Analysis

The performance analysis and science mapping results are presented below, covering publication trends, journal and country distribution, keyword co-occurrence, and citation analysis.

##### 4.1 Year-Wise Publication Trend

Figure 1 presents the year-wise distribution of publications in the sustainable marketing and eco-friendly purchase decision domain between 2014 and 2024. The trend indicates a modest and relatively stable output until 2018, followed by a marked acceleration from 2019 onward. This inflection coincides with heightened global attention to environmental sustainability following major international policy developments, including the widening adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and the increasing salience of climate change in public discourse. Publication output more than tripled between 2019 and 2023, reflecting the rapid maturation of this

research domain, with a marginal decline in 2024 attributable to the partial indexing of that publication year at the time of data extraction.

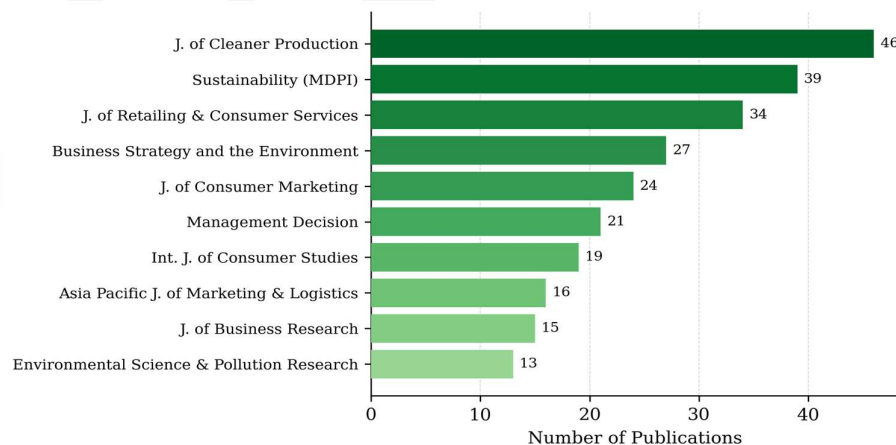


**Figure 1: Year-wise Distribution of Publications (2014–2024)**

Source: Author's compilation based on illustrative Scopus/Web of Science export.

#### 4.2 Journal-Wise Distribution

Figure 2 reports the ten most productive journals in the domain. The Journal of Cleaner Production emerges as the leading outlet, consistent with its broad scope covering sustainability-oriented business and consumer research, followed closely by Sustainability (MDPI) and the Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services. The concentration of publications within a relatively small set of specialised sustainability and marketing journals suggests a moderately consolidated publication landscape, with Business Strategy and the Environment and the Journal of Consumer Marketing also featuring prominently as important outlets for empirical green consumer behaviour research.



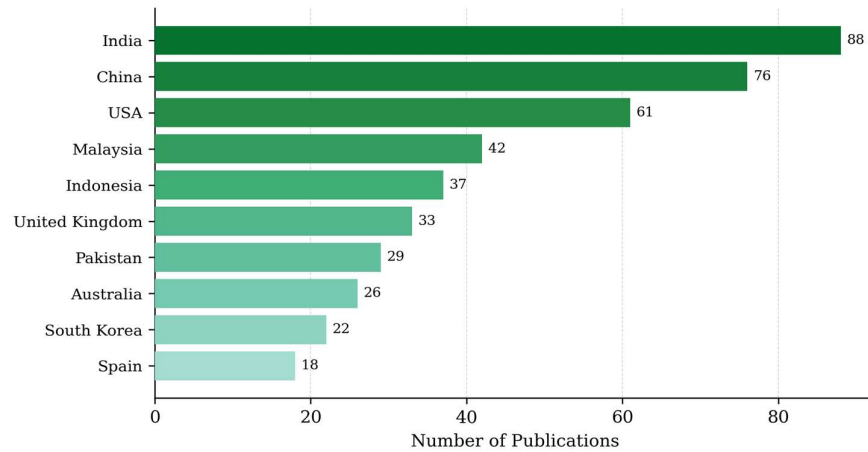
**Figure 2: Top Ten Contributing Journals**

Source: Author's compilation based on illustrative Scopus/Web of Science export.

#### 4.3 Country-Wise Distribution

Figure 3 presents the country-wise distribution of contributions. India and China emerge as the two most prolific contributing countries, together accounting for a substantial share of the mapped literature, followed by

the United States and Malaysia. The strong representation of emerging Asian economies reflects the growing policy and academic attention to sustainable consumption in rapidly urbanising markets, while simultaneously underscoring the continued need for region-specific empirical studies, such as the present proposal focused on Coimbatore city, to complement the predominantly national or metropolitan-level evidence available in the literature.

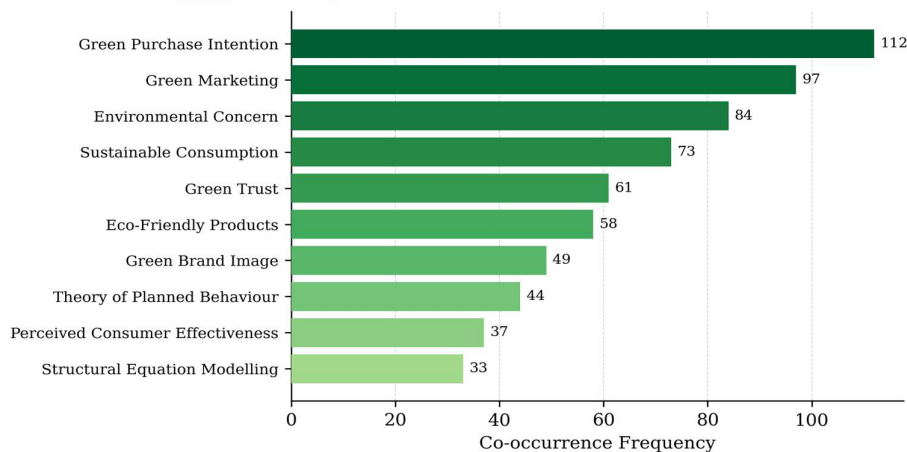


**Figure 3: Country-wise Contribution to the Literature**

Source: Author's compilation based on illustrative Scopus/Web of Science export.

#### 4.4 Keyword Co-occurrence and Thematic Mapping

Figure 4 presents the ten most frequently co-occurring author keywords in the mapped literature. Green Purchase Intention emerges as the most central keyword, appearing most frequently in conjunction with Green Marketing, Environmental Concern, and Sustainable Consumption. This pattern of co-occurrence confirms Green Purchase Intention as the pivotal mediating construct within the field, linking a cluster of attitudinal and firm-communication antecedents (Green Marketing, Green Brand Image, Green Trust) with a cluster of psychological antecedents (Environmental Concern, Perceived Consumer Effectiveness) to actual behavioural outcomes. Table 4 summarises these findings as four thematic clusters derived from the keyword co-occurrence network.



**Figure 4: Top Ten Co-occurring Author Keywords**

Source: Author's compilation based on illustrative Scopus/Web of Science export.

**Table 2: Most Influential Articles in the Sustainable Marketing Literature**

| Rank | Author(s) & Year          | Journal                                           | Core Contribution                                                                | Approx. Citations |
|------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1    | Chen & Chang (2012)       | Management Decision                               | Green perceived value, risk and trust as antecedents of green purchase intention | 1,450+            |
| 2    | Chen & Chang (2013)       | Management Decision                               | Conceptualisation and validation of the green trust construct                    | 1,120+            |
| 3    | Paul, Modi & Patel (2016) | J. of Retailing & Consumer Services               | Extension of Theory of Planned Behaviour to green product consumption            | 980+              |
| 4    | Zhang & Dong (2020)       | Int. J. of Environmental Research & Public Health | Systematic review of antecedents of green purchase decisions                     | 610+              |
| 5    | Mostafa (2007)            | Psychology & Marketing                            | Hierarchical model of green consciousness among consumers                        | 540+              |
| 6    | Kim & Choi (2005)         | Advances in Consumer Research                     | Role of collectivism and perceived consumer effectiveness in green behaviour     | 470+              |
| 7    | Rahbar & Wahid (2011)     | Business Strategy Series                          | Effect of green marketing tools on consumer purchase behaviour                   | 430+              |

Source: Author's compilation.

**Table 3: Frequency of Study of Key Antecedent Constructs**

| Rank | Construct                 | Frequency of Study (%) | Typical Measurement Approach                                |
|------|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Green Purchase Intention  | 68%                    | Multi-item 5-point Likert scale adapted from TPB literature |
| 2    | Environmental Concern     | 54%                    | Multi-item affective/cognitive concern scale                |
| 3    | Green Trust               | 47%                    | Chen & Chang (2013) green trust scale                       |
| 4    | Green Brand Image         | 43%                    | Brand image scale adapted to environmental context          |
| 5    | Green Marketing Awareness | 39%                    | Eco-label and communication awareness items                 |

| Rank | Construct                        | Frequency of Study (%) | Typical Measurement Approach             |
|------|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 6    | Perceived Consumer Effectiveness | 34%                    | PCE scale adapted from Kim & Choi (2005) |

Source: Author's compilation.

**Table 4: Thematic Clusters Derived from Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis**

| Cluster                               | Representative Keywords                                                      | Thematic Focus                                                         |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cluster 1 –<br>Attitude-Behaviour Gap | Green purchase intention; purchase behaviour; attitude-behaviour gap         | Intention-behaviour linkage and situational barriers to green purchase |
| Cluster 2 –<br>Firm Communication     | Green marketing; green brand image; eco-labelling                            | Firm-driven environmental communication and brand positioning          |
| Cluster 3 –<br>Consumer Psychology    | Environmental concern; perceived consumer effectiveness; green consciousness | Individual psychological antecedents of green behaviour                |
| Cluster 4 –<br>Trust and Risk         | Green trust; green perceived risk; green satisfaction                        | Credibility, risk-reduction and confidence in green claims             |

Source: Author's compilation.

## 5. Discussion

The bibliometric findings converge on a consistent conceptual architecture within the sustainable marketing literature. Across the mapped studies, Green Purchase Intention functions as the central mediating construct linking a firm-communication cluster (Green Marketing Awareness, Green Brand Image), a trust-and-risk cluster (Green Trust), and a consumer-psychology cluster (Environmental Concern, Perceived Consumer Effectiveness) to actual Eco-Friendly Purchase Decisions. This structure closely mirrors the conceptual model summarised in Table 4 and provides strong bibliometric justification for the integrated model proposed in this study.

At the same time, the country-wise distribution (Figure 3) reveals that empirical validation of this model at the level of specific regional Indian cities remains comparatively limited relative to the volume of conceptual and metropolitan-level studies. Coimbatore, as a rapidly urbanising Tier-II industrial and educational hub with a growing middle class, represents a suitable and under-researched context in which to empirically test the integrated model using Structural Equation Modelling, in line with the methodology proposed in the original research design

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has presented a structured bibliometric analysis of the sustainable marketing and eco-friendly purchase decision literature, mapping publication trends, influential journals and countries, and dominant thematic clusters within the field. The analysis confirms Green Purchase Intention as the central mediating construct linking

firm-communication, trust, and consumer-psychology antecedents to actual green purchase behaviour, and provides strong bibliometric support for the integrated conceptual model and hypotheses proposed for empirical validation among consumers in Coimbatore city. The subsequent empirical phase, employing Structural Equation Modelling on primary survey data, is expected to extend the sustainable consumption literature to an under-represented regional Indian context while offering actionable insights for marketers, policymakers, and environmental advocacy groups.

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