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## Integrating Sustainability into Marketing Strategies: Implications for Collective and Individual Well-Being

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### Abstract

Modern businesses increasingly embed sustainability into core marketing strategies to advance organizational success and societal welfare. This paper synthesizes Triple Bottom Line, stakeholder theory, consumer well-being, and ethical consumption literature to explain how sustainable marketing enhances individual outcomes (trust, responsible behavior, happiness) and collective outcomes (environmental quality, social equity). Focusing on evidence from fashion and related sectors, we identify research gaps, develop a conceptual framework, and outline a qualitative–conceptual methodology. We argue that authenticity, transparency, circular design, and purpose-led narratives strengthen trust and loyalty, normalize responsible consumption, and contribute to societal welfare. Managerial and policy implications emphasize credible claims, traceability, consumer education, anti-greenwashing enforcement, and enabling infrastructure. We conclude with limitations and an agenda for empirical validation.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Marketing; Triple Bottom Line; Stakeholder Theory; Ethical Consumption; Consumer Well-Being; Societal Welfare

### 1. Introduction

Sustainability has transitioned from a marginal concern to a central aspect of corporate strategy in recent decades, with marketing being a key function in bringing ethical, social and environmental responsibilities into practice for organizations. Organizations in a variety of sectors are recognizing that long-term success is tied to the impact they have on people, society and the planet. The fashion industry is a prime example of this, as one of the most environmentally damaging sectors the industry accounts for ~8% global carbon emissions and ~20% global waste water dy. This striking statistic underscores why businesses need to reconsider traditional marketing practices, which solely imagined consumption and profit, and instead turn to sustainable marketing practices that tackle environmental degradation and social issues. Consumer attitudes are shifting: research is beginning to suggest we are approaching a tipping point where sustainability will be considered an expectation for purchase decisions, and brands that authentically fulfill their social and environmental promises will have a competitive advantage. Sustainability in marketing is not just a moral requirement, but a market expectation.

However, even with the momentum behind this movement, taking sustainability into account in marketing raises very interesting questions about how companies should actually go about developing marketing strategies that serve consumer, societal and company economic objectives. Prior research in ethical consumption and corporate social responsibility (CSR) provides some clues, but there is still much to learn about the full effects of sustainable marketing on consumer/individual wellbeing and the cumulative effects on the wellbeing of society. Most studies tend to focus on either micro-level outcomes (such as consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, or brand loyalty) or macro-level outcomes (such as environmental indicators or community development) in isolation. There is a need for a

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comprehensive framework that links sustainable marketing initiatives to outcomes across these levels, showing how enhancing consumer well-being can go hand-in-hand with improving societal welfare.

The present article addresses this gap by synthesizing literature from marketing, business ethics, and sustainability domains to examine how integrating sustainability into marketing strategies can create value for consumers and society simultaneously.

We address this gap by articulating how integrated sustainable marketing can jointly advance consumer and societal well-being.

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## 2. Literature Review

Sustainable marketing extends the traditional marketing mix by integrating sustainable development principles and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) reframes performance around people, planet, and profit, encouraging firms to balance economic goals with social equity and environmental stewardship. Stakeholder theory argues that firms create value for customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and the environment, not only for shareholders. When CSR is authentic, it bolsters reputation and trust; when claims lack substance (greenwashing), credibility erodes.

Consumer well-being research—drawing on self-determination theory and transformative consumer research—links ethical consumption to happiness via value congruence, reduced dissonance, and a ‘warm-glow’ from prosocial action. Empirical work across categories (including fashion) finds that sustainable attributes, transparent supply chains, and credible certifications improve brand evaluations, trust, and engagement. However, the literature remains fragmented across micro and macro outcomes, motivating an integrative framework.

### 2.1. Sustainable Marketing and the Triple Bottom Line

Sustainable marketing refers to the design and promotion of products, services, and brand values that not only meet consumer needs and business goals but also preserve environmental resources and uphold social ethics for future generations. It extends traditional marketing by incorporating the principles of sustainable development and CSR into marketing mix decisions (product development, pricing, distribution, and promotion). A central framework in this context is the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), which posits that businesses should measure success across three performance dimensions: people, planet, and profit. Originally popularized by Elkington (1997), the TBL approach expands the notion of corporate success to include an organization’s contributions to social well-being and environmental health alongside financial performance. In summary, a sustainable marketing strategy strives to balance and achieve economic aims (profit) with social responsibility (people) and environmental stewardship (planet).

By employing a triple bottom line approach in marketing practice, businesses make the decisions about what products to sell, how to source and produce those products, and how to communicate with consumers considering their social and environmental effects, rather than solely their financial returns. For example, a fashion company's sustainable practices may include eco-friendly materials and fair labor practices (planet and people) while making a profit through low-cost operations and positioning their brand towards ethically based customers (profit). The literature shows adoption of a TBL mindset can lead to business operations and marketing activities that are more sustainable, and the impact on business can lead to more sustainable business models. Companies look for ways to decrease waste, lower their carbon footprints, employing labor under fair conditions, creating products that are safer and greener, are more in alignment with a holistic approach to sustainable development objectives. The TBL mindset leads to what Dyllick and Hockerts (2002) called "a set of fair business practices in respect to labor, society and the environment in which the enterprise operates." Businesses that adopt a TBL operative frame and reject the long-held mindset of profit alone have an opportunity to enhance the marketing value propositions to include ecological and social aspects into their offerings, thereby enabling the "grounds for shared value".

### 2.2. Corporate Social Responsibility and Stakeholder Theory

The concept of sustainable marketing is intricately woven into Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and stakeholder theory. CSR consists of voluntary, self-regulating processes, undertaken by a company, to demonstrate its accountability to, and the interests of, the economy, society, and the environment. elements of CSR, such as promotional campaigns or strategies emphasizing ethical labor, philanthropic and community engagement, related marketing communications, and environmentally friendly operations, are very often implicit dimensions of corporate marketing efforts and philosophies because they are often depicted as brand identity. According to stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), businesses should generate value for a wider range of stakeholders, not just shareholders, but customers, employees,

suppliers, communities, and the environment also. Accepting stakeholder theory is accepting the value of balancing stakeholder interests while seeking decisions that benefit the collective - not just a few Trade-offs, and generating value for wider range of stakeholders, and not pluralism denied, is possible through sustainable marketing.

In actuality, when companies embed sustainability into their marketing, they are responding often to the demands of several stakeholders. Consumers may want more sustainable products; local communities may want the business to reduce pollution and support social causes; employees may want the company to be commitment driven. By recognizing stakeholder demands, these firms are utilizing what has been called stakeholder marketing, in which marketing is extended beyond the customer, to include the needs and wellbeing of all stakeholder groups.

There is research that claim that genuine CSR can help to improve company brand image and stakeholder relationships. When companies make a legitimate effort to pursuing ethical, social and environmental goals (for example, cause-related marketing and sustainability report), companies can establish some trust with consumers and other stakeholders. Following through with CSR has actually been shown to improve consumer trust and customer loyalty, which can lead to competitive advantages, such as market share (Barlas et al., 2023; Hameed et al., 2018) Through CSR-driven marketing campaigns, organizations align their goals with societal progress, contributing not only to the public good but also to their own long-term viability (Luo & Bhattacharya, 2018) In conclusion, CSR and stakeholder theory offer an essential underpinning for sustainable marketing; they remind marketers that each marketing choice (a product's design or an advertisement's copy) has ethical considerations and affects stakeholders, and that accounting for these responsibilities can enhance the firm's ties to its stakeholders and contribute to sustainable success.

### **2.3. Consumer Well-Being and Ethical Consumption**

An aspect that makes sustainable marketing special is that it is explicitly concerned with effects beyond the sale related to consumer wellbeing (Mick et al., 2012) and ethical consumption patterns. Consumer well-being in marketing indicates that marketing should elevate the quality of life of consumers, not just persuade to buy more. There are some roots in this idea in macromarketing and transformative consumer research which argue marketing can be enacted to improve consumer welfare and society's well-being. The term refers to various aspects including things such as satisfaction, happiness, health, safety, and/or meaning of consumption. While many marketing areas traditionally have metrics, such as customers satisfaction or customer loyalty, well-being metrics are being added and explored as metrics by current seeker marketing scholars as they look to develop and move methods of inquiry forward; or refocus debates on key constructs in marketing. The terms involve a broad spectrum of 'well-being' and 'quality of life' changes related to marketing, consumers use, as well as organizations and society's impact on consumers (Sirgy, 2021). Traditional forms of well-being metrics examine facets of consumer use, such as economic actors, not their complete life or happiness impacts which consuming or consumption environments may create (Mick et al., 2012; Sirgy, 2021). happiness, health, safety, and meaningful consumption. One pivotal facet of this conversation is the growth of ethical consumption (also known as responsible or sustainable consumption behavior). Ethical consumption signifies purchase and consumption choices guided by ethical criteria — choosing products that are eco-friendly, cruelty-free, or fair trade, and boycotting products made in exploitative conditions or ones that harm people or the environment. Over the past twenty years, ethical consumerism has grown from a niche to a mainstream movement, especially among younger consumers and across the globe (including in emerging markets). Consumers increasingly report a willingness to pay more for sustainable products or to reward companies for engaging in social responsibility. For example, a collaborative study by McKinsey and NielsenIQ found that products touting environmental, social, and governance (ESG) claims were growing their sales much faster than conventional products, and that consumers cared about ESG claims and that these claims were influencing their purchase decisions (NielsenIQ/McKinsey, 2023). These trends demonstrate the opportunity that marketers have for embedding ethical values into both product and brand lines.

Critically, ethical consumption has frequently been associated with positive psychological outcomes for individuals. A growing base of literature in psychology and marketing indicates that sustainable, or prosocial, consumption behaviors can facilitate personal well-being. Taking an example, when consumers purchase products that align with their social or moral values (e.g., a shirt made from organic cotton and fair labor), they may experience feelings of pride, "warm glow," or integrity, thus enhancing their overall satisfaction with their purchase and life satisfaction (Brown & Kasser, 2005; Kasser & Sheldon, 2002). Recent research indicates that consumption including environmental and social factors has a positive relation to consumers' subjective well-being and happiness.

This makes sense as it reinforces a positive identity - consumers are 'doing the right thing' and working towards a larger cause, ultimately satisfying psychological needs. This action can be explained further by self-determination theory; when the act of consumption addressed core psychological needs of autonomy (acting based on known values),

competence (feeling effective in making a contribution), and relatedness (being connected to and caring of others and the planet), the consumer is more likely to experience greater subjective happiness and fulfillment.

In conclusion, the literature suggests a beneficial link between ethical consumption and well-being: sustainable marketing practices often prompt consumers to take responsible actions, and consumers may find that these responsible actions contribute towards their well-being (e.g. positive feelings, moral implications, and correspondence with their values). This is a key bridge between individual well-being and collective well-being - consumers find personal happiness and their actions are promoting the well-being of society and the environment at the same time.

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### 3. Conceptual Framework

This section builds upon the literature review and elaborates a conceptual framework representing the connection between incorporating sustainability into the marketing strategies and well-being outcomes at the individual/unit level and the collective level. The framework is informed by the triple bottom line view, stakeholder theory, and consumer well-being theories, and connects the micro-macro divide, by demonstrating the interaction between individual-level effects and societal-level effects.

Essentially, the sustainable marketing initiatives are a facilitator of value capture at multiple levels of analysis. Instagram's guidance on sustainable marketing strategies for business owners as it relates to examples of sustainable marketing initiatives, is expansive: for instance, developing eco-products (green product innovation); sustainable packaging, shipping and transportation/distribution; fair-trade sourcing; cause-related marketing campaigns (e.g., donating a percentage of sales to social/emotional causes); transparency about origins and impact; promoting moderation or recycling (as part of a cycle of consumption); and engaging consumers in sustainability activities (such as take-back schemes or community projects). The sustainable marketing initiatives collectively represent corporate values and strategies that utilize the triple bottom line, which means that the companies are intentionally pursuing their economic objectives at the same time as these social and environmental objectives - not rather in opposition to them.

From a theoretical perspective, stakeholder theory provides a basis for why a firm would engage in sustainable marketing: it holds that the firm recognizes that to survive and thrive in the marketplace it must meet stakeholder needs (e.g. a customer's environmental concerns, or a community's expectation for ethical practice, etc.). By establishing stakeholder-oriented values in marketing, the firm can exhibit accountability and concern for stakeholder welfare, which theoretically increases stakeholder trust and cooperation (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Similarly, in this regard, theory of shared value (Porter & Kramer, 2011) can be applied here: sustainable marketing can generate shared value by improving both the firm's competitive position and the welfare of communities (e.g. a campaign to reduce plastic waste can create a favorable environmental situation, and a better brand image and loyalty).

Consumer well-being theory, which incorporates elements from psychology with the concepts of self-determination theory and value congruence, explains the consumer-side mechanism too. If consumers see a sustainable marketing message - an advertisement promoting a product's ethical characteristics, or a brand regarding its social mission for improvement of society - and consumers cared about these concerns, it can lead to positive cognitive and emotional states. Consumers will almost always integrate a brand's values into their own identity; if a brand aligns with a consumer's personal values (i.e. environmentalism, social justice), purchasing from that brand can reinforce a consumer's sense of identity and elicit emotional fulfillment. This alignment represents what marketing scholars define as increasing consumer happiness from consumption experiences which are meaningful, but not only materially normative (Moisander et al., 2020). The framework we propose recognizes two pathways through which sustainable marketing can influence consumer well-being: (1) Cognition/attitudinal pathway - improving attitudes/ perceptions of the brand (trustworthy, authentic) and overall satisfaction with the choice, leading to more peace of mind and fulfillment and (2) Emotional/moral pathway - evoking positive emotions (e.g. pride or satisfaction of "doing good") associated with the sustainable behavior and reinforcing moral self-concept, which form part of one's happiness and overall satisfied life.

Another avenue is the institutional trust and social capital that companies can build when they act responsibly. In many societies, businesses are themselves significant institutions that shape public trust either positively or negatively. Sustainable marketing represents a credible way of letting society know that a company is a trustworthy social actor and cares about more than just the bottom line. This form of marketing can establish stakeholder trust in businesses and markets more generally, helping to normalize greater social solidarity and the idea that businesses are a part of solutions to global problems rather than problems themselves. For example, when a company leads an initiative around environmental education or community well-being as part of its marketing/CSR responsibilities, it typically partners with NGOs, governments, and citizens, helping to develop stakeholder networks and collective efficacy. Stakeholder

theory states the business-stakeholder relationship results in a virtuous cycle: stakeholders help support the business' activities (for example, consumers reward businesses with loyalty, and communities provide social license to operate) which in turn affords the business the potential to reinvest in initiatives that promote sustainable innovation that potentially benefits society even further.

The framework links sustainable marketing practices to individual and collective well-being through cognitive/attitudinal and moral/affective pathways, and through systemic diffusion effects. Four propositions (P) follow.

- P1. Authentic, evidence-based sustainability communication increases brand trust and loyalty.
- P2. Circular design and accessible repair/return schemes normalize responsible consumption without reducing perceived utility.
- P3. Value congruence and moral satisfaction enhance consumer happiness (subjective well-being).
- P4. Sector-wide adoption reduces negative externalities and improves societal welfare (environmental quality, labor equity, institutional trust).

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#### 4. Methodology

Given the complexity of the research question and its focus on linking marketing strategies to individual and societal outcomes, a multi-method or advanced conceptualization is justified. In this study, we take the conceptual and qualitative perspective. We use the word "perspective" as the intention of our application is theory development and to integrate past findings, not to test hypotheses with new data. The methodological aspect of this study is to do a literature review (provided above) and synthesis to create the conceptual framework. This method is appropriate for a nascent area of study where constructs like "collective well-being" are not well-defined in the marketing space, and where developing a causal pathway occurs conceptually before evidence through research can be sought.

Recognizing the challenges associated with defining a research-ready study and preparing the conceptual arena for future research, we would also propose a potentially research design to develop into an empirical study. One possible method would be a mixed methods study using qualitative information and quantitative data:

**Qualitative Phase:** Conduct in-depth interviews or focus groups with important players (for instance, the marketing managers who lead sustainability initiatives, the consumers who are an ethical consumer, and possibly community leaders or representatives of NGOs). The qualitative phase would be to explore perceptions of how sustainable marketing fosters trust and behavior for the wellbeing of the consumers. In the Moroccan context (it was noted there was local relevance), the outlined interviews could focus on marketing practitioners in Morocco's fashion retail industry and then Moroccan consumers, so the cultural detail of how to messages about sustainability are effective can be examined. A qualitative analysis (themed coding) can then further inform and enhance the framework by identifying further behaviours or conditions, for example religious/cultural values in Morocco that relate to sustainability are significant to the consumers, or skepticism, may arise from experiences of greenwashing.

**Quantitative Phase:** Based on the findings and the conceptual model, create a survey to test key relationships. For example, a survey of consumers can measure perceptions of a brand's sustainable marketing (independent variable), brand trust, perceived consumer well-being (for example, feeling good about one's purchase, measured through established scales of consumer happiness or life satisfaction associated with consumption), and support for societal outcomes (for example, willingness to engage in advocacy or community behaviors, possibly a proxy for collective orientation). Established scales from previous research would be utilized (e.g. brand trust scale, ethical consumption self-identity scale, subjective well-being scales). The survey could also include measures of objective knowledge or behavior (for example, did the consumer reduce waste or donate to causes to which they engaged with the brand). To incorporate collective well-being, community-level data or perceptions could also be included - for example, a measure of pride in community, or a measure where respondents consider the potential contribution to society of widespread support of the brand's practices. In an industry like fashion, an example could be contrast consumer who purchase a known sustainable fashion brand with consumers who purchase a fast fashion brand. Differences in trust and well-being outcome levels should be evaluated and the data analyzed using statistical techniques (e.g., structural equation modeling) to determine whether e.g., sustainable marketing perception positively predicts consumer trust which positively predicts customer well-being, with a further chain. Moderators could be tested e.g., did the CSR awareness moderate that path, (e.g., did the relationship strengthen among those aware of the brand CSR), or cultural values (e.g., did a collectivist orientation lead to an overall increase in collective well-being consideration?).

Conceptual Validation: Having conceptualized a paper, it is also possible to consider theoretical triangulation. The framework could be considered in relation to other theoretical frameworks (e.g., whether the consideration of an economics perspective or strictly utilitarian perspective challenged assumptions, etc) both as a way to offer validation and as a way to employ logical reasoning that assured that there were no internal inconsistencies.

In this article, we take an approach that is primarily conceptual: we have analyzed and synthesized empirical literature (academic articles, reports, case studies) to develop a unified argument. We have drawn largely upon peer-reviewed academic articles in the areas of marketing, sustainability, and ethics, to support each component of the framework that we have constructed based on earlier empirical evidence. This approach is theoretically oriented to a conceptual contribution to journals such as *Journal of Business Ethics* or *Sustainability*, where the objective is to generate new linkages for future empirical work. There is a degree of limitation with the strategy we employed, mainly that the empirical findings referenced, which may have their own context limitations, and we were making theoretical inferences based on these findings and not direct evidence. As a result, we have approached the framework developed here as a series of propositions that we hope to test with future research. The combination of qualitative perspectives and a proposed survey provides one way for testing these propositions; thereby informing what we have said is demonstrable and testable.

In conclusion, the methodology is primarily a conceptual inquiry, along with a proposed empirical approach. This allows us to thoroughly explore the “why” and “how” of the relationships between sustainable marketing and well-being (through existing theory), while also outlining “how to find out” in a rigorous way should researchers or practitioners attempt to measure these effects in practice.

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## 5. Discussion

In this section, we discuss the implications of integrating sustainability into marketing strategies, focusing on four key domains highlighted by our research question: consumer trust, ethical consumption behavior, consumer happiness (individual well-being), and societal welfare (collective well-being). We analyze how sustainability-oriented marketing contributes to each of these areas, drawing on our framework and relevant literature. The discussion also touches on practical examples (with a spotlight on the fashion industry and the context of emerging markets like Morocco where applicable) to illustrate these concepts.

### 5.1. Building Consumer Trust and Brand Loyalty

One immediate effect of sustainable marketing is trust. Trust is foundational for strong brand relationships and means consumers believe a brand will “do the right thing” as well as keep its promises. Incorporating sustainability credibly and transparently into a firm's marketing often act as indicators of higher transparency, ethics, and long-term orientations which further builds trust. For example, a brand that openly discusses the environmental footprint of its products, or shares stories about how it treats its workers fairly, promotes trust by opening itself to accountability and expressing that it cares about more than making money today. This is confirmed by the literature. There is a tendency for consumers to reward brands engaging in credible CSR with more trust and loyalty (Hameed et al., 2018). A recent study found that fulfilling CSR obligations leads to higher customer trust which contributed to higher brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. In our model, sustainable marketing initiatives (as a way to communicate CSR) demonstrate to consumers the relationship between the firm's stated values and its behavior, which increases trust.

In cases like Morocco and other developing markets in which trust can be meaningfully created via sustainability initiatives, it can be disruptive. In the developing market space, consumers may be increasingly aware of global sustainability [and other environmental] issues, yet confused about who they can trust due to less regulation and transparency. A Moroccan fashion brand, for example, which utilizes international sustainability certifications in their product and also promotes that certification (e.g., utilizing organic cotton with certification and promoting that), could really be a value differentiator for connecting with trust locally because they would have high standards. Additionally, the vast majority of Morocco's revenue in textiles comes from global brands, [that are known to due horrible sustainability practices] shown by local consumers often being aware of big issues. Just imagine selling/making clothing products with a 'Made in Morocco with sustainable practices' label. This opportunity even fosters a sense of national pride, which inherently supports and builds trust within Moroccan consumers. Sustainability initiatives could turn lost trust in companies' products and services into trust creating differentiators in the domestic context. More broadly, trust created through a sustainable marketing campaign supports the longevity of the brand's overall equity – trusted brands are ultimately less likely to be impacted negatively in a crisis, have greater resilience in customer relationships, etc. Here it should be noted that trusted brands created via sustainable marketing and implementation improve customer

loyalty, but only if done honestly and consistently. Thus, implementing sustainability initiatives strategically supports consumer trust and loyalty.

## 5.2. Encouraging Responsible and Sustainable Consumption

Sustainable marketing does not just seek to change how consumers perceive companies, but it aims to change how they behave. By promoting sustainable strategies in their products and messages, companies begin to influence ethical ways of consumption for their customers. It is important to remember that marketing is a mechanism to develop demand and preference, and if marketing uses this mechanism to communicate eco-friendly options, social issues, and consumption outcomes, then faced with such marketing messages, consumers will be more likely to engage in responsible behavior. For example, a marketing campaign may tell consumers how to recycle ("How do I recycle the packaging for your product?"), or promote mindful consumption ("Buy what you need - our product is built to last"), or explain the value of purchasing fair trade ("This coffee helps farm communities"). With time, these messages may change the everyday consumer's typical reaction behaviors to reflect ethical consumption.

The evidence of marketing relative to market growth, through the development of product markets (beyond organic foods) like electric vehicles or fair-trade goods are just three examples of categories that developed and grew, in part, as a result of clever marketing that linked goods and services to consumers' values, and to social causes on a global scale. It is critical to note that promoting responsible consumption through marketing often requires a shift in marketing metrics as well. Traditional marketing efforts mostly focus on increased consumption and sales volume, while sustainable marketing typically promotes a different way of consuming, or, in some instances consuming less, but better. For marketers who are already measured on quarterly sales, supporting responsible consumption may seem counter-intuitive. However, in practice, we are starting to see companies come up with different and novel business models to support responsible consumption practices such as using product-as-a-service models, promoting reuse (where reuse builds brand loyalty even if unit sales stall), and diversifying into services (repair, recycling programs, etc.). In academia terms of place, this has been referred to as moving from a transactional model to a relational model approach to value and value which captures and combines this with responsible consumption practices and is measured against long term well-being (Customer focused value) rather than immediate purchase. Successful firms can have and do make financially sustainable choices (loyal customers often have as a group higher lifetime value) to embrace a responsible consumption based culture. In summary, sustainable marketing plays an enormous role in the consumer education, or enablement and motivation as it relates to responsible consumption practices that align an individual consumer purchasing decision with the broader goal of sustainability.

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## 6. Managerial Implications

The discussion above has led to several implications for managers. These have been identified based on the potential of sustainable marketing strategies.

**Sustainability part of the core strategy:** Managers should ensure that sustainability is part of the core strategy, not an additional thing to think about, or something done for marketing purposes. The Triple Bottom Line can be used as a core strategy tool in setting objectives. This means establishing social and environmental performance alongside financial measures. This way, marketing teams have genuine examples and practices to account for in their communications; this also increases credibility. The marketing department should engage sustainability staff or operations to be able to source real examples/stories (e.g. carbon reductions, community funded projects, etc.) that marketing can tell a story about. This also helps avoid greenwashing and provides a coherent story.

**Create Authentic Narratives and Inform Consumers:** Marketers should design messages that educate consumers about how and why the company is sustainable, in turn informing consumers about the bigger issues at play. Storytelling is a powerful mechanism – for example, whether it is the entire process of the product journey from recycled content to final product or the artisans/farmers who receive a benefit through an ethical trade program. However, the focus should not just be on product features but the positive impact of the purchase linking to things that consumers care about (clean water, happy communities, a better future for children etc.). Marketing communications can also give ideas/tips or ask consumers to respond to the communication (for example, how to use product in a sustainable way, how to recycle it, etc.) and make marketing communications a two-way engagement that helps to enable conscientious consumer behavior.

**Establish Trust through Transparency:** One practical implication for building trust is radical transparency. Managers could think about providing information in a very open way - in other words, making easy access to information - for

example, life-cycle assessments, sourcing information, third-party audits - possibly digitally such as QR Codes on the products packaging or on specific sections on the company website.

**Align Marketing Metrics with Sustainability Goals:** One way is to evolve how marketing metrics measure success. Beyond traditional metrics such as sales growth or market share, include some that link to sustainability and well-being, some traction metric that might connect to sustainability inquiries. For instance, companies might count the percentage of customers who are aware of company's sustainability initiatives (brand awareness on sustainability) or assessing customers' trust and their satisfaction level based solely on the brand's established values. Some companies are experimenting with Net Promoter Score and a "Net Purpose Score" or related indices, as an effort to assess how well their purpose (usually sustainability-related) resonates. Companies can also base evaluation and reporting on marketing teams to reductions of negative impacts (e.g., decrease in return rates because of more effective customer education on how to buy the right product, thus reducing waste). By incorporating impact metrics into portion of marketers' KPI, companies help to create situations that incentivizes their teams to find creative ways to legally generate revenue while doing good.

**Product innovation and portfolio management:** From a product perspective, a managerial implication is the prioritization of sustainable product innovation, replacing unsustainable product innovation and marketing, so it's evident what superior product sustainable offerings the sustainability marketing can promote. For example, a fashion retailer may plan to increase sustainable fabric collections each season based on consumer response. That being said, managers must manage their whole portfolio, so the default choice for customers is a sustainable one. For example, by removing excess packaging or having all products meet specific ethical goals, you remove the need for marketing to dual message (sustainable line vs our regular line) - the entire brand becomes sustainable-by-default, thus removing confusion from internal communication and creating a clearer brand identity.

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## 7. Conclusion

When marketing promotes sustainability, it's not just about "doing good" in the outside world; it is a fundamental change in the value that marketing produces and creates value for consumers, companies, and society. This article set out to analyze the consequences of sustainable marketing on both collective and individual well-being, and our analysis led us to several important conclusions.

**Summary of Important Conclusions:** Sustainable marketing, inspired by frameworks like the triple bottom line and stakeholder theory, enables businesses to try to make profit together with people and planet. When companies market based on their ethical, social, and environmental responsibilities, they build greater: consumer trust and brand loyalty - because it's based on trust deriving from authenticity and transparency. Sustainable marketing efforts foster and promote ethical consumption behaviors, empowering consumers to make decisions that are better for society and the environment, which paradoxically also when applied to increased levels of consumer well-being and happiness because they also satisfy a deeper psychological need, more related to values and enable consumers to feel better about what they buy. With these behaviors increasing in the marketplace, sustainable marketing does offer a route to improve our societal well-being contributing to better environments, wage fair labor practices, and more conscientious communities.

**Limitations:** It is important to recognize the limitations of this research. First, our work is largely conceptual and based on existing literature. While we have drawn on a wide array of research - in drawing from several studies in many various contexts - all proposals have not been rigorously tested as an integrated whole. Empirical research will determine if the relationships assumed in this conceptual paper are valid, important or completely wrong. For example, the extent to which ethical consumption contributes to consumer happiness for an individual consumer might be different depending on individuals' cultural background, individual differences (in the case there are economic/social constraints that may override values) or situational context (it's possible to buy into a seller's values for example but price as an example would have equal or higher impact). We also did not deeply explore potential immediate trade-offs to performance - i.e., is it possible that if you were to emphasize sustainability in your marketing it could diminish some immediate terms of performance? For example, calling on consumers to buy less could conflict with how most companies set objectives for growth in sales. We caution the potential contradictory situations that might emerge and emphasize the need to study the contexts carefully.

In conclusion, the move towards integrating sustainability into marketing is a defining shift for contemporary business - one that aligns business practice with the pressing global need for sustainable development. As this article has argued, when executed sincerely, sustainable marketing can be a powerful force for positive change, creating win-win outcomes: consumers gain products and services that they can feel good about, increasing their trust and well-being, while society benefits from the cumulative impact of more responsible consumption and corporate practices. The collective and

individual dimensions of well-being are deeply interconnected, and sustainable marketing serves as a bridge between them – turning market transactions into opportunities for advancing human and ecological flourishing. It is our hope that more companies, policymakers, and researchers will recognize the importance of this integration and work collaboratively to refine and realize the potential of marketing as a catalyst for a sustainable and well-being-oriented future.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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