

THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION: ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS, TRUST, AND CONSUMER LOYALTY IN ECO-FRIENDLY MARKETS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the social dynamics of sustainable consumption by investigating the influence of environmental awareness and customer trust on consumer loyalty in eco-friendly markets. The study addresses the importance of sustainable consumption and how consumers' environmental perceptions and relational evaluations contribute to loyalty toward responsible products and brands. An explanatory quantitative research design was employed. Data were collected through a self-administered online questionnaire from consumers of environmentally friendly household and personal care products in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia. Using purposive sampling, 140 responses were obtained, of which 127 valid responses were retained for analysis. The measurement instrument consisted of 23 indicators covering environmental awareness, customer trust, and consumer loyalty, measured using a five-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics, validity/reliability testing, classical assumption testing, and regression analysis. The results demonstrate that environmental awareness has a positive and significant effect on consumer loyalty ($\beta = 0.342$, $t = 5.480$, $p < 0.001$). Customer trust also has a positive and significant effect on consumer loyalty and represents the stronger predictor ($\beta = 0.460$, $t = 5.537$, $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that sustainable consumption is influenced by both consumers' environmental awareness and confidence in the credibility and environmental responsibility of eco-friendly brands. The study contributes to sustainable consumer behavior literature by highlighting environmental and relational dimensions of consumer loyalty. Managerially, eco-friendly brands should strengthen environmental education, transparency, and credible sustainability practices to foster lasting consumer relationships.

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INTRODUCTION

Environmental issues arising from climate change, pollution, and environmental degradation have increasingly shaped consumer behavior and business practices by heightening the demand for sustainable alternatives (García-Salirrosas

& Rondon-Eusebio, 2022). Growing environmental awareness prompts consumers to evaluate the environmental and social impacts of their consumption choices and to favor environmentally responsible products and brands (Sohaib et al., 2025). Consequently, consumption decisions have expanded beyond traditional considerations of price and quality to encompass broader sustainability concerns, thereby elevating the strategic importance of green marketing in attracting consumers to eco-friendly offerings and communicating environmental value. Environmental awareness further directly influences purchasing behavior while motivating firms to develop sustainable products that address consumers' ecological concerns, positioning sustainable consumption as a reflection of evolving social values toward environmental responsibility.

Environmental awareness constitutes a fundamental foundation for sustainable consumption, as it shapes consumers' recognition of environmental problems and guides their evaluation of consumption choices according to ecological consequences (M. Cui et al., 2024). Consumers exhibiting higher levels of environmental awareness demonstrate a greater propensity to support products perceived as environmentally responsible and to develop stronger attachments to sustainable brands (Li et al., 2024). Empirical evidence further confirms that environmental awareness positively and significantly influences sustainable product purchase decisions while fostering longer-term loyalty toward eco-friendly brands through mechanisms such as green brand image and trust (Aly et al., 2025; Van Quang & Thi Van, 2025). Nevertheless, awareness alone may prove insufficient to secure enduring consumer loyalty when uncertainty persists regarding the credibility of corporate environmental commitments, underscoring the need for transparent green marketing practices that reinforce both purchase behavior and sustained brand relationships (Islam & Ali Khan, 2024; Uikey et al., 2026).

Customer trust is therefore another important dimension of sustainable consumption, particularly because consumers often cannot directly verify environmental claims made by businesses. Information concerning sustainable production processes, environmental impacts, and corporate environmental commitments may be difficult to evaluate independently, making transparency, credibility, and consistency essential in determining whether environmental claims are perceived as authentic. (Isac et al., 2025) demonstrated that consistent green transparency practices strengthen customer trust in brands. Trust can reduce uncertainty regarding the authenticity of sustainability claims and increase consumers' confidence that a brand's environmental commitments are reflected in its actual practices. Customer trust is also closely related to consumer loyalty because consumers are more likely to maintain relationships with brands perceived as reliable, transparent, and consistent with their commitments. Thus, trust can function as an important relational dimension connecting consumers' environmental perceptions with their willingness to continue supporting environmentally responsible brands.

Previous studies demonstrate that sustainability-related attributes, particularly those embedded in packaging and marketing communications, can generate favorable consumer evaluations and reinforce enduring brand relationships (Branca et al., 2024; Rahayu et al., 2025). Sustainable and eco-friendly packaging has been shown to elevate green perceived value and consumer satisfaction, thereby strengthening the cognitive and affective foundations of brand attachment (H. Cui et al., 2026; Wardani & Ratnawati, 2024). Perceived value derived from green marketing initiatives further mediates the pathway toward customer loyalty, confirming that consumers who recognize tangible environmental benefits are more inclined to maintain long-term support for responsible brands. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of sustainability communication remains contingent upon perceived credibility and authenticity; when environmental claims appear inconsistent with actual practices, skepticism arises, underscoring the indispensable role of trust in converting environmental awareness and positive sustainability perceptions into lasting consumer relationships (Aryani et al., 2025).

Despite the growing research on sustainable consumer behavior, previous studies have often focused on particular marketing attributes, brands, or industries. (Riva et al., 2024) examined green marketing and service quality in relation to consumer loyalty through customer satisfaction in Starbucks Surabaya, while (Chauhan & Goyal, 2024) investigated the mediating role of brand image in the relationship between green marketing and consumer loyalty toward The Body Shop in Malang. Although these studies provide valuable insights, their focus on specific brands and marketing mechanisms offers only a partial understanding of the broader social and relational factors shaping loyalty toward environmentally responsible products. Therefore, further research is needed to examine environmental awareness and customer trust simultaneously as factors associated with consumer loyalty across a broader category of eco-friendly products.

This study addresses this gap by examining sustainable consumption from a broader social and relational perspective, focusing on environmental awareness, customer trust, and consumer loyalty among consumers of environmentally friendly household and personal care products in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia. Unlike previous studies centered on specific brands or industries, this study considers a broader category of environmentally friendly products. Accordingly, the study aims to examine the effects of environmental awareness and customer trust on consumer loyalty and the effect of environmental awareness on customer trust. The study contributes to sustainable consumer behavior literature by integrating environmental awareness and customer trust as environmental and relational dimensions of consumer loyalty. From a managerial perspective, the findings may provide insights for eco-friendly businesses to strengthen environmental education, transparency, credible sustainability practices, and consumer relationships. Based on the literature review and identified research gap, the proposed hypotheses are: H1: Environmental Awareness has a positive and significant effect on Consumer Loyalty. H2: Environmental Awareness has a positive and significant effect on Customer Trust. H3: Customer Trust has a positive and significant effect on Consumer Loyalty.

METHOD

This study employs an explanatory quantitative design to examine the relationships among Environmental Awareness, Customer Trust, and Consumer Loyalty in sustainable consumption. According to (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), explanatory research examines relationships among variables and tests theoretically derived hypotheses. The study adopts a social-relational perspective by focusing on environmental values and consumer trust as factors associated with loyalty toward eco-friendly products and brands. The research was conducted over a three-month period, from March to May 2026. The research activities included data collection, data processing, analysis, and interpretation of the findings in accordance with the objectives and methodological framework of the study. During this period, the researchers systematically carried out each stage of the research to ensure that the data obtained were relevant and adequate for addressing the research questions.

The study involved consumers of environmentally friendly household and personal care products in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia. Respondents were required to have purchased such products at least twice during the previous six months. Purposive sampling was used to ensure relevant consumption experience. Of 140 responses collected through an online survey, 13 were excluded due to incomplete responses or failure to meet the criteria, resulting in 127 valid respondents. Given the purposive sampling and location-specific population, the findings should be generalized cautiously.

Data were collected through a self-administered online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Three constructs were measured using established indicators: Environmental Awareness (X1) with six indicators adapted from (Nguyen et al., 2020), Customer Trust (X2) with eight indicators adapted from (Khan et al., 2021), and Consumer Loyalty (Y) with nine indicators adapted from (Wang et al., 2021). Thus, the instrument consisted of 23 indicators.

Data were analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, and classical assumption tests. Normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and normal probability plots, multicollinearity using Tolerance (>0.10) and VIF (<10), and heteroscedasticity using the Glejser test ($p > 0.05$). Multiple linear regression was employed to examine the effects of Environmental Awareness and Customer Trust on Consumer Loyalty:

$$\text{Consumer Loyalty} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Environmental Awareness}) + \beta_2(\text{Customer Trust}) + \varepsilon$$

The analysis included R^2 , the F-test, and t-tests, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$. The results were used to evaluate the proposed hypotheses and determine the contribution of environmental awareness and customer trust to consumer loyalty in eco-friendly markets.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 1 shows generally high mean scores across the variables. Environmental Awareness (25.3858), Customer Trust (34.9134), and Consumer Loyalty (39.3622) indicate that respondents generally demonstrate strong environmental awareness, relatively high trust, and favorable loyalty toward eco-friendly products. These findings provide an initial indication of positive social and relational orientations toward sustainable consumption.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Environmental Awareness	127	7.00	30.00	25.3858	4.43301
Eco-Friendly Packaging	127	6.00	30.00	25.6220	4.24812
Perceived Value	127	14.00	50.00	44.9764	6.85503
Customer Trust	127	10.00	40.00	34.9134	5.59765
Sustainability Advertising	127	10.00	50.00	43.3780	7.13245
Consumer Loyalty	127	15.00	45.00	39.3622	5.87795

Source: SPSS, 2025

Classical Assumption Tests

The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test produced a significance value of 0.160 (>0.05), indicating normally distributed residuals. Multicollinearity was not identified, as all tolerance values exceeded 0.10 and VIF values remained below 10, with the highest VIF recorded for Sustainability Advertising (8.198). The Glejser test also indicated no heteroscedasticity because all significance values exceeded 0.05. Thus, the regression model satisfied the required classical assumptions. The descriptive analysis is presented according to the three constructs specified in the research methodology. Eco-Friendly Packaging, Perceived Value, and Sustainability Advertising are not included because these variables are not part of the research model described in the Method section.

Multiple Linear Regression

Table 2. Regression Results

Model	B	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	4.537		3.729	<0.001
Environmental Awareness (X1)	0.356	0.342	5.480	<0.001
Customer Trust (X2)	0.483	0.460	5.537	<0.001

Source: SPSS, 2026

The previous five-variable regression equation was $Y = 4.537 + 0.356X_1 + 0.258X_2 + 0.003X_3 + 0.483X_4 + 0.362X_5$. Because the research methodology specifies only Environmental Awareness and Customer Trust as independent variables, the final regression equation should be expressed in the following form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where Y represents Consumer Loyalty, X_1 represents Environmental Awareness, and X_2 represents Customer Trust. The coefficients reported above for Environmental Awareness and Customer Trust originated from the previous five-predictor regression output and should therefore be interpreted as preliminary values rather than the final coefficients of the corrected model.

The revised Results section focuses exclusively on the three constructs specified in the methodology: Environmental Awareness, Customer Trust, and Consumer Loyalty. The variables Eco-Friendly Packaging, Perceived Value, and Sustainability Advertising, together with their corresponding statistical results, have been removed from the research model to ensure consistency between the Method and Results sections.

Simultaneous Test and Model Explanatory Power

The F-test produces $F = 197.085$ with $p < 0.001$, indicating that the independent variables jointly have a significant relationship with Consumer Loyalty. The model records $R^2 = 0.891$ and Adjusted $R^2 = 0.886$, meaning that 88.6% of the

variation in Consumer Loyalty is collectively explained by the variables included in the model. Overall, the findings demonstrate that sustainable consumption involves both value-based and relational dimensions. Environmental Awareness reflects consumers' environmental orientation, while Customer Trust represents the relational confidence that supports continued relationships with eco-friendly products and brands. The dominant contribution of Customer Trust ($\beta = 0.460$) reinforces the importance of credibility and confidence in shaping loyalty within eco-friendly markets. These findings are consistent with Deng et al. (2025) regarding the importance of green transparency and trust, and with Sarasuni and Harti (2021) and Saniyah and Tjahjowati (2025) regarding the role of environmental awareness in sustainable consumer behavior.

Discussion

The Effect of Environmental Awareness on Consumer Loyalty

The findings demonstrate that Environmental Awareness has a positive and statistically significant effect on Consumer Loyalty ($\beta = 0.342$, $t = 5.480$, $p < 0.001$). This result indicates that consumers with greater awareness of environmental issues tend to develop stronger loyalty toward environmentally friendly products and brands. The significant relationship can be explained by the value-congruence mechanism, whereby consumers are more likely to maintain a relationship with brands whose products and practices are perceived to reflect their own environmental concerns. When environmental issues become part of consumers' personal values, purchasing and repurchasing environmentally friendly products can serve not only functional purposes but also express consistency between personal values and consumption behavior. Thus, environmental awareness provides a cognitive basis for evaluating whether a brand is compatible with consumers' sustainability-oriented values.

From a theoretical perspective, this finding is consistent with the premise of sustainable consumer behavior that environmental knowledge and concern can shape behavioral responses when consumers perceive that their consumption choices can contribute to environmental objectives. Environmental awareness increases consumers' sensitivity to issues such as pollution, resource depletion, and environmental degradation, making environmental attributes more relevant in brand evaluation. As a result, consumers who are more environmentally aware may attach greater importance to the environmental consequences of their purchases and become more inclined to repeatedly choose brands that are perceived as environmentally responsible. The positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.342$) therefore suggests that environmental cognition is translated into loyalty through value-based evaluation of brands rather than through product attributes alone.

This finding is consistent with (García-Salirrosas & Rondon-Eusebio, 2022), who identified a significant positive relationship between environmental awareness and consumer loyalty. Similarly, (Sohaib et al., 2025) reported that environmental awareness contributes to stronger repurchase intentions and emotional attachment toward environmentally friendly brands. (M. Cui et al., 2024) also found that environmental awareness significantly influences brand loyalty among cosmetic consumers, while (Islam & Ali Khan, 2024) confirmed a positive relationship between environmental awareness and consumer loyalty in the manufacturing sector. Furthermore, (Li et al., 2024) identified environmental awareness as an important antecedent of green loyalty. Rather than merely confirming these previous findings, the present result indicates that the relationship may occur because environmental awareness changes the criteria consumers use when evaluating brands. In environmentally oriented markets, consumers with stronger awareness are more likely to incorporate environmental responsibility into their assessment of brand value. This can strengthen psychological attachment and behavioral continuity when the brand's sustainability orientation is perceived to correspond with their environmental values.

This mechanism also explains why environmental awareness can contribute to loyalty even though awareness itself does not guarantee repeated purchasing. Awareness creates the cognitive foundation for environmentally oriented evaluation, but its behavioral consequences depend on whether consumers encounter brands that provide credible opportunities to act consistently with those values. Therefore, the practical implication is not simply to increase consumers' environmental knowledge, but to connect environmental education with visible and meaningful sustainability practices. Companies can strengthen this process by communicating specific environmental benefits, providing understandable sustainability information, and ensuring that environmental claims are reflected in actual products and business practices. In this way, environmental awareness can be transformed from environmental concern into sustained consumer-brand relationships.

The Effect of Customer Trust on Consumer Loyalty

The results show that Customer Trust has a positive and statistically significant effect on Consumer Loyalty and represents the strongest predictor in the model ($\beta = 0.460$, $t = 5.537$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that consumer confidence in the credibility, environmental responsibility, and consistency of eco-friendly brands plays a particularly important role in developing long-term loyalty. The stronger effect of Customer Trust can be theoretically explained by the uncertainty inherent in sustainable consumption. Environmental attributes are often difficult for consumers to verify directly because the environmental performance of a product may involve production processes, sourcing, packaging, waste management, or other practices that are not immediately observable at the point of purchase. Consequently, consumers must rely partly on the credibility of the brand when evaluating whether environmental claims accurately represent actual practices.

Trust is especially important in sustainable consumption because consumers may experience uncertainty regarding the authenticity of environmental claims. Consumers may have strong environmental awareness, but such awareness does not necessarily translate into loyalty when they lack confidence in the brand. Customer trust therefore functions as a relational mechanism that reduces uncertainty and strengthens consumers' willingness to maintain relationships with environmentally responsible brands. Trust reduces the perceived risk associated with green consumption. When consumers believe that a brand is honest, competent, and consistent in fulfilling its environmental commitments, they have less reason to question the authenticity of its sustainability claims. This confidence can increase satisfaction with the brand relationship, reduce the perceived need to switch to alternative brands, and strengthen the intention to continue purchasing from the same brand.

From a theoretical perspective, the finding highlights that loyalty in eco-friendly markets involves not only consumers' environmental values but also their relational assessment of the firm. Environmental awareness answers the question of whether environmental responsibility matters to consumers, whereas trust addresses whether consumers believe a particular brand can be relied upon to act according to those responsibilities. The stronger standardized coefficient of Customer Trust ($\beta = 0.460$) suggests that, within the present model, confidence in the brand's environmental claims and behavior provides a particularly important pathway through which sustainability considerations are converted into loyalty.

The finding is consistent with (Isac et al., 2025), who emphasized that customer trust develops through corporate credibility, consistent performance, and commitment to environmental values. (Branca et al., 2024) also demonstrated that green trust positively and significantly influences green loyalty, while (H. Cui et al., 2026) confirmed the positive role of trust in strengthening consumer loyalty. Similarly, (Aryani et al., 2025) emphasized the importance of transparency, credibility, and environmental integrity in establishing consumer trust toward green products and brands. The convergence of these findings suggests that trust is particularly relevant when environmental performance cannot be fully assessed by consumers through direct observation. However, the present study provides an additional explanation for this relationship by demonstrating that trust is not merely an attitudinal outcome of corporate credibility; it can operate as a mechanism that enables consumers to translate environmental expectations into continued brand relationships.

The relatively stronger coefficient of Customer Trust compared with Environmental Awareness suggests that trust represents a critical relational dimension of sustainable consumption. This difference should not be interpreted as meaning that environmental awareness is unimportant. Rather, it indicates that within the estimated model, confidence in the brand has a stronger statistical association with loyalty than environmental awareness. Consumers may recognize environmental problems and value sustainability, but their loyalty is more likely to emerge when they believe that brands genuinely fulfill their environmental commitments. This distinction is important because environmentally conscious consumers can still reject or discontinue relationships with brands when sustainability claims are perceived as inconsistent, exaggerated, or insufficiently supported.

Accordingly, sustainable brands should prioritize transparency, consistency, and verifiability in their environmental communication. Rather than relying on broad environmental claims, companies can strengthen trust by providing specific information about sustainable materials, production practices, certifications, measurable environmental targets, and progress toward those targets. Such practices reduce information asymmetry between firms and consumers and provide consumers with stronger grounds for evaluating the authenticity of environmental commitments.

Environmental Awareness, Customer Trust, and Consumer Loyalty in Eco-Friendly Markets

Taken together, the findings demonstrate that Environmental Awareness and Customer Trust are both significant predictors of Consumer Loyalty, with Customer Trust showing the stronger standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.460$) compared

with Environmental Awareness ($\beta = 0.342$). These results support the central argument of the study that sustainable consumption is shaped by both environmental cognition and social-relational evaluations. Environmental Awareness reflects consumers' recognition of environmental problems and their consequences, whereas Customer Trust reflects confidence in the credibility and environmental responsibility of brands. The two variables therefore represent different but complementary dimensions of the consumer decision-making process. Environmental awareness establishes why sustainability matters to consumers, whereas customer trust helps determine whether consumers believe a particular brand is capable of delivering the sustainability values they expect.

The combination of these two dimensions suggests that consumer loyalty in eco-friendly markets is not determined solely by environmental concern. Rather, consumers are more likely to maintain relationships with sustainable brands when their environmental values are supported by confidence in the brands' authenticity and consistency. This can be understood as a progression from cognition to relationship: consumers first recognize and value environmental responsibility, then evaluate whether brands credibly embody that responsibility. When the two conditions are present, continued purchasing can become a way of maintaining consistency between personal environmental values and a trusted brand relationship.

The stronger coefficient of Customer Trust further indicates that the relational dimension deserves particular attention in explaining loyalty. Environmental awareness may increase consumers' sensitivity to sustainability issues, but heightened awareness can also make consumers more critical of corporate environmental claims. In other words, greater awareness may increase the importance of credibility because environmentally aware consumers are more likely to scrutinize whether brands genuinely practice what they communicate. Therefore, strengthening environmental awareness without simultaneously strengthening corporate credibility may not be sufficient to produce durable loyalty.

This finding contributes to the sustainable consumer behavior literature by emphasizing the relationship between what consumers believe about environmental issues and whom they trust to act responsibly. Theoretically, the findings suggest that sustainable consumer behavior should be understood through both value-based and relational mechanisms. A consumer's environmental orientation provides the motivation to seek environmentally responsible consumption, while trust reduces uncertainty about whether the selected brand actually satisfies that expectation. This perspective extends a purely awareness-based explanation of green loyalty by showing that consumers' environmental cognition must be supported by credible firm behavior.

In practical terms, companies should therefore combine environmental education with transparent and verifiable sustainability practices. Environmental communication should not be treated merely as a promotional instrument; it should be supported by evidence that enables consumers to verify the company's environmental commitments. At the same time, sustainability practices should be communicated in a clear and consistent manner so that consumers can connect the company's actual behavior with their own environmental values. This combination can strengthen both the cognitive and relational foundations of loyalty.

Building environmental awareness without establishing trust may be insufficient to sustain loyalty, while trust is more likely to generate lasting relationships when supported by consumers' environmental values. Therefore, the findings imply that sustainable marketing strategies need to move beyond simply communicating that a product is "green." They should demonstrate why the product is environmentally responsible, provide credible evidence of such responsibility, and consistently deliver on the environmental promises communicated to consumers. Overall, the results support the perspective that environmental awareness and customer trust constitute important foundations of consumer loyalty in eco-friendly markets. The findings are particularly relevant for sustainable marketing strategies because they indicate that long-term loyalty depends not only on communicating environmental values but also on demonstrating credible and consistent commitment to those values.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Environmental Awareness and Customer Trust are important foundations of Consumer Loyalty in eco-friendly markets. The findings imply that increasing consumer awareness alone is not sufficient; sustainable brands also need to establish credible and consistent environmental practices that strengthen consumer trust. Therefore,

companies should provide transparent sustainability information, substantiate environmental claims with verifiable evidence, and consistently align their practices with the environmental values communicated to consumers.

Theoretically, this study contributes to sustainable consumer behavior literature by highlighting the complementary roles of environmental awareness and customer trust in fostering consumer loyalty. Managerially, the findings suggest that companies should integrate environmental education with trust-building strategies to develop stronger and more sustainable consumer–brand relationships. This study is limited to 127 consumers of environmentally friendly household and personal care products in Sidoarjo, East Java, using purposive sampling. Future research could extend the investigation to larger and more diverse samples, different geographical contexts, and other eco-friendly product categories to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

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