

## **From Sustainable Marketing to Green Satisfaction: Insights on the Roles of Green Branding in Saudi tourism and hospitality industry**

**Abrar Alhomaïd**

Department of Business Administration, College of Business and Economics,  
Qassim University, Buraidah, Saudi Arabia,  
E-mail: [Ab.alhomaïd@qu.edu.sa](mailto:Ab.alhomaïd@qu.edu.sa)

### **Abstract**

This research, grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), investigates how green brand mediates the relationship between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction within the rural tourism regions of Saudi Arabia. Using a quantitative methodology, data was gathered from tourists who had visited rural locations where sustainable marketing initiatives were in place. The analysis, conducted with structural equation modeling (SEM) on data from 874 participants, tested the proposed relationships. Results demonstrated that sustainable marketing positively influences both green satisfaction and green brand. Furthermore, the findings highlighted a strong positive effect of green brand on green satisfaction. Notably, the results revealed that the link between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction is significantly mediated by green brand. These insights are critical for tourism officials and marketers in Saudi Arabia, indicating that investing in green brand can enhance rural tourism by improving tourists' satisfaction with sustainable practices. This study contributes to the expanding literature on sustainable tourism and underscores the strategic value of green brand in promoting long-term sustainability in rural tourism destinations.

Keywords: Sustainable marketing, green brand, green satisfaction, innovation, sustainability, tourism, Saudi Arabia.

### **Introduction**

Sustainable marketing has become increasingly important in tourism and hospitality, driven by rising consumer demand for eco-friendly and responsible travel options. Businesses, particularly in rural areas, are adopting strategies that highlight environmental conservation and community involvement to appeal to eco-conscious travelers (Gheorghe *et al.*, 2023; Al-Romeedy, 2024a, b). Green branding plays a central role by aligning brands with sustainability principles, fostering customer loyalty and green satisfaction. Consumers often feel fulfilled supporting environmentally responsible brands and are willing to pay more for sustainable offerings. This approach enhances brand image, strengthens market positioning, and promotes innovation, ultimately driving responsible consumption, long-term business growth, and environmental stewardship (Gheorghe *et al.*, 2023; Yildiz *et al.*, 2023; Panda *et al.*, 2020).

Sustainable marketing boosts green satisfaction by aligning consumer values with environmentally conscious purchasing. By promoting eco-friendly products, ethical sourcing, and transparent practices, businesses cultivate trust among environmentally aware customers (Gelderman *et al.*, 2021). This trust fosters loyalty and satisfaction, as consumers feel their purchases support sustainability while fulfilling their needs. The emotional reward of contributing to environmental causes further enhances satisfaction, leading to repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth (Sivapalan *et al.*, 2021; Hossen *et al.*, 2024). Moreover, engaging consumers in sustainability initiatives, such as local projects or environmental education, deepens their sense of empowerment and commitment. In the long run, sustainable marketing not only increases consumer satisfaction but also fosters long-term dedication to sustainable lifestyles, driving a broader transition toward an eco-conscious market (Khalid *et al.*, 2019; Gupta & Daruwalla, 2024).

Sustainable marketing enhances green brand by aligning a brand's identity with environmentally conscious principles. By emphasizing environmental stewardship, ethical conduct, and social responsibility, companies establish credibility and trust among consumers looking for sustainable choices (Al-Romeedy & Hashem, 2024). Tactics like highlighting eco-friendly materials and carbon-neutral practices position brands as sustainability leaders, helping them stand out in a competitive market. This strategy fosters a loyal customer base with an emotional connection to brands that champion environmental and social initiatives. Sustainable marketing not only improves brand visibility and attractiveness but also drives long-term success through higher engagement, repeat business, and a solid reputation, contributing to a more sustainable future (Majeed *et al.*, 2022; Surface, 2023).

Green brand plays a crucial role in enhancing green satisfaction by aligning consumer environmental ideals with their purchasing behavior. When a brand sincerely conveys its dedication to sustainability, it creates a deep emotional bond with eco-minded consumers, resulting in a sense of fulfillment and confidence. This confidence reinforces consumer trust, as they feel assured that their purchases contribute to meaningful environmental initiatives (Majeed *et al.*, 2022; Jain *et al.*, 2024). As consumers view the brand's eco-friendly claims as trustworthy, their overall satisfaction grows, leading to increased repeat purchases and brand loyalty. In conclusion, green brand boosts green satisfaction by ensuring that consumer values are consistently mirrored in their brand interactions, cultivating enduring loyalty and strong, positive brand connections (Huo *et al.*, 2022; Papista & Dimitriadis, 2019).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that an individual's intention to engage in a behavior, like supporting sustainable tourism, is shaped by their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control over the behavior (Erul *et al.*, 2020). Sustainable marketing can influence these factors by promoting positive attitudes towards eco-

friendly tourism practices, highlighting the benefits and value of sustainability (Šagovnović & Stamenković, 2023; Limjaroenrat & Ramanust, 2023). When brands clearly communicate their green values and practices, they enhance their green brand, which leads to increased consumer satisfaction. This satisfaction stems from the alignment between the consumer's personal environmental values and the brand's sustainable efforts, encouraging repeat engagement and long-term support for the brand and the tourism sector (Ottman, 2017; Murray & Kline, 2015). Despite the global rise in interest towards sustainable tourism and green practices, there remains a notable research gap concerning these issues in the rural tourism regions of Saudi Arabia. Existing studies predominantly concentrate on urban areas, leaving the unique ecological and cultural attributes of rural destinations insufficiently examined. Particularly, the concept of "green satisfaction," where tourists experience fulfillment from eco-friendly practices, is not well-explored in these regions. Furthermore, there is limited insight into how sustainable marketing directly influences green satisfaction in rural tourism settings. The role of green brand as a mediator between sustainable marketing and customer satisfaction is also under-researched, emphasizing the need to recognize its strategic importance in advancing sustainable tourism in Saudi Arabia's rural areas. So, this study aims to address these gaps by investigating three key objectives: first, to assess the impact of sustainable marketing on both green satisfaction and green brand among tourists in Saudi Arabia's rural regions; second, to analyze the effect of green brand on green satisfaction; and third, to evaluate the mediating role of green brand in the relationship between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction.

## **Literature review and hypotheses development**

### **The effect of sustainable marketing on green satisfaction**

Sustainable marketing is a strategic approach that promotes products or services while prioritizing environmental, social, and economic sustainability, ensuring that present consumer needs are met without compromising the future (Belz & Peattie, 2012). Within this context, green satisfaction refers to the contentment consumers feel when their purchasing decisions align with environmental values, such as choosing eco-friendly or ethically produced products, contributing to ecological preservation and a sense of responsible consumption (Jalees *et al.*, 2021; Pestana, 2023). The impact of sustainable marketing on green satisfaction is a complex and pivotal aspect of consumer behavior in the eco-conscious market. Sustainable marketing involves strategies that promote products and services with minimal environmental impact and address social and ethical concerns. This approach aims to attract eco-conscious consumers and foster long-term relationships based on trust, transparency, and shared values (Surface, 2023). Sustainable marketing significantly raises consumer awareness about environmental issues and sustainable practices. By highlighting the benefits of eco-friendly products, ethical sourcing, and reduced carbon footprints, it empowers consumers to make informed and

responsible purchasing decisions. This increased awareness enhances the alignment between consumers' values and their behaviors, leading to greater green satisfaction as they feel more fulfilled with their eco-conscious choices (Mancuso *et al.*, 2021; Gaafar & Al-Romeedy, 2024).

Moreover, sustainable marketing helps build trust and credibility by addressing concerns about greenwashing. Transparent communication and verified sustainability claims strengthen consumer confidence, resulting in higher satisfaction, brand loyalty, repeat purchases, and positive word-of-mouth. Ultimately, sustainable marketing fosters a deeper connection between consumers and brands committed to authentic environmental responsibility (Qayyum *et al.*, 2023; Al-Adwan *et al.*, 2020). The emotional dimension of consumer behavior is vital in connecting sustainable marketing with green satisfaction. Sustainable marketing frequently taps into consumers' sense of pride and fulfillment, especially those who prioritize environmental stewardship. When consumers perceive their purchases as contributing to broader environmental goals, such as combating climate change or supporting local communities, their emotional bond with the brand intensifies, boosting their green satisfaction. Campaigns that leverage storytelling and resonate with consumers on an emotional level further enhance this satisfaction (Mogaji *et al.*, 2022). As well, sustainable marketing drives consumer behavior by promoting eco-friendly choices that align with personal values. When consumers are empowered to make sustainable decisions and experience tangible benefits, such as cost savings or health improvements, their green satisfaction rises, fostering long-term loyalty (Taufique, 2022; Thakkar, 2021). Hence, the following hypothesis is suggested:

*H1: Sustainable marketing positively affects green satisfaction.*

### **The effect of sustainable marketing on green brand**

A green brand is a brand that prioritizes environmental sustainability, ethical practices, and eco-friendly operations, appealing to consumers who value ecological responsibility (Sheykhani *et al.*, 2024). Sustainable marketing is essential in shaping green brand by embedding environmental, social, and ethical considerations into marketing strategies. This comprehensive approach enhances a brand's identity and reputation, establishing it as a leader in sustainability. By implementing practices such as eco-friendly packaging, responsible sourcing, and community involvement, sustainable marketing helps brands stand out in a competitive market, attracting consumers who are environmentally conscious. This differentiation fosters emotional bonds, loyalty, and brand recognition (Surface, 2023; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2021). Furthermore, sustainable marketing strengthens a brand's credibility by clearly demonstrating its commitment to ethical practices, such as reducing carbon emissions or using recycled materials. This transparency supports green brand and appeals to consumers who value responsible business practices (Nygaard, 2024; Al-Romeedy *et al.*, 2023).

Consumer trust, a cornerstone of green brand, is built through sustainable marketing by offering transparent information about a brand's environmental efforts. When brands effectively communicate their sustainability achievements and provide verifiable evidence, they foster trust and loyalty among eco-conscious consumers. These customers are more inclined to support brands that reflect their values and show genuine environmental responsibility (Iannuzzi, 2024). Sustainable marketing also shapes consumer perceptions by emphasizing the environmental benefits of a brand's products or services, thereby enhancing the brand's perceived value. This increased value drives consumer preference for green brands over less sustainable options, making them more appealing to those who prioritize environmental impact in their purchasing choices (Ottman, 2017).as well, the authenticity of green brand is closely tied to a brand's ability to substantiate its sustainability claims through effective marketing. Sustainable marketing involves not just promoting green initiatives but also providing credible evidence and transparency regarding environmental practices (Iannuzzi, 2024). This authenticity is critical for building trust and avoiding accusations of "greenwashing." For instance, a food company that markets its organic products with certifications and detailed information on sustainable sourcing enhances its credibility and green brand reputation (Ha *et al.*, 2022; Hengboriboon *et al.*, 2022). So, the following hypothesis is developed:

*H2: Sustainable marketing positively affects green brand.*

### **The effect of green brand on green satisfaction**

The impact of green brand on green satisfaction is profound, especially as consumer awareness of environmental issues increases and they seek products that align with their values (Ottman, 2017). Green brand involves positioning a brand as dedicated to environmental sustainability, ethical practices, and eco-friendly products. This approach significantly influences how consumers perceive, engage with, and feel satisfied by green products and services (Majeed *et al.*, 2022). A key effect of green brand is the establishment of trust and credibility. Brands that transparently communicate their sustainability efforts through practices and certifications build trust with consumers. When a brand is perceived as genuinely committed to its environmental promises, consumer satisfaction rises, leading to increased loyalty, repeat purchases, and positive word-of-mouth (Uikey & Baber, 2023).

Moreover, green brand fosters strong emotional connections. Eco-conscious consumers often value environmental stewardship and community support (Khoirala & Alfansi, 2024; Rajput *et al.*, 2024). Brands that effectively convey these values through compelling storytelling—such as showcasing efforts to minimize waste, support local communities, or conserve resources—evoke a sense of pride and fulfillment. This emotional bond enhances green satisfaction, as consumers feel their purchases make a positive contribution to society and the environment, reinforcing their identity as

responsible consumers (Hussain & Waheed, 2016; Rodriguez, 2023). Additionally, green brand shapes consumer expectations regarding product quality. Eco-friendly products are often associated with higher quality and ethical sourcing. When these products meet or exceed such expectations, satisfaction is heightened. Conversely, if they fall short, it can lead to disappointment. Therefore, maintaining high-quality standards is crucial for ensuring positive consumer experiences alongside green brand (Papista & Dimitriadis, 2019; Manguerra-Mahusay & Liu, 2024).

Green brand also encourages sustainable behaviors among consumers. By promoting eco-friendly practices and educating consumers about sustainable living, brands align their values with consumer behaviors, leading to greater fulfillment and satisfaction. For instance, a brand that not only offers sustainable products but also provides education on sustainable living can foster deeper customer satisfaction (Ottman, 2017; Majeed *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

*H3: Green brand positively affects green satisfaction.*

### **The mediating role of green brand in the link between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction**

The interaction between sustainable marketing, green brand, and green satisfaction plays a pivotal role in influencing consumer behavior within today's environmentally conscious market. Sustainable marketing encompasses strategies that highlight environmental and social responsibility, including the promotion of eco-friendly products and transparent practices. This approach helps brands forge initial connections with consumers who value sustainability (Ottman, 2017; Al-Romeedy & Ismail, 2023). Green brand builds upon this initial connection by crafting a brand identity focused on sustainability (Ottman, 2017). It acts as a mediator between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction by showcasing a brand's dedication to eco-friendliness through its visual elements, messaging, and storytelling. Consumers who recognize these sustainable attributes tend to associate the brand with positive environmental values, thereby enhancing their satisfaction (Lyeonov *et al.*, 2021; Martínez *et al.*, 2018; Lin & Zhou, 2022).

A crucial component of green brand is its role in fostering trust and credibility. Brands that are transparent about their sustainability objectives and progress are more likely to earn consumer trust. When consumers perceive a brand as genuinely committed to its sustainability promises, their satisfaction with the brand increases, leading to repeated patronage (Tran, 2023; Cho *et al.*, 2024). Moreover, green brand motivates consumers to adopt sustainable behaviors. Brands that actively engage in sustainability efforts, such as implementing recycling programs or providing advice on sustainable living, encourage consumers to align their own practices with these values. This congruence between brand values and consumer actions fosters a sense of fulfillment, further enhancing green satisfaction (Majeed *et al.*, 2022; Ottman, 2017). For sustainable

marketing to be truly effective, it must be seamlessly integrated into the core brand strategy. This comprehensive approach ensures that sustainability is evident across all brand interactions, from product development to customer service. Consistent demonstration of sustainability enhances the authenticity of green brand, making it more credible and appealing to consumers (Surface, 2023; Pittman *et al.*, 2022; Ishaq & Di Maria, 2020). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

*H4: Green brand mediates the relationship between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction.*

## **Methodology**

### **Participants and data collection**

The ease and affordability of obtaining responses from today's consumers through online surveys have made them a valuable tool for researchers exploring various topics (Sue & Ritter, 2012). This study focuses on sustainable marketing, green brands, and green satisfaction, which are closely linked to consumer perceptions and behaviors. Online surveys were chosen as the data collection method because they efficiently reach a wide audience, enabling the capture of diverse opinions and insights. This approach aligns well with the study's goal of understanding consumer attitudes toward sustainability and eco-friendly practices in marketing (Rhim *et al.*, 2022). Consistent with the approach of Al-Romeedy and Zaki (2024), participants were conveniently recruited from travel-related groups on major social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and LinkedIn. These platforms were chosen for their extensive user base and relevance to the tourism and hospitality industry. Convenience sampling was utilized to effectively engage the target audience and enhance the chances of securing their consent to participate in the study.

The study targeted tourists visiting rural destinations in Saudi Arabia. Data was gathered using a questionnaire focused on sustainable marketing, green brand, and green satisfaction. The study covered various natural and rural areas, including Taif, Al-Baha, Asir, Al-Jouf, and Al-Ahsa. The electronic questionnaire was distributed via multiple social networking platforms from April 2024 to July 2024. This four-month data collection period ensured a substantial sample size and encompassed a broad spectrum of experiences. Participants were given detailed information about the study's objectives and assurances regarding the confidentiality of their personal data, ensuring they provided informed consent. They were also informed about the key concepts of sustainable marketing, green brand, and green satisfaction to ensure they fully understood the study's focus and the terminology used. This approach aimed to enhance participants' comprehension of the study's aims and the concepts being explored. Each participant in the survey was first presented with a screening question designed to determine whether

they had previously visited a tourist destination in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Participants responded with either "yes" or "no." Those who answered "yes" were directed to complete the full survey, while those who answered "no" were thanked for their time, their responses were recorded, and they were excluded from further participation. Only participants who answered "yes" to the screening question were considered eligible for inclusion in the study.

The study invitation was disseminated through relevant group pages, including Traveller Experience, TravellerAdvisor, and Travel Secrets Club. Additionally, targeted outreach was conducted through direct messages and advertisements, reaching a total of 2,321 individuals. Of these, 1,447 respondents answered negatively to the screening question and were excluded from further analysis. The remaining 874 responses, which came from participants who had visited rural areas in Saudi Arabia, were validated and included in the subsequent analysis.

### **Measures**

The study employed a structured questionnaire as its primary data collection instrument, which was divided into four distinct sections. *Sustainable Marketing*: This section consisted of 12 items adapted from Jung *et al.* (2020). Examples of items included statements such as "Environmentally friendly materials used" and "Company makes a lot of effort for technological innovation". *Green Brand*: Evaluated through 5 items derived from Cretu and Brodie (2007). Sample items included "The brand is regarded as the best benchmark of environmental commitments" and "The brand is trustworthy about environmental promises". *Green Satisfaction*: This section was assessed with 4 items adapted from Chen (2010). Examples included "You are happy about the decision to choose this brand because of its environmental commitments" and "You believe that it is the right thing to purchase this brand because of its environmental performance." Respondents rated these items using a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 indicated "strongly agree" and 1 indicated "strongly disagree". *Demographic Profile*: The final section collected information about participants' demographic characteristics.

### **Common method biases**

Before diving into deeper statistical analysis, the study first addressed the potential issue of Common Method Variance (CMV). CMV can distort relationships between variables, particularly in studies using cross-sectional methods like concurrent surveys. To evaluate CMV, this research utilized two approaches: the Harman's single factor test and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) (Zaki & Al-Romeedy, 2024). The results revealed that no single factor accounted for over 50% of the total variance, suggesting that CMV was not a significant issue for this study.

### **Data analysis**

The study employed the Smart PLS approach in conjunction with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for its data analysis, driven by several key considerations.



SmartPLS, as part of the SEM framework, is well-suited for examining complex interrelationships among variables and testing theoretical models. It excels in exploring causal relationships and is particularly effective for predictive purposes and scenarios involving emerging theories or unclear model structures. Unlike traditional SEM, which requires larger sample sizes and adherence to multivariate normality, PLS-SEM accommodates smaller samples and non-normally distributed data, making it ideal for resource-constrained environments and challenging data collection situations. Moreover, PLS-SEM effectively handles multicollinearity issues often encountered in traditional regression and covariance-based SEM models. It supports a range of analyses, including measurement model evaluation, structural model assessment, and hypothesis testing through path and mediation analysis (Alnasser *et al.*, 2024; Alshiha *et al.*, 2024).

**Results**

**Demographic profile**

According to Table (1), more than half of the sample were males (62%), while females were 38%. The age group between 30 and less than 40 years was the highest (39.6%), followed by the age group from 40 to less than 50 years (34.1%), then the age group 50 years and above (13.8%), and the age group less than 30 years (12.5%). As for the educational level, more than two-thirds of the sample held a bachelor’s degree (66.8%), and 24.4% held qualifications less than a bachelor’s degree, while 8.8% held postgraduate qualifications. Finally, with regard to nationality, more than two-thirds of the study sample were Saudis (68.4%), 21.6% were of Arab nationalities, and 10% were of other nationalities.

Table (1) Demographics of respondents

Measure	Item	Frequencies	%
Gender	Male	542	62%
	Female	332	38%
Age	Under 30 years	109	12.5%
	From 30 to less than 40 years	346	39.6%
	From 40 to less than 50 years	298	34.1%
	50 years and more	121	13.8%
Educational level	Less than bachelor	213	24.4%
	Bachelor	584	66.8%
	Postgraduate	77	8.8%
Nationality	Saudi nationality	598	68.4%
	Arab nationality	189	21.6%
	Foreign nationality	87	10%
Total		874	100%

**Measurement model**

Table (2) shows that all item loadings in the final measurement model were above 0.50, confirming internal consistency (Hair *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, Cronbach's alpha

exceeded 0.70, satisfying Nunnally's minimum reliability standard (1978). Regarding convergent validity, all Composite Reliability (CR) values surpassed the 0.80 benchmark, and all Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were above 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). These results confirm that the measurement model exhibits sufficient reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Further, before evaluating the complete measurement model with the full sample (N = 874), the fit and validity of each construct were assessed. The goodness-of-fit statistics were as follows: CMIN/DF = 1.332, GFI = 0.970, CFI = 0.962, IFI = 0.956, NFI = 0.959, TLI = 0.947, and RMSEA = 0.014. These indices indicated a strong fit between the model and the data (Hair *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, Table (2) demonstrates that the reliability of each variable ranged from 0.787 to 0.884, all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. All factor loadings were found to be statistically significant, ranging from 0.776 to 0.894. Each construct's average variance extracted (AVE) exceeded 0.60, surpassing the threshold needed for convergent validity, and all item loadings were above 0.5. Additionally, the square roots of the AVE for all constructs were greater than their highest correlations with other variables, as shown in Table 3. This confirms that both convergent and discriminant validity were satisfactory, in accordance with Hair *et al.* (2021) guidelines.

Table (2) Measurement model

Construct	Factor loading	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
<b>Sustainable marketing (SM)</b>		0.884	0.964	0.694
SM1	0.887			
SM2	0.834			
SM3	0.881			
SM4	0.862			
SM5	0.798			
SM6	0.804			
SM7	0.872			
SM8	0.812			
SM9	0.844			
SM10	0.776			
SM11	0.806			
SM12	0.819			
<b>Green satisfaction (GS)</b>		0.787	0.904	0.703
GS1	0.834			
GS2	0.894			
GS3	0.802			
GS4	0.822			
<b>Green brand (GB)</b>		0.790	0.920	0.698
GB1	0.799			
GB2	0.856			
GB3	0.829			
GB4	0.874			
GB5	0.818			

Table (3) Discriminant validity

Construct	Sustainable marketing	Green satisfaction	Green brand
Sustainable marketing	(0.833)		
Green satisfaction	0.632	(0.838)	
Green brand	0.665	0.591	(0.835)

**Structural model**

Table (4) was employed to examine the influence of sustainable marketing on green satisfaction and green brand, and to assess the mediating effect of green brand on the relationship between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction. The analysis was conducted using path coefficient analysis ( $\beta$ ), standard error (S.E.), critical ratio (C.R.), and p-values. The results showed that sustainable marketing has a significant and positive impact on smart destinations ( $\beta= 0.588$ , p-value= 0.000), confirming H1. Additionally, sustainable marketing also significantly and positively influences green brand ( $\beta= 0.631$ , p-value= 0.000), thereby confirming H2. The findings also demonstrated a significant and positive impact of green brand on green satisfaction ( $\beta= 0.401$ , p-value= 0.000), validating H3. Furthermore, mediation analysis revealed that green brand partially mediates the relationship between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction ( $\beta= 0.317$ , p-value= 0.000). Partially mediates means that the green brand acts as a connecting factor that explains part, but not all, of the relationship between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction. This suggests that while sustainable marketing directly influences green satisfaction, a portion of its effect is also channeled through the green brand. Thus, confirming H4.

Table (4) Direct and indirect effects

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R	P Value	Result
H1: Sustainable marketing → Green satisfaction	0.588	0.072	8.166	0.000	Confirmed
H2: Sustainable marketing → Green brand	0.431	0.068	6.352	0.000	Confirmed
H3: Green brand → Green satisfaction	0.401	0.069	5.811	0.000	Confirmed
<i>Mediation effect</i>					
H4: Sustainable marketing → Green brand → Green satisfaction	0.317	0.073	4.342	0.000	Confirmed

**Discussion**

This study aimed to examine how sustainable marketing affects green satisfaction, with green brand serving as a mediating factor. The results underscored a significant and positive impact of sustainable marketing on green satisfaction. This aligns with the findings of Surface (2023) and Taufique (2022), who asserted that sustainable marketing enhances green satisfaction by increasing consumer awareness of environmental issues and aligning with their personal values. By educating consumers about eco-friendly

practices and maintaining transparency regarding sustainability efforts, brands build alignment and trust. This connection results in higher consumer satisfaction, as customers feel well-informed, empowered, and emotionally aligned with brands that embody their environmental and ethical principles. Furthermore, Garanti *et al.* (2024) and Han (2021) emphasized that sustainable marketing not only improves satisfaction but also fosters long-term loyalty and advocacy, particularly among eco-conscious travelers in specialized markets.

The findings also demonstrated that sustainable marketing has a significant and positive influence on green brand. Majeed *et al.* (2022) noted that sustainable marketing contributes to green brand by enabling companies to build an authentic and credible green identity. By consistently showcasing their commitment to sustainability, brands can effectively engage with environmentally conscious consumers, thereby cultivating trust and loyalty. Additionally, Sheth and Parvatiyar (2021) and Fatma and Khan (2023) highlighted that sustainable marketing helps brands stand out in a competitive market by emphasizing unique sustainability efforts. This differentiation not only enhances brand equity but also improves consumer perception. Aligning with consumer values strengthens the brand's position, making it more adaptable to market fluctuations and supporting long-term success through heightened consumer trust and advocacy.

The study also found that green brand significantly and positively affects green satisfaction. Majeed *et al.* (2022) asserted that green brand enhances green satisfaction by aligning a brand's identity with the environmental values of consumers, thereby increasing the perceived quality and value of its products or services. Zhang *et al.* (2020) further emphasized that consumer satisfaction is higher when a brand's commitment to sustainability is perceived as genuine and consistent, as this fosters trust and emotional connections with the brand. Errichiello and Zschiesche (2022) added that green brand reduces cognitive dissonance, allowing consumers to make choices that align with their values, which contributes to a more satisfying brand experience. This alignment and trust not only enhance immediate satisfaction but also encourage long-term loyalty, as consumers feel their purchases are positively impacting the environment.

Significantly, the findings revealed that green brand partially mediates the relationship between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction. This means that while sustainable marketing directly enhances green satisfaction, green brand amplifies this effect by aligning the brand's identity with consumers' environmental values. However, green brand alone does not account for the entire impact, indicating that other aspects of sustainable marketing also contribute to consumer satisfaction.

### **Theoretical and practical implications**

The study extends the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by exploring its application to sustainable marketing, green brands, and green satisfaction in Saudi rural tourism. It demonstrates that sustainable marketing not only fosters favorable attitudes

toward eco-friendly practices but also enhances consumer green satisfaction by deepening emotional and psychological investment. By building strong green brand identities through credible and effective communication, sustainable marketing aligns with consumer values, boosting satisfaction, loyalty, and behavioral intentions. The research underscores the mediating role of green brands in translating sustainable marketing efforts into tangible outcomes, emphasizing their pivotal role in sustaining rural tourism and amplifying the impact of sustainable marketing on consumer engagement and support for environmental stewardship.

The study underscores the critical role of sustainable marketing and green branding in enhancing green satisfaction, particularly within Saudi rural tourism. It provides practical guidance for stakeholders to integrate sustainability into their strategies to attract eco-conscious travelers, boost satisfaction, and ensure long-term competitiveness. Tourism operators are encouraged to adopt practices like renewable energy, waste reduction, and cultural preservation, embedding these initiatives into their marketing strategies and brand messaging. By promoting their efforts through social media, websites, and marketing materials, businesses can strengthen their green brand identity, increasing customer loyalty and repeat visits. Marketers are advised to ensure that green brands are transparent, credible, and reflective of their commitment to sustainability. Initiatives such as obtaining third-party certifications, partnering with environmental organizations, and clearly communicating sustainability achievements can build trust and satisfaction among tourists. Policymakers can support these efforts by providing incentives, setting sustainability standards, and showcasing green brands at events, fostering consistent and credible messaging across the sector. Local communities also play a vital role by offering authentic cultural experiences and eco-friendly services that reinforce the region's green brand identity. Ultimately, the study highlights how aligning sustainable marketing with green branding can position Saudi rural tourism regions as leaders in sustainable tourism, preserving natural and cultural heritage while fostering economic growth and customer loyalty.

### **Limitations and future research**

The study acknowledges several limitations that should be addressed in future research to enhance the validity and relevance of the findings in this dynamic field. One key limitation is its focus on Saudi rural tourism regions, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to other geographical areas or types of tourism destinations. The distinctive socio-cultural and economic conditions of Saudi Arabia, along with the particular characteristics of rural tourism, may not reflect the experiences of urban or international tourism settings. Future research could broaden the scope by incorporating a variety of regions or countries to assess the applicability of the findings in different contexts. Comparative studies could offer valuable insights into how sustainable marketing and green brand influence green satisfaction across various tourism

environments. Moreover, the study did not account for all context-specific variables that might affect the success of sustainable marketing and green brand. Factors such as local economic conditions, cultural attitudes towards sustainability, and the presence of green infrastructure can all influence outcomes. Future research should delve into these contextual variables and examine how they impact the relationship between sustainable marketing, green brand, and green satisfaction. Similarly, while the study highlights the mediating role of green brand, other potential mediators or moderators might also affect the relationship between sustainable marketing and green satisfaction. For example, factors such as customer loyalty, the perceived value of green practices, and the influence of personal values on satisfaction could also play significant roles. Future research should explore these additional variables to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics involved.

## **References**

- Al-Adwan, A., Kokash, H., Adwan, A., Alhorani, A., & Yaseen, H. (2020). Building customer loyalty in online shopping: the role of online trust, online satisfaction and electronic word of mouth. *International Journal of Electronic Marketing and Retailing*, 11(3), 278-306.
- Alnasser, E., Alkhozaim, S., Alshiha, A., & Al-Romeedy, B. (2024). The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Marketing Performance of Tourism and Hospitality Businesses: The Mediating Role of Marketing Innovation. In V. Nadda, P. Tyagi, A. Singh, & V. Singh (Eds.), *AI Innovations in Service and Tourism Marketing* (pp. 375-396). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-7909-7>.
- Al-Romeedy, B. S. (2024a). Tomorrow's Travel Companion: The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Shaping the Future of Tourism. In T. Hashem, A. Albattat, M. Valeri, & A. Sharma (Eds.), *Marketing and Big Data Analytics in Tourism and Events* (pp. 162-182). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3310-5.ch010>
- Al-Romeedy, B. S. (2024b). Unlocking the Power of Data: Exploring the Dynamic Role of MKIS in Revolutionizing Tourism Marketing. In T. Hashem, A. Albattat, M. Valeri, & A. Sharma (Eds.), *Marketing and Big Data Analytics in Tourism and Events* (pp. 183-204). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3310-5.ch011>
- Al-Romeedy, B., & Hashem, T. (2024). From Insight to Advantage: Harnessing the Potential of Marketing Intelligence Systems in Tourism. In T. Hashem, A. Albattat, M. Valeri, & A. Sharma (Eds.), *Marketing and Big Data Analytics in Tourism and Events* (pp. 80-98). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3310-5.ch005>
- Al-Romeedy, B., & Ismail, M. (2023). Evaluating the use of hidden marketing techniques in airlines from the customers' perspective. *Journal of the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels - University of Sadat City*, 7(1/1), 1-24.

- Al-Romeedy, B., & Zaki, H. (2024). How celebrity-endorsed travel livestreaming triggers impulsive buying? the role of trust and positive emotions. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13567667241268667>
- Al-Romeedy, B., Ismail, M., & Al-Asraj, A. (2023). The impact of holistic marketing on the marketing flexibility of airlines: A case study of EgyptAir. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Heritage*, 6(1), 51-71.
- Alshiha, A., Alkhozaim, S., Alnasser, E., & Al-Romeedy, B. (2024). Beyond the Storm: Harnessing AI for Effective Tourism Crisis Management. In *Impact of AI and Tech-Driven Solutions in Hospitality and Tourism*, IGI.
- Belz, F. M., & Peattie, K. (2012). *Sustainability marketing: A global perspective*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Cho, H., Jo, D., & Kim, H. (2024). Understanding Consumer Perception towards Sustainable Apparel: A Parallel Mediation Analysis on Satisfaction and Trust. *Sustainability*, 16(16), 6835.
- Errichiello, O., & Zschiesche, A. (2022). *Green Brand*. Springer.
- Erul, E., Woosnam, K., & McIntosh, W. (2020). Considering emotional solidarity and the theory of planned behavior in explaining behavioral intentions to support tourism development. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 28(8), 1158-1173.
- Fatma, M., & Khan, I. (2023). Corporate social responsibility and brand advocacy among consumers: The mediating role of brand trust. *Sustainability*, 15(3), 2777.
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of marketing research*, 18(1), 39-50.
- Gaafar, H. A. & Al-Romeedy, B. S. (2024). Data Fusion for Destination Success: Exploring the Integration of MKIS and BDA in Marketing Touristic Destinations. In T. Hashem, A. Albattat, M. Valeri, & A. Sharma (Eds.), *Marketing and Big Data Analytics in Tourism and Events* (pp. 38-60). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3310-5.ch003>
- Gaafar, H., & Al-Romeedy, B. (2024). Bridging the Digital Divide: Unleashing the Power of Big Data Analytics for Touristic Destination Promotion. In T. Hashem, A. Albattat, M. Valeri, & A. Sharma (Eds.), *Marketing and Big Data Analytics in Tourism and Events* (pp. 17-37). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3310-5.ch002>
- Garanti, Z., Ilkhanizadeh, S., & Liasidou, S. (2024). Sustainable Place Brand and Visitors' Responses: A Systematic Literature Review. *Sustainability*, 16(8), 3312.
- Gelderman, C. J., Schijns, J., Lambrechts, W., & Vijgen, S. (2021). Green marketing as an environmental practice: The impact on green satisfaction and green loyalty in a business- to- business context. *Business strategy and the environment*, 30(4), 2061-2076.

- Gheorghe, G., Tudorache, P., & Roşca, I. (2023). The contribution of green marketing in the development of a sustainable destination through advanced clustering methods. *Sustainability*, *15*(18), 13691.
- Gupta, M., & Daruwalla, M. (2024). Examining The Effectiveness Of Green Marketing Communication On Consumer Behavior Towards Sustainable Purchases. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, *30*(5), 6861-6868.
- Ha, M., Ngan, V., & Nguyen, P. (2022). Greenwash and green brand equity: The mediating role of green brand image, green satisfaction and green trust and the moderating role of information and knowledge. *Business Ethics, the Environment & Responsibility*, *31*(4), 904-922.
- Hair Jr., Hult, G., Ringle, C., & Sarstedt, M. (2021). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)*. Sage publications.
- Han, H. (2021). *Sustainable Consumer Behaviour and the Environment*. Routledge.
- Hengboriboon, L., Naruetharadol, P., Ketkeaw, C., & Gebsoombut, N. (2022). The impact of product image, CSR and green marketing in organic food purchase intention: Mediation roles of corporate reputation. *Cogent Business & Management*, *9*(1), 2140744.
- Hossen, S., Mridha, Y., Rahman, A., Ouboucetta, R., & Amin, M. (2024). Consumer Perceptions And Purchasing Trends Of Eco-Friendly Textile Products In The US Market. *International Journal of Business and Economics*, *1*(2), 20-32.
- Huang, C., & Guo, R. (2021). The effect of a green brand story on perceived brand authenticity and brand trust: the role of narrative rhetoric. *Journal of Brand Management*, *28*, 60-76.
- Huo, C., Hameed, J., Zhang, M., Bin Mohd Ali, A., & Nik Hashim, N. (2022). Modeling the impact of corporate social responsibility on sustainable purchase intentions: insights into brand trust and brand loyalty. *Economic research-Ekonomska istraživanja*, *35*(1), 4710-4739.
- Hussain, K., & Waheed, A. (2016). Building green brand relations: The role of green brand image as significant driver. *International Journal of Environment, Workplace and Employment*, *4*(2), 116-138.
- Iannuzzi, A. (2024). *Greener products: The making and marketing of sustainable brands*. CRC press.
- Ishaq, M., & Di Maria, E. (2020). Sustainability countenance in brand equity: a critical review and future research directions. *Journal of Brand Management*, *27*(1), 15-34.
- Jain, S., Basu, S., & Dwivedi, Y. (2024). Green brand identity and B2B channel partners' tactical green marketing orientation: Moderating effect of brand governance. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *119*, 218-237.
- Jalees, T., Qabool, S., Zaman, S. I., & Alam Kazmi, S. H. (2021). Effect of spirituality and ethics on green advertising, and the multi-mediating roles of green buying and green satisfaction. *Cogent Business & Management*, *8*(1), 1920559.



- Khalid, S., Ahmad, M., Ramayah, T., Hwang, J., & Kim, I. (2019). Community empowerment and sustainable tourism development: The mediating role of community support for tourism. *Sustainability*, *11*(22), 6248.
- Khoirala, C. M., & Alfansi, L. (2024). Green Euphoria: Unraveling the Power of Sustainable Brands-Examining the Nexus of Green Brand Image, Authenticity, and Emotional Well-being with the Mediating Force of Green Brand Attachment. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business*, *5*(1), 28-42.
- Limjaroenrat, V., & Ramanust, S. (2023). Green Marketing Tools and Consumer Behavior: Exploring the Influence of Eco-Brands and Environmental Advertising on Purchasing Decisions. *Journal of Energy and Environmental Policy Options*, *6*(4), 33-42.
- Lin, J., & Zhou, Z. (2022). The positioning of green brands in enhancing their image: the mediating roles of green brand innovativeness and green perceived value. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, *17*(6), 1404-1424.
- Lyeonov, S., Pimonenko, T., Chygryn, O., Reznik, O., & Gaynulina, R. (2021). Green brand as a marketing instrument: Principle, features and parameters. *International Journal of Global Energy Issues*, *43*(2-3), 147-165.
- Majeed, M., Aslam, S., Murtaza, S., Attila, S., & Molnár, E. (2022). Green marketing approaches and their impact on green purchase intentions: Mediating role of green brand image and consumer beliefs towards the environment. *Sustainability*, *14*(18), 11703.
- Mancuso, I., Natalicchio, A., Panniello, U., & Roma, P. (2021). Understanding the purchasing behavior of consumers in response to sustainable marketing practices: An empirical analysis in the food domain. *Sustainability*, *13*(11), 6169.
- Manguerra-Mahusay, S., & Liu, G. (2024). Consumer Perceptions on Food Production Companies' Brand Strategy and Customer Experience Alignment. *Social Science and Humanities Journal (SSHJ)*, *8*(07), 4371-4399.
- Martínez, P., Herrero, A., & Gómez, R. (2018). Customer responses to environmentally certified hotels: The moderating effect of environmental consciousness on the formation of behavioral intentions. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *26*(7), 1160-1177.
- Mogaji, E., Adeola, O., Adisa, I., Hinson, R., Mukonza, C., & Kirgiz, A. (2022). *Green marketing in emerging economies: A communications perspective*. Springer Nature.
- Murray, A., & Kline, C. (2015). Rural tourism and the craft beer experience: Factors influencing brand loyalty in rural North Carolina, USA. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *23*(8-9), 1198-1216.
- Nunnally, J. (1978). An overview of psychological measurement. *Clinical diagnosis of mental disorders*, 97-146.
- Nygaard, A. (2024). Green Promotion and Marketing Communication. In *Green Marketing and Entrepreneurship* (pp. 63-81). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Ottman, J. (2017). *The new rules of green marketing: Strategies, tools, and inspiration for sustainable brand*. Routledge.

- Panda, T., Kumar, A., Jakhar, S., Luthra, S., Garza-Reyes, J., Kazancoglu, I., & Nayak, S. (2020). Social and environmental sustainability model on consumers' altruism, green purchase intention, green brand loyalty and evangelism. *Journal of Cleaner production*, 243, 118575.
- Papista, E., & Dimitriadis, S. (2019). Consumer–green brand relationships: revisiting benefits, relationship quality and outcomes. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 28(2), 166-187.
- Pestana, M. L. (2023). *The Mediating Role of Green Knowledge in the Relationship between Consumer's Life Values, Income and Green Purchase Decision* (Master's thesis, Universidade Catolica Portuguesa (Portugal)).
- Pittman, M., Oeldorf-Hirsch, A., & Brannan, A. (2022). Green advertising on social media: Brand authenticity mediates the effect of different appeals on purchase intent and digital engagement. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 43(1), 106-121.
- Qayyum, A., Jamil, R., & Sehar, A. (2023). Impact of green marketing, greenwashing and green confusion on green brand equity. *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC*, 27(3), 286-305.
- Rajput, A., Suryavanshi, K., Thapa, S. B., Gahlot, P., & Gandhi, A. (2024, January). The Impact of Social Media Influencers on Ecoconscious Consumers. In *2024 ASU International Conference in Emerging Technologies for Sustainability and Intelligent Systems (ICETISIS)* (pp. 1-6). IEEE.
- Rhim, J., Kwak, M., Gong, Y., & Gweon, G. (2022). Application of humanization to survey chatbots: Change in chatbot perception, interaction experience, and survey data quality. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 126, 107034.
- Rodriguez, M. (2023). *Brand storytelling: Put customers at the heart of your brand story*. Kogan Page Publishers.
- Šagovnović, I., & Stamenković, I. (2023). Investigating values of green marketing tools in predicting tourists' eco-friendly attitudes and behavior. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 22(4), 479-501.
- Sheth, J., & Parvatiyar, A. (2021). Sustainable marketing: Market-driving, not market-driven. *Journal of macromarketing*, 41(1), 150-165.
- Sheykhani, S., Boozary, P., GhorbanTanhaei, H., Behzadi, S., Rahmani, F., & Rabiee, M. (2024). Creating a fuzzy DEMATEL-ISM-MICMAC-fuzzy BWM model for the organization's sustainable competitive advantage, incorporating green marketing, social responsibility, brand equity and green brand image. *Sustainable Futures*, 8, 100280.
- Sivapalan, A., von der Heide, T., Scherrer, P., & Sorwar, G. (2021). A consumer values-based approach to enhancing green consumption. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 28, 699-715.
- Sue, V., & Ritter, L. (2012). *Conducting online surveys*. Sage.

- Surface, D. (2023). *Essays in Green Marketing: Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies, Competitive Advantages and Consumer Discernment* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts Lowell).
- Taufique, K. (2022). Integrating environmental values and emotion in green marketing communications inducing sustainable consumer behaviour. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 28(3), 272-290.
- Thakkar, R. (2021). Green marketing and sustainable development challenges and opportunities. *International Journal of Management, Public Policy and Research*, 1(1), 15-23.
- Tran, N. (2023). Enhancing green brand equity through environmental reputation: The important of green brand image, green brand trust, and green brand loyalty. *Business Strategy & Development*, 6(4), 1006-1017.
- Uikey, A., & Baber, R. (2023). Exploring the Factors that Foster Green Brand Loyalty: The Role of Green Transparency, Green Perceived Value, Green Brand Trust and Self-Brand Connection. *Journal of Content, Community & Communication*, 17, 155-170.
- Yildiz, H., Tahali, S., & Trichina, E. (2023). The adoption of the green label by SMEs in the hotel sector: a leverage for reassuring their customers. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEIM-03-2023-0160>
- Zaki, H., & Al-Romeedy, B. (2024). Chatbot symbolic recovery and customer forgiveness: A moderated mediation model. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 15(4), 610-628.
- Zhang, S., Peng, M., Peng, Y., Zhang, Y., Ren, G., & Chen, C. (2020). Expressive brand relationship, brand love, and brand loyalty for tablet pcs: Building a sustainable brand. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11, 231.

## من التسويق المستدام إلى الرضا الأخضر: رؤى حول أدوار العلامات التجارية الخضراء في صناعة السياحة والضيافة السعودية أبرار الحميد

قسم ادارة الأعمال، كلية الأعمال و الاقتصاد ، جامعة القصيم

E-mail: [Ab.alhomaidd@qu.edu.sa](mailto:Ab.alhomaidd@qu.edu.sa)

### المخلص

يقوم هذا البحث، الذي يستند إلى نظرية السلوك المخطط، باستكشاف كيفية توسط العلامة التجارية الخضراء للعلاقة بين التسويق المستدام والرضا الأخضر داخل مناطق السياحة الريفية في المملكة العربية السعودية. باستخدام منهجية كمية، تم جمع البيانات من السياح الذين زاروا المواقع الريفية التي تُطبق مبادرات التسويق المستدامة. تم اختبار العلاقات المقترحة من خلال التحليل الذي

أجري باستخدام نمذجة المعادلات البنوية (SEM) على بيانات من 874 مشاركًا. أظهرت النتائج أن التسويق المستدام يؤثر بشكل إيجابي على كل من الرضا الأخضر والعلامة التجارية الخضراء. وعلاوة على ذلك، سلطت النتائج الضوء على التأثير الإيجابي القوي للعلامة التجارية الخضراء على الرضا الأخضر. والجدير بالذكر أن النتائج كشفت أن الارتباط بين التسويق المستدام والرضا الأخضر يتوسطه بشكل كبير العلامة التجارية الخضراء. هذه الرؤى بالغة الأهمية لمسؤولي السياحة والمسوقين في المملكة العربية السعودية، مما يشير إلى أن الاستثمار في العلامة التجارية الخضراء يمكن أن يعزز السياحة الريفية من خلال تحسين رضا السياح عن الممارسات المستدامة. تساهم هذه الدراسة في توسيع نطاق الأدبيات حول السياحة المستدامة وتؤكد على القيمة الاستراتيجية للعلامة التجارية الخضراء في تعزيز الاستدامة طويلة الأجل في وجهات السياحة الريفية. الكلمات المفتاحية: التسويق المستدام، العلامة التجارية الخضراء، الرضا الأخضر، الابتكار، الاستدامة، السياحة، المملكة العربية السعودية.