

**THE PORTRAYAL OF GREEN MARKETING
PRACTICES IN ADVERTISEMENTS: A CONTENT
ANALYSIS OF FAST-FASHION BRANDS
ADVERTISEMENTS
IN YOUTUBE**

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Eskişehir 2023

**THE PORTRAYAL OF GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES IN
ADVERTISEMENTS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FAST-FASHION BRANDS
ADVERTISEMENTS IN YOUTUBE**

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FINAL APPROVAL FOR THESIS

This thesis titled “The Portrayal of Green Marketing Practices in Advertisements: A Content Analysis of Fast-fashion Brands Advertisements in YouTube” has been prepared and submitted by Sena Düzleyen in partial fulfillment of the requirements in “Anadolu University Directive on Graduate Education and Examination” for the Degree of Master of Science in Business Administration Department has been examined and approved on/...../.....

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ÖZET

YEŞİL PAZARLAMA UYGULAMALARININ REKLAMLARDA SUNUMU: HIZLI MODA MARKALARININ YOUTUBE REKLAMLARINA YÖNELİK BİR İÇERİK ANALİZİ

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Moda endüstrisi küresel ölçekte çevresel olarak en zararlı endüstrilerden biri olarak tespit edilmiştir. Tüketiciler ve üreticiler, bu endüstrinin çevresel etkilerinin farkındadırlar. Hızlı moda markaları, kendilerini daha sürdürülebilir ve bilinçli varlıklar olarak konumlandırmaya çalışarak yeşil pazarlama uygulamalarına başlamışlardır. Bu çalışmada yeşil pazarlama üzerine kapsamlı bir literatür taraması yapılmış ve hızlı moda ile YouTube hakkında bilgiler sunulmuştur. Bu içerik analizi çalışması, popüler hızlı moda markalarının YouTube üzerinden yaptığı yeşil pazarlama uygulamalarının etkisini incelemektedir. Araştırma, 2017 ve 2023 yılları arasında Mart ayına kadar YouTube'da paylaşılmış olan hızlı moda markalarının en güncel videoları incelemiştir. Bu çalışmada, uluslararası ve ulusal (Türk) hızlı moda markalarının paylaştığı 54 YouTube videosu üzerinde metinsel, görsel ve işitsel içerik analizi kullanılarak nitel bir yaklaşım benimsenmiştir. Sonuçlar, analiz edilen videoların içeriğinin beş ana tema etrafında kümelenen yirmi altı kodla kategorize edilebileceğini göstermiştir; "çevresel sürdürülebilirlik ve sorumluluk", "etik moda ve işçi uygulamaları", "malzeme ve tedarik zincirinin şeffaflığı ve takip edilebilirliği", "tüketici güçlendirme" ve "toplum ve sosyal etki".

Anahtar kelimeler: yeşil pazarlama, hızlı moda, sürdürülebilirlik, geri dönüşüm, çevre

ABSTRACT

THE PORTRAYAL OF GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES IN ADVERTISEMENTS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FAST-FASHION BRANDS ADVERTISEMENTS IN YOUTUBE

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Department of Business Administration

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Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Sevgi Ayşe Öztürk

The fashion industry is one of the industries that have harmful effects on the environment globally. Consumers and producers are becoming more aware of this industry's environmental impact. Fashion fast-fashion brands have started their green marketing practices by trying to position themselves as more sustainable and conscious assets. A comprehensive literature on green marketing has been reviewed, and information on fast-fashion and YouTube has been provided. This content analysis study examines how green marketing practices are depicted in fast-fashion brands' YouTube advertisements. The research examined the most up-to-date videos shared by fast-fashion brands on YouTube between 2017-2023 March. In this study, a qualitative approach was used to analyze 54 YouTube videos shared by both foreign and Turkish fast-fashion brands. The analysis included textual, visual, and verbal content evaluation. After analysis, results have determined that the videos' contents can be categorized into twenty-six codes, which are centered around five primary themes. These themes are "environmental sustainability and responsibility," "ethical fashion and labor practice," "transparency and traceability of materials and supply chain," "consumer empowerment," and "community and social impact."

Keywords: green marketing, fast-fashion, sustainability, recycling, environmental, sustainable fashion

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ETİK İLKE VE KURALLARA UYGUNLUK BEYANNAMESİ

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMA	: American Marketing Association
BCI	: Better Cotton Initiative
CO₂	: Carbon Dioxide
CSR	: Corporate Social Responsibility
EPA	: Environmental Protection Agency
EPRS	: European Parliamentary Research Service
EU	: European Union
FTC	: Federal Trade Commission
GEN	: Global Ecolabelling Network
HSV	: Hue, Saturation, Value
ISO	: International Organization for Standardization
LMICs	: Low and Middle-Income Countries
PETA	: People for The Ethical Treatment of Animals
PV	: Photovoltaic
RFID	: Radio Frequency Identification
SVM	: Support Vector Machine
UK	: United Kingdom
USA	: United States of America

1. INTRODUCTION

The research problem, aim, and significance are explained in this section. Subsequently, the limitations of the research are presented.

1.1. Research Problem

In today's rapidly changing global landscape, companies are aware of the increasing importance of environmental management. As a result, more and more enterprises are actively investing their resources in the development of green innovation (Chang, 2011).

In response to these concerns, some fast-fashion brands have embarked on green marketing practices, trying to position themselves as more sustainable and conscious entities. However, their detrimental environmental impact, including toxic chemicals, excessive water, energy consumption, garment waste, and air emissions, make this industry less sustainable (Blackburn & Textile Institute (Manchester, England), 2009).

Therefore, the research problem addressed in this study is to analyze the implementation of green marketing practices by fast-fashion brands on YouTube, specifically in their video advertisement. The primary focus is on how these brands apply green marketing practices and reach the practices reflected in the content of their advertisements.

1.2. Research Aim and Objectives

The study aims to gain insight into how green marketing practices are depicted by fast-fashion brands on the YouTube platform. This study focuses on analyzing and understanding how these brands address sustainability, whether they have transparency in their products and activities, what they do for their social and environmental impacts, whether they follow an ethical fashion stream or not, how they approach customers, and which frameworks and what context they use to communicate with and reach the audience in their ads.

1.3. Significance of the Research

The rising of globalization and easy access to desired information for everyone has brought about marketing opportunities for many businesses, and awareness is raised through many forms of advertising. The concept of sustainability has gained significant attention in various sectors and has prompted companies to adopt environmentally friendly practices. Hence, environmental issues become more and more critical and recognized due to global concerns. Environmental management concepts such as green management, green marketing, green production, and green innovation are now being

followed to eliminate the problems of environmental pollution (Y.-S. Chen, 2008). As a consequence, green marketing has expanded its boundaries and impacted various industries when it comes to ecologically friendly products.

One of the impacted industries from green marketing is the fast-fashion industry. In the context of modern fashion, the term "fast" refers to the speed of the economic environment within the fast-fashion industry. Hence, costs are involved when producing something, such as time, labor, capital, and natural resources. Businesses try to minimize these costs by optimizing and making them as efficient as possible to profit more. The goal is to get the most value out of these resources to increase profits.

Nevertheless, there are negative consequences or drawbacks associated with the excessive utilization of production and usage practices. Making cheap, high-quality fabrics that allow fashion to spread to many people causes more toxic chemical pollution, consumption of water and energy, and waste of garments than any other industry (Anguelov, n.d.; Blackburn & Textile Institute (Manchester, England), 2009; Fletcher, 2008).

Fast-fashion brands have realized that YouTube can be an effective marketing tool with great potential that supports sustainability objectives by utilizing YouTube's large audience and influence power. Moreover, today's consumers seek more environmentally conscious brands that share their values. This study, which analyses a variety of video examples from well-known fast-fashion brands, provides a comprehensive assessment of the portrayal of green marketing practices on YouTube by revealing major themes, trends, and objects used (e.g., nature, gender, age animals, sounds, inclusivity), marketing tools used, product display, and advertising appeals.

With this study, consumers can make more conscious and responsible fashion preferences by better understanding fast-fashion brands' efforts on environmental sustainability and ethical practices.

1.4. Limitation of the Research

The limitations of the research are given below.

- The research solely focuses on YouTube videos for analyzing green marketing practices in fast-fashion brands while acknowledging the existence of other platforms where such practices can also be observed.

- The analysis is limited to videos released between 2017 and March 2023, providing insights within a specific time frame.
- The study examines 54 YouTube video examples, acknowledging that they may not represent the entire range of content or all fast-fashion brands.
- This study mainly concentrates on popular fast-fashion brands worldwide, including a few from Turkey. However, it's worth noting that the findings may have limited relevance to other geographical regions.
- The research includes a content analysis and is not supported by quantitative data.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Green Marketing

2.1.1. Definition of green marketing

A changing world brings new challenges and transformations to the business world and reshapes businesses. Companies' marketing strategies continue to evolve in response to current market conditions over time. They use various marketing methods and strategies to reach large audiences for their goods. Due to changing world order and changing consumer behavior, they use different strategies.

Green marketing is one strategy that focuses on promoting and producing products and services that have environmental benefits. It is also known as environmental, sustainable, organic, eco-friendly, or ecological marketing (Vilkaite-Vaitone & Skackauskiene, 2019). These concepts encompass all actions intended to produce and facilitate transactions aimed at fulfilling human needs or desires with minimal environmental damage (Polonsky, 1994a).

The majority of people believe that green marketing entails promoting products with environmentally friendly attributes. Commonly associated terms include phosphate-free, recyclable, refillable, ozone-friendly, and environmentally friendly products. While these are examples of green marketing claims, Polonsky (1994a) states that the phrase itself refers to a much larger idea that may be used to describe services and consumer and industrial goods.

2.1.2. History of green marketing

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Wroe Alderson started the ecological marketing debate. Alderson used a systematic approach to analyze how the marketing system affects both society and the environment. This approach was one of the first serious attempts to define marketing regarding its environmental impact (Katrandjiev, 2016).

The idea of “green marketing” was initially proposed by Lazer (1969) as a societal dimension of marketing. Green marketing is a strategic approach that aims to tackle the scarcity of environmental resources, minimize the harmful environmental effects of traditional marketing practices, and incorporate sustainable practices into various aspects of traditional marketing. It is based on what we know about how marketing affects people and the environment. These challenge existing notions about consumption, examine the environmental impact of marketing and emphasize the importance of addressing environmental concerns in marketing.

The American Marketing Association (AMA) presented the first “Ecological Marketing” workshop in 1975. (National Workshop on Ecological Marketing (1st : 1975 : Austin, 1976). One of the earliest books on environmentally responsible business practices, "Ecological Marketing," was created from the results of this workshop (Henion, 1976). The focus of ecological marketing in this book encompasses all marketing activities, both those that have contributed to the creation of environmental problems and those that have the potential to contribute to the solution of environmental issues.

During the 1980s, the idea of "green consumerism" first appeared. This was a response to the increasing need for environmentally friendly products, and businesses began to market their products as environmentally friendly. This was a significant development; for the first time, companies specifically targeted environmentally-conscious consumers (Peattie, 2001). In the 1990s, green marketing became more sophisticated, and companies began to develop more comprehensive strategies. For example, companies began to use life-cycle analysis to determine the environmental impact of their products and to develop products that were more environmentally friendly (Polonsky & Jevons, 2006).

While environmentally safe products spread through companies and consumers, “greenwashing” became a fact. Greenwashing is putting on programs that are good for the environment to draw attention away from actions that are bad for the environment or less desirable. With the growth of green markets and the rise of greenwashing that followed, it has become hard for customers to tell whether a green claim is true or not (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020). To address this issue, organizations such as the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) have developed guidelines for green marketing (*Green Guides*, 2018; Polonsky, 1994b).

In conclusion, it is crucial to note that green marketing originated in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a time of environmental awareness and activism rising. Today, green marketing plays a significant role in promoting environmentally sustainable products and practices. Companies invest in research and development to create eco-friendly products and respond to consumer demand for greater transparency and accountability in their environmental practices.

2.1.3. The phases of green marketing

There is an ever-increasing concern among consumers worldwide regarding the preservation of the environment. There is mounting evidence demonstrating people's growing concern for the environment and the associated behavioral shifts. As a direct

consequence of this, green marketing has developed, which reflects that the market for eco-friendly and socially responsible products and services is growing rapidly.

During this time, green marketing underwent an evolution defined by Peattie (2001) into three distinct phases:

The first phase is called "Ecological" green marketing. During this stage, the marketing efforts were directed towards identifying and addressing environmental concerns, with the aim of promoting environmental sustainability. Awareness about environmental issues increased in the general public, which led to governments' creation and implementation of new environmental regulations and policies. The management of the environment was viewed less often as a strategic concern, and the responsibility of handling environmental concerns was frequently given to a staff department that specialized in environmental matters. This phase lasted about a decade (Simons et al., 2001).

In the second phase of green marketing, the focus shifted to "Environmental" concerns, emphasizing clean technology. This phase involved the design of innovative new products that address issues related to pollution and waste. Businesses started to realize that their current strategy for addressing environmental issues would only be acceptable to the government regulators and the general public for a bit longer. Because of this shift in circumstances, a new generation of environmental strategies emerged. For the first time, the industry started to feel responsible for the environmental damage it was causing and decided to start a dialogue to win back the general public's confidence. Companies were required to implement significant environmental protection and resource conservation initiatives as a prerequisite for conducting business. The primary focuses of these programs were the conservation of energy and the reduction of waste. This phase was also known as "green marketing" (Simons et al., 2001).

The third and final phase was labeled "Sustainable" in green marketing. Green marketing gained prominence in the late 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s. The concept of sustainable development is centered around meeting the needs of the current generation without decreasing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Environmental management became a strategic instrument to help organizations obtain a competitive advantage and stand out. Companies started measuring products' environmental impacts across their life cycles to optimize supply networks and product design. The corporation took responsibility for environmental management.

Communication with external stakeholders regarding the company's environmental performance was prioritized.

Another research (Simons et al., 2001) has added a new phase to the phases of green marketing as green marketing evolution can be evaluated in four phases since the 2000s. According to Simons et al. (2001), the fourth phase proposes that the development of green products is attributed to several factors, including advanced technology, stricter enforcement of deceptive claims by the state, government regulations and incentives, and increased scrutiny from environmental organizations and the media. Consumer confidence is regained with those improvements. Eco-friendly practices like becoming green are becoming increasingly popular among businesses and customers, and the phrase "sustainable green marketing" has been born.

Over the years, green marketing has evolved in response to growing consumer demand and the need to minimize adverse environmental effects. It continues to evolve as consumers demand greater transparency and accountability from companies in their environmental practices.

2.2. Green Marketing Mix (Four Ps)

The marketing four Ps are a group of variables that marketers can manage and adapt to better satisfy customer expectations than their rivals and address the unique requirements of specific market segments. Marketing mix elements may be revised as part of the green marketing strategies.

2.2.1. Green product

The product is the first of the four Ps and the most critical aspect of marketing. Marketers determine what they want to achieve for the market, competitive position, and product characteristics while considering product variety, quality, design, packaging, and size (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

For a product to be considered "green," it must prioritize the conservation of natural resources, renewable resources, sustainable resource consumption, recycled and recyclable materials, protection of natural habitats and endangered species, energy and water conservation, waste reduction, and pollution prevention. Specifically, it should avoid using and releasing toxic substances into the air, water, and land (Ottman, 2010).

When developing new products, companies need to consider more questions, while designers must be careful about selecting the materials, considering their sources and carbon footprints. In addition to that, they will have to develop packaging since it is a

significant resource of environmental waste, and a green product that is contained in packaging made of non-green or non-decomposable plastic is not at all a green product (Solaiman et al., 2015; Vaibhav et al., 2015). The high demand for recycled or recyclable materials shows how crucial it is for consumers. When a package has green particles on it, the manufacturer intends for it to be recycled. It also serves as a reminder for customers to place the package in recycling bins that are easily accessible (Kotler, 2011; Solaiman et al., 2015; Vaibhav et al., 2015).

2.2.1.1 Eco-labeling

Labeling can be considered as a part of the product that gives lots of information about the product. Eco-labeling is an environmental certification system that informs consumers about product and service environmental impact. Products with eco-labels meet environmental standards. Eco-labeling promotes environmentally friendly products and reduces consumer environmental impact. They typically focus on reducing waste, pollution, and natural resource use, and certifying that a product is environmentally safe or friendly, has been a significant consideration component.

The purpose of eco-labels is to provide customers with a tool that will allow them to make decisions that will have a lesser impact on the surrounding environment and offer them the opportunity to have some level of control over the manufacturing process. Regarding Salman (2016), eco-labels allow environmentally conscious consumers to make informed purchasing decisions, preserve the environment, and raise environmental awareness.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced Energy Star as one of the first eco-labels to promote and identify energy-efficient products (Steiger, n.d.). Today, eco-labels come in various forms, with some having more comprehensive information than others. For instance, the fuel economy label by the EPA gives consumers comprehensive information about fuel efficiency and cost. On the other hand, other labels are more general and make vague claims, such as "natural" or "healthy" on food items, without providing any evidence to support these claims (Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014).

The market for eco-labeled products encourages environmental protection. Moreover, the companies that invest in environmentally friendly technologies are now entitled to use a specific eco-label on their products since they can differentiate themselves from non-green competitors, improve their environmental image, and safely make environmental claims through eco-labels. Solaiman et al. (2015) emphasized the significance of determining whether a private, impartial organization or a government

agency should conduct labeling. Third-party organizations, such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and Globale Ecolabelling Network (GEN), verify environmental claims made by manufacturers, ensuring that eco-labeled products meet specified standards. Using eco-labels makes monitoring environmental claims by companies easier (Salman, 2016).

2.2.1.2 Eco branding

According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), a brand consists of various components, including a name, term, symbol, or design. These elements differentiate the products or services of one seller or group from their competitors. In addition to regular brands, the definition of branding can also be applied to eco-brands that utilize names, symbols, or designs to signify their products' positive impact on the environment. Consumers can easily identify environmentally friendly products from other non-environmentally friendly ones by looking for eco-brand features.

According to Chatterjee's (2009) findings According to Chatterjee's (2009) findings, consumers tend to prefer environmentally friendly products with a minimal negative impact on the environment compared to those with a more significant negative impact. Brand equity is a vital marketing concept that pertains to the power of brands in influencing consumers' purchasing choices. Essentially, it refers to brands' impact on consumers' minds. The definition of brand equity by Aaker (1992) refers to the distinctive influence that brand knowledge has on how consumers respond to a specific brand's marketing strategies. In the case of green products, incorporating green branding helps emphasize their equal performance compared to non-green products. It also makes it easier for consumers to differentiate themselves from similar products in the market.

2.2.2. Green price

Once a company creates a product, the next step is to determine its price. Numerous factors come into play when determining the product's price. These are production costs and what the customer wants to pay to purchase the product.

The pricing component of the marketing mix is the only one that generates revenue, while the others generate costs. Pricing decisions can be complicated as they involve various factors, such as the company, customers, competition, and marketing environment (Kotler & Keller, 2016), and environmental issues when producing green products.

Green products should be priced affordably for customers while generating revenue for companies. Hence, companies must find a solution for cost and profit rates while reducing harmful waste. Coordinating production processes more effectively will reduce waste and the need for raw materials and make environmentally conscious customers more willing to pay (Kotler, 2011; Polonsky, 1994a). Despite these pricing regulations, Solaiman et al. (2015) claim that consumers acknowledge the benefits of green products and are even ready to pay more for such benefits.

2.2.3. Green place

The place is generally defined as a distribution channel as a location or area where goods or services are sold. The place can be physical stores or online stores, and companies need to consider where to locate production and distribution facilities.

The distribution of environmentally friendly goods must not harm the surrounding ecosystem. Furthermore, "green distribution" requires a careful logistical organization to cut down on emissions from transportation and, consequently, the carbon footprint (Solaiman et al., 2015). Integrated transportation networks and online initiatives have helped reduce the environmental impact of logistics activities by minimizing the need for multiple transport modes and customers driving to the stores (Kotler, 2011; Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001).

When it comes to getting environmentally friendly products into the hands of consumers, retailers are another component of this logistical process, and they play an essential role in it. In many instances, they are equally responsible for the guarantees that the manufacturers of environmentally friendly products have made (Solaiman et al., 2015). Retailers play a crucial role in green marketing. They take on the responsibility of offering facilities for consumers to try out eco-friendly products, providing personal product experiences, creating lasting relationships with consumers, and achieving a powerful market position for green products. It is essential to examine their role to understand how they proactively share these responsibilities (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015).

2.2.4. Green promotion

The final component of the marketing mix, green promotion, is not the least significant. Because involvement in promotional activities increases customers' product knowledge, organizations must have effective promotional tactics before delivering their products to end users. Green promotional activities involve organizing various

promotional tools such as ads, marketing materials, signs, white papers, websites, videos, and presentations while considering the well-being of both people and the planet and financial benefits (Shil, 2012).

Companies need to determine which promotions would be impacted, which partners have a solid track record in green marketing, which materials are promoted for use, such as recyclable bags rather than plastics, and which messages contain ethical or moral content (Vaibhav et al., 2015). Furthermore, they must decide on the method of promotion that will be used. Regarding Kotler (2011), print needs paper, ink, and other resources, so companies must decide how much to transfer their promotion online. Their labels may need to list components and carbon footprints. Most firms want growth, but they should prioritize sustainable growth.

Green promotion strategically highlights the environmental aspects of its products, processes, and practices. This involves studying corporate operations, educating consumers about green products, and assisting them in making informed purchase decisions. By exploring communication and interaction strategies, misunderstandings, doubts, and criticisms about green product claims and performance can be reduced. This promotes sharing of information, mutual understanding, and informed decision-making (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015).

As green practices rise globally and more people become aware of environmental issues, many organizations have adopted environmental advertising in the media as a green approach to introduce their products to environmentally conscious consumers.

The purpose of green marketing practices is to encourage consumers to buy products that are not harmful to the environment. Green advertisements also aim to influence consumers' purchasing behavior by directing their attention to the positive consequences of their purchase behavior, both for themselves and the environment (Rahbar & Abdul, 2011).

In addition, in the past few years, consumers and businesses have used social media and the internet a lot more, making it an important way to communicate. As more and more people use social media to look for and buy products, social media advertising has become an important part of brand marketing. Because of this, companies need to have a presence on social media platforms to interact with their target audience. Because online and social media communication is common and essential, companies must use them in their marketing plans to stay competitive in the digital age (Ktisti et al., 2022).

2.2.4.1 Green marketing framework and green marketing mix

Peattie (1992) proposed the 7 Ps and 4 Ss as a framework for understanding and managing green marketing, which aims to promote environmentally responsible products and practices. The internal Ps are a set of seven factors that impact the success of green marketing: product, promotion, price, place, providing information, processes, policies, and people. The 4 Ss represent the outcomes or benefits organizations aim to achieve through effectively managing the 7Ps: satisfaction, safety, social acceptability, and sustainability.

Customer satisfaction refers to the happiness of customers' experience with the company's green products or services. Safety involves protecting the environment and human health during the company's offerings' production, distribution, and disposal. Social acceptability assesses how well the company's green marketing practices align with society's values, beliefs, and expectations. Sustainability refers to the long-term sustainability of the company and its ability to sustain green marketing practices over time.

Peattie's external 7P shows the green marketing overview from the outside, leading to the results shown by the 4S. For instance, payer values and preferences play an important role in determining the opinion and social acceptability of a product or service. Providers, like suppliers, can impact the use and sustainability of a product or service through their practices and beliefs. Environmental regulations and how politicians use them can impact safety, social acceptability, and sustainability. Environmental concerns, including issues like pollution and waste, as well as upcoming trends and predictions, can significantly impact the sustainability of a product or service. Furthermore, the actions and advocacy of pressure groups, such as environmental advocacy organizations, can play a role in determining the social acceptability and overall satisfaction associated with a product or service if the company is linked with other organizations that might affect the greenness of the company or what kind of environmental problems might affect the company in the future.

The 7 Ps and 4 Ss framework suggest that organizations must consider both internal and external embeddedness in their green marketing efforts to achieve success. Internal factors include the company's policies, operations, and practices, while external factors include how things like execution, controls, communication, and support groups affect the company. Businesses can develop green marketing strategies that help the community and the environment by effectively managing internal and external spread.



Figure 2.1. *The Green Marketing Process Source: (Peattie, 1992)*

2.3. Greenwashing Practices

Greenwashing involves spreading misleading or false information regarding an organization's environmental strategies, goals, motivations, and actions (Becker-Olsen & Potucek, 2013). It occurs when an organization falsely promotes its environmental efforts or spends more resources on advertising to promote itself as green rather than engaging in environmentally sound practices. As consumer demand for environmentally friendly products increased, many companies began advertising them as sustainable. However, some of these claims were identified as greenwashing because they were not truthful or accurate (Furlow, 2010).

Jay Westerveld, a biologist and environmentalist from New York, first used the term "greenwashing" in a 1986 essay. He referred to those companies that focused more on advertising their environmental friendliness rather than implementing sustainable practices. Westerveld highlighted the hotel industry's practice of encouraging guests to reuse their towels to conserve water and save on laundry costs while presenting themselves as eco-friendly to customers. During the mid-1980s, the term "greenwashing" gained popularity as a description for making false or exaggerated claims about a product or company's sustainability or environmental friendliness to gain a larger market share

(Dahl, 2010). Today, the term is used to describe any industry that engages in similar outwardly green actions to increase profits (Orange & Cohen, 2010).

According to de Freitas Netto et al. (2020), all of these descriptions of the greenwashing phenomenon describe two primary behaviors: concealing negative information about the company's environmental performance and revealing positive information about the company's environmental performance.

Recent years have seen a rise in the practice of "greenwashing," which involves questionable marketing messaging and strategies such as rebranding products as environmentally friendly or launching eco-initiatives that may not exist. There is minimal regulation or monitoring of claims made on labels promoting a product's natural, eco-friendly, or recyclable qualities. Standards and laws can be ambiguous, and the term "natural" does not always imply "healthy" or "environmentally friendly." Since contamination during the recycling process is a risk, products manufactured from recycled materials are also being closely examined. Only a small percentage of recycled materials are really used; the remainder is dumped in hazardous landfills (Orange & Cohen, 2010).

The Seven Sins of Greenwashing framework by The TerraChoice Group, a Canadian environmental marketing agency, was developed to assist in detecting instances of greenwashing. The sins include statements that suggest a product is eco-friendly with features on limited attributes, claims without easily accessible information or reliable third-party certification, vague terminology, false labels, irrelevant claims, claims that distract from more significant environmental impacts, and factually false statements. This framework helps consumers identify potential greenwashing claims to make informed choices (Baum, 2012; Dahl, 2010).

2.4. Green Consumer

A consumer can be defined as a person who uses products or services that are available for purchase and make purchases of various goods and services. Consumers significantly influence production since they purchase goods and services in a market. Regarding Shrum et al. (1995), a green consumer is an individual who makes decisions for purchasing based on products' ethical and environmental impacts since the primary purpose for them is being eco-friendly or green. Nowadays, consumers are more aware of their actions' effect on the environment. This increased awareness leads to an increasing understanding of the relationship between their purchase actions and environmental consequences.

In the last three decades, consumers have realized that the environment is more delicate than they thought and that there are restrictions on using natural resources. Solvalier (2010) claims that various education and awareness campaigns have facilitated this increased awareness launched to create a more informed population. Through these campaigns, people are becoming more aware that natural resources are limited and must be used responsibly.

2.5. Fast-fashion Industry

The fashion and textile business is one of the world's oldest and largest industrial sectors and has been around for centuries. The fashion industry faced a major challenge as the demand for fashion grew. This gave rise to fast-fashion, which offers trendy clothing at low prices that are quickly produced and sold in order to keep up with the latest fashion trends, so new collections are released regularly (Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2010).

The fast-fashion sector is known for producing affordable, trendy items at a rapid rate of speed using poor materials and labor. Because fashion consumers strongly desire constant change and always look for new products. To meet this expectation, fashion brands must ensure the frequent availability of new items. This is accomplished by finding new suppliers who offer different products and maintaining relationships with existing suppliers who understand the need for change and can deliver accordingly (Bruce & Daly, 2006).

The availability of affordable fashion through “fast-fashion” companies has increased consumer spending, decreased the average lifespan of an item of clothing, and increased clothing disposal rates. (Birtwistle & Moore, 2007; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Moreover, today’s fashion market is very competitive, and ongoing need to “refresh” product ranges force many brands to expand the number of “seasons”, or the frequency with which a store’s whole collection is updated. Fast-fashion brands are using “Here Today, Gone Tomorrow” to draw customers in with small collections of products (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010). Hence, through the past few years, there has been an increase in the amount of used clothes that is included in the municipal trash stream. This trend has been referred to as “Primark effect” by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee (Clift & Allwood, 2011). Primark is one of the most affordable and biggest fas-fashion brands which is opened in 1969 as a Irish fast fashion retailer and owned by Associated British Foods (Case Study on Primark Sustainability, Ethics, Supply Chain., 2017; Gendall, 2015).

2.5.1. Negative effects of the fast-fashion industry on the environment

Fast-fashion brands have recently embraced green marketing practices in response to growing consumer awareness and concern for environmental sustainability. However, a closer examination of these practices reveals several critical issues that must be addressed.

The fashion industry is the second most polluting industry in the world (Morgan Andrew, 2015). It requires enormous quantities of raw materials, generates alarming levels of waste, generates substantial pollution, and leaves a substantial carbon footprint. Moreover, manufacturing involves large amounts of natural resources such as water, energy, and raw materials and produces significant amounts of waste and parts. It consumes more water than any other sector, with the exception of agriculture, and it releases large amounts of toxic chemicals into the surrounding environment. The production of synthetic fabrics such as polyester also contributes to the opening release of greenhouse gases and microplastics. It is estimated that the yearly volume of production for textiles and fashion at the global level is greater than 30 million tons, and as a result, the environmental effects of this industry are extraordinary. Additionally, powering up the business at the start of production often results in poor working conditions and low wages for factory workers (Chen & Burns, 2006; Saito, 2018).

The study of the environmental impact of the textile and clothing industry by Sajn (2019) claims that the environmental impact is largely attributed to the production of raw materials; specifically, the cultivation of natural fibers of cotton requires large amounts of water and pesticides for its growth. Polyester is a synthetic textile material that originates from oil. Several recent studies have indicated that a load of laundry consisting of polyester clothing, along with nylon and acrylic, has the potential to discharge approximately 700,000 microplastic fibers. These fibers can release toxins into the environment and subsequently enter the human food chain. Approximately 50% of the total amount comprises one million tons of plastic microfibres annually, according to current projections. The processes of spinning raw materials, weaving fabrics, and applying finishing techniques, such as dyeing or enhancing durability and shine, are known to be energy-intensive and require significant amounts of water and chemicals. Moreover, the leftover scraps resulting from the process of cutting patterns for garments contribute to approximately 20% of the total fabric waste (Sajn, 2019).

Another issue with fast-fashion is that the textile and garment sectors transfer the ecological and professional responsibilities linked to large-scale manufacturing and

disposal from high-income countries to developing (e.g., low-income, low-wage workers, women) communities in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) (Bick et al., 2018). Garment workers are among the lowest-paid workers in the world, with some making just a few dollars a day. They faced dangerous working conditions that killed 1,129 workers in the 2013 Rana Plaza disaster in Bangladesh and injured many more when a previously declared unsafe factory building collapsed, resulting in tragedies in which workers were forced. Many of these workers do not have a say in the larger supply chain, and they face difficulties in claiming their rights (Ozdamar-Ertekin, 2017).

As a consequence, some of the negative impacts of the fast-fashion industry are environmental problems; pollution, poisoning, overuse of pesticides and insecticides, deoxygenation of water resources and subsequent loss of animal life, water salinization and reduced soil fertility, and loss of natural biodiversity (Blackburn & Textile Institute (Manchester, England), 2009).

The negative effects of fast-fashion on the environment have become a reality through growing consumption and production. The textile industry started to explore new ways of manufacturing products that are sustainable and environmentally friendly since the awareness of consumers about environmental issues and social responsibilities (Chen & Burns, 2006). As a result of this awareness, the sustainable fashion concept emerged within the fashion industry. The industry is actively focusing on minimizing the negative impacts of its actions on the environment and is committed to producing eco-friendly products. Moreover, they started to engage with society's ethical and moral standards. These positive steps are the beginning of a more sustainable and responsible future, which benefits both environment and society.

2.5.2. Fast-fashion industry and sustainability

In the 1970s, environmental thinking focused on solving problems about waste caused by industrial production. Today, sustainable thinking seeks a sustainable balance in using economic, social, and environmental resources while ensuring future generations' ability to meet their sustainability needs (Niinimäki, 2013). According to Fletcher (2008), a narrow approach cannot achieve sustainability. The impact of our choices on the entire lifecycle of a product, including cultivation, production, distribution, use, reuse, and disposal, must be considered. The examination of the entire lifecycle allows for the identification of significant phases and necessary changes. This approach enables the effective addressing of sustainability challenges.

Some fast-fashion companies are taking steps to improve their reputation by moving towards sustainability (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). This includes using more sustainable fibers and promoting the recycling of used garments (McNeill & Moore, 2015).

Sustainable fashion does not aim to create more environmentally products; it also aims at some practices and approaches such as using natural resources responsibly, protecting biodiversity, reducing waste and polluting, using sustainable materials, and ensuring fair labor practices. The industry tests less common natural fibers such as hemp, flax, and pile. These fibers are preferred because they require less water, fertilizers, and pesticides. In addition, lyocell (Tencel), made from eucalyptus cellulose, is an innovative material that does not need irrigation or pesticides. Other innovative materials, such as bemberg (cupro), made from cotton fiber, and Piñatex, made from pineapple leaves, are also used. These efforts aim to reduce environmental impact during processing and production by reducing chemical consumption, using enzymes, using water efficiently, and recycling water. New techniques that do not use water, for example, dope dyeing (spin dyeing/solution dyeing) and supercritical carbon dioxide (CO₂) dyeing, have great potential to reduce impacts associated with climate, water, and chemicals. These dyeing techniques are used in synthetic fibers obtained from fossil sources as part of sustainability studies in some companies. This creates conflicting goals, such as phasing out fossil resources or reducing the dyeing process climate, water, and chemical impacts through sustainable cutting techniques and bonding methods (Sajn, 2019; Sandin et al., 2019)

Sandin et al. (2019) stated that energy consumption is one of the major causes of the environmental impacts of production. The transition to renewable energy could be an effective intervention, such as the light fuel oil and natural gas used for heat in production (mainly for wet treatment) and the fuel used for the user's transport. This transition can significantly reduce environmental impact by changing the electrical energy mix used in manufacturing countries' yarn production, fabric production, wet processing, and preparation processes.

Circular fashion is another way to reduce waste and keep the materials within the consumption and production loop as long as possible. To achieve this, products must be designed to have multiple life cycles. It is necessary to use recyclable materials selected in accordance with the relevant intended use. Also, timeless styles and detachable, convenient designs, such as modular design, are essential elements. Some companies

provide consumers with information about the environmental impact of their products, such as CO₂ emissions or water use. Clear and standardized labeling methods can be used to select environmentally friendly products easily. This way, making a more sustainable choice can be made more accessible (Sajn, 2019).

2.6. Social Media

Social Social media is a term used to describe various online applications and platforms developed using Web 2.0 technologies. These platforms allow users to create, share, and exchange user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Popular platforms include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and, allowing users to connect, form online communities based on shared interests, beliefs, and values, share their thoughts and ideas, participate in discussions, express their opinions, and engage with others on a variety of topics (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Social media is an effective promotional instrument for sustainable fashion brands and products. By partnering with influencers, developing engaging content, utilizing paid advertising, and initiating awareness campaigns, sustainable fashion brands can reach a larger audience and encourage consumers to make more environmentally and socially responsible fashion choices.

Social media is one of the best methods to engage consumers in specific trends because social media platforms enable brands and consumers to engage in interactive interaction (Reiter & Kozar, 2016).

Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) Indicate that social networking sites generally use for personal purposes, allowing users to connect by creating profiles and exchanging emails and instant messages with others. With the increasing popularity of content communities like YouTube, which serves as a content community where users can share videos, pictures, and other forms of media, they have become an attractive channel for businesses and organizations to connect with their target audiences. Various entities such as brands, firms, groups, communities, and music bands are using YouTube and other social media platforms to reach their intended audiences, customers, and interests lately. Since YouTube advertisements will be used in this research, a brief explanation will be given below.

With its main office in San Bruno, California, YouTube is a social media network for sharing videos online. Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim introduced it on February 14, 2005.

In 2006, YouTube was acquired by Google, and since then, it has become one of the most visited and popular social networks in the world. According to Statista, as of January 2023, With over 2.5 billion active users, YouTube is the world's second most prominent social media platform (*Biggest Social Media Platforms 2023*, n.d.; "YouTube," 2023).

It provides users with several different options for streaming videos. Several options are available for accessing online videos, such as using the website directly, utilizing mobile applications, and embedding YouTube videos on other websites. Online videos include music videos, video clips, documentaries, short films, audio recordings, film trailers, live streams, and video blogs ("YouTube," 2023).

2.7. Previous Research on Sustainability Advertisement in Fast-fashion Industry

In the study "Exploring The Role Of Social Media Influencers In Promoting Sustainable Fashion On Twitter," the analysis of data suggests that sustainable fashion influencers lack a unified understanding of sustainability, as they focus on different aspects within the fashion sector. This leads to confusion among consumers, as influencers use vague terminology and hashtags, making it difficult to grasp the concept of sustainability. However, the study answered its research questions and identified several themes and subthemes in the content shared by influencers. These findings align with existing theories and demonstrate that influencers use elements of the marketing mix to promote sustainable practices and consumption. Marketing firms can use these insights to target sustainability-conscious consumers, while influencers can incorporate them into their content creation. Although influencers share knowledge on sustainable fashion, they primarily promote consumption through external web links. The study acknowledges the potential for interpretation in qualitative research. It suggests expanding the study with a larger or more diverse sample size or exploring influencers on different social media platforms. Overall, it highlights the importance of raising awareness about the environmental impact and the possibilities for adopting sustainable practices to mitigate it in an increasingly consumer-driven society (Short, 2021).

The main goal of the "How And Why Sustainable Content Of Fast-fashion Brands On Social Media Can Impact Consumers' Behaviour?" study on green marketing and advertising in fast-fashion is to figure out how and why the sustainable content of fast-fashion brands on social media may impact how people behave. This literature review examines various topics related to the fashion industry, including sustainability, the attitude-behavior gap, and the impact of social media. Additionally, 15 interviews were

conducted to gain insights into consumers' thoughts on fast-fashion brands, sustainability in fashion, the role of social media, and the type of content that attracts their attention.

The research shows that although consumers generally receive sustainable content, they have different opinions about fast-fashion brands' sustainability efforts. Excessive promotion of sustainability can make consumers feel stressed and fearful. Even though consumers are aware of fast-fashion's negative effects, their family and friends can still influence their behavior. Appealing visuals are essential in attracting consumer attention, and trust is built through consistent and transparent communication. In summary, sustainable content can impact consumer attitudes and behaviors, but these responses are shaped by multiple factors in the fast-fashion industry (Accardo, 2022).

Another research conducted by Kwon & Lee (2021) presents the findings of a study that examined how fashion brands showcase their commitment to sustainability through corporate social responsibility (CSR) advertising on Instagram. The study focused on the six fashion brands known for their sustainability efforts: H&M, Zara, Gap, Stella McCartney, Gucci, and Burberry. By analyzing their Instagram posts from 2019, the researchers identified different strategies employed by these brands in their CSR advertising campaigns. The study revealed a strong emphasis on sustainability efforts related to the environment, with socially responsible practices and ethical business operations being the most prevalent CSR initiative type. However, the study also underscores the importance of fashion brands adopting comprehensive and transparent sustainability practices beyond mere advertising. Consumers are increasingly interested in sustainable fashion and expect brands to take responsibility for their environmental impact. Therefore, fashion brands must prioritize sustainability throughout their operations and communicate their efforts transparently to establish trust with consumers. The study suggests that future research should include a broader range of brand categories to understand better how fashion brands promote their CSR commitments through social media advertising.

A case study by Febrila & Chen (2017) focused on green marketing and its effectiveness in promoting sustainable fashion consumption among fast-fashion consumers in Jakarta, with a focus on H&M's video advertisements. The data for this research was collected through semi-structured interviews with seven Jakarta fast-fashion consumers.

Based on the results, the video advertisement produced by H&M seems successful because of its straightforward messaging, well-structured presentation, and clear

solutions provided. The research also reveals that Jakarta's fashion consumers have a strong desire for Western brands, especially those that have effectively dominated the Indonesian market. Despite their limited knowledge of sustainable fashion, participants responded positively to sustainability-related concepts. To effectively convey sustainable fashion concepts to Jakarta's fashion consumers, it is necessary to approach the subject from a specific angle and avoid overwhelming them with complexity. To establish a solid foundation for the development of sustainable fashion in Jakarta, consumers must develop a comprehension of sustainable practices through simple yet essential actions such as water consumption, plastic bag usage, and consumption of organic produce. Using a life-cycle perspective, the government and brands should resolve consumer concerns and concentrate on secondary details in the fashion supply chain. Collaboration between smaller and more prominent brands can aid in overcoming consumer mistrust. Sustainable fashion can be perceived differently due to green marketing's ability to combat and alter preconceived notions.

The authors of "How Do You Depict Sustainability? An Analysis Of Images Posted On Instagram By Sustainable Fashion Companies" utilized visual content analysis to analyze more than 300 Instagram images that were obtained from two corporate accounts: Stella McCartney and Patagonia. Visual content analysis is a research technique that measures and analyses the frequency with which particular visual codes appear in an identified set of images. This study examines how sustainable fashion companies portray sustainability via Instagram images and how these visuals impact digital engagement.

The results show that Patagonia and Stella McCartney employ distinct visual strategies on the platform. Patagonia emphasizes nature-focused images, whereas Stella McCartney emphasizes fashion-focused images. The choice of pictures is influenced by brand positioning and the extent to which fashion products are associated with sustainability issues. Following the trend of fashion companies prioritizing "green" content, the research indicates that images related to environmental sustainability generate greater digital engagement. Patagonia strategically employs images centered on nature and animals to convey its sustainability vision and engage consumers. Stella McCartney also sees engagement with nature-centric images, but engagement with fashion-centric images is lower.

The study underlines the significance of examining the evocative power of the environment, landscape, and animal photographs on Instagram as visual representations of sustainability. However, it emphasizes the necessity for sustainable fashion companies

to demonstrate brand-specific characteristics, such as production techniques and supply chains, to prevent greenwashing charges. Future research should look into Instagram videos and supporting words, as well as analyze sustainability representation beyond photographs (Milanesi et al., 2022).

Another research that discusses how slow fashion is portrayed on Instagram and its empowering effect on women underlines that slow fashion is associated with environmental sustainability and is promoted by both fashion producers and consumers. Three key themes emerged from analyzing #slowfashionaustralia posts on Instagram. These themes suggest that social media channels, such as Instagram, can be powerful tools to promote sustainable fashion concepts and empower women.

The article also acknowledges some limitations, including small sample size and potential bias in post-selection. It suggests further research opportunities in the field of sustainability communication, especially in exploring the use of social media beyond Instagram to promote sustainable fashion. In conclusion, social media is important in promoting sustainable fashion and empowering women. However, additional research is necessary to fully understand how social media can be used effectively for sustainable communication beyond Instagram and to address the limitations of this study (Lee, 2021).

The purpose of the “Social Media Enabled Market Shaping – An Analysis Of The Visual Rhetoric Of Fast And Sustainable Fashion Content On Instagram” thesis is to study if consumers on social media can have a major influence on a market level through their shared online content. The study specifically investigates how User Generated Content differs in terms of the visual rhetoric of fast and sustainable fashion and how this influences market shape. The social media network Instagram is examined in further depth, taking into account the current change from text-based to image-based social media dialogue as well as the platform’s popularity.

The study enhanced visual content analysis on Instagram by incorporating hashtags and text-based elements, leading to a clearer understanding of the conveyed rhetoric. The study builds on the understanding of social media empowering consumers as influential market actors. Individual actors directly influence fashion presentation, shaping the mainstream fast-fashion market. It explores consumer contributions at micro and macro levels, revealing that fast-fashion involves self-representation and promotion with popular hashtags, while sustainable fashion focuses on identity creation, slower consumption, conscious presentation, and co-creation. Reframing fast-fashion disrupts the market, increasing sustainable fashion visibility. Marketers face pressure to rethink

strategies and improve conditions for future generations. The study also highlights women's active engagement in the digital fashion conversation, making them key influencers. Marketers can target women and encourage them to share their beliefs, creating opportunities for targeted marketing and active participation like photo challenges (Geller, 2020).

Another study conducted by Zhao et al. (2022) has made a data-mining approach to how sustainable fashion brands communicate with their consumers on social media by analyzing the visual and textual content they post. The researchers collected data from the social media pages of sustainable fashion brands, analyzing a total of 1525 images and their captions, along with 140,735 comments. They utilized color theory and speech act theory to extract information using hue, saturation, value (HSV) color analysis and a support vector machine (SVM) classification model.

The research findings revealed that sustainable fashion brands successfully aligned their brand identities and sustainability objectives through the images and captions they shared. In this study, color theory and speech acts theory were employed to gain insights into how sustainable brands communicate their messages on social media using data mining techniques. The study highlights the effective use of visual elements and textual content by sustainable brands to convey sustainability-related messages and actively engage their customers. It emphasizes the significance of having a well-defined strategy that includes appropriate images and posts that reflect the brand's sustainable goals. The study also indicates that various types of posts and speech acts can elicit different responses from consumers. Furthermore, the research underscores the importance of actively monitoring and participating in consumer interactions, such as comments, to comprehend brand messages and foster a sense of community. Ultimately, the study suggests that sustainable brands employ diverse speech acts in their text-based posts. They used a classification model to analyze the data quickly and accurately.

Among the brands studied, Stella McCartney's posts had less focus on sustainability, while Everlane and Patagonia used clear instructions and paired images to promote their values. This finding provides guidance for other fashion brands interested in sustainability. It's crucial to align social media strategies with the brand's identity and choose the right speech acts to communicate information effectively. The study has some limitations, and there are opportunities for future research, such as updating data, exploring different fashion brands, studying the relationship between posts and comments using different research methods, understanding brand intentions on social media,

evaluating the impact of communication, and using other techniques for computer vision to analyze sustainability-related information in images (Zhao et al., 2022).

There are researches about consumer attitudes to green marketing advertising. Since this thesis is focused on the advertisements itself, a few articles will be summarized below.

Regarding Barnett et al. (2005), individuals who consider various concerns when making shopping and consumption decisions and try to use their resources in accordance with these concerns can be defined as ethical consumers. They aim to make purchases that align with their ethical values and beliefs, such as environmental sustainability, health and safety, animal welfare, fair trade, labor conditions, and human rights. An attitude, as defined, is a conditioned inclination to react consistently to a particular object or entity (Keegan & Green, 2013). Consumer attitudes toward sustainability in the fast-fashion industry have been a growing concern in recent years. Customers are starting to ask the fast-fashion sector for more sustainable solutions as they become more aware of these problems.

According to McNeill & Moore (2015), consumers' attitudes towards sustainability in fashion purchasing are influenced by their level of concern for social and environmental issues, pre-existing attitudes towards sustainable fashion, and previous experiences with ethical purchasing. Consumers may not embrace sustainable fashion approaches. Attitudes, peer influence, and product knowledge affect sustainable fashion behavior. Consumers who value rapid fashion change and see fashion as essential to their self-identity are less likely to care about sustainable fashion and environmental and social issues.

In a study conducted by Hartmann et al. (2005), it was found that using a functional positioning strategy for a brand can make consumers like the brand more. This means that if a brand focuses on the specific features of its product, such as CSR, labeling, partnership, etc., it can influence how consumers feel about the brand in a positive way. Additionally, if a brand highlights the benefits of its product, it can also have a positive impact on how consumers perceive the brand.

Grankvist et al. (2004) claim that consumer trust in eco-labels and the amount of attention they receive as a result were positively connected with attitudes toward eco-labels. They also remarked that the level of attention and usage of eco-labels is dependent on how much consumers prioritize environmental protection and how strongly they believe in purchasing eco-labeled products to achieve this goal. Additionally, they

referenced a study by (Thøgersen & Ölander, 2002), which showed how individual value priorities can have an impact on the development of sustainable purchasing behaviors.

Studies on the impact of greenwashing on consumers have indicated that it has a negative effect on their attitudes and intentions to make environmentally friendly purchases. This negative effect is often seen as an increase in consumer skepticism and a decrease in perceived credibility. The majority of consumers tend to believe that companies labeling their products as “green” are merely using it as a marketing tactic, leading to mistrust in such claims (Lu et al., 2022; Munir & Mohan, 2022; Sinisalo, 2020).

Based on another study about, specifically among young consumers and Gen Z in the United Kingdom (UK), found that customer attitudes about sustainability in fast-fashion products are becoming increasingly crucial among Gen Z in the UK. However, there is a difference in the affective component of these attitudes, which means that various issues receive different levels of attention. Affective variables influence buying behavior of sustainable fast-fashion products more than cognitive considerations. According to the survey, the female, youthful working class is a significant element of the fast-fashion market, and they are not particularly attentive to sustainability aspects. Overemphasis on sustainability may reduce the market share of fast-fashion makers. The study suggests that consumers update their sustainability knowledge on a regular basis to prevent misleading marketing and that politicians introduce appropriate taxes and subsidies to boost sustainability in the fast-fashion business (Zhang et al., 2021).

The study by Stringer et al. (2020) has found that having self-transcendence and being open to changing one’s ideas causes customers to care more about ethical issues involving the treatment of animals, the environment, and workers in the fashion industry. The survey also showed that people who care more about the environment and animal welfare are more likely to buy fast-fashion items that are labeled as ethical.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this section of the study, the method of research, sample size, determination of data collection techniques and analysis, and data analysis will be explained.

3.1. Research Design

This research study utilized a qualitative approach to examine the green marketing practices of fast-fashion brands as they are portrayed in YOUTUBE advertisements. The present study involves a content analysis of chosen brands and their videos based on specific criteria. The assessment includes a comprehensive evaluation of all textual, auditory, and visual resources. The process of content categorization involved the participation of two separate coders, resulting in the identification of five primary themes. Furthermore, diverse interpretations and observations are proposed in relation to other transmissions in the videos.

3.2. Sample Size

This study includes well-known fast-fashion brands that have YouTube channels and produce advertising videos. Since a list of fast-fashion brands was not available, popular and well-known foreign and Turkish fast-fashion brands are considered first. To ensure diverse representation, the initial step involves selecting fast-fashion brands on both a national and international scale, and to maintain consistency, only videos available in English or Turkish, along with subtitles, are considered for inclusion in the study. Videos in other languages are excluded, as they would have introduced language barriers that could potentially oversight the findings. The search is restricted to videos published between 2017 and March 2023, which made it possible to understand a deeper of the recent green marketing practices in the fast-fashion industry. A maximum limit of two videos per brand is set to ensure diversity in this sample. Following this selection process, 54 relevant videos are collected as a final sample for content analysis. Among these videos, 42 are from international brands, while the remaining 12 are from Turkish brands.

The brands selected for analysis and their country of origin are listed in the table below.

Table 3.1. The brands selected for analysis and their country of origin

Brand Name	Country of Origin
	<i>Foreign Brands</i>
Adidas	Germany
Bershka	Spain
Boohoo	UK
C&A	Netherlands
Forever 21	United States of America(USA)
Gap	USA
GapInc	USA
Guess	France
H&M	Sweden
Levi's	USA
M&S	UK
Mango	Spain
Massimo Dutti	Spain
New Look	UK
Next	UK
Nike, Inc	USA
Pretty Little Thing	UK
Primark	Ireland
Pull&Bear	Spain
Tommy Hilfiger	USA
Uniqlo	Japan
United Colors of Benetton	Italy
Zara	Spain
	<i>Turkish Brands</i>
Colin's	Türkiye
Defacto	Türkiye
Kiğılı	Türkiye
Koton	Türkiye
Mavi	Türkiye
Penti	Türkiye

The links to the videos that are analyzed are listed in Appendix 1.

3.3. Data Collection Techniques and Analysis

Data for this study are collected through a content analysis approach, which involves examining the textual, visual, and verbal content found in YouTube video ads. After the brands have been selected, comprehensive research is undertaken within each YouTube channel, primarily targeting videos linked with topics relating to sustainability, recyclable materials, the environment, the earth, and water. By utilizing these keywords, the aim is to locate videos relevant to the green marketing field. The selection of appropriate words and hashtags during the search process is pivotal in accurately identifying videos about green marketing on YouTube.

The analysis process includes three main components: textual analysis, visual analysis, and verbal analysis. The textual analysis involves identifying and analyzing the

messages, statements, and claims made in the videos regarding green marketing practices. The visual analysis examines the imagery, symbols, and visual elements used in the videos to communicate the brands' green initiatives. The verbal analysis assesses the spoken content, including voice-overs, dialogue, and sounds of nature or animals, to identify key themes and patterns related to green marketing. The findings from the content analysis will be interpreted and presented descriptively, providing insights into the portrayal of green marketing practices utilized by leading players in the fast-fashion sector.

3.4. Data Analysis

An inductive coding process is employed to derive the findings in the context of research questions, wherein the raw data are summarized into brief codes and themes to link them with the research questions (Thomas, 2006).

First of all, after collecting the videos, the raw data for each video is thoroughly examined to analyze its visual, auditory, and textual components. This comprehensive examination aims to identify the most frequently repeating parts and topics within the video content. Labeling these repeating elements makes it possible to create distinct themes that emerge from the analysis. Moving forward, the raw data is carefully studied, and the repeating codes are further categorized into themes based on their content. The goal is to determine the relationship between these codes and the themes they represent. It is important to note that each code mentioned in the analysis comprises specific words, phrases, or visual expressions identified within the content of at least one video or video's statements.

The conclusion of this process resulted in the development of five primary themes, consisting of a total of 26 codes, which effectively captured the main ideas and messages conveyed in the videos. To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the analysis, a second coder independently coded and examined each labeled code, providing additional validation to the findings.

4. FINDINGS

To enhance data and enrich the results, conducted a visual, textual, and auditory content analysis on the videos shared by brands on the YouTube channels. To gather general information by examining the videos and their statements within specific aspects, it is desired to determine which criteria the videos with similar content focus on, such as gender presented, age range, nature sounds or colors, footage from nature, positive/negative tone, presence/absence of the natural sources, product displayed or relation campaigns with products. An analysis is conducted to determine these criteria, aiming to identify the prominent and common features among videos with similar content.

4.1. A Brief Description of the Analyzed Videos

The videos will be described in terms of the inclusion of the brand/product feature, whether the approach is active or proactive, gender representation, and the presence or absence of planetary resources. According to the findings of the genders represented in the videos, it was observed that out of 54 videos, both genders were present in 24 of them, only women were present in 16, and only men were present in 3. This observation indicates a diversity in gender representation in the videos. Furthermore, when examining other elements present in the videos, it was noticed that inclusivity was found in only 2 videos. Inclusivity here refers to representing individuals with different characteristics, such as race, age, and gender.

Table 4.1. A brief description of the analyzed videos (advertisements) shared by brands' YouTube channels

Criteria	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender presented in the videos.	<i>Female</i>	16	29.63%
	<i>Male</i>	3	5.56%
	<i>Both</i>	24	44.44%
	<i>Not exist</i>	11	20.37%
	<i>Total</i>	54	100.00%
Brand/product displayed videos	<i>Displayed</i>	41	75.93%
	<i>Not Displayed</i>	13	24.07%
	<i>Total</i>	54	100.00%
Brand/product-related videos	<i>Related</i>	37	68.52%
	<i>Not related</i>	17	31.48%
	<i>Total</i>	54	100.00%
The active or proactive approach used in the videos	<i>Active</i>	40	74.07%
	<i>Proactive</i>	9	16.67%
	<i>Undefined</i>	5	9.26%
	<i>Total</i>	54	100.00%
Absence or presence of planetary resources' impression in the videos	<i>Absence</i>	2	3.70%
	<i>Presence</i>	2	3.70%
	<i>Undefined</i>	50	92.59%
	<i>Total</i>	54	100.00%

The videos generally focus on what they are currently doing actively. However, only nine videos adopt a proactive approach toward the future, while no active or proactive information could be found in five videos. Lastly, in most (75.93%) of the videos, products of the brand are displayed, and brand-related campaign videos are at a rate of 68.52% (n=37). The other videos contain endangered species, machines, animations, or fabrics instead of products.



Figure 4.1. Mavi, Mavi #IndigoTurtles Kampı, 2022

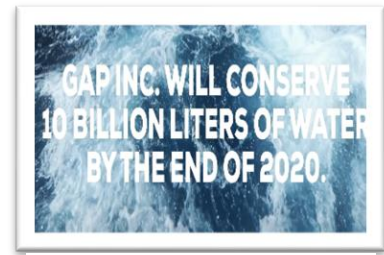


Figure 4.2. GapInc., Gap Inc. is committed to doing better by the environment, 2018

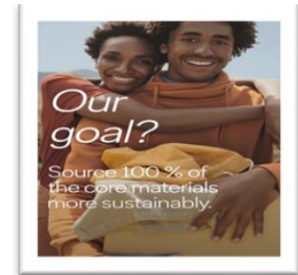


Figure 4.3. C&A, At C&A, we are committed to increasing the use of sustainable raw materials. #wearthechange, 2022



Figure 4.2. Kiğılı, Tomorrow | Kiğılı, 2022

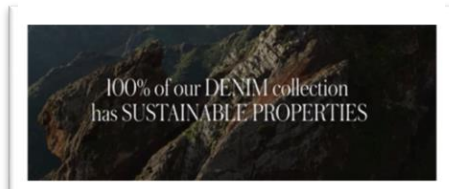


Figure 4.5. Mango, DENIM COLLECTION with SUSTAINABLE PROPERTIES | MANGO SS22, 2022



Figure 4.6. Next, Creating a circular economy | NEXT Recycling Centre | Life at Next, 2022

Although definite and conclusive results could not be obtained in terms of the message appeal, 3 videos focus on moral appeal, 10 videos emphasize rational appeal, and 12 videos delve into emotional appeal. Additionally, there are 12 videos where the specific appeal is undefined. Moreover, 8 videos address the intersection of moral and emotional appeal, while 7 explore the connection between moral and rational appeal. Lastly, 2 videos cover all three aspects: moral, emotional, and rational. In some rational appeals, the percentages are provided to emphasize the sustainability of their products or productions. In contrast, rational aspects are presented in a fun and entertaining way, for example, through animation. In specific emotional appeals, there is a focus on humorous emotions or making things more enjoyable. In moral appeals, partnership examples or certifications are often highlighted to convey the message.

Additionally, it is observed that 5 videos focus on professions such as workers, farmers, or laborers. These videos might have been created to showcase these occupational groups or share their experiences. Finally, it is seen that animation has been used in 5 videos to make the advertisements more attention-grabbing and entertaining.



Figure 4.7. Primark, PRIMARK | Fair Trade Partnership, 2022



Figure 4.8. H&M, H&M's all-vegan Animal Crossing collection & fashion show, 2021



Figure 4.9. Gap Inc., The Fair Trade Difference, 2017

Animations are commonly employed as a tool to capture viewers' interest and effectively convey the message.

On the other hand, in 25 videos, it is observed that outdoor shots were taken. These videos incorporated nature-related sounds such as ocean waves, wind, bird sounds, etc. The focus of these videos is on nature, highlighting elements such as mountains, the sky,



Figure 4.10. Mango, DENIM COLLECTION



Figure 4.11. Mango, DENIM COLLECTION with SUSTAINABLE PROPERTIES | MANGO SS22, 2022

flowers, trees, forests, animals, and beaches. Furthermore, these videos emphasize nature's colors, mainly brown, green, and blue.

Some differences stand out upon more profound research between the Turkish and international fast-fashion brands. First, in the Turkish advertisement videos, endangered species were in the frame, such as being a part of the indigo turtle's project, submarines, and coral cultivation. Among these videos, they are only 2 advertisements in which the vegan products belonged to the Turkish brand and a completely vegan collection which

is prepared from olive skin. Also, the only advertisement stating that it is a member of the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), known as the sustainable revolution, belonged to Turkey.

Moreover, in 15 videos, information about green marketing is only provided in the statement sections. In contrast, information regarding green marketing has yet to be found in the visual, auditory, or textual content. Furthermore, based on the analysis of all video statements, "sustainable/sustainability" appears in the highest number of video statements (25), accounting for approximately 46.30% of the total. It is followed by "recycled/recycling/recyclable" in 15 video statements (approximately 27.78% of the total), "environment" in 11 videos (approximately 20.37% of the total). "reduction/reduce," "future," "planet/world" and "circular/circularity" follow in that order. (Table 4.2.)

Table 4.2. *The most common words used in video statements.*

Criteria	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Most common words used in statements.	Sustainable/sustainability	15	46.30%
	Recycled/Recycling/Recyclable	25	27.78%
	Environment	11	20.37%
	Reduction/Reduce	9	16.67%
	Future	7	12.96%
	Planet/World	6	11.11%
	Circular/Circularity	5	9.26%

4.2. Themes' Frame

4.2.1. Environmental sustainability and responsibility

Out of the analyzed 54 videos and statements, 47 of them included visual, text, and verbal messages that emphasized “environmental sustainability and responsibility” and 7 codes linked with this theme.

Based on analyzed data, the brands place a particular emphasis on their marketing practices of using recycled, regenerated materials and eco-friendly or sustainable materials.



Figure 4.12. *Primark, PRIMARK | Recover™ RColorBlend, 2022*



Figure 4.13. *Boohoo, FOR THE FUTURE - SOLAR ENERGY | boohoo, 2022*

Table 4.3. Theme 1

Theme 1. Environmental Sustainability and Responsibility	
Codes	Examples
1. Use of eco-friendly or sustainable materials	“Organic cotton,” “fairtrade certificate ingredients,” “beechwood,” “lower impact cotton,” “olive skin,”
2. Use of recycled or regenerated materials	“cotton,” “nylon,” “plastic,” “polyester fibers,”
3. Use of renewable energy or reduction of carbon footprint	“No dyeing,” “down recycled,” “reduce pollution,” “energy conservation,” and “naturally dyed collection.”
4. Reduction of waste or use of circular design principles	“Carrier bag,” “wear longer,” “recyclable,” “to maximize usage,” and “turning waste fabrics.”
5. Water conservation or use of sustainable water management practices	“Wiser wash,” “wash less,” “ecologic jeans,” “conserve water,”
6. Biodiversity conservation or use of responsible land/source use practices	“All vegan,” “Keep oceans clean,” “Coral reef restoration,” “cotton from a sustainable source,” “Eliminate fibers sourced from endangered forests,” “biomaterials,” and “indigo turtles.”
7. Use of innovative techniques	“Solar photovoltaic (PV),” renovating,” “Recover™,” “sustainable innovation,” “Smart Stitch™,” “Smart Disassembly™,” “wiser wash,” “energy monitoring system.”

Most of the videos linked with the first and second codes include the use of recycled or regenerated and sustainable or eco-friendly materials, including materials’ rates and stress materials that are used such as “organic cotton,” “recycled polyester,” “nylon,” or “fair trade certificate ingredients.” The third code of this theme included using renewable energy or reducing carbon footprint, such as “no dyeing” or “energy conservation” during the production cycle. Most of the videos linked under this code show process cycles, fabrics, machines, or labor to stress them. The following one is about circular design principles and reducing waste which is mentioned in the name of the videos, statements, or verbal way. The usages of the verbs were “wear longer,” “recyclable,” or “maximize usage.”

The fifth code of this theme contains “wiser wash,” “wash less,” or “conserve water,” and videos address practices related to wise water and water conservation by underlining the importance of reducing water consumption during the processing of a new

garment. Moreover, the other code linked with the videos includes “keep the ocean clean,” “coral reef restoration,” “biomaterials,” or “eliminating sources from the endangered forest.” The videos emphasize the conservation of biodiversity or responsible source/land uses by promoting some projects. The last code includes videos that contain the use of innovative technologies both using or being partners with technology companies such as “Solar PV,” “renovating,” “Recover™,” “sustainable innovation,” “Smart Stitch™,” and “Smart Disassembly™.”

Table 4.4. *The frequency and percentage of the first theme used*

Codes	Frequency	Percentage
Use of eco-friendly or sustainable materials	20	9.13%
Use of recycled or regenerated materials	21	9.59%
Use of renewable energy or reduction of carbon footprint	17	7.76%
Reduction of waste or use of circular design principles	15	6.85%
Water conservation or use of sustainable water management practices	11	5.02%
Biodiversity conservation or use of responsible land/source use practices	10	4.57%
Use of innovative techniques	10	4.57%
Theme-1 total		47.49%

4.2.2. Ethical fashion and labor practices

This theme highlights the importance of ethical standards in the fashion industry. The code's characteristics include using certificates or labels to convey sustainability or ethical standards, ethical working practices such as fair pay and safe working conditions, responsible and ethical use of resources, and the non-use of animal experiments or materials that do not harm animals. Using this theme emphasizes ethical values and sustainability principles in the fashion industry.

When the videos are analyzed, it is observed that 5.02% of the content contained codes related to this theme. Only 4 videos mention the presence of certifications from

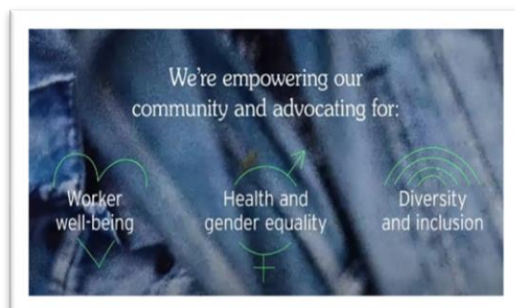


Figure 4.14. *Levi's, Building a Better, More Sustainable Future | Levi's®, 2022*



Figure 4.15. *Koton, #BetterCotton #YaşamaSaygı, 2022*

different brands. These certifications are People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Fair Trade, and BCI. PETA is the largest organization in the world that protects

animal rights and opposes animal testing, suffering, and exploitation. It enjoys global support. If a brand has a PETA-approved product, it signifies that it is cruelty-free and not tested on animals. (*About PETA*, n.d.).

Table 4.5. *Theme 2*

Theme 2. Ethical Fashion and Labor Practices	
Codes	Examples
1. Use of certifications or labeling to communicate sustainability or ethical standards	“PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals),” “Fair Trade,” “Better Cotton Initiative”
2. Ethical labor practices, including fair wages and safe working conditions	“women empowerment,” “worker well-being,” “health and gender equality,” “diversity and inclusion,”
3. Use of responsible or ethical sourcing practices (e.g., avoiding conflict minerals)	“Sustainable cotton production system,” “under Fair Trade certificate,” “supporting indigo turtles projects,” “raw materials used in the products”
4. No animal testing or use of cruelty-free materials	“No animal testing,” “PETA,” “animals treated ethically and responsibly,”

Fair Trade brings about changes in trade by ensuring improved pricing, better working conditions, and fair agreements for farmers and workers in developing nations. When a brand possesses the Fair-Trade certificate, it indicates that the production processes adhere to internationally agreed-upon standards and that farmers and workers have a voice. (*What Is Fairtrade?*, n.d.) Lastly, the Better Cotton Initiative focuses on the sustainability of cotton by preserving and restoring the environment. It aims to enhance the lives of cotton farmers and workers and establish a more sustainable and socially responsible cotton production system. (*The World Does Not Just Need Cotton, It Needs Better Cotton.*, n.d.)

Table 4.6. *The frequency and percentage of the second theme used*

Codes	Frequency	Percentage
Use of certifications or labeling to communicate sustainability or ethical standards	4	1.83%
Ethical labor practices, including fair wages and safe working conditions	4	1.83%
Use of responsible or ethical sourcing practices (e.g., avoiding conflict minerals)	2	0.91%
No animal testing or use of cruelty-free materials	3	1.37%
Theme-2 total		5.94%

Apart from the certification content, the second code of this theme includes videos that touch upon ethical labor practices such as women empowerment, working conditions, and diversity and inclusion, accounting for only 4 videos. The following code linked

under only 2 videos addresses responsible or ethical sourcing practices such as “Sustainable cotton production system,” “under Fair Trade certificate,” and “raw materials used in the products.” The last code under this theme focuses focusing no animal testing and cruelty-free materials PETA-approved products automatically fulfill this code. In contrast, the other videos focus on projects supporting coral reforestation or the conservation of indigo turtles under this code.

4.2.3. Transparency and traceability of materials and supply chain

The third theme contains the concept of transparency and traceability of materials and supply chain and three codes associated with this theme by allocating 25 videos out of 54 videos.

Table 4.7. Theme 3

Theme 3. Transparency and Traceability of Materials and Supply Chain	
Codes	Examples
1. Disclosure of suppliers or production facilities	“PETA,” “Recover™,” “Woolmark company,” “Resortecs,” “wiser wash,” “Fair Trade,” “BCI,”
2. Traceability of raw materials or finished products through the supply chain	“PETA,” “Fair Trade,” “Recover™,”
3. Transparency of the production process	“%100 of denim is sustainable”, “given link includes garments material used,” “environmental impact of production.”, “social and environmental impact of Production,” “Better Cotton Initiative,” and “The factories where the garments were made.”

The first code of the theme is being transparent about suppliers and production facilities. The 7 videos in this code include information about their production facilities

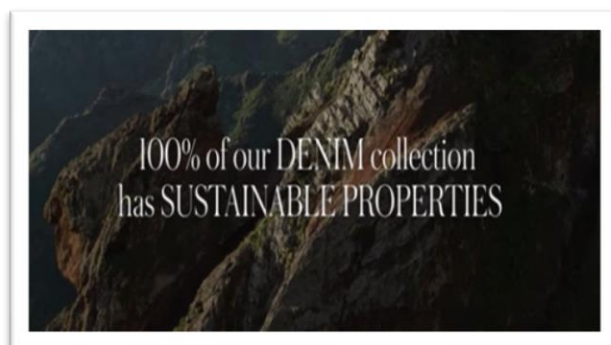


Figure 4.16. Mango, DENIM COLLECTION with SUSTAINABLE PROPERTIES | MANGO SS22, 2022



Figure 4.17. C&A, At C&A, we are committed to increasing the use of sustainable raw materials. #wearthechange. 2022

and suppliers such as “Recover™,” “Woolmark company,” “Resortecs,” or have a “PETA or Fair-Trade certificate.”

The following code, which is traceability of raw materials or finished products through the supply chain, includes 5 videos with more specific information gathered from the videos to evaluate more accurately. This information comprises internationally recognized certificates, suppliers, or producers. The last code linked under this theme checks for the materials and machines used and their production’s social and environmental impact. In the 15 videos, brands often provide information about their garment’s content by adding links to their sites in the video statement sections or ends.

Table 4.8. *The frequency and percentage of the third theme used*

Codes	Frequency	Percentage
Disclosure of suppliers or production facilities	7	3.20%
Traceability of raw materials or finished products through the supply chain.	5	2.28%
Transparency of the production process	15	6.85%
Theme-3 total		12.33%

4.2.4. Consumer empowerment

25 videos classified under this theme include at least one visual, textual, or auditorial content, linking 7 codes together. The codes under this theme are focused on providing consumers information about recycling, sustainability, and responsible consumption and choices to make environmentally conscious decisions and be a part of sustainable practices. This theme is the second most outstanding among the other themes.

The first code focuses on providing information about recycling, sustainability, or responsible consumption by sharing details on videos regarding the recycling process, fabrics, or machines. The videos include the second code, which highlights sustainable and ethical product choices, which refer to the products produced considering their environmental impacts, such as using organic cotton or recycled polyester, free cruelty-free, certifications or labels, etc.

Table 4.9. Theme 4

Theme 4. Consumer Empowerment	
Codes	Examples
1. Providing information on sustainability, recycling, or responsible consumption to consumers	“Showing recycle process,” “showing fabrics or machines for sustainability.”
2. Offering sustainable or ethical product choices to consumers	“Used recycling polyester etc.,” “used organic cotton,” “cruelty-free,” “certifications,” “labeling,”
3. Providing options for recycling or responsible disposal of products	“Maximize recyclability,” “recyclable,” “durable,”
4. Provide information on how much of their grants are recyclable, available for redesign products, have sustainable materials, are responsibly sourced, or what they have done so far	“%100 of denim is sustainable”, “%70 of dresses are kind”, “viscose will come from responsible sources,”
5. Recycling incentive programs to encourage customers	“Bring back 5 items of unwanted clothing and receive %15 off”,
6. Providing information about the sources of the world or offering choices on how to prevent causes	“Let the ocean continue to thrive,” “eliminate fibers sourced from endangered forests,” “for lower impact, for a better world,” “join us to reduce ocean garbage,”
7. Using technology to enhance the consumer experience (such as Augmented Reality-	“Animal crossing game”

The following code focuses on product usage after the processing cycle. Inscriptions such as recyclables, durable, or maximize recyclability linked with this code and videos include this type of information collected under providing options for recycling or responsible disposal of products. The next code informs consumers about their choices and the environmental impact of the products they purchase. In the videos

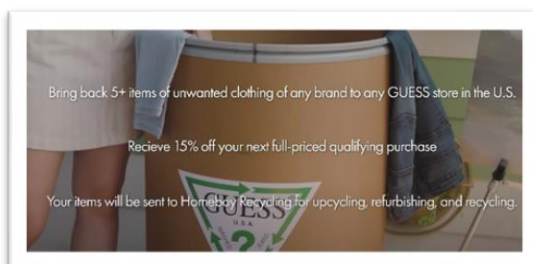


Figure 4.18. Guess, Introducing the GUESS Recycling Program with Homeboy Industries ♻️, 2022



Figure 4.19. Uniqlo, 22FW UNIQLO DOWN RECYCLE, 2022

included, they are transparent about what they have done so far or how much of their garments are recyclable and have sustainable materials. There are also numerical rates or future-oriented information such as “%70 of dresses are kind, viscose will come from responsible sources”, or by 2025, %100 of their garments will be sustainable.

The fifth code is recycling incentive programs take place on only one video represented Guess brand as Bring back 5 items of unwanted clothing and receive %15 off. The videos convey messages such as “Let the ocean continue to thrive,” “Eliminate fibers sourced from endangered forests,” “For lower impact, for a better world,” and “Join us to reduce ocean garbage” linked under providing information about the sources of the world or offering choices on how to prevent causes code. And only video belongs to H&M linked under the last code of using technology to enhance the consumer experience by giving and dream code for the Animal Crossing game to promote their all-vegan collection.

Table 4.10. *The frequency and percentage of the fourth theme used*

Codes	Frequency	Percentage
Providing information on sustainability, recycling, or responsible consumption to consumers	11	5.02%
Offering sustainable or ethical product choices to consumers	21	9.59%
Providing options for recycling or responsible disposal of products	11	5.02%
Provide information on how much of their grants are recyclable, available for redesign products, have sustainable materials, are responsibly sourced, or what they have done so far	8	3.65%
Recycling incentive programs to encourage customers.		
Providing information about the sources of the world or offering choices on how to prevent causes	1	0.46%
	4	1.83%
Using technology to enhance the consumer experience	1	0.46%
Theme-4 total		26.03

4.2.5. Community and social impact

16 videos classified under this theme include at least one visual, textual, or auditorial content that links 5 codes together. The codes under this theme center on community and social impacts. All videos under this theme provide information about brands’ partnerships with nonprofit organizations and the production process, including a message by supporting projects or showing moments from the workspaces to show the community and social impacts of their brands.

Table 4.11. Theme 5

Theme 5. Community and Social Impact	
Codes	Examples
1. Supporting local communities through employment or other initiatives	“farmers,” “workers from underdevelopment countries,” “labors”
2. Charitable donations or partnerships with nonprofit organizations	“Tree-Nation,” “Parley’s,” “Woolmark Company,” “Ellen MacArthur Foundation,” “Homeboy Industries,”
3. Supporting diversity and inclusion in the workforce or in marketing campaigns	“Local workers from underdevelopment countries,” “inclusive marketing campaigns,”
4. Supporting local communities through their needs	“Clean water,” “sanitation,” “women empowerment,”
5. Supporting projects/ events for sustainability	“Run for the oceans,” “a journey to a better future,”

The first code of this theme included videos containing “farmers,” “laborers,” or “workers from underdeveloped countries” to support local communities through employment. Charitable donations and partnerships with nonprofit organizations linked with the videos sharing their partnerships’ information which demonstrates a commitment to social and environmental sustainability, such as “Tree-Nation,” “Parley’s,” “Woolmark Company,” “Ellen MacArthur Foundation,” “Homeboy Industries.”

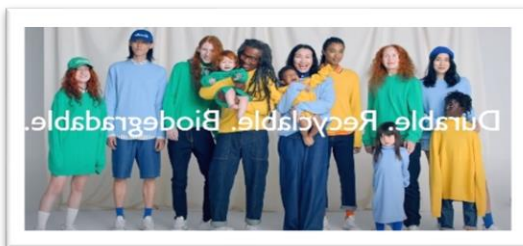


Figure 4.20. *United Colors of Benetton, Never-Ending Wool, 2021*



Figure 4.3. *Gap, Women + Water Alliance: Pramila, a cotton farmer and water access champion, 2022*

Local workers from underdeveloped countries or inclusive marketing campaigns are linked under the third code of this theme. The following code includes videos that are focused on the needs of local communities to work with fair conditions, such as “clean water,” “sanitation,” or “women empowerment.” The last code of the theme is centered on global or local events/projects campaigns.

Table 4.12. *The frequency and percentage of the fifth theme used*

Codes	Frequency	Percentage
Supporting local communities through employment or other initiatives	3	1.37%
Charitable donations or partnerships with nonprofit organizations	10	4.57%
Supporting diversity and inclusion in the workforce or marketing campaigns	1	0.46%
Supporting local communities through their needs	2	0.91%
Supporting projects/ events for sustainability	2	0.91%
Theme-5 total		8.22%

5. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1. Conclusion

Overall, a qualitative method was used in this study to look at how green marketing practices are depicted in fast-fashion brands' youtube advertisements. The study tried to find out what themes and messages were used by fast-fashion brands to get across with their green marketing practices through an analysis of YouTube ads of brands. The results showed many different aspects of videos, including gender representation, an occupational group focus, message appeal, and themes related to green marketing practices in the fast-fashion industry.

The majority of the videos were about product demonstrations and related campaigns, reflecting a high emphasis on marketing and promotion. The study also indicates the different types of appeals employed in the videos, with emotional appeals dominating, followed by rational and moral appeals.

The analysis of gender images in the videos revealed a range of representations, with both genders featured in some videos but only women or men in others. On the other hand, inclusion was discovered in only a small percentage of videos, indicating a limited representation of different characteristics such as color, gender, and age. This means that most of the videos are not inclusive and generally represent a specific segment, like the young and white population.

The study found that the brands highly value environmental sustainability and responsibility in their videos. This theme demonstrates that brands recognize the importance of addressing environmental concerns and promoting sustainable apparel creation techniques. Brands understand the critical need to address environmental challenges in the fashion sector, and they are working on promoting a more sustainable future by showing circularity and decreasing waste or displaying sustainable materials and manufacturing practices. However, more work must be done to ensure that the whole industry adopts strategies for long-term sustainability.

The importance of ethical fashion and labor practices in the brand videos is highlighted. It is important to see that firms are taking steps to guarantee that their employees have fair and safe working conditions. Moreover, showing global certificates and treating animals ethically make a brand appear more in the fast-fashion industry. Increased awareness among consumers makes ethical fashion and labor practices require a more place in the industry. Hence, brands should continue to prioritize ethical standards

and aim to make the fashion industry more just and equal since it has a lower frequency through videos.

In the fast-fashion, materials and supply chains must be transparent and traceable by being clear and easy to track, and brands are putting in much work to build trust and responsibility by showing off their open efforts and giving information about their supply lines. By emphasizing openness, companies may meet or exceed customer standards and help the fashion industry build a stronger sense of responsibility. This means working with providers, setting up ways to track products, and ensuring ethical standards are met at every step of the manufacturing process. Full transparency and traceability may take much work to achieve. However, they are important for fast-fashion companies to build long-term trust and make the fashion industry more sustainable and fair.

Consumer empowerment is an important element in brand videos as the second most frequent theme. Brands are getting more involved with their customers and giving them the tools they need to make smart fashion purchases. Brands are trying to get people to buy more responsibly by running campaigns, giving sustainable products, and encouraging them. However, more efforts are required to give consumers easily accessible resources, tools, and information to help them understand the complexity of the fast-fashion industry and make sustainable decisions.

The videos linked with the community and social impact highlight the significance of community and social effects as important problems in the fast-fashion industry. Brands are engaged with communities in underdeveloped countries, solving social issues and impacting positively. Brands are recognizing their role in promoting positive change, whether through partnerships with organizations, supporting local workers, or supporting diversity and inclusivity. To achieve lasting and significant transformations, brands should aim to expand their engagement, grow their social impact programs, and work with communities.

In conclusion, environmental sustainability and responsibility are prioritized while using environmentally friendly materials, waste reduction, renewable energy, and innovative techniques are emphasized. The theme of ethical fashion and worker practices highlights the importance of fair wages, safe working conditions, responsible sourcing, and animal welfare. Transparently communicating these practices is extremely important for establishing a relationship of trust and trust with consumers. Consumer empowerment and social and societal impact are essential in analyzing fast-fashion brands' green

marketing practices. In addition, brands have focused on their social and community impact by supporting local communities and promoting diversity and inclusion.

Today consumers are becoming increasingly interested in learning the origins of the items they purchase and their influence on the environment and the communities in which they are produced. Aligned with this fact, the videos analyzed are informative about these matters. Brands must meet this need by starting sustainable and ethical projects, promoting transparency, and giving customers knowledge and choices. The fast-fashion industry needs to keep working to protect the environment, ensure workers are treated fairly, and build supply chains and materials that are clear and easy to track. Brands should make empowering customers as one of their top concerns, and this can be done by giving customers the information, tools, and resources they need to make educated and responsible choices. The findings show an increasing emphasis on encouraging consumers to make sustainable choices through education campaigns, green initiatives, and transparency in supply chains. These efforts aim to positively impact society and establish stronger bonds with consumers who value social responsibility.

The fast-fashion industry needs to address and meet consumers' needs, such as style and quality, while reducing their environmental and social negative impacts, and the problems examined show that there are chances for the fast-fashion industry to become more ethical, socially responsible and good for the environment.

5.2. Discussion

This study highlights that green marketing practices are prominent in the fast-fashion industry despite fast-fashion being one of the industries that cause the most environmental pollution. The identified themes reveal the main areas that fast-fashion brands focus on in their green marketing practices. It seems that there are both gaps and supportive elements exist. The production of clothing using a combination of cotton and synthetic fibers results in significant waste, in addition to increased raw material costs and higher consumer demand for textiles. To address these issues, companies are exploring innovative ways of reusing materials. Some brands feature organic cotton production and participation in BCI initiatives aimed at reducing chemical usage and minimizing yarn waste through sustainable practices. Consequently, most recent innovations in the textile industry are focused on utilizing waste materials in yarn manufacturing (Rajkishore, 2021).

Many brands are prioritizing reducing waste and adopting circular design principles. However, most videos focused primarily on garment-caused waste, with only

one video touching on packaging waste. It's important to note that packaging waste can also have a significant impact on the environment. The Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive aims to address this issue and set targets for EU Member States to achieve by 2025 and 2030, such as a recycling target of at least 70% by the end of 2030 (EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service, n.d.). Regarding Jestratijevic et al. (2022), fashion brands that are examined are committed to passing through low-impact packaging in the near future with packaging solutions in sustainable and innovative ways. Moreover, these brands prioritize using water and energy more efficiently, reducing waste, and improving packaging logistics. Hence, the waste caused by packaging should be more apparent for both fast-fashion brands and consumers.

In the videos, it is mentioned to reduce water use during the production phase, such as wiser wash or ecologic jeans. Most of the chemical used in textile production occurs during 'wet processing,' i.e., dyeing, washing, printing, and fabric finishing. Up to 200 tons of water are used in textile dyeing and finishing mills for every metric ton of textile produced (Roy Choudhury, 2014). Studies indicate that denim washing methods have shifted towards water conservation. Advances in laundry technology, such as laser or ozone methods, have enabled minimal water usage (Paul, n.d.). The dyeing process also has a significant role in consumption and pollution, the reason for using large amounts of energy, water, and chemicals, as mentioned in the negative impacts of the fast-fashion industry. Hence, not dyeing or making this process more environmental helps reduce carbon footprint and energy and water conservation (Parisi et al., 2015). It can be said that the fast-fashion brands examined are aware of the wastewater situation and taking precautions for that.

Certifications and labels are crucial in the current fashion industry, yet it has been discovered that fast-fashion brands rarely mention them in their videos. However, sustainability certifications are crucial environmental indicators consumers rely on with limited product information. As a result, labels and certifications that promote sustainability play a significant role in consumers' decision-making (Thøgersen et al., 2010). The use of certificates and labels to communicate sustainability and ethical standards has only been mentioned in a few videos, demonstrating a potential transparency gap in the industry.

Research has shown that providing transparency and traceability regarding the contents of garments, suppliers, processes, and labor issues instills trust in consumers. By disclosing information about the content of the garments in their links or at the end of

videos, brands can show consumers that they value transparency. This study also revealed that some brands are already aware of this important issue. When consumers prefer to purchase sustainable products over non-sustainable ones, they value transparency and sustainable certifications. A good framework for certifications or labels should let less confusion and prove the companies' trustworthiness because consumers might not understand what all certification means in the fashion industry. For example, Fairtrade certification certifies food and cotton, but not all textile manufacturing. When there is less confusion, the consumer can make decisions more assured in a way that is good for the environment (Nandkeolyar et al., 2023; Shaw et al., 2006). For companies being transparent about their attempts would improve their relationship with consumers (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). This analysis shows that no brand has yet implemented blockchain technology for transparency. This system provides a unique identity for each product via serial numbers, radio frequency identification (RFID), etc. With this technology, a consumer quickly reaches out to a history of a sustainable product, ecolabels, suppliers, and contains (Guo et al., 2023).

Peattie's (2008) research suggests that companies are reconsidering their collaboration with suppliers due to the significant impact on the environment in the earlier stages of the supply chain. To monitor social and environmental performance, companies utilize tools such as "life cycle analysis" and "social and environmental supplier audits." Collaborating with suppliers to enhance their performance in these areas is a common practice. As an answer, including information due to supply chain activities such as Resorts, Woolmark company, or Recover™ shows that supply chain activities have an essential role.

Regarding Peattie (2008), there has been a trend toward techniques that involve cooperation between pressure groups and companies as part of cause-related marketing activities. Moreover, as of today, ten fast-fashion brands have mentioned in their YouTube videos that they have formed partnerships with other groups, such as "Tree-Nation," "Parley's," or "Woolmark Company," to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable business methods.

Only a few videos prioritize supporting female workers, improving their well-being, enhancing working conditions, and aiding female farmers and workers in developing nations. However, the part of the media is crucial for empowering women easier, which will lead to empowering women economically. Social media is a valuable and helpful way to give women economic power by spreading the results they have

achieved and continuing to reach out to women in many areas of economics and beyond and the social consideration of women for their economic empowerment (Ahmad, 2016). The videos showed some diversity in terms of gender representation, but there is still a need for more inclusivity. Very few videos featured individuals with different characteristics such as race, age, and gender. To appeal to a wider audience and promote inclusivity, it would be beneficial for fast-fashion brands to showcase a broader demographic.

The analysis also considered other criterias, such as active and proactive approaches and the presence of natural elements, and most of the videos had a positive tone and presented green apps positively. Peattie (2008) claims that fast-fashion brands should aim to communicate their long-term sustainability goals and initiatives more effectively and incorporate more nature-related visions to reinforce their environmental message, as sustainability refers to the company's ability to sustain long-term and green marketing practices over time. In conclusion, many videos needed a more proactive approach to the future and limited use of nature-related elements.

By improving gender representation, taking a proactive approach, incorporating elements of nature, and ensuring transparency and credibility, brands can better communicate their commitment to sustainability and ethical principles. These efforts can align with the values of individuals or groups who prioritize responsiveness, social responsibility, and high expectations in the fashion industry.

5.3. Suggestions

Initially, the research focused solely on YouTube videos, among other platforms where fast-fashion brands can engage in green marketing practices. Also, the analysis is limited to a specific time frame, making it difficult to generalize the findings to different periods. Examining the videos released between 2017 and March 2023 provided insights into a specific time frame. It is useful to conduct an analysis over a long period to assess the long-term impact of these green marketing practices.

Additionally, the study examined 54 examples of YouTube videos that may only represent part of the range of available content or all fast-fashion brands since the videos are the most updated videos related to green marketing on the platform for each brand. In addition, the study's primary focus on international and Turkish fast-fashion brands limits the applicability of the results to other geographic regions and their local brands that are not known globally. Including a broader range of brands from various countries in future research will provide a more diverse perspective.

By addressing these limitations and gaining a more comprehensive understanding, future research can expand the sample size to deepen our understanding of the fast-fashion brands' green marketing practices on YouTube.

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7. APPENDIX-1

1. [Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ ile #MaviDönüşüm Başladı! - YouTube](#)
2. [Mavi #İndigoTurtles Kampı - YouTube](#)
3. [Zeytin Derisi Koleksiyonu - YouTube](#)
4. [Wiser Wash X DeFacto Jeans - YouTube](#)
5. [Şahika Ercümen x Koton Suyu Saygı Kış 2023 Koleksiyonu - YouTube](#)
6. [#BetterCotton #YaşamaSaygı - YouTube](#)
7. [Enerji Verimliliği Haftası kutlu olsun! - YouTube](#)
8. [COLIN'S Ecologic Jeans - YouTube](#)
9. [5 Haziran Dünya Çevre Günü kutlu olsun! - YouTube](#)
10. [Daha İyi Yaşam, Daha Sürdürülebilir Pamuk - YouTube](#)
11. [Plastik Şişelerden Recycled Gömlek | Kişili - YouTube](#)
12. [Tomorrow | Kişili - YouTube](#)
13. [DENIM COLLECTION with SUSTAINABLE PROPERTIES | MANGO SS22 - YouTube](#)
14. [GERİ DÖNÜŞTÜRÜLMÜŞ VE GERİ DÖNÜŞTÜRÜLEBİLİR DENİM | MANGO İLKBAHAR/YAZ 2023 - YouTube](#)
15. [H&M's all-vegan Animal Crossing collection & fashion show - YouTube](#)
16. [A circular design story | H&M - YouTube](#)
17. [M&S | Start A Denim Love Affair - YouTube](#)
18. [PRIMARK | Fair Trade Partnership - YouTube](#)
19. [PRIMARK | Recover™ RColorBlend - YouTube](#)
20. [Creating a circular economy | NEXT Recycling Centre | Life at Next - YouTube](#)
21. [An Intro to Sustainable Development at Next | Sustainability at Next - YouTube](#)
22. [22FW UNIQLO DOWN RECYCLE - YouTube](#)
23. [JOIN:THE POWER OF CLOTHING Join us in our efforts to reduce ocean garbage. - YouTube](#)
24. [Renew Unisex | PrettyLittleThing - YouTube](#)
25. [Renew ft. Molly-Mae | PrettyLittleThing - YouTube](#)
26. [New Look | Poppy Deyes talks future-friendly dresses - YouTube](#)
27. [New Look | Poppy Deyes talks transitional-weather dressing - YouTube](#)
28. [Sustainable Jewelry - YouTube](#)
29. [Gap Inc. is committed to doing better by the environment - YouTube](#)
30. [The Fair Trade Difference - YouTube](#)

31. [Women + Water Alliance: Pramila, a cotton farmer and water access champion - YouTube](#)
32. [A Journey To A Better Future | adidas - YouTube](#)
33. [Run For The Oceans 2022 | Our Impact - YouTube](#)
34. [Bloom over Doom—turning science fiction to science fact, at Nike’s scale. #shorts - YouTube](#)
35. [Bloom over Doom | Move to Zero | Nike - YouTube](#)
36. [BOOHOO BY KOURTNEY KARDASHIAN BARKER | boohoo - YouTube](#)
37. [FOR THE FUTURE - SOLAR ENERGY | boohoo - YouTube](#)
38. [Never-Ending Wool - YouTube](#)
39. [Stylish, stretchy styles, crafted from recycled fabrics in colours to suit everyone. #WeDoTheFashion - YouTube](#)
40. [At C&A, we are committed to increasing the use of sustainable raw materials. #wearthechange - YouTube](#)
41. [Introducing the GUESS Recycling Program with Homeboy Industries !\[\]\(7e02a7aa288773ecb933fdf27a950318_img.jpg\) - YouTube](#)
42. [Young. Sexy. Sustainable. !\[\]\(4613cd839348b5b54c9804688420e89a_img.jpg\) #GUESSEco - YouTube](#)
43. [CLASSICS REBORN: Tommy Hilfiger x Shawn Mendes - YouTube](#)
44. [CLASSICS REBORN: Tommy Hilfiger x Shawn Mendes - YouTube](#)
45. [Building a Better, More Sustainable Future | Levi's® - YouTube](#)
46. [When they're made to last, we can all waste less. I Buy Better. Wear Longer. I Levi's - YouTube](#)
47. [Join life | Kids. Sustainable editorial - YouTube](#)
48. [About Pull&Bear Join Life - YouTube](#)
49. [Pull&Bear: Join Life - YouTube](#)
50. [Join Life | Massimo Dutti Men's Collection - YouTube](#)
51. [Join Life | Massimo Dutti Women's Collection - YouTube](#)
52. [Spring Summer 2022 Collection - YouTube](#)
53. [Bershka | New denim collection, part of The Jeans Redesign by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation - YouTube](#)
54. [Bershka | Resortecs - YouTube](#)