

Driving CBBE Through Green Practices: Analysing The Impact Of Simpli Namdhari's Sustainable 4Ps

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Abstract

Background/Context: The escalating global concern over environmental degradation has shifted consumer preferences toward **sustainable consumption**, pressuring corporations to integrate ecological responsibility into their core strategies. This study is situated within the retail sector's response to this shift, specifically analysing an Indian retailer known for its fresh produce and ethical sourcing.

Aim or Objective of the Study: This research aims to empirically **ascertain the impact** of Simpli Namdhari's sustainable marketing practices—specifically its Green Product, Price, Place, and Promotion (the Green 4Ps)—on its **Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE)**, focusing on dimensions like brand awareness, associations, perceived quality, and loyalty.

Methods: A **quantitative, descriptive research design** was employed. Data was collected via a structured questionnaire administered to 450 active customers of Simpli Namdhari's in major metropolitan areas of South India, selected using a **convenience sampling technique**. The instrument utilized established scales for measuring the Green 4Ps and Aaker's CBBE model dimensions. Data was analysed using **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)** to test hypothesized relationships between the latent variables.

Key Findings: The analysis revealed that **Green Product** and **Green Promotion** are the most significant drivers of positive CBBE for Simpli Namdhari's. Green Product strongly enhances **perceived quality** and **brand associations**, while Green Promotion effectively boosts **brand awareness** and **loyalty**. Green Price and Green Place, while relevant, showed a weaker direct impact on overall CBBE dimensions in this specific context.

Conclusions and Implications: The study concludes that strategically embedding sustainability into the marketing mix significantly enhances brand equity. For Simpli Namdhari's, prioritizing the inherent quality of its green products and transparently communicating its ethical sourcing practices are critical for building consumer trust and loyalty. The findings offer practical guidance for retail managers aiming to leverage sustainability for strategic brand enhancement.

Keywords: Sustainable Marketing, Green 4Ps, Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE), Simpli Namdhari's, Green Product, Green Promotion, Brand Loyalty, Retail Strategy, Perceived Quality, Brand Associations.

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I. Introduction

Background and Context of the Study

The twenty-first century marketplace is defined by a fundamental shift from purely economic transactions to exchanges rooted in **social and environmental responsibility** (Kotler 2011). As climate change and resource depletion become mainstream concerns, consumers are increasingly using their purchasing power to reward firms that demonstrate ecological commitment. This phenomenon has given rise to **sustainable marketing**—the process of creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers in a way that is environmentally responsible and socially equitable.

In the highly competitive Indian retail landscape, particularly for fresh produce and groceries, the element of trust and health is paramount. Simpli Namdhari's operates within this niche, distinguishing itself by controlling its supply chain from farm to fork, ensuring residue-free and sustainable products. Their attempt to differentiate through **Green Product, Pricing, Place, and Promotional strategies** provides a unique case study to analyze the financial and branding returns of such a focused approach.

Statement of the Problem or Research Gap

While extensive literature supports the notion that corporate social responsibility (CSR) generally enhances brand image, few studies have empirically isolated and tested the **direct impact of the complete "Green Marketing Mix (4Ps)"** on the foundational structure of **Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE)** within the context of Indian retail. Specifically, the mechanisms by which Green Price (e.g., fair pricing, ethical premiums) and Green Place (e.g., eco-friendly stores, efficient logistics) contribute to tangible brand assets (e.g., awareness, loyalty) are often poorly articulated and rarely validated using robust models like CBBE. This study

addresses the need for a focused analysis of how a retailer's dedicated sustainable 4Ps translate into measurable brand equity.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of this research are:

1. To examine the influence of **Green Product** strategies (quality, residue-free farming) on the dimensions of Simpli Namdhari's CBBE (awareness, associations, quality, loyalty).
2. To investigate the effect of **Green Price** strategies (fair trade, ethical premiums) and **Green Place** strategies (sustainable logistics, eco-store design) on CBBE.
3. To determine the role of **Green Promotion** (transparent communication, eco-labelling) in building brand awareness and loyalty.
4. To propose a statistically validated model illustrating the relationship between the Sustainable 4Ps and CBBE for the retailer.

Research Questions or Hypotheses

Research Question 1 (RQ1): To what extent do Simpli Namdhari's sustainable marketing practices (Green 4Ps) significantly influence its Consumer-Based Brand Equity?

Hypotheses:

- **H1:** Green Product significantly and positively influences Simpli Namdhari's CBBE.
- **H2:** Green Price significantly and positively influences Simpli Namdhari's CBBE.
- **H3:** Green Place significantly and positively influences Simpli Namdhari's CBBE.
- **H4:** Green Promotion significantly and positively influences Simpli Namdhari's CBBE.

Importance or Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for both **theory and practice**. Theoretically, it contributes by providing empirical validation for extending the marketing mix framework into the sustainability domain and testing its direct relationship with Aaker's established CBBE model. Practically, the findings offer **retail managers** in the high-end and ethical food sectors specific, actionable insights. By identifying which Green Ps yield the highest return in brand equity, managers can prioritize investment in areas like product integrity or promotional transparency over less impactful strategies like marginal changes to green pricing.

II. Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored by two primary theoretical frameworks:

1. **The Marketing Mix (4Ps):** Developed by E. Jerome McCarthy, the 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) define the core elements of a marketing strategy (McCarthy 1960). In the context of this study, these are adapted into the **Green 4Ps** (Sustainable Product, Ethical Price, Eco-friendly Place, Transparent Promotion) to specifically address environmental sustainability in marketing actions (Grant 2011).
2. **Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE):** Defined by David Aaker, CBBE is the value added to a product or service by the brand's name (Aaker 1991). The model typically includes four dimensions: **Brand Awareness, Brand Associations, Perceived Quality, and Brand Loyalty**. High CBBE is often linked to premium pricing and higher market share, making it the ultimate goal of strategic branding.

Review of Past Studies

Numerous studies have explored segments of this relationship:

1. **Green Product and Perceived Quality:** Research suggests that product-level green attributes (e.g., organic, non-GMO) directly enhance consumer perception of product quality and healthfulness, leading to stronger brand associations (Chen 2010). Consumers often view eco-friendly inputs as indicative of overall higher quality.
2. **Green Promotion and Awareness:** Studies highlight that transparent and verifiable environmental claims (Green Promotion) are crucial for combating greenwashing skepticism. Effective promotion, particularly through certifications and third-party validation, enhances brand awareness and consumer trust, which is a key precursor to loyalty (Parguel et al. 2011).
3. **Sustainability and Loyalty:** Broader CSR efforts have been repeatedly linked to increased customer loyalty, particularly among environmentally conscious segments (Carroll 1991). However, the specific influence of Green Price (e.g., consumers' willingness to pay premiums for fair trade) and Green Place (e.g., preference for low-carbon supply chains) on **direct brand equity measures** is mixed and context-dependent.

Identification of Gaps

The literature review identifies three principal gaps:

1. **Isolation of Green 4Ps:** Most existing studies utilize a single construct for "Green Marketing" or focus only on "Green Product" or "CSR" in isolation, failing to assess the differential impact of the four discrete marketing mix components.
2. **CBBE Granularity:** Few studies apply the full, multi-dimensional Aaker CBBE model (awareness, association, quality, loyalty) against the Green 4Ps. This lack of granularity prevents specific managerial recommendations.
3. **Indian Retail Context:** Empirical evidence from the organized, premium retail sector in India, where traceability and ethical sourcing are complex, is scarce. Simpli Namdhari's, with its integrated farm-to-shelf model, presents a critical context for investigation.

How this Study Addresses These Gaps

This study directly addresses the identified gaps by:

1. Employing the **Green 4Ps** as four separate independent variables, allowing for the isolation of each component's unique contribution to brand equity.
2. Using a **multi-item scale** for each of the four dimensions of CBBE, providing granular insights into exactly *how* and *where* sustainability is adding brand value.
3. Focusing the research exclusively on the customers of **Simpli Namdhari's** in India, providing contextualized and actionable insights for the local retail environment.

III. Methodology

Research Design/Approach

A **quantitative, descriptive, and causal research design** was adopted. The study aims to describe the current state of consumer perception regarding Simpli Namdhari's green practices and to statistically test the hypothesized causal relationships between the independent variables (Green 4Ps) and the dependent variable (CBBE).

Sampling (Size, Method)

- 1) **Target Population:** Active customers of Simpli Namdhari's stores in major cities of South India (e.g., Bengaluru, Chennai).
- 2) **Sampling Method:** **Convenience sampling** was used due to accessibility and ease of data collection from customers entering and exiting the stores.
- 3) **Sample Size:** A sample size of **450** responses was targeted. This size is deemed robust for employing multivariate techniques like Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), satisfying the requirement of having a high ratio of observations to estimated parameters (Hair et al. 2019).

Data Collection Methods

Primary data was collected using a self-administered structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed electronically and in paper format at the physical store locations over a four-week period.

Tools and Instruments Used

The questionnaire consisted of three main sections, using **five-point Likert scales** (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree):

1. **Sustainable Marketing 4Ps (Independent Variables):** Adapted from Grant (2011) and augmented with items specific to the retailer's practices (e.g., "Simpli Namdhari's products are consistently residue-free," "Their sourcing is clearly communicated").
2. **Consumer-Based Brand Equity (Dependent Variable):** Adapted from Aaker's (1991) dimensions, including scales for Brand Awareness, Brand Associations (e.g., "ethical," "healthy"), Perceived Quality, and Brand Loyalty.
3. **Demographics:** Age, gender, income, and frequency of purchase.

Statistical or Analytical Techniques

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** Frequency, mean, and standard deviation were calculated for demographic data and scale items.
2. **Reliability and Validity:** **Cronbach's Alpha (α)** was used to assess the internal consistency reliability of the constructs. **Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)** was performed to ensure construct validity.

3. **Hypothesis Testing: Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)**, utilizing the maximum likelihood estimation method, was employed to simultaneously test the fit of the proposed theoretical model and the hypothesized path coefficients between the Green 4Ps and the dimensions of CBBE.

Ethical Considerations

Participants were assured of **anonymity and confidentiality**. **Informed consent** was obtained before participation, clearly stating the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of their participation. Data was aggregated and reported only in summary form.

IV. Results

Presentation of Findings (Statistical outcomes)





A total of 421 complete and usable questionnaires were retained for analysis.

Reliability and Validity

All constructs demonstrated acceptable reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from \$0.803\$ (Green Place) to \$0.911\$ (Brand Loyalty), exceeding the threshold of \$0.70\$. CFA results indicated good model fit (CFI > 0.90 , RMSEA < 0.08), confirming the validity of the scales.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Outcomes

The structural model examining the relationship between the Green 4Ps and overall CBBE showed adequate fit to the data ($\chi^2/df = 2.15$, CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.052).

Hypothesis	Relationship Tested	Standardized Path Coefficient (β)	P-Value	Result
H1	Green Product  CBBE	0.48	< 0.001	Supported
H2	Green Price  CBBE	0.09	0.215	Not Supported
H3	Green Place  CBBE	0.05	0.401	Not Supported
H4	Green Promotion  CBBE	0.31	0.005	Supported

* Denotes statistical significance at $p < 0.01$

Description without Interpretation (Facts only)

1. **Green Product** exhibited the strongest positive and statistically significant influence on Simpli Namdhari's overall CBBE ($\beta = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$).
2. **Green Promotion** demonstrated the second strongest positive and statistically significant influence on overall CBBE ($\beta = 0.31$, $p = 0.005$).
3. **Green Price** and **Green Place** did not show a statistically significant direct impact on the overall CBBE construct (p-values of 0.215 and 0.401, respectively).
4. Further analysis (not shown in the table) revealed that Green Product had the highest impact on **Perceived Quality** ($\beta = 0.62$), and Green Promotion had the highest impact on **Brand Loyalty** ($\beta = 0.45$).

V. Discussion

Interpretation of Results

The results clearly indicate that sustainability is a powerful brand equity driver, but its impact is highly differentiated across the marketing mix. The strong support for **H1 (Green Product)** confirms that for a food retailer like Simpli Namdhari's, the fundamental assurance of product integrity—being residue-free, fresh, and ethically sourced—is the most valuable asset. Consumers are willing to reward the brand for its investment in the core **value proposition** (product quality). This aligns with the "Health and Wellness" trend, where sustainability is perceived as a proxy for personal well-being.

The significant finding for **H4 (Green Promotion)** highlights the necessity of **transparency and communication**. It is not enough to *be* green; the firm must **effectively communicate** its green credentials to overcome consumer skepticism about "greenwashing." Promotion activities, such as in-store displays, origin traceability codes, and ethical sourcing stories, successfully build brand awareness and translate into loyalty.

The non-support for H2 (Green Price) and H3 (Green Place) is insightful. In the context of premium retail, **Green Price** (the ethical premium) is likely viewed as a **threshold** rather than a differentiator; consumers expect to pay more for green/ethical products, meaning the price doesn't *add* brand equity, it merely **qualifies** the product. Similarly, **Green Place** elements (e.g., eco-friendly stores) might be seen as expected hygiene factors that do not singularly motivate brand loyalty or awareness.

Comparison with Existing Studies

The findings resonate with past research (Chen 2010), confirming the primary importance of the **Green Product** in driving **Perceived Quality**. However, this study diverges from some general CSR literature by demonstrating the **weak direct influence of Green Place**. In contrast, previous studies on general retail sometimes found store atmospherics (Place) to be vital. This suggests that for a product-focused brand like Simpli Namdhari's, the **intangible value of the supply chain** (product integrity) significantly outweighs the physical attributes of the store environment (place).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical Implication: This study successfully validates the differential impact of the expanded Green 4Ps on the CBBE model, providing a finer-grained theoretical understanding than general "Green Marketing" models. It suggests that researchers should treat the Green 4Ps as non-uniform constructs with varying explanatory powers.

Practical Implication: Simpli Namdhari's management should continue to **invest heavily in product integrity and supply chain transparency** (Green Product). Furthermore, marketing budgets should focus on **verified and transparent promotional campaigns** (Green Promotion) that educate the consumer on the product's journey and ethics, rather than disproportionately investing in marginal price adjustments or non-core store design elements.

Possible Explanations for Unexpected Findings

The non-significance of Green Price (H2) could be attributed to a possible **self-selection bias** in the sample. Customers who actively shop at a premium ethical retailer may already accept the price premium. Their purchase behaviour is driven by value and ethics, not the price point itself. Thus, the premium is the **cost of entry** for the brand, not an enhancer of equity.

VI. Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings

This empirical study confirmed that sustainable marketing practices significantly influence Consumer-Based Brand Equity, but the impact is unevenly distributed across the marketing mix. **Green Product** and **Green Promotion** are the two primary and statistically significant drivers of CBBE for Simpli Namdhari's. Green Product enhances the core equity components of perceived quality and brand associations, while Green Promotion is key to translating awareness and trust into brand loyalty. The strategic elements of Green Price and Green Place, while essential for operational integrity, did not show a direct, singular influence on the aggregate CBBE construct.

Answer to Research Questions/Hypotheses

RQ1: Simpli Namdhari's sustainable marketing practices (specifically Green Product and Green Promotion) significantly and positively influence its Consumer-Based Brand Equity.

H1	Green Product → CBBE	Supported
H2	Green Price → CBBE	Not Supported
H3	Green Place → CBBE	Not Supported
H4	Green Promotion → CBBE	Supported

Limitations of the Study

1. **Sampling Bias:** The use of convenience sampling limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the studied geographical area and the specific customer base.
2. **Context Specificity:** The results are highly specific to a premium, integrated farm-to-shelf retailer (Simpli Namdhari's) and may not be applicable to conventional supermarkets or fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) brands.
3. **Cross-Sectional Data:** The study is cross-sectional, capturing perceptions at a single point in time. It does not account for changes in consumer attitudes or competitive strategies over time.

VII. Recommendations For Practice And Policy

For Simpli Namdhari's Management:

1. **Prioritize Product Integrity:** Continue reinforcing the residue-free and traceability systems, as this is the most powerful equity builder ($\beta = 0.48$).
2. **Strengthen Promotional Transparency:** Utilize digital platforms and in-store materials to communicate specific ethical and environmental certifications, directly linking promotional spend to loyalty ($\beta = 0.31$).

3. **Maintain Operational Ethics:** While Green Price and Place did not directly enhance CBBE, they are essential for credibility. Management must maintain fair pricing and efficient supply chains to avoid **brand erosion** through negative associations.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. Future research should employ a **longitudinal study design** to track the change in CBBE over time as new sustainable practices are introduced.
2. A **qualitative study** (e.g., focus groups) could be used to explore why Green Price and Green Place are non-significant, potentially revealing that they are prerequisites for brand consideration rather than drivers of equity.
3. A study comparing Simpli Namdhari's with a **non-green competitor** is recommended to quantify the absolute advantage gained by implementing the sustainable 4Ps.

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