



Greenwashing Practices in Business Organizations: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

As environmental consciousness grows among consumers, many businesses have begun marketing their products and services with an emphasis on environmental responsibility and ecological conservation. Unfortunately, not all these claims are genuine. Some companies deliberately mislead customers by making false or exaggerated environmental claims about their offerings, such practices are known as greenwashing. Since this deceptive behaviour is particularly prevalent in the business sector, this study seeks to identify common greenwashing tactics used by organizations and examine how these practices affect organizational performance and sales outcomes. The research employs a systematic literature review methodology, drawing documents from the Web of Science (WoS) database. The PRISMA framework guided the selection process, ultimately yielding 57 relevant documents focused on greenwashing practices in business organizations. A Meta table was constructed to synthesize findings and identify areas for future research.

A consistent pattern emerged across the reviewed literature shows that, while greenwashing may generate positive results initially, sustained deceptive practices combined with increasing consumer awareness eventually led to detrimental effects on organizational operations and profitability. Based on this comprehensive review, a synthesized conceptual framework has been developed to guide subsequent research on greenwashing.”

Keywords: Business, greenwashing, systematic review, web of science

Introduction

Environmental concerns and pollution awareness have been steadily growing since environmental advocacy emerged in the 1960s. In recent decades, climate change, air pollution, and waste management have emerged as central global challenges influencing consumer attitudes and business practices. The Special Euro barometer 464 survey reveals that an overwhelming 94% of European citizens demonstrate personal dedication to protecting the environment, with their primary worries focusing on climate change, air quality, and waste management (European Commission, 2017). In response to this global rise in environmental awareness, numerous manufacturers have begun implementing more sustainable production methods (Heras Saizarbitoria et al., 2020). Organizations are motivated to create eco-friendly products and brands for multiple purposes, including: meeting consumer expectations, exploring emerging markets, increasing product worth, and building favourable brand reputations and corporate social responsibility to gain public approval (Booi Chen & Teck Chai, 2010).

The term “greenwashing,” derived from “whitewashing” to imply concealment, was coined in 1986 by environmentalist Jay Westerveld (Bladt et al., 2024). It refers to deceptive tactics used by firms to appear environmentally responsible via unsubstantiated claims, eco-themed packaging, or nature-inspired imagery without genuine sustainability commitments. These practices undermine the establishment of truly viable eco-friendly markets (Vangeli et al., 2023). Greenwashing involves marketing products as environmentally friendly despite failing to meet such standards, thereby influencing consumer attitudes toward sustainable or circular products. It negatively affects green brand equity by eroding trust and fostering skepticism. While authentic green brands evoke positive emotions and encourage eco-conscious lifestyles, greenwashing heightens perceived risks, generates uncertainty, and diminishes favorable consumer perceptions and behaviors (Chen & Chang, 2013; Lin et al., 2017). Research shows that product-specific deceptive claims have the most damaging impact on brand attitudes (Bladt et al., 2023). Green products have become widespread, and their commercial appeal is increasing. Sustainable, eco-friendly components make green products less polluting, more renewable, and ultimately less detrimental to the environment. Many buyers are willing to pay more for sustainable and green products. Camilleri et al. (2023) found that most consumers believe they should buy more sustainable services and believe service providers and producers should be held accountable for their environmental practices when providing those products/services. Consumers treat green products and services differently when compared to conventional services and brands.

Consumers typically do not prefer to purchase products advertised as being green, or sustainable, without having some level of knowledge about that product. Most people switch to green products if they find them to represent a more desired alternative. Confusion has been proven to reduce consumer pleasure and buying intention (European Commission, 2017). Consumers are confused when there are too much product resemblance and information, which arises when consumers misunderstand what is being portrayed as green features of hotel products/services. This lack of knowledge regarding green products/services leads to green buyer confusion.

Greenwashing is increasingly recognized as an unethical business practice that intentionally misleads consumers seeking environmentally responsible products and services. Greenwashing is being one of the unethical practices of business organization which makes the consumer confused. Firms employ multiple deceptive strategies, making it difficult for consumers to identify genuine sustainability efforts across sectors. Industries such as tourism, food, logistics, and hospitality are particularly vulnerable due to their high reliance on environmental imagery and experiential value. Studies indicate that such unethical practices negatively influence perceived trustworthiness, brand image, satisfaction, loyalty, and overall brand equity (Ha et al., 2022; Santos et al., 2023; Kaur et al., 2023).

In developing countries such as Nepal, greenwashing poses a more complex challenge due to limited consumer awareness, weak regulatory enforcement, and information asymmetry. Industries like food, logistics, tourism etc. are seems to have more false claims communication. People are also not so aware about the eco-friendly products and services so the to analyses the quality of the product is not the primary task of the customer at developing nation. This study tries to identify the various studies where such unethical practices were performed and to acknowledge how they impact in the day to day functioning as well as the overall brand image of the business organization.

Rising consumer awareness of environmental issues has boosted the commercial appeal of green products (Yang et al., 2015). However, unethical practices remain widespread, including unsubstantiated claims, selective disclosures, questionable certifications, lobbying for harmful regulations, and partnerships with environmentally damaging firms (Vangeli et al., 2023). These greenwashing tactics erode consumer trust, undermine genuine sustainability efforts, and significantly harm sales, perceived trustworthiness, brand image, satisfaction, loyalty, and overall brand equity (Ha et al., 2022; Ioannou et al., 2023; Kaur et al., 2023; Santos et al., 2023b).

Greenwashing also heightens consumer confusion and perceived risks, further diminishing confidence in environmental claims and discouraging green purchases (Li et al., 2020). In the hospitality industry, customer perceptions are shaped by marketing efforts, information transparency, and certifications, with varying types of greenwashing such as false, vague, or hidden claims adversely affecting beliefs and behaviours (Bladt et al., 2024; Majeed & Kim, 2023). Mitigating these issues through societal awareness, incentives for recycling, digitalization, and innovative packaging can foster authentic green marketing (Skackauskiene & Vilkaite-Vaitone, 2022).

Studying greenwashing is essential for restoring trust, enhancing corporate reputation, reducing perceived risks, and promoting true sustainability. This is particularly critical in Nepal's hospitality sector, where tourism driven by natural beauty and cultural heritage forms the economic backbone. As demand for eco-friendly accommodations grows, hotels increasingly adopt sustainable practices, yet prevalent greenwashing threatens industry credibility. Deceptive claims mislead tourists, damage Nepal's destination image, undermine competitive advantages in attracting loyal eco-conscious visitors, and risk harming fragile ecosystems. Investigating these discrepancies between proclaimed and actual environmental efforts is vital for ensuring authentic stewardship, building stakeholder trust, and supporting long-term sustainability.

The main objective of this study is to explore the concept of greenwashing and its impacts within the marketing field, with a particular emphasis on the hospitality industry. To achieve this, the research pursues several specific objectives. First, it aims to identify emerging issues and challenges related to greenwashing practices. Second, it seeks to understand the various theories that contribute to existing studies on the topic. Third, it will develop the concepts of key constructs and variables relevant to the investigation. Fourth, it intends to synthesize findings from prior research. Finally, it will formulate a conceptual framework based on these studies to serve as a solid theoretical foundation.

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

Search Strategy

The Web of Science (WoS) was utilized for data extraction for this study, as it is recognized as the most reliable and trusted global database (Saleem et al., 2021). Following the systematic guidelines ensured a transparent selection process, enhancing the robustness and reliability of

this review. The resources of the study were identified for the review on June 1st, 2024, from the WoS core collection, covering the period from 2013 to 2024. During data screening, the review was limited to peer-reviewed, English-language articles with at least two citations. To assess the literature on greenwashing, the researchers conducted a Topic search yielding 717 articles. Boolean Proximity search was used to find specific variations of the term, such as greenwashing, greenwash, greenwashed, and greenwashes, the Boolean for the term “greenwash*,” was used to refine the articles. The exclusion criteria and selection process are detailed in the flow diagram. After screening, 577 documents were excluded, leaving 140 articles for review. Again, to ensure accuracy, the researchers conducted additional filtering. Keyword combinations were used to exclude articles that are not related with the terms like topic. So only those articles with the terms (“Business OR Corporate OR Business organization OR Business Marketing AND Greenwashing*) are only included for the study. This process excluded 68 documents. 72 articles were sought for retrieval and again the exclusion of some irrelevant articles were performed. For this the articles which are peer reviewed and early access articles were only included for the further review process. 12 articles did not match the inclusion criteria. Ultimately, 57 articles met the review criteria. The researchers analyzed these articles to identify recurring topics and their frequency of occurrence. This analysis helped uncover gaps and trends in the literature, providing valuable insights into the field of greenwashing.

Study Selection

The data selection process was meticulously executed in two distinct stages to ensure the inclusion of the most relevant and high-quality sources. In the first stage, the focus was on a preliminary analysis of the titles and abstracts of the documents. This involved a careful review of these sections to identify documents that appeared to align with the predefined selection criteria. Documents that seemed to meet these criteria were then retained for a more detailed evaluation. In the second stage, the selection process became more intensive, concentrating on the introductions and conclusions of the documents that had passed the initial screening. This stage involved an in-depth review of these sections to ensure that the documents truly satisfied the selection criteria. The aim was to verify the initial assessments and confirm the relevance and quality of the documents based on a comprehensive examination of their introductory and concluding sections. By implementing this two-tiered approach, the researchers aimed to meticulously filter the documents. This method allowed for a thorough verification process, ensuring that only the most pertinent and high-quality sources were included in the final

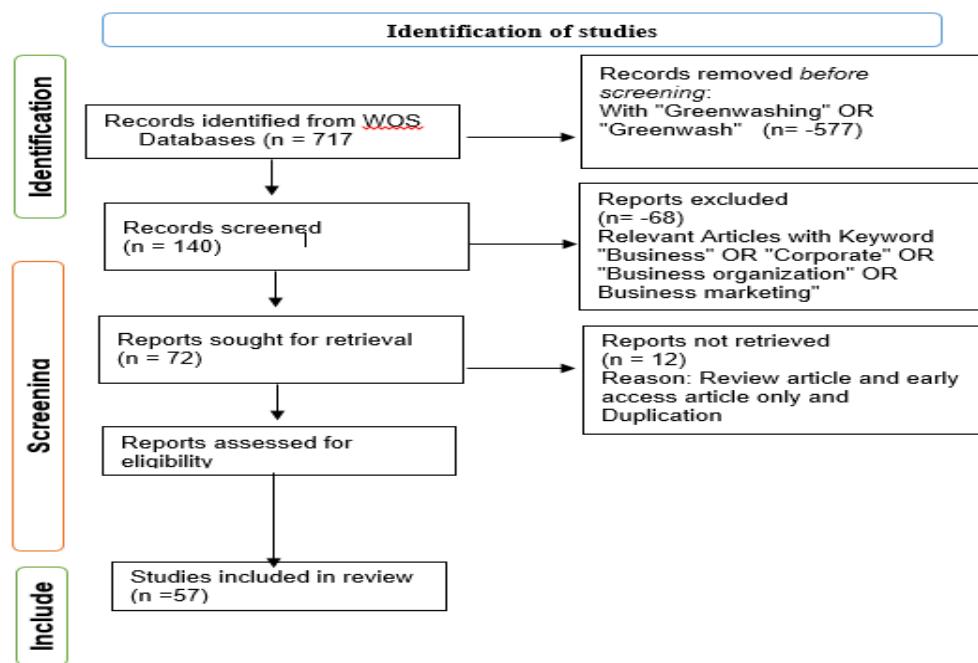
review. This rigorous selection process was crucial for maintaining the integrity and relevance of the research findings.

Data Extraction Process

Figure 1 illustrates the PRISMA refinement process utilized to curate the research library for this review. The process began with an initial search that identified 717 documents. Following this, a systematic exclusion of 577 irrelevant documents was conducted. The remaining 140 sources were then subjected to a dual-screening process. The first screening assessed the sources for their relevance to the review topic. For this step relevant Articles with keywords like “Business” OR “Corporate” OR “Business organization” OR Business marketing” were used for filtering. The second screening ensured that only reviewed articles with open access are selected for the review process. This process led to the exclusion of 68 sources from the previous screening and 12 sources from the second screening process. The remaining 57 sources were then meticulously examined and used for the review process of the study. This visual representation details the rigorous selection process that was undertaken to ensure the inclusion of high-quality and relevant sources for this comprehensive review.

Figure 1

PRISMA flow diagram



Literature Review

Conceptualization and Definition

The term “greenwashing” originates from the concept of “whitewashing,” signifying a cover-up, and was coined in 1986 by the American environmentalist Jay Westerveld (Bladt et al., 2023). Greenwashing refers to the practices used by certain firms to portray ecologically friendly manufacturing methods through claims, green-colored packaging, and nature-evoking visuals without actually demonstrating an environmental commitment. This situation poses a challenge to the creation of a market that is both ecologically and economically viable (Vangeli et al., 2023). Greenwashing is a marketing approach in which items are promoted as environmentally friendly even when they do not satisfy such standards. This strategy has the ability to impact customer perceptions and attitudes toward circular product adoption (Adhikari, 2024).

Greenwashing has an adverse effect on the green brand or brand equity. Green brands elicit pleasant feelings, and customers who feel good about purchasing environmentally friendly items are more likely to embrace a “green” lifestyle. Greenwashing, on the other hand, has a detrimental influence on customer perceptions and actions, generating green uncertainty and increasing perceived risks. (Lin et al., 2017; Chen and Chang, 2013). Findings indicate that misleading greenwashing concerning specific products has the most pronounced adverse impact on brand attitude. (Bladt et al., 2023)

Empirical Review

Papagiannakis et al. (2024) researched “Are publicly traded tourism and hospitality provider’s greenwashing?” The study aimed to identify the valid evidence on the extent to which tourism and hospitality providers greenwash and whether customers penalize tourism and hospitality providers for greenwashing or not. Descriptive research design was used in the study. The data from 253 traded tourism and hospitality firms for the period 2004–2017 were used in this study. The result found that greenwashing reduces firm sales by decreasing trustworthiness, as it is seen as a deceptive attempt to appear more environmentally responsible. The researcher concluded that practicing the greenwash, significantly decline the sales on any organization.

The study conducted by Majeed & Kim, (2023) establishes a conceptual framework for understanding greenwashing, exploring customer perceptions and their antecedents and consequences in the hospitality sector. Analyzing literature from 2000 to 2022 through a scoping review approach, 54 relevant works were included. Findings indicate that customer

perceptions are shaped by hotel operators' environmental efforts, such as green knowledge sharing, marketing, information disclosure, resource conservation claims, and certifications. These perceptions influence eco-friendly behaviors, with customer green attitudes playing a mediating role. The proposed model aids stakeholders in addressing customer skepticism, developing effective green strategies, and positively influencing green behavior. This review fills gaps from prior inconsistent and superficial studies, presenting a new conceptual model for future research (Majeed & Kim, 2023).

The research by Bernard et al. (2024) indicates that sustainability communications need to be effective when it comes to the promotion of positive attitudes and environmentally-conscious behavior among consumers of hotels. Although it is an important issue, there is limited research on the ability of various message factors to interact in such a way that they lead to the increased persuasiveness of environmental messages. To counter this, two studies of onsite and online hotel guests were done. The research find that the restriction-based language design has a positive impact on the intentions of booking, as it has an effect on the perceptions of environmental performance, greenwashing, and environmental concern. The study makes a contribution to the literature on sustainability marketing by examining linguistic tools that the hospitality managers can integrate in their sustainability marketing communications. Other practical and theoretical implications are also discussed.

The article by Alyahia et al., (2024) investigates how green authenticity (GA) and green transparency (GTR) are moderators of the correlation between greenwashing and guest green trust (GT), which eventually affect patronage intentions (PI) to green hotels. Through a quantitative methodology, a survey of 309 respondents was conducted to find out their experience at green hotels. According to structural equation modelling (SEM) in Smart PLS 4, some of the main findings indicated that hotel greenwashing has negative implications on green trust and further patronage intentions, such as intentions to stay (IS) in green hotels and willingness to pay a premium (WPP) in green hotels. Green trust was also found to play an important mediating role in greenwashing-patronage relationship. Importantly, the positive relationship between GT and PI was increased and the negative effect of greenwashing on the green trust was diminished through higher perceptions of GA and GTR. Such findings indicate that the adverse impacts of greenwashing on green-hotel patronage are reversible by encouraging authentic environmental sustainability and articulating the sustainability policies. The green-hotel managers can also have practical implications such as preventive strategies

to overcome the negative consequences of greenwashing to ensure the sustainability of their operations in the long term.

The article by Zhao et al. (2024) examined that the relationship between the intention and satisfaction in greenwashing behavior in hospitality industry and achievement of psychological contracts. It gathers quantitative and qualitative data by employing a mixed-method approach. The results show that the realization of psychological contracts enhances greenwashing behavior, of which moral disengagement mediates. Also, there is an ethical climate that moderates the relationship between fulfilment of psychological contract and moral disengagement. In particular, in the teams that have a high ethical climate, the positive correlation between moral disengagement and the fulfilment of psychological contract is weakened. This study helps us to appreciate the processes that affect the greenwashing behaviors of service workers.

The paper of Bladt et al. (2023) examined how various greenwashing practices (GWP) affect consumers' brand attitudes. They propose a two-dimensional typology of GWP, differentiating between the type of claim (false, vague, or hidden information) and the level of initiation (product or firm), resulting in six unique categories of GWP. In a survey, we presented 315 German participants with these six GW scenarios and measured their brand attitudes. The results show that respondents' reactions varied significantly across different GWP, indicating the necessity of distinguishing between various forms of GW to fully understand its impact from the consumer perspective.

Ha et al. (2022) examined the impact of greenwashing on consumer brand avoidance, considering the mediating role of brand hypocrisy and the moderating role of CSR–CA belief. Data were collected from a survey of 317 consumers. Hypotheses were tested using a first-stage moderated mediation model with bootstrapping in the PROCESS program in SPSS. Results show that greenwashing positively influences brand avoidance, with brand hypocrisy acting as a partial mediator. Additionally, higher levels of CSR–CA belief weaken the positive effects of greenwashing on both brand hypocrisy and brand avoidance. The mediating role of brand hypocrisy is also diminished with stronger CSR–CA beliefs. Based on these findings, it is recommended that brands honor their environmental claims and strike a balance between quality control, manufacturing costs, and environmental protection. Moreover, government and environmental organizations should educate the public that corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate capability (CA) are not mutually exclusive.

The paper by K. Zhang et al. (2023) explored the impact of Chinese companies' environmental performance (EP) on greenwashing, using data from listed companies in China between 2010 and 2018. Analysing through legitimacy and signal theories, it finds a negative correlation between EP and greenwashing, supporting signal theory. The study also examines how environmental subsidies and political connections influence this relationship. Results show that EP reduces greenwashing more effectively in companies receiving environmental protection subsidies, and this effect is stronger in state-owned enterprises compared to non-state-owned ones. These insights can help government departments reform environmental subsidies and improve state-owned enterprises' environmental governance.

Neureiter et al. (2023) examined the effects of abstract and concrete claims on perceived greenwashing, environmental boycotting and buycotting intentions, brand evaluation, and purchase intentions, with a focus on the moderating role of consumers' environmental knowledge. Study 1 (511 participants) found that abstract claims increased perceived greenwashing, while concrete claims did not, and environmental knowledge had no effect. Study 2 (423 participants) showed that concrete claims also led to perceived greenwashing, though less than abstract ones, and environmental knowledge helped detect greenwashing. Both studies found that perceived greenwashing increased boycotting intentions but not buycotting, and Study 2 linked perceived greenwashing to lower purchase intentions. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Theoretical Review

Studies on greenwashing are mostly based on signaling theory, attribution theory, the stakeholder theory, and the consumer skepticism theory. Signaling theory describes the use of environmental claims as market signals by firms to convey their high environmental performance but when such claims are false or unverifiable, they mislead information symmetry and diminish signal credibility, creating consumer distrust (Chen et al., 2023). The attribution theory also indicates that consumers proactively explain the purpose of corporate claims towards environmental sustainability attributing a genuine sustainability motive or a cynical attitude, which largely determines trust and purchase intentions. In situations where the consumers view green claims as selfish as opposed to value based, negative appraisals and resistance actions will arise.

The stakeholder theory underscores the point that organizations have a responsibility towards more than shareholders, as they have a responsibility to the rest of the stakeholders,

such as consumers, communities, and the natural environment. Greenwashing is a breach of these ethical commitments which compromises legitimacy and value in the relationship over the long term. Also, the consumer scepticism theory points out that exposure to exaggerate or false environmental claims again and again increases scepticism of a green marketing and perceived risk and reduces the green brand equity. Collectively, these theoretical views explain that greenwashing disrupts the establishment of trust, increases confusion and adversely affects consumer attitudes, satisfaction and loyalty especially in experience based sectors like the hospitality industry.

The review of several research papers has used various theories in their study. Researchers have usually linked greenwashing to its various business functions, using theories like; Decoupling of Institutional Theory (Guo et al., 2018a); (Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, 1977); (Beverland & Luxton, 2005), Schema Incongruity Processing Theory (Goodstein, 1993), Construal Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010), Theory of Psychological Reactance, Theory of Psychological Distance (Trope & Liberman, 2010) consumer theory (Policarpo et al., 2023), Schema Incongruity Processing Theory (Clark & Fiske, 2014), Human Association Memory theory (Anderson, J.R., Bothell, D., Lebiere, C. and Matessa, 1998; Keller, 1993), Adaptive network model (Janiszewski, C. and Van Osselaer, 2000; van Osselaer, S.M. and Alba, 2000). Out of reviewed articles, the majority of research studies embrace the institutional theory. According to this theory, businesses are intricately connected to various social systems. The operational endeavors of enterprises are required to align with existing social systems, which encompass the regulations, standards, and guidelines governing business activities (Zhu, 2016).

Table 1*Meta Table*

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Gupta et al., 2019)	Self/other oriented green experiential values: Measurement and impact on hotel-consumer relationship	International journal of hospitality management	Exploratory Sequential Design:	Trust is mainly built through self-oriented experiences, emphasizing the need for clear communication of green efforts to environmentally concerned guests.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Papagiannakis et al., 2024)	Are publicly traded tourism and hospitality provider's greenwashing?	Tourism Management	Descriptive Research design	Greenwashing reduces firm sales by decreasing trustworthiness, as it is seen as a deceptive attempt to appear more environmentally responsible.
(Koseoglu et al., 2021)	Exploring the connections among CSR performance, reporting, and external assurance: Evidence from the hospitality and tourism industry	International journal of hospitality management	Panel data analysis	The results confirmed the signaling theory while rejecting the presence of a greenwashing tendency in the hospitality and tourism sector.
(Dhanda, 2014)	The role of carbon offsets in achieving carbon neutrality: an exploratory study of hotels and resorts	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	Exploratory research design	The paper's findings provide strategic information for hotels and resorts aiming to achieve legitimacy and viability in the offset market, and also benefit consumers by identifying the best carbon-neutral hotels and resorts.
(Rahman et al., 2015)	Consequences of "greenwashing": consumers' reactions to hotels' green initiatives	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	Quasi-experimental design	Skepticism was negatively related to both the intention to participate in the linen reuse program and the intention to revisit, but positively related to environmental concern, while the intention to participate in the linen reuse program and the intention to revisit showed a significant positive correlation.
(Majeed & Kim, 2023)	A reflection of greenwashing practices in the hospitality industry: a scoping review	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	Systematic Literature review	Customer perceptions of greenwashing are influenced by hotel operators' green efforts, such as marketing, information disclosure, and certifications, which in turn shape customer behaviors, moderated by their green attitudes.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Bernard et al., 2024)	Sustainability Communication in Hotels: The Role of Cognitive Linguistics	Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	Descriptive Research design	The study found that restriction-based language in sustainability communication enhances booking intentions by improving perceived environmental performance and reducing perceived greenwashing, suggesting it effectively mitigates skepticism.
(Skackauskienė & Vilkaite-Vaitone, 2022)	Green Marketing – a New Norm: A Qualitative Evidence of Green Marketing Challenges and Future Perspectives in High-Low Context Communication Cultures	Cultural Management: Science and Education, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2022)	Phenomenological Research:	The findings revealed that green marketing challenges vary by industry and enterprise size, and suggested that raising societal awareness, promoting inspiring examples, offering recycling incentives, digitalizing processes, and innovating packaging could help address these challenges.
(Alyahia et al., 2024)	Greenwashing Behavior in Hotels Industry: The Role of Green Transparency and Green Authenticity	Sustainability	Descriptive Research design	Hotel greenwashing reduces green trust and patronage intentions (IS and WPP). Green trust mediates the relationship between greenwashing and patronage. Green authenticity (GA) and transparency (GTR) moderate this impact, with higher perceptions weakening greenwashing's negative effect on trust and enhancing the GT-PI link.
(Zhao et al., 2024)	Greenwashing in workplace: The influencing mechanism of psychological contract fulfillment and the moderating role of ethical work climate	Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	Exploratory Sequential Design	Psychological contract fulfillment increases moral disengagement among workers, subsequently heightening greenwashing behaviors. A strong ethical climate in hotels mitigates service workers' engagement in greenwashing practices.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Montero-Navarro et al., 2021)	A bibliometric analysis of greenwashing research: a closer look at agriculture, food industry and food retail	British Food Journal	descriptive research design	The academic study of greenwashing has evolved in three phases: ground-setting (2003-2010), trail-blazing (2011-2015), and remarkable growth (2016-2020). Originating from CSR literature, it has expanded into areas like stakeholder management, marketing, communication, and audit practices. Further research is needed, particularly in agriculture, the food industry, and food retail sectors...
(Poveda-Pareja et al., 2024)	The paradox between means and end: workforce nationality diversity and a strategic CSR approach to avoid greenwashing in tourism accommodations	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Descriptive Research design	The study found a positive direct relationship between WND (waste reduction and recycling) and CSR practices. Moreover, integrating CSR actions into corporate strategy through a strategic CSR orientation enhances the bottom-line impact of CSR activities.
(Guo et al., 2017)	A Path Analysis of Greenwashing in a Trust Crisis Among Chinese Energy Companies: The Role of Brand Legitimacy and Brand Loyalty	Journal of Business Ethics	Descriptive Research design	DEBG has both a direct negative effect on GEBT and an indirect influence through the crucial mediating role of green energy brand legitimacy. Additionally, brand loyalty acts as a moderating factor that can mitigate the energy brand trust crisis.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Rahman & Nguyen-Viet, 2023)	Towards sustainable development: Coupling green marketing strategies and consumer perceptions in addressing greenwashing	Business Strategy and the Environment	Descriptive Research design	Greenwashing positively influences Corporate Financial Performance (CFP), but this effect is mitigated by stringent environmental regulations and reversed by low media favorability. In emerging economies with high information asymmetry, stakeholders struggle to identify greenwashing practices.
(Bladt et al., 2023a)	The influence of greenwashing practices on brand attitude: A multidimensional consumer analysis in Germany	Business Strategy and the Environment	Descriptive Research design	False greenwashing on product-level has the most negative impact on consumer beliefs. Vague greenwashing has a slight positive effect, and hidden information falls in between. False greenwashing claims have the most detrimental impact on consumer beliefs, while vague claims are least negative, and hidden information is moderate.
(Xiao et al., 2022)	Will Greenwashing Result in Brand Avoidance? A Moderated Mediation Model	Sustainability	Descriptive Research design	The study confirmed a positive impact of greenwashing on brand avoidance, partially mediated by brand hypocrisy. However, consumers who believe in the tradeoff between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Ability (CA) are less significantly influenced by greenwashing.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Ha et al., 2022)	Greenwash and green brand equity: The mediating role of green brand image, green satisfaction and green trust and the moderating role of information and knowledge	Business Ethics, Env & Resp.	Descriptive Research design	. The findings indicate that while greenwashing does not significantly impact green brand equity, it adversely affects green brand image, satisfaction, and trust, which in turn positively influence green brand equity through full mediation. Additionally, information and knowledge moderate the relationship between greenwashing and green brand equity, amplifying its adverse effects.
(Guo et al., 2018b)	Timely or considered? Brand trust repair strategies and mechanism after greenwashing in China—from a legitimacy perspective	International Marketing management	Experimental Research:	Green brand legitimacy significantly mediates the process of green brand trust repair. When greenwashing behaviors are exposed, enterprises can implement a strategic approach to repair green brand trust with stakeholders in a timely and considered manner...,
(Lopes et al., 2023)	The Dark Side of Green Marketing: How Greenwashing Affects Circular Consumption?	Sustainability	Cross sectional Research	Greenwashing positively influences consumers' environmental concerns and their inclination to seek sustainable information. These factors subsequently enhance their intentions toward circular consumption.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Zhang et al., 2018)	The influence of greenwashing perception on green purchasing intentions: The mediating role of green word-of-mouth and moderating role of green concern	Journal of cleaner production	Descriptive Research design	Consumers' perceptions of greenwashing not only directly reduce green purchasing intentions but also indirectly affect them through negative green word-of-mouth (WOM). Additionally, stronger green concerns amplify the negative impact of greenwashing perceptions on green purchasing intentions.
(Ioannou et al., 2023)	The Impact of Perceived Greenwashing on Customer Satisfaction and the Contingent Role of Capability Reputation	Journal of Business Ethics	Descriptive Research design	Perceived greenwashing in green product innovation (GPI) negatively impacts the ACSI index due to overpromised corporate policies rather than inadequate implementation. A firm's capability reputation mitigates this impact on customer satisfaction.
(Santos et al., 2023b)	The greenwashing effects on corporate reputation and brand hate, through environmental performance and green perceived risk	Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration	Correlational Research:	This study finds that greenwashing damages brands by lowering corporate reputation through perceived environmental performance and increasing green perceived risk. Reducing greenwashing practices can improve corporate environmental perceptions, lower perceived risks, enhance reputation, and strengthen customer relationships.
(Bernini & La Rosa, 2024)	Research in the greenwashing field: concepts, theories, and potential impacts on economic and social value	Journal of Management and Governance	Phenomenological Research	The study offers a robust theoretical framework to comprehend the complex facets of greenwashing and its potential effects on corporate value creation.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Cavazos et al., 2023)	Institutional and Individual Effects of Greenwashing on Food Waste	Sustainability	Exploratory Sequential Design	Surveys showed that 15.6% of patrons were aware of composting options, yet 83.3% were willing to compost. After increasing awareness through a field experiment, compost bin usage rose by 2.5 percentage points, diverting approximately 13.4 pounds (about 6.1 kg) of waste from landfills.
(Aji & Sutikno, 2015)	The Extended Consequence of Greenwashing: Perceived Consumer Skepticism	International Journal of Business and Information	Correlational Research:	Greenwashing is linked to green consumer confusion (GCC), perceived skepticism (PCS), and perceived risk (GPR), suggesting deceptive advertising leads to confusion, skepticism, and risk perceptions. GCC did not significantly affect green trust (GT); PCS and GPR negatively impacted GT, reducing trust in green products. Consumer confusion, skepticism, and perceived risks did not predict switching intentions away from green products.
(Yang et al., 2020)	Greenwashing behaviors: causes, taxonomy and consequences based on a systematic literature review	Journal of Business Economics and Management,	Descriptive Research design	The impact of multinational corporations (MNCs) on emerging markets has generally been positive; however, their practices pose a threat of greenwashing due to insufficient external environmental regulation and oversight.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Zhang et al., 2023)	Relationship analysis between greenwashing and environmental performance	Environment, Development and Sustainability	Longitudinal research design	The study finds a negative correlation between environmental performance (EP) and greenwashing, supporting signal theory. Environmental subsidies enhance EP's ability to reduce greenwashing, particularly in subsidized enterprises. State-owned enterprises show a stronger negative impact of EP on greenwashing compared to non-state-owned counterparts. Consumers may perceive truthful green marketing as greenwashing due to prior negative experiences with deceptive marketing practices.
(Szabo & Webster, 2021)	Perceived Greenwashing: The Effects of Green Marketing on Environmental and Product Perceptions	Journal of Business Ethics	Explanatory Sequential Design	
(Neureiter et al., 2023)	Is It Greenwashing? Environmental Compensation Claims in Advertising, Perceived Greenwashing, Political Consumerism, and Brand Outcomes	Journal of Advertising	Longitudinal research design	The findings indicate that perceived greenwashing predicts intentions for environmentally boycotting but not environmentally boycotting. Perceived greenwashing is unrelated to brand evaluation but negatively correlates with purchase intentions. Concrete compensation claims positively influence both brand evaluation and purchase intentions.
(Policarpo et al., 2023)	Social cynicism, greenwashing, and trust in green clothing brands	International Journal of Consumer Studies	Correlational Research	The study confirmed that social cynicism negatively impacts green brand trust through perceived greenwashing. Conspicuous consumption moderates this indirect effect, with a stronger influence observed when conspicuous consumption is more salient.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Qayyum et al., 2023)	Impact of green marketing, greenwashing and green confusion on green brand equity	Spanish journal of marketing	Explanatory Sequential Design	Excessive product packaging predicts greenwashing and green confusion positively. Greenwashing negatively impacts green brand equity, moderated by brand credibility.
(Akturan, 2018)	How does greenwashing affect green branding equity and purchase intention? An empirical research	Marketing intelligence and planning	Experimental Research:	Green brand associations and brand credibility positively influence green brand equity, which in turn strongly impacts consumer purchase intentions. However, greenwashing negatively affects green brand associations and brand credibility, indirectly influencing green brand equity and purchase intentions negatively.
(Mu & Lee, 2023)	Greenwashing in Corporate Social Responsibility: A Dual-Faceted Analysis of Its Impact on Employee Trust and Identification	Sustainability	Cross sectional Research	This study found that greenwashing in primary-stakeholder-oriented CSR was negatively related to trust, and greenwashing in secondary-stakeholder-oriented CSR had a negative and significant impact on employee-company identification. Interestingly, each type of CSR greenwashing had no bearing on the other's trust and identification. Furthermore, greenwashing in both CSR types indirectly decreases employee loyalty through the respective mediators of trust and identification

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Arouri et al., 2021)	Greenwashing and product market competition	Finance research letters	Longitudinal research design	The study reveals that Performance Management Control (PMC) reduces greenwashing in industries with high environmental costs. In less competitive sectors, managers of more polluting firms tend to engage in more greenwashing, where PMC's impact is weaker amid stronger incentives for private benefits. Conversely, in highly competitive industries with substantial environmental costs, increased transparency via PMC effectively mitigates greenwashing, enhancing economic efficiency through reliable information disclosure.
(Chen & Chang, 2013)	Greenwash and Green Trust: The Mediation Effects of Green Consumer Confusion and Green Perceived Risk	Journal of Business Ethics	Experimental Research:	Green consumer confusion and green perceived risk negatively mediate the relationship between greenwashing and green trust, demonstrating their role in influencing trust perceptions.
(Chen et al., 2020)	Greenwash and green purchase behavior: the mediation of green brand image and green brand loyalty	Total Quality Management & Business Excellence	Cross sectional Research	firms greenwash negatively influences their consumers' green purchase behavior. Besides, this research proves that firms greenwash is negatively related to both their green brand image and their consumers' green brand loyalty that would positively affect their consumers' green purchase behavior
(Boncinelli et al., 2023)	Effect of executional greenwashing on market share of food products: An empirical study on green-colored packaging	Journal of Cleaner Production	Experimental Research:	Findings demonstrate that greenwashing food products can potentially increase their market share compared to ordinary food.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Zhang et al., 2022)	Does Greenwashing Influence the Green Product Experience in Emerging Hospitality Markets Post-COVID-19?	Sustainability	Cross sectional Research	Green awareness influences purchase intentions of lodging consumers directly and indirectly; the most important factors influencing whether people have a positive or negative green lodging experience are those perceived risks held by consumers.
(Neureiter & Matthes, 2023)	Comparing the effects of greenwashing claims in environmental airline advertising: perceived greenwashing, brand evaluation, and flight shame	International Journal of Advertising	Experimental Research:	perceived greenwashing decreases consumers' brand evaluations; green advertising with concrete compensation claims has positive effects on brand evaluations; consumers accept green claims offering concrete green compensations; even consumers with low topical environmental knowledge perceive greenwashing in vague, false, and abstract compensation claims.
(Vangeli et al., 2023)	From greenwashing to green B2B marketing: A systematic literature review	Industrial Marketing Management	Systematic literature Review	Contributes to a modern understanding of greenwashing by providing a new framework for the typology, drivers, and consequences of greenwashing.
(Galletta et al., 2024)	A PRISMA systematic review of greenwashing in the banking industry: A call for action	Research in International Business and Finance	Meta-Analysis	The key findings show that greenwashing has garnered substantial attention recently, as evidenced by the growing number of studies. It indicates that banks have been accused of greenwashing by overstating their sustainable policies and environmental commitments without actual implementation.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Santos et al., 2023a)	A systematic literature review on greenwashing and its relationship to stakeholders: state of art and future research agenda	Management Review Quarterly	Bibliometric Analysis	This article identifies key aspects of greenwashing literature, examines recent studies on its impact on stakeholders, and highlights trends, gaps, and future research opportunities, focusing on branding, consumer behavior, B2B relationships, and greenwashing taxonomy.
(Blasi et al., 2024)	network perspective of cognitive and geographical proximity of sustainable tourism organizations: evidence from Italy	Sustainable tourism organizations	Systematic Literature review	The results indicate geographical clusters of tourist accommodations linked by strong cognitive proximity based on well-communicated sustainability principles, suggesting these are not instances of greenwashing, as the companies involved have implemented concrete actions and signal them through various sustainability certifications.
(de Freitas Netto et al., 2020)	Concepts and forms of greenwashing: a systematic review	Environmental science Europe	Systematic Literature Review	Identified four main types of greenwashing: firm-level executional, firm-level claim, product-level executional, and product-level claim.
(Oppong-Tawiah & Webster, 2023)	Corporate Sustainability Communication as 'Fake News': Firms' Greenwashing on Twitter	Sustainability	Descriptive Research	Greenwashing harms consumers' trust in products and influences their purchase intentions

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Wei, 2023)	Does the “Green-washing” and “Brown washing” of Corporate Environmental Infor-mation Affect the Ana-lyst Forecast Accuracy	Sustainability	Descriptive Re-search	The more environmental infor-mation corporations measure or disclose, the more accurate analysts’ forecasts become, with a strong, significant correlation between the environmental details in special reports and forecast accuracy, especially in cases of “matching words to deeds” and “brown washing” by corporations
(Sharma et al., 2023)	Factors affecting green purchase behavior: A systematic literature review	Business, strategy and the environment	Systematic Liter-a-ture review	This paper identifies factors affecting consumers’ green pur-chase intentions and behaviors, offering strategic insights for marketers to enhance marketing opportunities for green prod-ucts.
(Sailer et al., 2022)	Greenwashing and Blue washing in Black Friday-Related Sus-tainable Fashion Mar-keting on Instagram	Sustainability	Exploratory Se-quential Design:	Findings indicate that consumers’ critical attitudes toward Black Friday and high ad skepticism lead to positive evalua-tions, whereas sustainable pur-chase behavior leads to negative evaluations.
(H. Chen et al., 2019)	Greenwashing in ho-tels: A structural model of trust and behavioral intentions*	Journal of Clean-er Production	Descriptive re-search design	Results suggest that perceived greenwashing significantly reduces green trust, which is positively associated with re-visit intention and intention to participate in green practices, and negatively associated with negative word of mouth.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Bernini et al., 2023)	Measuring greenwashing: A systematic methodological literature review	Business Ethics, the Environment and Responsibility	Systematic Literature Review	Greenwashing practices have significantly increased since 2000, dedicated empirical research only began to emerge around 2012, highlighting a significant temporal gap between the phenomenon's appearance and scientific interest in it.
(Paul & Barari, 2022)	Meta-analysis and traditional systematic literature reviews—What, why, when, where, and how?	Psychology Marketing	Meta Analysis	Outlined the steps of the meta-analytic process, including question definition, data collection, data analysis, and reporting results, explaining the primary purpose, tasks required of the meta-analyst, and best practice recommendations for each step
(Quoquab et al., 2022)	“Do they mean what they say?” Measuring greenwashes in the sustainable property development sector	Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	Exploratory Sequential Design	The exploratory factor analysis revealed that greenwashing in sustainable property development (GSPD) is a multi-dimensional construct with dimensions of false claims and misleading claims, which were confirmed by the confirmatory composite analysis.
(Bottega et al., 2024)	Advertising, ecolabeling and consumers' beliefs: Greenwashing or not?	Economics Letters	Descriptive research	When consumers overestimate quality, increasing informative advertising can be counterproductive, as it lowers perceived quality. Additionally, when the ecolabel is more stringent and information about quality is more accurate, persuasive advertising widens the gap between perceived and actual quality.

Author	Title	Journal	Research Design	Findings
(Mohd Suki & Mohd Suki, 2015)	Consumers' environmental behavior towards staying at a green hotel	Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal	Explanatory sequential research	Returning tourists' intention to stay at a green hotel was positively influenced by perceived behavioral control and attitude, while the subjective norm was not significantly related to this intention.

Note: Author's creation from various literature review

5.4 Research Gap

A comprehensive review of existing literature reveals significant research gaps in the study of greenwashing within the hospitality industry. These gaps span both methodological and theoretical dimensions, indicating substantial opportunities for future investigation (Saleem et al., 2021). Several critical areas require deeper exploration regarding consumer responses to greenwashing. Researchers need to examine how inherent consumption values embedded in green experiences influence green trust (Chen & Chang, 2013), green brand equity (Ha et al., 2022), and customers' intentions to return. Understanding the prevalence of greenwashing practices across hospitality establishments remains unclear (TerraChoice, 2010), as does the extent to which consumers demonstrate negative purchasing behaviors toward companies engaged in such practices. The actual impact on firm sales and revenue streams warrants empirical investigation.

Additionally, the relationship between different types of greenwashing and consumer brand attitudes deserves attention (Nyilasy et al., 2014). This includes examining how greenwashing perceptions lead to brand avoidance behaviors and exploring the mechanisms through which perceived greenwashing affects customer satisfaction. The role of overly ambitious environmental product innovation policies and their interaction with a company's capability reputation presents another unexplored dimension (Dangelico & Pujari, 2010). The hospitality sector lacks sufficient empirical evidence connecting CSR performance with Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) adoption and external assurance mechanisms for CSR reporting. This gap extends to understanding how corporate reputation intersects with greenwashing to influence brand hatred, environmental performance perceptions, and green perceived risk among consumers (Chen & Chang, 2012). Further research should address the environmental practices of service workers in hotels, particularly when they receive non-environmentally

friendly products to use in their daily operations. The combined influence of various message factors on persuasiveness and their ability to drive pro-environmental behavior among hotel guests remains underexplored.

The regulatory landscape surrounding greenwashing requires thorough examination, specifically regarding how firms position themselves in relation to value drivers within existing frameworks. Developing effective strategies to minimize the erosion of guest trust and behavioral intentions caused by greenwashing represents a pressing need. The impact of social cynicism on trust toward “green” product brands and eco-friendly offerings requires systematic investigation. A fundamental gap exists in establishing robust theoretical frameworks that explain the complex relationships between corporate reputation, greenwashing practices, and brand hatred. These frameworks should also account for how these dynamics shape environmental performance perceptions and influence green perceived risk among various consumer segments (Chen, 2012). Addressing these interconnected research gaps will provide a more complete understanding of greenwashing in the hospitality industry and offer practical insights for businesses, policymakers, and consumers navigating the complexities of environmental sustainability claims(Kim et al., 2015).

Table 2*Future Research Agendas*

Author	Future agenda
(Gupta et al., 2019)	Future research should examine the unique values of green and non-green hotel services, their interactions, and separate effects on trust, brand equity, and re-patronage intentions.
(Papagiannakis et al., 2024)	Future studies could use experimental designs.
(Koseoglu et al., 2021)	There is room for improvement for non-CSR reporters and non-GRI adopters.
(Dhanda, 2014)	Future work should include more direct contact with hotels and resorts through site visits, surveys, or interviews.
(Rahman et al., 2015)	Future research could explore how customer environmental education, both offline and online, affects relationships in this review’s conceptual framework.
(Majeed & Kim, 2023)	Future research should explore the impact of customer environmental education on proposed relationships in the conceptual framework and analyze customer perceptions of greenwashing.

(Bernard et al., 2024) Longitudinal or experimental designs might reveal causal relationships. Future studies could also examine moderators like income, education, travel purpose, environmental consciousness, and environmental certification.

(Skackauskiene & Vilkaite-Vaitone, 2022) Future studies should examine different hotel types and use subdivided samples for thorough results. Star hotels have more systematic management compared to B&Bs and budget hotels.

(Alyahia et al., 2024) Future research should strive for balanced samples, explore green hotels' perspectives on greenwashing effects, and use longitudinal or experimental designs to understand causal relationships.

(Zhao et al., 2024) Future research should include control variables like cash flow or firm leverage to better understand hotel resource availability.

(Montero-Navarro et al., 2021) Longitudinal or dynamic data analysis is crucial, as cross-sectional survey data can't capture dynamic effects on GEBT.

(Poveda-Pareja et al., 2024) Future research should adopt field investigation, interview and questionnaire to obtain more reliable research data.

(Guo et al., 2017) Longitudinal or dynamic data analysis is crucial for understanding the dynamic effect on GEBT and the relationship between GEBT and green energy brand equity.

(Rahman & Nguyen-Viet, 2023) Future studies should compare different countries and cultures to enhance the generalizability of the findings. An experimental or longitudinal design is preferred.

(Bladt et al., 2023b) Future research should adopt longitudinal designs to examine changes in greenwash, green brand image, satisfaction, trust, and consumer knowledge across various stages of environmental regulations.

(Bladt et al., 2024) Future research should prioritize collecting data from diverse industries and countries, while employing robust experimental designs to investigate the multifaceted roles of brand legitimacy in rebuilding brand trust following greenwashing incidents.

(Xiao et al., 2022) Future research can further build on our findings by studying the impact of greenwashing across different demographic groups, cultural contexts, and industries.

(Ha et al., 2022) Future research should include comparative studies across different cultural backgrounds and environmental contexts.

(Guo et al., 2018)	Studies could extend beyond environmental product innovation to measure perceived greenwashing. Additionally, using product-specific measures of customer satisfaction could provide deeper insights than firm-level measures.
(Lopes et al., 2023)	Given potential cultural variations in perceptions of greenwashing, it's advisable to replicate the model in other countries.
(Ioannou et al., 2023)	Future research should extend beyond experiments on awareness and ease of use, investigating education on food waste as a strategy to reduce plate waste. Longitudinal studies with prolonged placement of compost bins could boost awareness and promote composting habits
(Bernini & La Rosa, 2024)	Future comparative research is needed to account for effects of green ads on perceived greenwashing that vary in the environmental harm of advertised products or services.
(Cavazos et al., 2023)	Research has focused on sustainable fashion clothing brands. However, ecological and signaling concerns may vary across product categories.
(Aji & Sutikno, 2015)	Moderating factors like environmental knowledge and green concerns could also influence results. Future studies could incorporate these moderators to enrich the proposed mode
(Yang et al., 2020)	Different product categories should be tested for generalizability
(K. Zhang et al., 2023)	Future research is suggested to conduct a field experiment to track the responses and attitudes of employees in companies that engage in greenwashing behavior in CSR.
(Szabo & Webster, 2021)	It would be interesting to develop new measures of greenwashing so as to expand the analysis to a broader sample and enjoy more leeway in terms of econometric methodologies.
(Neureiter et al., 2023)	Future research could set forth toward the longitudinal study to find out the differences of greenwash, green consumer confusion, green perceived risk, and green trust in the different stages of the environmental regulations in the world

Note: Author's creation from the literature review

Synthesized Conceptual Framework for Future Research

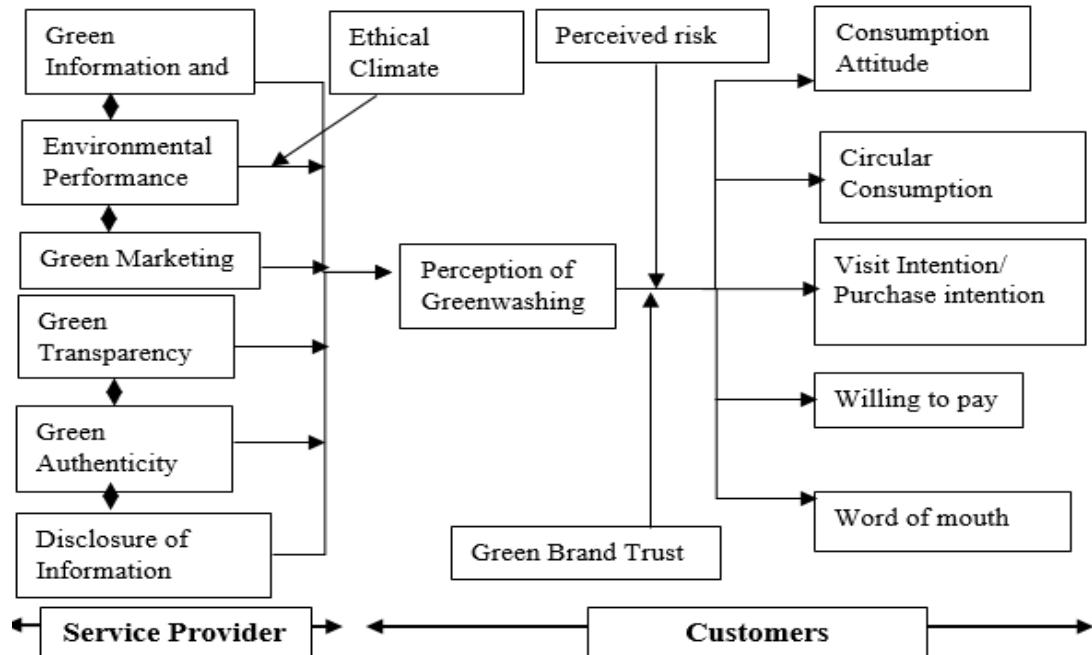
Based on the findings from various studies and the constructs used in those studies, a conceptual model is depicted in Figure 1. This model illustrates how suppliers within the hospitality

industry, such as hotels and tourism services, can impact customer perceptions of greenwashing through various mechanisms. These perceptions, in turn, influence customers' green behaviors, including their consumption attitudes, trust levels, intentions to revisit, willingness to pay a premium, and word-of-mouth endorsements. The relationship between customer perceptions of greenwashing and their green behaviors is moderated by their perceived risk and overall green attitudes.

In the context of marketing and communication, green marketing can leverage green communication strategies, such as sharing operators' green knowledge, disclosing environmental information, making resource conservation claims, and obtaining environmental certifications, to affect customer perceptions of greenwashing. The conceptual model is divided into two main components: the service provider side and the customer side. This division highlights that customer perceptions of greenwashing and the subsequent green behaviors are influenced by green initiatives and activities promoted through various channels

Figure 1

Conceptual model of consumer perception towards greenwashing



Note: The synthesized conceptual framework is Author's own creation from the review of literatures.

Results and Discussion

The paper is a synthesis of theoretical and empirical sources, which analyzes the impact of greenwashing in business operation. It has studied the consequences of greenwashing on consumer perceptions, trust, and behavioral intentions in businesses like hospitality and tourism industry. The results are based on the signaling theory, which shows that misleading environmental statements produce a distortion of sustainability signals that are supposed to pass information about high environmental performance (Koseoglu et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023). In the cases where the pronounced environmental promises do not correspond to reality, the consumers attribute the gap in this context to opportunistic intentions, which leads to low trust and a negative brand image (Chen, 2010).

Regarding the consumer behavior and attribution view, previous studies have always shown that greenwashing increases consumer confusion, cynicism, and perceived risk, which constitute major psychological processes driving the results of trust and purchase (Chen and Chang, 2013; Aji and Sutikno, 2015; Li et al., 2020). The observed patterns in the context of hospitality prove the hypotheses that the perceived greenwashing decreases green trust, revisit intention, and engagement in pro-environmental activities and promotes negative word-of-mouth (Rahman et al., 2015; H. Chen et al., 2019; Alyahia et al., 2024). These results support the importance of the processes of attribution in punishing companies who are viewed to be hypocritical in their sustainability reporting.

Conclusion

The analysis indicates that the effects of greenwashing are not similar among the types of claims. False claims at the product level will result in the most adverse consequences, and vague or abstract claims will lead to relatively weak consumer responses, which clarifies the adverse negative impact on long term operation of the organization (Bladt et al., 2023). In line with the stakeholder theory, the recurrence of misleading sustainability messages weakens the legitimacy of a corporation and damages the relationship trust with consumers, employees, and other stakeholders (Guo et al., 2017; Santos et al., 2023).

Notably, the negative impact of greenwashing can be addressed by moderating influences like green transparency, authenticity, ethical organizational climate, and credible certifications, which enable building trust and minimizing skepticism (Majeed & Kim, 2023; Bernard et al., 2024). Such lessons are especially applicable to the emerging economies like developing countries, such as Nepal where the regulatory frameworks have more loopholes

and consumer knowledge is low making them more susceptible to greenwashing. Altogether, the results indicate the need to implement genuine sustainability and effective communication to safeguard brand trustworthiness and favor sustainable tourism growth.

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