

Understanding Consumer Perceptions of Sustainable Innovations: The Impact of Perceived Company Motivations

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Abstract

The increasing emphasis on environmental sustainability has compelled companies to adopt sustainable product innovations (SPIs) to align with consumer demands and address ecological concerns. SPIs are classified into incremental and radical innovations, with the former involving minor changes and the latter representing significant technological advancements. Following an attribution theory perspective, this research examines how these two SPI types influence consumer perceptions of company motivations and explores the implications of intrinsic (genuine environmental commitment) and extrinsic (market-driven) motivation on consumer behaviors. Three experimental studies indicate that radical SPIs elicit stronger attributions of intrinsic motivations, leading to more favorable consumer outcomes, a relationship moderated by a company's positive sustainability reputation. The findings contribute to the understanding of SPI-related consumer behavior and offer actionable strategic insights.

Keywords: Sustainable product innovation, company motivations, sustainability reputation

Track: Innovation Management & New Product Development