

HOLISTIC MARKETING AND SUSTAINABILITY: INSIGHTS FROM A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL RESEARCH

 Wahiduzzaman Khan ^(a)  Kazi Ahmed Farhan ^(b)  Md. Belal Hossain ^{(c)1}

^(a) Professor, School of Business, Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh; E-mail: drwahid.sob@aust.edu

^(b) Assistant Professor, School of Business, Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh; E-mail: kaf.sob@aust.edu

^(c) Lecturer, Department of Marketing, Jashore University of Science and Technology (JUST), Jashore, Bangladesh; E-mail: b.hossain@just.edu.bd

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability has grown into vital focus in global business practices, with companies increasingly integrating sustainable strategies into their marketing approaches. However, research on the convergence of sustainability and holistic marketing still needs to be completed, especially in emerging economies. A cohesive understanding is necessary for businesses to adopt comprehensive strategies that serve both financial and ecological objectives. This study investigates global research trends in incorporating sustainability into holistic marketing. Using a bibliometric analysis, data from 105 peer-reviewed articles published between 1996 and 2024 were analyzed and sourced from Scopus through the PRISMA framework. Visualization tools like VOSviewer were used to map co-authorship networks, keyword co-occurrence, and citation patterns. The results reveal that sustainability is increasingly becoming a focal point in marketing strategies, with significant contributions from developed economies like the United States and the United Kingdom, while emerging economies like India are gradually entering the discourse. The co-occurrence analysis identified four key thematic clusters: sustainability and innovation, marketing and product development, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and supply chain management, and decision-making processes. The findings of this study indicate a growing alignment between sustainability and holistic marketing, particularly in innovation and product development. However, the research remains concentrated in developed regions, highlighting the need for more studies in emerging markets. The results suggest a need for greater collaboration between areas to foster a more global approach to sustainable marketing practices.

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INTRODUCTION

In the last few years, sustainability has been increasingly popular, particularly within marketing. As businesses increasingly recognize the importance of integrating sustainable practices into their operations, the role of holistic marketing becomes paramount. Holistic marketing encompasses a comprehensive approach that considers the interconnectedness of various marketing elements, including social, economic, and environmental factors (Kemper et al., 2018; Salvi et al., 2018).

The application of holistic marketing strategies can boost the efficiency of sustainability efforts, as evidenced by studies that highlight the importance of considering diverse stakeholder needs and the broader implications of marketing decisions on sustainable development (Hatipoglu & Inelmen, 2022; Boley & Nickerson, 2013; Lozano, 2015). The increasing emphasis on sustainability within marketing practices is also reflected in the growing body of literature that employs bibliometric analysis to map research trends and identify influential contributions in the field (Wani, 2023). This bibliometric perspective not only sheds light on the evolution of sustainability in marketing but also underscores the necessity for a cohesive framework that integrates various dimensions of sustainability into marketing strategies (Dias et al., 2020). By examining the interplay between marketing, sustainability, and organizational culture, researchers can better understand how holistic marketing drives sustainable practices and contributes to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Shaukat et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2021).

Despite the growing body of literature on sustainability and marketing, much of the research still needs to be complete, and a thorough understanding of how these areas can be successfully incorporated is required. This gap limits the

¹Corresponding author: ORCID ID: 0009-0003-4154-8566

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potential for businesses to develop holistic marketing strategies that contribute meaningfully to sustainability goals, especially in emerging economies. This study attempts to close this gap. By providing an overview of global trends, highlighting key thematic areas, and offering insights into future research directions. The main goal of this study is to provide an extensive bibliometric analysis of the global literature on the intersection of sustainability and holistic marketing. The main result is the identification of key authors, research trends, and collaborative networks that have shaped the discourse. By identifying several intermediate problems—such as the fragmented nature of research and the overrepresentation of studies from developed countries—this study seeks to highlight areas for improvement that will help businesses adopt more effective holistic marketing strategies.

The remaining sections of this study are organized as follows: Section 2 reviews the relevant literature, Section 3 outlines the research methodology, and Sections 4 and 5 present the results, discussion, and conclusion of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The intersection of sustainability and holistic marketing has recently attracted substantial interest in both academic and corporate circles. Holistic marketing is an approach that considers the interconnectedness of all marketing activities, aligning them with social, economic, and environmental objectives. This strategy is becoming increasingly more pertinent as companies are pressured to implement sustainable practices beyond profit maximization and address broader societal concerns (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019).

Numerous research studies have examined how to include sustainability in marketing strategies, with particular attention on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the contribution of innovation to the advancement of sustainable business models (Dias et al., 2020). Research shows that holistic marketing can drive sustainability by aligning marketing practices with ethical and environmental goals (Lozano, 2018). However, the literature still needs to be more comprehensive, and there is limited empirical evidence on how this integration plays out in different industries, particularly in emerging economies (Kumar et al., 2020).

Scholars such as Maroto and others have emphasized the importance of value co-creation and green marketing as essential components of sustainable business models (Maroto, 2022). However, much of the research has been concentrated in developed economies, with little attention paid to the challenges businesses face in developing countries, such as resource constraints and digital infrastructure limitations (Zhao et al., 2023). Additionally, while there is growing interest in the role of digital transformation in supporting sustainable marketing, this area still needs to be explored (Pandya et al., 2023).

A growing body of literature has also examined the role of consumer perceptions in shaping sustainability-driven marketing strategies. Studies highlight the increasing demand for transparency and ethical practices in marketing, with consumers becoming more eco-conscious and demanding explicit, credible sustainability claims (Machová et al., 2022). However, there is a lack of research on how these consumer trends impact long-term brand loyalty and business performance, particularly in relation to holistic marketing strategies (Shaukat et al., 2023).

The literature reveals a variety of theoretical frameworks used to study sustainability in marketing, including the service-dominant logic (Maroto, 2022) and corporate social responsibility frameworks (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019). These frameworks have been instrumental in advancing our understanding of how businesses can align their marketing practices with sustainability goals. However, integrating these frameworks within the context of holistic marketing still needs to be improved (Lu et al., 2021).

Despite these advances, several issues need to be solved in the literature. First, understanding how holistic marketing can be applied across different industries and regions to promote sustainability needs to be improved. Second, the literature is dominated by studies from developed countries, leaving gaps in our understanding of how businesses in emerging economies can leverage holistic marketing to address sustainability challenges. Third, while many studies focus on CSR and innovation, few address the role of consumer behavior in driving sustainable marketing strategies (Yulianti & Zulfikar, 2023).

In summary, the existing literature highlights the importance of integrating sustainability into holistic marketing, but significant gaps must be addressed. These gaps include the need for more empirical studies in emerging economies, limited industry-specific research, and insufficient exploration of consumer behavior in response to sustainable marketing efforts.

This study aims to fill these gaps by performing a bibliometric analysis of the worldwide literature on holistic marketing and sustainability. This study offers insights that can direct future research and assist companies in implementing more thorough sustainability-driven marketing strategies by mapping research patterns and identifying important topic clusters.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This research will adopt a bibliometric approach using tools like VOSviewer to analyze the literature on sustainability within holistic marketing (Rayhan et al., 2024). Bibliometric analysis allows for mapping research landscapes and visualizing relationships between authors, keywords, journals, and publications, thus clearly understanding research trends and collaborations.

Data Collection

The data will be collected from renowned academic databases such as Scopus, which will focus on peer-reviewed journal articles (Zhao et al., 2023), conference papers, and book chapters that address sustainability and holistic marketing. Finally, for this study authors consider only research articles and for selecting the relevant articles authors have followed a key

searching key strings showed in table 1.

Search Criteria

To evaluate the pertinent literature for this investigation, the authors utilized the PRISMA diagram shown in figure 1, which stands for Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (Saif et al., 2022). The authors followed the most recent and revised guidelines of PRISMA 2020 to classify the relevant documents suitable for reporting.

Table 1. The searching key strings

SPAR-4-SLR	Consideration	Decision
Assembling (Identification)	Search focus	Sustainability in Holistic Marketing
	Search keywords	sustainability AND holistic AND marketing
	Search database	Scopus
	Search field	Article title, abstract, and keywords
	Search result	216 documents
Arranging (Screening and Eligibility)	Search period	1996 until September 2024

Data Analysis

Co-Authorship and Citation Network Analysis:

Using **VOSviewer**, co-authorship networks and citation patterns will be analyzed to identify influential authors and collaborative research clusters (Carchiolo et al., 2022).

Co-Occurrence of Keywords:

To map recurring keywords related to sustainability and holistic marketing, indicating research trends and thematic clusters (Fergnani, 2019).

Trend Analysis:

To identify shifts in research focus, such as the transition from CSR to broader sustainability frameworks in marketing (White et al., 2019).

Identification of Relevant Papers from the Research Databases

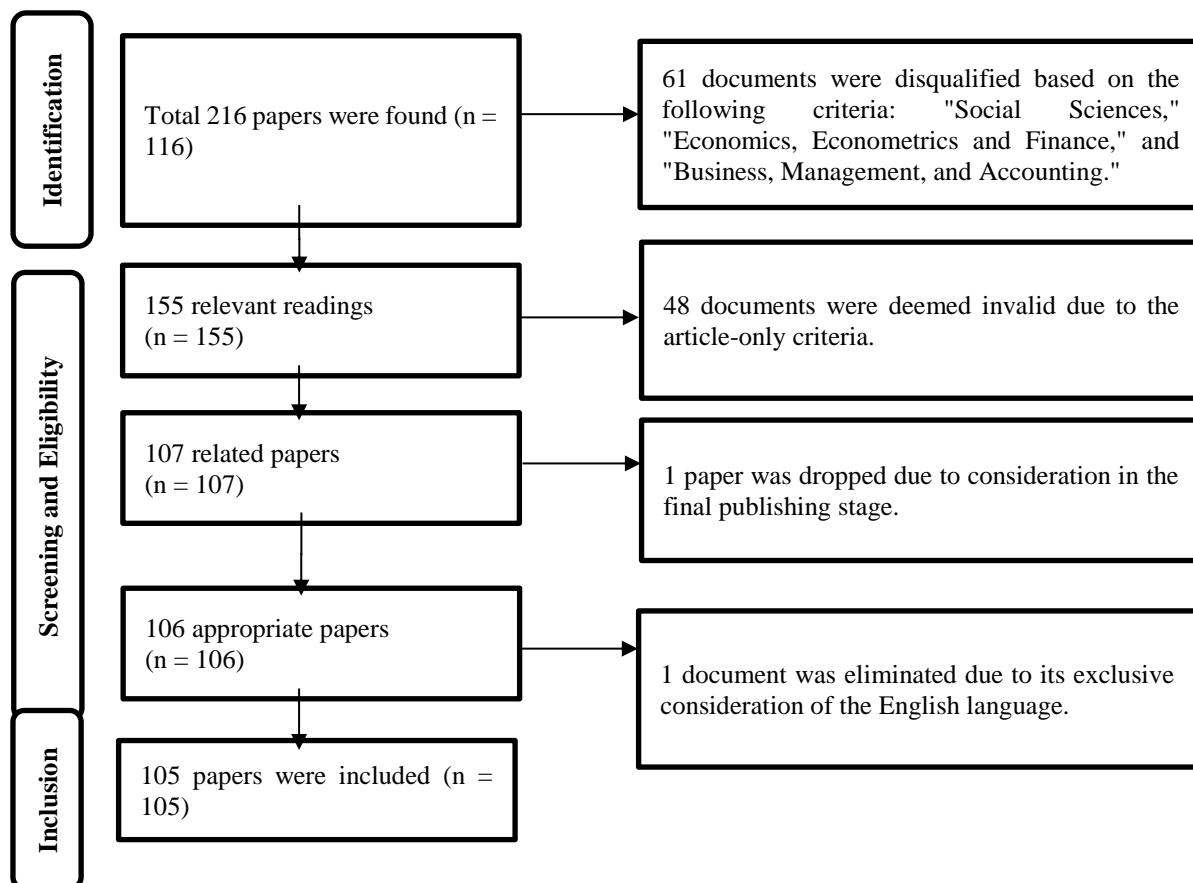


Figure 1. The PRISMA flow figure

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study's identification of key journals is highlighted in table 2, the central platforms advancing the intersection of sustainability and holistic marketing. Sustainability (Switzerland), with the most articles, is a leading source for interdisciplinary research, showing how sustainability principles are increasingly being integrated into business and marketing strategies. This journal's prominence reflects the growing academic interest in examining sustainability from multiple dimensions, including social, environmental, and economic factors. Similarly, the Journal of Cleaner Production underscores the importance of operational sustainability, emphasizing eco-efficiency and sustainable development. This emphasis on more environmentally friendly production methods demonstrates how companies must match their operational procedures with their sustainability objectives, which is essential to holistic marketing. Other publications like Business Strategy and the Environment and Technological Forecasting and Social Change highlight sustainability's strategic and innovative elements. To maintain competitiveness and support global sustainability goals, these articles show that companies must embrace and incorporate sustainable practices into their long-term plans.

The key publications identified in the study showed in table 3, shed light on emerging trends and practical applications in the field. For instance, digital transformation and sustainability research highlights how businesses leverage technology to support their sustainability initiatives. By integrating digital tools, companies can enhance transparency in their supply chains and engage more effectively with consumers about their sustainability efforts. This trend suggests that digital transformation is critical in driving sustainable marketing practices. Another notable publication on consumer perceptions of sustainability labels points to the increasing demand for transparency and ethical practices in marketing. As consumers become more eco-conscious, businesses must confirm that their sustainability demands are clear and credible, using labels and certifications to build trust and brand loyalty. Additionally, the research on eco-innovation and sustainable marketing in B2B contexts, such as port marketing, demonstrates that even industrial sectors are adopting sustainable practices. These findings underscore the broader adoption of sustainability across various industries, showing that businesses in all sectors are increasingly expected to innovate and lead the way in sustainable development.

Key Journals

Table 2. The most frequent journals publishing on this intersection

	Journal Name	Articles on this intersection
1	Sustainability (Switzerland)	15
2	Journal of Cleaner Production	5
3	Journal of Macro-marketing	3
4	Business Strategy and the Environment	3
5	Technological Forecasting and Social Change	2

Sources: Generated from Scopus Dataset

Key Publications

Table 3. Some of the notable articles from this dataset include:

	Title
1	Research streams on digital transformation from a holistic business perspective: A systematic literature review and citation network analysis
2	Consumer perceptions of sustainability labels for alternative food networks
3	Promotion of eco-innovation to leverage sustainable development of eco-industry and green growth
4	Port marketing as a manifestation of sustainable marketing in a B2B context

Sources: Generated from Scopus Dataset

The "Documents by Year" graph shows in figure 2, an increasing trend in publications on sustainability and holistic marketing from 1996 to 2024, with notable spikes in 2013, 2020, and 2023. The early years (1996-2008) saw limited activity, suggesting initial topic exploration. A sharp increase around 2011-2014 likely reflects growing interest in sustainable business practices and the influence of global initiatives like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The surge in 2020 could be linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, which heightened the focus on sustainability in marketing strategies and corporate responsibility. This trend suggests that the academic discourse around integrating sustainability within holistic marketing is gaining momentum as environmental and social concerns rise globally.

Corpus Findings

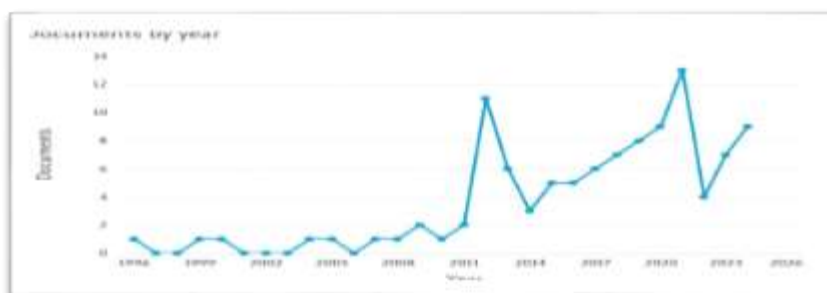


Figure 2. Document by Year

Sources: Generated from Scopus Dataset

Figure 3 shows how research documents are distributed by nation or region, highlighting that the United Kingdom and the United States lead the production of scholarly works related to sustainability and holistic marketing. This prominence may reflect the extensive focus on sustainability in these countries, supported by advanced research infrastructure and funding. Additionally, both countries have proactively adopted sustainability practices in business and academia. India follows, reflecting the growing emphasis on sustainability in emerging economies, particularly in response to environmental challenges and sustainable development goals. The presence of Germany, Australia, and South Africa in the figure indicates the global scope of interest in integrating sustainability into marketing frameworks, suggesting a trend of increasing awareness across both developed and developing nations. These results imply a global shift towards holistic and sustainable business practices, as countries worldwide recognize the importance of balancing economic growth with environmental and social responsibility. This cross-country analysis underscores the need for international collaboration in sustainability research to address shared global challenges effectively.

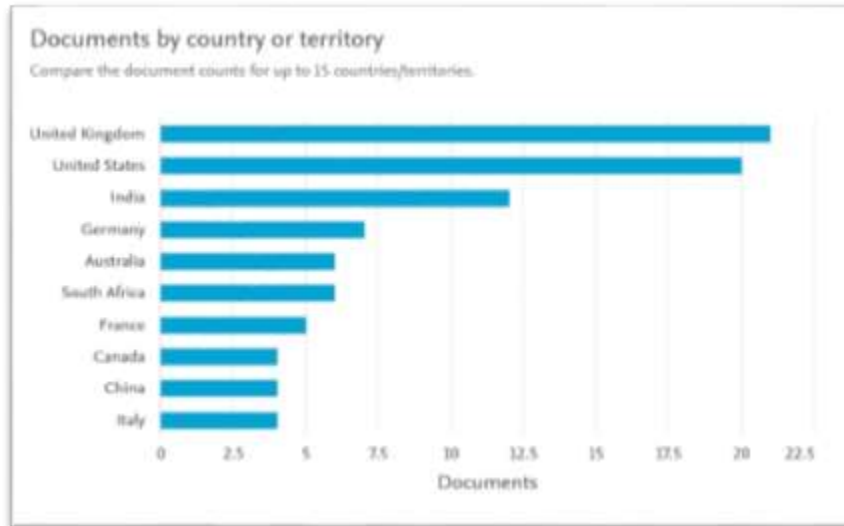


Figure 3. Document by country
Sources: Generated from Scopus Dataset

Figure 4 shows the key authors contributing to the intersection of sustainability and holistic marketing based on the documents collected from the Scopus database and analyzed using VOSviewer. Authors like Kumar, D., Lee, M.Y., and Lozano, R. are among the most prolific contributors, producing significant documents in this research area. The presence of these authors indicates their influence and thought leadership in the field, reflecting ongoing research into how sustainability can be integrated into holistic marketing strategies. For instance, authors such as Lozano, who has extensively studied corporate sustainability, highlight the growing academic discourse around embedding environmental, social, and economic considerations into business practices. The consistency in the contributions from these key authors suggests that sustainability in marketing is not only a growing academic interest but is also becoming central to how businesses operate, especially in light of sustainable development objectives and corporate social responsibility. These results highlight how crucial it is to conduct more studies on the cooperative efforts of these important players to promote creative ways in sustainable marketing tactics.

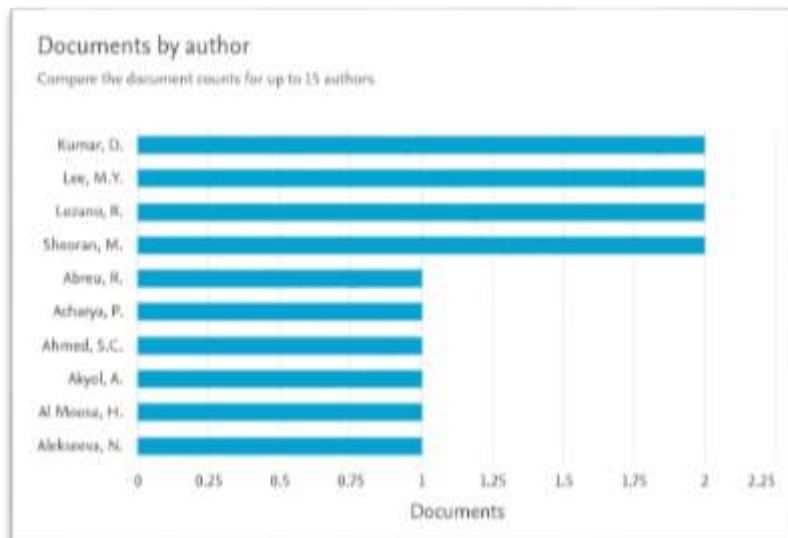


Figure 4. Documents by Authors
Sources: Generated from Scopus Dataset

The visualization of figure 5 represents the co-citation network of authors who have been frequently cited together in the context of sustainability and holistic marketing research. Authors like Vargo S.L., Peattie K., Porter M.E., and Kumar S. are prominent within their respective clusters, indicating their strong influence in this field. Vargo's co-citation with authors such as Peattie and Porter reflects a significant body of work related to service-dominant logic and sustainability marketing, emphasizing value co-creation and green marketing. The presence of Kumar S. in a separate cluster signifies his contributions in more recent or distinct areas of sustainable marketing, potentially focused on empirical studies and applied strategies. The interconnections between these authors suggest a shared focus on integrating environmental and social responsibility into business practices, highlighting collaborative efforts to build frameworks that drive sustainable outcomes. This co-citation map indicates that sustainability in holistic marketing is grounded in diverse but interrelated research streams, emphasizing interdisciplinary approaches and global collaboration to address the complexities of sustainable business practices.

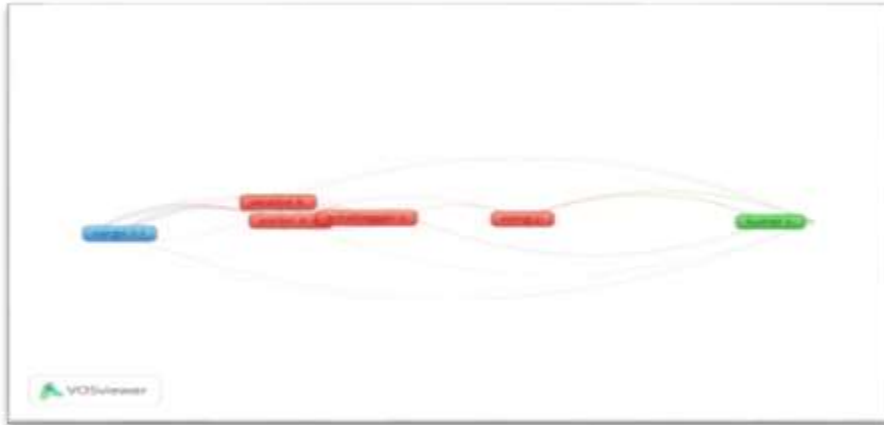


Figure 5. Co-citations of cited authors
Source: VOSviewer

The patterns of collaboration across various nations in sustainability and holistic marketing research are depicted in the co-authorship network map in Figure 6. Given these nations' significant academic and research collaboration levels, the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom are major cooperation centres. These nations have well-established research infrastructures, extensive networks, and significant investments in sustainability research. The connections between these countries suggest that interdisciplinary and cross-border research is crucial in advancing sustainability in holistic marketing. South Africa's connection with the United Kingdom indicates the presence of collaborative research efforts between developing and developed nations, emphasizing the global relevance of sustainability challenges.

Additionally, India, France, and Australia form another distinct cluster, showing regional research collaborations. India's strong presence in this network, particularly in connection with France and Australia, highlights its growing contribution to sustainability research as a developing nation grappling with large-scale environmental challenges. These co-authorship networks suggest that sustainability and holistic marketing research are driven by global collaboration, with significant contributions from developed and emerging economies, reflecting the universal importance of sustainable business practices. The collaboration among these countries is essential to address global challenges and create shared solutions.

This network emphasizes the importance of international research collaboration to foster innovation, share knowledge, and develop comprehensive solutions that cater to diverse economic and environmental contexts.

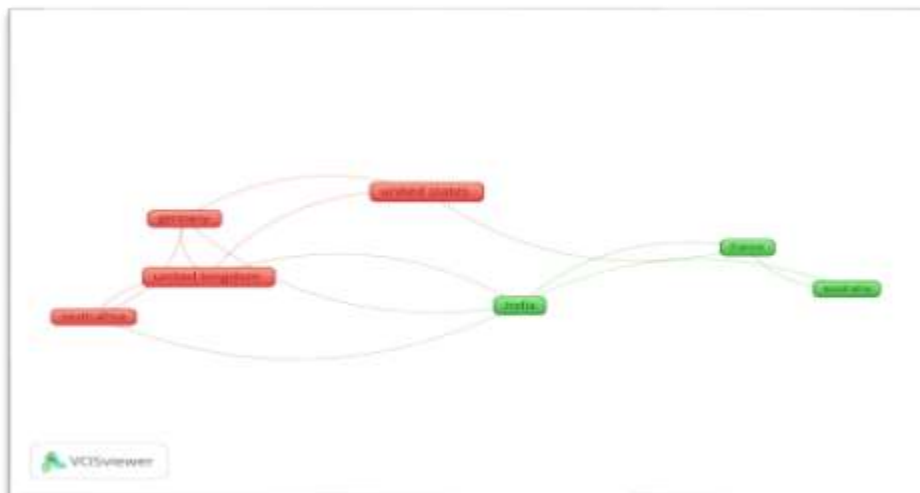


Figure 6. Network of Co-authorship of countries
Source: VOSviewer

The density visualization of bibliographic coupling between countries highlights regions with the highest concentration of collaborative academic outputs in sustainability and holistic marketing, as shown in figure 7. The United States and the United Kingdom are shown as the most prominent hubs of research, indicated by the intensity of the yellow regions. This suggests that these countries produce a significant volume of research and have high levels of academic collaboration with other nations. The proximity of Germany and South Africa to these hubs indicates substantial cooperation and educational exchange between these countries and the central research leaders.

India, France, and Australia also show significant research outputs and collaboration. However, they appear as separate clusters, suggesting that while they contribute meaningfully to the global body of research, their collaborations may be more regionally focused or involve specific partnerships rather than with the dominant hubs of the US and UK. This visual separation could imply differences in regional research priorities or resource allocation in sustainability and holistic marketing.

The density of these collaborations suggests a global push towards interdisciplinary and cross-national research addressing shared global sustainability challenges. However, the clustering indicates that while significant collaboration exists within specific regions, there is still room for more global integration in research efforts. Expanding regional partnerships, especially between developed and emerging economies, could help create more comprehensive and globally applicable solutions for sustainability in holistic marketing.

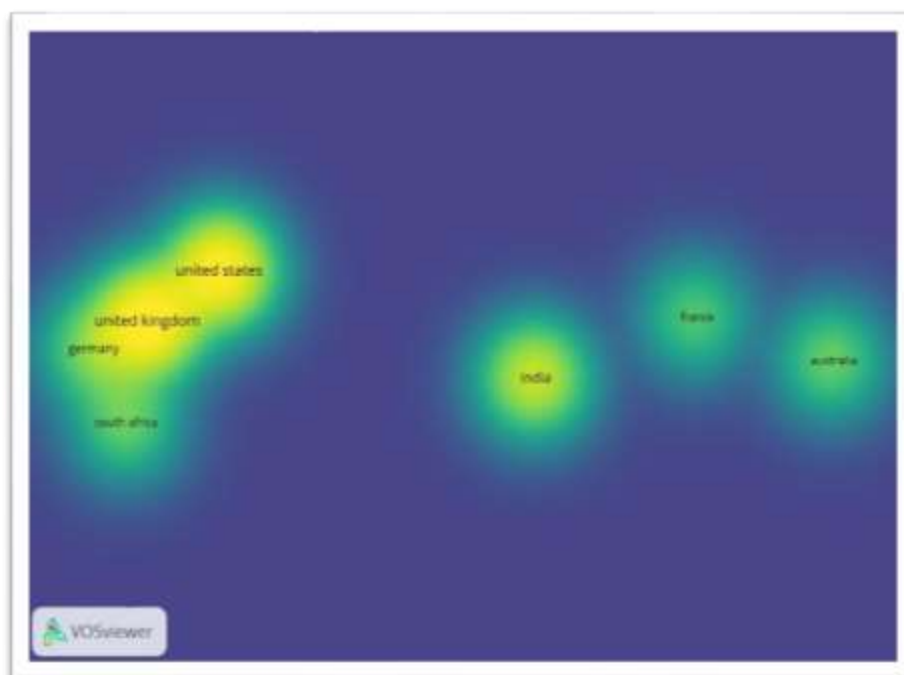


Figure 7. Density visualization of bibliographic coupling of countries
Source: VOSviewer

The co-word analysis map of all keywords provided in figure 8 reflects the intricate network of terms frequently used in research focused on sustainability and holistic marketing. The central prominence of "sustainability" and "sustainable development" as primary nodes indicates that these themes form the core of academic discourse in this domain. Around these two nodes, interconnected terms such as "decision making," "corporate social responsibility," "innovation," and "supply chain management" suggest that sustainability is widely explored in relation to how businesses integrate responsible decision-making and management strategies into their operations.

The broad connectivity also reveals that sustainability intersects with various economic, social, and environmental considerations, highlighting its multidimensional nature. For instance, the link between "supply chain management" and "circular economy" suggests a growing focus on sustainable business models that minimize waste and emphasize resource reuse. Similarly, "green marketing" and "eco-innovation" imply that businesses are leveraging sustainability as an operational strategy and a marketing tool to appeal to customers who care about the environment.

Moreover, keywords like "climate change" and "consumer perception" demonstrate that sustainability research is not confined to corporate strategies but also explores broader societal impacts, including how consumers respond to green initiatives and the role of businesses in mitigating environmental challenges. Terms like "agriculture" and "tourism development" point to the sectoral relevance of sustainability, underscoring that industries with significant environmental footprints are key focus areas.

The co-word of diverse keywords reveals an increasing trend toward interdisciplinary and international collaboration in sustainability research. This suggests that businesses and researchers recognize the importance of holistic approaches integrating innovation, consumer behavior, and corporate responsibility to achieve long-term sustainability goals. As noted in the original article, integrating sustainability into company plans is a global priority rather than merely a localized issue (Hatipoglu & Inelmen, 2022). The map underscores the complexity and interrelatedness of factors driving sustainability in the contemporary business landscape.

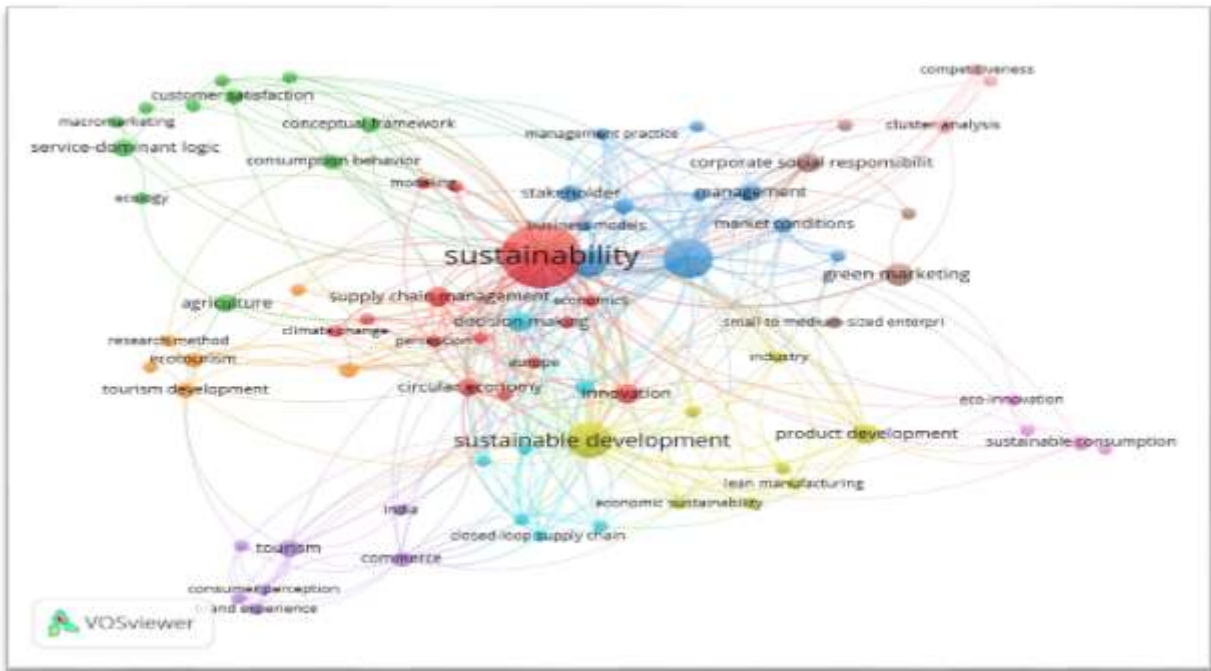


Figure 8. Network Visualization of Co-Word Analysis
Source: VOSviewer

The "Network Visualization of Co-Authorship" figure 9 illustrates the collaborative efforts among researchers in sustainability and holistic marketing. The density visualization, where brighter areas indicate more frequent collaborations, highlights key researchers or groups who play significant roles in advancing this academic field. Researchers like "Schaltegger S.," "Tseng P.-H.," and "Simmons J.A." appear prominently, suggesting their influence through frequent collaborations and contributions.

The rationale behind co-authorship visualization is to map out how interconnected the academic community is and identify which researchers or groups drive thought leadership. These collaborations are often critical in interdisciplinary research areas such as sustainability and holistic marketing, where integrating perspectives from different fields, such as economics, environmental science, and business strategy, leads to more comprehensive and impactful findings. These researchers will likely contribute to significant projects or studies that require collective expertise to address complex global challenges like corporate social responsibility, eco-innovation, or sustainable business models.

The implications of these results are significant for both academia and practice. This network visualization helps researchers identify potential collaborators with a proven track record in advancing the field. Additionally, it provides insights into geographic or institutional trends, as highly collaborative networks often span countries or universities, leading to more robust research outcomes. For practitioners, such collaborative networks suggest the depth of research behind sustainability and holistic marketing strategies, highlighting that a diverse, interdisciplinary academic foundation supports these fields.

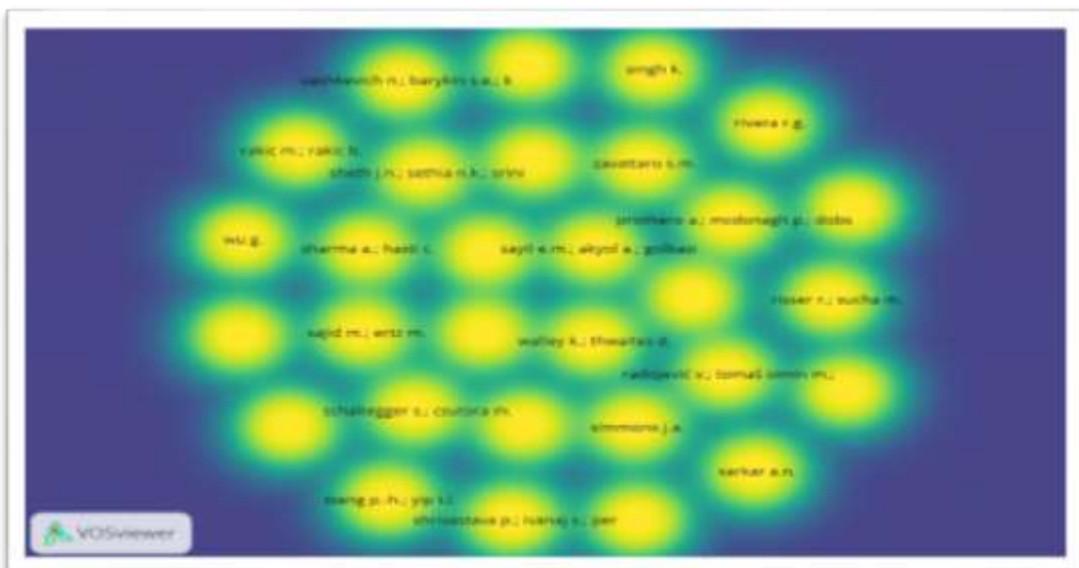


Figure 9. Density visualization of Co-authorship network
Source: VOSviewer

Collaborative research clusters in this domain

In the VOSviewer keyword co-occurrence analysis, several clusters have emerged from figure 10, highlighting key concepts in the intersection of sustainability and holistic marketing. These clusters are colour-coded based on keyword similarities, each reflecting different areas of emphasis within the research landscape.

Yellow Cluster (Sustainability, Holistic Approach, Innovation)

The first prominent cluster is the yellow cluster, which centers on sustainability and includes keywords like holistic approach and innovation. This cluster suggests that sustainability is often discussed in the context of a comprehensive, all-encompassing strategy. The holistic approach in marketing refers to integrating different aspects of business practices to meet broader sustainability goals. Furthermore, innovation is essential to creating sustainable corporate procedures or product design solutions. This combination is critical as companies attempt to integrate sustainability into their operational and marketing structures.

The connection between sustainability and a holistic approach emphasizes the necessity of creative, integrated solutions to environmental problems. Businesses that use this strategy achieve their sustainability objectives more successfully, coordinating their operations with global endeavours like the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019; Kemper et al., 2018). This cluster underscores the growing recognition that sustainability cannot be addressed in isolation; instead, it must be embedded within the fabric of business operations and marketing strategies.

Green Cluster (Marketing, Product Development, Sustainable Development)

The green cluster includes keywords such as marketing, product development, and sustainable development, indicating the close relationship between these areas. This cluster implies that sustainable development heavily relies on the synergy between innovative product development and marketing strategies. Businesses aiming to achieve sustainability must focus on creating products that align with sustainable principles while marketing them effectively to consumers who increasingly demand eco-friendly solutions.

Marketing is essential in communicating the value of these sustainable products to the market, and product development ensures that businesses are continuously innovating to meet environmental and social needs. The literature has extensively discussed this relationship, where sustainable marketing practices are linked with positive brand perception and long-term profitability (Lozano, 2018). The emphasis on product development within this cluster suggests that sustainability-driven businesses must continually innovate to remain competitive while ensuring that their marketing strategies reflect their commitment to sustainability.

Blue Cluster (Corporate Social Responsibility, Supply Chain Management, Green Marketing)

The blue cluster revolves around corporate social responsibility (CSR), supply chain management, and green marketing. It highlights the importance of embedding sustainability into the core business operations, from sourcing materials to delivering products. Supply chain management is critical to upholding sustainable practices throughout production, minimizing environmental impact and promoting social responsibility.

Green marketing plays a crucial role in communicating these sustainable practices to the market in this cluster. Companies leverage green marketing strategies to highlight their commitment to sustainability and differentiate themselves in a competitive marketplace. CSR practices, including responsible supply chain management, are key to business success, as consumers increasingly value ethical and sustainable brands (Saeed & Kersten, 2019; Kumar et al., 2020). This cluster underscores the growing significance of aligning marketing strategies with CSR initiatives to foster consumer trust and loyalty.

Turquoise Cluster (Decision Making)

The turquoise cluster focuses on decision making, which is fundamental to implementing sustainability strategies. This cluster emphasizes that effective decision making, particularly at the managerial level, is essential for businesses seeking to integrate sustainability into their operations. Strategic decisions around sustainability involve balancing short-term profitability with long-term environmental and social responsibilities.

Decision making in sustainability often requires a nuanced understanding of the trade-offs in pursuing sustainable practices. Leaders must navigate complex challenges, such as the financial costs of adopting green technologies or the risks associated with changing consumer expectations. The role of decision making in sustainability is well-supported in the literature, where it is often tied to the success of sustainable business strategies (Dias et al., 2020). This cluster emphasizes the critical role of leadership and strategic foresight in driving the sustainability agenda within organizations.

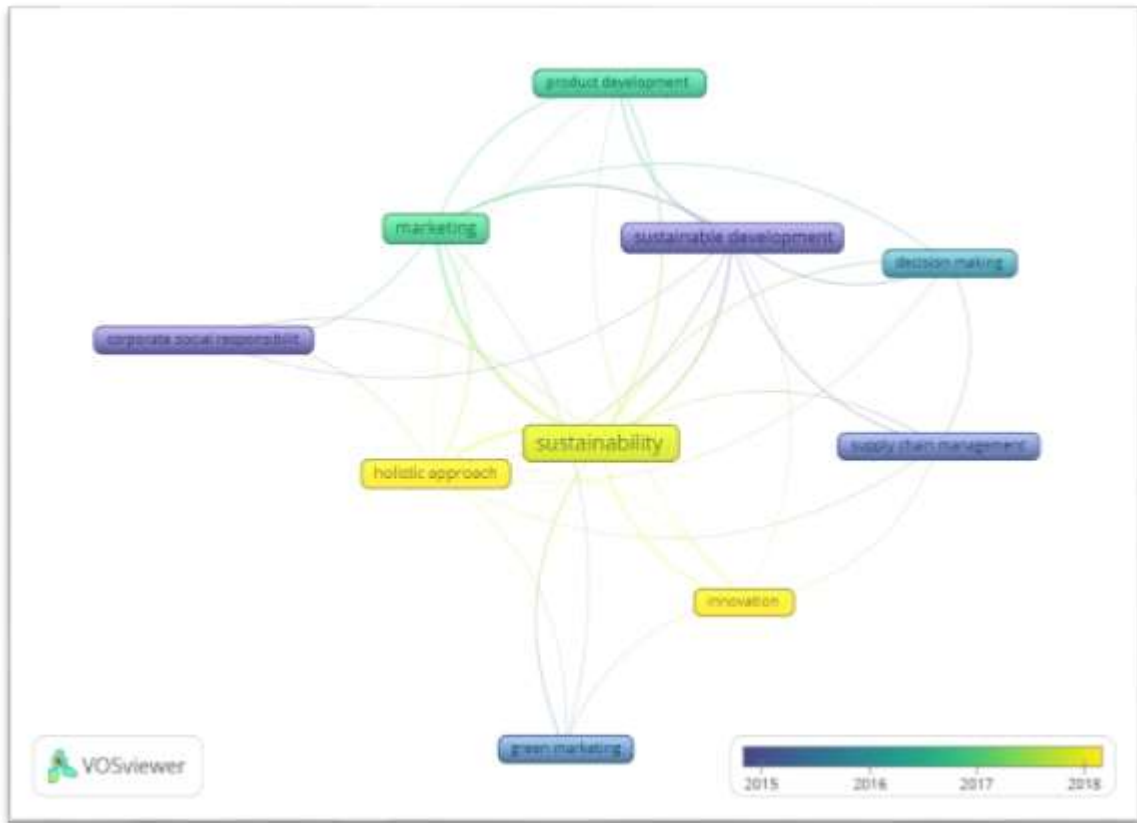


Figure 10. Clusters from Co-occurrence of all keywords
Source: VOSviewer

Emerging Research Trends

Integration of Sustainability into Core Business Strategies (Kemper et al., 2018; Oertwig et al., 2017)	There is a growing trend of integrating sustainability into organisations' core business models and marketing strategies. This is not limited to environmental aspects but extends to social equity and economic viability, forming a holistic approach to sustainability. The integration is seen across various sectors, signalling a shift from ad-hoc sustainability practices to systematic inclusion in marketing strategies.
Increased Focus on Innovation in Sustainable Product Development (Hatipoglu & Inelmen, 2022; Vinodh et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2022).	Innovation, particularly in product development, is closely tied to sustainability initiatives. Businesses increasingly focus on developing products that align with sustainable principles while utilizing green marketing strategies to communicate these efforts to consumers. This trend is particularly noticeable in industries with high environmental impacts, such as manufacturing and consumer goods, where product innovation can directly address sustainability challenges.
Rise of Green Marketing and CSR Initiatives (Machová et al., 2022; Zhang & Berhe, 2022; Park et al., 2022)	Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and green marketing are critical components of holistic marketing strategies. Businesses leverage these concepts to promote sustainability initiatives, building stronger connections with eco-conscious consumers. This trend reflects the growing consumer demand for ethical and sustainable brands, with green marketing used to differentiate companies in competitive markets.
Global Collaboration in Sustainability Research (Payumo et al., 2021; Yarime et al., 2010; Amato, 2021).	The bibliometric analysis reveals a significant increase in international collaboration on sustainability research, with countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and India leading the discourse. This global push highlights the need for interdisciplinary research, where scholars from different regions and fields collaborate to address sustainability issues from various perspectives (Wani, 2023). The emphasis on international research suggests that sustainability challenges are global problems requiring collective solutions.
Focus on Decision-Making and Strategic Leadership (Wanaswa et al., 2019; Mahdi & Nassar, 2021; Cortes & Herrmann, 2021)	Decision-making and strategic leadership are emerging as key drivers of successful sustainability integration in businesses. Managerial decision-making processes increasingly account for the trade-offs between short-term profitability and long-term sustainability goals. Leadership within organizations is critical in embedding sustainability into operations, marketing, and corporate strategies.

Source: Authors

Research Gaps

Fragmentation of Sustainability and Holistic Marketing Research (Durach et al., 2017; Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012; Manninen et al., 2023; Butdisuwan et al., 2024)	While there is an expanding body of literature on sustainability and holistic marketing, much of the research still needs to be completed. Studies often focus on sustainability or marketing in collaboration with adequately exploring the synergy between the two fields. This limits the understanding of how holistic marketing strategies can effectively drive sustainability. There is a need for more comprehensive research that bridges these gaps and explores how the different dimensions of holistic marketing (relationship, integrated, internal, and socially responsible marketing) intersect with sustainability principles.
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Limited Empirical Studies in Emerging Economies (Esfahbodi et al., 2016; Shamim et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2017)	Most research on sustainability within holistic marketing strategies is concentrated in developed countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. However, there needs to be more empirical studies from emerging economies, where sustainability challenges are often more pronounced. Countries like India and South Africa are increasingly involved in sustainability discourse, but more research is needed to understand how holistic marketing strategies are implemented in these regions.
Lack of Focus on Industry-Specific Sustainability Marketing (Borland et al., 2019; Sudirjo et al., 2023; G. Hansen & Schaltegger, 2013).	Many studies address sustainability in a generalized manner without delving into industry-specific strategies. Certain industries, such as energy, transportation, and fashion, face unique sustainability challenges that require tailored marketing strategies. Research focusing on how specific industries incorporate sustainability into their marketing and operations remains limited, representing a gap that future studies can address.
Underexplored Aspects of Consumer Behavior and Sustainability (Yulianti & Zulfikar, 2023; Wyrwa et al., 2023; Peattie, 2010).	While much attention has been given to CSR and green marketing, more research on consumer behavior in response to sustainability initiatives still needs to be done. Specifically, how consumers interpret and respond to green marketing efforts and how these perceptions impact long-term brand loyalty still need to be explored. Future research can further investigate the psychological and behavioural aspects of consumer responses to sustainability-driven marketing efforts.
Leveraging Technology for Sustainability (Gomez-Trujillo & Gonzalez-Perez, 2021; Pandya et al., 2023; Lim, 2016).	As technology evolves, future research can explore how digital tools, data analytics, and artificial intelligence can support sustainability initiatives in marketing. For example, digital marketing platforms can help companies optimize their sustainability campaigns, reach eco-conscious consumers more effectively, and track the environmental impact of their operations.

Source: Authors

CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to provide a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of global research exploring the intersection of sustainability and holistic marketing. By analyzing 105 peer-reviewed articles published between 1996 and 2024, this research mapped the evolution of sustainability in marketing practices, identifying key trends, thematic clusters, and research gaps. The findings revealed that sustainability is central to marketing strategies, especially in developed economies. Four thematic clusters were identified—sustainability and innovation, marketing and product development, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and supply chain management, and decision-making processes. The research shows that sustainability is closely tied to product innovation and responsible marketing, with increasing attention paid to CSR and stakeholder engagement.

This paper provides a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of global research on integrating sustainability into holistic marketing, offering insights into key research trends, influential authors, and collaborative networks. It identifies four major thematic clusters: sustainability and innovation, marketing and product development, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and supply chain management, and decision-making processes. These clusters reflect the evolving role of sustainability in marketing strategies, especially in developed economies, while highlighting the gap in emerging markets. This study uniquely uses bibliometric tools such as VOSviewer to map research trends and co-authorship networks, contributing to a deeper understanding of how sustainability can drive holistic marketing strategies.

The study enriches the academic understanding of the intersection between holistic marketing and sustainability by demonstrating how sustainability-oriented innovation, CSR, and product development play central roles in modern marketing strategies. Theoretical frameworks, such as corporate social responsibility and service-dominant logic, are essential for understanding how businesses integrate sustainability into their operations. This research contributes to the growing literature emphasising aligning marketing strategies with sustainability goals (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019).

From a managerial perspective, the paper encourages businesses to adopt comprehensive sustainability-driven marketing strategies. It emphasizes the importance of innovation, CSR, and sustainable supply chain management in marketing practices. Managers are advised to integrate sustainability into their decision-making processes and marketing campaigns, leveraging digital tools and eco-innovation to meet consumer demands for transparency and ethical practices. Adopting sustainability practices for companies in emerging markets can help align with global standards, improve brand loyalty, and achieve long-term success.

The study's limitations include its reliance on peer-reviewed articles from the Scopus database, which may exclude relevant research from other sources, such as industry reports or non-English publications. Additionally, the concentration of research in developed countries limits the generalizability of the findings to emerging markets. The study's bibliometric analysis focuses on co-authorship and citation networks, which, while valuable, may overlook important qualitative insights into how businesses implement sustainability and holistic marketing in practice.

Future research should explore sustainability and holistic marketing strategies in emerging economies, where businesses face challenges such as resource constraints and digital infrastructure limitations. More empirical studies are needed to understand how companies in developing countries integrate sustainability into their marketing strategies. Additionally, future studies should investigate the role of digital transformation in promoting sustainable marketing, mainly using artificial intelligence, big data, and digital marketing platforms to optimize sustainable business practices. Expanding the research to cover industry-specific sustainability challenges, particularly in the energy, fashion, and transportation sectors, would also add valuable insights to the field.

In addition, future studies should examine the long-term impacts of consumer perceptions of sustainability-driven marketing on brand loyalty and business performance. Understanding how green marketing strategies influence consumer behavior and purchasing decisions remains underexplored (Machová et al., 2022).

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