

SOURCES OF RESISTANCE IN ADOPTING ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY LIGHTING PRODUCTS: A STUDY ON TECHNICAL DOUBTS, EXAGGERATED NARRATIVES, AND BRAND DISTRUST**Didit Darmawan^a, M Najib Zakariya^b**^{a,b}Ekonomi / Manajemen, Universitas Sunan Giri Surabaya**Article History:**Received : March 14th 2026Revised : March 28th 2026Accepted : April 4th 2026Published : April 11th 2026**Corresponding author:**dr.diditdarmawan@gmail.com**Cite This Article:**

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Abstract: This literature study aims to analyze the sources of consumer resistance to environmentally friendly lighting products, focusing on doubts about technical specifications, resistance to exaggerated green promotion narratives, and distrust of brand motivations behind environmental campaigns. The method used is qualitative library research with a thematic synthesis approach following systematic literature review procedures. The results indicate that technical doubts arise from complex information confusing average consumers and past negative experiences with energy-efficient products. Resistance to promotional narratives is triggered by greenwashing practices, exaggerated unverifiable claims, and patronizing language. Distrust of brand motivations stems from perceptions that companies are more motivated by profit than environmental concern, reinforced by inconsistencies between campaigns and business practices. These three sources of resistance are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, creating significant barriers to adoption of environmentally friendly products. Understanding these resistance sources is essential for manufacturers and policymakers to design more authentic and effective communication strategies. This study contributes theoretically to enriching green marketing literature with a consumer resistance perspective and practically provides foundations for manufacturers in simplifying technical information, avoiding exaggerated claims, and building trust through consistent practices.

Keywords: consumer resistance, technical specifications, greenwashing, brand motivation, environmental campaigns, energy-efficient lighting, sustainable products.

1. INTRODUCTION

Global awareness of climate change and environmental damage has increased significantly in recent decades. Various countries are committed to reducing carbon emissions and transitioning to sustainable energy sources (Umar & Egbu, 2019). Indonesia, as part of the global community, also encourages the use of environmentally friendly products across various sectors. Eco-friendly lighting, such as energy-saving LEDs and lamps with green certification, has become an alternative to conventional incandescent bulbs. Manufacturers are racing to market products with claims of electricity savings, long lifespans, and positive contributions to the environment (Ambarita, 2018). However, amidst the intensive promotion, many consumers are still hesitant to switch to these products. Resistance arises from various sources that need to be understood.

The technical specifications of eco-friendly lighting products often become a source of consumer doubt (Zakariya & Darmawan, 2024). Information regarding lumens, watts, color temperature, and color rendering index confuses average consumers. They lack sufficient knowledge to evaluate whether energy-saving claims are proportional to lighting quality. Past experiences with energy-saving products that were dim or easily damaged reinforce this skepticism. Consumers worry that eco-friendly products cannot provide the same lighting comfort as conventional lamps (Murdiyansyah et al., 2024). Challenges in consumer literacy and access to easily understandable information are also significant barriers (Ramle & Mardikaningsih, 2022). Unclear specifications and a lack of education make consumers hesitate to make decisions. Purchase decisions are fundamentally influenced by many factors such as price, brand image, lifestyle, and perceptions of product

quality, so it is natural for consumers to consider various aspects before deciding to switch to environmentally friendly products (Putri & Darmawan, 2023).

The intensive green promotional narratives actually trigger resistance among critical consumers (Amin & Sinaga, 2019). Advertisements claiming that products are highly environmentally friendly, drastically save electricity, and save the earth are often considered exaggerated. Consumers who are accustomed to marketing tactics begin to question the truth of these claims. They seek evidence and validation from independent sources. If none is found, the claims are regarded as mere marketing gimmicks. Resistance to greenwashing is growing stronger as consumer awareness of misleading marketing practices increases (Bit et al., 2022). Exaggerated narratives are actually counterproductive and reinforce doubt. Sustainability communication strategies should be built honestly and transparently to strengthen awareness while maintaining corporate integrity in the eyes of consumers (Essa & Mardikaningsih, 2021).

Distrust of brand motivation behind environmental campaigns serves as a fundamental source of resistance. Consumers question whether manufacturers truly care about the environment or are simply capitalizing on a trend for business profit (Bursan et al., 2022). Large brands previously known for not being eco-friendly that suddenly campaign for green products raise suspicion. Consumers see inconsistencies between a company's business practices and its environmental claims. They look into the company's track record, production practices, and long-term commitment to sustainability. If a gap is found, trust is lost and resistance strengthens. Ethical issues in development also become an important concern because consumers are increasingly caring about the social and moral responsibilities of companies (Radjawane & Mardikaningsih, 2022).

The three sources of resistance confusing technical specifications, exaggerated promotional narratives, and distrust of brand motivation are interrelated. Doubts about specifications are reinforced by distrust of promotional claims. Overstated narratives make consumers increasingly skeptical of brand motivations. Fundamental distrust makes consumers reluctant to put in the effort to understand technical specifications (Sinaga & Dewy, 2023). This cycle creates a major barrier to the adoption of environmentally friendly products. A deep understanding of these sources of resistance is essential for manufacturers and policymakers to design more effective communication strategies and build consumer trust. Risk perception and a lack of trust often become the main barriers to the formation of purchase intention, even when the product has clear functional benefits (Riski & Darmawan, 2025).

Manufacturers of eco-friendly lighting face serious challenges in convincing consumers to switch from conventional products (Stall-Meadows & Hebert, 2011). Sales of environmentally friendly products are often below target despite various promotional campaigns being conducted. This condition indicates that consumer resistance cannot be overcome solely through intensive advertising and claims of product superiority. Manufacturers may focus too much on the technical aspects of the product while ignoring the psychological and social dimensions that shape consumer doubt. Complex specifications that consumers do not understand, promotional narratives perceived as exaggerated, and suspicion toward brand motivation work together to create a wall of resistance. A human resource management approach that supports competence and an understanding of the green economy can also help companies convey their product values more convincingly (Essa & Mardikaningsih, 2023).

A gap also exists between manufacturers' perceptions of product superiority and what is perceived by consumers (Kreczmańska-Gigol & Gigol, 2022). Manufacturers take pride in technological innovation and environmental benefits, but consumers see the same claims across various products and begin to doubt. A lack of transparency regarding technical specifications and the difficulty of verifying claims reinforce distrust. Manufacturers who are truly committed to the environment struggle to differentiate themselves from competitors who merely practice greenwashing. As a result, skeptical consumers generalize all brands and become reluctant to purchase environmentally friendly products.

The transition toward a green economy is an inevitability driven by governments and the global community (Bhargava, 2023). The use of environmentally friendly products, such as energy-saving lamps, is part of the effort to reduce carbon emissions. However, this transition will only succeed if supported by widespread consumer adoption. Consumer resistance that is neither understood nor addressed will hinder the achievement of environmental targets. Examining the sources of doubt becomes essential for designing effective communication strategies and building public trust. Green innovation integrated with supply chain management and corporate technological capabilities has also proven to play a role in improving business performance while supporting sustainability (Mardikaningsih, 2024).

Changes in post-pandemic consumer behavior also influence how consumers evaluate products (Saxena, 2024). Consumers have become more critical and selective. They seek more information before deciding to buy. The prevalence of greenwashing practices has made consumers increasingly vigilant. Manufacturers truly committed to the environment need to understand this resistance to communicate authentically. An

understanding of the sources of doubt regarding technical specifications, resistance to exaggerated narratives, and distrust of brand motivations will help in designing a more humanistic and convincing approach.

This study aims to theoretically analyze how consumer doubt regarding technical specifications and resistance toward green promotional narratives perceived as exaggerated form resistance to eco-friendly lighting products. Furthermore, this study aims to examine how distrust of brand motivation behind environmental campaigns contributes to consumer resistance. The analysis is focused on the psychological and sociological sources underlying doubt and distrust. The theoretical contribution of this research is to enrich the literature on consumer behavior and green marketing with a perspective on resistance, which has received less attention until now. Its practical contribution serves as a foundation for manufacturers and policymakers to design more authentic and effective communication strategies to encourage the adoption of environmentally friendly products.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is structured as a literature study with a qualitative approach aimed at theoretically analyzing the sources of consumer resistance toward eco-friendly lighting products, including doubts about technical specifications, resistance to green promotional narratives perceived as exaggerated, and distrust of brand motivation behind environmental campaigns. As explained by Walliman (2021), library research is an investigative strategy that relies on written sources as primary data, allowing researchers to build a conceptual understanding without having to conduct field data collection. This approach was chosen because it aligns with the research objective of understanding the psychological and sociological dynamics of consumer resistance from various theoretical perspectives developed in the literature of consumer behavior and green marketing. Gupta and Gupta (2022) emphasize that in library research, the quality of the research instrument is determined by the researcher's accuracy in choosing keywords and determining search boundaries. Keywords used in the search include consumer resistance, green skepticism, technical specifications, greenwashing, perceived greenwashing, corporate motivation, environmental claims, sustainable products, energy-efficient lighting, and LED adoption in various combinations to ensure broad and representative coverage.

The literature search and selection procedures in this study refer to the state-of-the-art review framework proposed by Barry et al. (2022) through six systematic steps: identification of research questions, structured literature search, selection of sources based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, data extraction, synthesis of findings, and report preparation. Frank and Hatak (2014) emphasize the importance of systematics in tracking, evaluating, and synthesizing literature to build a solid theoretical foundation. Stratton (2019), in his guide on literature reviews, stresses the importance of clear research question definitions, structured search strategies, and explicit selection criteria to guarantee the quality and relevance of sources. Data sources in this study consist of textbooks in the fields of consumer behavior, green marketing, and environmental psychology, as well as indexed scientific journal articles that directly discuss the variables focused on in this study. The search was conducted on reputable academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and SpringerLink to obtain credible sources relevant to the research topic.

Data analysis in this study uses a thematic synthesis approach as recommended by Snyder (2024) to design a literature review that provides a strong contribution. Mohajan (2018) explains that in qualitative research, the validity of findings is maintained through persistent observation and source triangulation by comparing opinions from various authors and different scientific traditions. The researcher performs comparisons between theoretical perspectives, looks for common threads connecting various findings, and constructs a coherent argument about how doubts regarding technical specifications, resistance to exaggerated promotional narratives, and distrust of brand motivation collectively form consumer resistance toward eco-friendly lighting products. This synthesis is expected to generate a new understanding of the sources of resistance that have received little attention in green marketing literature.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Doubts Regarding Technical Specifications and Resistance to Green Promotional Narratives

Consumer doubt regarding the technical specifications of eco-friendly lighting products does not arise from a lack of desire to switch to more sustainable products, but rather from the complexity of technical information presented without adequate guidance to understand it. Manufacturers often list various technical terms such as lumens, watts, Kelvin color temperature, color rendering index, and luminous efficacy as evidence of product superiority; however, for average consumers without a technical or physics background, these numbers are merely a series of symbols that are difficult to translate into real benefits for daily use. Consumers do not know how many lumens are sufficient for a bedroom, how many watts are equivalent to the 60-watt incandescent bulb they usually use, or how a specific color temperature affects the comfort of a room. This confusion creates a gap between the information provided by the manufacturer and the understanding needed by consumers to make a confident decision. According to Ottman et al. (2006), consumers are often

confused by excessive technical information. This confusion creates uncertainty about whether the product truly delivers the benefits as promised. Consumers tend to choose products they understand rather than products that confuse them, even if they are more environmentally friendly. The diversity of specifications without simple explanations can actually make consumers more hesitant to determine the choice that best suits their needs (Margareta & Darmawan, 2025). Thus, the complexity of technical specifications that is not balanced with consumer education becomes the first source of doubt, where information that should build trust instead creates a psychological distance between the consumer and the eco-friendly product.

Past experiences with energy-saving products from previous generations reinforce consumer doubt through a mechanism of negative generalization that is difficult to erase solely with modern marketing claims. Consumers who have used compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) in the past have memories of lamps that were slow to turn on, provided uncomfortable light, or produced an annoying buzzing sound. These negative experiences form a cognitive schema that "energy-saving products" are synonymous with sacrificing comfort for the sake of savings. When faced with LED lamps, which are technically far superior, consumers automatically activate old schemas and generalize that all eco-friendly products possess similar weaknesses. Concerns that LED lights will be dim, uncomfortable for the eyes, or quickly damaged persist even though technology has advanced rapidly, because direct experience has greater power to shape beliefs compared to abstract information. Zakariya and Darmawan (2025), in their research on the influence of green products on purchase decisions for lighting products, found that past negative experiences affect perceptions of new products. Consumers generalize that all eco-friendly products have similar flaws. They worry that LED lights will be dim, uncomfortable for the eyes, or easily broken even though technology has evolved. These concerns are difficult to eliminate through marketing claims alone. Manufacturers need to provide opportunities for consumers to try products directly or provide easily understood comparison information. The memory effect of these past negative experiences becomes a second source of doubt that is affective and experiential in nature, complicating manufacturers' efforts to convince consumers because they must counter deep-seated memories rather than just provide new information. Furthermore, from a business law perspective, the clarity of manufacturer responsibility regarding product quality and safety also influences the consumer's sense of security in trying new innovations (Marsal et al., 2025).

Uncertainty regarding long-term cost savings becomes the third source of doubt, which is economic in nature, where consumers struggle to perform a rational calculation between a higher initial price and future electricity savings. Eco-friendly lamps are generally priced higher than conventional lamps, with the promise of long-term electricity cost savings. However, average consumers lack the tools or knowledge to calculate how many months or years are required to reach the break-even point of their initial investment. Without a clear calculation, abstract savings figures lack sufficient persuasive power to overcome the reluctance to pay more at present. Consumers naturally focus more on the price they must pay now (present cost) rather than the benefits they will receive in the future (future benefit), a psychological bias known as hyperbolic discounting. Ottman (2017), in his book on the new rules of green marketing, emphasizes the importance of communicating economic value in a way that is easily understood by consumers. Consumers find it difficult to calculate how many months or years are needed to reach the break-even point of the initial investment. They focus more on the price to be paid now than on future savings. Manufacturers need to simplify these calculations and present them in an attractive format, for example, with online calculators or simple comparison tables. Without clear information, consumers choose products with cheaper initial prices. This inability of consumers to project long-term savings becomes the third source of doubt, which is calculative in nature, turning the economic advantage of eco-friendly products which should be an attraction into a source of confusion that drives consumers back to simpler conventional choices. This indicates that transparency of economic information is a vital part of consumer protection so that they can make conscious decisions and not be disadvantaged (Prasetyo et al., 2023).

Resistance to green promotional narratives emerges as a psychological response when consumers feel that the claims delivered by manufacturers are exaggerated, bombastic, and inconsistent with the reality they can verify. Advertisements using phrases such as "highly environmentally friendly," "save the earth," or "100 percent green" actually trigger suspicion instead of building trust, because critical consumers realize that no product is entirely free of environmental impact. Overly heroic narratives create a gap between claims and available evidence, prompting consumers to seek validation from independent sources. When validation is not found or is difficult to access, such claims are regarded as mere marketing tactics (greenwashing) that actually strengthen skepticism toward the entire category of eco-friendly products. A more effective approach is to use language that is simple, factual, and verifiable, acknowledging product limitations while highlighting relative advantages over conventional alternatives. Witkowski (2021), in research on expanding anti-consumption research, found that critical consumers tend to reject marketing messages that are too bombastic. They seek evidence and validation from independent sources. If not found, claims are considered mere marketing tactics.

Exaggerated narratives are actually counterproductive because they reinforce skepticism. Manufacturers should use language that is simpler, more factual, and verifiable. Resistance to these excessive green promotional narratives becomes the fourth source of doubt, which is critical and evaluative in nature, where consumers doubt not only the product but also the integrity of the manufacturer's communication, creating a deeper psychological barrier as it concerns trust in the information source itself. In the digital era, the ethics of information dissemination are increasingly important because inaccurate or misleading messages can quickly create a widespread impact on society (Muhammad et al., 2023).

The phenomenon of greenwashing, which is prevalent across various industries, has significantly strengthened consumer resistance toward green promotional narratives, as consumers become increasingly savvy and skeptical in evaluating environmental claims made by manufacturers. Many companies claim their products are eco-friendly without strong, verifiable evidence, or they make only minor changes with no significant impact yet promote them extensively as green innovations. Repeated experiences with these practices shape a consumer mindset that most green claims are suspicious until proven otherwise through concrete evidence. A single exposed case of greenwashing can damage the reputation of not only the brand involved but also the entire category of eco-friendly products, as consumers generalize that dishonest practices may occur everywhere. Fachrurazi et al. (2022), in research on medical products and eco-friendly purchase intentions, found that consumers are increasingly adept at recognizing greenwashing practices. They seek information about production practices, raw materials, and company environmental policies. If they find inconsistencies between claims and reality, trust is lost and resistance spreads to other products. One case of greenwashing can damage the reputation of the entire eco-friendly product category. Manufacturers truly committed to sustainability need to differentiate themselves through transparency and credible certifications. Thus, the prevalence of greenwashing practices becomes the fifth source of resistance, which is systemic in nature, creating a climate of distrust that causes consumers to start with a suspicious assumption toward every green claim before evidence to the contrary can be presented. The role of regulation and supervision from competent authorities becomes essential to ensure that product claims match reality and do not disadvantage consumers (Mustika et al., 2023).

Consumer resistance to green promotional narratives is also triggered by communication approaches that personally blame them for environmental damage, which actually generates negative psychological reactions instead of building support for eco-friendly products. Advertisements using messages such as "if you don't buy this product, you are destroying the earth" or "the future of the planet is in your hands" create a disproportionate moral burden that feels manipulative. Consumers feel cornered and blamed for complex problems that actually involve many parties, including large corporations and government policies. This overly patronizing approach activates psychological defense mechanisms that make consumers reject not only the message but also the product being promoted. A more effective narrative is one that empowers consumers with positive information and demonstrates how their choices are part of a collective solution, rather than an individual source of the problem. Arifin et al. (2023), in research on risk perception and customer trust toward eco-friendly electronic products, found that approaches that are too preachy actually trigger rejection. Consumers feel emotionally manipulated. They are more responsive to messages that empower and provide positive information. Narratives emphasizing shared benefits and collective solutions are more effective than blaming individuals. Manufacturers need to design messages that build optimism rather than guilt. This blaming communication approach becomes the sixth source of resistance, which is emotional in nature, where consumers reject a product because they reject the way the product is promoted, regardless of the environmental benefits it may offer.

The role of social media in spreading skepticism toward green claims has fundamentally changed the marketing communication landscape, where manufacturers no longer have full control over the narratives circulating in society. Consumers can now easily share information, experiences, and findings about greenwashing practices through various platforms, creating a collective knowledge base that strengthens resistance against unproven claims. Negative reviews, investigative videos, and critical articles can go viral within hours, reaching thousands or even millions of consumers before manufacturers have a chance to respond. A single product with problematic green claims can become a subject of widespread discussion that permanently damages a brand's reputation. Consumer reviews on digital platforms have also been proven to influence product competitiveness and corporate management strategies in the long term (Negara et al., 2021). In this decentralized information ecosystem, a transparent and proactive approach to communicating sustainability practices is no longer an option but a necessity. Mardikaningsih et al. (2025), in research on the influence of social media use on student knowledge regarding green management and pro-environmental attitudes, found that online discussions shape collective perceptions. Negative reviews, investigative videos, and critical articles spread quickly. Manufacturers lose control over the narrative. A single product with problematic green claims can go viral and damage reputations. A transparent and proactive approach to

communicating sustainability practices is becoming increasingly important. Social media, as an arena for this information exchange, becomes the seventh source of resistance, which is collective and organized in nature, where consumers mutually reinforce skepticism and build shared knowledge that makes them harder to influence with conventional marketing narratives.

Resistance to green promotional narratives is also influenced by the perception that eco-friendly products are only intended for certain circles with high purchasing power, creating a social gap that makes lower-middle-class consumers feel excluded. The premium prices often attached to green products, combined with narratives emphasizing the moral responsibility to save the environment, create a paradoxical situation where consumers with limited resources are blamed for environmental damage while eco-friendly products remain beyond their economic reach. Narratives that are insensitive to this economic reality trigger resistance because they feel unfair and elitist. Consumers reject messages that make them feel guilty for something they cannot afford to do. A more inclusive approach is needed by providing eco-friendly products at various price points and communicating that environmental responsibility is a shared duty that can be realized in various ways, not just through the purchase of premium products. Hardiyanti and Darmawan (2023) state that price influences consumer perception. Narratives that emphasize moral responsibility without considering economic affordability create a gap. Lower-middle-class consumers feel excluded and resistant to such messages. Manufacturers need to design products with various price levels and communicate that environmental responsibility is a shared responsibility, not just for the affluent. This perception of economic exclusivity becomes the eighth source of resistance, which is social in nature, where consumers reject not only the product but also values perceived as being for the elite only, strengthening polarization and hindering the widespread adoption of eco-friendly products.

The lack of clear and uniform standards and certifications in the eco-friendly product market further strengthens consumer doubt by creating confusion about which labels can truly be trusted. Various green labels have emerged with differing criteria; some are issued by official government agencies, some by international non-governmental organizations, and not a few are self-made claims by manufacturers without third-party verification. Consumers faced with various labels featuring attractive designs have no easy way to distinguish which ones have substantial meaning and which are mere marketing gimmicks. This ambiguity drives consumers to ignore all labels and return to conventional considerations such as price and brand, rather than trying to understand complex and non-standardized environmental claims. The role of the government and independent institutions in establishing national standards and socializing credible labels is crucial to reducing this confusion. Masrifah and Darmawan (2023) state that consumers seek quality assurance from trusted sources. In eco-friendly products, consumers are confused about distinguishing official labels from self-made claims. They do not know which labels can be trusted. This lack of clarity strengthens resistance because consumers feel they have no basis for comparing products. Government and independent institutions need to play a role in setting standards and socializing credible labels. The implementation of consistent labeling regulations and fair supervision in the market is an essential part of creating healthy business competition while protecting consumers (Purwanto et al., 2023). The absence of clear standards and certifications becomes the ninth source of resistance, which is structural in nature, creating information noise that makes consumers choose not to trust any claim rather than taking the risk of misplaced trust in an invalid claim.

The interaction between technical doubt and narrative resistance creates a vicious cycle that reinforces negative attitudes. Consumers who doubt technical specifications tend to be more skeptical of promotional claims. Kessous et al. (2016), in research on consumer sensitivity to the sustainable practices of major retailers in France, found that consumers who are critical of one aspect tend to be critical of others. Skepticism spreads across all dimensions of the product. Manufacturers need to build credibility holistically, not just in one aspect. Consistency between specifications, claims, and company practices is the key to overcoming resistance.

Consumer resistance toward eco-friendly lighting products is a rational response to uncertainty and inadequate information. Das and Kethineedi (2025), in a policy and business framework for addressing consumer resistance to sustainable marketing, emphasize the importance of an integrated approach involving education, transparency, and regulation. In healthy business competition, information transparency and regulatory compliance are keys to building sustainable market trust (Wibowo et al., 2023). Manufacturers need to simplify technical information, avoid exaggerated narratives, and build credibility through concrete actions. Consumers who feel respected and provided with clear information will be more open to eco-friendly products. Resistance can be reduced if the sources of doubt are addressed with an authentic and transparent approach.

Distrust of Brand Motivation as a Source of Resistance

Consumer distrust toward brand motivation behind environmental campaigns is the most fundamental source of resistance because it touches the core of the relationship between consumers and manufacturers: integrity and authenticity. An ethical approach in business relationships has also proven to influence

performance sustainability and long-term trust between business actors and their consumers (Putra & Wibowo, 2022). Consumers do not only evaluate products based on technical specifications or environmental claims, but also question what drives a company to suddenly care about nature conservation. Large brands previously known for ignoring eco-friendly practices, using hazardous materials, or having a poor track record in waste management, which then launch massive green campaigns, automatically trigger suspicion that this is merely an opportunistic marketing tactic to capitalize on the rising trend of environmental awareness. Consumers seek consistency between what the company says in its campaigns and what it does in daily business practices, from raw material procurement to factory waste management. When significant gaps are found, trust built over a long period can collapse instantly, and resistance toward the brand's eco-friendly products becomes very strong even if, technically, the products might indeed be better for the environment. Ali et al. (2022) state that reputational consistency affects trust. Consumers investigate a company's track record, production practices, and long-term commitment to sustainability. If a gap is found between green campaigns and daily business practices, trust is lost and resistance strengthens. Inconsistent brands will find it difficult to convince consumers even if their products are technically eco-friendly. Thus, the inconsistency between campaigns and actual practices becomes the first fundamental source of distrust, where consumers reject not only the claims but also the entire brand identity perceived as inauthentic. From a business ethics perspective, corporate responsibility toward consumer needs, including aspects of product halalness and safety, also becomes part of the formation of trust that cannot be separated from the brand image (Alfiyah et al., 2023).

Consumer resistance toward eco-friendly products does not emerge suddenly; rather, it is rooted in deep-seated distrust regarding the motivations behind a company's green campaigns. When consumers begin to question whether the displayed environmental concern is a sincere commitment or merely an opportunistic marketing strategy, the emotional connection with the brand begins to crack. Various triggering factors for this distrust need to be mapped systematically so that manufacturers can understand the true root of the problem before designing strategies to rebuild credibility in the eyes of consumers.

Table 1. Sources of Consumer Distrust Toward Brand Motivation in Green Campaigns

Source of Distrust	Core Issue
Inconsistency (Fundamental)	The gap between green campaigns and actual business practices (production, waste)
Economic Motive (Evaluatif)	Suspicion that environmental concern is merely a business calculation, not a sincere commitment
Greenwashing (Systemic)	The prevalence of greenwashing practices creates general skepticism toward all green claims
Global vs. Local (Geographical)	Contradictions between a global image and poor practices at the local level that are directly visible
Lack of Transparency (Informational)	Closed production/supply chain information; consumers fill the void with negative assumptions
Social Media (Accelerative)	Violations go viral easily, accelerating the destruction of trust built over many years
Premium Pricing	Suspicion that high prices are only for profit, not environmental costs
Damaging Core Business	Green campaigns are considered mere image-building if the company's main business remains unsustainable
Minimal Involvement	The company only sells green products without real contribution to broader environmental issues
Claims vs. Reality	Products do not meet performance expectations; environmental claims are viewed as marketing tactics
Social Influence	Skepticism spreads through reference groups; trusted recommendations can reduce resistance

The mapping indicates that consumer distrust is multidimensional, ranging from issues of consistency and transparency to broader social impacts. Manufacturers can no longer rely on superficial green campaigns because modern consumers have the access to information and the sensitivity required to distinguish between sincere commitment and mere image-building. Rebuilding trust requires consistent concrete actions, radical openness, and involvement in larger environmental issues, as only then can a brand convince consumers that sustainability is truly internalized within all operational aspects, not just a marketing tool.

The perception that economic motives are more dominant than environmental concern in a company's green campaigns reinforces consumer distrust at a deeper level. Consumers, who are increasingly critical and

informed, believe that companies are essentially profit-seeking entities; thus, every step toward sustainability will always be questioned whether it is driven by sincere commitment or merely a business calculation to win over a growing market. Consumers with high environmental awareness have a more sensitive radar for the motivations behind green campaigns. It is not enough for them to simply see advertisements or eco-friendly packaging; they look for evidence that sustainability values are truly internalized within all aspects of the company's operations. Certifications from independent institutions, audited sustainability reports, and supply chain transparency become indicators they use to distinguish between companies that are genuinely committed and those merely engaging in superficial image-building. Companies that only conduct campaigns without fundamental changes will be easily identified and rejected by this consumer segment, which is often the primary target of eco-friendly products. Nuraini et al. (2022), in research on environmental sustainability, found that internal locus of control and environmental insight influence pro-environmental behavior. Consumers with high environmental awareness are more critical in evaluating brand motivations. They seek evidence that the company truly internalizes sustainability values in all operational aspects. Certifications, sustainability reports, and supply chain transparency become important indicators. Companies that only engage in superficial campaigns without fundamental changes will be easily recognized and rejected by consumers. Suspicion regarding these economic motives becomes the second source of distrust, which is evaluative in nature, where consumers look not only at what the company says but also why the company says it, assessing whether the reasoning behind the campaign aligns with the values they hold. Accurate and open data management also helps management make more transparent strategic decisions so that sustainability messages do not stop at slogans but are supported by measurable evidence (Ali & Darmawan, 2023).

The crisis of trust in brand motivation is exacerbated by the prevalence of greenwashing practices across various industries, creating an environment where consumers start with a suspicious assumption toward every green claim they encounter. Each time a greenwashing case is exposed in the media, the impact is not limited to the brand involved but spreads across the entire category of eco-friendly products, as consumers generalize that dishonest practices may occur everywhere. Direct or indirect experience with greenwashing forms a cognitive schema that environmental claims, in general, are worthy of suspicion until proven otherwise through strong and verifiable evidence. Manufacturers truly committed to sustainability face the daunting challenge of differentiating themselves amidst this widespread skepticism. They must invest more to build trust, not only through quality products but also through radical transparency and openness to independent audits, as consumers who have been burned by greenwashing will be harder to satisfy with ordinary claims. Halizah et al. (2022) state that reputation and security become the foundation of trust in the marketplace. Regarding eco-friendly products, a company's reputation for fulfilling environmental commitments becomes the deciding factor. Consumers who have encountered cases of greenwashing will generalize their suspicion toward other brands. A single case of dishonesty can damage trust in the entire green product category. Manufacturers truly committed to sustainability face a major challenge in differentiating themselves amidst widespread skepticism. The domino effect of these greenwashing practices becomes the third source of distrust, which is systemic in nature, creating a market climate where trust becomes a rare commodity and every new brand must pay the same high "skepticism tax" regardless of their actual commitment.

Inconsistency between the global campaigns of multinational companies and their practices at the local level serves as a fourth, very tangible source of distrust, especially in developing countries where consumers can directly observe the contradictions between a promoted green image and daily operational reality. Companies often build a sophisticated sustainability image at the global level through international advertisements and glossy sustainability reports, but practices at local factories, waste management within communities, or the treatment of workers are often far from the claimed standards. Local consumers who witness firsthand how a company disposes of waste into rivers, ignores worker health, or conflicts with surrounding communities will experience cognitive dissonance when they later see the company's beautiful green campaigns on social media. This visible contradiction evokes stronger resistance because consumers feel directly manipulated by an image built solely for consumers in certain markets, while the reality before their eyes tells a different story. Authenticity becomes a non-negotiable demand in an era of open information, where what happens in one place can be quickly known elsewhere. Halizah et al. (2022) state that consumers are sensitive to inconsistencies. Local consumers see firsthand how companies treat workers, manage waste, or interact with surrounding communities. If local practices contradict global campaigns, resistance emerges. Consumers feel manipulated by an image built only for specific markets. Authenticity is a primary demand in the era of open information. This gap between global campaigns and local practices becomes a fourth source of distrust that is geographical and contextual in nature, showing that consumers do not only evaluate marketing messages but also the operational reality they can directly observe; thus, companies cannot build a green image that is detached from actual practices at every operational location.

The lack of transparency regarding production practices and supply chains reinforces consumer

suspicion that companies have something to hide behind their green claims. Critical consumers are not satisfied with just an eco-friendly label on the packaging; they want to know where raw materials originate, how production processes are conducted, whether child labor is involved, how waste is managed, and the carbon footprint of the entire supply chain. When this information is unavailable or difficult to access, consumers tend to fill the void with worst-case assumptions. Paradoxically, research shows that companies that dare to admit the weaknesses and challenges they face on the journey toward sustainability are actually more trusted than those that only present a perfect positive side. Consumers understand that no company is perfect in its environmental practices, and they appreciate honesty about limitations and a commitment to continuous improvement. An approach that tries to create an image of perfection actually triggers suspicion because it feels unrealistic and too good to be true. Pino et al. (2022), in research on how to shape consumer reactions toward corporate environmental communication, found that admitting weaknesses can actually build trust. Companies that are open about the challenges faced and the improvement steps taken are more trusted than those that only show the positive side. Consumers appreciate honesty and transparency. They understand that no company is perfect in environmental practices. What matters is the willingness to keep improving and long-term commitment. An approach that over-perfects an image instead triggers suspicion. This lack of transparency becomes the fifth source of distrust, which is informational in nature, where consumers refuse to believe not because of evidence of wrongdoing, but because of the absence of sufficient evidence to build conviction, creating space for skepticism to flourish. Supervision of material quality and production processes, as applied in consumer health protection, shows that information disclosure is indeed the key to maintaining public trust (Kahfi et al., 2023).

The role of social media in uncovering corporate practices further strengthens consumer distrust of brand motivation by creating an information ecosystem where every aspect of a company's operations can become public consumption. In the digital era, there is no longer a boundary between what the company wants to communicate and what consumers can discover. Photos of environmental pollution taken by residents near factories, testimonies from former workers about unethical practices, or leaked internal documents can quickly spread virally through various social media platforms, reaching millions of people within hours. A green campaign built with significant investment over many years can be destroyed overnight by a single credible report of poor corporate practices. Consumers now have access to various information sources that allow them to triangulate between corporate claims, media reports, and other users' experiences before deciding whether a brand is worthy of trust. In this landscape, environmental commitment must be carried out tangibly and consistently across all operational aspects, rather than merely constructed through image-building, because any inconsistency risks being exposed and spreading widely with unprecedented speed. Zahroh and Darmawan (2025) state that consumers seek information from various sources before deciding. Findings about poor corporate practices spread quickly and are difficult to control. One report on environmental pollution or worker exploitation can destroy a green campaign built for years. Manufacturers need to realize that in the digital era, every aspect of operation can become public consumption. Environmental commitment must be implemented tangibly, not just as image-building. The power of social media to uncover these inconsistencies becomes the sixth source of distrust, which is accelerative in nature, accelerating and expanding the impact of every previous source of distrust, so that companies no longer have the luxury of building an image separate from operational reality because every gap can be revealed and go viral in a short time. The utilization of social media as a promotional tool indeed has great potential, but without honest and responsible management, it can actually backfire on the corporate image (Infante & Mardikaningsih, 2022).

Distrust is also triggered by the perception that green campaigns are merely marketing strategies to sell products at higher prices. Khayru et al. (2021) state that consumers are sensitive to price. Eco-friendly products sold at premium prices raise questions about whether the additional cost is truly for the environment or for company profit. Consumers want to know how the price difference is allocated. Is it for more expensive raw materials, better technology, or simply an additional margin? Without a transparent explanation, consumers perceive green campaigns as a way to take larger profits. Manufacturers need to clearly communicate the cost structure and environmental contribution of each purchase. Risk perceptions regarding price and benefits are often primary considerations before consumers decide to buy, so clear information is highly needed to reduce such doubts (Cahyani & Darmawan, 2025).

The perception that large companies use green campaigns to divert attention from unsustainable core business practices also strengthens resistance. Sinambela et al. (2022) state that consumers build relationships with brands based on overall perceptions. Companies whose primary business damages the environment find it difficult to convince consumers that their new products are eco-friendly. Consumers see a fundamental inconsistency. Green campaigns are viewed as efforts to wash a reputation rather than a fundamental change. Manufacturers need to undergo a comprehensive transformation, not just launch a green product line. Environmental accountability as part of the company's ethics and legal obligations becomes the foundation so

that changes made are not merely symbolic but truly real (Baker & Schaltegger, 2015; Darmawan, 2022).

A lack of corporate involvement in broader environmental issues also raises questions. Musyafak and Darmawan (2025), in their research on realizing just sustainability through public policies responsive to social inequality, emphasize the importance of an active corporate role in environmental advocacy. Consumers want to see companies not only selling green products but also engaging in collective efforts to address the climate crisis. Support for environmental policies, partnerships with NGOs, and investment in sustainability research serve as indicators of sincere commitment. Companies that focus solely on products without making a broader contribution are considered less serious. Active involvement builds credibility and reduces resistance. In the broader economic ecosystem, collaboration between companies, the government, and small business actors is also essential to creating stability and fairness in sustainable development (Hardyansah & Putra, 2023).

The discrepancy between company claims and consumer perceptions regarding product impact also triggers distrust. Arifin and Darmawan (2026) state that consumers evaluate products based on direct experience. If consumers do not perceive a significant difference during use, the environmental claims are doubted. Eco-friendly lighting products that fail to provide adequate illumination or break quickly cause consumers to question claims of energy savings and long lifespans. Negative experiences reinforce the belief that environmental claims are merely marketing tactics. Manufacturers must ensure that product quality is comparable to or better than conventional products. Service quality and a satisfying user experience have also been proven to contribute to repurchase intentions, meaning brand promises must be truly felt in practice (Fared et al., 2021).

The influence of reference groups in shaping perceptions of brand motivation is very strong. Putra et al. (2022) state that discussions within social groups shape preferences. Consumers who hear from friends or family that a brand is insincere in its environmental campaigns will be influenced. Skepticism is contagious through social networks. Conversely, recommendations from trusted individuals regarding a brand's sincere commitment can reduce resistance. Manufacturers need to build relationships with communities and influential figures who can serve as independent advocates.

Distrust of brand motivation is the root of resistance that is most difficult to overcome. Gani et al. (2021), in their research on minimalist trends in consumption behavior, found that consumers are increasingly critical of excessive consumption and corporate image-building. Rebuilding trust requires time and consistency. Manufacturers must demonstrate through concrete actions, not just words, that their commitment to the environment is sincere and sustainable. Transparency, accountability, and involvement in broader environmental issues are key. Consumers who are convinced that a brand truly cares will be more receptive to eco-friendly products and may even become advocates who spread positive experiences.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Consumer resistance toward eco-friendly lighting products stems from three main factors: doubt regarding technical specifications, resistance to green promotional narratives perceived as exaggerated, and distrust of brand motivation behind environmental campaigns. Technical doubt arises from the complexity of information that confuses average consumers and past unsatisfactory experiences with energy-saving products. Resistance to promotional narratives is triggered by greenwashing practices, exaggerated claims that are difficult to verify, and language perceived as patronizing. Distrust of brand motivation is rooted in the perception that companies are more motivated by profit than environmental concern, reinforced by inconsistencies between campaigns and business practices. These three sources of resistance are interrelated and reinforce one another, creating significant barriers to the adoption of eco-friendly products. Understanding these sources of resistance is essential for manufacturers and policymakers to design more authentic and effective communication strategies.

Theoretically, the results of this analysis enrich the green marketing literature with a perspective on consumer resistance, which has received less attention compared to studies on adoption. This approach complements the understanding of psychological and sociological barriers in the transition toward sustainable consumption. Practically, for eco-friendly lighting manufacturers, the primary implication is the need to simplify technical information and present it in a format easily understood by average consumers. Promotional narratives must be factual, verifiable, and avoid exaggerated claims that trigger skepticism. Building trust requires consistency between environmental campaigns and daily business practices, as well as transparency regarding challenges and limitations. For marketers, a more humble approach that acknowledges weaknesses can actually build credibility. For policymakers, clear certification standards and law enforcement against greenwashing practices are necessary to protect consumers and create healthy competition.

Manufacturers should simplify product technical information using everyday analogies and tools such as online savings calculators. Promotional narratives should focus on tangible, verifiable benefits, avoiding bombastic claims and using empowering rather than patronizing language. Companies need to build credibility

through transparency in production practices, third-party certification, and consistency between campaigns and actions. Engaging consumers in two-way dialogue through social media and discussion forums can reduce resistance and build trust. Regulators need to tighten supervision of environmental claims and impose strict sanctions on greenwashing practices. Further research is suggested to empirically test the interaction model between variables through quantitative approaches or in-depth case studies across various categories of eco-friendly products.

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