

The Impact of Sustainability Marketing on Young Consumers: A Cross-Regional Study of Eastern and Western Europe

The study investigates the impact of sustainability marketing on the loyalty and purchasing behaviour of young customers in Eastern and Western Europe. The present article explores consumer attitudes towards sustainable marketing, cultural influences, and geographical variations using a combination of empirical research and theoretical analysis. Using focus group discussions with participants from both regions, the study reveals important differences in attitudes, purchasing behaviours, and opinions about sustainable marketing. Key findings indicate that although consumers in Eastern and Western Europe acknowledge the value of sustainability, Western Europeans exhibit a greater degree of openness and enthusiasm towards initiatives promoting sustainability. In contrast, Eastern Europeans are more skeptical and take practical factors into account. The study emphasises how crucial it is to comprehend regional and cultural nuances when creating sustainable marketing plans that are designed to appeal to a diverse range of customer demographics.

Keywords: sustainability marketing, consumer behavior, regional differences, loyalty.

Tyrime nagrinėjama, kaip jaunų vartotojų, reprezentuojančių Rytų ir Vakarų Europą, lojalumą ir elgseną veikia tvarumo marketingas. Šiame straipsnyje, naudojant empirinių tyrimų ir teorinės analizės derinį, nagrinėjamas vartotojų požiūris į tvarumo marketingą, kultūrinę įtaką ir geografiniai skirtumai. Pasitelkus fokus grupės diskusijas su dalyviais iš abiejų regionų, tyrimas atskleidžia svarbius požiūrių, pirkimo elgsenos ir nuomonių apie tvarumo rinkodarą skirtumus. Pagrindinės išvados rodo, kad nors Rytų ir Vakarų Europos vartotojai pripažįsta tvarumo vertę, Vakarų europiečiai atviresni ir entuziastingesni iniciatyvoms, skatinančioms tvarumą, o Rytų europiečiai skeptiškesni ir atsižvelgia į praktinius veiksmus. Tyrime pabrėžiama, kad labai svarbu suvokti regioninius ir kultūrinius niuansus kuriant tvarius marketingo planus, kurie būtų paveikūs įvairiais demografiniais rodikliais pasižyminčiais auditorijai.

Raktiniai žodžiai: tvarumo rinkodara, vartotojų elgsena, regioniniai skirtumai, lojalumas.

Introduction

The ever-increasing concerns about global sustainability have sparked intense debates and actions across various sectors, with marketing playing a pivotal

role in influencing both the problem and potential solutions (White et al., 2025). Sustainability has grown in importance when it comes to how companies conduct their activities. However, for the longest time it had been treated as a strategy

Jemima RODRIGUES – Master of Business Administration, Vytautas Magnus University, Faculty of Economics and Management, Vytautas Magnus University. Address: K. Donelaičio str. 58, LT-44248 Kaunas, Lithuania.

Lina PILELIENĖ – Professor at Vytautas Magnus University, Faculty of Economics and Management, Vytautas Magnus University. Address: K. Donelaičio str. 52, LT-44248 Kaunas, Lithuania. Phone: +370 37 327856. Email: lina.pileliene@vdu.lt

that only targets a niche group of people (Bernyte, 2022). S. Bernyte (2022) found that in the retail sector that operates in Lithuania the main flaw is that no company seems to be positioning itself as the market leader in sustainability or concentrating on organizational sustainability development. This further reinforces the aforementioned gap between brands and their sustainability marketing efforts in Eastern and Western European society. A. Batraga, D. Skiltere, J. Salkovska, S. Bormane, and A. Legzdina (2019) analysed integrated marketing communication in the context of sustainability and its influence on customer buying decisions. The research was of a quantitative nature and was based on a large-scale survey that was conducted. In contrast, T. Milfeld and D. J. Flint (2019) examined the core affective response of consumers when companies made sustainability a fundamental aspect of their brand image. This research was qualitative in nature which included long, in-depth interviews with consumers and their attitude toward sustainability marketing. While I. Sarma and R. Ali (2022) explored the determinants of sustainability marketing activities and their impact on customer loyalty, it is evident that the exploration of the relation between sustainability marketing communication and customer loyalty is scarce.

Moreover, there have been limited studies that have conducted cross-cultural examinations on the impact of marketing in Europe. In 2011, M. Mooij and G. Hofstede conducted research on Cross-Cultural Consumer Behavior. However, the study separated the markets into the Eastern world, including Asia and the Middle East, and the

Western world, including Europe and America. A. Chwialkowska, W. A. Bhatti and M. Glowik (2020) discuss the impact of cultural differences on an individual's inclination towards sustainable actions and briefly touch on varying consumer behaviours in their study, "The influence of cultural values on pro-environmental behavior." However, there is still a lack of cross-regional research on the impact of sustainability marketing on consumer behaviour, particularly in light of the significant cultural differences between Eastern and Western Europe.

The research problem addressed in this paper is intended to close this gap by discussing the impact of sustainability marketing on customer loyalty across Western and Eastern Europe. **The object of the paper** is the impact of sustainability marketing on customer loyalty. Consequently, the aim of the paper is to conduct a comparative analysis of the impact that sustainability marketing has on customer loyalty in the retail sector across Eastern and Western Europe.

In order to achieve the stated aim of the study, the research first identifies Eastern and Western Europe and examines the cultural factors and regional differences in the context of marketing. Further, qualitative field analysis through two focus group discussions with consumers from Eastern and Western Europe are provided to understand the impact of sustainability marketing on customer loyalty.

Research methods. For this research, a combination of secondary and primary data analysis is conducted. Secondary data includes a theoretical analysis of literature and the determination of Eastern and Western Europe along

with an analysis of other cross-regional studies in the marketing field. Based on the analysis, two assumptions are made which then are tested empirically in the format of two focus group discussions.

Cultural factors and regional differences: Eastern and Western Europe

One might argue over the definition and limits of what constitutes Central, Eastern, and Western Europe. However, there are clear regional trends in people's perspectives on religion, national identity, minorities, and important social concerns, regardless of where the boundaries are formed. When contrasting the opinions of nations traditionally identified with Eastern Europe are contrasted with those of nations traditionally identified with Western Europe, particularly stark discrepancies become apparent.

While national identities in Western Europe are by no means devoid of an ethnic component, conditions in Central and Eastern Europe have reproduced the tendency to emphasize pre-political criteria of 'belonging' as the primary condition for the enjoyment of rights (Batt, 2001). All countries in Eastern Europe struggle with various economic and political problems, and with specific crises induced by the rapid transition of Eastern Europe that increases stress and decreases well-being (Brdar & Rijavec, 2022).

Centrally positioned nations may have dominant attitudes that more closely mirror public mood in the West on some subjects, while on others they may represent popular ideas in the East

(Pew Research Center, 2018). For example, despite the Czech Republic, Hungary and Croatia share similar history, religion and cultural values (Brdar & Rijavec, 2022), differences are also obvious. Like most of Western Europeans, Czechs are very secular, usually support same-sex marriage, and do not identify Christianity with their national identity. However, Czechs also seem to be less accepting to Muslims, more in line with their Eastern neighbors. Furthermore, the majority of Hungarians hold the traditional Eastern European perspective of national identity, which holds that being born in Hungary and having Hungarian ancestors are essential to being authentically Hungarian. However, only over 60 percent of Hungarians hold a religious belief, which is consistent with Western European levels of religion (Pew Research Center, 2018).

Considering Western Europe, this region can be characterized as being very balanced, the climate is moderate, health and educational standards are well developed, and economic and political systems are comparatively stable; moreover, people in this region are relatively rarely confronted with threatening conditions (Harzer & Weber, 2022). Western European countries are characterized by a much higher level of social capital, thus environmental issues are viewed as more important if compared Eastern Europe (Lopatkova, 2021). Despite this, Western societies also become more ethnically and culturally diverse due to the acculturation of immigrant fostering social cohesion (Baumert et al., 2024).

European ideals are frequently used by leaders to support their positions on contentious political issues. However,

various people may interpret the term “European values” differently. Some associate it with the Christian legacy of the continent, while others associate it with a more expansive kind of political liberalism that includes democratic governance, refugee asylum, and a separation of religion and state. Values at the same time can be a source of unity and of division (Cachia, 2023). Given the significant cultural differences between Eastern and Western societies, it is reasonable to assume that marketing techniques will have varying effects on consumers depending on the prevailing political and attitudinal climate. It is widely acknowledged that climate change, environmental concerns, and sustainable consumption are highly politicized issues globally, and consumer attitudes towards sustainable marketing may be influenced by their political leanings (Song et al., 2017). The European Union has emphasized the significance of sustainable goals for the functioning of society. In recent years, it has become a core aspect of European values. However, there is a noticeable difference in the interpretation of European values between Eastern and Western European countries, which has been evident throughout history (Weymans, 2023). Moreover, L. Sazonova (2014) emphasizes the etymology of the word “sustainability” which gave the birth for the term “sustainable development”: it comes from a forestry term in the West German (Western European) group of languages and for centuries was used to denote a feature of good maintenance of forests (what today could be called as “environment”).

As sustainable development is becoming an increasingly important topic

on the global scale (Lopatkova, 2021), also sustainability is becoming a widely used topic across industries (Kehris & Gaile-Sarkane, 2022). In this regard, sustainability marketing is gaining its position.

Sustainability within Eastern and Western Europe

Sustainability marketing provides organizations with multiple scenarios on how to communicate their sustainability strategy with consumers, investors, and stakeholders (Kehris & Gaile-Sarkane, 2022). Traditional marketing mindset focused on a linear economy, has promoted the over-consumption of resources in ways that do not respect that our planet and its resources are finite (White et al., 2025). G. Beattie and L. McGuire (2016) outline the evidence that human activities such as patterns of consumption contribute to climate change. Acceptance of sustainability marketing is driven by the population’s recognition of the urgency of climate change, over-pollution, and the need for sustainability. This section will briefly explore the attitudes of the general population towards climate change and sustainable consumption in Eastern and Western Europe.

One of the most significant threats to humanity is climate change. Climate change leads to extreme weather events, floods, droughts, and wildfires (Bolan et al., 2024). Every aspect of society must work together to address it, from consumers changing their behaviour to businesses adopting new, greener business models and regulations changing. Even though a single person’s impact on

climate change may seem little, research indicates that the European Union may be able to lower its carbon footprint by around 25 percent if known improvements in consumer behavior are mobilized (Moran et al., 2020). However, acknowledging the threat posed by human-caused climate change is the first step towards individuals changing their consumption habits. Worldwide, the general public's ignorance about the effects of climate change is still rather high: numerous studies have found little behavior change on the part of consumers (Beatrice & McGuire, 2016). Moreover, people in nations with higher pollution levels frequently show comparatively lower levels of worry about climate change. Its lack of awareness is poorly understood, partly because of the varied local influences at play (Farrell et al., 2019).

The research provided by S. Koompai, J. Royer and S. Pathak (2024) found out that the perception of climate change between Eastern and Western Europeans was not significantly different; however, their actions to reduce climate change differed significantly. According to a Lloyd's World Risk Poll (2021), respondents in Eastern Europe were generally less concerned about climate change than those in Western Europe, despite the fact that there was a large variance in climate risk assessment within each area. In Eastern Europe, a similar tendency can be observed in both EU and non-EU regions.

The majority of European nations have specific national papers that outline all of the strategic goals for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and modify them to fit local circumstances (Lopatkova, 2021).

P. Rydzewski (2015) found that citizens of Eastern and Western European nations have different perspectives on sustainable development: despite people in Eastern and Western Europe agree that the social component of sustainability is crucial, countries in Western Europe have much greater levels of social capital. Furthermore, Western Europe views environmental challenges as more significant than Eastern Europe. Therefore, compared to Western Europe, the social pillar is weaker, and the environmental pillar is obviously undervalued in Eastern European countries. The development strategies of the nations should take global political and economic objectives into consideration while striking a balance between economic, social, and environmental considerations (Mensah, 2019).

Cross-regional studies in sustainability and marketing

Few studies have been conducted to understand cross-regional differences in sustainability marketing and its effects. Therefore, we will examine similar studies on cross-regional marketing and sustainable consumption separately to better understand the landscape.

More than twenty years ago, A. Schuh and H. Holzmüller (2003) examined the effectiveness of western marketing strategies in Eastern Europe. The authors argue that these strategies are not effective due to the significant macroeconomic differences resulting from the fall of the Iron Curtain and the underdevelopment of Eastern European nations. However,

this study may no longer be as relevant as the differences in development between Eastern and Western European nations have become more subtle, with differences now primarily lying in social and political aspects.

Y. Hsu et al. (2010) conducted research which included a cross-cultural study investigating consumers' acceptance of marketing innovation. This study used Hofstede's five cultural dimensions to examine variations in the acceptability of innovative marketing practices across different cultures. Participants in this survey included consumers from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Macao, Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Taiwan. The study aimed to demonstrate the link between national cultures and consumers' approval of creative marketing using 446 accurate surveys. However, the five cultural dimensions are not applicable to comparisons between Eastern and Western Europe.

Finally, the study that most closely aligns with the scope of this paper has examined the impact of loyalty on satisfaction in cross-cultural settings. S. Broyles (2009) investigated the effect of customer loyalty on predicting future customer purchase behaviour, as well as the concepts of fulfilled expectations and customer satisfaction. A survey was administered to US and Chinese samples after developing a methodology for the behavioural and attitudinal elements of customer loyalty and using existing measures for the satisfaction dimensions and future (re)purchase behaviour. Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the data and evaluate theories derived from existing research. While

the study was carried out across two completely different continents, the similar methodology can be applied while analysing the differences across a given region. The study found that the results varied massively based on product, category and culture.

To sum up, the examination of current research offers insightful information on the challenges associated with cross-regional marketing and sustainable consumption. A. Schuh and H. Holzmüller's (2003) analysis of Western marketing tactics in Eastern Europe emphasises the necessity for context-specific methods and the difficulties caused by macroeconomic differences. Although the cross-cultural study on marketing innovativeness by Y. Hsu et al. (2010) provides insights into consumer acceptability in Asian contexts, its relevance to the Eastern-Western European dynamic is still unclear. On the other hand, S. Broyl's (2009) study of pleasure and loyalty in cross-cultural contexts offers a methodological approach that emphasises how crucial cultural subtleties are to comprehending consumer behaviour. When taken as a whole, these studies highlight the complexity of cross-regional marketing dynamics and urge for academics to take into account both cultural and socioeconomic aspects when analysing sustainable marketing.

Research methodology

To accomplish the goals of the research of this paper qualitative research method has been applied.

The empirical study of this paper aims to conduct a comparative analysis of the impact that sustainable marketing activities have on customer loyalty across Eastern and Western Europe in the retail sector. Achieving the aim, two focus group discussions on sustainability marketing activities and its impact on customer loyalty with a series of structured questions are provided and the data collected from the discussion are analysed to accept or negate the Research Assumptions (RAs).

Based on findings from the literature review, the Research Assumptions are as follows:

RA1: Western and Eastern European consumers have differing attitudes toward sustainability and sustainability marketing.

RA2: Western European consumers are more likely to have increased customer loyalty in comparison to Eastern Europeans when exposed to sustainability marketing.

The methods used in this paper include secondary data collection as well as primary data collection through two comparative focus groups. Data that is gathered by a user other than the main user is referred to as secondary data. Census data, information gathered by government agencies, company records, and data that was initially gathered for other research goals are all common sources of secondary data for social science. Contrarily, primary data are gathered by the researcher who is performing the study. Secondary data analysis can give larger and higher quality databases that would be impossible for any individual researcher to acquire on their own, saving time that would otherwise

be spent collecting data. This is especially true for quantitative data. After conducting the initial literature review it aided in finding a structure for the focus group discussions.

A focus group discussion is a small group interview with participants who have other characteristics or experiences in addition to having a comparable demographic. Their responses to queries posed by the researcher or assessor are investigated. In market research, focus group discussions are used to better understand consumers' responses to goods or services or participants' perspectives of common experiences. The dialogues may be mediated or unmediated (Calder, 1977). Focus groups are interactive, allowing researchers to gather qualitative information from a number of people, and are therefore frequently a quick, easy, and effective research technique (Kitzinger, 1995). The purpose of conducting a focus group discussion for this particular research topic is the visible gap in qualitative research when it comes to analysing customer loyalty with regards to sustainability marketing. A majority of studies on this topic rely heavily on large scale quantitative data collected through surveys which allow for understanding what a consumers' reaction to certain sustainable marketing activities is. However, focus group discussion as a research method supports not only the understanding of what but also why the customer has a certain reaction. This research study is unique as it is tasked with addressing the 'why and now what?' issue as more and more of the research process, particularly quantitative research and analytics, is switched to

tech-based solutions to address the ‘who, what, when, where, and how’ of business concerns.

Description of the methods of data collection

Focus Groups. For clarity, the European countries were first categorised as either Eastern or Western European. Table 1 below shows the references used in this study to identify which countries are considered Eastern or Western.

For the focus groups, 2 sets of 8 students were gathered. Each focus group consisted of students between the ages of 18-30 that identified as Eastern European or Western European based on the classification visible in the table above. The focus groups were held 2 days apart and consisted of the same set of questions. Due to the limited resources, the researcher was the acting moderator of the focus group discussion as well and helped guide the discussion. The participants were all asked a set of 8 questions that were open in nature and were allowed to discuss them and share their personal opinion. The participants were also given the opportunity to rephrase their thoughts or challenge another

participants opinion to better understand the overall standing of the group. The first question asked was designed to help get the participants acquainted with each other and the set up was casual in nature so the discussion would feel informal. The participants were all informed about the topic beforehand and had the choice to opt out. None of the participants have expressed the desire to be fully named in the research. The first few questions were introductory to the definitions and then followed an increasing intensity of technicality to help them get familiar with the topic. Both focus group discussions were organised in nearly identical circumstances to not affect the outcome or perpetuate any biases.

Comparative analysis of the focus group discussion results

Based on the topics discussed in the focus groups, there are clear distinctions between Eastern and Western Europeans’ views and opinions about sustainability marketing. The following themes appeared to stand out the most when comparing the effects of sustainability marketing on the two groups.

Table 1. Eastern and Western European countries

European Countries	
Western	Eastern
Austria; Belgium; Switzerland; Germany; Denmark; Spain; Finland; France; United Kingdom; Ireland; Iceland; Italy; Luxembourg; Malta; Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Sweden	Albania; Bulgaria; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Belarus; Czech Republic; Estonia; Greece; Croatia; Hungary; Lithuania; Latvia; Moldova; North Macedonia; Montenegro; Poland; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovak Republic; Slovenia; Ukraine

Source: compiled on the basis of the UN region allocation.

Perceptions of Intentions Behind Sustainability Marketing:

Western European participants largely agreed that sustainable practices are becoming more and more important for firms, and they frequently attributed these efforts to a sincere dedication to environmental responsibility. Participants disagreed on the fundamental motivations of firms, with some arguing that the main motivations for sustainability activities were to improve company reputation and conform to market trends.

On the other hand, participants from Eastern Europe showed more doubt about sustainability marketing, believing it to be a tactic used by businesses to imitate Western trends. Many participants expressed doubts about the sincerity of businesses' intentions, bringing up issues with price and arguing that sustainability marketing served more as image management than as true environmental care.

Personal Importance of Sustainability:

Both Eastern and Western European participants affirmed the importance of sustainability as a concept, aligning it with their personal values. However, there appeared to be a slightly lesser degree of enthusiasm among some Eastern European participants, possibly influenced by cultural or economic factors unique to the region.

Impact on Purchasing Behaviour:

Participants from Western Europe showed a proactive attitude towards sustainability; many of them actively looked for goods that exhibited sustainable methods. Participants' predisposition towards sustainability had a role in their purchase decisions, as they indicated

a preference for firms that openly disclosed their sustainability initiatives.

On the other hand, individuals from Eastern Europe showed more indifference in sustainability marketing. They listed a number of important factors that influenced their purchases, including the price of sustainable items and the prominence of sustainable activities in retailers.

Trust and Loyalty:

Both groups voiced doubts about the legitimacy of big business's sustainability marketing campaigns. In order to establish confidence, participants underlined the significance of openness and concrete evidence of sustainable behaviours. While Eastern European participants gave greater weight to characteristics like product quality, durability, and price when deciding which brands to support, Western European participants were more likely to show their devotion to companies that showed a commitment to sustainability.

The proposed assumptions were:

- Western and Eastern European consumers have differing attitudes toward sustainability and sustainability marketing. This statement can be supported by the discussions with the participants as there are clear differences in attitudes and reception of sustainability marketing by the different regions.
- Western European consumers are more likely to have increased customer loyalty in comparison to Eastern Europeans when exposed to sustainability marketing. This statement can also be supported by the discussion as there was hesitation regarding the

earning of trust in both discussions. However, transparency in communication seems to be emphasized as an important factor to gain the trust and the focus group with Western European participants seemingly more likely to display loyalty toward companies that show a commitment to sustainability.

In conclusion, while both Eastern and Western European consumers acknowledged the potential benefits of sustainability marketing in enhancing brand perception and reputation, there were notable differences in the extent to which it influenced their purchasing behaviour and brand loyalty. Western European consumers exhibited a greater receptivity to sustainability marketing, whereas Eastern European consumers displayed a more cautious and pragmatic approach, driven by considerations of affordability and product quality.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the theoretical analysis revealed that considerable contrasts in societal viewpoints, especially with regard to religion, national identity, and social issues, are revealed when cultural elements and regional variations between Eastern and Western Europe are examined. These contrasts have a significant impact on the attitudes and behaviours of consumers, particularly with relation to sustainability marketing. Consumer reactions to sustainability marketing are significantly influenced by political and attitudinal environments; the European Union's focus on sustainable aims is a

reflection of larger cultural movements towards environmental care. However, different people's conceptions of "European values" reflect different perspectives on social fairness and liberalism. Diverse consumer tastes present a difficulty due to differences in risk perception and environmental awareness between Eastern and Western Europe. Cross-regional studies highlight the necessity of sophisticated marketing strategies that take socioeconomic and cultural aspects into account in order to successfully engage customers in both regions.

The focus group discussions reveal major differences between Eastern and Western European customers' attitudes and beliefs about sustainability marketing. Although sustainability was recognised as important by both groups, Western Europeans were generally more accepting of sustainability activities because they saw them as sincere attempts to be environmentally responsible. Eastern Europeans, on the other hand, were more sceptical, seeing sustainability marketing as little more than an imitation of Western trends or an image-management ploy. The impact on brand loyalty and purchase behaviour also revealed these disparities, with Western Europeans demonstrating a stronger enthusiasm and willingness to support businesses who engage in visible environmental activities. Overall, these results highlight how crucial it is to take regional and cultural context into account when creating sustainable marketing plans that cater to a wide range of tastes and perspectives.

The study also has several limitations that need to be addressed in future research. Firstly, the focus group members

did not represent all the countries attached to Eastern and Western Europe. A more thorough country-by-country comparison is necessary to gain a more detailed understanding of the situation. Furthermore, the study is based on a

sample of students, thus neglecting the opinions of other young people. Finally, the study could be expanded to include quantitative measures in order to obtain statistically significant results.

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The paper submitted: January 30, 2025

Prepared for publication: May 30, 2025

Jemima RODRIGUES, Lina PILELIENĖ

TVARUMO MARKETINGO POVEIKIS JAUNIEMS VARTOTOJAMS: TARPREGIONINIS RYTŲ IR VAKARŲ EUROPOS TYRIMAS

Santrauka

Augantis susirūpinimas dėl pasaulinio tvarumo sukėlė intensyvias diskusijas ir veiksmus įvairiuose sektoriuose, o marketingas vaidina lemiamą vaidmenį darant įtaką tiek problemos suvokimo mastui, tiek galimiems sprendimams. Tvarumas tampa vis svarbesnis, kai kalbama apie tai, kaip įmonės vykdo savo veiklą. Mokslininkai nagrinėjo emocines vartotojų reakcijas, kai įmonės tvarumą paverė savo prekių ženklų įvaizdžio pagrindu, taip pat tvarumo marketingo veiklą lemiančius veiksnius ir jos poveikį klientų lojalumui, tačiau akivaizdu, kad ryšio tarp tvarumo marketingo ir klientų lojalumo ištyrimas vis dar yra menkas. Visgi mokslinėje literatūroje

minimas prekių ženklų ir jų tvarumo marketingo pastangų suvokimo atotrūkis Rytų ir Vakarų Europos visuomenėse.

Pastebėtina, kad atlikta nedaug tyrimų, kuriuose pasitelkti tarpkultūriniai tyrimai, pabrėžiantys skirtingą marketingo poveikį Europoje. Taigi vis dar trūksta tarpregioninių tyrimų apie tvarumo marketingo poveikį vartotojų elgsenai, ypač atsižvelgiant į didelius kultūrinius skirtumus tarp Rytų ir Vakarų Europos.

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjama mokslinė problema siekiama užpildyti šią spragą, aptariant tvarumo marketingo poveikį vartotojų lojalumui Vakarų

ir Rytų Europoje. Straipsnio objektas – tvarumo marketingo poveikis vartotojų lojalumui, o tikslas – atliekant lyginamąją analizę nustatyti tvarumo marketingo įtaką vartotojų lojalumui mažmeninės prekybos sektoriuose Rytų ir Vakarų Europoje.

Siekiant užsibrėžto tyrimo tikslo, nagrinėjami kultūriniai veiksniai ir regioniniai Rytų ir Vakarų Europos skirtumai rinkodaros kontekste. Toliau atliekama kokybinė analizė, dviejose fokus grupėse diskutuojant su vartotojais iš Rytų ir Vakarų Europos, siekiant suprasti tvarumo marketingo poveikį vartotojų lojalumui. Tyrimui pasitelkiamas antrinių ir pirminių duomenų analizės derinys. Remiantis teorine analize, keliamos dvi prielaidos, kurios vėliau empiriškai tikrinamos dviejų fokus grupių diskusijų metu.

Apibendrinant, teorinė analizė atskleidė, kad nagrinėjant kultūrinius elementus ir regioninius skirtumus tarp Rytų ir Vakarų Europos atsiskleidžia dideli visuomenės požiūrių kontrastai, ypač religijos, tautinės tapatybės ir socialinių klausimų atžvilgiu. Šie kontrastai daro didelį poveikį vartotojų nuostatoms ir elgsenai, ypač kalbant apie tvarumo marketingą. Vartotojų reakcijai į tvarumo marketingo veiksmus didelę įtaką daro politinė aplinka, o Europos Sąjungos dėmesys tvariems tikslams atspindi didesnius kultūrinius judėjimus aplinkos apsaugos link. Tačiau skirtingos žmonių „Europos vertybių“ sampratos atspindi skirtingus požiūrius į socialinį teisingumą ir liberalizmą. Esant skirtingiems vartotojų požiūriams, kyla sunkumų dėl skirtingo rizikos suvokimo ir aplinkosauginio sąmoningumo Rytų ir Vakarų Europoje. Tarpregioniniai

tyrimai pabrėžia sudėtingų marketingo strategijų, kuriose atsižvelgiama į socialinius, ekonominius ir kultūrinius aspektus, būtinybę, siekiant sėkmingai įtraukti vartotojus abiejuose regionuose.

Fokus grupės diskusijos atskleidžia esminius skirtumus tarp Rytų ir Vakarų Europos vartotojų požiūrio ir įsitikinimų tvarumo marketingo atžvilgiu. Nors abi grupės pripažino, kad tvarumas yra svarbus, Vakarų europiečiai apskritai labiau vertino tvarumo veiklą, nes vertino ją kaip nuoširdžias pastangas būti atsakingus už aplinką. Kita vertus, Rytų europiečiai buvo skeptiškesni, į tvarumo marketingą žiūrėjo kaip į šiek tiek daugiau nei vakarietišku tendencijų imitaciją ar įvaizdžio valdymo gudrybę. Poveikis lojalumui ir pirkimo elgsenai taip pat atskleidė šiuos skirtumus, o Vakarų europiečiai parodė didesnę entuziazmą ir norą remti įmones, kurios užsiima matoma aplinkosaugine veikla. Apskritai rezultatai rodo, kaip svarbu atsižvelgti į regioninį ir kultūrinį kontekstą kuriant tvarumo marketingo planus, atitinkančius įvairius požiūrius ir perspektyvas.

Tyrimė taip pat yra keletas apribojimų, į kuriuos reikėtų atsižvelgti tolesniuose tyrimuose. Pirma, fokus grupių nariai atstovavo ne visoms Rytų ir Vakarų Europos šalims. Būtina atlikti nuodugnesnę kiekvienos šalies atstovų nuomonių palyginimą, siekiant susidaryti išsamesnę situacijos paveikslą. Tyrimas grindžiamas studentų imtimi, taip ignoruojant galimą kitų jaunų žmonių nuomonės neatitikimą. Galiausiai tyrimas galėtų būti išplėstas įtraukiant kiekybinius metodus, taip būtų gauti statistiškai reikšmingi rezultatai nagrinėjamu klausimu.

