

Consumer Behaviour towards Sustainable Products

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Abstract

The public is now more conscious about the negative impacts on the environment and the impact of climate change and responsibility for consumers is becoming trendy. Sustainable products are not only regarded as being environmentally friendly but they have also been an important factor of the consumer's ethical and social decision-making process. The main objective of this study is to explore the consumer attitude towards the sustainable products and factors that may influence the awareness, attitude, purchase intention and purchase decision of consumers. The subject of Environmental consciousness, perceived Product quality, Price sensitivity, Trust in Sustainability claims, social influence, Product availability, and perceived personal benefit are focused on particularly. Gap between consumers' positive attitudes to sustainability and purchasing behaviour is also taken into account. The understanding of the link between perceptions of sustainability and consumers' willingness to buy ecological products is based on a research-based and systematic approach. The study should shed light on their ability to positively affect sustainable purchase intentions through raising awareness and positive attitudes towards green products, and their ability to negatively affect actual purchase through higher prices, reduced availability, inadequate information and doubt about green claims. The results should help marketers and manufacturers, as well as policy makers and sustainability practitioners, to guide them towards responsible consumption. The study highlights the importance of communicating the sustainability of products transparently, to develop credible eco-labels, to make sustainable alternatives available at an affordable price, and to educate consumers, in order to boost sustainable consumption behaviour. By understanding the reasons behind consumer actions and the barriers they face, organizations can create successful marketing strategies and work towards their broader environmental sustainability and responsible consumption goals.

Keywords: Sustainable Products, Consumer Behaviour, Sustainable Consumption, Environmental Awareness, Green Purchasing Behaviour, Purchase Intention, Eco-Friendly Products, Consumer Attitudes, Green Marketing, Environmental Consciousness, Sustainable Consumption Behaviour, Green Consumerism.

Publication History

Received: 11 August 2026, **Accepted:** 28 August 2026, **Published:** 20 September 2026

Introduction

Increasing concern about environmental degradation, climate change, resource depletion and the increasing amount of waste has greatly shaped the perception of consumers of products and consumption. There has been a lot of pressure on the environment and society because of traditional consumption patterns that focus on convenience, affordability and frequent product change. As a result of these issues, sustainable products are becoming more and more mainstream for consumers, industry, policy makers and researchers. Sustainable products tend to be designed, produced, distributed, used and disposed of in ways that minimize negative environmental effects and promote social and economic health and vitality. Consequently, new possibilities have arisen to understand how consumers react to products that are more sustainable.

Consumer attitudes towards sustainable products are a combination of environmental concern, values, perceived benefits, economic concerns, social influences and buying conditions. Consumers might have high



levels of concern about environmental protection, positive attitudes towards sustainable products, but not always translate into purchasing behaviour. High costs, scarcity, doubts about the quality of the product, insufficient sustainability data, convenience and doubt about environmental claims may affect the actual decision. In many cases, this discrepancy between consumers' intentions and their actions is captured in the so called 'sustainability attitude-behaviour gap'.

A growing concern for the environment is a major determinant of sustainable consumption choices. If consumers are aware of the implications of excessive use of resources, pollutants and waste, they might be more likely to look at products that have environmentally responsible properties. But, awareness alone is not enough to promote sustainable procurement. Additionally, the functional, economic, health, durability, convenience and symbolic/social values of sustainable products are taken into consideration by consumers. Hence, environmental motives and conventional consumer factors play a role in the choice of sustainable consumption.

Trust is now also an increasing factor in the sustainable product market. Environmental claims like “natural,” “organic,” “eco-friendly,” “ethical,” “biodegradable” and “carbon-neutral” are common on the consumers' lips. If they are not clear, are exaggerated, or hard to substantiate, consumers could doubt the authenticity of sustainability practices. This, in turn, can lead to loss of consumer confidence and lower purchases of sustainable products (greenwashing). Issuing clear communications, credible certification, make information traceable, and ensure consistency of organisational practice can help to enhance consumer trust and the promotion of responsible consumption.

Another key determinant of sustainable purchasing is price. Sustainable products may be more costly to produce, certify, research/ source and as a result of these have a higher retail price. Some consumers may be willing to pay more for products reflecting their values, while others may be more price sensitive, particularly if they do not have sufficient resources to purchase these, or if they feel the additional value of purchasing the more sustainable products is not high enough. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how the perceived value, price sensitivity and willingness to pay are connected for companies to grow sustainable product markets.

Also, social and psychological factors are important aspects of sustainable consumption. Family, peers, social networks, online communities, influencers and general culture can shape the attitudes consumers hold regarding what they believe is environmentally responsible behaviour. Sustainable products might also be involved in consumer's image and identity, particularly for individuals that view it as their personal value to be environmentally responsible. The boom in digital platforms has increased these impacts, since consumers can research more about a product, reviews, sustainability information, and social perspectives before purchasing. From the business side, it is important to have a clear understanding of consumer behaviour towards sustainable products, especially when creating marketing strategies and products that match the consumers' expectations. The need to mainstream sustainability in product development, packaging, supply chains, brand, communication, and customer engagement is growing to the level of organizations treating sustainability as an activity for promotion. However, knowing what motivates and what hinders consumers can facilitate the creation of more effective sustainable offerings and make more credible communication strategies to demonstrate consumer confidence.

The analysis of consumer behaviour towards sustainable products is also related to the overall goal of sustainable development. Consumer demand has a positive effect on corporate production decisions; it can be used to promote responsible use of resources; and it can fuel markets for environmentally and socially responsible products. Sustainable choices can become the preferred option for consumers, potentially increasing the cost of businesses to adopt sustainable practices like the use of cleaner technologies, renewables, recyclables, ethical sourcing, and circular production. Therefore, sustainable consumer behavior can act as a significant linkage between individual consumption choices and environmental and social consequences.

In this context, the present study investigates consumer attitudes, purchase intention and actual buying behavior towards sustainable products and identifies the factors that affect consumers' attitude and purchase intention. The study aims to examine the factors that influence sustainable purchasing behaviour: environmental awareness, perceived value, price, trust, social influence, product knowledge, and perceived product quality. The aim of the study is to increase the understanding of the major drivers and barriers of sustainable

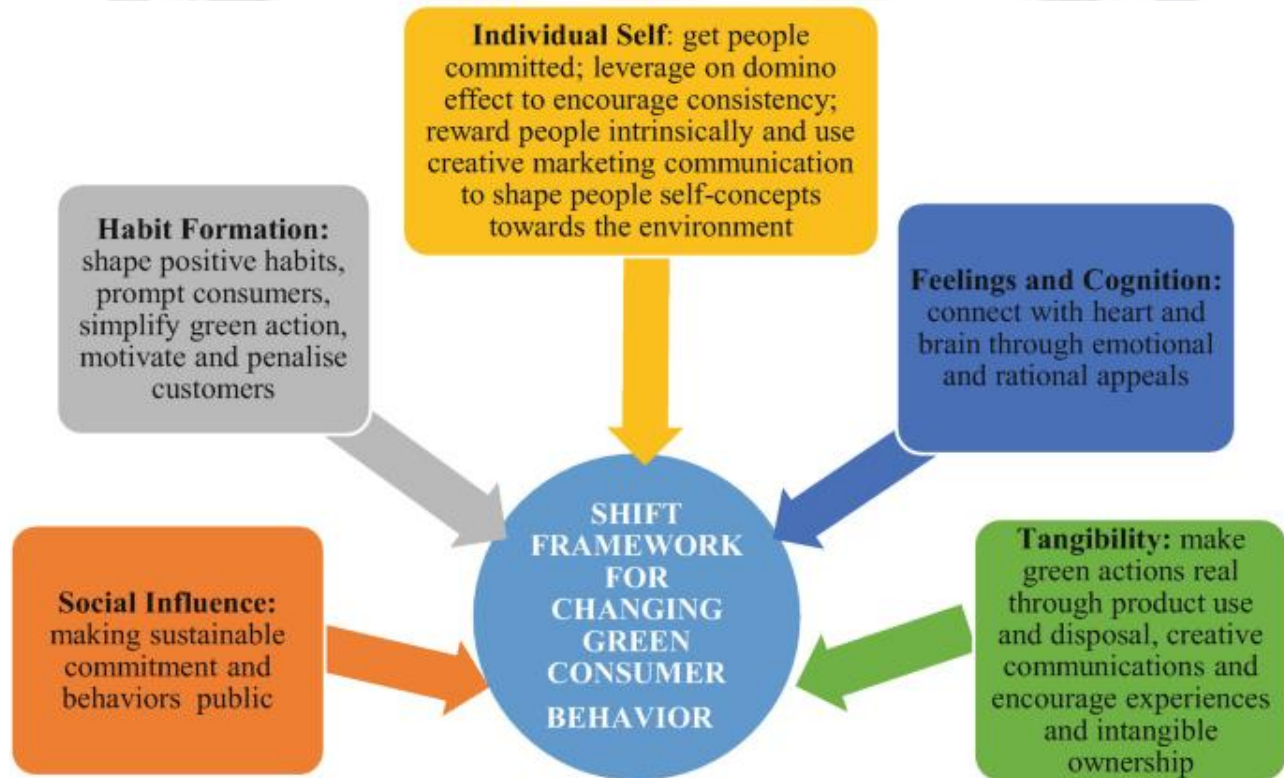


consumption, offering useful insights for marketers, businesses, policymakers and sustainability practitioners who aim to increase responsible consumption patterns. The results could also help to clarify the nature of conditions which enable positive opinions about the environment to be translated into a positive and lasting consumer behaviour.

Background of the study

The world is facing serious environmental challenges, decreasing resources, climate change, increased waste production and consumption shifts that strongly call for product reconsideration concerning their production, marketing, purchasing, and consumption. The traditional pattern of consumption has been linked to overconsumption, environmental degradation and the generation of waste. To address these issues, sustainable products have become more and more on the agenda of businesses, policy makers, environmental NGOs, and consumers alike. Sustainable products are typically designed, made, delivered and/or used to minimize harmful environmental and social effects, keeping their purpose of use and economic returns for consumers.

Consumer behaviour is one of the determining factors for the success of sustainable products in the market. While there is much more awareness, this is not always linked to sustainable purchasing behaviour. However, consumers might still be worried about the environment and even buy conventional products if they are cheaper, more available, more convenient, better quality, more popular or more effective. This disconnect between consumer's attitudes and their behaviour is of interest to current research in consumer behaviour.



Source: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-74065-8_4

The shift toward sustainable consumption has also led businesses to have revamped expectations. Consumers now value the product based on its functional features, price, environmental responsibility, ethical production, packaging, sourcing, durability, recyclability and social impact. More attention is paid to businesses when it comes to product development and whether it excels at meeting consumer expectations, including matters of sustainability. Sustainable branding and responsible marketing are key elements of a competitive marketing strategy in this regard.

Attitudes towards sustainable products are especially influenced by consumers' perceptions. Consumers are



willing to select sustainable products due to their perceived environmental benefits, product quality, trust in sustainability claims, brand reputation, personal values and environmental consciousness. At the same time, issues such as cost, limited availability, lack of information, poor convenience and doubt about the accuracy and authenticity of the information about the environment can lead to decreased consumer interest in purchasing sustainably produced products. The growing sensitivity to greenwashing has raised transparency and credibility issues in sustainable marketing to the top of the agenda.

Digital platforms make another layer of sustainable consumer behaviour. Consumers' awareness and perceptions of sustainable products can be influenced by social media, online reviews, online ads, environmental campaigns, influencers and online communities. Through digital communication, customers can learn about the origin of products, whether they are certified as environmentally friendly and endorse, know how they are produced, and whether the company has sustainability programs. However, when there is so much information available online you can get confused and it is difficult to know when sustainability information for a product or service is true or not.

A difference in generation and demographic could also have an impact on sustainable purchasing behavior. Environmental campaigns and sustainability themed digital content, in particular, are often aimed at young consumers, while income level, education level, occupation, lifestyle and cultural values might influence the amount and timing of consideration of sustainability when making a decision about a purchase. Understanding these differences is important when designing the businesses' particular strategies for sustainability, as well as when policy makers attempt to provide incentives for sustainable consumption.

Another factor to consider is the connection between the consumer intention and behaviour. A consumer may be well-meaning towards sustainable products and wish to purchase one but simply end up opting for a conventional product at the cashier. Economic reasons, habit, convenience, or unavailability and/or a lack of confidence in claims of sustainability are among the reasons for the disconnect. This lack of linkage between positive environmental attitudes and environmental purchasing behaviour is a gap that needs to be examined to provide important insights into the issue.

The research on sustainable consumer behaviour has a special relevance for emerging markets as the following trends are taking place concurrently: economic development, consumer aspirations, growth of retail markets and environmental pressures. Consumer preference for "green" products has grown in these markets, and there has been a heightened interest in the products that are environmentally friendly and convenient to purchase. Understanding sustainable consumption factors can assist organizations to develop environmentally sustainable and commercially viable product and marketing strategies.

In this context, the study of consumers' behaviour towards sustainable products is relevant to investigate the reasons for the purchase, perceptions, attitudes, intentions and obstacles. This can facilitate reflection on the translation of the environmental consciousness to marketplace behaviour, the outcome of such reflection. It can also provide some useful lessons for marketers and manufacturers as well as for policy makers and sustainability practitioners seeking to promote responsible consumption and to engage consumers in sustainable development. To conclude, the responsibility of developing responsible products only represents part of the solution for achieving sustainable consumption, and an increase in knowledge about the psychological, economic, social and informational influence on consumer decisions is required.

Justification

Sustainable production and consumption has become more important due to the rising climate, environmental and resource problems in the modern times. Consumers are being exposed to more information regarding environmental damage and are becoming more conscious of social and environmental impacts of their buying choices. Products with sustainable features have therefore become more and more noticeable in today's markets because they are created with a clear focus on protecting the environment in responsible sourcing, efficient use of resources, reduction of waste, use of recyclable materials, environmentally responsible production processes etc. But it's not certain that increased environmental consciousness leads to sustainable purchasing. Having knowledge of this disparity gives an important foundation to consider consumer behaviour related to sustainable products.



Factors affecting consumers' behaviour are psychological, social, economic, cultural and marketing aspects. While consumers may have positive attitudes towards a product that is environmentally responsible, they may not be able to afford the price, access is poor, they might not believe the claims made about the product, they don't have enough information, the quality of the environmentally responsible product is different, or the product is less convenient. This consumer intention-behaviour gap is a relevant topic for research. It is possible to use the factors that drive and hinder sustainable consumption as a framework to understand why environmental and ecological attitudes are not necessarily enough to drive sustainable consumption.

The second one is the growing presence of marketing and communication activities focusing on sustainability. Eco-labels, sustainable packaging, green advertising, ethical sourcing claims and environmental certification are becoming more and more common among companies to communicate the sustainability characteristics of their products. Consumers can be made aware of these through such practices, and more responsible consumption can be encouraged, but may also cause consumer scepticism and even consumer mistrust if misleading or exaggerated environmental claims are made. Thus, the importance of the perceived environmental credibility, consumer trust, product knowledge and awareness of how these factors affect sustainable purchasing actions should not be overlooked.

This research is also relevant due to economic factors. The production and distribution costs of sustainable products might be increased, resulting in increased prices for consumers. Thus, price sensitivity is one of the determinants of purchasing behaviour particularly in price sensitive markets. In the meantime, as consumers realize that sustainable products are valuable for the environment, society, function, or ethics, they will pay a premium for these products. The link between PV, PC and intention to buy can be investigated to obtain relevant insights to the economic side of sustainable consumption.

Consumer lifestyles are also changing and digital media is gaining importance and so the study is warranted. Social media platforms, online reviews, sustainability awareness, influencers, digital communities affecting consumers' awareness and perception of sustainable products. Digital communication has the potential of contributing to a shift towards a responsible consumer, but can also serve as a source of false information and 'greenwash' and cause confusion over sustainability claims. The significance of understanding consumer appraisal of sustainability information in the digital context has only grown greater.

In the business aspect, it can positively affect the development of products and marketing strategies that can better accommodate the growing expectations of consumers, by knowing consumers' attitude toward sustainable products. Businesses can design appropriate pricing, branding, packaging, communication, and distribution strategies based on the understanding of customers' motivations, perceived barriers, attitudes, trust, and the environmental consciousness, and purchase intent. This knowledge can also help an organization transcend symbolic sustainability actions to actions that actually add value to the environment and consumers. Social and policy implications of this study are also important. There is the need for sustainable consumption of consumers, businesses, government and other stakeholders. In order to create environmental awareness programmes, consumer protection measures, eco-labelling schemes and sustainability policies, it is vital that policymakers have an understanding of what drives consumers to adopt sustainable purchasing behaviour. Encouraging informed and responsible consumers' behaviour can contribute to the conservation of resources, prevention of waste, promotion of responsible production and towards sustainable development goals.

Hence, the present study is warranted because it aims to elucidate the intricate consumer awareness-elaborative attitudes-perceived value-trust-price considerations-Social influence-purchasing intentions relationship among sustainable products. The findings from this research could be utilized in the academic context for knowledge and decision-making process as it can highlight the significant factors affecting consumer behaviour. The results could help fill the consumer awareness-to-behaviour disconnect, in the process helping to ensure that consumers move towards more responsible and sustainable consumption patterns.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore how aware and knowledgeable consumers are about sustainable products and their benefits for the environment.
2. To assess consumers' attitudes and perceptions towards sustainable products.



3. To determine the key influencers on consumers' intention to buy sustainable products.
4. To investigate how consumers' purchasing behaviour is affected by their awareness of the environment.
5. To understand how perceived product quality, price and consumers' willingness to buy sustainable products are related.

Literature Review

The topic of consumer behaviour towards sustainable products has gained significance and has become an important research field due to the fact that environmental degradation, climate change, resource depletion, and social responsibility are becoming more and more important to consumer decisions. Sustainable consumption is the purchasing and consumption of products that take into account environmental, social and economic impacts. Previous studies have shown that consumers can have positive attitudes toward sustainable products but not necessarily translate these attitudes into purchasing behavior. This is the so-called attitude-behaviour gap in the study of sustainable consumption. This continues to be one of the main issues in understanding sustainable purchasing behaviour, as identified by recent systematic reviews.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was designed by Ajzen (1991) to explain the intention to behave in a certain manner, suggesting that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are all factors which influence behaviour. The theory has been widely used to describe environmentally-conscious consumption. If consumers perceive sustainable purchasing positively, feel socially supported in their own decision to buy sustainable products, and feel they have the resources and feel the control to make sustainable purchases, these consumers will have higher chances of building a positive purchase intention for sustainable products.

On this theoretical basis, Paul, Modi and Patel (2016) investigated green product consumption based on an extended Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). They showed that it is possible to use the TPB framework with environmental concern. The study also suggested that the perceived behavioural factors and environmental concerns can help to mediate the intention to purchase greens and that the impact of each individual TPB factor might vary depending on the context.

Joshi and Rahman (2015) found that literature reveals three important factors that influence sustainable purchase – environmental concern, environmental knowledge and product related green attributes. Meanwhile, higher prices and inconvenience were cited as major challenges. It is especially appropriate for their review, as it illustrates that consumer environmental attitudes are not enough to induce sustainable consumption behavior.

The importance of green perceived value has also been highlighted in consumer behaviour research. Green perceived value is the judgement of the benefits consumers gain from sustainable products as compared to the costs of doing so. According to Chen and Chang (2012) the green perceived value and green trust are demonstrated to be the important factors which influence consumers' reactions to green products. Adopting the view that sustainable products provide real environmental and functional benefits may boost their marketability. If consumers think sustainable products provide real, meaningful benefits, it can lead to greater willingness to purchase them.

Similarly, Yadav and Pathak (2017) examined the green purchase behaviour of the young consumers and concluded that there are psychological and environmental factors that play an important role in a sustainable purchase. Their research indicates that environmental concern and perceived benefits among consumers can affect their purchase intention, along with their personal perceptions of sustainable products. These results support the view that the relationship between sustainable consumption is a combination of individual attitudes and contextual influences.

Based on the literature review, Zaremohzzabieh et al. (2021) performed a meta-analytical study on green purchase intention to see how consumer attitude acts as an important mediating role in formulating green purchase intention. Their analysis, which was based on 90 studies and 38,622 participants, gave wide empirical support for the integration of TPB and models of green purchase behaviours.

Green trust is another significant factor in the sustainable consumer behavior. If consumers are not confident that the companies' environmental claims are genuine, they are less willing to buy products that are



environmentally friendly. In order to reinforce consumers' willingness to interact with green products, Chen and Chang (2013) highlighted the importance of green trust and green perceived value. Trust is especially significant when the consumer can't determine if a product is actually good for the environment as the manufacturer advertises.

Perceived risk has been the subject of a great deal of research as well. Wang et al. (2021) conducted a meta-analysis of 54 empirical studies to examine the influences of green perceived value, attitude, green trust, perceived behavioural control, perceived consumer effectiveness and subjective norm on green purchase intention, and concluded that these factors all have positive effects on green purchase intention, except for green perceived risk which has negative effects. This shows that there are pro- and contra-motivators for sustainable purchasing.

The findings from the systematic review conducted by Wibowo et al. (2022) strengthened the theoretical basis of green purchase behaviour. They found that the most dominant theoretical frameworks of green purchasing are the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Theory of Perceived Value, and the Theory of Personal Value in their study of 76 empirical articles. This implies that the explanation of consumer behavior toward sustainable products is not possible without considering the psychological factor, and the intention to buy the product is determined by attitude, perceived benefits, values, and social factors.

A more comprehensive systematic review by Sharma et al. (2023) analysed 151 empirical studies spanning the period of 2000–2021 and concluded that there are diverse determinants that affect the green purchase intention and green purchase behaviour. The review revealed that the attitude behaviour gap remains a significant issue, and that some variables like perceived behavioural control had not been found in all studies and contexts.

Kumar and Jain (2024) also supported the finding with the meta-analysis of Theory of Planned Behavior in the study of sustainable consumption. Their results showed that TPB variables have an important effect on sustainable consumption intention, and that environmental concern and environmental knowledge also have an important effect. The study also highlighted the ongoing intention-behaviour gap, indicating that the consumers' intention to consume sustainably does not always translate into buying sustainably.

Social influence and subjective norm are of special relevance when it comes to sustainable products, as consumers have to make purchasing decisions in social and cultural context. What family members, friends, peer groups, online communities and social influencers say can affect perceptions of sustainable products. Consumers can also buy goods, which they consider to be environmentally-friendly, as a way of demonstrating their social identity and their values. So, sustainable consumption may not only be an economic choice, but also an expression of identity.

Recent studies have increasingly gone beyond purchase intention to the continuous sustainable purchasing behaviour. Existing research has focused on purchase intention, whereas limited research has been done on what happens post-purchase to the consumers of sustainable products, as suggested by Agarwal (2025). In the present study, the integrated framework is based on the perceived value, product instrumentality and value relevance of consumers to sustainable purchasing behaviour.

Literature also suggests that the attributes of sustainable products have an impact on consumer responses. Consumers might take into account the quality, price, durability, functionality, environmental performance, packaging, certification, brand identity and convenience at the same time. Environmentally friendly products can have advantages, but not be attractive to consumers if they are considered too costly, inconvenient, not very effective, or poorer quality. So, there is a need for marketers to maintain sustainability communications without sacrificing functional and economic value.

In recent literature there has been attention also paid to health and environmental value. Studies on sustainable personal and household products have suggested that consumers might consider products beyond the environmental criteria level and based on the perceived health benefits, product quality, emotional aspects, and value for money. This implies that environmental features may be used in a more effective way to place sustainable products with features that consumers will experience.

Additionally, Megha (2024) found environmental concerns, consumer attributes, theoretical considerations, and the context of consumption as significant factors in understanding green consumption. The review also



noted that there is a wide range of literature available across countries, product types and consumers. These differences suggest that consumer behaviour with regard to sustainable products is not necessarily the same between markets.

Some recent systematic studies have been continually conducted to find attitude, environmental concern, perceived consumer effectiveness, personal norms, perceived value, perceived risk, trust, and willingness to pay as important internal and external predictors of green purchase intention. The literature indicates that sustainable consumer behaviour is complex and multi-faceted, with psychological, social, economic, product related and environmental determinants.

Material and Methodology

The study used descriptive and analytical research design to explore consumer behaviour on sustainable product and the factors affecting consumer buying intention and buying behaviour. Structured questionnaires were used to gather primary data from consumers based on the key dimensions: environmental awareness, perceived product quality, price sensitivity, environmental concern, social influence, trust in sustainable product claims, availability, and purchase intention. A five-point Likert scale was used for measuring the perception and attitude of the respondents in the questionnaire, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The sample consisted of 300 consumers, who were sampled by convenience sampling, who had bought or expressed interest in sustainable products. The secondary data were collected from the available academic journals, books, research reports and other published relevant sources to support the theoretical explanation of the study. Data collected were systematically coded, classified and analysed with descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Inferential techniques such as correlation and regression analysis were used to analyze the relationship between the selected influencing factors and the sustainable purchase behaviour of the consumers. The methodology aimed to analyze if the factors of environmental consciousness, perceived value, consumer trust, price and social influence have a significant influence on consumers' willingness to purchase sustainable products.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study show that consumers are becoming more aware of the environmental and social impacts of their consumption products. The awareness of the environment became an important factor that affects the consumer's behavior towards sustainable products. Those with a higher awareness of environmental concerns like climate change, plastic pollution, resource depletion and waste generation were more likely to have positive attitudes towards environmentally responsible products. The results indicate that awareness can not only affect consumers' perception of sustainability, but can also persuade them to think about the environmental impacts in their buying process. It means that environmental concern is increasingly becoming a key consideration in today's consumer buying.

The results also suggest that the attitude of consumers towards sustainable products is affected by the perception of quality, utility, safety and environmental benefits of the products. Consumers were more likely to be accepting of the sustainable alternatives when they believed these would be as effective or more effective than traditional products. This means that environmental benefits alone are not sufficient to encourage sustainable buying without other benefits. Consumers are usually searching for an environmental benefit, in addition to functional value, in sustainable products. Thus, companies wanting to increase the adoption of sustainable products need to be able to effectively explain the ground benefit as well as the environmental benefit.

It was also discovered that price sensitivity is an important factor in sustainable purchasing. One of the “concerns” of many consumers in regard to environmental friendly products appeared to have been thwarted by these positive attitudes, specifically the cost of the products. This reflects an attitude-behaviour disconnect as consumers can have positive attitudes towards sustainability, but may not always be attuned to converting the attitude into purchasing actions. The results indicated that affordability is a major factor in consideration, especially for those who are price-sensitive. The companies might need to think about the efficient production process, competitive pricing and value communication to create “sustainable products” more accessible to



more consumers.

Additionally, the study revealed that consumers' trust plays a substantial role in their sustainable purchase choices. Consumers are more likely to buy sustainable products if they consider environmental claims to be credible, transparent and based on trustworthy information. Green claims that are potentially misleading can cause consumer skepticism and distrust. Product information, well-known sustainability certifications, transparency regarding the supply chain and credible environmental claims can thus help to increase consumer confidence. The results emphasize the need to be careful in making false statements on the sustainability of the products, but to provide accurate information on the environmental characteristics of the products.

Social influence was another influence related to sustainable consumer behaviour. Consumers' attitudes towards sustainable products are influenced by family, friends, social groups, online communities and social media. Increased visibility of such content will help normalise sustainable consumption, while raising awareness as more sustainable related content is seen on digital platforms. Social trends, digital communities, sustainability advocates and online reviews can all sway younger consumers. It shows the potential influence of social influence and digital communication in relation to promoting sustainable consumption patterns.

Additionally, the results show that the availability of products and their convenience for consumers have a positive effect on sustainable purchasing. If there are no sustainable alternatives or sustainable alternatives are not easily available or readily accessible, then consumers with strong environmental concerns will not be able to sustain their consumption behavior. This can have an impact on sustainable purchasing behaviour through access via supermarket, online, local stores and direct to consumers. Making sustainable products more available and conspicuous would make it easier to bridge the gap between consumers' intentions and their purchases.

The findings overall indicate that the adoption of sustainable products is not only a result of environmental concern but the result of other factors as well, including perceived value of a sustainable product, price, trust in the product, social influence and ease of access to the product. The results suggest that individual motivation and market conditions are needed to create sustainable consumption. There is a need for the consumer to have credible information and affordable options, and a need to make products available that have environmental responsibility, quality, functionality and convenience. Thus, the findings show that consumer awareness-raising, transparency and removing price barriers and adding sustainable alternatives can be a factor in raising sustainable purchasing behaviour. As a management strategy, it must be considered as integral to product development, price, brand or product and distribution and communication and not merely a promotion.

Limitations of the study

There are some limitations in the study of consumer behaviour towards sustainable products which needs to be taken into consideration for interpreting the results of the study. Consumer preferences and purchasing behavior may differ significantly among different groups, regions, income levels, education and culture; so the results may not be completely generalizable to all consumers. Second, the study may heavily depend on the self-reported attitudes and purchase intent of the respondents, which can be affected by social desirability, perception and/or difference between reported attitudes/purchases plans and actual purchasing behaviour. Thirdly, consumers' knowledge about sustainability and 'environmentally friendly' products could be different, which can influence uniformity of the consumers' response. The availability, cost, quality, and access to sustainable products can also differ between markets and affect consumers' choices apart from their attitudes towards the environment. Moreover, the study might not include quick shifts in consumer preferences due to new technologies, changing environmental awareness, new sustainability regulations or trends in the market. Lastly, limitations in terms of sample size, geographical scope, time and resources may restrict the extent of the study. The limitations of the current study could be overcome in future research by increasing and diversifying the number of samples, through longitudinal studies, cross samples in different regions as well as sampling actual purchases and comparing these with consumer survey responses.



Future Scope

Future research on consumer behaviour in relation to sustainable products can investigate the attitudes and purchase trends of consumers in the various demographic, cultural and socio-economic groups. Future research could focus on the impact of new technologies like artificial intelligence, social media, digital platforms and personalized marketing on consumers' awareness, trust and purchase intention for sustainable products. Longitudinal studies may provide further insights into the evolution of a consumer's attitude towards sustainability over time, as well as their willingness to re-buy and brand loyalty following their awareness of sustainability. Comparative studies across the urban and rural markets, across generations and across developing and developed economies could be useful in providing perspectives on differences in sustainable consumption behaviour. Additionally, the effects of greenwashing, eco-labeling, sustainability certifications, and the transparency of companies on consumer trust could be further explored. Moreover, more opportunities can be taken-up for government policies, EE programmes, circular economy programmes and sustainable packaging to promote responsible consumption. The research can facilitate the creation of more effective sustainable marketing strategies, and can guide businesses, policy makers, and environmental organizations to implement strategies that help to foster real and lasting changes in consumer behaviour.

Conclusion

Consumer behaviour towards sustainable products is an indicator of people's knowledge of the environmental and social impacts of their buying choices. According to the study, consumers' attitude towards sustainability, environmental awareness, perceived product quality, affordability, trust, social influence, and availability are very important factors that can influence consumers' willingness to buy sustainable products. While most consumers have positive attitudes towards environmentally responsible products, a disconnect exists between these attitudes and purchasing practices because environmentally responsible products are often more expensive, less readily available, provide less information and are perceived as less effective and less authentic. Clear labelling, credible sustainability claims, sustainable production and good communication can help build consumer trust, and foster more regular sustainable purchasing decisions. There are other ways that businesses can contribute to sustainable consumption, such as providing products that are low in cost and easy to access, and making it easy to see products' environmental and social impacts. Policymakers also have an important role in consumer awareness promotion, supporter of sustainable production, and developing adequate standards to prevent misleading environmental claims. In general, sustainable consumer behaviour is a matter of interdependency among consumers, business, government and other stakeholders. An increased match between values and opportunities for consumption can help towards responsible consumption, environmental protection and long-term transition to a more sustainable economy.

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