

Consumer Behavior and Sustainable Consumption: Understanding the Factors Influencing Eco-Friendly Purchasing Decisions in the Age of Climate Change

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Abstract

Consumer behaviour plays a pivotal role in driving sustainable consumption, especially in the context of climate change. Understanding the factors that influence eco-friendly purchasing decisions is crucial for promoting environmentally responsible choices and addressing the global environmental crisis.

Due to increasing environmental concerns among the residents, the present research is aimed at studying the factors influencing the eco-friendly purchase decisions of consumers. The research has also investigated the barriers to sustainable consumption. This study was done in the Vadodara and Surat cities of Gujarat State, and by using convenience sampling method 448 residents were included in the sample. The data has been collected by using the questionnaire method. Results highlighted that consumers are moderately concerned about climate change and environmental issues and they sometimes consider sustainability when making purchasing decisions. Consumers occasionally purchase sustainable products and most purchased eco-friendly products are organic food (79.91%), personal care products (72.32%) and reusable housing products. It was observed that the most influencing factor to purchase eco-friendly products is the quality of the product followed by the availability of product and environmental impact

Key Words: Consumer behavior, eco-friendly products, climate change

Introduction:

The global climate crisis has increasingly become one of the most urgent challenges facing humanity. As the detrimental effects of climate change—such as rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and ecosystem disruptions—continue to intensify, there is an increasing call for individuals, businesses, and governments to take action to mitigate these effects (Asseng et al., 2015; Trisos et al., 2020; Seneviratne et al., 2021). One key aspect of addressing climate change is through the promotion of sustainable consumption patterns. Consumers play a critical role in driving sustainability efforts, as their purchasing decisions collectively shape the demand for eco-friendly products and services.

Consumer Behavior and Sustainability

The activities and choices people make in the marketplace, such as the selection of goods, services, and brands, are referred to as consumer behaviour (Jisana, 2014). With growing knowledge of the effects of consumption on the environment, there has been a noticeable movement in consumer behavior in recent years toward more environmentally responsible practices. The demand for goods that are viewed as sustainable, eco-friendly, or ethically made is rising as consumers grow more conscious of the environmental impact of the things they buy (Mukherjee, 2015). The use of products and services that improve the social, economic, and environmental well-being of future generations is known as sustainable consumption, and it has become more popular (Lorek & Spangenberg, 2014). Numerous elements, including media, government regulations, ethical issues, and environmental awareness, are driving this movement. As a result, there is a growing interest in understanding the psychological, social, and cultural factors that influence eco-friendly purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Climate Change Awareness

Concerns about the future of the earth are driving customers to make more decisions about what to buy in the context of climate change. People are rethinking their buying patterns as a result of increased awareness of environmental challenges, such as pollution, biodiversity loss, and the depletion of natural resources (Kenis & Mathijs, 2012). Nowadays, a lot of buyers look for goods that are made from sustainable materials, have a lower carbon footprint, are energy-efficient, or are produced by businesses that have made explicit environmental pledges (Hartikainen et al., 2014).

Factors Influencing Eco-friendly Purchasing Decisions

Eco-friendly consumer behavior is influenced by a number of factors, such as:

1. **Environmental Awareness:** Consumers are more likely to make sustainable decisions if they are more informed about environmental challenges. Awareness can be increased by public campaigns, educational

programs, and firsthand accounts of climate-related incidents.

2. **Cost and Accessibility:** One of the biggest obstacles to sustainable consumption is still cost. Cost is a major determining factor for many consumers when making purchases, and many eco-friendly products are more costly than their conventional counterparts.
3. **Social Influence:** Peer pressure and social conventions can also affect the decisions made by consumers. Eco-friendly buying may be encouraged by people's propensity to adopt behaviors that reflect the ideals of their social group, particularly if sustainability is regarded as a desirable quality in society.
4. **Perceived Quality and Functionality:** For a lot of customers, a product's quality and functionality are crucial. In order to justify their higher price point, sustainable products must not only satisfy environmental criteria but also function well and satisfy consumer needs.
5. **Brand Influence:** Companies that are known for their social responsibility and sustainability tend to have a competitive edge. Businesses that successfully convey their environmental policies through advertising campaigns and open supply chains stand a good chance of influencing customer decisions.
6. **Government and Policy Support:** Policies that impact consumer behaviour include carbon emissions levies, subsidies for environmentally friendly products, and environmental laws. Demand for environmentally friendly substitutes can be increased by offering incentives for eco-friendly goods and sanctions for non-sustainable behaviour.
7. **Psychological and Ethical Factors:** Ethical factors, such as a desire to lessen environmental harm, encourage moral corporate conduct, or advance social justice, may inspire consumers. Eco-friendly behaviour may also be encouraged by psychological elements like remorse or a sense of duty.

An opportunity to investigate and comprehend the psychological, social, and economic elements that influence eco-friendly purchase decisions is presented by

the increased focus on sustainable consumption in response to climate change. With an emphasis on how people's decisions are influenced by their ethical beliefs, understanding of climate change, and other socioeconomic variables, this study aims to investigate the factors influencing consumer behaviour in the context of sustainability. By gaining a deeper understanding of these factors, businesses can better tailor their marketing strategies, policymakers can design more effective sustainability programs, and consumers can make more informed choices that contribute to a greener future.

This research is critical in the context of global efforts to mitigate climate change, as it will provide valuable insights into the relationship between consumer behavior and sustainable consumption. Understanding what drives eco-friendly purchases in an era of climate change will be instrumental in fostering sustainable consumption practices that can help address the environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Review of Literature

The relationship between consumer behaviour and sustainable consumption has garnered significant attention in recent years, particularly as the urgency of addressing climate change becomes more pronounced Milfont& Markowitz (2016). As global concerns about environmental degradation, resource depletion, and climate change intensify, consumers are increasingly motivated to make environmentally conscious choices. This has led to a growing body of literature examining the factors that influence eco-friendly purchasing decisions.

One of the most prominent drivers of sustainable consumer behavior is environmental awareness. Research like Kostadinova (2016) consistently shows that consumers who are more informed about the negative impacts of their actions on the environment are more likely to engage in eco-friendly behaviors. Trudel (2019) argue that individuals who have a higher level of environmental concern are more inclined to purchase products that are marketed as eco-friendly. However, despite a general increase in awareness, there is often a gap between consumers' stated environmental concerns and their actual purchasing behavior. Tomşa, Romoñi-Maniu&Scridon (2021) suggest

that while consumers express concern for the environment, they may still prioritize convenience, price, and product functionality over sustainability, leading to an "attitude-behavior gap." This gap highlights the complexities of translating environmental knowledge into consistent purchasing decisions.

The cost of sustainable products remains a significant barrier to eco-friendly consumption. Many studies have found that price is a critical factor influencing consumer decisions. For instance, a study by Shah et al. (2021) found that higher prices of environmentally friendly products deterred many consumers from making eco-conscious choices, especially in price-sensitive markets. Consumers often perceive eco-friendly products as premium-priced, which makes them less accessible to certain income groups. This price sensitivity is particularly evident in the food and fashion industries, where the cost of sustainable alternatives is frequently higher than conventional options(Ishak&Zabil, 2012).

However, Scorrano&Rotaris (2022) studies suggest that when consumers perceive eco-friendly products as offering long-term value, such as durability or energy savings, they are more likely to make a purchase. Polas et al. (2023) found that perceived value plays a significant role in consumer decision-making, with consumers willing to pay a premium for products that provide both environmental benefits and functional advantages.

Social influence is another important factor in shaping consumer behavior toward sustainable consumption. Biswas & Roy (2016) highlighted that societal norms and peer influence can have a profound effect on individuals' purchasing decisions. As sustainability becomes a core value in many communities, individuals are increasingly motivated to make eco-friendly choices to align with social expectations. This social influence is particularly strong among younger generations, who are more likely to engage in environmentally conscious behaviors due to peer pressure and collective values surrounding sustainability (Riesgo,Lavanga&Codina, 2020).

Additionally, marketing and advertising campaigns often leverage social norms to promote eco-friendly products. Companies that successfully communicate their

sustainability efforts—whether through certifications, transparent supply chains, or corporate social responsibility initiatives—can influence consumer preferences and brand loyalty Asikis et al. (2021). For example, the rise of "green" marketing has led to increased demand for products that are associated with positive environmental impacts.

Government policies and regulations also play a key role in influencing consumer behavior. Research by Lazaric et al. (2020) demonstrates that environmental policies, such as carbon taxes or subsidies for sustainable products, can incentivize consumers to opt for eco-friendly alternatives. For instance, subsidies for electric vehicles or energy-efficient appliances can lower the financial barriers to adopting green technologies. Similarly, governments that impose regulations on industries to reduce their environmental footprint can shift consumer demand toward more sustainable products.

Corporate responsibility is another critical factor in shaping sustainable consumption. Varshneya, Pandey & Das (2017) emphasize that companies with a clear commitment to sustainability and transparent environmental practices tend to build stronger relationships with environmentally conscious consumers. The role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in influencing consumer decisions cannot be understated, as consumers increasingly reward brands that align with their values Johnstone & Hooper (2016).

Finally, psychological and ethical considerations also influence eco-friendly purchasing behavior Luchs, Phipps & Hill (2015). Consumers motivated by ethical concerns—such as a desire to reduce harm to the environment or support fair labor practices—are more likely to make sustainable choices. According to Stevens (2010), individuals are motivated by personal values that reflect their beliefs about right and wrong, and these values can influence their purchasing decisions. Psychological factors, such as guilt or a sense of responsibility, may also encourage consumers to adopt more sustainable consumption patterns Prothero et al. (2011).

In conclusion, the literature reveals that eco-friendly purchasing decisions are shaped by a complex interplay of factors, including environmental awareness, price

sensitivity, social influence, government policies, corporate responsibility, and psychological motivations. While environmental awareness is a key driver, it is not always sufficient to bridge the gap between attitudes and actual behavior. Price, social pressures, and perceived value also play crucial roles in determining whether consumers choose to purchase sustainable products De Groot, Schubert, & Thøgersen (2016). As the demand for sustainability grows, future research should explore how these factors interact in different cultural and socio-economic contexts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior and sustainable consumption.

Research gap

Despite extensive research on consumer behavior and sustainable consumption, significant gaps remain, particularly regarding the persistent attitude-behavior gap, where consumers' environmental concerns do not always translate into eco-friendly purchasing decisions. Limited attention has been given to how perceived value (beyond price) influences eco-friendly choices, and there is a lack of understanding about how cultural and socio-economic contexts shape sustainability behaviors, particularly in emerging markets. Additionally, the role of social influence, especially through digital media and peer networks, has not been fully explored. Further, while corporate sustainability practices are often linked to consumer preferences, there is insufficient research on how these practices impact trust and loyalty. Finally, some factors affecting eco-friendly purchase decision of consumers remain underexplored, highlighting the need for more comprehensive studies to understand the dynamic nature of eco-friendly consumption behaviors.

Objectives

1. To study the consumers' attitude towards sustainability
2. To discuss the eco-friendly purchase behavior of consumers
3. To identify the factors affecting eco-friendly purchase decision of consumers
4. To study the barriers of sustainable consumption

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant impact of consumers' concern about climate change on their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products.
2. The consumers' willingness to pay premium for eco-friendly products is indifferent with respect to their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products.

Research Methodology

A descriptive approach was used to conduct this study with an aim to explore the perception of individuals towards climate change. The population consist of the residents of Vadodara and Surat city of Gujarat state who were recruited by using convenience sampling method 448 residents were included in the sample. The aim and objective of the study were explained to them and informed consent was obtained before beginning the study.

Data Collection and analysis: To collect the primary data a well-structured survey was used. The survey form was divided into 4 sections i.e. (a) demographic profile (b)

Consumer Attitudes Toward Sustainability (c) Eco-Friendly Purchasing Behavior and (d) Barriers to Sustainable Consumption. The primary data collected from 448 consumers was analyzed by using percentage analysis, mean, and chi-square test.

Results

Demographic Profile of Consumers

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of sample consumers. In the sample 63.39% of consumers were male and 36.61% of consumers were female. As per age of the consumers they were divided into seven groups. The majority of the consumers were aged between 35 to 44 years (28.79%) followed by 25 to 34 years (28.57%) and 45 to 54 years (16.07%). The majority of consumers were full-time employed (41.07%) and 18.75% consumers were self-employed. The rest of the respondents were part-time employed (11.83%), unemployed (11.61%), students (8.71%) and retired (8.04%).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Consumers

| Gender | N | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Male | 284 | 63.39 |
| Female | 164 | 36.61 |
| Total | 448 | 100 |
| Age (in Years) | N | Percentage |
| Under 18 | 27 | 6.03 |
| 18–24 | 33 | 7.37 |
| 25–34 | 128 | 28.57 |
| 35–44 | 129 | 28.79 |
| 45–54 | 72 | 16.07 |
| 55–64 | 35 | 7.81 |
| 65 or older | 24 | 5.36 |
| Total | 448 | 100 |
| Occupation | N | Percentage |
| Student | 39 | 8.71 |
| Employed full-time | 184 | 41.07 |
| Employed part-time | 53 | 11.83 |
| Unemployed | 52 | 11.61 |
| Self-employed | 84 | 18.75 |
| Retired | 36 | 8.04 |
| Total | 448 | 100 |

Consumers Attitude towards Sustainability

Consumers were asked to indicate their concern about climate change and environmental issues and it was observed that the majority of consumers were moderately concerned (48.66%) followed by 22.32% of consumers who were slightly concerned about environmental issues. More than 10% of the consumers (13.84%) were very concerned and 5.58% of consumers were extremely

concerned about climate change and environmental issues. Further respondents were asked if they consider sustainability while making purchase decisions and 41.96% of consumers said that they sometimes consider sustainability while making purchase decisions while 17.63% of consumers often consider it. 12.28% of consumers indicated that they never consider sustainability while making purchase decisions.

Table 2: Consumer Attitude towards Sustainability

| How concerned are you about climate change and environmental issues | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| Response | N | Percentage |
| Not concerned | 43 | 9.60 |
| Slightly concerned | 100 | 22.32 |
| Moderately concerned | 218 | 48.66 |
| Very concerned | 62 | 13.84 |
| Extremely concerned | 25 | 5.58 |
| Total | 448 | 100 |
| Do you consider sustainability when making purchasing decisions | | |
| Response | N | Percentage |
| Never | 55 | 12.28 |
| Rarely | 104 | 23.21 |
| Sometimes | 188 | 41.96 |
| Often | 79 | 17.63 |
| Always | 22 | 4.91 |
| Total | 448 | 100 |

Table 3 shows the environmental issues which influence the purchase decisions of consumers. As per the results, resource depletion (mean=3.79, rank=1) is the major influencing environmental issue affecting the consumers'

purchase decision followed by climate change (mean=3.62, rank=2) and air pollution (mean=3.27, rank=3). The some other environmental issues were plastic waste (mean=3.13, rank=4) and biodiversity loss (mean=3.01, rank=5).

Table 3: Environmental Issues Affecting Purchase Decision

| Environmental Issues | Mean | S.D. | C.V. | Rank |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| Climate change | 3.62 | 0.98 | 0.27 | 2 |
| Plastic waste | 3.13 | 1.05 | 0.34 | 4 |
| Resource depletion (water, minerals, etc.) | 3.79 | 0.87 | 0.23 | 1 |
| Biodiversity loss | 3.01 | 0.94 | 0.31 | 5 |
| Air pollution | 3.27 | 0.89 | 0.27 | 3 |

Eco-Friendly Purchase Behavior of Consumers

First of all, consumers were asked that how frequently they purchase eco-friendly or sustainable products and it was

found that 8.26% consumers always purchase eco-friendly products, 19.42% purchase these products frequently and 39.96% consumers occasionally purchase eco-friendly products.

Table 4: Frequency of Purchasing Eco-friendly Products

| Frequency of Purchase | N | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| Never | 21 | 4.69 |
| Rarely | 124 | 27.68 |
| Occasionally | 179 | 39.96 |
| Frequently | 87 | 19.42 |
| Always | 37 | 8.26 |
| Total | 448 | 100 |

To check the impact of consumers' concerned about environmental issues on their frequency of purchase of eco-friendly products following hypothesis has been taken:-

H01: There is no significant impact of consumers' concern about climate change on their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products

Ha1: There is a significant impact of consumers' concern

about climate change on their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products

To test this hypothesis chi-square test was applied as shown in table 5. The value of chi statistic is significant at 5% level of significance which leads to the rejection of hypothesis so it can be concluded that there is a significant impact of consumers' concern about climate change on their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products.

Table 5: Chi-Square test result to measure impact of consumers' concern about climate change on their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products

| Concerned about Climate Change | Frequency of Purchase | | | | | | Chi - Statistic | p-value | Result |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------|------------|--------|-------|-----------------|---------|-------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Occasionally | Frequently | Always | Total | | | |
| Not concerned | 10 | 19 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 43 | 231.636 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Slightly concerned | 4 | 38 | 20 | 30 | 8 | 100 | | | |
| Moderately concerned | 5 | 55 | 119 | 31 | 8 | 218 | | | |
| Very concerned | 1 | 11 | 30 | 18 | 2 | 62 | | | |
| Extremely concerned | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 18 | 25 | | | |
| Total | 21 | 124 | 179 | 87 | 37 | 448 | | | |

Level of Significance=5%

Table 6 shows the list of eco-friendly products purchased by consumers. It can be seen that the highly purchased eco-friendly products are organic food (79.91%), personal care products (72.32%), reusable housing products (67.63%)

and eco-friendly clothing products (55.58%). The consumers also indicated the purchase of electric or hybrid vehicles (35.04%) and renewable energy products (28.57%).

Table 6: Eco-friendly products purchased by consumers

| Products | N | Percentage |
|--|-----|------------|
| Organic food | 358 | 79.91 |
| Reusable household items (e.g., bottles, bags) | 303 | 67.63 |
| Eco-friendly clothing | 249 | 55.58 |
| Renewable energy products (e.g., solar panels) | 128 | 28.57 |
| Electric or hybrid vehicles | 157 | 35.04 |
| Sustainable personal care products | 324 | 72.32 |

Respondents were asked to rank the factors affecting their purchasing decision of eco-friendly products and the final ranking was obtained with the help of mean score. As per the results shown in Table 7 the most influencing factor to purchase an eco-friendly product is the quality of the product (mean=4.21, rank=1) followed by availability of the product (mean=4.01, rank=2) and environmental

impact (mean=3.74, rank=3). The factors which moderately influence the purchase decision of eco-friendly products are the price of the product (mean=3.69, rank=4) and brand reputation (mean=3.51, rank=5). The slightly influencing factors were found to be the social responsibility of the company (mean=3.38, rank=6) and certifications (mean=3.21, rank=7).

Table 7: Factors affecting eco-friendly purchase decision of consumers

| Factors | Mean | S.D. | C.V. | Rank |
|---|------|------|------|------|
| Price | 3.69 | 1.05 | 0.28 | 4 |
| Quality of the product | 4.21 | 0.95 | 0.23 | 1 |
| Brand reputation | 3.51 | 0.99 | 0.28 | 5 |
| Availability | 4.01 | 0.87 | 0.22 | 2 |
| Environmental impact (e.g., carbon footprint, resource use) | 3.74 | 0.74 | 0.20 | 3 |
| Social responsibility of the company | 3.38 | 1.05 | 0.31 | 6 |
| Certifications (e.g., organic, fair trade, carbon -neutral) | 3.21 | 0.91 | 0.28 | 7 |

Consumers were asked will they pay a premium to purchase eco-friendly products and it was observed that the majority of consumers (47.77%) were willing to pay up to 5% more to purchase eco-friendly products followed by 22.77% of

consumers who were willing to pay 6-10% more for eco-friendly products. Only 8.20% of consumers said that they are willing to pay more than 20% more to purchase eco-friendly products.

Table 8: Consumers' willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products

| Willingness to Pay | N | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|
| I am not willing to pay more. | 47 | 10.49 |
| Up to 5% more | 214 | 47.77 |
| 6-10% more | 102 | 22.77 |
| 11-20% more | 48 | 10.71 |
| More than 20% more | 37 | 8.26 |
| Total | 448 | 100 |

To measure the difference in consumers' willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products with respect to their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products following hypothesis has been taken:-

H02: The consumers' willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products is indifferent with respect to their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products

Ha1: The consumers' willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products is significantly different with respect to

their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products

Table 9 depicts the results of the chi-square test applied to test the above hypothesis. The value of the chi-statistic is significant which leads to the rejection of the hypothesis so it can be concluded that the consumers' willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products is significantly different with respect to their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products.

Table 9: Ch-square test result to measure difference in consumer's willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products with respect to their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products

| Variable | Test Value = 30 | | t- value | p-Value | Result |
|--------------|-----------------|------|----------|---------|-------------|
| | Mean | S.D. | | | |
| Overall Role | 39.13 | 2.89 | 78.852 | 0.000 | Significant |

Level of Significance=5%

At last, consumers were asked how they learn about the sustainability practice of a brand or product and it was observed that the major awareness source is social media (67.19%) followed by word of mouth (63.39%), online

reviews (47.54%) and news articles (43.30%). The other awareness sources were product labelling (27.46%) and company website (20.54%).

Table 10: Awareness Sources of Sustainability Practices

| Awareness Source | N | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|-----|------------|
| Company website | 92 | 20.54 |
| Social media | 301 | 67.19 |
| Product labeling | 123 | 27.46 |
| Online reviews or blogs | 213 | 47.54 |
| Word of mouth (friends/family) | 284 | 63.39 |
| News articles | 194 | 43.30 |

Barriers to Sustainable Consumption

Consumers were asked to rank the barriers to sustainable consumption and the results are presented in table 11. The barriers which hinder sustainable consumption most is limited availability (mean=3.97, rank=1) followed by higher prices (mean=3.78, rank=2) and lack of awareness

about eco-friendly options (mean=3.59, rank=3). Another barriers identified were lack of information about the product (mean=3.47, rank=4), skepticism about the authenticity of claims (mean=3.31, rank=5) and inconvenience (mean=3.22, rank=6)

Table 11: Barriers to Sustainable Consumption

| Barriers | Mean | S.D. | C.V. | Rank |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| Higher price | 3.78 | 1.24 | 0.33 | 2 |
| Limited availability | 3.97 | 0.98 | 0.25 | 1 |
| Lack of information about the product | 3.47 | 1.01 | 0.29 | 4 |
| Inconvenience (e.g., less selection or harder to find) | 3.22 | 0.87 | 0.27 | 6 |
| Skepticism about the authenticity of claims | 3.31 | 0.91 | 0.27 | 5 |
| Lack of awareness about eco-friendly options | 3.59 | 0.84 | 0.23 | 3 |

Discussion

The results highlighted that consumers are moderately concerned about climate change and environment issues and they sometimes consider sustainability when making purchasing decisions. Consumers occasionally purchase sustainable products and most purchased eco-friendly products are organic food (79.91%), personal care products (72.32%) and reusable housing products. Results showed the significant impact of consumers' concerned about environment on their purchasing frequency of eco-friendly products. It was observed that the most influencing factor to purchase eco-friendly product is quality of product followed by availability of product and environmental impact. On average customers are willing to pay up to 5% more for purchasing the eco-friendly products. The barriers which hinder the sustainable consumption most are limited availability of product followed by higher prices and lack of awareness about eco-friendly options.

Moderate Concern about Climate Change and Environment:

The finding that consumers are moderately concerned about climate change and environmental issues aligns with existing literature, which suggests that while environmental awareness is on the rise, it does not always translate into consistent behavior change. This moderate concern indicates that while consumers are aware of environmental issues, this awareness does not always drive decisive action in the marketplace. The infrequency of sustainable purchasing decisions could be linked to other factors, such as perceived inconvenience, price sensitivity, or lack of understanding of how to make sustainable choices (Nascimento & Loureiro, 2024). This suggests that while concern for the environment is present, it is not yet strong enough or prioritized enough to significantly alter purchasing patterns on a large scale. For businesses and policymakers, this highlights the importance of enhancing consumer awareness and providing easier, more accessible options to bridge the gap between environmental concern and behavior.

Frequency of Sustainable Purchases:

The finding that consumers occasionally purchase sustainable products, with a particular focus on organic

food, personal care items, and reusable housing products, reflects the growing acceptance of sustainable options in certain product categories. Organic food, in particular, has seen widespread adoption as it is often viewed as a healthier and more sustainable alternative to conventional products. Personal care products and reusable items like water bottles or shopping bags have also gained popularity due to their direct impact on personal health and the environment. The significant impact of consumers' environmental concern on the frequency of eco-friendly purchases further emphasizes the link between awareness and behaviour, but it also suggests that environmental concern alone may not be enough. Other factors, such as product availability, affordability, and convenience, play a crucial role in shaping consumer choices (Nguyen et al., 2022). This finding underlines the importance of both marketing and product accessibility to encourage more frequent sustainable purchasing.

Factors Influencing Eco-friendly Purchases:

The results show that product quality, availability, and environmental impact are the most influential factors in purchasing eco-friendly products and reflect the growing sophistication of consumer preferences. For example, a study by Ishaswini & Datta (2011) found that while environmental considerations significantly influenced consumers' choices, they often weighed them against product quality and practical aspects. Similarly, Malhotra et al. (2024) highlighted that consumers were increasingly choosing eco-friendly products as they found a positive correlation between favourable attitudes towards eco-friendly products and increased purchase intent. Additionally, factors like advertising and product accessibility also play a crucial role in influencing these intentions. The willingness to pay up to 5% more for sustainable products aligns with findings from Biswas and Roy (2016) who found that consumers' willingness to pay (WTP) for green products is driven by their perceptions of the functional aspects of these products, along with contextual factors such as price, availability, and quality. Specifically, they highlighted that consumers were more likely to pay a premium for green products when they perceive added value in terms of performance and quality.

This indicates that while price sensitivity remains a barrier, a modest premium is acceptable when the products satisfy consumer expectations for quality and convenience. These insights emphasize the importance of integrating sustainability with product performance and accessibility to drive broader adoption.

Barriers to Sustainable Consumption:

The barriers identified—limited availability, higher prices, and lack of awareness—are consistent with existing research on the challenges of promoting sustainable consumption. Limited availability remains one of the most significant barriers, suggesting that consumers may want to purchase eco-friendly products but are constrained by a lack of options in the market. The finding that higher prices are a significant barrier further reinforces the idea that cost remains a key deterrent, especially for price-sensitive consumers. While consumers may be willing to pay a small premium (5%) for eco-friendly products, this willingness has clear limits, and products priced too high may not attract a broad consumer base. Lack of awareness also plays a role, as consumers may not always be aware of the sustainable options available or may not fully understand their environmental benefits. This knowledge gap suggests that there is a need for greater consumer education and more transparent labeling of eco-friendly products. Together, these barriers highlight the importance of improving product availability, affordability, and consumer education to increase the uptake of sustainable consumption.

Conclusion

These findings offer valuable insights into the factors driving and hindering sustainable consumption. While there is a moderate concern for environmental issues among consumers, this concern does not always translate into consistent purchasing behavior. Product quality, availability, and environmental impact are key drivers of sustainable purchases, but barriers like price, limited availability, and lack of awareness still pose significant challenges. To enhance sustainable consumption, businesses need to focus on improving the quality and availability of eco-friendly products, offering them at reasonable prices, and engaging in consumer education to reduce barriers related to awareness.

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