

**A STUDY ON UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION: A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS.****Faby John <sup>1</sup>,  
Swathy Sunil <sup>2</sup>**<sup>1,2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department Of Commerce And Management St. Xavier's College, Bangalore**ABSTRACT**

This study delves into the intricate relationship between consumer behaviour and sustainable practices, aiming to shed light on the factors influencing consumer choices towards sustainability. Drawing from a diverse range of theoretical frameworks, including psychology, sociology, and environmental studies, the research employs a multi-dimensional approach to explore the complexities underlying consumer decision-making processes. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, this investigation examines the various drivers, barriers, and motivations that shape consumers' attitudes and behaviours towards sustainable consumption. Moreover, this research endeavours to uncover the impact of informational cues, societal norms, and individual values on consumer preferences for sustainable products and services. By analysing data collected from surveys, interviews, and observational studies, the study seeks to identify patterns and trends in consumer behaviour across different demographic groups and geographical regions. Furthermore, the study explores the role of marketing strategies, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and government policies in fostering sustainable consumption practices among consumers.

Ultimately, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between consumer behaviour and sustainability, offering insights that can inform policymakers, businesses, and advocacy groups in their efforts to promote more environmentally and socially responsible consumption patterns.

**Keywords:**

Consumer behaviour, sustainability, consumption practices

**1.2 INTRODUCTION**

Consumer behavior refers to the analysis of how individuals or groups make decisions regarding product acquisition, usage, and disposal. Understanding consumer behaviour is crucial for designing effective marketing strategies, developing products that meet consumer needs, and building strong customer relationships.

Sustainability is the capacity to fulfill today's needs without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs. It involves considering environmental, social, and economic factors to ensure that resources are used efficiently and equitably. Sustainable practices aim to promote long-term well-being and resilience, fostering harmony between human activities and the natural world.

Sustainable consumption involves using goods and services in a manner that minimizes environmental impact and preserves resources for future generations. It encompasses behaviors such as reducing waste, choosing eco-friendly products, and adopting energy-efficient practices. Sustainable consumption aims to strike a balance between meeting present needs and ensuring the well-being of ecosystems and societies in the long term. It encourages responsible consumption patterns that promote environmental stewardship and social equity.

Consumer behavior significantly impacts sustainable consumption by driving demand for environmentally friendly products, influencing businesses to adopt sustainable practices, and shaping policy decisions. Understanding consumer preferences, values, and motivations is crucial for promoting sustainable consumption patterns and fostering a transition towards a more environmentally conscious society. By aligning marketing strategies, product offerings, and regulatory measures with consumer expectations, stakeholders can accelerate progress towards sustainability goals and create a more resilient future.

**1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Sustainable consumption: Green consumer behavior in product purchases by William Young, Kumju Hwang, Seonaidh McDonald, and Caroline J.**

This paper explores the purchasing process of green consumers concerning consumer technology products in the UK. The study concludes that incentives and single-issue labels (such as the current energy rating label) would help consumers focus their limited efforts. More importantly, integrating 'being green' requires time and space in people's lives, which is often unavailable due to increasingly busy lifestyles.

**Social influence on sustainable consumption: evidence from a behavioural experiment: Helen Arce Salazar, Leon Oerlemans, Saskia van Stroe-Biezen (06 June 2012)**

Although the impact of social influence on consumer behavior has been acknowledged and documented, most empirical studies on sustainable products primarily focus on individual characteristics (such as socio-demographic attributes and personal environmental attitudes) to explain the decision to purchase sustainable products. In our experimental setting, the significance of peer effects is confirmed. We find clear evidence of 'herd behavior,' and the data indirectly support the existence of 'social learning' effects.. The results also suggest heterogeneous impact of specific social groups.

**Encouraging sustainable consumption: An exploration of consumer behaviour: Finney, Sherry L.(June 1, 2014)**

This paper examines the sustainable marketing literature to present a summary of more recent findings in the area of consumer behaviour. The literature reveals inconclusive findings in accurately defining the green consumer, according to demographic variables. Despite decades of research, the segmentation variables for this group remain unclear. Additionally, the motivation to engage in eco-friendly behavior should appeal to altruistic needs and can be effectively promoted through social marketing strategies. Today's society lives in a culture of overconsumption, which does not necessarily lead to satisfaction or happiness.

**Understanding the Evolution of Sustainable Consumption Research: Yue Liu, Ying Qu, Zhen Lei, Han Jia(24 January 2017)**

These findings clearly demonstrate that sustainable consumption has expanded from a singular, practice-oriented research topic into a variety of systematically studied subjects. These subjects encompass key factors such as sustainability, consumption behavior, energy utilization, and environmental impact.

**Is Sustainable Consumption Translated into Ethical Consumer Behavior?: Monica-Maria Tomşa, Andreea-Ioana Romonţi-Maniu, Mircea-Andrei Scridon (27 January 2021)**

The aim of this study was to analyze the impact of sustainable behavior on consumers' intentions to act ethically in political, social, and environmental dimensions. This approach provides valuable insights into understanding consumer ethical behavior from a different perspective.

**Changing the marketplace one behaviour at a time: Perceived marketplace influence and sustainable: D. Mittelstaedt, Patrick E. Murphy, John F. Sherry, Jr. (6 November 2013)**

This study introduces the concept of Perceived Marketplace Influence (PMI) and examines its role in mediating the relationship between environmental concern and sustainable consumption behavior. A nationwide survey shows that Perceived Marketplace Influence plays an important role in mediating the relationship between concern and behaviour, providing an explanation for prior inconsistencies in this relationship.

**Internal and External Determinants of Consumer Engagement in Sustainable Consumption :Zaneta Pilgrimienė, Andzelika Zukauskaitė, Hubert Korzilius, Jūratė Banytė, Aistė Dovalienė (12 February 2020)**

This study introduces the concept of consumer engagement within the framework of sustainable consumption, aiming to uncover the factors that influence consumer engagement in this area. The findings highlight the significant mediating role of consumer engagement, suggesting that applying this concept can enhance our understanding of actual consumer behavior across various contexts of sustainable consumption.

#### 1.4 OBJECTIVES

1. To understand underlying factors driving consumer behavior towards sustainable consumption across multiple dimensions.
2. Examine the impact of various marketing strategies and interventions on shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors towards sustainable consumption.
3. Assess the potential barriers and challenges hindering widespread adoption of sustainable consumption practices among consumers.

##### 1.4.1 FACTORS DRIVING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

- An increased consciousness regarding environmental matters

- Taking the next generation and sustainability into account
- Social norms and peer pressure's effects
- The accessibility of goods and services that are sustainable
- Corporate Social Responsibility Programs
- Laws passed by the government that support sustainability
- Details and media attention on eco-friendly activities
- Ethical considerations when making purchases
- The demand for safer and healthier goods
- How much do environmentally friendly choices cost?
- The impact of social media and celebrities on sustainability
- Developments in technology making sustainable consumption possible
- Openness in manufacturing processes and supply chains
- Attitudes and viewpoints that encourage sustainability
- Information about how products affect the environment is available
- The tendency toward more conscientious consumerism

Because more people are becoming aware of environmental issues, many aspects of society are shifting toward sustainable practices. This includes the importance of corporate social responsibility programs and future generations. Peer pressure and social standards have an impact on people's decisions about sustainability. Customers now have an easier time making ecologically responsible decisions since sustainable products and services are readily available, and government rules and regulations promote this trend. Media coverage of environmentally friendly actions, the demand for safer and healthier products, and ethical considerations in consumer decision-making all contribute to sustainable consumption. The cost of environmentally friendly goods, the influence of social media and celebrities on sustainability, and technical advancements that support environmentally friendly behavior are other crucial factors.

#### **1.4.2 IMPACT OF VARIOUS MARKETING STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS ON SHAPING ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION**

Research has shown that various marketing strategies and interventions can have a positive impact on consumer attitudes and behaviors towards sustainable consumption. Companies have the opportunity to influence consumers by implementing targeted marketing campaigns that emphasize the benefits of sustainable products and practices. Tactics like eco-labeling, green advertising, and social media promotions have been successful in raising awareness about sustainability and encouraging consumers to make eco-friendly choices. Moreover, loyalty programs, discounts on sustainable products, and partnerships with environmental organizations can further motivate consumers to embrace sustainable consumption habits. In conclusion, a combination of informative, persuasive, and incentivizing marketing approaches can significantly shape consumer behaviors and attitudes towards sustainability. By highlighting the advantages of sustainable products and practices, companies can not only attract environmentally conscious consumers but also contribute to a more sustainable future for all.

Elkington (1997) introduced the concept of the triple bottom line, which focuses on measuring success in economic, social, and environmental terms. This approach has had a significant impact on discussions surrounding sustainable development in marketing. Businesses are now adopting strategies that go beyond profit maximization by incorporating social responsibility and environmental stewardship into their marketing practices. Research in this field delves into how marketing can effectively communicate a company's commitment to the triple bottom line, ultimately influencing consumer behavior and societal perceptions.

Cause-related marketing, a key aspect of strategic marketing, has been recognized for its ability to benefit both businesses and social causes simultaneously. Varadarajan and Menon (1988) highlight the positive effects of cause-related marketing on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. This body of literature emphasizes the potential of cause-related marketing initiatives to contribute to sustainable economic development by aligning business goals with social and environmental causes.

While strategic marketing has been shown to positively impact sustainable economic development, ethical considerations are essential. Some scholars, like Crane and Desmond (2002), caution against greenwashing and superficial marketing strategies that could undermine genuine business efforts. The literature explores the

challenges of balancing profit motives with ethical concerns and advocates for a more authentic integration of sustainability into marketing strategies.

The emergence of digital marketing has brought about both challenges and opportunities in the realm of sustainable economic development. Research by Smith and Brower (2012) investigates the potential of digital platforms to amplify sustainability messages and engage consumers. However, it also underscores the importance of navigating the digital landscape carefully to ensure that sustainability efforts are effectively communicated and put into practice.

#### **1.4.3 TO KNOW ABOUT THE POTENTIAL BARRIER AND CHALLENGES WIDESPREAD ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION PRACTICES AMONG CONSUMERS**

- Financial implications: Sustainable products and services may be perceived as more costly, discouraging certain consumers from making the switch.
- Limited availability: Not all sustainable products may be easily found in the market, creating barriers for consumers to access them.
- Complexity in labeling: Consumers may encounter difficulties in comprehending various eco-labels and certifications, impacting their decision-making process.
- Accessibility factor: Sustainable choices may not always be as conveniently accessible as traditional products, influencing consumer decisions.
- Trust concerns: Some consumers may have doubts about the authenticity and reliability of sustainability claims made by companies, impeding adoption.
- Societal pressures: Existing social norms and peer influence can discourage individuals from adopting sustainable consumption habits.
- Perceived challenges: Consumers may perceive sustainable practices as requiring additional time or effort, leading to reluctance in adoption.
- Psychological barriers: Factors such as habits, attitudes, and beliefs can shape consumer behavior towards sustainable consumption.
- Deceptive marketing: Companies employing misleading tactics can create confusion and mistrust among consumers, obstructing the acceptance of genuine sustainable products.
- Lack of credible sources: Consumers may struggle to find reliable information on sustainable consumption, impacting their decision-making process.
- Absence of incentives: The absence of tangible rewards or benefits for embracing sustainable practices could dissuade consumers from transitioning.
- Cultural influence: Cultural norms and values can influence consumer preferences and attitudes towards sustainability, posing barriers to widespread adoption.
- Infrastructure limitations: Inadequate infrastructure for recycling, waste management, and sustainable practices can impede consumer involvement in sustainable consumption.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this research offers a thorough analysis of the complex connection between consumer behavior and sustainable practices. By integrating various theoretical viewpoints from psychology, sociology, and environmental studies, and utilizing a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, numerous important findings and implications are revealed.

- Factors Influencing Consumer Choices: This study thoroughly examines the various factors that impact consumers' decisions to adopt or hinder sustainable consumption practices. These factors encompass informational cues, societal norms, individual values, the accessibility of sustainable products, and the influence of marketing strategies, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and government policies.
- Drivers and Barriers: It becomes evident that despite the growing awareness and positive attitudes towards sustainability, there are obstacles that pose significant challenges to widespread adoption. These obstacles include perceived higher costs, limited availability of sustainable products, and concerns regarding greenwashing.
- The Role of Marketing and Policies: Effective marketing strategies and supportive policies play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior towards sustainability. Initiatives such as eco-labeling, green

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advertising, and incentives for sustainable products can enhance consumer engagement. Additionally, robust government policies that promote sustainability and corporate social responsibility can create an enabling environment for sustainable consumption practices.

- Implications for Stakeholders: The findings of this study offer practical insights for policymakers, businesses, and advocacy groups that strive to promote environmentally and socially responsible consumption patterns. By understanding the intricate dynamics that influence consumer behavior, stakeholders can develop targeted interventions that effectively address barriers and leverage drivers.
- Future Directions: Moving forward, further research could delve deeper into the subject matter, exploring additional aspects of the relationship between consumer behavior and sustainable practices. This would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding and provide valuable insights for future initiatives aimed at fostering sustainable consumption.

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