



# Sustainable Products and Consumer Attitudes: An Empirical Study

**Dr. C. Sharmila Rao<sup>1</sup>, Daksh<sup>2</sup>, Mishank<sup>3</sup>, Pakshal<sup>4</sup>, Vriksh<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, Center for Management Studies, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University), Bangalore

<sup>2</sup>Student, Center for Management Studies, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University), Bangalore

<sup>3</sup>Student, Center for Management Studies, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University), Bangalore

<sup>4</sup>Student, Center for Management Studies, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University), Bangalore

<sup>5</sup>Student, Center for Management Studies, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University), Bangalore

## Abstract

The growing intensity of environmental challenges and the rising awareness of sustainability have significantly influenced consumer behavior across the globe. Sustainable products, which aim to minimize environmental harm while promoting social and economic responsibility, have gained increasing attention in recent years. Despite this growing awareness, the adoption of sustainable products remains inconsistent, particularly in emerging economies like India. This study seeks to examine consumer attitudes toward sustainable products and to identify the key factors that influence their purchase intentions.

Understanding consumer attitudes is essential for businesses as it enables them to design effective marketing strategies that align with sustainability goals. Additionally, the findings of this study can assist policymakers in encouraging sustainable consumption patterns, thereby supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to responsible consumption and production.

The study is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire administered to consumers belonging to diverse age groups, income levels, and educational backgrounds. A quantitative research approach was adopted, using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to examine the relationships between environmental awareness, price sensitivity, trust in eco-labels, perceived product quality, and purchase behavior.

The findings reveal that environmental concern and perceived product quality have a positive influence on consumers' attitudes toward sustainable products. However, high prices and lack of adequate awareness continue to act as major barriers to adoption. In conclusion, the research highlights the importance of consumer education, transparent communication, and accessible pricing strategies.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Products, Consumer Attitude, Green Marketing, Purchase Intention, Environmental Awareness, Sustainability

## Introduction

In recent decades, sustainability has emerged as a critical global concern due to increasing environmental degradation, climate change, resource depletion, and pollution. Rapid industrialization, urbanization, and unsustainable consumption patterns have placed immense pressure on natural ecosystems. As a result, both governments and organizations are increasingly emphasizing sustainable development as a means to balance economic growth with environmental protection and social well-being.

This heightened awareness has led to the growth of sustainable products across the world, including in India. Sustainable products are designed to reduce negative environmental impacts throughout their life cycle, from production and distribution to consumption and disposal. In India, the demand for eco-friendly products has grown steadily, driven by rising environmental awareness, regulatory initiatives, and changing consumer preferences.

**Industry Relevance and Context:** Several industries have responded to this shift, including fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), fashion, electronics, and food and beverages. Companies are increasingly adopting green practices such as eco-friendly packaging, ethical sourcing, energy-efficient manufacturing, and waste reduction. However, despite these efforts, the market share of sustainable products remains relatively small when compared to conventional alternatives.

**Purpose and Structure:** The purpose of this study is to explore consumer attitudes toward sustainable products and to identify the factors that influence their purchase decisions in the Indian context. By examining variables such as environmental awareness, price sensitivity, trust in eco-labels, and perceived quality, the study aims to provide insights into the barriers and motivators affecting sustainable consumption. The paper is structured into a literature review, problem statement, analysis of findings, and final recommendations.

## Review of Literature

Sustainable or green products are commonly defined as products that minimize environmental harm and promote social responsibility while meeting consumer needs. Prior research has highlighted the importance of consumer awareness and attitudes in shaping green purchase behavior.

**Theories and Models:** The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been widely used to explain consumer decision-making in the context of sustainable consumption. According to the theory, behavioral intentions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Studies applying TPB suggest that positive environmental attitudes increase the likelihood of purchasing sustainable products.

**Key Findings and Comparisons:** \* **Environmental Awareness:** Consumers knowledgeable about environmental issues are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward green products, though awareness alone is often insufficient.

\* **Price Sensitivity:** Many studies indicate that consumers perceive sustainable products as more expensive, which discourages adoption in price-sensitive markets like India.

\* **Trust and Greenwashing:** Greenwashing practices have led to consumer skepticism, reducing trust in environmentally friendly claims.

**Research Gaps:** Comparative studies between developed and developing economies reveal differences in consumer motivations. While international studies emphasize ethical concerns, Indian studies highlight price and availability as major barriers, creating a gap that this study seeks to fill.

## Problem Statement

Despite growing awareness of environmental challenges, sustainable products continue to experience low adoption rates in the Indian market. Many consumers express positive attitudes toward sustainability but fail to translate these attitudes into actual purchasing behavior. Factors such as high prices, limited availability, lack of awareness, and trust issues related

to sustainability claims contribute to this attitude–behavior gap. Therefore, there is a need to examine these factors in greater detail within the Indian context.

## Analysis & Discussion

The study is based on primary data collected from respondents representing diverse demographic profiles. The sample was analyzed based on age, gender, income, and education level to understand variations in consumer attitudes.

Interpretation of Findings: The analysis indicates a positive relationship between environmental awareness and purchase intention. Consumers with higher awareness levels are more likely to show favorable attitudes toward sustainable products. However, price sensitivity negatively impacts purchase behavior, highlighting affordability as a key concern.

Linking Results with Theory: Trust in eco-labels and perceived product quality emerged as significant determinants of consumer attitude. The findings are consistent with existing theories (TPB) and prior research, reinforcing that psychological and economic barriers must be addressed simultaneously to shift consumer behavior.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study finds that consumers generally hold positive attitudes toward sustainable products but face several barriers that limit widespread adoption.

\* Summary: High prices, lack of awareness, and trust-related concerns remain key challenges.

\* Managerial Implications: Businesses should focus on affordability, transparent communication, and consumer education to encourage sustainable purchases.

\* Policy Relevance: Policymakers can support these efforts through incentives, awareness programs, and regulatory frameworks.

\* Future Research: Future studies may focus on specific industries or adopt a longitudinal approach to gain deeper insights into sustainable consumption behavior.

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