

The Role of Youth in Influencing Sustainable Packaging Practices

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Abstract—Due to the growing issue of plastic pollution and product packaging being one of the biggest culprit of , and the future generation being the user of the product and also the victim of this pollution this research tries to focus on the role of the coming generation in sustainability and specially the packaging of the products ,while there are many studies that focus on the supply side of this issue , this study tries to focus on how the young generation tries to tackle this situation and their thoughts on this issue. The reason to focus on the coming generation is because they can have a huge impact on the packaging just by changing their buying behavior or otherwise, we will be able to at least see what are the issue that are stopping them from implementing it in their daily lives

Index Terms—Sustainable Packaging, Youth Consumer Behaviour, Environmental Sustainability, Green Consumption, Plastic, Pollution, Consumer Awareness, Buying Behaviour, Sustainable Consumption, Packaging Practices, Eco-friendly Products

I. INTRODUCTION

Most of the studies about this topic follows the regulations of government about sustainable packaging or what the market leaders are doing or some new trend and few focus on active buying behavior of the core audience , here we try to focus or study on the youth because we can see what influences them , why are they choosing to buy a particular brand or why are they avoiding a brand , a young customer may be well aware of the trends and risks of unsustainable products but they have to move according to some factors like price , or perceived effectiveness or actual impact

This research tries to know the reason and become the medium between youth and industry so that both can get what they want I,e industries want more customers and customer wants that companies listen to them

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Indian market is the hardest to conquer as customer are extremely price sensitive , so managing to make a good product which people choose over competitor while managing to be relatively less priced and also focused on environment and sustainability is very difficult , companies ask premium price for “sustainability”, so here we try to see what are the issues through the eyes of customer so that we can communicate it with other parties who have the power to change products or laws or other things

Companies have a image of their audience they call target customer and youth are now going into the face to become target customer to many companies so here we try to become a mediator between both and ask question and gather information to know what youth demands and are they willing to switch brands for it , are they willing to pay more for it , why are they not choosing sustainable options and other important questions

III. OBJECTIVES

Following are the objectives of this study

- To see the awareness of youth regarding Sustainable Packaging
- To access the difference between intention and actual behavior
- To identify the major factors affecting decisions
- To see youths perceived involvement in packaging
- To see what are the factors that youth focus on and its reason if possible

Hypothesis

H1: Youth consumer behavior plays an important role in the implementation of sustainable packaging.

H0₁: Youth consumer behavior plays no significant role in the implementation of sustainable packaging.

H2: Factors like cost, awareness, availability, and trust play an important role in the implementation of sustainable packaging among the youth.

H0₂: Factors like cost, awareness, availability, and trust play no significant role in the implementation of sustainable packaging among the youth.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

The current research on sustainable packaging is hyper focus on the supply part of it like material, sourcing, supply chain management and not enough on adoption and not really on the young and upcoming generation. They focus on production and regulations and material while completely ignoring the next generation and young people

They are given less importance because they have less disposable income so there are not given the required attention even though they are the one who will be shaping the next wave of consumers and it is around their preferences products will be made

The common thing that is being noticed is that even though they are aware of the sustainability practices they are not implementing it in their behavior; there are some studies that focus on them but not many

Following are the factors that are deemed to be the force, price availability, accessibility and awareness
The influence of youth has been seen as a factor by companies because of social media trends and campaigns but it not strong enough to move industry standards, companies see them as a potential trend but not their identity

Youth influence on sustainable packaging has also been observed, albeit indirectly, through brand switching, buying behavior, and digital engagement, although not always to the same extent.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design uses both descriptive and exploratory research questions. Descriptive Research help in measuring the awareness level and the behavior. Exploratory research help In understanding the reason behind the behavior which are sometimes opposites of each other.

Research Approach

The approach is to use both open and close ended questions; The Structured approach helps to measure the data which helps us understand useful insights and the Open-ended questions help in understanding the reasons and behavior behind it. Both are equally important in a study

Data Collection Method

As this is a primary study the data is collected through the method of Questionnaire distribution. A questionnaire was circulated which was expected to take no longer then 8-10 minutes

The questionnaire tries to focus on awareness, patterns/behaviors, participation, barriers and the close ended questions were designed to be consistent in nature

Population

This study was focused on the youth so population was selected as the age group of 18–30-year-olds, it includes students, young professionals and others in this age group, the populations constated of people from various places, different income level, different educational background, different spending capacity and awareness level

Sampling Method

The sampling method employed in the study is the convenience sampling method, which has been done in a manner that the respondents are selected based on the convenience.

The convenience sampling method has been employed in the study, which is suitable in the current circumstances.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

366 responses Participation

State	Frequency	Percentage
Gujarat	247	67.5%
Maharashtra	41	11.2%
Rajasthan	27	7.4%
Madhya Pradesh	19	5.2%
Bihar	14	3.8%
Uttar Pradesh	11	3.0%
Other	7	1.9%
Total	366	100%

Age Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
18-21	201	54.92%
22-25	112	30.6%
26-30	53	14.48%

Gender Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	194	53.01%
Female	159	43.44%
Prefer not to say	13	3.55%

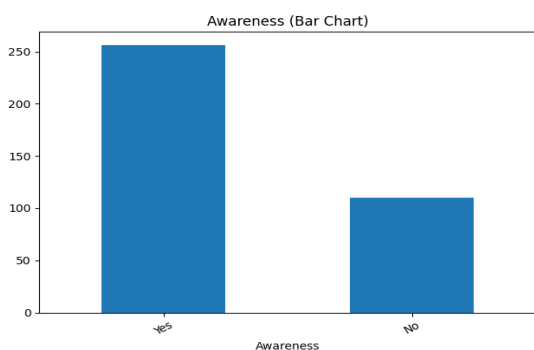
Monthly Spending

Category	Frequency	Percentage
5000-10000	160	43.72%
Below- 5000	159	43.44%
Above 10000	47	12.84%

Demography

- Most responders are from Gujarat, followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan and then others
- Mostly from the age of 18-21 then 22-25
- Spending is on the lower end then between 5 to 10 thousand rupees
- Almost a 55-45 split of gender

Awareness to Sustainability



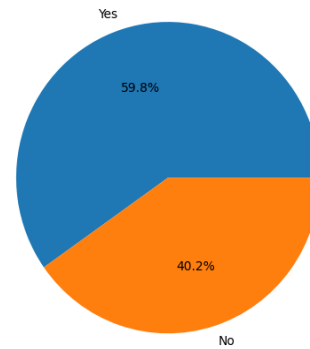
Most have heard about it and some still new to this topic, this can be where government and companies can try to educate the customers

Ways in Which Youth Support Sustainable Packaging (Multiple Response)

Participation Method	Frequency
Reuse packaging	108
Recommend brands	108
Prefer recyclable	107
Give feedback	106
Avoid plastic	104

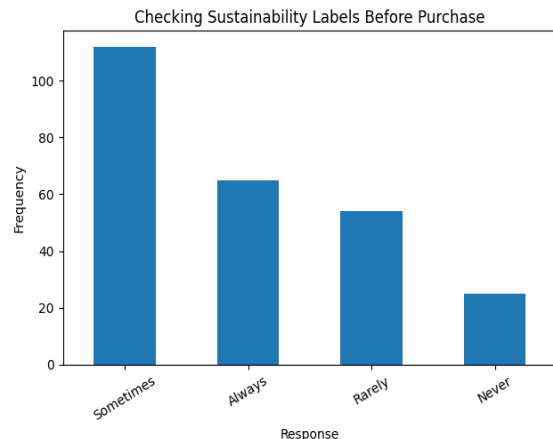
Have you ever changed a brand because of its packaging?

Brand Switching Due to Packaging



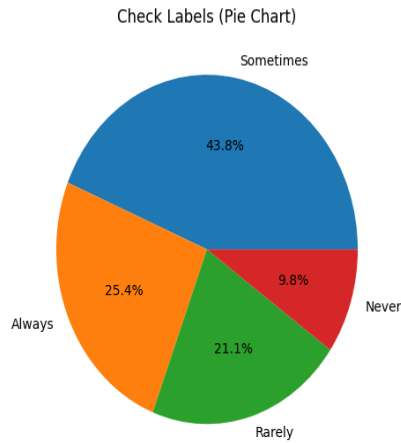
Majority of the responders have switched their product due to some kind of packaging, few of them have not, those who did are sending a strong message that people are noticing the packaging and it is not just viewed as a protection film to cover the product

Do you check sustainability labels before purchasing?



Most people occasionally check sustainability labels; few are always checking for sustainability in products while almost same number of them do it rarely while a chunk of responders do not care about it

How often do you choose products with sustainable packaging?



This is where people show their choice, almost 50 percent of people sometimes check it , a Quarter of them ie 25% always check it while 10% never check it

Do you believe your purchasing choices influence company packaging decisions?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	102	39.84%
Neutral	52	20.31%
Strongly Agree	50	19.53%
Disagree	42	16.41%
Strongly Disagree	10	3.91%

40% agree that that they have some kind of influence while 10 responders think it does not make any difference other are split and don't know and do not have a firm stance in this matter

What is the main reason for not supporting sustainable packaging?

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Higher cost	39	35.45%
Lack of awareness	25	22.73%

Limited availability	22	20.0%
Lack of trust	15	13.64%
No clear difference	9	8.18%

Cost comes as the main reason for not supporting sustainable packaged products then it is followed by lack of awareness and non-availability issues almost 15% do not trust brands and the minority of them think it does not make any difference

Would you support sustainable packaging if better information was provided?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	42.73%
Maybe	35	31.82%
No	28	25.45%

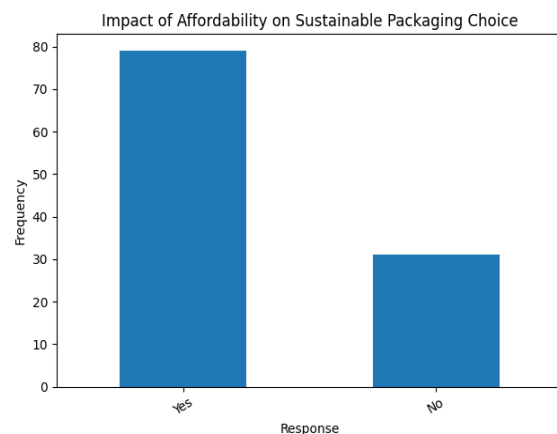
This question was asked to know if awareness was the real issue, the people who were unaware of sustainability, 50% said that they would support if they knew and a quarter of them were firm on not supporting it now

Do you feel companies do not clearly communicate their sustainability efforts?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	41	37.27%
Not sure	38	34.55%
No	31	28.18%

This Question was asked to know if communication by companies was the issue to not follow sustainability it has mixed response and a third of them were not really sure

Would affordability influence your decision to choose sustainable packaging?



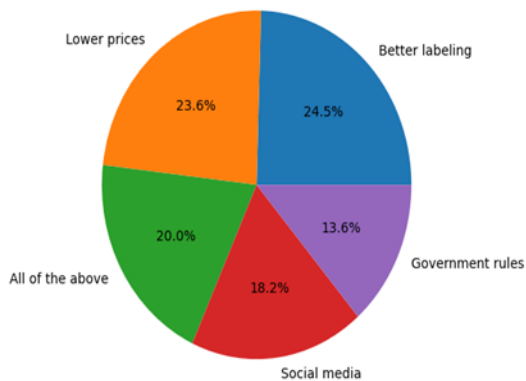
This was a direct question to see if price was the deal breaker, as we saw in other question this agrees with it that the cost and price of the product is what has the biggest influence on the current sustainability trend, responders said that they chance according to the price of the products

What would motivate you to participate in sustainable packaging practices?

Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Better labeling	27	24.55%
Lower prices	26	23.64%
All of the above	22	20.0%
Social media	20	18.18%
Government rules	15	13.64%

Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Brand switching	105	28.69%
Buying power	103	28.14%
Demand for sustainability	81	22.13%
Social media	77	21.04%

Factors That Would Motivate Adoption of Sustainable Packaging

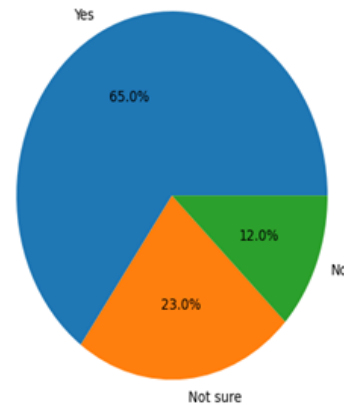


Here we see an interesting response pattern, even though people know price is the biggest reason, here we see that labeling is also a factor, social media can also be used to change the pattern and the most obvious government rules and regulation

Do you think youth can play a significant role in promoting sustainable packaging?

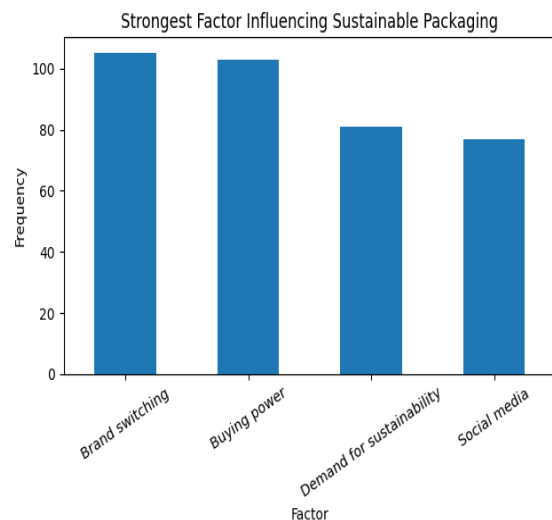
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	238	65.03%
Not sure	84	22.95%
No	44	12.02%

Role of Youth in Sustainable Packaging



This question was asked to know the perceived influence of youth in this sector, 65% say yes 22% was not sure and 12% say that they do not have significant role in promoting these practices

In your opinion, which factor gives youth the strongest influence over packaging decisions?



Do you believe increased youth awareness can lead to widespread adoption of sustainable packaging?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	150	40.98%
Strongly Agree	78	21.31%
Neutral	73	19.95%
Disagree	38	10.38%
Strongly Disagree	27	7.38%

This was the last question; 40% responders agree that awareness will play a important role in adoption of sustainable packaging practices while sub 10% think that it will not cause any difference 21% strongly agree and 10% disagree and 20% are neutral on this

VII. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

From the received responses which was focused on awareness, behavior, barriers, and influence and they will be tested against their hypothesis

Demographic Insight

Mostly male from the age group of 18-21 who have purchasing power between 5 thousand to 10 thousand, mostly from Gujarat but few from surrounding states

Awareness

Most of them are aware about sustainability and feel that more awareness will help, but more communication from the side of companies and government is required. it has a direct role to play in increasing the adoption of Sustainable future

Behavior

They try to avoid plastic and will opt for recycled products and are ready to switch brands if they have it in option and same range of there choice, there is a trend to keep an eye out for sustainable products and their labels. But consistency is lacking

Barriers

Biggest reason is the price of the product following it availability in their surroundings. Part of them also believe that communication is also an issue and also

believe that there is no enough trust for them to follow it

Motivation

Young consumers believe their behavior influences companies, though consistency has been lacking.

Overall Summary

High awareness and willingness exist, though consistency has been lacking.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: Supported. Young consumer behavior has been observed to influence sustainable packaging.

H2: Supported. Cost, awareness, availability, and trust have been observed to be significant factors.

VIII. VIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Major limitation of this study is that convenience sampling is used that means that it may not represent the sentiment of the whole youth population
- this become a valid argument only for the area around where this was taken ie Gujarat and that there was limited reach
- This research was done on a group of population which does not have a large income at their disposal
- The study has limitations in the sense that the data has been collected only from one point in time, which is cross-sectional in nature.
- The study has limitations in the sense that the data is self-reported, which may not necessarily show the true picture.
- The sample size may not be sufficient and need more data
- There isn't enough response from the rural area
- Factors like brand loyalty and personal preferences not taken fully into account
- Some respondents may not have fully understand sustainability-related terms or labels.
- The study does not measure long-term behavioral change.

IX. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Even though awareness exists in the young people it does not follow in behavior pattern that means that adoption of sustainable packaging can be really slow or will be avoided due to multiple factors and biggest of them is price

Young Generations shows processing movement towards sustainability as they are the one who will be directly affected by climate change and pollution so they are up to date with the trend and requirements

Major issue can be the difference between intention and action, as people want things to change but they might not want to do it themselves so it is important that we as a society push each other towards this common goal of sustainability and take accountability of our actions as whole and not blame other or generation before us

Trust level is still low and people are sceptical about its direct or indirect effect on nature but this can only be removed if we increase the adoption and awareness of these kinds of sustainable practices.

Responders know that their individual actions like brand switching and reading labels are equally important so this is a promising not

X. SUGGESTIONS

The biggest factor affecting this is cost, so the best suggestion or path of action is that the prices of sustainable products should be kept relatively similar to non-sustainable products and companies should be held accountable if they charge a premium because they think sustainable products are luxury products

Another major reason is that availability is still not reached in all the areas so, importance should be given to make this kind of products accessible to everyone and not just in the metropolitan areas

Clear labels and communication is also a necessary step for wide spread adoption

Government intervention in terms of laws and advertising and communication is important and the regulation of this is important so that people trust that it will make a difference and they should start implementing it on the larger level so that lower level can copy or follow them

Regulations for companies in this area is also really important, government subsidies are important at this point

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