

Eco-Conscious India: Understanding the Psychology Behind Green Consumer Behaviour

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Abstract—This abstract explores the terms green or sustainable consumer behaviour. As environmental concerns are rising globally, we need to understand the psychology of consumers while some consumers are choosing environmentally friendly products others are not choosing the same. The study draws upon various internal and external factors influencing green consumption. We also need to identify the consumers' attitudes towards environmental issues and green products, environmental concern, and values. The green purchase intention and subsequent behaviour are influenced by an individual's attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms (perceived social pressure), and perceived behavioural control (perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour).

The research revolves around into moral and ethical considerations, where a sense of duty or responsibility towards the environment and future generations motivates consumption choices. Identity plays a role, with consumers integrating green Behaviours into their self-concept. Furthermore, social influence from peers, family, and media, as well as cultural and religious factors, are recognized as significant external shapers of green consumerism. The abstract also acknowledges the persistent "attitude-behaviour gap," where positive environmental attitudes do not always translate into actual green purchases. This gap is often attributed to perceived barriers such as higher prices of green products, limited availability, lack of trust in green claims (greenwashing), and a perceived lack of personal impact. Ultimately, understanding these psychological drivers and barriers is crucial for businesses and policymakers to develop effective strategies that encourage widespread adoption of green consumption, thereby fostering sustainable development and mitigating environmental degradation.

Index Terms—Green Consumer, Eco-Friendly products, Environment, Sustainability, Consumer Psychology.

I. INTRODUCTION

The word 'Green' plays an important role in every living creature. Here, Green does not mean the colour. Green here is our ecosystem, our environment. As man evolved and developed, one way or the other, our ecology became the victim of human activities. In the name of development, we destroyed our root our Green. As a result of this, we have seen the suffering of all creatures due to acid rain, tsunamis, and earthquakes. Now, human beings, especially people from industries, are focusing on the production of eco-friendly products. Consumers, whom we call as kings, are switching towards eco-friendly products.

Green marketing, also referred to as environmental or sustainable marketing, encompasses an organization's initiatives aimed at creating, advertising, pricing, and distributing products that will have a minimal negative impact on the environment. (Sanjay K Jain and Gurmit Kaur, 2004). Eco-friendly products are created to lessen their environmental impact throughout their entire life-cycle and even after they are no longer functional. These products generally have two primary objectives: minimizing waste and enhancing resource efficiency. They are produced using non-toxic materials and environmentally safe methods, and they receive certification from reputable organizations. Eco-friendly products can be recycled, reused, and are inherently biodegradable. (Mrs. Rajitha Pathange, Mrs. Rajani Parcha, Iffath Ara, Irikilla Anusha, Irram Fatima, Jabeen Fathima, 2024). 'Green consumption' signifies a type of consumption that is mindful of environmental issues, with consumers taking into account the ecological consequences of their purchasing, utilizing, and discarding of goods and services. An increasing number of individuals are adopting pro-environmental behaviours and opting for

products that have minimal negative impacts on the environment. (Chetali Arora, 2022). More consumers are placing greater importance on sustainability in their buying habits, with nearly nine out of ten (85%) reporting that they are feeling the disruptive effects of climate change in their daily lives. To lessen their environmental footprint, 46% of consumers indicate they are opting for more sustainable products. Actions that individuals have taken include: making more deliberate purchases to minimize overall consumption (43%), changing their dietary choices (32%), reducing their travel or altering travel methods (31%), or considering electric vehicle options (24%), among others. A substantial majority (80%) of consumers express readiness to pay a premium for goods that are sustainably produced or sourced. On average, some shoppers are willing to spend 9.7% more for products that meet certain environmental standards, such as being locally-sourced, made from recycled or eco-friendly materials, or produced within a supply chain that has a reduced carbon footprint. However, such willingness may not always result in increased spending due to influences like inflation, economic instability, and concerns related to the cost of living. Consumers are evaluating the sustainability practices of producers based on specific criteria, including: methods of production and recycling (40%), environmentally-friendly packaging (38%), and contributions to nature and water conservation (34%). Additionally, consumers are intending to increase their consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables (52%) and decrease their intake of red meat (22%). (PwC India Survey 2024).

The objectives of this study are to understand consumer psychology regarding eco-friendly products, to examine consumer's concerns about environmental protection, and to analyse their awareness of green products.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Parvathi, Dr. P Annamuthu (2024) Green consumerism promotes sustainability in consumer behaviour by encouraging individuals to choose more environmentally friendly products. This process begins with the creation of eco-friendly products and extends through their promotion, packaging, and overall commitment to environmental protection. Companies are increasingly positioning their offerings

as environmentally friendly. Currently, there is a discernible shift in the social attitudes of the modern generation, who are now inclined to purchase products that do not harm the environment. People have become more conscientious about preserving nature and ensuring the well-being of the planet. Adopting green consumption habits fosters a healthy equilibrium between the profit objectives of businesses and the sustainable practices of consumers. The primary aim of this research is to examine the evolving preferences of online shoppers regarding green consumption. A carefully crafted questionnaire has been distributed to gather data on consumer perceptions of green consumerism and their willingness to embrace eco-friendly products. This study reveals that customers are informed about the green and organic products available in the market and are willing to choose these items for environmental and health considerations, regardless of cost. The proposed study aims to shed light on customer attitudes, levels of awareness, and motivators related to green consumption and how these elements affect their purchasing decisions. Furthermore, data has been collected from a limited sample in a specific region. Future research could delve deeper and uncover additional significant insights. Understanding and predicting human behavior is a challenging endeavor; this study attempts to explore customer attitudes towards sustainability. It seeks to address questions regarding how individuals engage with green consumption and their levels of activity in protecting the environment. This represents an initial exploration of the consumption habits of online shoppers in the Coimbatore district.

Mrs. Rajitha Pathange, Mrs. Rajani Parcha, Iffath Ara, Iriskilla Anusha, Irram Fatima, Jabeen Fathima (2024) The study aims to examine and evaluate consumer purchasing behaviour concerning green products, focusing specifically on the factors that affect the adoption of sustainable and eco-friendly alternatives. As environmental awareness grows, consumers have become crucial in influencing the demand for products that minimize ecological harm. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, which includes surveys and detailed interviews, this research intends to delve into the complexities of consumer decision-making behaviours regarding green products. The main goals include measuring the extent of awareness and comprehension of green products, pinpointing the factors that shape consumer preferences, and

investigating the influence of elements such as labelling, brand trust, and perceived environmental effects. Additionally, the study strives to identify any obstacles or challenges that might impede the broader acceptance of green products. The results of this research are anticipated to provide valuable insights for businesses, policymakers, and marketers, aiding them in better understanding and addressing the preferences and motivations of consumers within the expanding market for sustainable and environmentally friendly products.

Rajumesh Sivarajah (2024) This study reveals the complex interaction between psychological and social elements that influence consumers' eco-friendly purchasing behaviour. By conducting a systematic review and thematic analysis, it pinpoints the driving forces behind environmentally conscious choices, examining the psychological and social factors while exploring emerging themes. The analysis uncovers key psychological aspects—such as attitudes, beliefs, motivations, emotions, knowledge, and ethics. At the same time, it emphasizes the role of social factors, including norms, corporate responsibility, media, education, and culture. By synthesizing these insights, the research connects individual decisions with broader societal influences, offering guidance for targeted green marketing strategies for companies, enhancing customer loyalty, and contributing to society. This study suggests opportunities for future research into the complex interactions of these factors, differences across cultures, and the impact of technology on behaviour. Additionally, it lays a solid groundwork to promote sustainable changes in business practices, policy development, and academic inquiry for a greener future.

Chetali Arora (2022) The research addresses various factors influencing green consumption behaviour in India. It focuses on consumer behaviour towards two types of products: organic food items and energy-efficient electrical devices. Method/design: A convenience sample of 204 Indian consumers was surveyed using a carefully designed questionnaire. To evaluate the proposed models of green consumption across the two product types, multiple regression analysis was utilized. Several tests were conducted to assess the dependability of the results. Results show that distinct sets of factors influence the purchase of green products in different categories. Shared factors between these groups include behavioural flexibility,

influence from peer groups, eco-labels and certifications, family size, and the price of green items. Practical implications: The findings of this study highlight that a uniform approach may not effectively promote green consumption; rather, a tailored strategy for each product category should be adopted by stakeholders when encouraging green consumption. Originality: This research offers fresh perspectives on green consumption behaviour by analysing factors relative to different commodity categories. Additionally, this study introduces behavioural flexibility and family size as factors examined for the first time within the green consumption arena.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Source of Data: This study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through responses obtained from consumers through a structured questionnaire. Secondary data was collected from various journals, articles and research papers etc.

Sample Size: 50 respondents

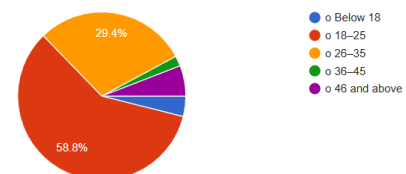
Method of data collection: The data for this research work was collected using questionnaires administered to the selected sample.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Section A: Demographic Information

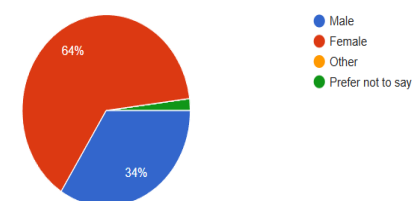
1. Age

51 responses



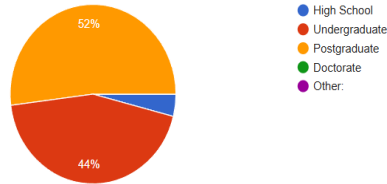
2. Gender

50 responses



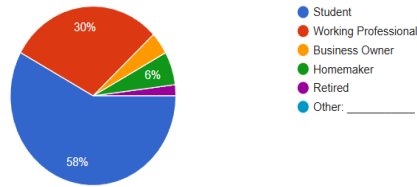
3. Educational Qualification

50 responses



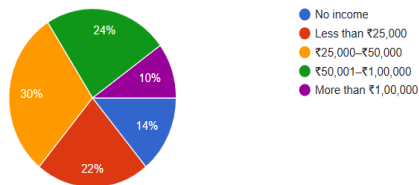
4. Occupation

50 responses



5. Monthly Household Income

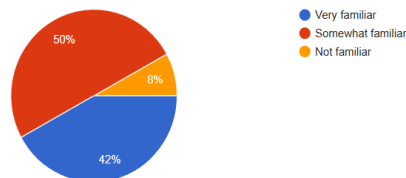
50 responses



Section B: Awareness and Attitude

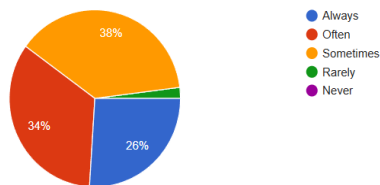
6. How familiar are you with the term "Green Consumer"?

50 responses



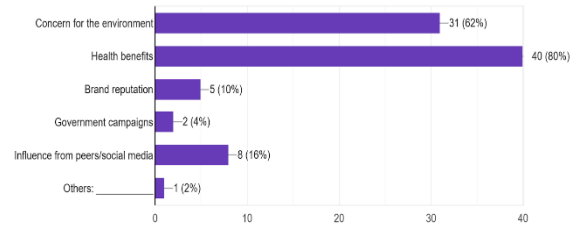
7. Do you consider yourself environmentally conscious when making purchases?

50 responses



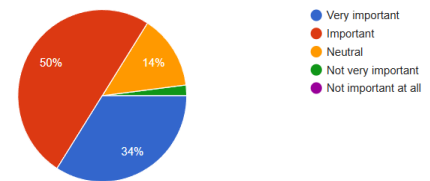
8. What motivates you to purchase eco-friendly products? (You may choose multiple)

50 responses



9. How important is **eco-labeling** (e.g., organic, biodegradable) in your buying decision?

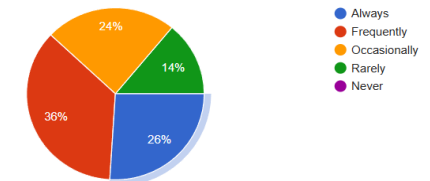
50 responses



Section C: Behaviour and Practices

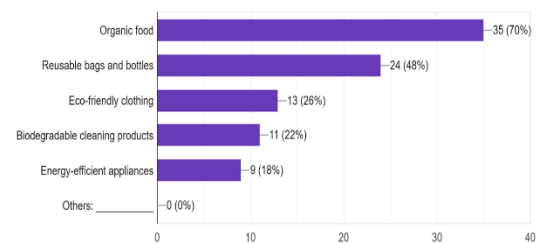
10. How often do you buy eco-friendly products (e.g., reusable, organic, sustainable)?

50 responses



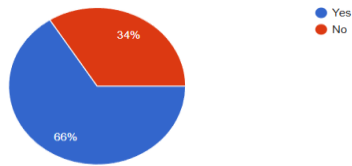
11. Which eco-friendly products do you usually purchase? (Multiple options allowed)

50 responses



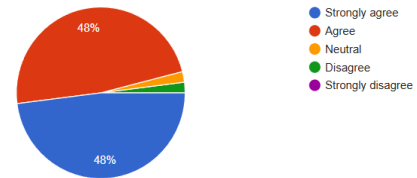
12. Have you ever paid more for an eco-friendly product over a conventional one?

50 responses



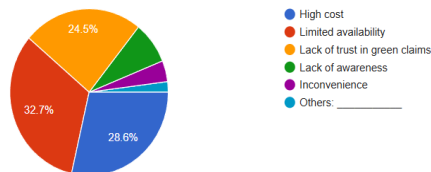
17. Do you believe your eco-conscious choices can make a positive impact on the environment?

50 responses



13. What prevents you from buying green products more often?

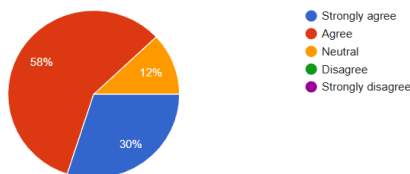
49 responses



Section D: Psychological Aspects

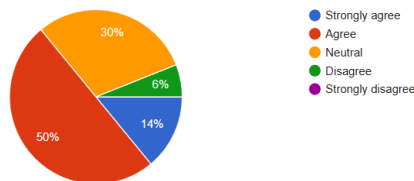
14. Do you feel a sense of personal responsibility toward the environment?

50 responses



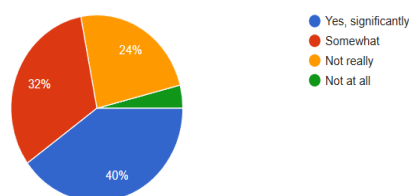
15. Do social norms and peer influence affect your eco-friendly purchases?

50 responses



16. Do advertisements or environmental campaigns influence your behaviour?

50 responses



V. FINDINGS

1. Age

The biggest segment of participants is in the 18–25 age range, comprising 58.8%. The following largest group, those aged 26–35, accounts for 29.4% of the sample. The number of respondents under 18 and over 36 is relatively small in comparison.

The survey pool is predominantly made up of younger individuals, especially from Gen Z and younger millennials. This age group tends to be more engaged and outspoken regarding environmental matters, which could impact the answers to the following questions.

2. Gender

The largest group of respondents are Female, accounting for 64%. Male respondents represent 34%. The categories of "Other" and "Prefer not to say" make up a very minor percentage.

The greater number of female respondents is significant and might influence the overall results. Studies frequently indicate that women tend to show more concern for and take initiative regarding environmental issues than men do.

3. Educational Qualification

The participants in the study are predominantly educated, with a total of 96% holding either an Undergraduate (44%) or Postgraduate (52%) degree. The respondents are presumably knowledgeable and have the resources to stay updated on environmental matters. Their advanced educational background may play a role in shaping their awareness and perspectives.

4. Occupation

Most of the participants are Students (58%). The second largest group is Working Professionals,

comprising 30%. The occupational information corresponds with the data on age and education, indicating that the sample mainly consists of students and young professionals.

5. Monthly Household Income

The distribution of income varies across different categories, with the largest segment falling in the ₹50,001–₹1,00,000 range (24%), followed by the ₹25,000–₹50,000 range (30%) and the "No income" category (14%). The notable presence of a substantial "No income" group (14%) corresponds with the high percentage of student respondents. The significant portion of the sample with some level of income, typically within the middle-to-high ranges, suggests they possess a degree of purchasing power, which is essential for analyzing their consumer behavior.

Section B: Awareness and Attitude

6. Familiarity with the term "Green Consumer"

A significant 92% are acquainted with the phrase "Green Consumer" (42% are "Very familiar" while 50% are "Somewhat familiar"). This suggests that the notion of eco-friendly consumption is widely recognized within this group.

7. Environmental Consciousness when making purchases

Although a large portion of individuals identify as environmentally conscious, their behaviors do not always align with this belief.

- o Always: 26%
- o Often: 34%
- o Sometimes: 38%
- o Rarely/Never: A very small percentage fit into these categories.

This chart demonstrates a notable disparity between intentions and actions. While many hold a positive outlook, various factors (such as cost, availability, or convenience) may hinder them from consistently making eco-friendly purchases.

8. Motivations to purchase eco-friendly products

The primary motivator is "Health benefits," chosen by 80% of those surveyed. Following that, "Concern for the environment" is the second most common reason at 62%. Other influences, such as brand reputation (10%), government initiatives (4%), and the impact of social media (16%), are considerably less significant.

This insight is vital. It indicates that although people are worried about the environment, their main driver for action is their personal health. This has important consequences for marketing, as emphasizing health benefits could prove to be more effective than focusing solely on environmental messages.

Section C: Behavior and Practices

9. Importance of eco-labelling

84% of participants' view eco-labelling as either "Important" (50%) or "Very important" (34%).

This reflects a strong consumer dependence on third-party certifications and labels to confirm a product's eco-friendliness. It acts as a quick reference to aid in making informed buying choices and fosters trust.

10. Frequency of buying eco-friendly products

Most participants report purchasing eco-friendly products either "Frequently" (36%) or "Always" (26%), totalling 62%. A noteworthy segment (24%) claims they buy such products "Occasionally." While many individuals are regular buyers, there remains a considerable number who only make these purchases sporadically.

11. Types of eco-friendly products purchased (50 responses)

Organic food ranks as the most frequently bought eco-friendly item at 70%. In second place are reusable bags and bottles at 48%, while items like biodegradable cleaning products, eco-conscious clothing, and energy-efficient appliances are purchased less often.

One of the main reasons for this choice is the health advantages. Consumers tend to link organic food with personal well-being, which places it high on their list. Reusable bags and bottles are also a popular option due to their ease of use, which helps explain their widespread adoption.

12. Have you ever paid more for an eco-friendly product over a conventional one? (50 responses)

A substantial majority, 66%, have spent more on a sustainable product.

This is an important insight. It demonstrates that for this segment of consumers, cost is not a definitive obstacle. They are open to paying extra for products they believe are more beneficial for the environment, reflecting a strong alignment with their values.

13. What prevents you from buying green products more often? (49 responses)

The primary challenges identified are "Limited availability" (32.7%) and "High cost" (28.6%). Together, these two factors represent more than 60% of the feedback. Another significant barrier is "Lack of trust in green claims," which stands at 24.5%. "Lack of awareness" and "Inconvenience" are less impactful in comparison.

The price remains a barrier to making more frequent purchases. Even more critical is the concern regarding limited availability, indicating that eco-friendly products are not always readily accessible. The finding related to "lack of trust" highlights the necessity for effective eco-labelling (as noted in a prior question) and underscores the need for increased transparency from brands.

14. Do you feel a sense of personal responsibility toward the environment? (50 responses)

A substantial majority of participants, 88%, believe they have a personal obligation to protect the environment (30% "Strongly agree," 58% "Agree").

This indicates a solid internal drive. The respondents view environmental concerns not merely as societal challenges but as their own responsibility to help find a resolution. This inherent motivation significantly influences their buying choices.

15. Do social norms and peer influence affect your eco-friendly purchases? (50 responses)

A total of 64% of participants believe that social norms and peer influence impact their purchasing decisions (14% "Strongly agree," 50% "Agree").

This indicates that while individual responsibility is important, external influences also significantly contribute. The wish to align with social norms or the sway of peers and family can promote environmentally-friendly consumption. This implies that initiatives rooted in community involvement and social marketing may serve as effective strategies.

16. Do advertisements or environmental campaigns influence your behavior?

A significant number of respondents are swayed by advertisements and campaigns, with 40% responding "Yes, significantly" and 32% answering "Somewhat." This question typically encompasses a broader spectrum of marketing, including brands and NGOs,

rather than solely focusing on government-led programs. It suggests that well-crafted communication and marketing strategies can effectively influence consumer behavior.

17. Do you believe your eco-conscious choices can make a positive impact on the environment?

Nearly all participants, 96%, think their decisions can have a beneficial effect (48% "Strongly agree," 48% "Agree").

This is an important psychological element referred to as "perceived consumer effectiveness." The conviction that their individual contributions are significant encourages participation in environmentally friendly consumption. In the absence of this belief, a consumer may feel that their actions are futile, resulting in inaction. The strong consensus on this issue implies that the respondents are hopeful and feel empowered by their choices.

IV. CONCLUSION

The research indicates that most participants are youthful, highly educated, and mainly female, factors that significantly affect their eco-friendly viewpoints. There is a notably high level of awareness regarding the idea of the "Green Consumer," reflecting a broad acknowledgment of sustainable consumption. Nonetheless, there is a discrepancy between expressed environmental awareness and regular eco-friendly buying habits, indicating that one's intentions do not always convert into actions. Health benefits are identified as the main driving force behind green purchases, and eco-labelling is recognized as a crucial element for establishing trust and influencing decisions. The preference for organic foods and reusable products highlights the combined effects of health considerations and convenience. While a considerable number of consumers' express readiness to invest more in eco-friendly goods, obstacles such as high prices, limited availability, and scepticism about green marketing claims remain significant challenges. Social influences, advertising, and environmental initiatives also significantly impact sustainable decisions, underscoring the role of external factors. Ultimately, the results highlight a strong sense of individual accountability among consumers along with a conviction in the positive effects of their actions, illustrating an optimistic and empowered

consumer demographic for advancing eco-responsible practices.

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