Determinants of Green and Sustainable Consumption

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Abstract- ***This research investigates the factors influencing green and sustainable consumption among consumers in the Delhi-NCR region. Using a quantitative methodology, data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 123 participants. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) revealed eight major determinants: environmental awareness, social norms, ethical responsibility, perceived behavioral control, price sensitivity, trust in government policy, brand influence, and habitual resistance.***

Key findings include:

- ***A significant positive correlation between higher income/education and eco-friendly consumption.***
- ***Peer influence doubling the intent to recycle.***
- ***A clear gap between intention and action—80% of participants support sustainability, yet only 32% make consistent green purchases due to cost and trust issues.***

The study recommends policy incentives like tax rebates, awareness campaigns, and affordable green alternatives. It aligns with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), providing actionable insights for policymakers, marketers, and businesses.

I. INTRODUCTION

The urgency of sustainability in response to environmental degradation has led to an increased focus on green consumption. In India—an emerging economy with rising urbanization—consumer behavior toward sustainable products is crucial but not fully understood.

Research Objectives:

- To identify the primary factors influencing green purchasing behavior.
- To analyze the role of demographic, psychological, and social variables.
- To recommend strategies for promoting sustainable consumption.

Despite increased awareness, actual sustainable practices remain limited due to barriers like affordability and trust. This study attempts to bridge the gap between intention and action using empirical data and factor analysis.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Key Theories:

- Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991): Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence sustainable consumption.
- Value-Belief-Norm Theory (Stern, 2000): Personal values and ethical beliefs trigger environmentally conscious behavior.

Empirical Findings:

- Higher income and education levels correlate with a stronger willingness to buy green products (Yadav et al., 2020).
- Social media significantly influences younger consumers (Sreen et al., 2020).
- Environmental awareness drives intent, but price remains a barrier (Thakur, 2014).
- Social norms play a key role in recycling behavior (Singh & Tripathi, 2016).

Research Gaps:

- Prior studies focus on Western markets and intention rather than actual behavior.
- This study addresses the Indian context and includes real purchasing data.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

- Quantitative, cross-sectional study

- Use of descriptive statistics, EFA, and correlation analysis

Data Collection:

- Sample Size: 123 respondents from Delhi-NCR
- Sampling Method: Random, with inclusion criteria (prior green product purchase)
- Tool: Structured questionnaire (5-point Likert scale)
- Reliability Check: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.964

Analysis Techniques:

- EFA: Identified key factors using KMO = 0.858, Bartlett's test ($p < 0.01$)
- Inferential Stats: Pearson correlation, ANOVA for demographic differences

Limitations:

- Geographic focus on Delhi-NCR
- Self-reported responses may include bias
- Cross-sectional data limits causality

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A. Demographics:

- 56.9% female participants showed higher green purchase intent
- Age group 20–30 most influenced by social media
- High-income respondents more likely to pay premium for green products

B. Factor Analysis (8 Key Determinants):

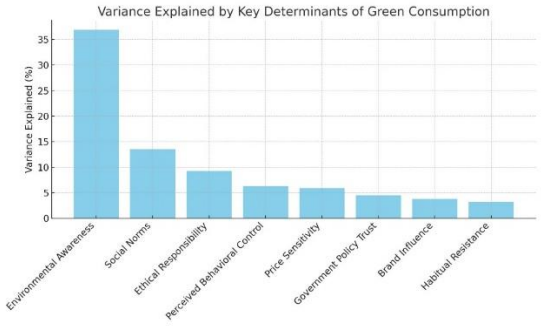
I. Environmental Awareness (36.9%) – Most influential
II. Social Norms (13.5%) – Strong for Gen Z
III. Ethical Responsibility (9.3%) – Linked with education
IV. Perceived Control (6.3%) – Influences behavior feasibility
V. Price Sensitivity (5.9%) – Key barrier
VI. Trust in Government Policy (4.5%) – Low trust levels
VII. Brand Influence (3.8%) – Weak overall
VIII. Habitual Resistance (3.2%) – Seen in busy professionals

C. Correlation and ANOVA Results:

- Strong positive correlation: Awareness ↔ Purchases ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$)
- Income ↔ Premium payment ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.05$)
- Age/income had significant differences in green behavior

D. Insights:

- Value-Action Gap: 80% value sustainability, only 32% act consistently
- Generational Divide: Gen Z driven by trends; older groups less trusting
- Green Premium Paradox: Organic food preferred over eco-fashion



Key Findings

Demographics:

- Women and postgraduates show higher eco-friendly behavior.
- Youth (20–30 years) are most influenced by social media.
- Higher income groups are 3x more likely to pay for green products.

Top Drivers (EFA Results):

- Environmental Awareness is the most influential factor (36.9% variance).
- Social Norms and Ethical Responsibility also play key roles.
- Price Sensitivity is the biggest barrier for 67% of respondents.

Value-Action Gap:

- 80% support sustainability, but only 32% buy green products regularly.
- Barriers: High cost, lack of trust, and inconvenience.

Statistical Highlights:

- Strong correlation: Awareness ↔ Purchases (r = 0.72), Income ↔ Willingness to Pay (r = 0.65).
- Recycling is influenced by peer norms. Consumer Segments:
- Green Advocates (22%), Selective Adopters (54%), Skeptics (24%).

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

This study uncovers that while environmental awareness and ethical responsibility are high among Indian consumers, systemic barriers like price and trust prevent consistent green behavior. Women, millennials, and educated individuals are most inclined toward sustainable consumption.

Key Conclusions:

- Awareness ≠ Action without affordability and trust
- Targeted interventions are required—both policy-driven and market-based
- Collaboration among government, businesses, and communities is essential

Future studies should explore long-term behavioral changes, include rural perspectives, and consider cross-country comparisons for more inclusive strategies.

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