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**ANALYSING REASONS BEHIND CONSUMERS
PREFERRING ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS BUT OPTING
FOR CHEAPER, AND NON-SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES**



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**Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation
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I, balendran kandarsamy , declare that this dissertation has been composed by myself, that the work contained herein is entirely my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification, in whole or in part, except as specified.

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Abstract

The issues of climate change, environmental degradation, and resource depletion are causing concern and in the context of the growing concerns, sustainable consumption has become an area of increased concern. While environmental awareness and concern about consumer goods' environmental impact are growing, a significant number of consumers are still opting for more budget-friendly and less sustainable goods. The aim of this study was to delve into this contradiction by first examining consumer attitudes towards green products, highlighting factors that shape buying behaviour, understanding the importance of awareness, trust and perceived value and last but not least, examining the attitude–behaviour gap in sustainable consumption. The quantitative method of data collection has been chosen wherein online surveys were conducted among 51 respondents. Such data collected was analysed by means of statistical calculations, such as descriptive analysis and correlation using MS Excel.

Overall, the results showed consumers had positive attitudes towards sustainability and were environmentally aware. But price, convenience, accessibility and perceived value had much impact on actual purchasing behaviour. Price was identified as the top driver of purchasing and trust in the sustainability claims, and belief in product credibility was also shown to influence purchasing behaviour. It was found that there was evidence of a significant attitude–behaviour gap as positive environmental intentions were not always followed by sustainable purchasing behaviour. The study's overall findings suggest that many psychological, economic and contextual factors impact sustainable consumption behaviours. The results offer perspectives for companies, marketers, policy makers and consumers looking to foster sustainable consumption and to decrease obstacles to environmentally responsible purchasing behaviour.

Keywords: *Sustainable Consumption, Eco-Friendly Products, Consumer Behaviour, Attitude–Behaviour Gap, Green Purchasing, Price Sensitivity, Environmental Awareness, Perceived Value, Sustainable Consumption Behaviour*

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Climate change and pollution are the issues that grew in popularity in recent years and caused the awareness of consumers who are now more inclined towards using the products that are environmentally friendly. However, there exists a contradiction, as despite the intentions, consumers will still buy cheaper substitutes, which are unsustainable. This selection hole is symptomatic of the influence of the economy and feasibility of purchasing decisions. The chapter overviews the background, rationale, aims, objectives, research questions, scope, significance and the general structure of the research.

1.2 Background and Problem Statement

The concept of sustainable consumption has gained relevance amid efforts by societies to find a balance between economic growth and environmental conservation. Despite the growing awareness of consumers regarding the issue of the environment, the awareness will not necessarily lead them to uniform purchasing behaviour. The disconnect between the declared attitudes and the real actions has thus been a focal point in research on sustainability. The psychological factors may trigger consumers to make apparently unsustainable decisions, even though they have pro-environmental attitudes, including social comparison. This implies that behaviour is greatly guided by internal processes in cognition. Furthermore, Sinha and Annamdevula (2025) offered a knowledge-related gap, namely a knowledge-intention gap, which is the gap between the knowledge and intention to proceed with sustainability. This represents a limitation of awareness in an act of altering behaviour.

This empirical evidence also supports this contradiction. According to consumers, the most significant result is that the willingness to pay for a sustainable product is at an average of 9.7% that signifies a deep interest (PWC, 2025). Nonetheless, the reality is still incongruent, as the rates of moving towards sustainable buying differ in the long run (Statista, 2025). According to Teerakapibal and Schlegelmilch (2025), this gap can be seen especially in the domain of fast fashion, where affordability and convenience take over the decision-making process. An irregular consumer behaviour undermines the association between responsible consumption and sustainable production. Preferences for shopping with sustainable companies in future is shown by 65% of customers, whereas 26% are already buying eco-friendly products only, thereby depicting difficulty in spreading environmental awareness

(HBR, 2025). Aspects like value perceived and trust play a crucial role in making buying choices. As per the views of Xue et al. (2025) emphasise the importance of contextual influences on behaviour, whereas the fact that positive attitudes by themselves are not enough to generate behaviour change. Comprehensively, the reference-action gap has intertwined psychological, economic, and situational influences.

1.3 Research Rationale

The need to study this topic can be explained by the fact that there is an increasing demand to encourage sustainable consumption due to rising environmental issues. Whereas the level of awareness on sustainability has increased, unsustainable purchasing behaviour still hinders the advancement of environmental impact reduction. According to Do and Do (2025), internal thinking processes usually result in consumers explaining their choices, which can conflict with their environmental attitudes. Any gap between knowledge and behaviour can only be closed through the need to understand what influences consumer decision-making. This means that awareness is not enough to guarantee a behaviour change, and therefore it is important to consider the factors behind the mixed purchasing behaviour.

Other factors that contribute to this gap are economic and contextual. The pricing systems and market environments usually deter the adoption of sustainable products by consumers since affordability and convenience are at the forefront. Narassima et al. (2025) highlight that consumer behaviour is essential to promote sustainable systems of production, which is the fact that inconsistent decisions undermine the sustainability process in general. Moreover, Agarwal et al. (2025) made a recommendation to address psychological and economic considerations in order to enhance the interest in sustainable products. Thus, this research will help to determine the major contributors to the preference-action gap and offer some insights that can be used to design more effective approaches to promoting sustainable consumption.

1.4 Aim and Objectives

Aim

This study intends to examine why consumers shift in their buying behaviour towards giving preference to green products and use less cost-effective but non-sustainable alternatives.

Objectives

- To investigate the consumer attitude toward green and environmentally friendly products
- To determine factors that affect the behaviour of the consumer to buy cheaper non-sustainable alternatives
- To determine the sensitivity of prices on sustainable buying behaviour
- To examine the difference between environmental consciousness and real buying decision-making

1.5 Research Questions

- Which aspects contribute to consumers embracing eco-friendly products?
- Why do consumers buy low-priced, non-sustainable products whilst being environmentally sensitive?
- What is the effect of price sensitivity on sustainable purchasing behaviour?
- Why is there a difference between the attitudes on the environment and real purchasing decisions?

1.6 Scope of the study

This research aims to examine the consumer behaviour as applied to environmentally friendly products, especially on the discrepancy between the reported behaviour and the actual behaviour in making purchases. Although consumers are more concerned about environmental sustainability, their purchasing behaviour tends to portray otherwise. This study thus explores the inherent conditions that lead to such inconsistency, such as price sensitivity, availability of products, level of awareness and the perception about sustainable products. Psychological influences that influence consumer decision-making are also encompassed in the scope. Do and Do (2025) stated that people tend to justify their buying behaviour by the use of cognitive processes, despite the buying behaviour being contrary to their environmental attitudes. Besides, the study reflects industry-specific contexts in which such a gap is more apparent. According to Teerakapibal and Schlegelmilch (2025), industries like fashion and retail are among the areas that are the most impacted because consumers are more concerned with affordability and convenience rather than sustainability.

Moreover, this study combines various factors of sustainable consumption to give it a holistic outlook. As pointed out by Agarwal et al. (2025), trust, perceived benefits, and long-term value have a crucial role in deciding whether to buy or not. Another role that is identified in

the study is played by external and contextual influences. The authors posit that situational triggers or the presence of enabling conditions are needed to make the environmental awareness result in action (Xue et al., 2025). The research is, however, confined to certain categories of products and mainly consumer views. It is not written in the field of all industries or all geographic territories, and this can limit the generalisability of findings. Irrespective of these drawbacks, the research offers a critical and pertinent insight into the most important influences on sustainable purchasing behaviour.

1.7 Significance of the study

The proposed study is important as it will address the gap that exists in the study of sustainability, such as the lack of connection between the attitudes of consumers and their real behaviour. This gap is significant in order to be able to trigger more active outcomes in changing towards consuming environmentally friendly products and passing the trends of consumption with environmentally oriented patterns. The study aids in comprehending consumer behaviour as being sustainable, by giving the elements that influence consumer buying decisions. Sinha and Annamdevula (2025) argued that knowledge must be bridged to behavioural change to realise meaningful changes. This paper will be founded on this point of view considering that, it will be analysed in detail as to the obstacles that fail to help the consumers to pursue their intentions. Furthermore, consumer behaviour also plays its role in ensuring a sustainable way of production, and there is need to talk about inconsistency in buying behaviours.

The findings of this research can be beneficial to businesses as well. Sustainable products need to be promoted in a more efficient manner by using specific strategies tailored by the knowledge of the consumer segments and consumer motivation (Madinga et al., 2025). In a behavioural approach, Wiśniewska (2025) implies that the word "attitude" cannot be sufficient to take action and that interventions on the ground are needed. It is also recommended by Lim et al. (2025) that the interaction between consumers and sustainability efforts can be enhanced using novel approaches, such as engagement-based approaches. Overall, the practical research study contributes to the theoretical literature and business strategy as well as policy formulation to promote sustainable consumption.

1.8 Structure of the Dissertation

The organization of this dissertation into six chapters has been done to provide an effective and logical flow of information.

Chapter 1 introduces the topic of the research, gives an overview, justification, objectives, and purpose of the research, research question, scope and significance of the research.

Chapter 2 entails the literature review which has examined the literature available regarding sustainable consumption and consumer behaviour.

In chapter 3, the research methodology including data collection methods and analysis techniques are explained.

Chapter 4 contains findings of the research conducted on the basis of the information gathered.

Chapter 5 makes the results as per the available literature and objectives of research.

Chapter 6 concludes the research and suggests recommendations on future research and practices.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to the Literature Review

The chapter is a review of available literature about sustainable consumption and the disconnect between consumer behaviour and consumer attitudes. The goal is to critically explore the previous study and find out the essential aspects of impacting the most eco-friendly consumption. The literature review is crucial because it offers theoretical background support, indicates what is known and determines gaps in the research. The particular chapter targets consumer attitudes and the factors of decision-making influencing sustainable purchasing. It is organised by major concepts, then analyses are carried out and aimed at considering the psychological, economic and situational forces at work to cause the attitude behaviour gap in green consumption.

2.2 Definitions of Key Concepts

Sustainable consumption implies using goods and services in such a way that they result in minimal environmental impact, and, critically, at the same time meet the current needs without prejudice to the capacity of future generations to satisfy their needs as well. It is the careful management of natural resources, minimisation of waste, and environmentally friendly decision-making throughout the product life cycle. The model of sustainable consumption, as stated by Agarwal et al. (2025), embraces environmentally, economically, and socially conscious buying behaviour, making it a multidimensional phenomenon, not a purely ecological phenomenon. This is because sustainability does not just revolve around environmental protection but rather balancing economic viability and social responsibility. Eco-friendly goods are products that aim to limit the environmental damage by sustainable procurement, manufacturing, and end-of-life usage procedures. These products will, in most cases, be biodegradable materials, recyclable packages, and energy-efficient designs that will reduce carbon footprints. Nevertheless, there is no uniform consumer perception of the ecological products. Saikrishnan and Archana (2025) point out that many consumers often associate such products with increased price and performance that is uncertain, thereby limiting their desire to patronise such products despite having positive attitudes towards the environment. This implies that perceived risk and cost are two important factors influencing consumer choice.

Consumer behaviour is the process that people utilise in choosing, buying and consuming products. Concerning sustainability, it encompasses attitudes, intentions, and real buying behaviour. Wiśniewska (2025) clarifies that a positive attitude towards sustainability might predict behavioural intentions, but never necessarily lead to actual purchasing behaviour. This disconnection between intention and action is one of the major questions of the research on sustainable consumption. The attitude-behaviour gap explains the discrepancy between what consumers claim to support regarding certain consumer behaviour and what consumers actually do in practice. Do and Do (2025) posit that the psychological mechanisms, including social comparison, enable individuals to rationalise unsustainable decisions even when individuals believe in pro-environmental beliefs. Likewise, Sinha and Annamdevula (2025) also found a knowledge-intention gap, wherein the consumers are knowledgeable about the issue of sustainability, but they failed to put the knowledge into consistent behaviour. According to Green purchase intention, Çam et al. (2025) say that socially responsible attitudes have a positive impact on such intentions, but external obstacles likely inhibit actual purchase behaviour. Perceived value and price sensitivity are thus essential factors in influencing decision-making by the consumer. Although price sensitivity is the level at which the cost has a strong direction on purchasing behaviour, the perceived value is founded on the benefits that consumers attribute to a product. According to Agarwal et al (2025), the trade-off between environmental benefits and financial cost by consumers often results in trade-offs that play a significant role in determining sustainable consumption behaviour.

2.3 Literature Based on Research Objective 1

To investigate the consumer attitude toward green and environmentally friendly products.

The general attitude of consumers towards eco-friendly products is favourable and that is primarily due to the increasing level of environmental awareness and concern towards such world issues as climate change, pollution and the depletion of resources. Because of increased access to information, people are increasingly becoming more informed on sustainability, influencing their perceptions and preferences. The level of environmental awareness greatly influences the occurrence of pro-environmental attitudes, particularly in younger generations who acquire sustainability education and become digital literate in school. Similarly, Halibas et al. (2025) note that the ethical values of Gen Z consumers are rather high and they are, probably, more oriented on sustainable consumption. Such results

indicate that awareness and generational values are important factors that influence positive attitudes towards products that are environmentally friendly. The attitudes are also strengthened by psychological roles that comprise personal values, beliefs and social norms. It is stated that these prosocial attitudes (that are concerned with the well-being of both the environment and society) have a positive impact on the values of green consumption (Cg and G (2025)). It is also important to social media and other external factors. The attitude of consumers to different dimensions of sustainability is also conditioned by how the material referring to the above issues is displayed on the internet and various other media sources. Coman et al. (2025) believed that the sustainable behaviour can be promoted with the help. Though such positive attitudes exist, they are not always translated into what is actually achieved by purchasing behaviour, resulting in what is extensively documented in the literature, namely, the attitude-behaviour gap. According to Do and Do (2025), consumers undertake downward social comparison, justifying the unsustainable activities by putting themselves in a better position in comparison to others. Similarly, Gugenishvili and Laine-Kronberg (2025) allude that both knowledge and perceptions of the impact on the environment influence intentions but do not ensure consistent behaviour. According to Teerakapibal and Schlegelmilch (2025), this gap in the fast fashion process best explains why a number of fashion brands tend to pay little attention to the environmental aspects of their fashion products. Conversely, Mehrotra et al. (2025) discovered that environmental concern, when implemented positively (positive income or product availability influences sustainable purchasing), can result in sustainable purchasing. Nevertheless, this does not always have the same relation across different contexts. Generally, what the texts suggest is that the consumer attitude towards products that are environmentally friendly is good but not sufficient in its own right to create sustainable behaviour and it is practically and contextually determined that will lead to action or inaction.

2.4 Literature Based on Research Objective 2

To determine factors that affect the behaviour of the consumer to buy cheaper non-sustainable alternatives.

The complex interaction of economic, psychological and contextual drivers contributes to shaping consumer purchasing decisions, and the price sensitivity can be shown as one of the most important impediments to sustainable consumption. Eco-friendliness is commonly

believed to make the products costly compared to their traditional counterparts, which makes many people allocate their budget towards high-quality products rather than focusing on environmentally friendly products. Agarwal et al. (2025) emphasise that perceived value is a pivotal aspect in this process, where consumers assess whether the benefits of sustainable products in the environmental context and long-term terms are justified by their higher price. Having such benefits that cannot be clearly communicated and seen at once, consumers are more likely to choose the variants that are cheaper. Moreover, the purchasing behaviour is highly influenced by the availability and accessibility. In cases where the consumers have positive attitudes in regard to sustainability, the inability of a consumer to act on the intentions may be due to a lack of access to the eco-friendly production. Saikrishnan and Archana (2025) noted that even with awareness, it is not enough unless there is the availability of sustainable alternatives conveniently in the market. Trust is also that which is very vital in decision-making, especially in relation to greenwashing. The consumers tend to be sceptical of the environmental claims made by the companies, and this decreases their desire to pay a premium. According to Theocharis and Tsekouropoulos (2025), brand credibility, transparency and clear communication are critical aspects in establishing consumer trust and promoting sustainable purchasing behaviour.

The other important things in the process of making a buying decision are the perceived quality of the eco-friendly product. Performance and environmental responsibility have a trade-off as some consumers believe sustainable products might sacrifice performance, durability or functionality. Such a feeling scares off the adoption, particularly in product lines where quality has been an important factor. The contradiction between making ethical and economic choices is one of the primary discussion areas in the literature. Despite the fact that consumers may seek to highly express their environment-related values and intentions, they are often overshadowed by more practical values and concerns such as price and convenience. As shown by Teerakapibal and Schlegelmilch (2025), consumers, particularly in the contexts of fast fashion, tend to concentrate on priciness and accessibility whilst being aware of the impact it can have on the environment. However, there have been other solutions proposed which aim to provide solutions to such problems. According to Lim et al. (2025), such innovative approaches as gamification can have an impact on consumer behaviour by making sustainable choices more attractive, interactive, and incentivising.

Similarly, Sinha and Annamdevula (2025) add that to bridge the intention and behaviour gap, it is important to take into account the external constraints (embarking on market conditions and product availability) and internal motivators (embarking on attitudes and values). Interestingly, the literature proposes that the ethical intentions are often constrained by the economic realities, thus concerted actions are taken to enable sustainable consumption.

2.5 Literature Based on Research Objective 3

To determine the sensitivity of prices on sustainable buying behaviour.

Awareness has been well understood as an essential component of sustainable consumption, but consistent impacts on practical behaviour have not been realised. The education and digital media, as well as the institutional campaigns, have greatly enhanced the environmental awareness of consumers, who are thus more knowledgeable about the issue of sustainability. According to Cyfert et al. (2025), the acquisition of knowledge is highly important in determining the value of green consumption, especially among younger consumers, because whichever side provides information is more likely to be accepted as true by the receiver of such information. In a similar vein, Nisa et al. (2025) also pointed out that environmental literacy improves awareness and has a de facto positive effect on attitudes, yet does not always have a uniform behavioural effect. This shows that awareness is a necessary but insufficient situation towards sustainable consumption. Moreover, the efficiency of awareness can be determined by the way information is interpreted and implemented by the consumers. Even as others willingly convert knowledge into action, others are passive because of other competing priorities or due to their lack of motivation. Brand (2025) also stated that information that is digitalised can serve to bridge the intention-behaviour gap, provided it is clear, relevant and actionable. When the information is too abstract or complicated, there is a probability that it may not be influenced to make decisions and therefore, its practical significance is limited.

Perceived value and trust are as important in determining sustainable purchasing behaviour. Eco-friendly products can be judged based on brand credibility, transparency, and authenticity, among other factors as assumed by consumers. According to Zhang et al. (2025), post-purchase disclosure of green qualities can increase consumer trust and has positive implications on attitudes, which supports the significance of disclosure when it comes to diminishing scepticism. Nevertheless, the greenwashing issue causes a lack of trust, so

consumers will be reluctant to use sustainability as a reference to their impact on the environment. Perceived value also impacts the decision-making process as consumers consider not only functional but also emotional value whenever making a decision on selecting eco-friendly products. According to Van Phuong et al. (2025), environmental and health consciousness would become an improvement to perceived value and would increase the chances of adoption. However, this is not always a stable case because customers tend to make personal interests more important in the short term when compared to long-term environmental benefits. Fang and Zaman (2025) mention that consumer-brand relationships can be strengthened with the help of sustainable marketing strategies, which, in turn, will reinforce the perception of trust and value. Meanwhile, as Elsantil et al. (2025) observed, the de-influencing factor can be utilised to influence consumer perceptions by promoting realistic and critical attitudes towards consumption, which can either support or discourage sustainable behaviour. On the whole, the literature confirms that the three factors, namely, awareness, trust and assumed value, are four components that are interrelated and that the foundation is laid by awareness, which subsequently is backed by trust, whose eventual outcome is the showcasing of the perceived value, which is, ultimately, the focal point of the entire process.

2.6 Literature Based on Research Objective 4

To examine the difference between environmental consciousness and real buying decision-making.

This discrepancy between consumer intention and actual behaviour is one of the best-researched questions in sustainable consumption research. Though the high levels of environmental concerns and positive intentions toward environmentally friendly products are often reflected in the real-life purchasing behaviour of consumers in the majority of cases. According to Mannoni (2025), this paradox can be defined as a kind of psychological conflict in which people can recognise the issue of environmental harm, but they are unable to take any action concerning the improvement of environmental conditions. This brings out a major weakness of the attitude-based models since the intentions alone, namely the positive ones, cannot lead to a change in behaviour. There is a possibility that the consumers really stand in support of sustainability as a principle, but as a matter of practicality, day-to-day decision-making will be affected by practical considerations. The fact that there exist behavioural

barriers can be listed among the primary reasons behind this gap. The practical considerations, like affordability and ease of access, as well as habitual factors, are often competing with ethical intentions. Chen and Chao (2025) emphasised that the actual behaviour of consumers is heavily reliant on the notions of convenience and ease of implementation, even though the consumer might hold a positive attitude towards sustainable practices, such as food waste reduction. This implies that behavioural change necessitates additional awareness as well as favourable conditions that will allow consumers to act on their intentions. Other contributing factors to this gap are social and cultural factors. According to Zheng et al. (2025), sustainable marketing can be used to impact consumer behaviour through social norms and expectations. The success of these strategies is, however, dependent on how they are aligned with the consumer lifestyles and values. When sustainable practices are perceived to be inconvenient or socially not supported, consumers will be less inclined to adopt them.

Information and communication are another major issue that will have an impact on the intention-behaviour gap. According to Brand (2025), the gap can be narrowed by providing consumers with clear, relevant, and accessible information by making their decisions blind. By realising the advantages and implications of sustainable decisions in reality, consumers will be more inclined to do so. Alternatively, however, overload or overcomplicated information may, in its turn, eliminate therapeutic effects and generate confusion, decision fatigue. It means that the quality and the manner in which the information is presented are as significant as the contents that are contained within. Conversely, there are other studies that suggest that, with appropriate interventions, the gap could be closed. Elsantil et al. (2025) emphasise the new position of de-influencers, who advocate realistic and critical views of consumption. De-influencers have the power to change consumer perception and behaviour by altering the traditional narrative in the field of marketing. Such a solution is an indication of a change in approach with persuasive marketing towards more open and introspective communication policies. Nevertheless, the intention-behaviour gap remains because of the interplay of various factors. As stressed by Cyfert et al. (2025), to ensure sustainable behaviour is consistent, there should be alignment between knowledge, competencies, and personal values. This, however, is hard to put into practice owing to economic factors, lifestyle preferences, and external pressure. On the whole, it can be said that the intention -

behaviour gap is a multidimensional problem that is influenced by psychological, social and contextual factors and addressed within a complex and integrated framework.

2.7 Relevant Models and Theories

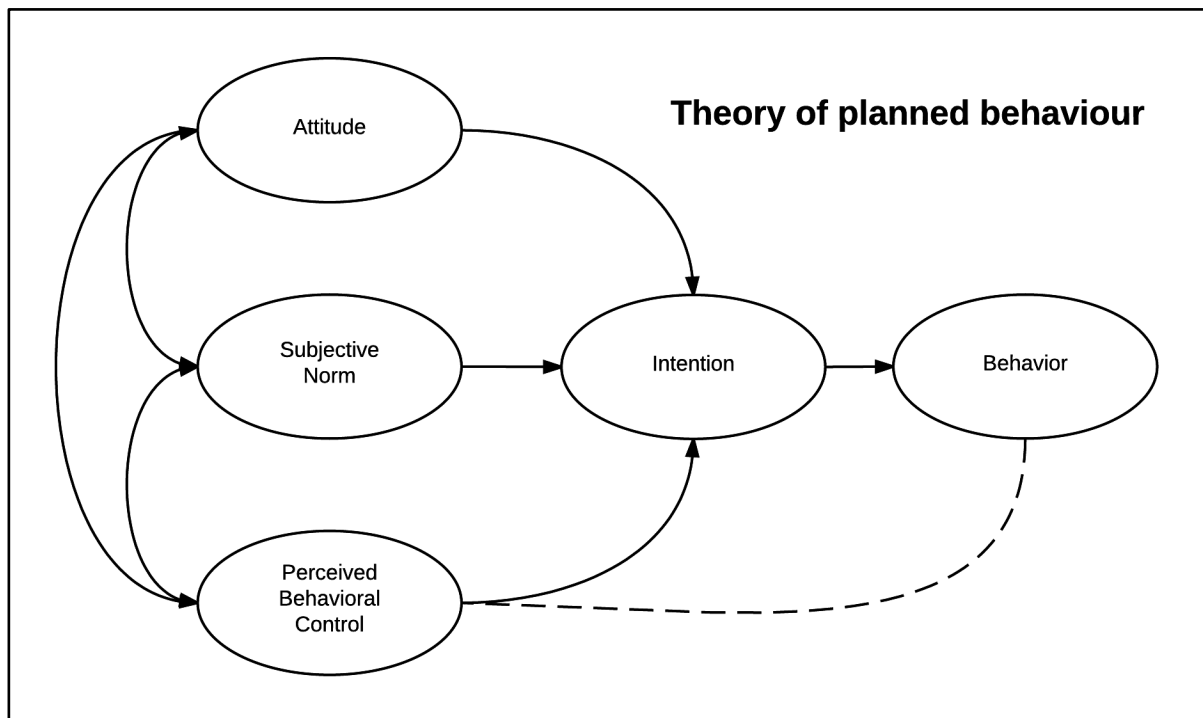


Figure 2.1: Theory of Planned Behaviour

(Source: Zheng et al. 2025)

Several theoretical frameworks have been constructed explaining sustainable consumer behaviour and the gap between attitude and behaviour. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is one of the most popular paradigms proposed by the theory, stating that behaviour is a function of attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Gul and Ahmed, 2024). This model is applicable in that it conceptualises how intentions are constructed and how intentions might not always translate into action. Another point of view is the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory, which links environmental values with behaviour by use of personal norms. It implies that when people have an ethical responsibility to act in a certain manner, they will do so in a sustainable manner. Nevertheless, the model presupposes that the values directly correspond to the behaviour, which does not always mean that in practice, the model operates in such a way. The models of consumer decision making are based on the influence of external factors, which include price, availability and information. These models demonstrate that the decision of purchasing is not based solely on a rational decision but rather is subject to situational influence. New research also highlights the existence of digital

and social factors. Fang and Zaman (2025) point out that sustainable marketing can enhance consumer-brand relationships. Whereas Zheng et al. (2025) suggest that marketing strategies can influence the development of eco-friendly behaviour. These points are the continuation of traditional models with the introduction of contemporary factors influencing communication, such as digital communication. On the whole, these theories offer some useful insight, but they have limitations in explaining the complexity of sustainable consumption behaviour fully.

2.8 Comparison of Models

As stated by Gul and Ahmed (2024), the Theory of Planned Behaviour is solid in explaining the development of behavioural intentions, but it lacks consideration of external constraints, including price and availability. Conversely, the Value-Belief-Norm theory pays attention to moral and ethical inspirations without considering practical obstacles that can affect behaviour. Models of consumer decision-making are more inclusive as they integrate both economic and situational aspects. Nonetheless, they can undermine the impact of psychological and social factors. Newer models incorporating digital and marketing viewpoints render a more holistic picture in that they take into account the dynamic nature of consumer behaviour. On the whole, there is no single model to thoroughly explain the attitude-behaviour gap. Sustainable consumption requires a mixed approach of psychology, economics, and a situational approach to understand procedures of sustainable consumption. Moreover, when comparing the theories, it became obvious that there are not several single determinants for sustainable consumption behaviour, but that shifts in these factors are interconnected. The Theory of Planned Behaviour has proven to be effective in describing the relationship between attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control on intentions, but it assumes that an individual has the resources and opportunities to act on their intentions (Arora and Varah, 2025). On the other hand, the Value-Belief-Norm theory offers a more satisfactory explanation of environmental responsibility and moral commitment than it does of the market reality that consumers encounter when shopping (Wang et al., 2023). Consumer decision-making models are useful in explaining consumer real-life behaviour, as they incorporate more focus on product attributes, perceived value, and economic trade-offs. However, in these models, consumers are considered to be rational decision-makers and emotional/social factors are ignored. Modern consumer behaviour is further explored through

contemporary frames which take account of digital communication, the influence of social media, trust and sustainability marketing. As such, linking theory allows for a wider view of the motivations for supporting such products and for buying and consuming less sustainable alternatives when they are less expensive. Such an integrated point of view is built upon a better base for exploring the attitude–behaviour gap in a way that captures its complexity.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

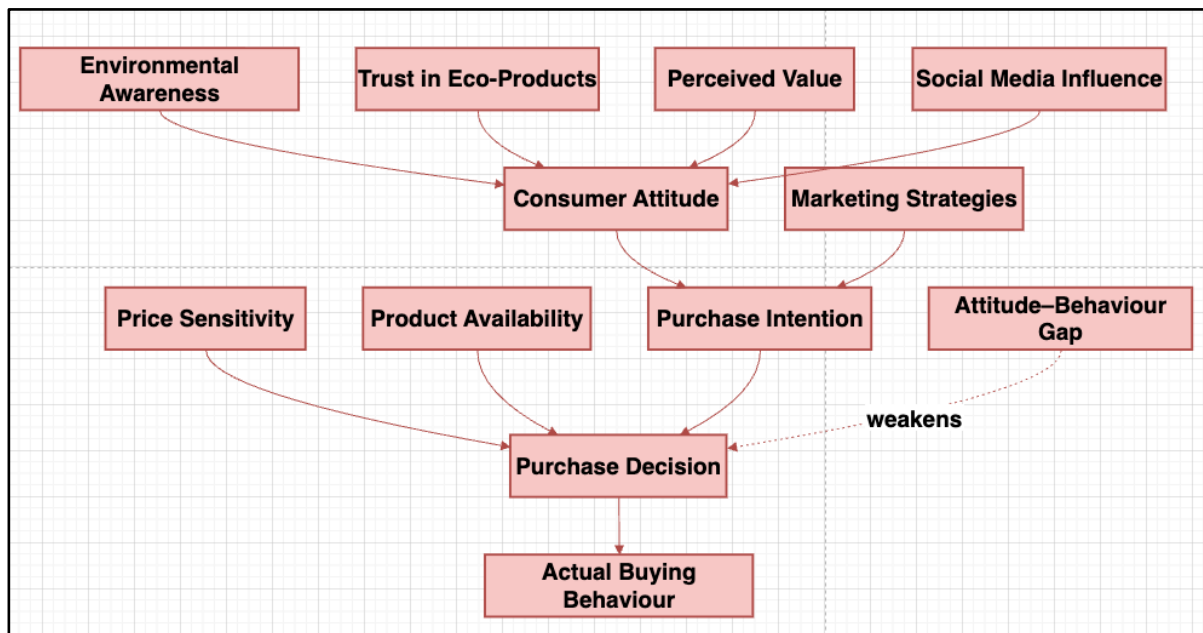


Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework

(Source: Self-Developed)

The theoretical framework utilised by this research lies in the connection between numerous influencing variables and consumer purchasing behaviour. Awareness and trust, perceived value, price sensitivity, and availability of the products are all independent variables. These variables affect the attitudes and intentions of consumers that mediate as variables. The dependent variable is the actual purchasing behaviour of the eco-friendly products. The framework supposes that the intention is dependent on the awareness and positive attitudes, yet the actual behaviour depends on the economic and contextual limiting factors. Perceived value and trust are crucial factors in how intention is translated into action. This relationship is further moderated by the outside factors, including the marketing strategies and social influence. This framework demonstrates the complexity of sustainable consumption as a multidimensional factor, as well as showing the interplay between psychological and practical factors.

2.10 Literature Gap

Available literature has indicated that a lot has been done in the understanding of sustainable consumption, but there are still several gaps. The bulk of the literature concentrates on consumer intent as opposed to actual behaviour, thus the knowledge on actual purchasing behaviour is limited. Also, it has the limitation of scanty integration of the psychological, economic and contextual factors within a single framework (Al Maruf et al., 2024). Although awareness and attitudes are a well-researched topic, the practical limitations, especially price and accessibility, constitute an under-researched area in the literature of awareness and attitudes. Moreover, the latest trends like digital platforms and de-influencers have not been worked out fully. This study fills these gaps by offering an in-depth discussion of the factors affecting intention and behaviour.

Furthermore, the current literature has been industry-specific, which limited the ability to cross-apply the results across wider markets of consumers, such as fashion, food, and tourism. Few empirical studies have explored combined demographic influences and attitudes toward sustainability and their combined impacts on purchase behaviour. In addition, the majority of the studies were carried out in developed economies, thus leaving a gap in the literature in terms of consumer behaviour in different economic contexts. It has, therefore, been found from available data that there is a gap between reported environmental awareness and buying practices, and more extensive research is needed into this. This research focuses on both attitudinal and behavioural aspects at the same time, which further enhances the overall understanding of the preference–action-gap in the context of sustainable consumption.

2.11 Expected Findings

It is anticipated that a positive attitude of consumers will enhance the intention to buy eco-friendly products. But price sensitivity will tend towards a bad impact on the actual buying behaviour. Sustainable brand trust is likely to have a positive influence on intention and behaviour. The awareness in itself is unlikely to ensure sustainable consumption because practical constraints may impede action. Also, the mediating factor is expected to be the perceived value between the intention and behaviour. These hypotheses are based on the complexity of the consumer decision-making process, along with the existence of the attitude-behaviour gap. Additionally, the role of demographic characteristics like age and income is expected to affect sustainable purchase behaviour, given that both younger and

environmentally conscious consumers have a greater intention to buy environmentally friendly products. Even within these groups, economic factors will probably have a levelling effect on actual buying. The availability and accessibility are expected to have a major impact on consumer choices, especially in times when more sustainable alternatives are hard to find. Also, if consumers are properly informed of the environmental benefits and a strong sustainability claim is present, they may be more inclined to purchase these eco-friendly products. Social influence and digital communication are also believed to have a positive impact on consumer perceptions and intentions (Kottala et al., 2025). In general, the study validates the finding that multiple factors, including psychological, economic and contextual, contribute to sustainable consumption behaviour and not only environmental attitudes. The results are expected to confirm that there is a strong disconnect between consumers' preference for sustainability and their spending habits.

2.12 Chapter Summary

The chapter reviewed available literature works that have been published on sustainable consumption, covering consumer attitudes, purchasing choices, and the intention-behaviour gap. The results indicate that although consumers have an overall positive attitude toward products with an eco-friendly nature, the actual behaviour of consumers is affected by a variety of economic, psychological, and contextual factors. The theories and models have shown that there is no single model that can be used to explain sustainable consumption behaviour. The specified research gaps underlie the necessity of the current research. The following chapter will describe the research methodology that could be applied to investigate these relationships.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter illustrated the methodological approach used to examine consumer preferences for eco-friendly products and what drove their preference for non-ecological and lower-priced products. This chapter provided the philosophy of the research, research approach, research strategy, research design, research method, selection of sampling, data collection, and data analysis that were used in conducting the study. Besides, the ethical aspects of the research were also debated in order to guarantee the credibility and integrity of the research. The methodology was selected based on research goals to ensure that the results are reliable for measuring consumer attitude, price sensitivity and the attitude-behaviour gap in sustainable consumption. The chapter also validated the use of quantitative methods and survey strategy as suitable tools to explore consumer purchasing behaviour and the factors that affect their decisions to purchase sustainably.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy was beliefs about knowledge and the construction of understanding in research. Susilawati et al. (2025) mentioned that the choice of method is based on research philosophy. Positivism was oriented towards objective facts, and interpretivism was oriented towards subjective understanding. Pragmatism fused practical and objective views and chose appropriate methods for the research problem. Philosophical selection was realized by considering the objectiveness and subjectiveness in the organisation of the research process (Bayramova and Edwards, 2026).

This research was based on a pragmatist philosophy as it emphasised practical aspects of consumer behaviour in their sustainable purchasing choices. In the study, opinions and consumer behaviour were investigated so there was a need to develop a practical approach that would allow for measurable study of behaviour patterns. Pragmatism seemed fitting given that the study wanted to go beyond theoretical interpretation and determine factors that would affect the consumer's decision in a realistic fashion. Gamage (2025) emphasised that pragmatist philosophy was appropriate in quantitative studies that explored the relationship between behaviours and practical consequences. There has been a need for methodological flexibility and practical research issues to be tackled in a rigorous manner. Thus, it was pragmatism that guided the systematic study of consumer behaviour via quantitative

methods. The pragmatism also helped in selecting the research methods that are suitable for addressing research objectives, instead of subscribing to a particular philosophy. This philosophy enabled the study to be targeted at meaningful knowledge to improve the understanding of the difference between consumer preference and purchasing behaviour. It also enabled attaining objective data, which were then statistically analysed to detect trends, and behavioral patterns. Pragmatism, as a result, was given a boost to encouraging research of having both academic interest and relevance for sustainable consumption.

3.3 Research Approach

The research approach was the procedure of developing and testing theories. Tilman et al. (2025) said that in inductive research, theories were generated from observations and in deductive research, theories were developed using empirical evidence. Deductive research was predominantly linked to quantitative study as it examined relationships between variables. The deductive approach facilitates the analytical investigation and statistical verification of the survey results (Qin et al. 2025).

Taking these into account, the deductive research approach was used in this study, as this research was intended to test theories already about sustainable consumption and consumer behaviour. The study investigated whether price sensitivity, environmental consciousness, trust, and perceived value had an impact on the purchasing behaviour towards green products. The study was conducted based on existing theories like the attitude–behaviour gap and the sustainable consumption theory. The deductive method was appropriate since numerical data and statistical analysis were used to analyse the relationships between variables. Gamage (2025) explained that deductive reasoning was effective for the identification and measurement of the causal relationship in the context of quantitative research in identifying the behaviour pattern. Hence, the deductive method was appropriate to provide support for the objective of the study, which is to examine differences between consumer attitudes and their consumer buying behaviour about sustainability. This method also enabled testing of the previous assumptions taken from literature and theoretical models. The research began with existing concepts or theories and then mirrored them with the use of empirical evidence, thereby allowing for the evaluation of the theory to assess if it is reflective of what consumers are doing in order to come to a conclusion. This way of thinking has ensured that the research results will not be subjective ones, and can be trusted. Also, deductive reasoning helped to

validate the survey instrument as one standardised by the researcher. This then helped in assessing relationships of the key variables systematically, which was used to draw conclusions on sustainable purchasing behaviour based on the collected evidence.

3.4 Research Strategy and Research Design

Research Strategy indicated the method employed in gathering and interpreting the data. According to Tusquellas et al (2025), the research strategy helped to form the framework used to collect data and interpret them. The methods used were general surf and dusting, case study, experimentation, and action research. The survey strategy is appropriate for obtaining responses from a large number of people in a standardised manner. Makateng and Mokala (2025) added that the quantitative design emphasises on measurable findings with generalisation.

This study, therefore, used the survey and cross-sectional strategies. The survey strategy was appropriate as it was able to gather standardised answers concerning environmental attitudes and purchasing behaviour. All the primary responses were collected from several different respondents in a limited amount of time using online surveys. The cross-sectional design was appropriate since data were obtained at one point in time for examining attitudes to sustainable products. The survey-based research design was effective in examining behaviour trends and patterns among participants (Carter et al. 2025). Furthermore, Kendall and Deutsch (2026) reported consistency and a degree of comparability in quantitative research design through structure. This research design facilitated the investigation of the relations and interdependency between environmental concern, price sensitivity, and actual buying behaviour. Hence, the chosen strategy and design were congruent with the goal of studying the behavioural gap between the customer's intentions and buying decisions. The choice of strategy and design also gave the researcher the potential of quantifiable data obtained from a wide range of consumers and enabled analysis of the current purchase trends of consumers towards sustainable products. An online survey was used increasing the efficiency and making it easily accessible and cost effective, hence its suitability to the various participants in the survey. Furthermore, within the methodology of a cross sectional study, a 'snapshot' of consumer attitudes and behaviour was taken at the time of data collection. This helped in investigating and identifying the present trends and the obstacles that hinder sustainable

consumption. Thus, the factors affecting the preference-action gap among consumers with regard to purchasing an object could be systematically examined using the method adopted.

3.5 Research Method Choice

Research method choice refers to the methods such as qualitative, quantitative or mixed. Jamaluddin et al. (2025) stated that qualitative methods were based on meaning and experience, while quantitative methods are based on numerical analysis and statistical measurement. The quantitative approach is the most preferred when it comes to quantifying the relationships between variables and to test hypotheses (Castro et al. 2025). Susilawati et al. (2025) added that quantitative methods are helpful for the analysis of the behavioural trends and the generation of generalizable results. Bayramova and Edwards (2026) argued that one of the main advantages of quantitative methods lies in their objectivity and the minimal interpretation of the analyses during the reporting process. This study used a quantitative research method, as it aimed at measuring the consumer attitude, price sensitivity and purchasing behaviour based upon numerical data. Since the problem was to establish patterns and relationships between variables affecting sustainable consumption, it was suitable to use a quantitative method. For the measurable responses, structured questionnaires were used to collect and for Statistical Analysis. Thus, the quantitative approach was appropriate to accomplish the goals of this research.

3.6 Target Population and Sampling

The target population refers to the entire group of individuals who possess desired characteristics/abilities that are fit for the study. Sampling was done for participants who typically represent consumer behaviour. Bouncken et al. (2026) provided a description of the extent of sampling, which affected reliability and representation. It was a study based on probability sampling, where sampling was equal, while non-probability sampling was a study based on convenience. Jiao (2026) pointed out that sampling decisions affected methodological rigour and validity.

The target population in this study were the consumers of products like clothing, household goods and food items. The selection of participants aged 18 years and older was based on the criteria that they were the ones making purchasing decisions and contributing to the important phenomenon of sustainable consumption behaviour. Convenience sampling was used since the respondents could be reached in an efficient manner. The questionnaire was

sent list-wise on online and social media networks, and university networks to cover all consumer groups, while ensuring diversity. Given the limited time and resources in conducting dissertation research, convenience sampling was employed. Targeted participants consisted of 51 participants in order to be able to get enough quantitative data that statistics could be used. Convenience sampling was chosen over generalisability, but it did provide insight into the consumer field with regard to behaviours. Thus, the sampling method was appropriate and practical in collecting data to achieve the objectives of the study.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods refers to a systematic way of collecting data that are suitable for the study. In this study, data has been gathered from the primary and secondary sources. Primary data was specifically obtained directly from the participants, while secondary data was gathered from literature and published sources. Susilawati et al. (2025) indicated that structured data collection had the advantage of better reliability and consistency. Large group responses were able to be measured using questionnaires that were popular with quantitative studies. According to Makateng and Mokala (2025), structured questionnaires helped to minimise ambiguity and enhance the comparability of the answers.

The data used in this study were primary data that were obtained by the survey method using an online questionnaire. Structured questions in the questionnaire probed environmental awareness, attitudes towards eco-friendly products, price sensitivity, awareness of and trust in sustainability claims, and actual purchasing behaviour. Opinions and behavioural tendencies of the participants were measured using a five-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Several multiple-choice questions were also used to gather demographics like age, gender, education, and buying habits. Online questionnaires were chosen, as these can access a larger consumer population in a cost-effective and time-efficient way. Journal articles, books, industry reports, and sustainability publications were used as secondary data to support the theoretical foundation of the study. The use of secondary sources enhanced academic knowledge and facilitated an analysis based on the literature. The use of both primary and secondary data enhanced the overall quality of the research by supporting the research results with both empirical data and data available in the existing literature. As inspired by the ideas of Hossan et al. (2025), the survey questionnaire was designed to ensure stable and comparable answers from the participants and thus to achieve consistency when

collecting the data. Online distribution was also helpful in offering participation opportunities and efficiently communicating and reaching out to the respondents within the given time frame. Therefore, the chosen data collection method gave a thorough description of the attitudes and buying intentions of consumers, as well as the reasons behind the discrepancy between these and sustainable purchases.

3.8 Data Analysis Techniques

The techniques of data analysis in the research are the procedures for interpreting the data collected by the researcher and finding meaningful results. Most commonly, quantitative studies employ statistical analysis to look for relationships among variables and to summarise the responses of the participants. Based on the concept of Gamage (2025), descriptive statistics enabled the researchers to organise and interpret the numerical data effectively. In the behavioural arena, statistical analyses like frequencies, percentages, means and correlation are very common. In addition, Jiao (2026) emphasised the importance of thorough data analysis to ensure high credibility of methodology and correct interpretation of results.

Descriptive statistical analysis and correlation analysis were applied in this study to analyse consumer behaviour on sustainable products. The results of participants about environmental awareness, purchasing attitude and price sensitivity were summarised by using descriptive statistics, frequency, percentage and mean. A correlation analysis was also performed to see the relationship between environmental concern and actual purchasing behaviour. Since quantitative data could be efficiently organised and interpreted in Microsoft Excel software, the latter was chosen for data analysis. The selected techniques were suitable for the study and were used to identify the behavioural pattern and the extent of the relationship between the variables in research studies systematically. Thus, the data analysis techniques facilitated the purpose of determining the reasons for favouring eco-friendly products while still buying low-cost non-sustainable products. Focus has been given on the descriptive statistics to present collected quantitative data in an organised and understandable form, which further helped in identifying the trends and patterns that underlie the attitudes and behaviours of the respondents. Taking ideas from Njeri Mugwe and Runo (2026), frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were helpful in illustrating the distribution and relative weighting of responses for each of the factors that influenced purchasing decision. Investigation of the relationship of variables of special consideration, 'environmental

awareness' and 'sustainability attitudes' with 'purchasing behaviour', was carried out by using correlation analysis. This helped in adding more validity to the study as an investigation to support the direction and magnitude of the relationship between variables was conducted (Ghanad, 2023). Such results were then analyzed through an analytical approach to provide a systematic base in coming to a valid and constructed conclusion on the factors that influenced consumers' preferences to buy goods in eco-friendly packaging.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The ethical aspect was also taken into account in ensuring that the execution of research work is done responsibly and in a respectful manner. Before participating, the intent and rights of the participants had to be disclosed to them. Marra and Nielsen (2025) emphasised how ethical research practices boosted credibility and safeguarded the well-being of participants. Ethical guidelines were adhered to, such as: voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity and the right to withdraw from research at any point. Ethical research principles have been adhered to during data collection and analysis of this research. Before completing the questionnaire, the participants were told what the study was about, and participation was voluntary. Participants' anonymity and confidentiality were preserved, as there was no personal identifying information collected. Throughout all phases of the study, there was also a right to withdraw without penalty to all respondents. The data collected was limited to academic uses, and appropriate care was taken to ensure the data was not susceptible to unauthorised use. Through these ethical practices, the researcher guaranteed responsible conduct and compliance with academic standards in the research process.

3.11 Chapter Summary

The methodology framework underpinning the research into the behaviour of consumers in relation to eco-friendly and non-sustainable products was dealt with in this chapter. The chapter described the research philosophy, deductive approach, survey approach, choice of quantitative method, sampling procedure, data collection methods and statistical analysis technique adopted in the study. Ethical issues have also been covered with the view of ensuring responsible research. The selected methodology helped to fulfil the research objectives as it followed a structured and systematic approach for the analysis of consumer attitude, price sensitivity and attitude–behaviour gap in sustainable consumption. The next chapter explored and discussed the collected data. The method decisions made for research in

the present study also provided consistency, reliability and validity for the analysis of the consumer purchase behaviour and the factors that affect consumer decisions in sustainable consumption.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, results gathered from the questionnaire survey (via Google forms) with consumers related to their perception and buying value of eco-friendly products are shown and analysed. Demographic characteristics, environmental awareness, attitudes, purchasing priorities, willingness to pay for greener options, and purchasing behaviour are examined. The results are tabulated in question-based formats to help the readers and to get the whole picture of consumers' preferences and their determinants. The analysis presented what prosocial attitude towards sustainable consumption consumers hold and whether this is manifested in purchasing behaviour, and it will therefore answer the research questions.

4.2 Findings from the Data Collection

1. What is your age group?
51 responses

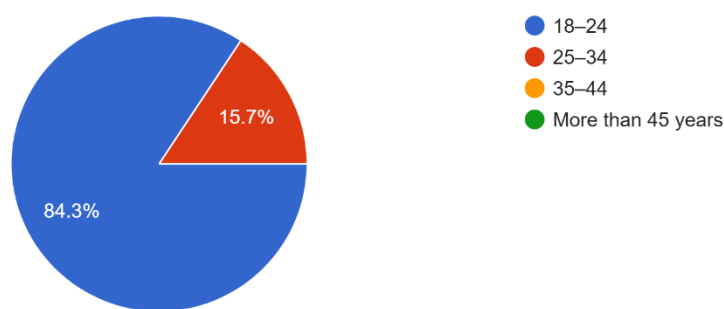


Figure 4.1: Age Group

(Source: Survey Responses)

The respondents' demographic profile reveals a sample dominated by young people. Of the 51 respondents, 84.3% were in the age group 18-24 and 15.7% were in the age group between 25-34 years. None of the respondents was older than 35 years. This distribution reveals that the study mainly reflected the viewpoints and buying habits of younger consumers, especially those in the younger millennial generation and below. This is particularly pertinent to this research, as younger age groups are generally more fluent in environmental issues and are more encouraging of sustainability initiatives. According to Theocharis and Tsekouropoulos (2025), younger consumers may be more interested in purchasing sustainable products, with a greater tendency to seek out brands with valuable

sustainability efforts. Youth are also at risk of knowing about sustainability by using digital media, education, and social networks. However, young people may not have as many funds with which to buy, due to low income and low purchasing power, despite the fact that they are more environmentally aware than older consumers. Consequently, they can buy eco-friendly items, demonstrate favourable attitudes and use their limited budgets for the purchase of cheaper ones. This age group is an appropriate demographic characteristic to examine the attitude–behaviour gap because younger consumers have been shown to have pro-sustainability attitudes and they are expected to put into practice that attitude, although this may be challenging in practice when faced with purchasing decisions.

2. What among these options is your approximate monthly household income?

51 responses

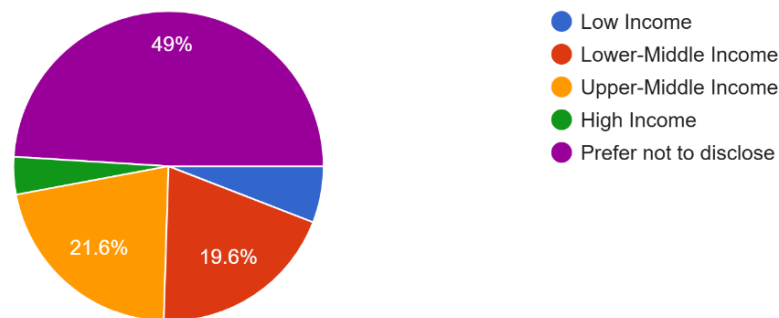


Figure 4.2: Monthly Household Income

(Source: Survey Responses)

The monthly income in household distribution indicates that there is a considerable difference in the responses. Almost half of the respondents (49%) did not share their income status. Of those giving income data, 21.6% were in the upper-middle and 19.6% the lower-middle income group. A small proportion indicated high income status and low-income status. The findings indicated that the purchasing power of the respondents was mostly at a moderate level. However, the fact that a good number of respondents did not wish to report their income could reflect reluctance about revealing their personal financial situation. This is relevant as income determines consumer purchasing power for sustainable products, which often carry a higher price tag than conventional products.

According to Neves et al. (2025), one of the most important factors that influences sustainable consumption is economic capacity. Mainly when purchasing it, EMS consumers

with low funds choose the price as well as not environmental concerns. So, while the product may be eco-friendly, providing "the right" price is likely to make a world of difference to a respondent's purchasing decision. The research argument that prices is a big obstacle to sustainable consumption is supported by the findings. This may thus be a financial issue for consumers who state that they actually like to buy greener and more expensive products, but do not.

3. How often do you prefer and assess the environmental impact of a product before buying it?

51 responses

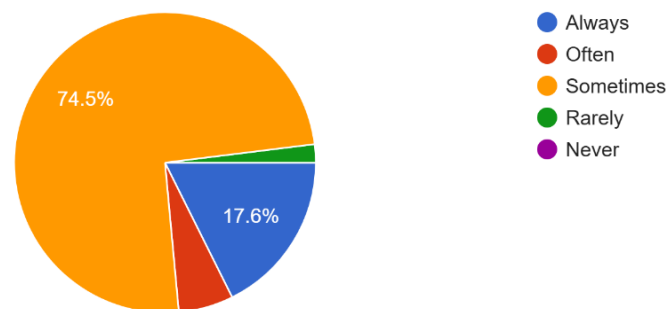


Figure 4.3: Assessment of Environmental Impact Before Purchase

(Source: Survey Responses)

From the results, it is shown that there exists a relatively high awareness level among the respondents in relation to the environment. 74.5% pointed out that they sometimes consider the environmental impact of their products before buying them, and 17.6% said that they always consider environmental impacts. Few said that they can rarely or never measure environmental impact while buying. This indicates that sustainability issues have been the subject of consumers' thinking for the majority of them throughout the shopping process. The consumers seem to be aware of the environmental issues and show willingness to take environmental impact into account when it comes to their consumption behaviour. This is a discovery that is resonating with increasing public awareness of climate change, resource depletion and environmental degradation.

Cg and G (2025) claimed that environmental awareness has a positive impact on the green consumption values and sustainable purchasing intentions. The results thus indicate that respondents have the knowledge and awareness they will need to facilitate ecologically responsible consumption. The large proportion of "sometimes" does suggest, however, that

environmental factors are not always taken into account when buying goods. When it comes to sustainability, consumers might have the option to think about it if it were allowed, but they might not choose to do so because they are faced with other factors that are more important to them, such as price, convenience, or availability. Thus, the results serve as initial evidence of the attitude–behaviour gap, which underlies this research. Levels of awareness are low, but behavioural consistency is limited.

4. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? [1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree]

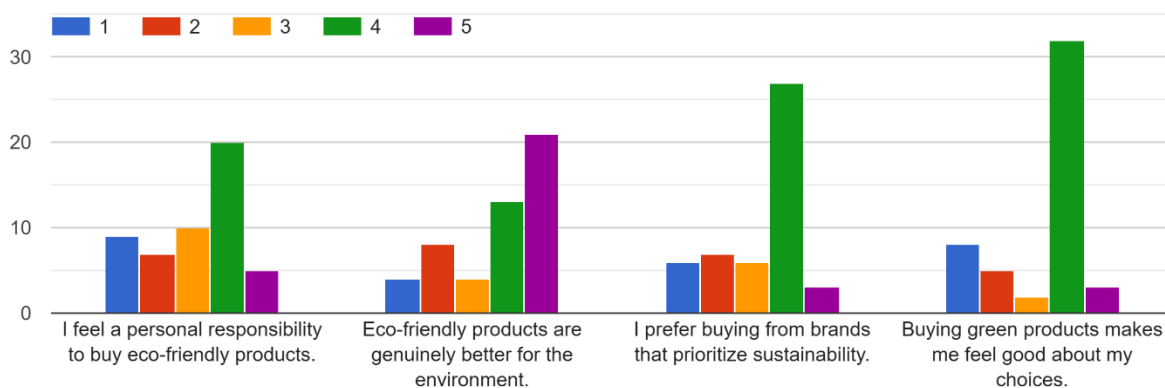


Figure 4.4: Attitudes Towards Eco-Friendly Products

(Source: Survey Responses)

The results as shown in figure 4.4 indicated a predominantly positive attitude towards eco-friendly products and behaviours for sustainable consumption. Some 20 respondents strongly agreed that they had a personal responsibility to buy 'environmentally friendly products'. Furthermore, approximately 32 respondents agreed that they felt good about their purchase of green products. In the same way, about 27 brands wanted to concentrate on sustainability and the environment. The results suggest a positive emotional and ethical attitude of the respondents in regard to sustainability. People seem to understand the need to improve their environments, and feel that their own consumption choices can make a difference to the overall environment. Positive emotions in relation to sustainable consumption could also reinforce their purchase of sustainable products. Wong et al. (2025) pointed out the significance of environmental values in predicting consumer pro-ecological actions. The results thus indicate that respondents have values in line with sustainable consumption

principles. But there were mixed reactions about the benefits of eco-friendly products for the environment. This variation indicates some level of uncertainty about the efficacy and credibility of environmental claims. The results show that there is high consumer awareness of the importance of sustainability and the importance of personal responsibility. Positive attitudes, however, do not guarantee behaviour consistency.

5. Which among these is the primary reason that you prefer when it comes to choosing a cheaper, non-sustainable alternative over an eco-friendly product?

51 responses

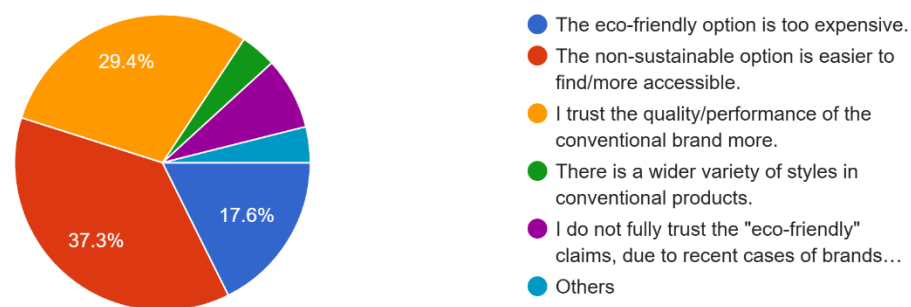


Figure 4.5: Reasons for Choosing Cheaper Non-Sustainable Alternatives

(Source: Survey Responses)

The survey responses revealed several barriers that prevent people from buying greener products in order to buy less expensive products that are not green. This is the highest percentage of the resulting responses (37.3%) that conventional products were more easily available and found. Another 29.4% said that the products were easier and more commonly used if they weren't sustainable. In addition, 17.6% thought that greener products were too costly. These results demonstrate that issues of accessibility, convenience and affordability are key obstacles to sustainable consumption. Although consumers have a preference for buying environmentally friendly products, there are practical barriers to aligning their preferences with their behaviour. The fact that the percentage of respondents who say that they do not trust claims about sustainability is relatively low indicates that there are practical issues that are more dominant than those of scepticism for making sustainability claims. Ortégón Cortazar et al. (2025) maintained that the buyer is often driven more by practicality than by the environment when it comes to buying. This view is well confirmed by the present results. People express attempts to purchase sustainable products when they are available, cost-competitive and easy. However, when consumers have to make more effort or pay more

to produce sustainable products, they fall back on traditional products. Results therefore indicate that the attitude–behaviour gap is determined by the attitudes as well as market and product availability.

6. Rank the following factors based on importance when you are making a final purchase decision.
(1 - Most Important, 4 - Least Important)

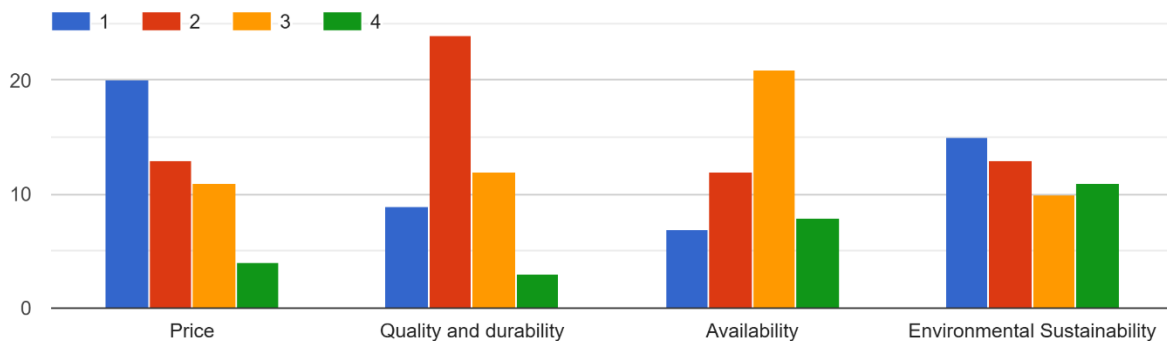


Figure 4.6: Ranking of Purchase Decision Factors

(Source: Survey Responses)

The utility of the ranking exercise is to gain insight into consumer priorities. About 20 respondents referred to the price as the stronger influence when it came to purchases. In place two, and ranked as the most frequent response, was quality and durability, with approximately 24 responses. Availability was often the third item, and environmental sustainability didn't often make the top of the list. These results show that product price, quality, and product performance remain the primary concerns for customers when buying products, with the environment still not on the agenda. Respondents generally agree that placing sustainability, but it does not seem that environmental attributes vastly contribute to purchasing choices. There is a disconnect between consumers' value of functional/economic benefits and the environment (Al Kurdi et al., 2025). The results justify this and demonstrate that sustainability is not a top priority in practical aspects. While consumers may value green products, they will put in purchasing commitments based on the attached conditions of quality, durability, acceptability, and affordability. These ranking results thus clearly indicate that consumers' actions are still largely influenced by economic and functional value.

Sustainability seems to be a side issue and not a main evaluation criterion when buying goods.

7. How far do you agree that you buy eco-friendly products more if they were priced the same as conventional products?

51 responses

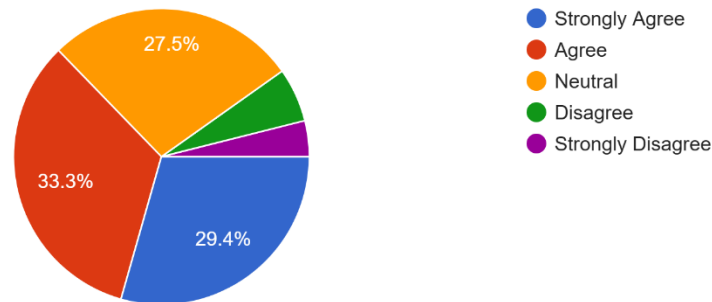


Figure 4.7: Purchase Intention if Prices Were Equal

(Source: Survey Responses)

Findings showed that preference for green products is strong for products without price differences. Overall, 29.4% strongly agreed, and 33.3% agreed that they would buy products with a similar perceived quality at an equal price when considering buying green products. All of these are totalling 62.7% of the respondents. This result clearly indicates the importance of price in sustainable consumption behaviour. While it seems, consumers are willing to pay for green products, they believe the prices of products differ enough that this is a barrier. This indicates that 'most consumers are not turned off by sustainable products but by their economic constraints'. According to Neves et al. (2025), one of the key factors influencing sustainable purchasing behaviour is price. This argument is reinforced by the results, as purchase intentions clearly rise when there is no financial constraint. This suggests that the relationship between affordability and sustainable intentions is important to consider when looking for a sustainable decision to action. The findings thus offered clear evidence that the pricing strategies can play an important role in the consumers' adoption of environmentally friendly products.

8. What is the maximum additional price (premium) you are willing to pay for an eco-friendly version of a product?

51 responses

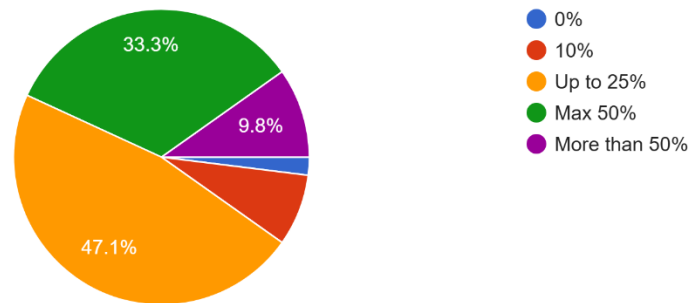


Figure 4.8: Maximum Premium Willing to Pay

(Source: Survey Responses)

About the results of the study, it was concluded that there is a moderate degree of willingness to pay extra costs for sustainable products. 47.1% were willing to pay no more than 25% more, and 33.3% up to 50% more. A small proportion were not willing to pay anything more, and 9.8% were willing to pay more by more than 50%. These results indicate that consumers are aware of the environmental attributes of sustainable products and will pay for them within a reasonable range to support sustainability. Personal willingness to pay is, however, limited. Prakash (2025) observed that products that are environmentally responsible are valued by consumers, and for the same reason, a marginal increase in the price is acceptable. The results back up this observation and suggest that there is a limit to the extent of price increases that will encourage sustainable buying practices. Overall, it shows that consumers appreciate environmental traits and that they are very responsive to prices. This strengthens the main understanding of the study that affordability plays a major part in making sustainable consumption decisions.

9. Which one of the following categories are you most willing to pay a higher price for a sustainable alternative?

51 responses

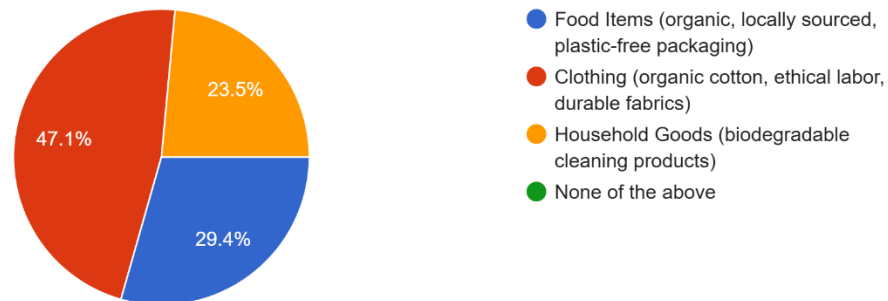


Figure 4.9: Product Categories for Paying Higher Prices

(Source: Survey Responses)

Results show variation in consumers' price preference between products. Sustainable clothing products received the highest rate of responses, with 47.1% of respondents. The share of food was 29.4%, and that of household goods was 23.5%. These results indicate that consumers value sustainable clothing products more than other product categories. This tendency could be attributed to the level of visibility of sustainability issues in the fashion industry. There is growing awareness amongst consumers of the ethical sourcing, labour and environmental issues relating to clothing production. Ortegón Cortazar et al. (2025) identified the increasing significance of sustainability in fashion consumption. The results contribute to this claim by revealing greater intentions to invest in sustainable product clothing. An increased freedom of consumers for fashion purchases is also possible in terms of their emotional relationship with products, leading to increased willingness to pay higher prices. Conclusions are that the sustainable purchasing intention differs between products, and is related to perceived relevance and personal involvement.

10. Please rate your agreement with the following scenario-based statements:

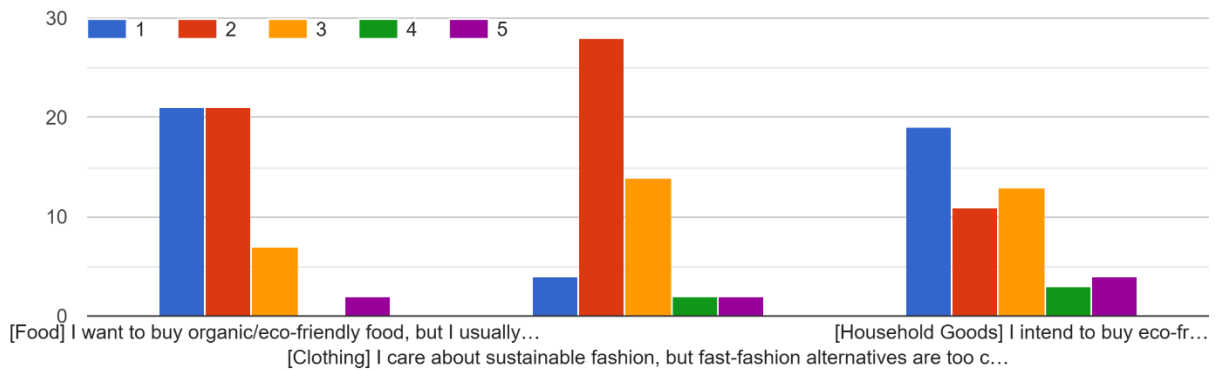


Figure 4.10: Scenario-Based Purchasing Behaviour

(Source: Survey Responses)

The scenario-based responses are direct evidence of the Attitude–Behaviour Gap. In the case of organic food, around 21 respondents showed lower levels of agreement, which indicated that positive intent may be undermined by pragmatic factors. In the case of clothes, there were about 28 people who felt it was good to buy sustainable fashion but recognised the lower cost of fast fashion alternatives. The same patterns seemed to hold for household products. The results illustrate that there is often a trade-off between ecological and economic interests that consumers have to deal with. Respondents identified benefits of sustainable products but cited economic factors which hindered their consistent actions. De et al. (2025) explained that there are often contextual and economic barriers that limit sustainable consumption behaviour. The results strongly corroborate this conclusion. In what it means to buy real products, consumers seem prepared to invest in sustainable products, but much more in the interest of lower prices. Results of the scenarios are therefore strong evidence with regard to the central research question.

11. Thinking about your last 5 purchases, how many of them were explicitly chosen because they were eco-friendly?

49 responses

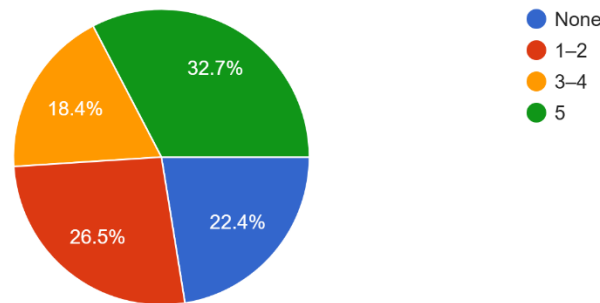


Figure 4.11: Eco-Friendly Purchases Among the Last Five Purchases

(Source: Survey Responses)

Lastly, actual purchasing behaviours were explored. 32.7% of all 49 respondents said that all 5 of their last 5 purchases were made due to its green characteristics. A further 26.5% said they made 1 to 2 green purchases, and 18.4% said that they'd made 3 to 4. However, 22.4% stated that none of their recent purchases was chosen because of environmental considerations. The results narrate moderate adoption of sustainable products as well as an attitudinal behaviour gap. While many respondents agree that sustainability is the right path, their records of purchases suggest that some are more committed to sustainability than others. However, positive attitudes towards sustainability do not always result in consistent behaviour (Lim et al., 2025). The findings lend weight to this, as they found significant differences in the purchasing outcomes. People seem to be open to sustainability but are still impacted by cost, ease of use, and availability. It was overall concluded that the attitude–behaviour gap is therefore a challenge within sustainable consumption. Although there is awareness of the environment and positive attitudes towards it, practically speaking, these factors impact on purchases and do not encourage regular use of eco-friendly products.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis

Question	Mean	SD
Q1: Age Group	1.16	0.37
Q2: Monthly Household Income	3.71	1.4
Q3: Environmental Impact Assessment	2.61	0.8
Q4a: Personal Responsibility for Eco-Friendly Products	3.1	1.28
Q4b: Eco-Friendly Products Better for Environment	3.73	1.63
Q4c: Prefer Sustainable Brands	3.2	1.23
Q4d: Buying Green Products Makes Me Feel Good	3.29	1.27
Q5: Reason for Choosing Non-Sustainable Alternatives	2.59	1.28
Q6a: Price Importance	1.92	1
Q6b: Quality & Durability Importance	2.12	0.84
Q6c: Availability Importance	2.53	0.99
Q6d: Environmental Sustainability Importance	2.29	1.15
Q7: Buy More Eco-Friendly Products if Prices Were Equal	2.22	1.06
Q8: Maximum Premium Willing to Pay	3.41	0.85
Q9: Category Most Willing to Pay Premium For	1.94	0.73
Q10a: Organic Food Scenario	1.84	0.95
Q10b: Sustainable Fashion Scenario	2.37	0.87
Q10c: Eco-Friendly Household Goods Scenario	2.22	1.25
Q11: Eco-Friendly Purchases in Last Five Purchases	2.59	1.22

Table 4.1: Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used for the investigation of respondents' attitudes, buying behaviour and factors which have an impact on purchase decisions for ecological goods. Results showed a favourable attitude towards sustainability overall, despite the fact that there was evidence of some inconsistencies when it came to buying products. For instance, the statement of “*I prefer buying from brands that focus on sustainability*” had a mean score of 3.73, which was one of the highest mean scores among attitude-related variables. Likewise, the attitude green product purchase “*I feel good about buying green products*” recorded a mean score of 3.20, which points to a positive attitude towards green consumption. Environmental values and personal norms are important factors in shaping green consumption intentions as asserted by Al Mamun et al. (2025). The results, therefore, indicated that the respondents had relatively positive pro-environmental attitudes and the importance of sustainable products. The statement measuring personal responsibility to buy eco-friendly products resulted in a mean score of 2.61, while the perception that the environmental care of the eco-friendly products is real had a mean score of 3.10. These discoveries showed that, in general, the respondents were aware of the benefits to the environment while showing moderate personal commitment. Le et al. (2025) posited that

consumers' intentions to buy sustainable products are sometimes reinforced by perceiving the environmental and social benefits of their purchase. The results indicated that the subjects expressed conceptual support for sustainability with varying degrees of support measured in different attitudes.

Descriptive results also confirm that economic considerations play a major role in consumers' decisions. Factor ranking analysis showed that price got the highest mean score equal to 1.92, while price was the most important factor in product purchase. This was followed by quality and durability, with a mean score of 2.12 and availability, with a mean score of 2.53. Environmental sustainability was ranked as having the lowest priority value and mean score of 2.29, with the lowest priority ranked as 4 and the highest as 1. Historically, Agarwal et al. (2025) pointed out that consumers consider the environment alongside their perceived value in purchasing decisions. The research results clearly corroborate this argument, as the influence of the classic attributes of the product prevailed over the consideration of sustainability. Further evidence on price sensitivity comes from the item that asks if they would increase purchases of eco-friendly products if their cost was the same as that of non-eco-friendly products. This variable had a mean score of 2.22 and most of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the item. Likewise, the mean of the willingness-to-pay premium question was 3.41, suggesting that higher additional costs for sustainable alternatives were acceptable to consumers but not to a great degree. Nguyen and Duong (2025) indicated that the value of perceived benefits and personal assessment of value may relate to behavioural intentions in many cases. RBM is showing that customers are willing to pay for sustainability, but do not want to be hit with too much of a price premium. The scenario-based questions also showed that there is an attitude–behaviour gap. The sustainable fashion scenario had the highest mean score of 2.37, compared to the statement about organic food purchase with 1.84. The mean score of the household goods scenario was 2.22. The results pointed towards the positive perceptions of the actors towards sustainability issues and a relatively high obstacle level regarding actual purchases. The overall descriptive analysis results showed that the majority of consumers are willing to buy the eco-friendly product, but the costs, quality and convenience still play a significant role in their buying decisions.

sustainable purchasing is influenced by a mix of economic and functional factors, as well as environmental factors. The results confirm this outlook as they have revealed that buying decisions are a set of several related elements. The correlation between the purchase intentions for green products (at the same price as the conventional products) and actual sustainable purchasing actions was quite weak ($r = 0.18$). This indicates that while there was an intention among the respondents to use SCP, this did not necessarily result in consistent buying habits. Nguyen and Duong (2025) said that although behavioural intentions will not always follow, purchasing behaviour is shaped by contextual and situational factors. The conclusion, therefore reflects the attitude – behaviour gap which was emphasised during this study. There were also negative relationships observed. There was a negative correlation between the willingness to pay for higher prices and the environmental sustainability rankings ($r = -0.38$), which means that the respondents who were more oriented towards sustainability did not always put a higher value on the price. This helps to confirm the role of affordability for the consumption choices that enable sustainable consumption. In theory, the consumers are ready to buy eco-friendly products, but they are also cost-conscious.

Positive correlations between sustainability attitudes and purchasing behaviours were only modestly found when asked about the last five purchases explicitly selected because they were eco-friendly. This implies that it did not suffice to have strong environmental beliefs and behaviours to ensure consistent sustainable purchasing. In addition to attitudes, Agarwal et al. (2025) identified perceived value, trust, and accessibility, along with financial considerations, as factors affecting real-world behaviour. This conclusion is highly corroborated by the correlation findings. From the overall results of the correlation analysis, it can be seen that sustainable consumption intention is positively correlated with environmental beliefs, sustainability perception and personal responsibility. But the link between intentions and real behaviour is less than would have been predicted. The results reaffirm that whilst the majority of consumers are willing to buy environmentally friendly products, price, quality, and practicality still matter significantly in their ultimate buying decision and this is why the attitude–behaviour gap continues to exist.

4.5 Discussion

The survey results have shown some discrepancies between consumers' attitudes to environmentally friendly products and their buying habits. While there was a strong

sentiment for sustainability, issues of cost, convenience, availability, and value often played a role in purchasing decisions. A preference for brands that focus on sustainability got a mean score of 3.73, and purchasing of green products due to the "felt good" factor got a mean score of 3.20. Further, 74.5% of the respondents said that they sometimes tell how well a product will do to the environment before buying, 17.6% always do this. Presence in the surroundings is of a relatively high level of awareness. The study by Wong et al. (2025) revealed the positive impact of environmental values on sustainable consumption intentions. In a similar context, Al Mamun et al. (2025) stated that environmental attitudes/normal influence green consumption. In this regard, Cg and G (2025) showed that pro-social attitudes enhance green consumption attitudes and intentions, while it negatively impacts consumption attitudes. However, real behaviours were less consistent with these favourable attitudes. Only moderate correlations were obtained between sustainability attitudes and actual buying behaviour. Moreover, 22.4% of participants said that they hadn't chosen any of their most recent five purchases for their "environmentally compatible" properties. This finding aligns with Neves et al. (2025), who found that positive environmental attitudes are not necessarily enough to ensure sustainable actions. Similarly, De et al. (2025) showed that consumers' difficulties in implementing their environmental intentions are rooted in contextual and behavioural aspects. So the results demonstrate the attitude – behaviour gap in Sustainable consumption. The price was the ultimate in de facto purchasing. The results of the ranking analysis revealed that price received the lowest mean score of 1.92, which meant that price was the most important purchasing factor. Furthermore, 62.7% of the respondents indicated agreement or strong agreement to buying more eco-friendly products if the product were as expensive as conventional products. The willingness-to-pay analysis showed that 47.1% were found willing to pay up to 25% more, and 33.3% were willing to pay up to 50% more than the price of a conventional product for a sustainable product. These findings align with the results of Agarwal et al. (2025), which revealed perceived value and cost considerations as significant key factors that drive sustainable purchasing habits. In a similar context, Al Kurdi et al. (2025) showed that the cost and usability typically take precedence over environmental issues. This implies that sustainability needs to not impose high extra costs, as consumers will not support it. Purchasing behaviour was also greatly impacted by convenience and accessibility. Thirty-seven per cent said accessibility and availability for choosing the cheap,

or less sustainable products, while 29.4% said convenience and familiarity. These results suggest that barriers to sustainable consumption still exist in the market. Consumer convenience and entrenched consumer behaviours were key determinants of consumer behaviours, as argued by Carvalho et al. (2025). Likewise, De et al. (2025) stated that intentions do not necessarily translate to actions, and there are practical considerations that must also be taken into account. Therefore, accessibility of products, even if not more so, is as important as environmental awareness. Trust and credibility were also a part of purchasing decisions. A mean score of 3.10 indicated some scepticism as to whether products offering an environmental advantage are truly better. Transparency is a factor that minimises uncertainty, fostering sustainable decision-making (Hina et al., 2025). Similarly, the results of Le et al. (2025) demonstrated that trust in a company's socially responsible actions has a positive impact on sustainable purchase intentions. Thus, more work is needed to promote stronger evidence that underpins environmental claims so that consumers consistently support green products.

The results of the correlation indicated that the contribution of the factor “branding” and the communication in it was manifested. The degrees of positive correlation, with >0.70 considered high, were exhibited between believing "eco' products are good for the environment" and preferring to use "eco' brands" ($r = 0.74$), as well as between "eco' products are good for the environment" and "I wish to obtain eco' products" ($r = 0.72$). Theocharis and Tsekouropoulos (2025) hypothesize that sustainability-branding has a significant impact on consumer behavior, particularly on young consumers. There are many reasons to uphold this argument and one of them is the fact that 84.3% of the respondents belong to the age group 18-24. Ribeiro et al. (2025) also pointed out that when sustainability becomes a part of the young generation Z's personal values, they are more inclined to engage in pro-environmental behaviour. The formation of perceptions of sustainability also appears to be an important space for digital communication and social media. Similarly, Cui et al. (2025) revealed that the green influencers could effectively improve the awareness and trust of followers, thus influencing their intention towards green consumption. Similarly, Adaba et al. (2025) noted that social media influencers who are powerful also help in strengthening the willingness of people to purchase. Kothari et al. (2025) further pointed out that authenticity and credibility must also be important aspects of sustainability's promotion. This suggests there is scope to

influence younger consumers to make more sustainable purchasing with digital channels. Product category analysis showed that the most preferred premium product category to be purchased is sustainable clothing products (47.1%). Food products and household goods were the two largest items with 29.4% and 23.5% respectively. This fits in with the claim that sustainability is even more critical in the fashion industry, where customers have become conscious of the ethical and societal aspect of fashion (Ortegón Cortazar et al. 2025). Prakash (2025) pointed out how products that are green are gaining popularity with the consumer goods category.

The scenario-based responses were also used to further build the attitude–behaviour gap. Many people talked about the sustainable options they wanted, many also said they couldn't select the sustainable options because they didn't have enough money. Simeone et al. (2025) claimed that customers consider all three aspects of personal benefit, environmental performance and social responsibility when making purchase decisions. This was clearly borne out by the results, with many of the respondents choosing economic over environmental factors. Several areas for action and innovation were identified as a result of the results that identify how to support sustainable consumption. Gamification can result in involvement from consumers, which, in turn, can encourage sustainable behaviours (Lim et al. 2025). Li (2025) suggested that once more, environmental knowledge and green advertising can boost the purchase intention, while Rosário and Dias (2025) mentioned the impact of digital marketing as a factor that affects sustainable consumption. Technological innovations can also be helpful for behavioural change. Agya (2025) has started to highlight how technology tools can push for responsible consumption and Hassan et al. (2025) discovered how targeted suggestions can enhance trust and satisfaction. Furthermore, Sánchez-Mompó et al. (2025) highlighted Environmental Awareness in relation to Technologies. The overall finding demonstrates the people's positive attitude towards the use of eco-friendly products and knowledge about sustainability. However, when people are buying, the price, convenience, availability and value for money matter too. Beliefs and intentions are produced as a result of the degree of environmental awareness and as behaviours are not easily translated into sustainable behaviour, an effort is made to bring those intentions to that level. The study thus confirms the occurrence of a significant attitude–

behaviour gap in sustainable consumption and the need for strategies that increase the affordability, accessibility, trust and engagement of the consumers.

4.6 Chapter Summary

The results indicated that people tended to have a positive attitude toward using environmentally friendly products, and they also have a high level of awareness of environmental problems. Yet, there was a considerable disconnect between attitudes and buying behaviours, too. Factors that proved to be most impactful to the decision to buy were price, access, convenience and perceived value, often surpassing considerations of environment. Most of those involved were willing to buy sustainable products and would pay moderate price premiums, but there were financial and practical barriers to sustainable consumption. Overall, the results offered strong evidence showing that even though there has been a significant increase in interest in sustainability and the purchase of environmentally responsible products, economic and contextual considerations continue to influence consumer behaviour.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the conclusion of the study, summarises the findings and shows the degree to which the research aim and objectives were met. The chapter explains in detail the key factors affecting the discrepancy between consumers' eco-friendly product preferences and buying actions. It further emphasises the theoretical and practical implications of findings and offers suggestions for the business, marketer, policy makers and consumers. In addition, the chapter outlines the study's limitations, with an eye to the future. These discussions round the chapter off thoroughly and present findings and ideas on how to create more sustainable consumption behaviour.

5.2 Achievement of Research Aim and Objectives

This study sought to explain why they prefer using environmentally friendly products and buy less expensive, unsustainable products. The results showed that consumers are expected to have good attitudes towards sustainability, but these attitudes are somewhat restricted by practical concerns that affect their purchase. The study achieved all four of its research objectives, and it yielded a broad overview of the factors that cause the attitude – behaviour gap in sustainable consumption.

5.2.1 Objective 1

The first objective examined consumer attitudes towards eco-friendly products. The results indicated a largely positive attitude to sustainability and buying of environmentally sound products. The majority of the participants were aligned with sustainable brands and take sustainability into account when making a purchasing decision. The level of environmental awareness was high, indicating consumers' recognition of the need for environmental protection by engaging in responsible consumption. The positive attitudes were not always reflected in sustainable purchasing behaviour, however. However, overall, the findings did support the existence of the favourable perceptions regarding eco-friendly products, as well as the presence of stronger intentions towards sustainability.

5.2.2 Objective 2

The second objective revealed factors affecting environmentally friendly product purchase decisions. The results showed that price was the most significant determinant of choosing alfalfa, and quality, durability, convenience, and accessibility were the next four factors.

Respondents indicated an interest in sustainable products, but often the economic aspect and the convenience factor were cited as being more important than environmental ones. Numerous respondents expressed a desire to buy eco-friendly products more frequently if the costs were reduced or matched those of the regular products. Hence, results did verify that the issues of affordability and convenience are still important factors in determining sustainable purchasing behaviour.

5.2.3 Objective 3

The third objective was to analyse the relationship between awareness, trust and perceived value, and sustainable consumption behaviour. The results indicated that, overall, respondents were highly aware of the environment and often took into consideration aspects of sustainability when purchasing items or when considering what to purchase. But, with awareness came the need to go beyond, to make sure that behaviour became sustainable. The perception of the value of a green product and the trust in green claims did play an important role in the decision to purchase. Moderate premiums were acceptable to consumers when benefits were there to justify the costs. Hence, awareness, trust, and perceived value were relevant factors that led to sustainable consumption.

5.2.4 Objective 4

The fourth objective examined the differences between intentions and the buying behaviour of the consumer. Results gave a clear indication of the presence of an attitude-behaviour gap. Although the respondents had high opinions towards sustainability and wished for sustainable products, many were still buying non-sustainable products in the market that were cheaper. Product availability, convenience and costs often determine actual product behaviours. As a further illustration of incongruence between intentions and actions, the scenario-based responses revealed inconsistencies between intentions towards the environment and buying behaviour. So, the results also indicated that practical aspects are a key barrier to the link between sustainability attitudes and current consumer actions.

5.3 Overall Conclusion of the Study

The results from this research suggest that consumers are generally pro-sustainable and have positive attitudes towards the use of sustainable products. The general level of environmental awareness was seen as being, to some extent, high, and the overwhelming majority of the respondents accepted the importance of taking environmental aspects into account when

buying. The results show that sustainability is an important factor to be considered for consumers' behaviour today. But the research also found that positive attitudes can't guarantee that the purchasing behaviour will be sustainable. The respondents often chose the products that were less expensive and less environmentally ethical when asked for their opinions on the issue of responsible consumption. This illustrates that there is a large attitude-behaviour gap in the area of sustainable consumption. The price proved to be the most effective purchase motivator. In general, consistent price levels were important for consumers to show an interest in sustainable products: when costs were higher than a premium, it negatively influenced purchasing behaviour. Other factors that impacted consumer decisions were accessibility and convenience. Several commenters reported a lack of availability and a lack of convenience associated with sustainable products. So, many times, environmental concerns got second best.

Also, other factors like trust and perceived value were seen to impact sustainable purchasing behaviour. Sustainability claims were perceived as more credible, and the use of such claims to buy an 'eco-friendly' product was more likely if the benefit outweighed the added cost. In contrast, a lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the products hampered consumers' confidence and purchasing intentions. The research findings indicate that sustainable consumption behaviour is a complex phenomenon that depends on a variety of psychological, economic and contextual factors. While you may have positive attitudes and intentions to act for the environment, you always have to consider if it is affordable, accessible, and if it is perceived as a value. Hence, to tackle the attitude-behaviour gap, there is a need to have a holistic package for the same, which should involve measures to overcome the barriers as well as awareness campaigns. Altogether, the results help to understand why, although some consumers prefer ecological products, they still buy less expensive products that are not ecological. The research points to the need to take into account both enabling conditions and individuals' attitudes when analysing sustainable consumption practices.

5.4 Theoretical Implications

This study further develops the literature on sustainable consumption by providing some evidence that supports the multidimensionality of consumer decision-making. The results confirm the relevance of using the Theory of Planned Behaviour as positive attitudes towards sustainability relate to behavioural intentions. But the findings also suggest that intentions to

take action, in this context, can lead to action if it is not curtailed by factors outside the person's control (e.g., price or accessible options). The results also confirm the Value-Belief-Norm Theory, as it was found that values of green and individual responsibility had a positive effect on favourable attitudes towards sustainable consumption. However, the findings indicate that ethics can't be the only factor in inducing sustainable actions when impediments can be found.

The study also makes a contribution to the literature on consumer decision-making theories by pinpointing perceived value, affordability and convenience as important factors that consumers consider in making a purchase. The results indicated that consumers consider sustainable products as a whole, not only the environment, but also economic factors. Therefore, there is a need to explain sustainable consumption behaviour from a psychological dimension, but not exclusively. This suggests through the research that a combination of psychological, economic and contextual factors should be used in an integrated theoretical perspective. This contribution is one in which to deepen the understanding of this attitude-behaviour gap with the intent of offering a more complete explanation of sustainable consumption behaviour.

5.5 Practical Implications

Important implications for businesses, marketers and policy makers looking to encourage sustainable consumption. The results emphasise that for businesses, there is a need to create sustainable products which deliver functional value and are relatively inexpensive. Consumers are more willing to buy products that are environmentally conscious if they believe they are achieving a benefit to merit the increased costs. The results highlight the need for clear communication for marketers of sustainability claims. The consumer should be given reliable information to enable him or her to construct trust and confidence in the environmentally friendly product. So marketing channels need to emphasise tangible environmental good benefits and long-term value. The results for the policy makers indicate that awareness creation is not always adequate to stimulate responsible consumption. Policies that make a product more affordable and/or easier to access can have a greater impact on mitigating the impediment to sustainable purchasing behaviour. Thus, there is a need to cooperate with businesses, marketers and policy makers to achieve sustainable consumption on a wider scale.

5.6 Recommendations

5.6.1 Recommendations for Businesses

Where possible, business is advised to remove price premiums in the environmental dimension. To enhance operations efficiency and carrying out sustainable production can help reduce costs to make products more affordable. However, distribution channels can be used to promote business accessibility, and there should be lots of sustainable alternatives available. Further, businesses need to enhance transparency of environmental claims and to obtain recognised sustainability credentials to foster consumer confidence.

5.6.2 Recommendations for Marketers

Marketers should consider communicating to their consumers the value that their sustainable products can provide to the world and their uses. However, value is a focus that needs to be borne in mind in digital marketing campaigns, and not only the environment. Building relationship with trusted influencers and sustainability advocates can also help build consumer trust and engagement. Through marketing information, consumers must be convinced that in the long run green product use will be beneficial to both the consumer and the environment.

5.6.3 Recommendations for Policymakers

Sustainable consumption can be provided by financial and regulatory assistance from the policy makers. Subsidies or tax breaks can be used to overcome these price barriers to support sustainable offerings. Governments should also implement stricter guidelines and standards on environmental claims as a disincentive to ‘greenwashing’ behaviour and to strengthen the trust in environmental claims. Awareness campaigns on sustainability issues are still needed as well as the highlighting of concrete activities that consumers can contribute to to become environmentally responsible.

5.6.4 Recommendations for Consumers

Decisions should be based on taking sustainable products into account considering its long-term environmental and economic impact. An emphasis needs to be placed on product quality and durability, and environmental assessment rather than just looking at the upfront product price. But there is also a demand for green marketing from the consumers and companies demonstrating green commitment should be targeted. Education and awareness can help

improve favour with the environment and drive changes for sustainable products in the market.

5.7 Limitations of the Study

The following constraints should be mentioned. A small sample size, in terms of both the number of respondents, 51, and the age range of the respondents, was used in the study, which results in limited generalisability of findings. Second, the use of convenience sampling may have caused sampling bias. Thirdly, the survey sample comprised individuals aged 18-24, which resulted in the views of younger consumers being represented primarily. Fourth, there was a self-reported response, and the influence of the social desirability bias might be there. Finally, the study used a cross-sectional design that reflects attitudes and behaviour at one time only, thus denying the possibility of change as a function of time.

5.8 Future Research Directions

Future research should incorporate larger and more varied sample sizes to have greater generalisability of the results. Research might test different groups of consumers on the basis of age, income and geographic location, etc. The study could be capable of giving insights into the evolution of sustainable consumption behaviour over a longer period of time if the research is longitudinal. Further research could also explore purchasing behaviour by industry and explore the latest trends like artificial intelligence, personalised recommendations and sustainability technology. Further, research investigating the cultural variations in sustainable consumption might help to further account for the attitude–behaviour gap.

5.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter started by assessing the extent to which the research aim and objectives had been accomplished and providing a summary of the findings. Results showed that consumers have a positive attitude overall on purchasing eco-friendly products; however, economic and practical constraints prevent them from purchasing a higher-priced non-sustainable option. The key factors found to have an influence on purchasing behaviour were price and accessibility, convenience, trust and perceived value. The chapter included discussion of theoretical and practical implications, recommendations for key stakeholders, and limitations and future directions for research. Overall, the study revealed that co-determining factors of sustainable consumption behaviour are multi-determinant and involve a complex interplay of

psychological, economic and contextual factors, showing that the attitude–behaviour gap still exists.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this survey. This survey is being conducted so as to understand attitudes of consumers toward eco-friendly products versus non-sustainable alternatives. Your responses will be kept anonymous and will only be used for research purposes. Do you want to proceed?

- Yes
- No

Section 1: Demographics

1. What is your age group?

- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- More than 45 years

2. What among these options is your approximate monthly household income?

- Low Income
- Lower-Middle Income
- Upper-Middle Income
- High Income
- Prefer not to disclose

3. How often do you prefer and assess the environmental impact of a product before buying it?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely

- Never

Section 2: Consumer attitudes toward eco-friendly products

4. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? [1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree]

- I feel a personal responsibility to buy eco-friendly products.
- Eco-friendly products are genuinely better for the environment.
- I prefer buying from brands that prioritize sustainability.
- Buying green products makes me feel good about my choices.

Section 3: Factors driving non-sustainable purchases

5. Which among these is the primary reason that you prefer when it comes to choosing a cheaper, non-sustainable alternative over an eco-friendly product?

- The eco-friendly option is too expensive.
- The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.
- I trust the quality/performance of the conventional brand more.
- There is a wider variety of styles in conventional products.
- I do not fully trust the "eco-friendly" claims, due to recent cases of brands being accused of Greenwashing
- Others

6. Rank the following factors based on importance when you are making a final purchase decision. (1 - Most Important, 4 - Least Important)

- Price
- Quality and durability
- Availability
- Environmental Sustainability

Section 4: Price Sensitivity & Sustainable Buying

7. How far do you agree that you buy eco-friendly products more if they were priced the same as conventional products?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. What is the maximum *additional price (premium)* you are willing to pay for an eco-friendly version of a product?

- 0%
- 10%
- Up to 25%
- Max 50%
- More than 50%

9. Which one of the following categories are you most willing to pay a higher price for a sustainable alternative?

- Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)
- Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)
- Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)
- None of the above

Section 5: The "Green Gap" (Consciousness vs. Real Decisions)

10. Please rate your agreement with the following scenario-based statements:

- [Food] I want to buy organic/eco-friendly food, but I usually end up buying the cheaper conventional groceries to save money.
- [Clothing] I care about sustainable fashion, but fast-fashion alternatives are too cheap and trendy to ignore.

- [Household Goods] I intend to buy eco-friendly cleaning/home supplies, but if they aren't on the shelf at my regular store, I buy the standard chemical/plastic version.

11. Thinking about your last 5 purchases, how many of them were explicitly chosen because they were eco-friendly?

- None
- 1–2
- 3–4
- 5

Appendix B: Survey responses

[illegible]

Yes	25 – 34	Lower-Middle Income	Often	3				The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	3					Strongly Agree	More than 50%	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2			1 – 2
Yes	25 – 34	Lower-Middle Income	Often	1	4	2	5	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	4	2		4		Agree	Up to 25%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	2	2	4	1 – 2
Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Always	2	3	1	2	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	1	2	2	1		Strongly Agree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	2	1	3	1 – 2
Yes	18 – 24	Lower-Middle Income	Always	4	4	4	4	Others	1	1	1	1		Strongly Agree	0%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	5	5	5	3 – 4
Yes	25 – 34	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	2	4	2	4	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.		1	3	1		Neutral	10%	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2	1	3	3 – 4

Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Always	1	1	2	1	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	1	1	1	1	Strongly Agree	Up to 25 %	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	1	2	1	None
Yes	18 – 24	Lower-Middle Income	Sometimes	1	2	2	1	I do not fully trust the "eco-friendly" claims, due to recent cases of brands being accused of Greenwashing			2		Neutral	More than 50 %	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	2	3	1	1 – 2
Yes	18 – 24	Lower-Middle Income	Sometimes	2	1	2	3	I do not fully trust the "eco-friendly" claims, due to recent cases of brands being accused of Greenwashing	3		3	3	Neutral	Up to 25 %	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	3	2	1	None
Yes	18 – 24	Lower-Middle Income	Always	2	2	2	1	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	3	2	2	3	Neutral	Up to 25 %	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2	2	2	1 – 2

Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	2	1	2	2	Agree	More than 50%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	1	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	1	2	4	1	Agree	10%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	2	3	2	1 – 2
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	2	3	1	2	Agree	Up to 25%	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	1	2	3	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	4	3	2	1	Agree	Max 50%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	1	3	2	5
Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	5	4	3	2	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	1	2	3	4	Agree	Max 50%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	2	1	3	5

Yes	18 – 24	Lower-Middle Income	Sometimes	2	2	3	1	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	3	2	3	2	Strongly Agree	Up to 25%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	1	2	3	1 – 2
Yes	18 – 24	Lower-Middle Income	Always	3	3	1	1	I do not fully trust the "eco-friendly" claims, due to recent cases of brands being accused of Greenwashing	2	2	3	3	Strongly Agree	Max 50%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	2	1	1	3 – 4
Yes	25 – 34	Prefer not to disclose	Always	5	5	5	5	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	1	1	2	1	Strongly Agree	10%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	3	3	3	3 – 4
Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	4	4	4	4	I trust the quality/performance of the conventional brand more.	1	2	3	2	Agree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	3	2	3	1 – 2

Yes	25 – 34	Lower-Middle Income	Always	4	4	1	4	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	4	4	4	4	Strongly Agree	Up to 25%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	3	4	4	5
Yes	18 – 24	High Income	Always	5	4	3	4	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	3	2	3	2	Strongly Agree	Max 50%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	2	3	5	
Yes	25 – 34	Low Income	Always	5	5	3	4	Others		1		1	Strongly Agree	Max 50%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	5	4	5	3 – 4
Yes	25 – 34	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	4	2	1	2	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	3	3	2	4	Agree	Up to 25%	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2	3	2	1 – 2
Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	I trust the quality/performance of the conventional brand more.	1	2	3	4	Strongly Agree	Max 50%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	2	3	3	5

Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	3	3	4	2	Agree	Max 50 %	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	2	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	2	3	4	1	Agree	Max 50 %	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	5	4	1 – 2
Yes	18 – 24	High Income	Rarely	1	2	1	2	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	1	2	1	2	Disagree	Up to 25 %	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	3	3 – 4
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	2	4	2	1	Neutral	Up to 25 %	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2	3	5	3 – 4
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	1	4	3	2	Strongly Disagree	More than 50 %	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2	2	3	3 – 4

Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	I do not fully trust the "eco-friendly" claims, due to recent cases of brands being accused of Green washing	2	3	1	4	Neutral	Up to 25%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	2	3	1	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	5	4	There is a wider variety of styles in conventional products.	4	1	4	3	Neutral	Max 50%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	1	2	2	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	3	5	4	4	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	3	2	3	1	Strongly Disagree	10%	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2	3	1	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	2	3	3	1	Strongly Agree	Max 50%	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2	2	1	1 – 2

Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	5	4	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	3	3	2	2	Neutral	Up to 25%	Clot hing (organic cotton , ethical labor , durable fabrics)	2	3	1	No ne
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	1	3	1	3	Neutral	Max 50%	Hou seho ld Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	1	2	1	3 – 4
Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	5	4	4	2	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	1	2	2	3	Agree	Max 50%	Clot hing (organic cotton , ethical labor , durable fabrics)	3	2	1	5
Yes	18 – 24	Lower-Middle Income	Sometimes	1	2	3	1	There is a wider variety of styles in conventional products.	3	1	3	2	Agree	Max 50%	Clot hing (organic cotton , ethical labor , durable fabrics)	3	2	1	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	3	5	4	4	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	2	3	2	1	Neutral	Up to 25%	Clot hing (organic cotton , ethical labor , durable fabrics)	1	2	3	

Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	2	2		5	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	1	2	3	3	Agree	Max 50%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	2	5
Yes	18 – 24	Upper-Middle Income	Sometimes	1	2	3	4	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	3	2	4	1	Agree	Max 50%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	3	2	1	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	3	4	4	4	I trust the quality / performance of the conventional brand more.	2	2	3	3	Agree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	3	2	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	3	5	4	4	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	1	2	3	4	Disagree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	2	3	1	No
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	3	4	4	4	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	2	3	4	1	Disagree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	3	1	No

Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	3	4	4	4	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	2	3	4	4	Neutral	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	3	None
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	3	4	4	4	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	1	2	3	4	Agree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	1	5
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	1	3	4	4	I trust the quality/performance of the conventional brand more.	1	2	3	3	Strongly Agree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	1	None
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	3	4	4	4	The non-sustainable options are easier to find/more accessible.	1	2	3	4	Strongly Agree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	3	None
Yes	25 – 34	Low Income	Often	2	1	2	1	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	2	1	1	2	Neutral	Up to 25%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	2	2	2	1 – 2

Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	2	2	3	3	Neutral	Max 50%	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	2	2	1	None
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	1	3	4	3	The non-sustainable option is easier to find/more accessible.	1	2	3	2	Neutral	More than 50%	Household Goods (biodegradable cleaning products)	1	2	2	None
Yes	18 – 24	Prefer not to disclose	Sometimes	4	5	4	4	I trust the quality/performance of the conventional brand more.	1	2	3	2	Agree	Up to 25%	Clothing (organic cotton, ethical labor, durable fabrics)	1	2	1	None
Yes	18 – 24	Low Income	Sometimes	1	1	1	1	The eco-friendly option is too expensive.	1	2	2	4	Strongly Agree	Max 50%	Food Items (organic, locally sourced, plastic-free packaging)	1	2	2	1 – 2