

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT SOCIOLOGY & HUMANITIES



ISSN 2277 – 9809 (online)

ISSN 2348 - 9359 (Print)

An Internationally Indexed Peer Reviewed & Refereed Journal

www.IRJMSH.com
www.isarasolutions.com

Published by iSaRa Solutions

Awareness, Trust, and Barriers in Eco-Friendly Purchasing: Evidence from Young Consumers in an Emerging Economy

Yamini K. Menon,

Assistant Professor (CES), Department of Commerce and Business Management,
Faculty of Commerce, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.
Email:kkyamini@gmail.com

Abstract

This research investigates the influence of awareness, trust, and perceived obstacles on eco-friendly purchasing behavior among young consumers (ages 18–24) in a developing economy (N = 104). Descriptive statistics suggested favorable trends in awareness and trust; however, chi-square tests demonstrated that these correlations lacked statistical significance ($p > .05$). Logistic regression indicated that knowledge ($B = 0.82$, $p = .008$) and trust ($B = 0.69$, $p = .014$) are significant predictors of purchase frequency, but affordability barriers had a substantial negative impact ($B = -0.74$, $p = .006$). These findings underscore the attitude–behavior conundrum in sustainable consumption, where favorable intentions do not invariably result in purchase behavior. The research consolidates cognitive, emotional, and contextual elements into a cohesive framework and provides practical recommendations for managers and policymakers.

Keywords: sustainable consumption; consumer awareness; trust; eco-friendly purchasing; perceived barriers; green marketing; emerging economy

1. Introduction

Sustainability has emerged as a major subject in modern marketing, transforming organizational value communication and consumer purchasing behavior. As environmental issues escalate, eco-friendly products and sustainable branding are increasingly regarded as ethical necessities and competitive advantages. Young consumers constitute a vital demographic, since their purchasing decisions not only mirror existing market trends but also indicate the future direction of sustainable consumption. Despite increasing knowledge, consumer behavior frequently demonstrates a paradox: consumers articulate environmental concerns yet are reluctant to consistently acquire eco-friendly items. Previous research has found obstacles like elevated costs, restricted accessibility, and doubt over environmental assertions, which hinder the conversion of knowledge into action (Joshi & Rahman, 2015; Lyon & Montgomery, 2015). Although research has explored sustainability communication and consumer attitudes, there has been little focus on the interplay of awareness, trust, and perceived obstacles in influencing real purchasing behavior among young customers in emerging nations.

This study examines the role of awareness and trust on the frequency of eco-friendly purchases, while simultaneously analyzing the effects of price and accessibility obstacles. The study utilizes

descriptive and inferential methods, such as cross tabulations and logistic regression, to furnish empirical information about the many determinants of sustainable consumption. This study enhances the literature by elucidating the interaction of cognitive (awareness), emotional (trust), and situational (barriers) elements, providing practical recommendations for managers and policymakers aiming to fortify sustainable marketing tactics.

2. Review of Literature

Awareness and Sustainable Consumption: Consumer awareness is recognized as essential for eco-friendly purchasing behavior. Peattie and Crane (2005) posited that understanding environmental issues influences attitudes toward sustainable products, whereas Nguyen et al. (2020) evidenced that awareness campaigns enhance consumer receptivity to green branding. Awareness alone does not ensure behavioral change, as many consumers remain passive despite being informed. This underscores the necessity to analyze the interaction between awareness and other factors affecting purchasing decisions.

Trust and Credibility in Green Marketing : Trust is a key factor in sustainable consumption. Chen and Chang (2013) highlighted that credibility and transparency in eco-friendly claims significantly increase consumer willingness to adopt green alternatives. Lyon and Montgomery (2015) cautioned that “greenwashing” undermines consumer confidence and fosters skepticism regarding sustainability messaging. Kapitan et al. (2019) observed that authenticity, supported by eco labels and verifiable impact reports, is more compelling than symbolic endorsements. These studies highlight the significance of trust as a key factor in eco-friendly purchasing decisions.

Barriers to Adoption : Despite favorable attitudes, barriers like affordability and accessibility persist in limiting sustainable consumption. Joshi and Rahman (2015) identified elevated prices as a consistent barrier, especially in emerging economies with constrained disposable income. Limited product availability and distribution gaps diminish consumer access to eco-friendly alternatives. The situational constraints illustrate the paradox between consumer intent and behavior, indicating that structural barriers should be addressed alongside awareness and trust.

Integrative Perspectives: Recent research has examined the interaction of cognitive, affective, and situational factors in influencing sustainable consumption. Research indicates that awareness and trust can drive eco-friendly purchasing, though their influence is affected by factors such as affordability and accessibility (Nguyen et al., 2020; Joshi & Rahman, 2015). This perspective establishes a basis for analyzing the joint influence of these dimensions on consumer behavior, especially among young consumers in emerging economies.

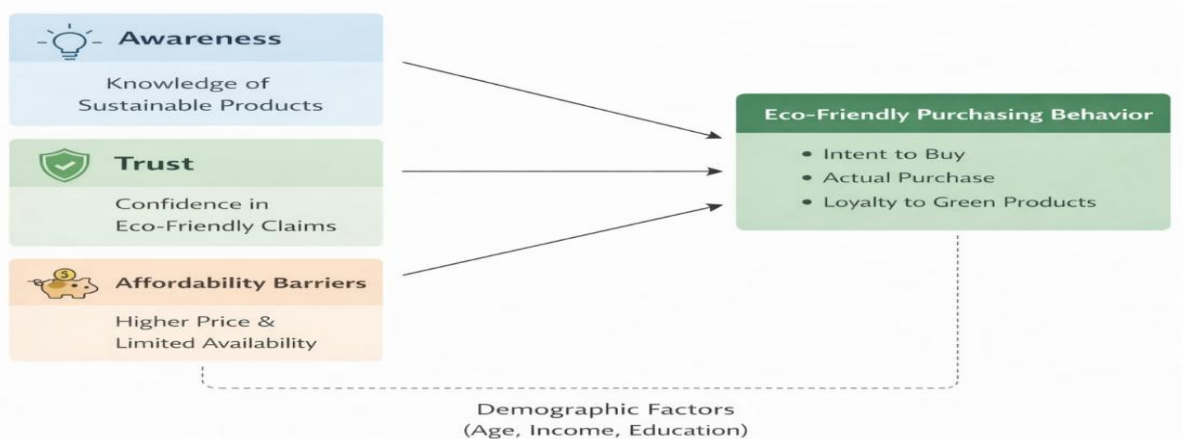


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework: Awareness, Trust, and Barriers in Eco-Friendly Purchasing

Note. The framework illustrates how cognitive (awareness), affective (trust), and situational (affordability barriers) factors jointly influence eco-friendly purchasing behavior among young consumers. Demographic variables (age, income, education) are positioned as contextual moderators.

3. Objectives and Hypotheses

The primary objective is to examine the relationship between consumer awareness, trust, and perceived barriers in predicting eco-friendly purchasing behavior. Specifically, the study aims to: (1) assess how awareness of sustainable marketing influences purchase frequency; (2) evaluate the role of trust as a determinant of purchasing behavior; and (3) identify the impact of price and accessibility barriers on sustainable consumption and (4) provide actionable insights for managers and policymakers to strengthen sustainable marketing strategies.

The following hypotheses are proposed:

1. H1: Higher consumer awareness is positively associated with more frequent eco-friendly purchasing.
2. H2: Greater trust in eco-friendly claims is positively associated with more frequent eco-friendly purchasing.
3. H3: Awareness significantly predicts eco-friendly purchasing frequency.
4. H4: Trust significantly predicts eco-friendly purchasing frequency.
5. H5: Perceived barriers (price and accessibility) negatively predict eco-friendly purchasing frequency.

4. Methodology

A quantitative survey design was employed. Data were collected from 104 respondents aged 18–24 years using purposive sampling, targeting young consumers in an emerging economy context. A structured questionnaire administered online captured measures of awareness, trust, perceived barriers, and purchase frequency of eco-friendly products—all adapted from prior validated instruments. Incomplete responses were excluded, yielding the final sample of 104. Analytical techniques included: (1) descriptive statistics and frequency distributions; (2) crosstabulation with

chi-square tests to examine categorical associations; and (3) binary logistic regression to assess predictive relationships between awareness, trust, barriers, and purchasing frequency.

This study adhered to ethical research standards. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and responses were anonymized to ensure confidentiality. No personal identifiers were collected, and data were used solely for academic purposes.

5. Results

5.1 Purchase Frequency and Awareness

The majority of respondents reported purchasing eco-friendly products sometimes (39.4%) or often (30.8%), suggesting moderate adoption. Awareness levels were generally high, with 75% of respondents reporting being somewhat or very aware of sustainable marketing practices.

Table 1. Frequency of Eco-Friendly Purchases (N = 104)

Purchase Frequency	Count	Percentage
Never	3	2.9%
Rarely	18	17.3%
Sometimes	41	39.4%
Often	32	30.8%
Always	10	9.6%

Note: Most respondents reported moderate purchasing frequency; only 9.6% indicated always purchasing eco-friendly products.

Table 2. Awareness Levels of Sustainable Marketing Practices (N = 104)

Awareness Level	Count	Percentage
Not aware at all	2	1.9%
Slightly aware	7	6.7%
Neutral	17	16.3%
Somewhat aware	44	42.3%
Very aware	34	32.7%

Note: 75% of respondents reported being somewhat or very aware of sustainable marketing practices.

5.2 Trust in Eco-Friendly Claims

Trust remained conditional: 52.9% of respondents reported trusting eco-friendly claims but verifying them, while 28.8% expressed complete trust. Only 2.9% reported no trust, reflecting a skeptical but not dismissive consumer base.

Table 3. Trust in Eco-Friendly Claims (N = 104)

Trust Level	Count	Percentage
No trust at all	3	2.9%
Neutral	16	15.4%
Somewhat, but verify claims	55	52.9%
Yes, completely	30	28.8%

Note: Over half of respondents verify eco-friendly claims before accepting them, indicating conditional trust.

5.3 Barriers to Eco-Friendly Purchasing

Higher price (60.6%) and limited availability (45.2%) were the most frequently cited barriers. Lack of trust in claims (34.6%) and awareness gaps (26.9%) were also notable deterrents.

Table 4. Barriers to Eco-Friendly Purchasing, Multiple Responses Allowed (N = 104)

Barrier	Count	% of Respondents
Higher Price	63	60.6%
Limited Availability	47	45.2%
Lack of Trust in Claims	36	34.6%
Lack of Awareness	28	26.9%
No Significant Difference	6	5.8%

Note: Higher price was the most cited barrier (60.6%), followed by limited availability (45.2%).

5.4 Preferred Marketing Strategies

Credibility-based strategies were most persuasive: eco-label certifications (40.4%) and transparent sustainability reports (25.0%) ranked highest. Celebrity endorsements (6.7%) were least convincing.

Table 5. Convincing Marketing Strategies for Eco-Friendly Products, Multiple Responses Allowed (N = 104)

Strategy	Count	% of Respondents
Eco-label certifications	42	40.4%
Transparent sustainability reports	26	25.0%
Advertisements showing real impact	21	20.2%
Social media campaigns & influencers	18	17.3%
Social proof & community influence	15	14.4%
Government incentives/subsidies	9	8.7%
Celebrity endorsements	7	6.7%

Note. Consumers prefer verifiable, evidence-based marketing (eco-labels, transparent reports) over symbolic endorsements

5.5 Crosstabulation Analyses

Crosstabulation of awareness and purchase frequency (Table 6) revealed that highly aware respondents were more likely to purchase often (n = 12) or always (n = 5). Similarly, respondents with complete trust were more likely to purchase often (n = 13) as shown in Table 7. Despite these positive trends, chi-square tests did not reach statistical significance (Tables 9 and 10).

Table 6. Crosstabulation: Awareness Levels × Purchase Frequency (N = 104)

Purchase Frequency	Not aware	Slightly aware	Neutral	Somewhat aware	Very aware	Total
Never	0	1	1	1	0	3
Rarely	0	3	5	6	4	18
Sometimes	1	2	7	18	13	41
Often	1	1	3	15	12	32
Always	0	0	1	4	5	10
Total	2	7	17	44	34	104

Note. Positive trend observed; chi-square not statistically significant ($\chi^2(8) = 12.84, p = .118$).

Table 7. Crosstabulation: Trust Levels × Purchase Frequency (N = 104)

Purchase Frequency	No trust at all	Neutral	Verify claims	Completely trust	Total
Never	1	1	1	0	3
Rarely	1	4	9	4	18
Sometimes	1	6	23	11	41
Often	0	4	15	13	32
Always	0	1	7	2	10
Total	3	16	55	30	104

Note. Positive trend observed; chi-square not statistically significant ($\chi^2(12) = 16.92, p = .153$).

Table 8. Chi-Square Test: Awareness × Purchase Frequency (N = 104)

Statistic	Value
Pearson χ^2	12.84
df	8
N	104
Asymptotic Significance (p)	.118

Note. The association was not statistically significant at the .05 level, though descriptive trends were positive.

Table 9. Chi-Square Test: Trust × Purchase Frequency (N = 104)

Statistic	Value
Pearson χ^2	16.92
df	12
N	104
Asymptotic Significance (p)	.153

Note. Two cells (8.3%) had expected counts below 5. Association not significant at the .05 level.

5.6 Logistic Regression

Logistic regression (Table 8) revealed that awareness ($B = 0.82, OR = 2.27, p = .008$) and trust ($B = 0.69, OR = 1.99, p = .014$) significantly increased the likelihood of frequent eco-friendly purchasing. Higher price as a barrier significantly reduced this likelihood ($B = -0.74, OR = 0.48, p = .006$). The overall model was significant ($\chi^2(3, N = 104) = 19.34, p < .001$).

Table 10. Logistic Regression Predicting Frequent Eco-Friendly Purchasing (N = 104)

Predictor	B	SE	Wald χ^2	p	Odds Ratio (Exp(B))
Awareness (High vs. Low)	0.82	0.31	7.01	.008	2.27
Trust (High vs. Low)	0.69	0.28	6.08	.014	1.99
Barrier: Higher Price	-0.74	0.27	7.52	.006	0.48
Constant	-1.15	0.40	8.25	.004	—

Note. Model $\chi^2(3, N = 104) = 19.34, p < .001$. OR = odds ratio. Higher awareness and trust increase purchase likelihood; price barriers reduce it.

Table 11. Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	Test Used	Result	p	Supported?
H1: Higher awareness → more frequent purchasing	Chi-Square	$\chi^2(8)=12.84$	.118	Not Supported (trend observed)
H2: Higher trust → more frequent purchasing	Chi-Square	$\chi^2(12)=16.92$	.153	Not Supported (trend observed)
H3: Awareness positively predicts purchasing	Logistic Regression	B=0.82, Wald $\chi^2=7.01$	.008	Supported
H4: Trust positively predicts purchasing	Logistic Regression	B=0.69, Wald $\chi^2=6.08$	.014	Supported
H5: Price barriers negatively predict purchasing	Logistic Regression	B=-0.74, Wald $\chi^2=7.52$	.006	Supported

The descriptive, chi-square, and regression analyses collectively present a nuanced picture: although awareness and trust exhibit positive descriptive trends, only the regression analysis confirms their predictive significance. This discrepancy emphasizes the finesse of cognitive and affective variables in sustainable consumption, implying that categorical associations may underestimate their true behavioral influence. The subsequent discourse contextualizes these discoveries within the existing body of literature and emphasizes their implications for policy design and managerial practice.

6. Discussion

The results empirically substantiate the attitude–behavior paradox in sustainable consumption. Although awareness and trust were identified as significant predictors of eco-friendly purchasing in regression analysis, their categorical associations with purchasing frequency were not statistically significant, as indicated by chi-square tests. This implies that cognitive and affective factors operate more subtly than simple categorical associations reveal, and that regression more accurately captures their predictive power.

The positive predictive effects of awareness ($B = 0.82$) and trust ($B = 0.69$) are consistent with the findings of Peattie and Crane (2005), Nguyen et al. (2020), and Chen and Chang (2013), indicating that consumers who are informed and confident are more likely to translate their sustainability intentions into positive action. In contrast, the negative coefficient for price barriers ($B = -0.74$) supports Joshi and Rahman (2015), emphasizing the importance of affordability as a critical structural constraint, particularly in emerging economies.

Consumers exhibit a preference for eco-labels (40.4%) and transparent sustainability reports (25.0%) rather than celebrity endorsements (6.7%), indicating a generational change towards evidence-based decision-making, as supported by Kapitan et al. (2019) and Lyon and Montgomery (2015). Collectively, these data validate the multifaceted essence of sustained marketing efficacy. This study enhances the sustainable consumption literature by experimentally synthesizing cognitive (awareness), emotive (trust), and situational (affordability obstacles) elements into a cohesive framework. This research emphasizes youthful consumers in a developing economy, advancing previous studies beyond attitudinal assessments to illustrate predicted behavioral results. The findings emphasize that credibility-focused communication and cost-sensitive tactics are crucial for converting positive attitudes into consistent environmentally-friendly purchase behavior.

7. Implications

7.1 Managerial Implications

Managers have to pursue third-party eco-label certifications and credible sustainability reports to enhance customer trust and mitigate distrust. Pricing strategies ought to mitigate the apparent 'green premium' via cost-sharing arrangements or tiered product lines. Digital storytelling rooted on authenticity and measurable effect will surpass symbolic endorsements. Enhancing distribution channels to increase accessibility is essential for converting awareness into action.

7.2 Policy Implications

Policymakers ought to implement subsidies or tax incentives to mitigate affordability obstacles. Regulatory frameworks must require uniform eco-labels, ensure openness in sustainability assertions, and impose penalties for greenwashing. Publicly funded educational activities and university-level sustainability programs can enhance awareness and establish eco-friendly consumerism as a cultural norm.

This table consolidates management and policy advice, providing a clear roadmap for practitioners and policymakers aiming to enhance eco-friendly buying behaviour among young customers.

Dimension	Managerial Recommendations	Policy Recommendations
Trust & Credibility	Prioritize third-party eco-label certifications; publish transparent sustainability reports; use authenticity-driven digital storytelling	Mandate standardized eco-labels; enforce transparency in sustainability claims; penalize greenwashing
Affordability	Reduce perceived “green premium” via tiered product lines, cost-sharing models, or bundling strategies	Provide subsidies or tax incentives to lower consumer costs
Accessibility	Expand distribution channels; integrate eco-friendly products into mainstream retail and e-commerce platforms	Support infrastructure for wider distribution; incentivize retailers to stock eco-friendly alternatives
Awareness & Education	Leverage digital campaigns showing measurable impact; emphasize evidence-based marketing over symbolic endorsements	Launch public sustainability education initiatives; integrate sustainability modules into university curricula

8. Limitations and Future Research

This study has significant drawbacks. The sample consisted of 104 young consumers (ages 18–24) from a single emerging economy, hence constraining generalizability. Dependence on self-reported data engenders social desirability bias. The cross-sectional design prohibits causal conclusions.

Subsequent study should utilize bigger, demographically varied samples across various cultural contexts. Longitudinal and experimental designs would enhance causal inferences and monitor behavioral changes over time. Incorporating behavioral data (e.g., purchase records) with survey metrics and doing comparison analyses across product categories and platforms would yield more comprehensive and actionable insights.

9. Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of awareness, trust, and perceived obstacles on eco-friendly purchase behavior among young customers. Logistic regression demonstrated that awareness and trust greatly enhance the probability of sustainable consumption, but price barriers substantially diminish it—reinforcing the cognitive–affective–situational paradigm. These findings enhance the sustainable consumption literature by experimentally illustrating that favorable sentiments do not inherently lead to purchase behavior without addressing structural limitations. Managerial activities (open communication, credibility enhancement, accessible price) and governmental interventions (subsidies, standardized eco-labels, educational programs) are crucial for normalizing eco-friendly shopping among the forthcoming generation of consumers.

References

1. Chen, Y. S., & Chang, C. H. (2013). Greenwash and green trust: The mediation effects of green consumer confusion and green perceived risk. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 114(3), 489–500.
2. Delmas, M. A., & Burbano, V. C. (2011). The drivers of greenwashing. *California Management Review*, 54(1), 64–87.
3. Dwivedi, Y. K., et al. (2021). Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research. *International Journal of Information Management*, 59, 102168.
4. Joshi, Y., & Rahman, Z. (2015). Factors affecting green purchase behavior and future research directions. *International Strategic Management Review*, 3(1–2), 128–143.
5. Kapitan, S., Kennedy, A. M., & Berth, N. (2019). Sustainability and social media: A review. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 39(4), 354–368.
6. Lyon, T. P., & Montgomery, A. W. (2015). The means and end of greenwash. *Organization & Environment*, 28(2), 223–249.
7. Nguyen, T. N., Lobo, A., & Greenland, S. (2020). Pro-environmental purchase behaviour: The role of consumers' biospheric values. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 55, 102–115.
8. Peattie, K., & Crane, A. (2005). Green marketing: Legend, myth, farce or prophesy? *Qualitative Market Research*, 8(4), 357–370.
9. Rahman, I. (2012). The influence of green marketing on consumer purchase behavior. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 28(3–4), 394–414.



EARN YOUR MBA

WWW.IIMPS.IN



Accreditation & Ranking



UGC / NCTE Approved.

INFO@IIMPS.IN

☎ 011-41005174

R
S
E
A
R
C
H
G
A
T
E
W
A
Y

STOP PLAGIARISM



Arogyam Ayurveda
Holistic Healing through herbs



A
R
O
G
Y
A
M
O
N
L
I
N
E

PARIVARTAN PSYCHOLOGY CENTER



COLOR PSYCHOLOGY : HOW COLOR AFFECT YOUR CHILD



- BLUE** Calms your Child's Mind & Body
- YELLOW** Promotes Concentration, Stimulates the Memory
- PINK** Evokes Empathy, makes your Child Calm
- RED** Excites and energizes your Child's body
- GREEN** Improves Reading speed and Comprehension

www.parivartan4u.com



Confuse about your children's future?

भारतीय भाषा, शिक्षा, साहित्य एवं शोध

ISSN 2321 – 9726

WWW.BHARTIYASHODH.COM



**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF
MANAGEMENT SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

ISSN – 2250 – 1959 (O) 2348 – 9367 (P)

WWW.IRJMST.COM



**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF
COMMERCE, ARTS AND SCIENCE**

ISSN 2319 – 9202

WWW.CASIRJ.COM



**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF
MANAGEMENT SOCIOLOGY & HUMANITIES**

ISSN 2277 – 9809 (O) 2348 - 9359 (P)

WWW.IRJMSSH.COM



**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF SCIENCE
ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY**

ISSN 2454-3195 (online)

WWW.RJSET.COM



**INTEGRATED RESEARCH JOURNAL OF
MANAGEMENT, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION**

ISSN 2582-5445

WWW.IRJMSSI.COM



**JOURNAL OF LEGAL STUDIES, POLITICS
AND ECONOMICS RESEARCH**

WWW.JLPER.COM

JLPE