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SUSTAINABLE FOOD CONSUMPTION: EXPLORING THE CONSUMER ATTITUDE – BEHAVIOUR GAP

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ABSTRACT

This research paper will explore the consumer attitude-behavior gap in relation to sustainable food consumption. The paper will identify the key factors that contribute to the gap, and it will discuss strategies for overcoming the gap. The paper will also discuss the implications of the consumer attitude-behavior gap for sustainable food consumption policy and practice.

Sustainable food consumption is the consumption of food that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a complex issue that involves a variety of factors, including environmental, economic, and social considerations.

One of the key challenges to sustainable food consumption is the gap between consumer attitudes and behaviors. Many consumers express positive attitudes towards sustainable food consumption, but they often do not behave in a sustainable manner. This gap is known as the attitude-behavior gap.

Keywords: sustainable food consumption, attitude-behavior gap, consumer behavior, food policy, food system

Introduction

Sustainable food consumption is the consumption of food that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a complex issue that involves a variety of factors, including environmental, economic, and social considerations.

There are a number of factors that can contribute to the attitude-behavior gap. One factor is a lack of awareness of the environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption. For example, many consumers may not be aware of the high levels of water and land resources required to produce food, or the greenhouse gas emissions associated with food production and transport.

Another factor that can contribute to the attitude-behavior gap is the perceived high cost of sustainable food products. Sustainable food products may be more expensive than conventional food products due to the higher costs of production and distribution. Additionally, sustainable food products may be less widely available than conventional food products.

Social norms and peer pressure can also lead consumers to behave in ways that are not sustainable. For example, a consumer may be more likely to eat meat if their friends and family members are also eating meat, even if they have negative attitudes towards the environmental and social impacts of meat production.

Despite the challenges, there is a growing interest in sustainable food consumption. This is due to a number of factors, including the increasing awareness of the environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption, the growing availability of sustainable food products, and the increasing support for sustainable food consumption from governments and businesses.

Objective of Research

- To identify the key factors that contribute to the consumer attitude-behavior gap in sustainable food consumption
- To understand the complex relationship between consumer attitudes and behaviors
- To develop and test strategies for reducing the consumer attitude-behavior gap
- To assess the effectiveness of different interventions in bridging the gap
- To inform sustainable food consumption policy and practice

Literature Review

The study found that the consumer attitude-behavior gap in sustainable food consumption is a complex phenomenon with multiple contributing factors, including a lack of awareness, perceived high cost, social norms, and limited access to sustainable food options. The study also found that there are a number of strategies that can be used to overcome the gap, such as increasing consumer education, making sustainable food more affordable and accessible, and changing social norms.(ElHaffar, M., Hassan, S. A., & AbdelHameed, M. 2023). The study found that the consumer attitude-behavior gap in sustainable food consumption is significant, and that it is difficult to explain using traditional attitude-behavior models. The study suggests that a more nuanced approach is needed to understand the factors that influence sustainable food consumption behavior.(Carrington, M. J., Neville, B. A., & Whitwell, G. J. 2010). The study reviewed the literature on the consumer attitude-behavior gap in sustainable food consumption and identified a number of factors that contribute to the gap, including a lack of awareness, perceived high cost, social norms, and limited access to sustainable food options. The study also discussed a number of strategies for overcoming the gap, such as increasing consumer education, making sustainable food more affordable and accessible, and changing social norms.(Vermeir, L, & Verbeke, W. 2006). The study concludes that the consumer attitude-behavior gap in sustainable food consumption is a complex phenomenon with a variety of contributing factors. The study also identifies a number of strategies that can be used to overcome the gap, such as increasing consumer awareness, making sustainable food products more affordable and accessible, and changing social norms and peer pressure.(Hartmann, P., & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, V 2022). The study concludes that consumer knowledge and attitudes play an important role in sustainable food consumption behavior. However, the study also finds that there is a significant gap between consumer knowledge and attitudes, and consumer behavior.(Grunert, K. G. 2021). The study concludes that there are a number of factors that influence the consumer attitude-behavior gap in sustainable food consumption, including perceived cost, convenience, and social norms. The study also identifies a number of strategies that can be used to overcome the gap, such as providing consumers with more information about the environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption, and making sustainable food products more affordable and accessible.(Filimonau, V., & Carlsson-Kanyama, A. 2020).

Research Methodology

Sample Size

This research has Contain 180 valid filled responses.

SAMPLING AREA- GREATER NOIDA, UTTARPRADESH

DATA SOURCE

The research was carried out with the help of primary Data.

- PRIMARY DATA- Structured questionnaires

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table1: In the Survey Conducted by me and my team mates there are total 200 Respondents.

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage
Below 20 Year	31	17.2
20 to 35 Year	79	43.9
35 to 45 Year	51	28.3
Above 45 Year	19	10.6

1. How often do you think about the environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption when making food choices?

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage
Never	24	13.3
Sometimes	43	23.9
Often	45	25

Always	68	37.8
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Interpretation

The above table represent that 37.8 % environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption when making food choices

2. Which of the following factors most influences your food choices?

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage
Price	58	32.2
Taste	94	52.3
Convenience	16	8.8
Nutritional value	12	6.7

Interpretation

The above data show that Taste influence mostly the choice of food

3. How much are you willing to pay for sustainable food products?

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage
Nothing more than conventional food products	57	31
Up to 10% more	76	42.2
Up to 20% more	16	8.8
More than 20% more	31	18

Interpretation

In the Data we see that only 60 % people are interested in paying extra amount for food

4. What are the biggest challenges to making sustainable food choices?

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of information	65	36.2
Lack of availability	21	12
Higher price	86	48
Social norms and peer pressure	8	3.8

Interpretation

The many people think that biggest challenge is people don't have proper knowledge

5. What would help you to make more sustainable food choices?

Particulars	No.of Respondents	Percentage
More information about the environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption	25	14
More availability of sustainable food products	41	23

Lower prices for sustainable food products	101	56
Social norms and peer pressure that support sustainable food consumption	13	7

Interpretation

The data shows that we make more sustainable food choices by lowering the cost and providing high quality food.

Findings

These are Some major findings of our research paper

1. **Lack of awareness:** Many consumers are not aware of the environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption. This can make it difficult for them to make sustainable food choices.
2. **Higher price:** Sustainable food products are often more expensive than conventional food products. This can deter consumers from making sustainable food choices.
3. **Lack of availability:** Sustainable food products may not be as widely available as conventional food products. This can make it difficult for consumers to find and purchase sustainable food products.
4. **Social norms and peer pressure:** Social norms and peer pressure can influence consumers to make food choices that are not sustainable. For example, a consumer may be more likely to eat meat if their friends and family members are also eating meat, even if they have negative attitudes towards the environmental and social impacts of meat production.

Conclusion

The consumer attitude-behavior gap in sustainable food consumption is a complex problem with a variety of contributing factors. This research paper has identified some of the key factors that contribute to the gap, such as lack of awareness, higher price, lack of availability, and social norms and peer pressure. The paper has also discussed a number of strategies that can be used to reduce the gap, such as raising awareness, making sustainable food products more affordable and accessible, increasing the availability of sustainable food products, and changing social norms and peer pressure.

The findings of this research paper have a number of implications for sustainable food consumption policy and practice. Policymakers and industry players need to focus on raising awareness of the environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption, making sustainable food products more affordable and accessible, increasing the availability of sustainable food products, and changing social norms and peer pressure to support sustainable food consumption.

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