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A Study on Sustainable Purchasing Behaviour of Young Consumers in Coimbatore District

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ABSTRACT:

This study investigates the sustainable purchasing behavior of young consumers in Coimbatore, focusing on their awareness, motivations, challenges, and frequency of buying eco-friendly products. Using primary data from 134 respondents and secondary sources, the research analyzes how factors such as social responsibility, environmental concern, and digital influence shape consumer behavior. Findings reveal that while there is a growing interest in sustainable products, actual purchasing remains limited due to barriers like high costs, lack of awareness, and limited availability. The study highlights the vital role of education, marketing strategies, and supportive infrastructure in promoting sustainable consumption among youth, emphasizing their potential to drive environmentally responsible practices in the region.

INTRODUCTION:

Sustainability has become a critical global issue, with consumers—especially the youth—playing a key role in driving environmentally responsible behaviour. Coimbatore, a vibrant and growing city in Tamil Nadu, is seeing increasing awareness among youth regarding eco-conscious consumption. This study explores how young consumers are engaging in sustainable purchasing, what motivates them, and the barriers they face.

In recent years, the concept of sustainability has transcended academic discussions and entered the mainstream consciousness of consumers worldwide. Young consumers, in particular, are not only more aware of environmental issues but are also willing to adjust their consumption habits to support a greener planet. Their purchasing power and preferences play a vital role in reshaping market trends and encouraging businesses to adopt sustainable practices.

With Coimbatore rapidly urbanizing and home to a large youth population, understanding their attitudes toward green consumption is critical. This study provides insights into the behavioural patterns of young consumers, identifies the key motivators and deterrents for sustainable purchases, and explores how informed, eco-conscious decisions can contribute to environmental preservation and sustainable development.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

There is growing concern about climate change and pollution, prompting demand for green products. However, these products face challenges such as low awareness and higher costs. This study investigates the level of awareness, preferences, and behaviour regarding sustainable products among Coimbatore's youth. Although young consumers are more open to sustainable choices, their actual buying behaviour doesn't always align with their values. There exists a gap between intention and action in green purchasing. Many still prioritize affordability and convenience over sustainability. Furthermore, marketing strategies and product visibility for eco-friendly options are often inadequate.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To examine and understand the sustainable purchasing behaviour of the young generation in Coimbatore district.
- 2) To analyse the factors that influence consumers' buying decisions on green products.
- 3) To examine the role of digital platforms and social media in shaping behaviour.
- 4) To measure the green values of consumers.

- 5) To identify consumer behavioural patterns toward green marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research methodology is way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of study where research is done scientifically. It includes various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in study his research problem.

Area Of Study:

The study was conducted within Coimbatore.

Period Of Study:

The study covers the period of five months from November 2024 to March 2025.

Method Of Data Collection:

To accomplish the objectives of the study, both primary and secondary data were collected.

1. Primary Data

Primary data are those which are collected for specific purpose directly from the field of enquiry and original in nature. Such data are published by authorities by themselves are responsible for their collection. They are original and raw. The sampling used in the data is convenience sampling primary data have been collected from customer of Coimbatore district.

b) Secondary Data

As per the need of the research study the data combination has been decided. Data can be observed but not measured. It approximates or characterizes but does not measure the attributes, characteristics and properties of a thing or phenomenon. Secondary data have been collected from Journals, Publications, Books and Website of the company.

Collection Of Data:

The data was collected through questionnaire method. The data has been classified on the basis of age, education, qualifications, monthly income, and gender of the respondents. More than 20 variables have been considered in the study for analysis.

Sample Size:

To represent every segment of the universe the sample size included sufficient in number. For higher accuracy of the data very small and large sample sizes are avoided. The sample size selected is 134 which has been collected from the primary data and it is taken only from Coimbatore district.

Tools Used:

Analytical Tool: Percentage analysis

Presentation Tool: Charts

Percentage Analysis:

Simple Percentage:

In this project percentage, the method test was used to know the accurate percentage of the data we took, it is easy to graph out through the percentages. The following are the formula.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Number of Respondents}}{\text{Total Number of Respondent}} * 100$$

From the above formula, we can get percentages of the data given by the respondents.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Chan R Y K (2001)³, the purpose of this research is to impact numerous cultural and psychological aspects on Chinese consumers' green purchasing behaviour. The findings suggest that the individuals' attitudes about green purchasing are influenced by their man– nature orientation, collectivism, ecological effect, and, to a minor extent, ecological knowledge. Their attitudes toward green purchases, in turn, play a role in influencing their purchase behaviour. The findings suggest that cultural and psychological factors have a great impact on the behaviour under investigation.

Faison Afar Sheikh, Ashfaq Ahmed Mirza, Anam Aftab, Bilal Asghar (2014)⁵ conducted a study on Consumer green behaviour toward green products and green purchase decision. This research paper discusses how our economy's customers will buy green products and how they could make decisions

while doing it and. Customers who really are eco-friendly are more likely to buy eco- friendly products. It discusses what factors can influence customer green behaviour and decision -making. The overall aim of this study was to determine how customers will make green buying decisions and respond toward green products. The findings of this study where Consumer green behaviour has a great positive link with price, quality, and green marketing.

Aysel Boztepe, 2014. The author contributes to different dimension i.e. demographic factors in buying behaviour of consumers of European Union. The following table shows the influence as regards green products. This paper provided an insight to the researcher to pour in this dimension of demographic factors like age group and marital status into enquiry. As a result, the respondents are divided into age group of 18 to 35 and above 35 for Urban Consumers.

Jacqueline Ottoman June, 2011. In this paper speaks about the scope for marketing the green products and the author mentions about an encouraging fact for Green Marketer is that – Till 2009, 84 % have bought at least one green product and high number of them are talking about recycling. This focused on a sale of green products shall become the wave of tomorrow and environmentalists are indirectly supporting the demand creation for Green Marketing She refers to Green Guide Concept and rules to follow which talk about to innovate new products, packages and business models which show that the gap in tuning marketing efforts to Green Marketing.

Dr. S. M Yamuna¹⁵, A Study on Consumer Preference towards Green Marketing Products; says that according to research consumer demographic and socio-economic characters respond positive in purchasing green products moreover, respondents suggested that green products are low priced and eco-friendly. Green products generally use eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient means of production, thereby causing less or no detrimental impact on the environment.

PROFILE OF THE STUDY:

Sustainable industries integrate economic, social, and environmental goals. Initiatives such as the UN's Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have emphasized the importance of eco-friendly business practices. It encompasses a wide range of sectors including food, fashion, energy, personal care, packaging, and home appliances are all focusing on minimizing ecological impact.

In India, sustainability is emerging as a powerful trend, especially among urban youth who are more aware and active in adopting environmentally responsible lifestyles. The green product market includes items like organic food, eco-friendly apparel, reusable containers, energy-efficient appliances, and zero-waste personal care products. As consumers become more environmentally conscious, they demand transparency and ethical standards from the brands they support.

Coimbatore, known for its strong industrial base in textiles and engineering, is also witnessing a rise in sustainable startups and green businesses. These enterprises are promoting organic cotton, natural dyes, and eco-conscious fashion, tapping into a growing niche of responsible consumers. Retailers are increasingly stocking green alternatives to meet consumer expectations, while digital platforms and e-commerce are enhancing access and visibility. Though pricing remains a challenge, demand is on the rise due to heightened awareness, especially among youth.

Government policies, corporate responsibility initiatives, and sustainability education are key drivers of this industry's growth. The sustainable industry not only supports environmental goals but also fosters economic and social benefits through green jobs and ethical practices.

Key Roles of Sustainable Industry:

Sustainable industries play a vital role in protecting and restoring the environment. Here's a breakdown of their key contributions:

Reducing Pollution:

- Sustainable industries minimize air, water, and soil pollution through cleaner production processes, advanced filtration systems, and responsible waste management.
- They prioritize reducing greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to climate change mitigation.

Conserving Natural Resources:

- These industries emphasize efficient resource utilization, reducing the demand for raw materials and minimizing waste.
- They promote the use of renewable resources and implement circular economy principles, where materials are reused and recycled.

Protecting Biodiversity:

1. Sustainable practices often involve protecting and restoring natural habitats, promoting biodiversity, and avoiding harmful land-use changes.
2. This can include responsible forestry, sustainable agriculture, and conservation efforts.

Mitigating Climate Change:

1. A core function of sustainable industries is to reduce their carbon footprint.
2. This involves transitioning to renewable energy sources, improving energy efficiency, and adopting low-carbon technologies.

Promoting Responsible Waste Management:

1. Sustainable industries focus on reducing waste generation, increasing recycling rates, and safely disposing of hazardous materials.
2. They strive to minimize landfill waste and promote a circular economy.

Promoting Responsible Waste Management:

- i. Sustainable industries focus on reducing waste generation, increasing recycling rates, and safely disposing of hazardous materials.
- ii. They strive to minimize landfill waste and promote a circular economy.

In essence, sustainable industries strive to operate in a way that minimizes their environmental impact and contributes to a healthy planet.

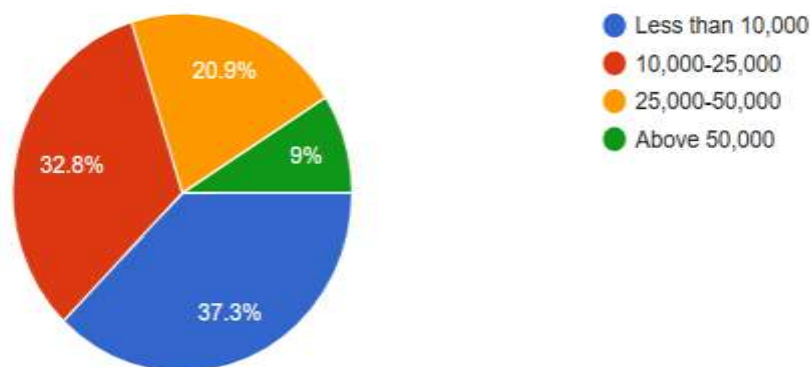
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA
SIMPLE PERCENTAGE METHOD**Monthly Income of the Respondents**

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Less Than 10,000	50	37.3
10,000-25,000	44	32.8
25,000-50,000	28	20.9
Above 50,000	12	9
Total	134	100

Interpretation:

This term shows the monthly income distribution of respondents in a study. The majority 37.3% earn less than 10,000 (presumably a local currency), followed by those earning 10,000-25,000 32.8%. A smaller percentage earn higher incomes, with only 9% earning above 50,000. The data is presented in both a table and a pie chart for easy visualization. The document also notes that the user's Office license may not be genuine.

Hence, 37.3% of the respondents with a significant majority earning relatively low incomes.

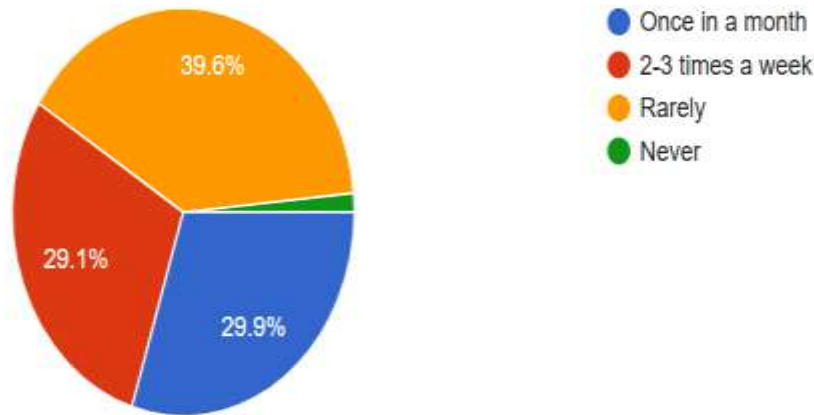
**How Often Sustainable Products Are Purchased by the Respondents**

How Often Do You Purchase Sustainable Products?	Frequency	Percentage
Once In a Month	40	29.9
2-3 Times a Week	39	29.1
Rarely	53	39.6
Never	2	1.5
Total	134	100

Interpretation:

When it comes to shopping frequency for various products like clothing, food, electronics, etc., 39 individuals shop 2-3 times a week, constituting 29.1% of the total; 2 individuals never shop, making up 1.5%; and 40 individuals shop once a month, representing 29.9% and 53 individuals were purchased rarely constituting 39.6%. Overall, there are 134 individuals in the dataset.

Hence, 39.6% of respondents purchase sustainable products "rarely."

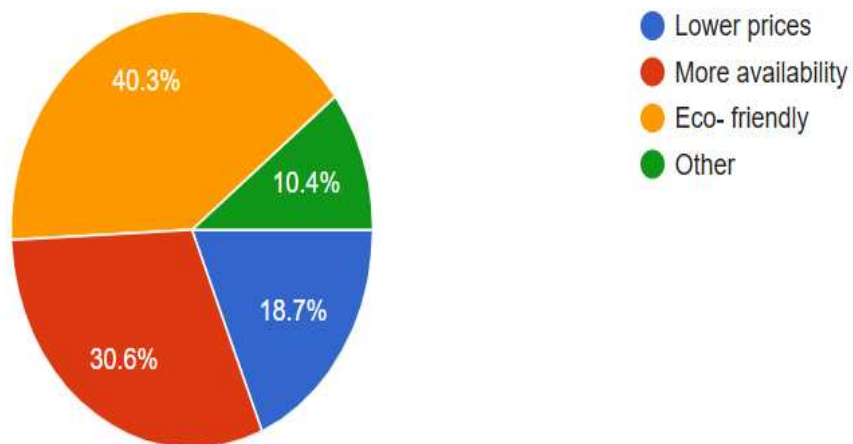
**Factor Encouraging Respondents to Buy More Sustainable Products**

What Factor Would Encourage You to Buy More Sustainable Products	Frequency	Percentage
Lower Prices	25	18.7
More Availability	41	30.6
Eco-Friendly	54	40.3
Other	14	10.4
Total	134	100

Interpretation:

This data reveals that the primary reason people would buy more sustainable products is if they were more eco-friendly 40.3%. Increased availability 30.6% and lower prices 18.7% are also significant factors. Other reasons combined make up a smaller portion 10.4%.

Hence, it is concluded as the majority 40.3% of respondents prefer eco- friendly products.

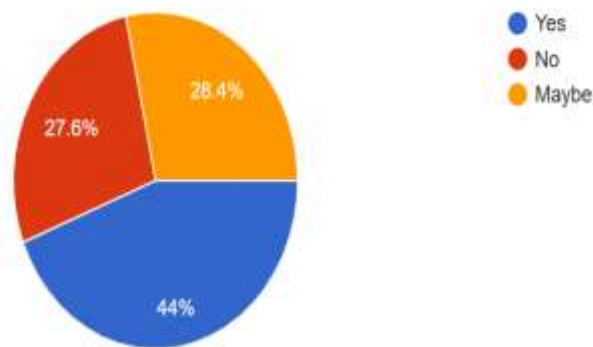
**Respondent's Growth in Sustainable Purchasing**

Do You See Yourself Increasing Your Purchases of Sustainable Products in Future	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	59	44
No	37	27.6
Maybe	38	28.4
Total	134	100

Interpretation:

A significant majority 59 individual respondents constituting of 44% of total that are indicated that they see themselves increasing their purchases of sustainable products in the future. A considerable portion of respondents either do not intend to increase 27.6% or are unsure 28.4% about increasing their sustainable product purchases. This combined percentage 56% indicates that while there's a positive trend.

Hence, majority of 44% of respondents indicated that they see themselves increasing their purchases of sustainable products in the future.

**FINDINGS:**

- The majority of the respondents with 37.3% of a significant earning relatively low income.
- The majority of respondents purchases sustainable products “RARELY” comprising 39.6% of the total.
- The majority 40.3% of respondents prefer eco- friendly products.
- The majority of 44% of respondents indicated that they see themselves increasing their purchases of sustainable products in the future.

SUGGESTIONS:

Understanding how young people in Coimbatore make choices about buying eco-friendly products are what this project is all about. We'll ask them questions to figure out what they like to buy, why they choose certain products, and what stops them from buying more sustainable. By looking closely at their answers, we hope to find out what really matters to them when they shop. Then, we'll share what we learn with businesses and leaders in the city so they can make changes that help young people buy more eco-friendly stuff. It's all about making it easier for everyone to make better choices for the planet. This can be done through educational programs and talks in schools and community centers. Next, make eco-friendly products more accessible and visible in stores, and provide information about their benefits. Additionally, offer discounts or incentives for buying sustainable goods to make them more appealing. It's also helpful to support local businesses that offer eco-friendly options and promote them within the community. Through these efforts, Coimbatore can nurture a culture of sustainability among its youth, ensuring a greener and healthier future for the city.

CONCLUSION:

In summary, fostering sustainable purchasing behaviour among Coimbatore's youth is crucial for cultivating a culture of environmental responsibility and conscious consumption. Through targeted educational initiatives, enhanced accessibility to sustainable alternatives, support for local eco- friendly businesses, and integration of sustainability principles into education, significant strides can be made in instilling lasting habits of mindful consumption among the city's youngsters. By empowering the youth to make informed decisions and emphasizing the importance of their role in shaping a sustainable future, Coimbatore can take meaningful steps towards creating a more environmentally resilient and socially equitable society for generations to come.