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EFFECT OF ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL REPUTATION ON CONSUMERS PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS RETAILERS PRACTICING SUSTAINABLE GROCERY PACKAGING

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of environmental knowledge and environmental reputation on consumer purchase behavior toward grocery retailers using sustainable packaging. As environmental concerns grow, especially in urban areas like Bangalore, understanding what motivates eco-conscious purchasing becomes essential. Due to the absence of accessible consumer databases and limited cooperation from retailers, the study employed a convenience sampling method. Data was gathered through a structured questionnaire, completed by 752 consumers who actively purchase grocery items with sustainable packaging. The questionnaire measured environmental knowledge, environmental reputation, and purchase intention using a five-point Likert scale. Reliability analysis confirmed that the scales were internally consistent. Results indicated that both environmental knowledge and environmental reputation significantly influence consumers' willingness to buy sustainably packaged products. Consumers who are more environmentally informed and who view retailers as environmentally responsible are more inclined to support those businesses. These findings highlight the importance of consumer awareness and brand reputation in promoting sustainable shopping behavior. The study offers practical insights for marketers and policymakers seeking to foster sustainable consumption. Strengthening environmental literacy and enhancing the green image of retail brands can encourage more responsible purchasing decisions. This research contributes to the growing field of sustainable consumer behavior in the retail context.

INTRODUCTION

Rising environmental concerns make sustainable consumerism in the retail industry more crucial especially for grocery packaging. Green grocery packaging consisting of biodegradable and recyclable as well as compostable materials determines consumer purchasing decisions directly. Traditionally packaged retailers are enhancing their environmentally friendly reputation which leads to beneficial effects on what shoppers buy. The use of environmental consciousness together with a positive retail image functions as a methodology to enhance the practice of sustainable consumption. Research data from (Trivium Packaging 2022) shows that the global transformation towards environment friendly packaging involves 86% of all individuals below 45 who have a preference for paying more for eco-friendly packages. The Bain & Company Global Consumer Lab discovered that sustainability ranks among the top four criteria which global consumers use to make purchase decisions while displaying a willingness to pay 12% more for sustainable products (Connors, 2024). In the Indian context, consumer awareness and preference for sustainable packaging are also gaining momentum. A survey by Bain & Company highlighted that 60% of Indian consumers are willing to pay a premium for sustainable products, reflecting a growing environmental consciousness (Her Circle, 2022). However, Mintel (2023) pointed out a gap between consumer attitudes and actions, noting that only 15% of Indian consumers regularly purchase products with sustainability claims.

Several factors determine how consumers decide to purchase sustainably packaged goods. Environmental knowledge leads to positive behavioral attitudes which support product purchasing decisions (Rahayu et al., 2024). The environment-based reputation of retailers establishes an important factor that modifies what shoppers decide to purchase. Consumers trust retailers with environmentally responsible practices therefore they choose sustainably packaged products from these retailers (Li et al., 2023). Research shows that sustainable packaging preferences from customers do not match their actual purchasing decisions because they choose what is most affordable and convenient (Martinho et al., 2015).

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Consumer understanding regarding sustainable packaging continues to rise throughout India's cities but reaches a greater level of awareness in urban areas like Bengaluru (Bhalla 2021). The study showed a direct relationship between environmental knowledge and purchase intentions and is weak although consumers show environmental concern so this does not result in environmentally sound purchases. Bengaluru stands as an ideal setting to study sustainable consumption because it has both technological progressiveness and environmentally conscious residents. Even though the city promotes a liberal attitude there exist significant challenges. People hold back from choosing sustainable packaged items because they hesitate about sustainability claims and they remain sensitive about prices. Deeper understanding is necessary is required comprehend the relationship between environmental awareness and retailer image with purchase behaviour. Significant measures should be developed based on this understanding to bridge the gap between purchasing decisions and environmentalism and promote sustainable consumption throughout Bengaluru and other urban settings.

Environmental knowledge encourages positive effects on green attitudes still it shows inconsistent results with regard to sustainable purchase behavior (Bhalla, 2021; Rahayu et al., 2024). Research shows storage environmental reputation works as an essential variable that shapes consumer trust levels and purchase behavior (Li et al., 2023). Limited research is conducted to examine the influence of environmental knowledge and retailers' environmental reputation on consumers purchase decision towards sustainably packaged grocery products in urban Indian cities like Bangalore. This study, therefore, seeks to address the following research questions: (1) What is the effect of environmental knowledge on consumer purchase behavior towards sustainably packaged grocery products? (2) How does the environmental reputation of retailer's impact consumer purchase behavior in this domain? In this direction, this study aims toe examine the effect of environmental knowledge and environmental reputation on consumers purchase behaviour towards retailers practicing sustainable grocery packaging

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Environmental Knowledge

Environmental knowledge refers to an individual's awareness and understanding of environmental issues and the impact of their consumption choices on the environment. Consumer purchasing behavior related to sustainably packaged groceries heavily depends on environmental understanding acquired by individuals. (Rahayu et al. 2024) demonstrated that environmental awareness has dual effects on green purchase intentions leading to them through environmental attitudes. Li et al. (2023) confirms that environmental knowledge together with green trust creates significant effects on customers' green purchase intentions and actual purchase activities. Bhalla (2021) the purchase intention for eco-friendly products grows stronger when people show environmental concern but environmental knowledge shows no direct relationship in the Indian marketplace. Environmental concern acted as an indirect link between ecological understanding and the intentions to buy environmentally friendly products. The research indicates that better environmental knowledge turns consumers into better decisions makers who buy products responsibly for the environment. Based on above discussion, following hypothesis is drawn:

H_1: Environmental knowledge significantly affects the purchase intention towards sustainably packaged grocery products

2. Environmental Reputation

Environmental reputation refers to the public perception of a company's promise to environmental sustainability, encompassing its practices, policies, and overall impact on the environment. This reputation significantly influences consumer purchasing behavior, especially concerning sustainably packaged grocery products. (Su et al. 2021) found that a retailer's environmental reputation directly and positively affects consumers' shopping behaviors, suggesting that consumers are more inclined to purchase from retailers perceived as environmentally responsible. Oliver et al. (2023), who observed that consumers' purchase intentions towards environmentally friendly grocery packaging are influenced by their perceptions of the retailer's environmental practices. Additionally, the availability of eco-labels and clear sustainability statements promotes consumer confidence, hence favorably influencing purchasing behavior (Chekima et al., 2016). Bhalla (2021) noted that although environmental consciousness affects purchasing intention, retailers' perceived environmental image significantly influences purchasing behavior. On the basis of the above discussion, following hypotheses is derived:

H_1: Environmental reputation significantly affects the purchase intention towards sustainably packaged grocery product.

METHODS

This study intends to investigate how environmental literacy and environmental reputation determine shoppers' willingness to buy grocery items with sustainable packaging. Consumers throughout Bangalore who engage in purchasing grocery products with environmentally friendly packaging make up the research population.

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Convenience sampling provided the research method because the wide-ranging database of such consumers did not exist and retailers refused to release customer information. The researcher could access crucial data from the sections of the population which were accessible. A structured questionnaire yielded 752 valid responses by collecting data from sustainable packaging grocery product buyers living in Bangalore. The questionnaire included measures for the three key variables—environmental knowledge, environmental reputation, and purchase intention. All items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. To ensure the reliability of the measurement instrument, Cronbach's alpha was computed for each construct using SPSS Version 23. All variables demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. This confirms that the constructs are reliable and appropriate for further statistical analysis. After the reliability test, regression analysis was performed to analyze the predictive relationship between the independent variables (environmental reputation and environmental knowledge) and the dependent variable (purchase intention). A regression model evaluated how much environmental awareness of retailers influences customer purchasing decisions for sustainably packaged groceries.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The main aim of the study is to examine the effect of environmental knowledge and environmental reputation on purchase intention towards sustainably packaged grocery products. The following analysis was conducted to test the reliability of the scale and determinants of sustainably packaged products purchase intention.

Table No.1- Reliability Analysis

Scale	Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Environmental Knowledge	7	0.821
Environmental Reputation	4	0.879
Purchase Intention towards Sustainable Grocery Products	5	0.916

Source: Primary Data

The results from reliability analysis in Table 1 appear to evaluate the measurement scales' internal consistency within the study. The researchers used Cronbach's Alpha (α) within SPSS Version 23 to compute reliability scores for Environmental Knowledge, Environmental Reputation and Purchase Intention towards Sustainable Grocery Products. All reliability coefficients for the three variables surpassed the accepted threshold of 0.70 which demonstrates superior internal consistency. Seven items in the Environmental Knowledge scale demonstrated a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.821 which indicates strong scale reliability. The selected items demonstrate their ability to measure consumer knowledge regarding environmental packaging concerns effectively. The reliability coefficient for the Environmental Reputation scale measured at 0.879 through its four items. The high value indicates strong compatibility among the measurement items which assess consumers' perceptions regarding retailer environmental standing and credibility. The Purchase Intention scale produced the highest reliability score of 0.916 from its five items thus demonstrating excellent internal consistency. The measurement scale demonstrates effective assessment of customer intentions to buy sustainable packaged grocery items. The survey results demonstrate that the measurement constructs exhibit both reliability and appropriateness for statistical analysis which strengthens the research findings.

Table No. 2a: Determinants of Purchase Intention towards Sustainably Packaged Grocery Products

Model Summary				
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.744a	.737	.741	.49221
a. Predictors: (Constant), Environmental knowledge and environmental reputation				

Source: Primary Data

The analysis of environmental knowledge and environmental reputation towards sustainably packaged grocery products shows its results in Table 2a. Research findings demonstrate that environmental knowledge together with environmental reputation explain 74.1% of the purchase intention variations. The model fit demonstrates a strong relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental reputation as important factors that drive consumer behavior in this setting. The independent variables demonstrate strong correlation with the dependent variable based on the R value of 0.744. The model predictions maintain high accuracy because the standard error of the estimate stands at 0.49221.

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Table no. 2b: Predictors of purchase intention towards sustainably packaged grocery products

Coefficients						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	t	Sig.
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	.711	.075		.632	.343
	Environmental Knowledge	.743	.081	**.7218**	16.032	**.000**
	Environmental Reputation	.735	.069	**.7484**	5.235	**.000**
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention towards Sustainably Packaged Grocery Products						

Source: Primary Data

The independent effects of environmental knowledge and environmental reputation on purchase intentions for sustainably packaged grocery products appear in Table 2b. The unstandardized coefficients from the analysis demonstrate environmental knowledge ($B = 0.743$, $p < 0.001$) and environmental reputation ($B = 0.735$, $p < 0.001$) as statistically important predictors of purchase intention with strong beta values at 0.7218 and 0.7484. T People with higher environmental awareness along with shops with strong green reputations tend to develop positive buying intentions towards products with sustainable packaging. The research supports findings presented in Wang et al. (2023) Journal of Cleaner Production which demonstrates that environmental knowledge leads to improved sustainable consumption patterns in urban retail spaces. The research of Lee and Chen (2022) presented in Sustainable Production and Consumption showed that urban consumers perceive brand environmental responsibility as a key factor determining their intent to buy eco-friendly packaged food products. Some literature presents a more complex interpretation despite many studies supporting the same findings. Gupta and Arora (2021) Research in Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services revealed that sustainable product prices which exceed consumer budgets prevent positive attitudes and awareness from becoming actual purchasing behavior.

According to Cho and Jin (2020) published in International Journal of Consumer Studies environmental reputation cannot independently affect purchase intentions because consumers need transparency and authenticity for trust to remain intact. The study based on Bangalore residents shows strong evidence of consumer mindset transformation through the high predictive power of both variables despite using consumer behavior in this particular metropolitan market for its analysis. The experiment data shows that each predictor works independently but also reveals an intensified combined effect which strengthens the purchase intention of potential customers. New scholarly research about sustainable education and modern retail messaging receives significant expansion from this study which demonstrates their growing importance in contemporary retail approaches. To build sustainable client segments retailers must invest resources both in environmental actions and communication systems for delivering sustainable information to their well-informed customers.

CONCLUSION

Through this research we have established that Consumer's environmental knowledge along with environmental reputation of businesses play a significant role in influencing the purchasing decision of consumers towards sustainably packed grocery items. Through this research we have also proved that consumers with environmental awareness prefer products which are eco-friendly and consumers also prefer retailers who have established a environmentally safe and sustainable practice. The study confirms that consumers' sustainable actions originate from the environmental knowledge they have acquired along with their assessment of environmental reputation in products. This research enhances conceptual understanding of consumer choices based on sustainability within fast-moving consumer goods stores and shopping centres. The research summarizes operational guidelines which help retail strategists and brand managers to implement effective strategies. Honest environmental initiative outreach along with consumer education expenses will build long lasting marketplace dominance along with customer loyalty programs. Public awareness initiatives and regulatory frameworks for authentic corporate sustainability need support from policymakers based on these research findings.

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