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“Mapping Consumer Perceptions Towards Sustainability in Retail in Bengaluru”

A dissertation report submitted in the partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master
of Business Administration

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Declaration

I confirm that this report titled "**Mapping Consumer Perceptions Towards Sustainability in Retail in Bengaluru**" truly represents my work undertaken as a part of my dissertation. I certify that this report represents my ideas in my own words and where others' ideas or words have been included, I have adequately cited and referenced the original sources. I also certify that I have adhered to all principles of academic honesty and integrity and have not misrepresented or fabricated or falsified any idea/data/fact/source in my submission. The work has not been submitted to any other Institute for any degree or diploma. I understand that any violation of the above will be cause for disciplinary action by the Institute and can also evoke penal action from the sources which have thus not been properly cited or from whom proper permission has not been taken when needed.

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This is to certify that **Mr. Abhishek Bhuyan**, Regn. No: **2023MMBA01ASB026** has completed the dissertation titled "**Mapping Consumer Perceptions Towards Sustainability in Retail in Bengaluru**" under my guidance as part of the dissertation, serving as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration.

Signature of Faculty Guide:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sanjeev S. Padashetty', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Name of the Faculty Guide: **Dr. Sanjeev S. Padashetty**

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Abstract:

In today's age, market dynamics are constantly being shaped by consumer's perceptions and attitudes towards sustainability and their eagerness to explore all the elements of this new dimension in consumerism, especially with the rise of environmental concerns. The purpose of this paper is to investigate, measure and report on the collective of consumer's attitudes and awareness relating to the use, consumption and preference of sustainable products and, to a broader effect, the degree of influence that eco-friendly themes have on the larger buying and purchase decisions, in Bengaluru, one of the most rapidly urbanizing cities in India, and it's often acclaimed "Silicon Valley".

This study utilizes a structured questionnaire that was distributed to a sample of 88 respondents, and through the responses we explore the key factors that influence, and shape consumer preferences linked to sustainability and adjacent themes. We also look at the market strategies, product attributes and individual values that help influence the behaviour of consumers towards sustainability.

The themes of sustainability and the variables of consumer perception are focused on the retail industry, which, in recent years has become notorious for having one of the largest carbon footprints and generating some of the most emissions and non-recyclable wastes due to packaging, return shipping, cost-effective but low-quality materials and unethical operations practices.

The study makes use of statistical methods to reveal important differences and discrepancies in consumer perceptions based on demographic factors such as age, income and education level, amongst a plethora of other marketing and human behavioural factors.

Our findings reveal a strong increase in the inclination among the consumers in Bengaluru towards sustainable products and services, which are driven by a heightened awareness and comprehension of environmental issues, current affairs and a more optimistic outlook towards corporate social responsibility. However, the findings also reflect some of the bigger challenges and hurdles that remain in skewing consumer's scepticism and reluctance towards a broader adoption of green products and sustainability in general consumeristic habits. The findings and insights generated from the study suggest that improving upon and tweaking the existing marketing strategies, product labelling and increased availability of sustainable options can help enhance consumer participation, adoption and engagement towards sustainable products.

1. Introduction:

The aim of this paper is to explore and study the perceptions of consumers towards sustainability in the Indian city of Bengaluru, which in the recent years has become one of the most affected by industrialization, pollution and rapid urbanization, leading to worsening of the city's environmental concerns. As more and more Indian and foreign corporations operating in India choose to adopt green marketing principles of business to influence and appeal to environmentally conscious consumers, it's a good mission to find out about the dynamics of the populace of Bengaluru towards sustainable practices.

The paper will help to investigate how different variables like environmental awareness, product attributes, ethical processes and brand image of the company help to persuade and guide sustainable purchasing decisions in Bengaluru. Thus, such factors can also help devise product innovation, advertising and marketing strategies and communication channels for other corporations, either already established or starting up in Bengaluru.

1.1 Background & Context:

Since the advent of the 1970s, the detrimental effects of the majority of environmental crises such as pollution, climate change, global warming and greenhouse gases amongst others was already known to be linked to industrial pollution. The growing awareness, education, broadcasting, campaigning, activism and regulatory measures of pollution and environmental degradation in general, have, in recent years, spurred many businesses, corporations, institutions and companies to either adopt, or promote marketing strategies that focus on the themes of eco friendliness, climate concerns or sustainability, among varied lines. The core reasons have always been to mitigate environmental damages, meet consumer demands and adapt to shifting public attitudes and outcry towards the increased awareness about the role of corporations towards environmental degradation (for example, the statistic that just 100 companies responsible for 71% of global emissions).

However, the biggest constraints have been meeting sustainability goals and targets set by global institutions and achieving profitability, without the increasing costs due to sourcing renewable, recyclable, biodegradable or ethical raw materials and procedures.

In recent years, the concept of green marketing has come to be defined by many reputed institutions, such as the American Marketing Association, to go beyond the scope of merely selling eco-friendly products and services; it also includes a review and study of a business's commitment to sustainability

via their operational processes, their manufacturing pipeline, their waste management and the disposal of by products and environmentally hazardous residue in their supply chain.

Consumer behaviour has hence shifted immensely, with growing segments of populations starting to prioritise values of sustainability, and ethical consumption in their marketing and consumption decisions and patterns. These values have led to increased demand and also a push to major corporations to incorporate more sustainable and ethical practices into their operations, marketing, campaigning and product development processes.

1.2 Key Concepts & Terminology:

1.2.1 Consumer Perception:

Consumer Perceptions are guided by three main elements or constituents: *Awareness, Attitude & Behaviour*. These three concepts that are used to analysed consumer perception in the world of business and marketing have themselves developed from the foundational theories set and explored in fundamental psychology and marketing studies.

Two main frameworks that are often cited for establishing a solid foundation for the importance of *awareness, attitudes, and behaviour* are the **Theory of Planned Behaviour** (Ajzen, 1991) and the **Attitude-Behaviour Consistency Models** (Kokkinaki, 1997). These two theories have led to a lot of literature being developed on the frameworks developed by Icek Ajzen and Martin Fishbein to emphasize the roles that attitude and awareness play in effectively determining behaviour and to a large extend, perception that guides decision making contexts, mostly for consumer decisions.

1.2.2 Sustainability in Retail:

Retail refers to the final stage in marketing where goods and products are actually sold to the consumers for non-commercial purposes or consumption (Marketing Principles, Cengage 2018). It represents the end stage of a firm's processes from production to selling and can be explained as the final end in the link of the supply chain from producers to consumers. Retail differs from wholesaling, as it is concerned with selling goods and services directly to consumers in quantities for their everyday consumption instead of mass bulking and selling for sale to other buyers, as is the case with wholesale.

Sustainability in retail is affected by the following factors, which has been used to craft questions for the consumer survey in this study. The answers recorded help us to record the perceptions of consumers in Bengaluru about the various dimensions and elements that are involved improving sustainability in the retail sector.

Factors affecting sustainability in retail:

- **Transparency and Traceability of Supply Chain and Logistics:** Providing consumers with information about the supply chain processes and sourcing of raw materials helps foster trust among consumers and stakeholders. It also helps them keep a track with how committed an organisation is about reducing or mitigating their environmental impact. For consumers who have a clear idea about their environmental and sustainability values, it helps to make informed purchase decisions while also making sure that a brand's sustainable goals are actually being enforced. Traceable supply chain systems help consumers understand risk factors and spot the common areas where an organisation might be most likely to avoid sustainable responsibilities, such as environmental violations and unethical labour sourcing and practices.
- **Consumer Awareness Vs. Demand:** While India continues to witness growing consumer awareness about environmental issues, climate change and the large dependence on non-biodegradable wastes in their everyday items of consumption (for example: India, with 86% has one of the largest percentage of population, globally, that believe in climate change), it's levels of incomes, GDP per capita and price sensitive markets still present a huge block that renders transitioning to sustainable models of manufacturing, recycling or CSR quite difficult or downright impossible for most smaller and medium sized industries than span across it's landscape.
- **Waste Management and Recycling Infrastructure:** Retail generates considerable amounts of packaging waste, while the recycling or waste management strategy remains rudimentary. Lack of appropriate scorecards on waste segregation and disposal policies especially in case of smaller retailing outlets. Expensive logistics solutions and associated costs among the retailers who wish to use circular packaging or implement all-card recycling in the stores.
- **High Costs of Sustainable Alternatives:** The retail packaging, materials and eco-friendly procedures tend to be more expensive than the conventional one which may affect the retail pricing. The cost of producing green products is higher as they are manufactured on small scales due to use of organic materials. Sustainability, the more expensive proposition is not embraced by many consumers who are price sensitive.
- **Regulatory and Compliance Issues:** Adherence to sustainability comes at a cost and the levels of compliance differed from one state to another and countries which were border to each other. Different policies that were in place in the certain regions and the absence of strategy on a national level which catered for retail sustainability. Guidelines concerning compliance are vague

or not coherent which means increased operational costs and challenges to the retailers who want to comply to sustainability.

- **Digitalization and Technological Gaps:** There is technology that could reduce carbon footprints by tracking them, however many retailers especially the small ones are not able to use such advanced technologies. There has been little digital transformation in the old-style retail industries and the technology solution has high upfront cost. Absence of the ability to utilize digital solutions brings the deficiency in the tracking of sustainability metrics as well as in the managing of resources effectively.

1.3 Scope of the Study:

This study aims to understand the consumer perception towards sustainability within the retail sector in Bangalore, which is characterized by a rich urban mix and a rapidly growing retail industry. The research will seek to understand how the consumers know, feel and act with respect to retailing and sustainability and factors such as awareness level at which consumers know green products, how much they trust the green claims and their attitude towards buying from green companies will be addressed. Its primary focus will be on household shopping covering the brick-and-mortar shops as well as the online shops since dwellers of Bangalore hold diverse shopping patterns.

The study will tackle six fundamental barriers to the implementation of sustainability in the retail supply chain: **supply chain transparency, consumer awareness and demand, waste management practices, the expense of sustainable substitutes, regulations and compliance requirements**, and the integration of information technology in support of sustainability strategies. Data for the study will be collected using a structured survey, which will be administered to at least 88 respondents in order to capture a cross-section of the population of Bangalore. Although the study is confined to Bangalore geographically and considers only the retail subsector, its results are expected to be useful in providing practical understanding of the current consumer attitudes and behaviours regarding sustainability that are identified in the study and therefore directions for future research and the industry.

2. Literature Review:

In the past few years, much literature and research has emerged to connect the dots between rising environmental awareness and consequential perceptions about consumerism and business practices between consumers and corporations. For example, the rise in importance of Corporate Social Responsibility, which among others, denotes a corporation's commitment towards sustainability, has been well documented and covered; from an optional brand quality to something that most companies strive for, to maintain consumer goodwill and abide by regulations regarding business practices.

We glance over some of the literature review and firstly arrive at how (Vyas, 2009) have defined consumer behaviour as a collection of actions that help to guide individuals along the processes of recognizing their needs, aggregating information, evaluating alternatives, making purchase decisions and reacting to external stimuli. As a result, the integration of sustainable marketing strategies and measures have emerged as a viable strategy for corporations that often come with a bonus of cost savings over the long term and garnering a sense of environmental responsibility. (Young, 2010) asserts that in this new world of ecofriendly marketing, optimizing the 4 Ps can go a long way to promote and even naturalise the usage of environmentally friendly products and services, thereby helping the concerned organisation to successfully align with its goals.

One of the factors that Bougherara (2014) found out was that product labelling immensely helped in driving positive consumer perceptions regarding sustainable overtones in marketing. It was found that clearly labelling the products about information, steps or activities of the organisation in making or distributing the product, helped in increasing the chances of environmentally conscious customers purchasing the product ^[12]. It was also found that the strongest performative factors were attitudes towards environmental issues, knowledge through education and pricing, however, product quality and performance also served as catalysts for buying probability. A study taken by (Tukker, 2015) also found similar links between product labelling and consumer purchase decisions.

Another important factor that's been known to influence consumer perceptions towards eco-friendly products is the concept of Brand reputation. A study (Ottman, 2006) found that consumer variables like trust and purchase decisions can be significantly affected by a corporation's image for being environmentally friendly and responsible. Also, the role of corporate social responsibility has been linked to positively draw consumer interest towards sustainable marketing practices of the organisation.

2.1 Literature Review for Retail Sustainability:

Sustainability in retail is defined as placing environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable practices throughout a firm's whole value chain. Retail organizations are increasingly coming under pressure to become much more responsible and sustainable in their operations with the mounting challenge of the global issues of climate change, resource depletion, and widening social gaps. The literature encompassing academicians and industry discusses every aspect of sustainability in retail: supply chain transparency, consumer awareness and behaviour, waste management, cost barriers, regulatory compliance, and adoption of digital technologies. This review is a more detailed exploration of current practices, challenges, and trends for every one of these aspects.

Supply Chain Transparency:

Supply chain transparency is quite fundamental in sustaining retailing, as it should ensure that materials are ethically sourced, and products are environmentally friendly. According to different studies, not all retailers can manage transparency due to the complexity of the global supply chain, no matter how many other stakeholders a supply chain involves across different regions (Kumar & Chandrasekaran, 2022). That is how critical these issues are when it comes to ensuring sustainability practices at every level.

Emerging technologies like blockchain help companies to track and monitor the products and raw materials sourced right from the sourcing phase to final delivery to the end-user. Blockchain provides an immutable record of transactions, fostering trust among stakeholders (Wang et al., 2021). For example, apparel companies such as Patagonia provide traceability tools that allow customers to gain comprehensive information regarding products, thereby promoting a sustainable culture.

It also demands joint efforts of suppliers for transparency. With this scenario, retailers can work with suppliers to create a collaborative sustainable solution that would generate mutual advantages. For example, Marks & Spencer's Plan A emphasizes collaboration to enhance the practice of sustainable sourcing in the supply chain. However, supply chain transparency remains one of the most challenging problems for most small and medium-sized retailers who lack advanced technology and resources.

Consumer Awareness and Demand:

Consumer awareness is the other force in advocating for sustainability in retail. According to research, people are becoming more concerned with sustainability in products, yet a gap remains between the articulated value and actual behaviours of action. This behaviour gap is one widely used term to

describe the "value-action gap" (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Perceived inconvenience, higher costs, and less information contribute to this gap. Retailers are incorporating education campaigns and clear labelling in order to fill this gap. Certification programs such as Fair Trade, LEED give customers confidence in the choices they make by supporting the sustainability claims. For example, IKEA educates customers about its renewable and recyclable products through in-store displays and online platforms on the environmental benefits.

Another strategy to influence consumer choice is through behavioural nudges. How placing sustainably sourced products at eye level or using green labelling increases purchases has been quite effective. However, this kind of practice is limited to a small number of widespread adoption due to many retail outlets hinging on short-term profitability rather than long-run sustainability goals.

Waste Management:

Retail creates significant waste sources-waste generated by the packaging of products, unsold stock including food waste in grocery. Waste management has become the most essential area of sustainability in retail. There is significant usage of circular economy models for reducing the environment footprint among the organizations. Circular economy models specify reusing, recycling, and repurposing materials to create closed-loop systems (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017).

For instance, H&M and The North Face have taken-back programs that encourage customers to return used products for recycling or resale. Such initiatives both conserve waste and enhance customer engagement and loyalty to the brand. Take-back initiatives can help grocery retailers deal with food waste in the following ways: charge affordable prices on near-expiry goods or partner with food banks. For instance, Tesco's "No Time for Waste" initiative successfully diverts surplus food to charities. However, despite such success, barriers are still immense towards the creation of widespread circular economy practices. The infrastructure is lacking and costly; consumers are still reluctant to buy used products; and, in many instances, the policy support of the regulatory does not sufficiently encourage systemic reduction in the levels of waste.

Cost Barriers to Sustainability:

The major drawback both to retailers and consumers is the high price point with sustainable alternatives. Sustainable materials such as organic cotton or recycled plastics are more expensive than their conventional equivalents. Such costs are then amplified by the investment costs necessary for starting new sustainable technologies or restructuring supply chains (Stewart & Niero, 2018).

Cost barriers can be easy to reduce through scale economies because bigger production volumes are usually characterized by reduced per-unit costs. Retailers such as Unilever and Walmart use their global reach to obtain better contract terms from suppliers for sustainable materials. New business models such as subscription-based services or product-as-a-service (PaaS) models enable cost-effective ways to promote sustainability. For instance, Rent the Runway's renting of clothes effectively cuts consumer costs by reducing waste.

Government subsidies and tax incentives also save costs. Financial assistance on the usage of renewable energy or sustainable packaging materials can push retailers to become more environmentally responsible. However, most of these programs are region-specific and therefore cannot be employed throughout the world in the same proportion.

Regulatory and Compliance Factors:

Regulatory frameworks are highly influential for sustainability practice in retail. Governments worldwide increasingly introduce tighter rules in curbing carbon emissions, improving sustainable sourcing, and waste minimization. For instance, the European Union has the Green Deal that aims to make Europe carbon-neutral by 2050 and issues specific mandates to industries- one of which is retail.

Generally, compliance with these regulations requires investments in new technologies, ecologically friendly materials, and monitoring systems. This might prove burdensome for the big retailers; however, some of the smaller businesses often face problems regarding compliance.

Voluntary standards and certifications also spur sustainability. For example, ISO 14001, an environmental management system program, offers guidelines on how retailers can more effectively practice sustainability. Critics counter that voluntary certifications contribute to "greenwashing"; wherein companies widely publicize environmental commitments without many concomitant actions being taken (Lozano et al., 2021).

Digital Technology Adoption:

The adoption of digital technologies is changing the face of retail sustainability. AI, IoT, and big data analytics have empowered retailers in optimizing their operations, improving customer engagement, and minimizing environmental impacts (Ghadge et al., 2020). For example, AI-driven demand forecasting helps retailers avoid overproduced items and prevent inventory waste.

IoT technologies, smart sensors included, enable retailers to track their energy consumption levels and the profile of emissions from the supply chain besides properly managing waste. Walmart, for instance, is using IoT-enabled refrigeration systems that help it reduce food spoilage and save energy.

E-commerce platforms, too, use the power of big data to suggest sustainable products to consumers by analysing their search history and purchases.

However, such innovations are also plagued with challenges of high implementation costs, data privacy issues, and the requirement of appropriately skilled persons. Additionally, digital solutions need careful integration into broader sustainability strategies in view of deriving the most positive unintended consequences that include reducing electronic waste.

Future Trends and Directions:

Sustainability in retail is evolving, with new trends shaping the industry's future. One such trend is the shift toward localized production and distribution, reducing carbon emissions associated with long-distance transportation. Brands like Zara are experimenting with nearshoring to manufacture products closer to their primary markets, balancing sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Another area of growth is the increase in renewable energy sources applied in retail operations. Installation of solar panels, wind turbines, and design for building energy efficiency is becoming increasingly prevalent in reducing operation emissions. For example, IKEA aims to become climate-positive by 2030 and is also investing in renewable energy and sustainable forestry.

Consumer co-creation also is on the rise where retailers get customers to co-create sustainable products and services. Crowdsourcing ideas and feedback drives innovation and makes sure that what is created in terms of sustainable offerings matches consumer preferences.

Gamification to induce sustainable behaviours in consumers is the final creative approach. Rewards in the form of apps and loyalty programs for eco-friendly behaviour such as recycling or purchasing sustainable products will stimulate engagement and may eventually drive long-term behavioural change.

3. Research Methodology:

3.1 Research Design:

This study maps consumer perceptions toward sustainability within the retail sector in Bengaluru by adopting a descriptive research design. Descriptive research is suitable to capture some insights about consumer awareness, attitudes, and behaviours regarding sustainability. The survey researcher focuses quantifying perceptions using a structured survey and analyses data in order to understand the patterns and relationships that characterise the six identified challenges related to sustainability in the retail industries.

3.2 Sampling Technique:

The adopted sampling method is convenience sampling, which comes under a non-probability sampling method. It has been adopted on account of it being convenient along with the accessibility factor since it gets highly influenced by time and resource constraints. The questionnaire had been provided to the researcher's personal network so that all respondents belonged to Bengaluru. Even though this method provides efficient means of data collection, it does have the disadvantage of lacking the representation factor.

3.3 Structure of the Questionnaire:

The questionnaire aims to collect consumer awareness, attitudes, and behaviours on six critical challenges in retail sustainability. The questions are constructed with clarity and simplicity, so as to not confuse the ordinary consumer. Hereunder is the outline of the questionnaire.

1. **Demographics:** Simple questions that touch on age, gender, education level, occupation and income.
2. **Awareness:** For instance: "Do you know how sustainability practice can be maintained in the retail trade?"
3. **Attitudes:** For example, "How important do you believe it is for retail to become more sustainable?"
4. **Behaviours:** Example: "How often do you make purchases that are sustainable?"
5. **Specific Sustainability Challenges:** Supply chain transparency, waste management, regulatory factors, digital technology adoption, etc.

3.4 Sample Size:

The current sample size is 88 respondents, who are residents of Bengaluru themselves, completing the survey using the Google Form. This sample collects a preliminary dataset, and efforts are on to further increase the sample size with a view to enhance the robustness of the analysis. The sample reflects diverse demographic profiles capturing variations in different age groups, occupation patterns, and levels of income.

3.5 Statistical Tools Used:

To obtain meaningful insights from such data, a variety of statistical tools and techniques are used to analyse the survey data:

1. Descriptive Statistics: It provides mean, median along with percentage distributions to summarize the overall data describing central tendencies of responses.

2. Chi-Square Goodness-of-Fit Test: Find out if the observed distributions of categorical responses- for instance, awareness levels or attitudes-exhibit a fit to hypothesized expected distribution under the null hypothesis.

3. One Sample Proportion Test

4. Results & Discussions:

4.1 Data Analysis:

S. No.	Particulars	Choices	Number
1	Gender	Male	42
		Female	44
		Prefer not to say	2
2	Generation/Age Group	Baby Boomers: Born 1946 to 1964 (Ages 60–78)	7
		Generation X (Gen X): Born 1965 to 1980 (Ages 44–59)	14
		Millennials (Generation Y): Born 1981 to 1996 (Ages 28–43)	44
		Generation Z (Gen Z): Born 1997 to 2012 (Ages 12–27)	21
		Generation Alpha (Gen Alpha): Born 2013 to present (Ages 0–11)	2
3	Highest level of education	PG (MBA, MTech, MSc. Etc)	56
		UG (BTech, BA, BSc. etc.)	27
		Diploma	2
		12 th or below	3
4	Monthly income	<20,000	10
		20,000 – 40,000	21
		40,000 – 65,000	30
		>65,000	27

5	Are you aware of how or where the retail products you purchase are sourced?	Yes, I actively seek out this information	30
		I know a little, but don't actively look for details	44
		No, I don't consider this information	14
6	How much do you trust that retail brands are truthful about their sourcing and sustainability claims?	Strongly Trust	6
		Somewhat trust	35
		Neutral	34
		Distrust	12
		Strongly distrust	1
7	Would you be more likely to buy from a brand that provides clear, detailed information on product origins and ethical sourcing?	Definitely	23
		Probably	35
		Unsure	27
		Probably Not	3
		Definitely Not	
8	If retailers provided a QR code or label to verify product origins and sustainable sourcing, would this influence your purchasing decision?	Yes, greatly	26
		Yes, somewhat	45
		Not much	17
		No, not at all	

9	How important is it to you that products you buy are made using environmentally friendly methods?	Extremely Important	27
		Somewhat important	36
		Neutral	19
		Not very important	6
		Not at all important	
10	Have you ever chosen a sustainable product over a non-sustainable alternative, despite a higher price?	Yes, often	19
		Yes, occasionally	41
		Rarely	22
		Never	6
11	Where do you usually get information about sustainability in retail?	Social media	19
		News/media	21
		Store Labels & information	27
		Family/friends	14
		I don't actively look out for this information	7
12	How likely are you to encourage friends or family to buy from eco-conscious brands?	Very Likely	19
		Somewhat likely	37
		Neutral	28
		Somewhat unlikely	4
		Very unlikely	
13	How often do you see in-store recycling or waste-reduction options in retail stores in Bengaluru?	Very often	12

		Occasionally	32
		Rarely	20
		Never	8
		Not sure	16
14	Would you recycle or reuse packaging if more retail stores offered recycling stations or bins?	Yes, definitely	26
		Yes, if convenient	37
		Maybe	17
		Probably Not	7
		No, never	1
15	How likely are you to avoid stores that use excessive, non-recyclable packaging?	Very likely	14
		Somewhat Likely	32
		Neutral	33
		Unlikely	8
		Not at all likely	1
16	Do you think Bengaluru retail stores do enough to minimize waste and promote recycling?	Yes, they do a lot	6
		They do some, but could do more	35
		They do very little	17
		They do nothing at all	3
		Unsure	27
17	How affordable do you generally find eco-friendly products compared to regular ones?	Much more affordable	10
		Slightly more affordable	15
		About the same	12
		Slightly more expensive	33
		Much more expensive	18

18	Would you be willing to pay a premium (e.g., 5–10% more) for products with sustainable packaging or materials?	Yes, definitely	12
		Yes, probably	23
		Maybe	27
		Probably not	18
		No, not all	8
19	What is the highest premium you would be willing to pay for a sustainable product?	No premium	19
		Up to 5%	37
		Up to 10%	15
		Up to 15%	14
		More than 15%	3
20	Do you think sustainable retail products are priced fairly in Bengaluru?	Yes, they are fairly priced	8
		They are somewhat overpriced	34
		They are very overpriced	23
		Unsure	23
21	Are you aware of any government initiatives or regulations promoting sustainability in retail?	Yes, I am well aware	22
		Somewhat aware	39
		No, not at all aware	27
22	Do you believe government regulations should require retailers to provide more sustainable options?	Strongly agree	19
		Agree	33
		Neutral	28

		Disagree	5
		Strongly disagree	3
23	How much responsibility do you think the government should have in enforcing sustainable practices among retailers?	Major responsibility	29
		Moderate responsibility	30
		Minor responsibility	14
		No responsibility	3
		Unsure	12
24	How often do you check a brand's website or app for information on its sustainability practices?	Very often	21
		Occasionally	28
		Rarely	27
		Never	12
25	Would you find it helpful if retail stores provided digital tracking (e.g., through an app) of the environmental impact of their products?	Yes, very helpful	19
		Somewhat helpful	45
		Neutral	21
		Not helpful	3
26	Do you think digital tools (e.g., apps, QR codes) make it easier to shop sustainably?	Strongly agree	20
		Agree	33
		Neutral	31
		Disagree	3
		Strongly Disagree	1

27	How willing would you be to use an app to track your own sustainable purchases in retail?	Very willing	19
		Somewhat willing	38
		Neutral	26
		Unwilling	4
		Very unwilling	1

4.2 Hypothesis Testing:

4.2.1: Association between generations and seeking out product sourcing:

We will perform a Chi – Square test to determine whether belonging to a particular generation increases the likelihood of actively seeking out information about product sourcing.

H0: There exists no association (or dependency) between generational age group and seeking awareness of product sourcing.

H1: There exists an association (or dependency) between generational age group and seeking awareness of product sourcing.

Survey Response Data:

Generation/Age Group:

- Baby Boomers: 7
- Gen X: 14
- Millennials: 44
- Gen Z: 21
- Gen Alpha: 2

Awareness of Product Sourcing:

- Actively seek out information: 30.
- Know a little but don't actively look: 44.
- Don't consider this information: 14.

Therefore, Chi-Square Statistic (χ^2): 2.682

p-value: 0.953

Degrees of Freedom (dof): 8

Interpretation:

The p-value is much higher than standard significance level (0.05). Hence, we fail to reject our null hypothesis (H_0).

Conclusion:

Generation/Age group and product sourcing awareness: There is no significant correlation between generation/age group and awareness of product sourcing from the collected data. Therefore, it means that age groups do not have an influence on the activeness of searching for product sourcing information.

4.2.2: Consumer trust in sourcing and sustainability:

To see if consumers in Bengaluru trust in general the claims of retail brands regarding sourcing and sustainability, we could conduct a One-Sample Proportion Test to see if the proportion of respondents who say they trust (strongly trust or somewhat trust) is significantly more than a neutral baseline, say, 50%.

Data Extracted:

From the survey question:

- **Strongly trust:** 6
- **Somewhat trust:** 35
- **Neutral:** 34
- **Distrust:** 12
- **Strongly distrust:** 1

Total respondents = 88

Trusting Responses = 6 + 35 = 41

Proportion = 0.466

H0: The proportion of consumers that trust retail on their sourcing and sustainability claims is 0.5 (p=0.5).

H1: The proportion of consumers that trust retail on their sourcing and sustainability claims is less than 0.5 (p<0.5).

Therefore, test statistic (z value) = -0.64

p-value = 0.261

Interpretation:

Since the p value (0.261) is greater than the significance level (0.05), we are unable to reject the null hypothesis.

Conclusion:

There is not enough evidence to be confident with the conclusion that a less than 50% proportion of consumers in Bengaluru believe in sustainability claims that retail brands are making. This essentially means that the proportion of those who are trusting may not be much different from an arbitrary neutral baseline of 50%. Still, the proportion actually observed—that is, 46.6%—shows the promise of increasing consumer trust.

5. Conclusion:

5.1 Key Findings:

The survey data provides valuable insights into consumer perceptions and behaviours regarding sustainability in the retail sector in Bengaluru. The key findings are summarized as follows:

1. Consumer Awareness and Trust:

- Awareness of Sourcing: While 34% of respondents actively seek information on product origins, a significant portion (50%) knows a little but does not actively search, and 16% do not consider this information.

- Trust in the Validity of Sustainability Claims: 46.6% of the respondents somehow believe the retail brands, with 6% trusting them completely and 40% trusting them somewhat; the percentage of neutral responses is at 39%, while 15% distrust them.

2. Purchase Intentions and Motivators:

Transparency Impact: 66% of the respondents (23% of whom definitely and 43% probably) will purchase from those brands that share sufficient information regarding the sourcing process.

- Use of Technology: 81% are positive (45% strongly, 36% somewhat) to use QR codes or labels for the verification of origin of products.

3. Sustainability Practices:

- Recycling and Waste Minimization: Though 70% were willing to recycle/reuse the packaging material if the retail stores were facilitating such an act, still 63% of the respondents felt that retail stores in Bengaluru should do more to minimize waste.

- Overpackaging: 52% of respondents will avoid shops with too much, non-recyclable packaging, which is an indicator of increasing environmental concerns.

4. Willingness to Pay for Sustainability:

- Premium Pricing: There is a 40% willingness to pay a 5–10% premium for sustainable packaging, but affordability is a challenge: 58% of respondents believe that eco-friendly products cost a little bit or much more than non-eco-friendly ones.

5. Government and Regulation:

- Role of the Government: 67% of respondents agree the government should force retailers to supply sustainable options, which reflects the apparent effectiveness of governmental regulations in promoting sustainable conduct.

6. Behavioural Tendencies:

- Sustainable Choices: 68% of the respondents have sometimes or frequently opted for sustainable products although more expensive.

Encouraging Sustainability: 64% likely to refer green brands to others. Strong word-of-mouth potential for sustainable retailers.

5.2 Recommendations:

- **Increase Transparency and Trustworthiness:** Label origin of products, sustainability practices by retailers to gain more confidence in consumers. Use technologies such as QR codes or digital trackers that can verify sourcing claims; in fact, 81% report such technologies useful.
- **Recycling, Reduction of Waste:** Install recycling centres within retail stores and encourage reuse of packaging, as 70% would be willing to do so if such facilities are readily available. Remove unnecessary packaging and ensure using recyclable material to connect with 52 percent of consumers who would abandon evil brands.
- **Give Cost Affordability:** Give affordable green products or show long-term value and impact of environmentally friendly buy. Consider price tiers that account for a variable capacity to pay premium for there is 40 percent of consumers who will pay 5-10 percent more for the sustainable packaging.
- **Leverage consumer advocacy:** Ask happy consumers to refer to their "friend" or refer sustainable brands as 64% of respondents were eager to participate in word-of-mouth activities for sustainability. Partner with influencers and community leaders to amplify the sustainability message.
- **Engage with Policy and Regulation:** Collaborate closely with government bodies to influence more favourable policies that promote sustainability practices and offer incentives for compliance. Establish public-private partnerships to educate consumers on what the government is doing toward sustainability.

5.3 Some Potential Future Research Areas:

- **Consumer Segmentation:** Conduct targeted studies in particular demographical groups, such as Gen Z or Millennials, and understand what motive and what barriers are associated with such groups for adopting sustainable practices.
- **Economic Impact of Sustainability:** Study whether sustainable practice is cost-effective to the retailers and whether they reduce longer-term consumer loyalty. Premium price threshold at which consumers are willing to pay across various segments of income.
- **Behavioural Insights:** Understand the psychological triggers that make an individual put his trust in and ultimately buy a product. Social norm understanding and environmental awareness. Elucidate the behaviour of digital tools, such as mobile applications and tracking devices, on consumer's behaviours toward sustainability.
- **Innovation of Technology in Retail:** Discuss the ability and implications of adopting new technologies like blockchain to enhance supply chain transparency and consumer confidence.

Analyse the access and adoption rate of track-and-trace technologies for improving sustainability reporting.

- Policy Effectiveness: Analyse the retail sustainability through the impact of current government policies or legislation and identify areas needing a policy shift. Analyse the use of incentives like tax exemptions or subsidies to incentivize retailers to make environment-friendly decisions.

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