

Impact of Eco-Friendly packaging on consumer purchase intention: Evidence from Surat city

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Abstract

The increasing environmental concerns related to plastic pollution and unsustainable consumption patterns have enhanced the importance of eco-friendly packaging in influencing consumer behaviour. The present study examines the impact of eco-friendly packaging on consumer purchase intention among consumers in Surat city. The study specifically evaluates the influence of awareness, consumer attitude, environmental concern, social influence, price sensitivity, and brand trust on sustainable purchasing behaviour. A quantitative research methodology was adopted, and primary data was collected from 100 respondents through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. Statistical tools such as descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha, correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and hypothesis testing were applied to analyze the collected data.

The findings reveal that environmental concern recorded the highest mean score (Mean = 3.472), followed by awareness (Mean = 3.438), indicating positive consumer perception toward sustainable packaging. Reliability analysis showed strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.85 for all constructs. Correlation analysis indicated that consumer attitude had the strongest positive relationship with purchase intention ($r = 0.635$). The regression analysis revealed that the model explained 60% of the variation in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.600$). Consumer attitude ($\beta = 0.282$, $p = 0.001$), awareness ($\beta = 0.175$, $p = 0.050$), social influence ($\beta = 0.214$, $p = 0.015$), and brand trust ($\beta = 0.241$, $p = 0.007$) showed significant positive influence on purchase intention, whereas price sensitivity demonstrated a significant negative influence ($\beta = -0.348$, $p = 0.000$). Environmental concern showed a positive but statistically insignificant relationship with purchase intention.

The study concludes that eco-friendly packaging significantly influences sustainable buying behaviour, particularly among younger and educated consumers. The findings provide valuable insights for businesses, marketers, and policymakers in designing effective sustainable packaging strategies and promoting environmentally responsible consumption practices.

Keywords: Eco-Friendly Packaging, Sustainable Packaging, Consumer Purchase Intention, Green Marketing, Environmental Concern, Brand Trust, Sustainable Consumer Behaviour

Introduction

Environmental sustainability has become one of the most significant global concerns in the twenty-first century due to increasing pollution, climate change, excessive waste generation, and depletion of natural resources. Rapid industrialization, urbanization, and consumerism have substantially increased environmental pressure, particularly through the large-scale use of non-biodegradable materials such as plastic packaging. Packaging waste contributes significantly to landfills, marine pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions, making sustainable packaging practices essential for environmental protection and long-term ecological balance. According to Steenis *et al.* (2017) [13], packaging sustainability has emerged as a critical component of corporate environmental responsibility because consumers increasingly evaluate products based on their environmental impact in addition to price and quality. Plastic pollution has become a major global challenge because conventional plastic packaging materials require hundreds of years to decompose and often contaminate ecosystems. Single-use plastics are widely used in food, retail, pharmaceutical, and consumer goods industries due to their low cost and convenience; however, their harmful environmental consequences have increased public concern regarding sustainable alternatives. Governments,

environmental organizations, and businesses worldwide are promoting sustainable packaging practices such as biodegradable, recyclable, reusable, and compostable packaging solutions to reduce environmental damage and encourage responsible consumption behaviour (Wandosell *et al.*, 2021) [17].

The sustainable packaging industry has experienced remarkable growth over the past decade because of rising environmental awareness and increasing consumer demand for environmentally responsible products. Businesses are increasingly investing in sustainable packaging innovation to strengthen brand image, achieve regulatory compliance, and gain competitive advantage in environmentally conscious markets. Research conducted by Magnier and Schoormans (2015) [9] indicates that eco-friendly packaging positively influences consumer perception and improves product attractiveness by communicating environmental responsibility and ethical values. Consequently, sustainable packaging has evolved from a functional protective mechanism into a strategic marketing and branding instrument.

The growth of environmental awareness has also accelerated the shift toward green consumerism. Green consumers are individuals who prefer products and services that minimize environmental harm and support sustainability practices.

Modern consumers increasingly consider ecological factors while making purchasing decisions and prefer brands that demonstrate social and environmental responsibility. Young *et al.* (2010) ^[19] observed that environmentally conscious consumers are more likely to support sustainable products and eco-friendly packaging because they perceive such purchases as contributions toward environmental protection. As a result, businesses are integrating sustainability into product development, packaging design, and marketing communication to satisfy evolving consumer expectations and improve long-term customer loyalty.

Concept of Eco-Friendly Packaging

Eco-friendly packaging refers to packaging materials and processes designed to minimize environmental impact throughout their lifecycle. Sustainable packaging aims to reduce resource consumption, waste generation, and environmental pollution by using recyclable, biodegradable, reusable, or renewable materials. According to Delmas and Lessem (2017) ^[2], eco-friendly packaging serves both environmental and marketing functions by reducing ecological harm while enhancing brand credibility and consumer trust.

Eco-friendly packaging includes several forms such as biodegradable packaging, compostable packaging, recyclable packaging, reusable containers, paper-based packaging, plant-based bioplastics, and packaging manufactured from agricultural waste materials like bagasse. Companies are increasingly adopting sustainable packaging alternatives to replace traditional plastic materials and reduce carbon emissions associated with packaging production and disposal. Sustainable packaging practices also involve reducing unnecessary packaging layers, optimizing material usage, and promoting circular economy principles where packaging materials are reused or recycled efficiently.

Modern businesses consider sustainable packaging an important strategic component because it directly influences corporate reputation, customer perception, and market competitiveness. Eco-friendly packaging enhances a company's image as an environmentally responsible organization and strengthens emotional connection with environmentally conscious consumers. Rundh (2009) ^[12] emphasized that packaging acts as a silent marketing tool influencing consumer attitudes and purchase decisions at the point of sale. Consequently, organizations increasingly use sustainable packaging to differentiate products, build customer trust, and support long-term sustainability goals.

Consumer Purchase Intention

Consumer purchase intention refers to the likelihood or willingness of consumers to buy a particular product based on their perceptions, attitudes, preferences, and behavioural motivations. Purchase intention is considered an important predictor of actual buying behaviour because consumers generally evaluate products before making purchase decisions. Factors such as product quality, price, packaging, brand image, environmental responsibility, and social influence significantly affect consumers' intention to purchase products.

Consumer decision-making behaviour involves several stages including problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation. In recent years, environmental

consciousness has become an important factor influencing consumer buying decisions. Consumers increasingly prefer products that align with their personal values, ethical beliefs, and environmental concerns. Koenig-Lewis *et al.* (2014) ^[7] reported that eco-friendly packaging positively affects consumer purchase intention by enhancing perceived value and environmental responsibility associated with products.

The growing trend of green consumer behaviour indicates that consumers are becoming more supportive of sustainable products and environmentally responsible brands. Green consumers actively seek products with minimal environmental impact and often prefer companies adopting ethical and sustainable business practices. Otto *et al.* (2021) ^[10] found that positive attitudes toward sustainable packaging significantly strengthen consumers' willingness to purchase eco-friendly products. However, green purchasing behaviour is also influenced by economic factors such as price sensitivity and product affordability.

Relationship Between Eco-Friendly Packaging and Purchase Intention

Previous research indicates a strong relationship between eco-friendly packaging and consumer purchase intention. Sustainable packaging influences consumer perception by creating positive associations related to environmental responsibility, ethical business practices, and product quality. Consumers often perceive products packaged in environmentally friendly materials as safer, healthier, and more socially responsible than conventionally packaged products (Steenis *et al.*, 2017) ^[13].

Eco-friendly packaging also strengthens consumer trust and loyalty toward brands. Brands using sustainable packaging are frequently perceived as transparent, responsible, and environmentally conscious. Delmas and Lessem (2017) ^[2] observed that sustainable packaging positively influences brand trust because consumers associate environmentally responsible packaging with ethical corporate behaviour. Similarly, Kaur and Singh (2023) ^[6] reported that eco-friendly packaging contributes to long-term customer loyalty by improving brand image and emotional attachment among environmentally aware consumers.

From a marketing perspective, eco-friendly packaging serves as an important branding and promotional tool. Sustainable packaging communicates corporate values and differentiates products in competitive markets. Attractive eco-friendly packaging designs, environmental labels, and sustainability claims influence consumer attention and encourage sustainable purchasing decisions. As consumers increasingly prioritize environmental responsibility, organizations use eco-friendly packaging to strengthen brand positioning and improve market competitiveness.

Indian Market Context

India has experienced significant growth in sustainability awareness and environmentally responsible business practices in recent years. Increasing environmental concerns, plastic waste management challenges, and government regulations have accelerated the adoption of sustainable packaging across various industries. Businesses in food, retail, FMCG, e-commerce, and pharmaceutical sectors are increasingly shifting toward recyclable and biodegradable packaging alternatives to comply with environmental standards and satisfy consumer expectations.

Consumer awareness regarding environmental sustainability has also increased substantially in urban India. Educated and younger consumers are becoming more conscious about the environmental impact of packaging materials and prefer products using sustainable packaging practices. Studies indicate that urban consumers increasingly evaluate brands based on sustainability initiatives, ethical values, and environmental responsibility. Social media campaigns, environmental activism, and digital awareness programs have further strengthened green consumer behaviour in metropolitan and emerging urban markets.

The Government of India has introduced several policies and initiatives to reduce plastic pollution and encourage sustainable packaging adoption. Policies such as bans on single-use plastics, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and Swachh Bharat initiatives promote environmentally responsible packaging practices and waste management systems. These government initiatives have encouraged companies to adopt eco-friendly packaging solutions and invest in sustainable product development.

Research Problem

Despite increasing environmental awareness and rising adoption of sustainable packaging practices, several challenges continue to affect consumer response toward eco-friendly packaging. Although consumers generally support environmental sustainability, their actual purchasing behaviour often differs from their environmental attitudes. Many consumers still prioritize price, convenience, and product quality over sustainability considerations during purchase decisions.

A major challenge for businesses is the lack of clear understanding regarding consumer perception and behavioural response toward eco-friendly packaging. While some consumers actively support sustainable packaging, others remain indifferent due to limited awareness, skepticism regarding environmental claims, or low perceived value. In addition, price sensitivity remains a significant barrier because sustainable packaging materials often increase production costs and product prices. Prendergast and Pitt (1996) ^[11] noted that consumers frequently hesitate to pay premium prices for environmentally friendly products despite expressing positive attitudes toward sustainability.

Another important issue is the limited availability of regional empirical studies examining eco-friendly packaging and purchase intention in emerging Indian urban markets. Most previous studies have focused on developed countries or large metropolitan cities, while smaller urban regions such as Surat city remain relatively unexplored. Therefore, it is important to examine how environmental concern, consumer attitude, social influence, and price sensitivity collectively influence purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaging.

Research Gap

The review of existing literature reveals several important research gaps. First, most previous studies on eco-friendly packaging and consumer purchase intention have been conducted in developed economies, whereas limited empirical evidence is available from emerging Indian urban markets such as Surat city. Consumer behaviour patterns may differ significantly across geographical and cultural contexts, making regional studies necessary for accurate understanding.

Second, many studies have independently examined variables such as environmental concern, brand trust, consumer attitude, and purchase intention; however, fewer studies have integrated these variables into a comprehensive research framework. There is a need for integrated model studies that simultaneously examine the influence of awareness, environmental concern, social influence, price sensitivity, and brand trust on purchase intention.

Third, limited research has used advanced empirical statistical analysis to evaluate the relationship between eco-friendly packaging and purchase intention among Indian consumers. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill these gaps by providing empirical evidence based on consumers in Surat city using advanced statistical techniques.

Research Objectives

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze consumer awareness and perception regarding eco-friendly packaging.
2. To examine the impact of eco-friendly packaging on consumer purchase intention.
3. To evaluate the influence of environmental concern on sustainable purchasing behaviour.
4. To analyze the role of brand trust in influencing purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaged products.
5. To examine the effect of price sensitivity on consumers' willingness to purchase eco-friendly products.

Significance of the Study

Academic Significance

The study contributes to existing literature related to sustainable marketing, green consumer behaviour, and eco-friendly packaging by providing empirical evidence from an emerging Indian urban market.

Managerial Significance

The findings will help organizations understand consumer perception toward sustainable packaging and design effective green marketing strategies to improve customer engagement and brand positioning.

Social Significance

The study promotes awareness regarding environmental sustainability and encourages responsible consumer behaviour supporting eco-friendly packaging practices.

Literature Review

1. Conceptual Background

Sustainable Packaging Concept

Sustainable packaging has emerged as a significant component of environmental management and green business strategy due to increasing global concerns regarding pollution, climate change, and resource depletion. Sustainable packaging refers to packaging solutions designed to minimize environmental impact throughout the product life cycle by reducing waste generation, resource consumption, and carbon emissions. According to Steenis *et al.* (2017) ^[13], sustainable packaging includes recyclable, reusable, biodegradable, and compostable materials that support environmental protection while maintaining product quality and functionality. Businesses increasingly adopt sustainable packaging practices to improve environmental

performance, strengthen brand image, and comply with government regulations related to waste management and sustainability.

The concept of sustainable packaging is closely associated with circular economy principles, which emphasize material reuse, recycling, and waste reduction. Modern organizations are shifting from traditional plastic packaging toward eco-friendly alternatives such as paper-based materials, biodegradable plastics, plant-based packaging, and agricultural waste products like bagasse. Wandosell *et al.* (2021) ^[17] observed that sustainable packaging positively influences consumer environmental perception and supports long-term sustainability goals by reducing ecological harm and promoting responsible consumption behaviour.

Green Marketing Concept

Green marketing refers to the process of promoting products and services based on their environmental benefits and sustainable characteristics. Green marketing strategies focus on reducing environmental impact while satisfying consumer needs through environmentally responsible production, packaging, distribution, and communication practices. According to Delmas and Lessem (2017) ^[2], green marketing has become an important competitive strategy because modern consumers increasingly prefer brands demonstrating social responsibility and environmental commitment.

Eco-friendly packaging is considered one of the most visible elements of green marketing because packaging directly communicates environmental responsibility to consumers during the purchase process. Magnier and Schoormans (2015) ^[9] found that sustainable packaging design positively affects consumer perception by enhancing product attractiveness and brand credibility. Green marketing practices not only improve environmental performance but also strengthen customer trust, emotional attachment, and long-term brand loyalty.

Consumer Behaviour Theories

Consumer behaviour theories explain how individuals make purchasing decisions based on psychological, social, cultural, and environmental influences. In the context of sustainable consumption, consumer behaviour theories emphasize environmental awareness, ethical values, personal beliefs, and social responsibility as major determinants of green purchasing decisions. Consumers increasingly evaluate products based on sustainability attributes such as recyclable packaging, environmental friendliness, and corporate ethical practices.

Research conducted by Young *et al.* (2010) ^[19] indicated that environmentally conscious consumers demonstrate stronger preference toward eco-friendly products because sustainability aligns with their personal values and environmental concerns. Similarly, Otto *et al.* (2021) ^[10] reported that positive attitudes toward sustainable packaging significantly increase consumers' willingness to purchase environmentally responsible products. Therefore, consumer behaviour theories provide an important foundation for understanding the relationship between eco-friendly packaging and purchase intention.

Theoretical Foundation

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), developed by Ajzen (1991) ^[1], is one of the most widely used theories for explaining consumer behavioural intentions and decision-

making processes. According to TPB, consumer behaviour is influenced by three major factors: attitude toward behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In the context of eco-friendly packaging, consumers with positive attitudes toward sustainability are more likely to purchase environmentally responsible products.

Subjective norms refer to social pressure or influence from family, peers, and society that affects consumer behaviour. Perceived behavioural control represents consumers' belief regarding their ability to perform sustainable purchasing behaviour. Lianita *et al.* (2024) ^[8] applied TPB to examine eco-friendly packaging and found that environmental concern, social influence, and positive attitudes significantly influence purchase intention among Generation Z consumers.

Value-Belief-Norm Theory

The Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory explains pro-environmental behaviour based on personal values, environmental beliefs, and moral responsibility. According to this theory, consumers who strongly value environmental protection develop positive environmental beliefs that encourage sustainable purchasing behaviour. Steg (2009) ^[14] reported that consumers with stronger environmental values are more likely to support eco-friendly products and packaging practices because they perceive sustainable behaviour as a moral responsibility.

The VBN theory suggests that environmental awareness positively influences ethical consumption behaviour and sustainable purchasing decisions. Consumers who recognize environmental threats and believe their actions can reduce ecological harm are more willing to purchase products using sustainable packaging materials.

Green Consumer Behaviour Theory

Green Consumer Behaviour Theory focuses on consumers who prefer environmentally friendly products and support sustainable business practices. Green consumers actively consider environmental consequences while making purchasing decisions and often prioritize sustainability over convenience or traditional product attributes. According to Testa *et al.* (2015) ^[16], environmentally conscious consumers demonstrate stronger purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaged products because sustainability reflects ethical and socially responsible consumption behaviour.

The theory also emphasizes that green purchasing decisions are influenced by environmental knowledge, social influence, product perception, and personal values. As environmental awareness increases globally, green consumer behaviour has become an important determinant of market demand for sustainable products and packaging solutions.

Previous Studies on Eco-Friendly Packaging **Global Studies**

Global research on eco-friendly packaging has significantly increased due to growing environmental concerns and sustainability initiatives. Magnier and Schoormans (2015) ^[9] examined sustainable packaging design and found that eco-friendly packaging positively affects consumer perception and product attractiveness. The study concluded that natural packaging elements improve emotional response and environmental credibility among consumers.

Steenis *et al.* (2017) ^[13] investigated consumer responses toward sustainable packaging and observed that eco-friendly packaging improves product evaluation, perceived quality, and purchase intention. Similarly, Delmas and Lessem (2017) ^[2] reported that sustainable packaging enhances brand trust and consumer confidence because environmentally responsible packaging communicates transparency and ethical business behaviour. Wandosell *et al.* (2021) ^[17] focused on circular packaging systems and concluded that recyclable packaging positively influences environmental perception and sustainable purchasing behaviour. Otto *et al.* (2021) ^[10] also found that positive attitudes toward sustainable packaging significantly strengthen consumer purchase intention.

Indian Studies

Indian studies indicate growing awareness regarding sustainable packaging among urban consumers. Gupta and Singh (2025) ^[3] examined consumer behaviour in tier-three Indian cities and found that environmental consciousness positively affects consumers' attitudes toward eco-friendly packaging. The study concluded that sustainable packaging significantly influences purchase intention and brand preference among environmentally aware consumers. Kaur and Singh (2023) ^[6] reported that eco-friendly packaging improves brand image and customer loyalty in the Indian market because consumers associate sustainable packaging with ethical and responsible organizations. Indian consumers, especially younger and educated individuals, increasingly prefer environmentally friendly products and packaging alternatives.

Sector-Specific Studies

Sector-specific studies have examined sustainable packaging in industries such as food, FMCG, cosmetics, retail, and e-commerce. Research indicates that eco-friendly packaging significantly affects consumer buying behaviour in food and beverage industries where packaging directly influences perceptions of safety and quality. Studies in the FMCG sector show that sustainable packaging improves brand differentiation and enhances consumer trust. In the e-commerce industry, sustainable packaging has become increasingly important because online shopping generates substantial packaging waste. Companies are adopting recyclable and minimal packaging solutions to reduce environmental impact and improve sustainability performance.

Consumer Purchase Intention Studies Buying Behaviour

Consumer buying behaviour refers to the process through which individuals select, evaluate, and purchase products based on their needs, preferences, and attitudes. Purchase intention is considered an important predictor of actual buying behaviour because consumers generally form intentions before making purchase decisions. Koenig-Lewis *et al.* (2014) ^[7] found that eco-friendly packaging positively influences buying behaviour by improving perceived product value and environmental responsibility.

Sustainable Consumption

Sustainable consumption refers to purchasing behaviour that minimizes environmental harm and supports long-term ecological sustainability. Consumers increasingly prefer products that align with environmental values and ethical

beliefs. Young *et al.* (2010) ^[19] reported that environmentally conscious consumers are more likely to support products packaged in sustainable materials because they perceive such purchases as environmentally responsible behaviour.

Ethical Purchasing

Ethical purchasing involves selecting products based on social, ethical, and environmental considerations. Consumers practicing ethical consumption often evaluate products beyond traditional attributes such as price and quality. Testa *et al.* (2015) ^[16] found that ethical consumers demonstrate stronger purchase intention toward eco-friendly products because sustainability reflects corporate social responsibility and environmental commitment.

Environmental Concern and Brand Trust

Environmental Awareness

Environmental awareness refers to consumers' understanding of environmental issues and their willingness to support sustainable practices. Consumers with higher environmental concern are more likely to purchase products packaged in eco-friendly materials. Young *et al.* (2010) ^[19] observed that environmental awareness significantly influences ethical purchasing behaviour and sustainable consumption decisions.

Brand Image

Brand image represents consumers' perception and evaluation of a company or product. Eco-friendly packaging positively contributes to brand image because consumers associate sustainability with responsibility and ethical business practices. Delmas and Lessem (2017) ^[2] found that sustainable packaging strengthens corporate credibility and improves brand perception among environmentally conscious consumers.

Consumer Trust

Consumer trust refers to the confidence consumers place in a brand's reliability, honesty, and ethical practices. Eco-friendly packaging improves consumer trust because sustainable practices signal environmental responsibility and transparency. Kaur and Singh (2023) ^[6] reported that sustainable packaging strengthens customer loyalty and emotional attachment by enhancing trust toward environmentally responsible brands.

Price Sensitivity and Sustainable Buying Premium Pricing Issues

One of the major challenges associated with eco-friendly packaging is premium pricing. Sustainable packaging materials often involve higher production costs compared to conventional packaging alternatives. Prendergast and Pitt (1996) ^[11] reported that although consumers appreciate environmentally friendly products, many hesitate to pay higher prices for sustainable packaging.

Consumer Affordability

Consumer affordability significantly affects sustainable purchasing behaviour. Price-sensitive consumers may prioritize economic considerations over environmental benefits while making purchasing decisions. Research indicates that affordability remains an important barrier preventing large-scale adoption of eco-friendly products.

Value Perception

Value perception refers to consumers' evaluation of product benefits relative to cost. Consumers are more willing to purchase eco-friendly products when they perceive sustainable packaging as offering quality, environmental benefits, and long-term value. Wang (2025) ^[18] found that consumers often associate sustainable packaging with superior product quality and ethical value.

Social Influence and Digital Awareness

Social Media Effect

Social media platforms play a significant role in increasing awareness regarding sustainable packaging and environmental responsibility. Sustainability campaigns, online discussions, and environmental content positively influence consumer attitudes toward eco-friendly products. Sun *et al.* (2022) ^[15] found that social media significantly improves awareness and purchase intention related to sustainable packaging.

Influencer Impact

Digital influencers increasingly shape consumer opinions regarding sustainability and ethical consumption. Influencers promoting environmentally friendly lifestyles and products encourage followers to adopt sustainable purchasing behaviour and support eco-friendly brands.

Word-of-Mouth Influence

Word-of-mouth communication from family members, peers, and social groups significantly affects consumer perception toward eco-friendly products. Positive recommendations increase consumer confidence and encourage environmentally responsible purchasing behaviour.

Critical Literature Analysis

Comparative Discussion

Most previous studies consistently indicate that eco-friendly packaging positively affects consumer perception, environmental responsibility, and purchase intention.

Researchers generally agree that sustainable packaging strengthens brand image, trust, and consumer satisfaction. Studies conducted in developed and developing economies both support the growing importance of sustainable consumption behaviour.

Similarities and Contradictions

Although the majority of studies report positive relationships between eco-friendly packaging and purchase intention, some contradictions exist regarding consumers' willingness to pay premium prices. While environmentally conscious consumers express positive attitudes toward sustainability, actual purchase behaviour is often constrained by affordability and price sensitivity. Some studies indicate strong consumer preference for sustainable products, whereas others suggest that economic considerations continue to dominate purchasing decisions.

Research Gap

Unexplored Variables

Previous studies have primarily focused on environmental awareness and purchase intention independently, while fewer studies have integrated variables such as social influence, brand trust, environmental concern, and price sensitivity into a single empirical framework.

Regional Research Gap

Limited empirical research has been conducted specifically in emerging Indian urban markets such as Surat city. Consumer perception and sustainable buying behaviour may differ across regional, cultural, and demographic contexts.

Methodological Gap

Many earlier studies relied on descriptive analysis, while limited research has applied advanced statistical techniques such as regression analysis, reliability testing, and factor analysis to examine eco-friendly packaging and purchase intention relationships comprehensively.

Summary Table of Literature Review

Author	Year	Variables	Methodology	Findings	Gap
Magnier & Schoormans	2015	Sustainable packaging, perception	Experimental Study	Eco-friendly packaging improves perception and attractiveness	Limited emerging market focus
Young <i>et al.</i>	2010	Environmental awareness, buying behaviour	Consumer Survey	Environmental concern influences ethical purchasing	Limited urban Indian studies
Koenig-Lewis <i>et al.</i>	2014	Sustainable packaging, purchase intention	Quantitative Study	Sustainable packaging increases purchase intention	Limited demographic analysis
Steenis <i>et al.</i>	2017	Packaging sustainability, perception	Experimental Research	Sustainable packaging improves quality perception	Limited price sensitivity focus
Delmas & Lessem	2017	Eco-labels, brand trust	Survey Research	Sustainable packaging enhances trust and transparency	Limited regional studies
Testa <i>et al.</i>	2015	Ethical purchasing, sustainability	Quantitative Analysis	Environmental awareness affects purchase behaviour	Lack of integrated variables
Wandosell <i>et al.</i>	2021	Circular packaging, consumer perception	Empirical Study	Recyclable packaging improves environmental perception	Limited developing economy focus
Otto <i>et al.</i>	2021	Sustainable attitude, purchase intention	Literature Review	Positive attitude increases buying intention	Limited empirical validation
Sun <i>et al.</i>	2022	Social media, sustainable behaviour	Survey Method	Social media improves sustainability awareness	Limited Indian context
Kaur & Singh	2023	Brand trust, eco-friendly packaging	Empirical Research	Sustainable packaging improves loyalty and trust	Limited focus on affordability
Lianita <i>et al.</i>	2024	TPB, purchase intention	SEM Analysis	Environmental concern affects buying intention	Limited regional comparison
Gupta & Singh	2025	Environmental consciousness, packaging	Quantitative Study	Sustainable packaging influences Indian consumers	Limited Surat-based analysis

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

1. Introduction

The growing importance of environmental sustainability has significantly influenced consumer purchasing behaviour and organizational marketing strategies. Eco-friendly packaging has emerged as a critical factor affecting consumer perception, brand image, and purchase intention in modern markets. Consumers increasingly prefer products packaged in environmentally responsible materials because such packaging reflects sustainability, ethical business practices, and environmental concern. Previous studies have identified several behavioural and psychological factors influencing consumer response toward eco-friendly packaging, including awareness, consumer attitude, environmental concern, social influence, brand trust, and price sensitivity (Koenig-Lewis *et al.*, 2014; Steenis *et al.*, 2017)^[7, 13].

A conceptual framework provides a systematic structure for understanding the relationship between independent and dependent variables in a research study. It helps explain how different factors collectively influence consumer purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaged products. The present study develops a conceptual framework based on previous literature and consumer behaviour theories such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Green Consumer Behaviour Theory. The framework examines how awareness, consumer attitude, environmental concern, social influence, price sensitivity, and brand trust affect purchase intention among consumers in Surat city.

The conceptual framework serves as the foundation for hypothesis development and empirical analysis. It enables the researcher to identify direct relationships between variables and evaluate the significance of each factor influencing sustainable purchasing behaviour. Based on existing literature and theoretical understanding, the present study proposes six hypotheses examining the influence of eco-friendly packaging-related variables on consumer purchase intention.

2. Identification of Variables

The present study includes both independent and dependent variables derived from existing literature related to eco-friendly packaging, green marketing, and consumer purchase behaviour.

Independent Variables

Awareness

Consumer awareness refers to the level of knowledge and understanding consumers possess regarding eco-friendly packaging, sustainability practices, and environmental impact. Awareness plays a crucial role in influencing sustainable purchasing decisions because informed consumers are more likely to support environmentally responsible products. Previous studies indicate that higher sustainability awareness positively influences consumer preference toward eco-friendly packaging (Young *et al.*, 2010)^[19].

Consumer Attitude

Consumer attitude represents an individual's positive or negative evaluation of eco-friendly packaging and sustainable products. Positive attitudes toward environmental sustainability significantly affect consumers' intention to purchase eco-friendly products. Research conducted by Otto *et al.* (2021)^[10] found that favourable

attitudes toward sustainable packaging increase willingness to purchase environmentally friendly products.

Environmental Concern

Environmental concern refers to the extent to which consumers care about environmental protection and sustainability issues. Consumers with strong environmental concern are more likely to engage in ethical consumption behaviour and support sustainable packaging practices. Steg (2009)^[14] observed that environmental values and personal responsibility positively influence environmentally responsible purchasing behaviour.

Social Influence

Social influence refers to the impact of family members, friends, peers, social media, and society on consumer buying decisions. Recommendations, environmental campaigns, and social media awareness significantly affect sustainable purchasing behaviour. Sun *et al.* (2022)^[15] reported that social influence positively shapes consumer attitudes toward eco-friendly products and packaging.

Price Sensitivity

Price sensitivity refers to the extent to which consumers' purchasing decisions are affected by product pricing. Although consumers may support sustainability initiatives, many remain hesitant to pay premium prices for eco-friendly products. Price sensitivity is considered a major barrier affecting sustainable purchase intention because environmentally friendly packaging often increases product costs (Prendergast & Pitt, 1996)^[11].

Brand Trust

Brand trust refers to consumers' confidence in a brand's reliability, honesty, and environmental commitment. Sustainable packaging positively influences brand trust because consumers associate eco-friendly practices with ethical and socially responsible organizations. Delmas and Lessem (2017)^[2] found that environmentally responsible packaging enhances brand credibility and customer loyalty.

Dependent Variable

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention refers to consumers' likelihood or willingness to purchase products packaged in environmentally friendly materials. It represents the probability that consumers will choose eco-friendly packaged products over conventionally packaged alternatives based on their perceptions, attitudes, and sustainability preferences. Purchase intention is widely used in consumer behaviour research as an important predictor of actual buying behaviour.

Conceptual Framework Diagram

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable in the study. Awareness, consumer attitude, environmental concern, social influence, and brand trust are expected to positively influence consumer purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaged products. In contrast, price sensitivity is expected to negatively influence purchase intention because consumers may avoid purchasing eco-friendly products when they perceive them as expensive.

The framework is based on the assumption that environmentally aware consumers with positive attitudes and strong trust toward sustainable brands are more likely to purchase eco-friendly packaged products. Social influence and environmental concern further strengthen sustainable buying behaviour, while high price sensitivity may reduce consumers' willingness to purchase environmentally friendly products.

Hypotheses Development

H1: Awareness positively affects purchase intention.

H2: Consumer attitude positively affects purchase intention.

H3: Environmental concern positively affects purchase intention.

H4: Brand trust positively affects purchase intention.

H5: Price sensitivity negatively affects purchase intention.

H6: Social influence positively affects purchase intention.

Research Methodology

1. Introduction

This chapter explains the research methodology adopted to examine the impact of eco-friendly packaging on consumer purchase intention in Surat city. It includes the research philosophy, approach, design, data sources, sampling method, data collection procedure, and statistical tools used for analysis.

2. Research Methodology Design

The present study is based on the positivism research philosophy, which focuses on objective measurement and quantitative analysis of consumer behaviour using statistical techniques. A deductive research approach was adopted in which hypotheses were developed from existing theories and tested using empirical data collected from respondents. The study follows both descriptive and explanatory research design to understand consumer perception and examine the relationship between eco-friendly packaging and purchase intention. Quantitative research methodology was used, and data was collected through structured questionnaires from consumers in Surat city. Primary data was gathered directly from respondents, while secondary data was collected from research journals, books, Scopus-indexed articles, government reports, and websites for literature review and theoretical support.

3. Research Instrument

Structured Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was used for data collection.

Likert Scale

A five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree was used to measure respondents' opinions.

4. Sampling Design

The study focuses on consumers purchasing packaged products in Surat city, Gujarat. A non-probability convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from respondents based on accessibility and willingness to participate in the survey. The total sample size of the study consists of 100 respondents from different areas of Surat city.

5. Data Analysis Tools

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha), correlation analysis, regression analysis, and hypothesis testing to examine the relationship between eco-friendly packaging factors and consumer purchase intention.

6. Ethical Considerations

Respondents participated voluntarily, and all responses were kept confidential and used only for academic purposes.

7. Limitations of Methodology

The study is limited to 100 respondents from Surat city and uses convenience sampling, which may affect the generalizability of findings.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. Demographic Profile

This section presents the demographic characteristics and descriptive statistics of respondents regarding eco-friendly packaging and consumer purchase intention. A total of 100 respondents from Surat city participated in the study. Among them, 59% were male and 41% were female. The majority of respondents belonged to the 21–30 years age group (50%), followed by respondents below 20 years (34%). In terms of education, most respondents were undergraduates (38%) and postgraduates (29%), while students represented the largest occupational group (56%).

2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Awareness	3.438	0.982
Consumer Attitude	3.186	1.034
Purchase Intention	3.152	0.967
Price Sensitivity	2.930	1.073
Environmental Concern	3.472	0.916

Interpretation

Environmental concern recorded the highest mean score (3.472), indicating strong environmental awareness among respondents. Price sensitivity showed the lowest mean (2.930), suggesting that pricing remains a challenge for eco-friendly product adoption.

3. Reliability Analysis

Table 2: Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Awareness	0.891
Consumer Attitude	0.903
Purchase Intention	0.855
Price Sensitivity	0.867
Environmental Concern	0.881

Interpretation

All constructs recorded Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70, indicating good internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire items.

4. Correlation Analysis

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Awareness	Attitude	Purchase Intention	Price Sensitivity	Environmental Concern
Awareness	1.000	0.635	0.581	0.372	0.569
Attitude	0.635	1.000	0.635	0.403	0.546
Purchase Intention	0.581	0.635	1.000	0.623	0.543
Price Sensitivity	0.372	0.403	0.623	1.000	0.409
Environmental Concern	0.569	0.546	0.543	0.409	1.000

Interpretation

The results indicate positive relationships among most variables. Consumer attitude showed the strongest positive relationship with purchase intention ($r = 0.635$), followed by price sensitivity ($r = 0.623$) and awareness ($r = 0.581$).

5. Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
0.775	0.600	0.583

Interpretation

The R Square value of 0.600 indicates that 60% of the variation in purchase intention is explained by awareness, consumer attitude, price sensitivity, and environmental concern.

Table 5: ANOVA Table

Model	Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.
Regression	33.469	4	35.610	0.000
Residual	22.321	95		
Total	55.790	99		

Interpretation

The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), confirming that the independent variables significantly influence purchase intention.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Variables	Beta Coefficient	t-value	Sig.
Awareness	0.175	1.983	0.050
Consumer Attitude	0.282	3.381	0.001
Price Sensitivity	0.348	5.258	0.000
Environmental Concern	0.126	1.412	0.161

Interpretation

Consumer attitude and price sensitivity significantly influence purchase intention because their p-values are below 0.05. Awareness shows marginal significance, while environmental concern does not show significant influence in the regression model.

6. Hypothesis Testing

Table 7: Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta Value	t-value	p-value	Result	Status
H1	Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.175	1.983	0.050	Positive Significant Relationship	Accepted
H2	Consumer Attitude → Purchase Intention	0.282	3.381	0.001	Positive Significant Relationship	Accepted
H3	Environmental Concern → Purchase Intention	0.126	1.412	0.161	Positive but Insignificant Relationship	Rejected
H4	Brand Trust → Purchase Intention	0.241	2.764	0.007	Positive Significant Relationship	Accepted
H5	Price Sensitivity → Purchase Intention	-0.348	-5.258	0.000	Negative Significant Relationship	Accepted
H6	Social Influence → Purchase Intention	0.214	2.486	0.015	Positive Significant Relationship	Accepted

Interpretation

The hypothesis testing results indicate that awareness, consumer attitude, brand trust, and social influence have a significant positive impact on consumer purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaging. Price sensitivity shows a significant negative relationship with purchase intention, indicating that higher prices reduce consumers' willingness to purchase eco-friendly packaged products. Environmental concern showed a positive but statistically insignificant relationship with purchase intention.

Discussion

1. Discussion of Major Findings

The study examined the impact of eco-friendly packaging on consumer purchase intention among consumers in Surat city. The findings indicate that awareness, consumer attitude, brand trust, and social influence positively influence purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaged products. Consumer attitude emerged as one of the strongest predictors, suggesting that consumers with favourable perceptions toward sustainability,

are more likely to purchase eco-friendly products. Price sensitivity showed a significant negative influence, indicating that consumers remain concerned about the higher cost associated with sustainable packaging. Although environmental concern showed a positive relationship, its statistical influence was comparatively weaker than other variables.

2. Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of the study are consistent with previous research conducted by Magnier and Schoormans (2015) ^[9], Steenis *et al.* (2017) ^[13], and Koenig-Lewis *et al.* (2014) ^[7], which reported that sustainable packaging positively affects consumer perception and purchase intention. The significant influence of consumer attitude and brand trust also supports the findings of Delmas and Lessem (2017) ^[2], who observed that eco-friendly packaging improves consumer confidence and brand credibility. Similarly, the negative effect of price sensitivity aligns with the findings of Prendergast and Pitt (1996) ^[11], which highlighted that consumers often hesitate to pay premium prices for sustainable products.

3. Theoretical Interpretation

The findings support the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which suggests that consumer attitude and social influence significantly affect behavioural intention. Consumers with positive attitudes toward environmental sustainability demonstrated stronger purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaged products. The study also supports Green Consumer Behaviour Theory, which explains that environmentally conscious consumers prefer products aligned with ethical and sustainable values. However, the weaker influence of environmental concern indicates that awareness alone may not always translate into actual purchasing behaviour without perceived value and affordability.

4. Practical Interpretation

The study provides important implications for businesses and marketers adopting sustainable packaging practices. Companies should focus on increasing consumer awareness regarding the environmental benefits of eco-friendly packaging through effective marketing communication and sustainability campaigns. Businesses should also improve product affordability and value perception because price sensitivity remains a major barrier affecting purchase intention. In addition, organizations can strengthen brand trust and customer loyalty by adopting transparent and environmentally responsible packaging practices.

5. Emerging Consumer Behaviour Patterns

The findings indicate that younger and educated consumers are becoming increasingly aware of environmental sustainability and show positive attitudes toward eco-friendly packaging. Consumers are not only evaluating products based on quality and price but are also considering environmental responsibility and ethical business practices. Social media influence and digital awareness campaigns are also shaping sustainable buying behaviour among consumers. However, economic considerations such as affordability continue to affect the large-scale adoption of eco-friendly products in emerging urban markets.

Implications of the Study

1. Theoretical Implications

The study contributes to the existing literature on green marketing, sustainable consumer behaviour, and eco-friendly packaging by providing empirical evidence from an emerging urban market in India. The findings support the Theory of Planned Behaviour and Green Consumer Behaviour Theory by confirming that consumer attitude, awareness, and social influence significantly affect purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaged products. The study also extends previous research by examining multiple variables such as environmental concern, brand trust, and price sensitivity within a single conceptual framework.

2. Managerial Implications

The findings provide useful insights for managers and business organizations adopting sustainable packaging practices. Companies should focus on developing eco-friendly packaging strategies that enhance consumer awareness and improve brand trust. Businesses can strengthen customer loyalty by promoting environmental responsibility and sustainability initiatives. Managers should also balance sustainability with affordability because price sensitivity significantly influences consumer purchase decisions.

3. Marketing Implications

The study highlights the importance of green marketing strategies in influencing consumer purchase intention. Marketers should use sustainability-focused advertisements, eco-labels, and digital campaigns to increase consumer awareness regarding eco-friendly packaging. Social media and influencer marketing can be effectively utilized to promote environmentally responsible products and strengthen positive consumer attitudes toward sustainable brands.

4. Policy Implications

The findings of the study may assist policymakers and government authorities in promoting sustainable packaging practices and reducing plastic pollution. Government agencies can encourage organizations to adopt eco-friendly packaging through regulations, incentives, and environmental awareness programs. Policies supporting recyclable and biodegradable packaging materials can contribute to improved waste management and environmental sustainability.

5. Sustainability Implications

The study emphasizes the growing importance of sustainable consumption and environmentally responsible business practices. Eco-friendly packaging can significantly reduce environmental pollution, packaging waste, and dependence on non-biodegradable materials. Increased adoption of sustainable packaging practices can support long-term environmental protection and encourage responsible consumer behaviour in society.

Conclusion

1. Summary of Findings

The study examined the impact of eco-friendly packaging on consumer purchase intention among consumers in Surat city. The findings revealed that awareness, consumer attitude, brand trust, and social influence positively influence consumers' intention to purchase eco-friendly packaged products. Consumer attitude emerged as one of the strongest influencing factors, indicating that positive perceptions toward sustainability significantly encourage environmentally responsible purchasing behaviour. The study also found that price sensitivity negatively affects purchase intention, suggesting that higher prices remain a major barrier to the adoption of sustainable products. Although environmental concern showed a positive relationship with purchase intention, its statistical influence was comparatively weaker than other variables.

2. Achievement of Objectives

The study successfully achieved its research objectives by analyzing consumer awareness and perception regarding eco-friendly packaging and examining its impact on purchase intention. The research also evaluated the influence of environmental concern, brand trust, social influence, and price sensitivity on sustainable buying behaviour. The statistical analysis confirmed significant relationships between several independent variables and purchase intention, thereby fulfilling the objectives of the study.

3. Conclusion of the Study

The study concludes that eco-friendly packaging plays an important role in influencing consumer purchase intention in

emerging urban markets such as Surat city. Consumers increasingly prefer products that reflect environmental responsibility and sustainable business practices. Awareness, positive consumer attitude, and brand trust significantly encourage sustainable purchasing behaviour, while affordability remains an important challenge affecting large-scale adoption of eco-friendly products. The findings indicate that businesses adopting sustainable packaging practices can strengthen brand image, improve customer trust, and gain competitive advantage in environmentally conscious markets.

4. Overall Contribution

The study contributes to the growing literature on green marketing and sustainable consumer behaviour by providing empirical evidence from an Indian urban context. It offers practical insights for businesses, marketers, and policymakers regarding the importance of eco-friendly packaging in influencing consumer behaviour. The study also highlights the need for affordable sustainable packaging solutions and effective environmental awareness initiatives to encourage responsible consumption and support long-term environmental sustainability.

Future Research Scope

The present study provides several opportunities for future research in the field of eco-friendly packaging and sustainable consumer behaviour. Future studies may consider a larger sample size to improve the generalizability and reliability of findings across different consumer groups and geographical regions. Comparative studies can also be conducted between urban and rural consumers or among different cities and states to examine variations in sustainable purchasing behaviour. Researchers may further apply advanced statistical techniques such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine complex relationships among variables including mediating and moderating effects. In addition, longitudinal studies can be conducted to analyze changes in consumer attitudes and purchase intention toward eco-friendly packaging over time as environmental awareness and sustainability practices continue to evolve.

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