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Consumer Perception And Purchase Intention Towards Sustainable Fashion Industry In Gujarat, India

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ABSTRACT

The fashion industry has recently experienced increasing pressure to adopt environmentally responsible practices due to growing concerns about climate change, textile waste, and unethical labor practices.

Sustainable fashion has emerged as a response to these challenges by promoting environmentally friendly materials, ethical production processes, and responsible consumption patterns. The purpose of this research is to examine consumer perception and purchase intention toward sustainable fashion in Gujarat, India. The study aims to understand how consumers view sustainable clothing, the factors that influence their buying decisions, and the barriers that prevent them from purchasing eco-friendly apparel.

Primary data was collected from 300 respondents across various cities in Gujarat using a structured questionnaire. The research used a descriptive research design while applying quantitative analysis methods to examine consumer responses. The researchers used statistical methods which included frequency distribution and correlation analysis and regression analysis to assess how awareness and environmental concern and price perception affected purchase intention.

The study results demonstrate that Gujarat consumers possess a favorable attitude toward sustainable fashion because they recognize its environmental advantages yet they only buy sustainable products at a moderate level. Price sensitivity and product unavailability and insufficient awareness about sustainable brands emerged as the primary obstacles. The research discovered that environmental awareness together with product quality perception managed to determine customers' buying behavior.

The research recommends that sustainable fashion companies need to establish more affordable products while educating customers about their offerings and developing more distribution points to increase sustainable clothing use throughout the area. The research study helps people understand how consumers in developing economies behave toward sustainable fashion by providing valuable information to businesses and policymakers and researchers who want to promote sustainable consumption.

Keywords: Sustainable Fashion, Consumer Perception, Purchase Intention, Environmental Awareness, Green Consumption, Gujarat Fashion Industry

I. INTRODUCTION

The worldwide fashion market operates as one of the most extensive and rapidly developing business sectors. The industry generates major environmental harm through its excessive water usage and its chemical discharges and its production of textile waste. The fast fashion system has intensified both production processes and consumer buying patterns which create major ecological damage and human rights violations. The fashion industry has started to embrace sustainable fashion as a solution to its existing problems which require urgent solutions.

Sustainable fashion exists as a clothing and accessory category which designers and manufacturers create to develop products that maintain low environmental effects while establishing just work practices throughout their entire production process. The system focuses on using environmentally friendly materials which companies need to implement through sustainable production methods while providing their employees with just compensation and developing products which will last for extended periods.

Sustainable fashion also encourages consumers to adopt responsible consumption behaviors such as buying fewer but higher quality garments, recycling textiles, and supporting ethical brands.

Fashion consumers now understand better how their choices affect environmental sustainability and social equity. Growing awareness about fashion sustainability has led to increased demand for sustainable fashion options which follow ethical production standards. Consumers now evaluate environmental effects together with brand disclosure and production methods before they decide which products to buy.

India operates as a leading textile producer and exporter which enables it to influence the international fashion market. Gujarat functions as a key textile manufacturing center, with Ahmedabad and Surat being the main industrial centers of its textile production industry. The area combines traditional textile craftsmanship methods with current industrial manufacturing capabilities. The area has maintained its traditional textile craftsmanship methods while well as modern industrial production. The study needs to examine how Gujarat consumers see sustainable fashion because environmental sustainability becomes essential for modern fashion business operations.

Sustainability awareness among people has increased, but consumers continue to choose traditional fashion items because those products offer lower costs and easier access and customers recognize those products more. The research needs to investigate consumer beliefs and their understanding of sustainable fashion because those elements directly impact their buying behavior.

The research investigates how consumers in Gujarat India understand sustainable fashion and their intent to buy those products. The research study examines consumer awareness and environmental attitudes and the resulting effects on their buying patterns to determine effective methods of promoting sustainable fashion within the region.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers have studied different elements of sustainable fashion consumption to understand how consumers behave toward their buying decisions. The researchers investigated the way that environmental knowledge and ethical values and social pressures and perceived product worth impact customer decision making for sustainable apparel.

Niinimäki (2010) demonstrated that consumer awareness development represents a fundamental element which enables people to choose sustainable fashion options. The research shows that people who learn about the environmental effects which textile manufacturing creates tend to practice responsible consumption while supporting environmentally friendly companies.

Fletcher (2013) established the slow fashion framework which prioritizes product excellence and product lifespan and ethical manufacturing processes above production methods which create mass quantities of goods for immediate consumer consumption. Slow fashion encourages consumers to buy fewer garments and invest in products that are designed to last longer.

Joergens (2006) studied ethical fashion consumption and discovered that many consumers show environmental and ethical concern, but these feelings do not always lead to actual buying behavior. Consumers tend to base their purchasing decisions on three key factors that include product price, product design, and product availability while they assign lower importance to ethical factors.

Gupta and Hodges (2012) studied corporate social responsibility in the apparel industry and discovered that consumers prefer brands which demonstrate ethical behavior and environmental sustainability. The research showed that transparency and trust serve as essential components which enable companies to create favorable impressions among their customers.

The researchers Han, Seo, and Ko (2017) examined how consumers determine their willingness to pay for environmentally sustainable fashion products and discovered that both product quality and brand reputation affect customers' purchase decisions. Customers will pay extra for products which they believe provide environmental advantages and deliver exceptional product performance.

Biswas and Roy (2015) conducted research on green consumption habits in India and found that environmental knowledge and personal values along with social influence work as key factors which guide people to make environmentally friendly buying choices. The adoption of environmentally friendly products faces challenges because products remain expensive while their distribution remains limited.

Research from recent studies shows that younger shoppers especially millennials and Generation Z show greater acceptance of sustainable fashion ideas. These groups show a preference for production processes which follow ethical standards and protection of the environment and transparent brand practices.

Although people now understand sustainable fashion better there exist multiple obstacles which stop customers from adopting sustainable fashion practices. The obstacles include elevated product costs combined with information deficits and restricted product distribution and consumer disbelief in green marketing advertising.

Consumer awareness together with environmental concern and perceived value and price sensitivity all exist as key factors which affect how people perceive sustainable fashion and their intent to buy sustainable fashion products.

III. RESEARCH GAP

Although sustainable fashion has been widely studied in developed countries, limited research has been conducted in regional markets within developing economies such as India. Most studies focus on metropolitan cities or national-level trends, leaving a gap in understanding consumer behavior at the regional level.

Gujarat is one of the most important textile producing states in India, yet there is limited research examining how consumers in this region perceive sustainable fashion products. The state has a unique mix of traditional textile heritage and modern fashion retail markets, making it an ideal setting for studying consumer attitudes toward sustainability in fashion.

Furthermore, existing studies often focus on general environmental attitudes rather than specific purchase intentions toward sustainable clothing. There is also a lack of research examining the relationship between awareness, environmental concern, and price sensitivity in shaping consumer purchasing behavior.

This study attempts to address these gaps by analyzing consumer perception and purchase intention toward sustainable fashion in Gujarat. The research provides insights into consumer awareness levels, attitudes toward sustainable clothing, and the factors that influence their purchasing decisions.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1.To examine the level of consumer awareness regarding sustainable fashion in Gujarat.
- 2.To analyze consumer perceptions toward eco-friendly clothing and ethical fashion brands.
- 3.To identify factors influencing consumer purchase intention toward sustainable fashion products.
- 4.To determine the barriers that prevent consumers from purchasing sustainable clothing.

V. HYPOTHESIS

- H1: Consumer awareness has a positive impact on purchase intention toward sustainable fashion.
H2: Environmental concern significantly influences consumer perception of sustainable fashion.
H3: Price sensitivity negatively affects consumers' willingness to purchase sustainable clothing.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers applied descriptive research methods to investigate how consumers in Gujarat understand sustainable fashion while developing their buying intentions and perceptions. The research focuses on evaluating how different factors interact with each other to create a relationship between awareness and environmental concern and price sensitivity and purchasing behavior. The main body of the research uses quantitative methods with additional data from respondents who provided open-ended answers.

Sources of Data Primary Data:

Collected through questionnaires (online and offline). Secondary Data: Gathered from journals, reports, articles, books, and relevant websites

Data Collection Method:

The researchers collected data through a survey method. The structured questionnaire distribution used Google Forms and social media platforms including WhatsApp and Instagram and LinkedIn and some offline distribution methods. The survey included closed-ended questions and Likert-scale questions which researchers could analyze through straightforward methods.

Population: The research focuses on studying Gujarat fashion consumers who belong to the 18 to 45 age group which includes students and professionals and homemakers.

Sampling Method: The researchers used convenience sampling to select respondents who would take part in the study based on their availability and desire to participate.

Sampling Frame and Size: The sample included respondents from cities like Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat, and Rajkot.

Sample Size: Around 300 respondents.

Data Collection Instrument :

The structured questionnaire consisted of four sections which covered:

Demographics

Awareness & Perception

Purchase Intention

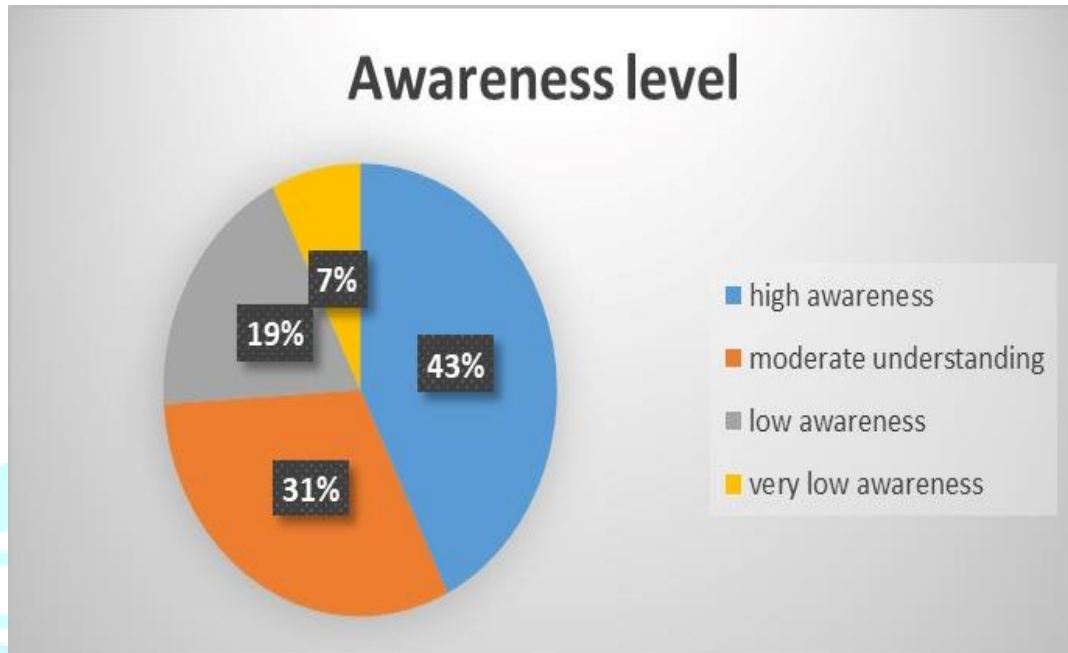
Barriers

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Consumer Awareness towards Sustainable Fashion

The study investigated how much sustainable fashion information respondents knew.

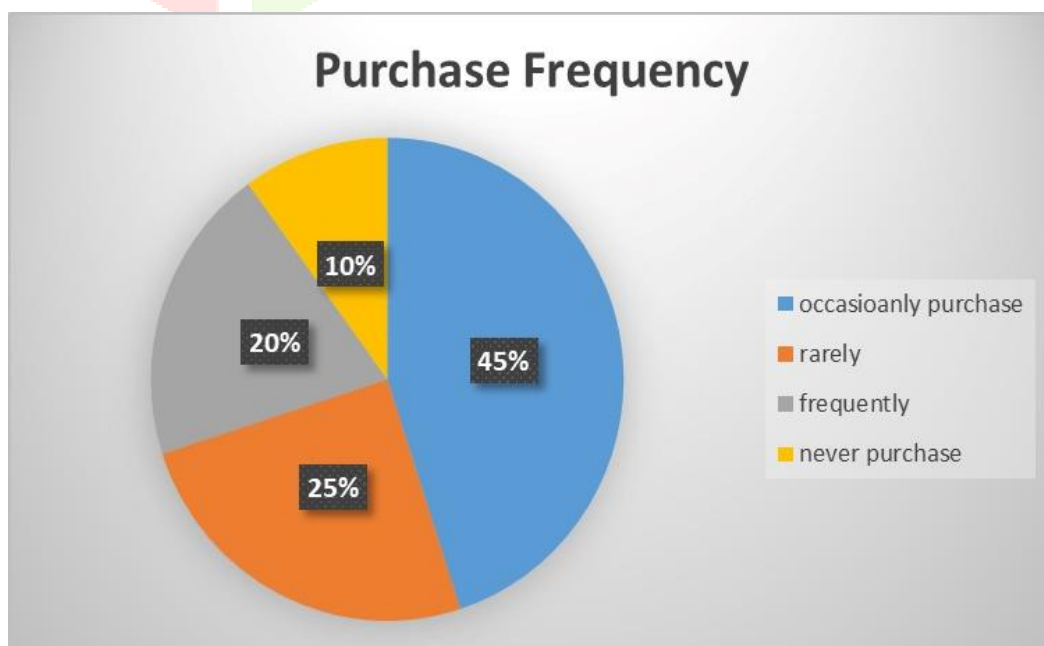
The results show that 42.7% of respondents demonstrated high awareness, while 31.3% showed moderate understanding of sustainable fashion. The low awareness group included 18.7% of participants, while 7.3% of participants demonstrated very low awareness. .



Interpretation: The study found that people knew about the product yet they chose not to buy it. The study demonstrated that people who knew about something failed to take action on it

2. Purchase Behavior of Consumers

Researchers studied how often people bought environmentally friendly fashion items. The results show that 45% of respondents purchase occasionally, followed by 25% who purchase rarely, 20% frequently, and 10% who never purchase sustainable fashion products.



Interpretation: Most consumers make occasional purchases because they show interest but do not buy products regularly.

2. Willingness to Pay for Sustainable Fashion

The study assessed whether consumers are willing to pay a premium for sustainable fashion products. The findings reveal that 40% of respondents are willing to pay more, 35% are uncertain, and 25% are not willing to pay extra.



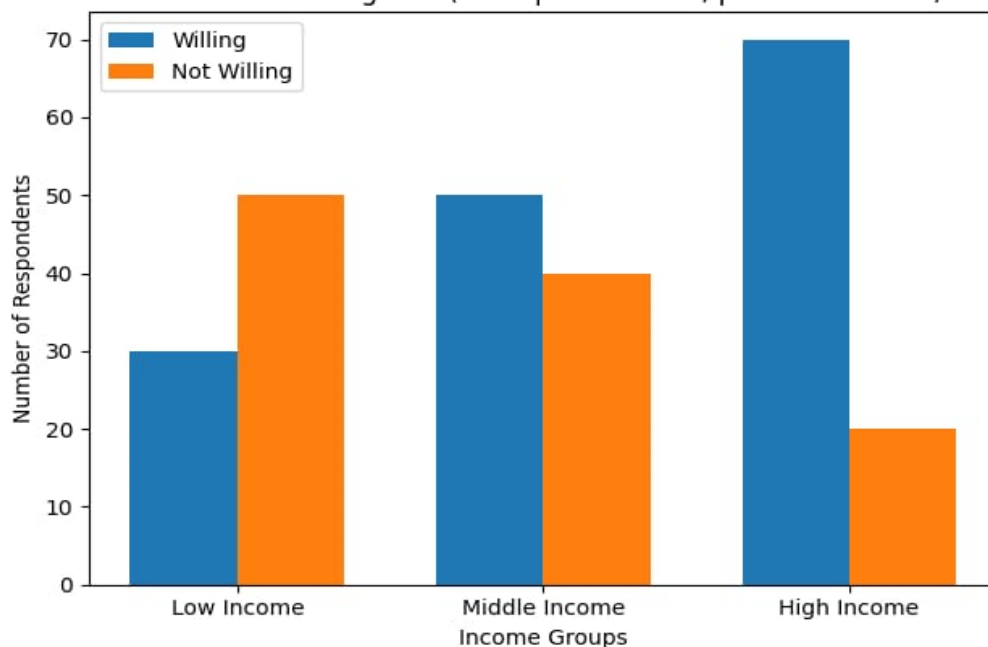
Interpretation:

Price sensitivity is a major barrier despite positive attitudes.

3. Impact of Income on Purchase Intention

Chi-square value = 18.6, p-value = 0.005 (<0.05), indicating a significant relationship.

Income vs Willingness (Chi-square = 18.6, p-value = 0.005)



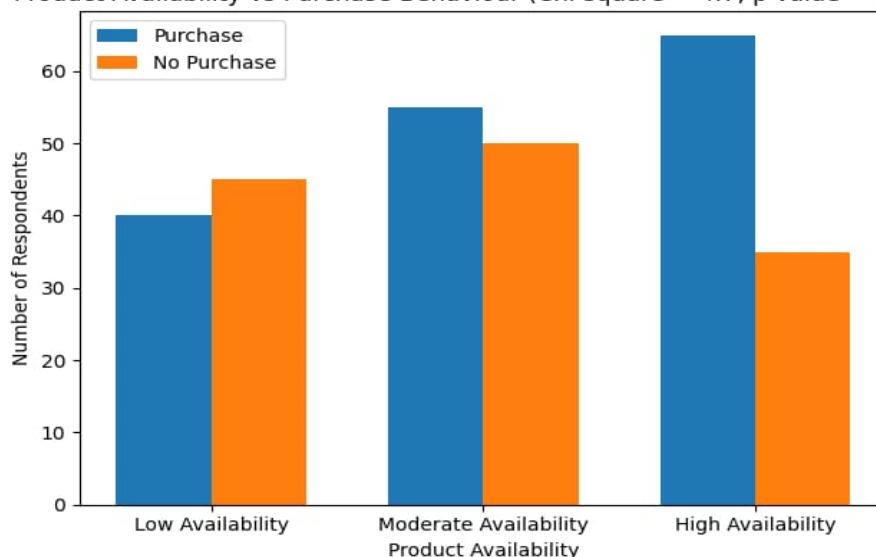
Interpretation:

People with higher incomes tend to buy environmentally friendly fashion items.

4.Impact of Product Availability on Purchase Behavior

Chi-square value = 4.7, p-value = 0.317 (>0.05), indicating no significant relationship.

Product Availability vs Purchase Behaviour (Chi-square = 4.7, p-value = 0.317)



Interpretation:

Availability does not strongly influence purchase decisions.

5.Key Findings

- People know about sustainable fashion yet they choose not to buy it.
- Customers show strong price sensitivity toward products.
- Consumers decide to buy products based on their income level.
- Product availability does not serve as a significant purchasing factor.

Final Insight:

People who consume sustainable fashion show a pattern of behavior that contradicts their established beliefs.

The survey results show that most respondents already know about sustainable fashion. Consumers consider sustainable clothing to be eco-friendly when it uses sustainable materials and follows ethical production methods and reduces its environmental footprint.

People show high awareness of sustainable fashion but they buy sustainable fashion products less frequently. The research shows that people buy sustainable fashion items on occasion instead of making regular purchases. People who support sustainability show positive attitudes toward sustainable products but they buy those products less frequently.

Environmental concern was identified as one of the most influential factors affecting purchase intention. Consumers who strongly believe in environmental protection are more likely to support sustainable fashion brands.

Price perception also plays a significant role in purchasing decisions. The majority of respondents said that sustainable clothing products cost more than regular fashion items.

The study identified product availability as an essential factor. Consumers reported difficulty finding sustainable fashion products in local stores which limits their ability to purchase such items.

The analysis discovered that younger people show more interest in sustainable fashion than older people. Younger respondents showed higher levels of environmental concern while they demonstrated greater

interest in eco-friendly clothing options.

VIII. KEY FINDINGS

The investigation showed multiple significant outcomes which demonstrated how people in Gujarat perceived sustainable fashion and their subsequent decisions to buy it.

First, consumer awareness about sustainable fashion is gradually increasing. Many respondents understand the environmental benefits of eco-friendly clothing and recognize the importance of responsible consumption.

Second, although consumers have positive attitudes toward sustainable fashion, their purchasing behavior remains limited due to practical constraints such as higher prices and limited product availability.

Third, environmental concern emerged as the primary element which impacted consumers purchase decisions. Consumers who strongly believe in protecting the environment are more likely to consider purchasing sustainable clothing.

Fourth, perceived product quality also influences consumer decisions. The respondents showed increased willingness to buy sustainable clothing when the product guaranteed high quality and long-lasting performance.

Price sensitivity serves as the main obstacle which prevents people from adopting new technologies. Many consumers expressed interest in sustainable fashion but indicated that they would purchase such products more frequently if prices were more affordable.

IX. LIMITATIONS

The study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

The research uses convenience sampling which restricts its findings to apply only to the complete population of Gujarat.

The study investigates consumer behavior in Gujarat which prevents it from applying to other areas of India.

The data collection process depended on self-reported answers from participants who supplied information about their own behavior.

Research time restrictions restricted both research capacity and survey participant count.

The study reveals important information about how people in Gujarat view sustainable fashion and their purchasing decisions.

X. CONCLUSION

The study shows that people in Gujarat are becoming more knowledgeable about sustainable fashion. Consumers understand that eco-friendly clothing creates environmental advantages and they express support for ethical fashion practices. The shift from consumer knowledge to product buying remains restricted.

Multiple factors determine whether customers will buy sustainable fashion products. Environmental concern and perceived product quality positively affect consumer willingness to purchase sustainable clothing. At the same time, price sensitivity and limited product availability act as major barriers.

Fashion brands and retailers need to improve their product pricing and product availability while providing clear information about their products' environmental advantages to encourage sustainable fashion adoption. Educational campaigns and marketing initiatives can also help raise awareness and encourage responsible consumption behaviors.

The findings of this study provide useful insights for businesses, policymakers, and researchers interested in promoting sustainable fashion and responsible consumption practices in India.

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