
CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS ON E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine consumer behaviour towards online shopping and to understand the key factors that influence purchase decisions in a digital environment. The research focuses on identifying consumer preferences, satisfaction levels, and the reasons behind repeated usage of e-commerce platforms. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from online shoppers, while secondary data was obtained from books, journals, and online resources. The study analyzes the role of price, product quality, convenience, delivery services, and customer support in shaping consumer behaviour. The findings reveal that convenience and competitive pricing play a major role in encouraging online purchases. The study provides useful insights for businesses to improve their services and enhance customer satisfaction.

Keywords: *Consumer Behavior, Sustainable Personal Care Products, E-commerce Platforms, Green Marketing, Price Sensitivity, Online Purchasing Behavior, Eco-labels.*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed the traditional shopping system into a more convenient and accessible online format. Today, consumers prefer online shopping due to its time-saving nature, wide product variety, and easy comparison of prices. The availability of smartphones and internet connectivity has further increased the popularity of e-commerce platforms across different age groups.

Online shopping allows consumers to make purchases without physical effort and offers multiple payment options, flexible delivery services, and customer reviews. These features have made digital platforms more attractive compared to traditional retail stores.

This study focuses on analyzing consumer behaviour towards online shopping by understanding their preferences, expectations, and satisfaction levels. It also attempts to identify the major factors that influence purchase decisions in the online marketplace.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE**Mehta (2022)**

The study highlights the growing consumer preference for sustainable and eco-friendly personal care products. It emphasizes that increased environmental awareness, health consciousness, and ethical consumption values significantly influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.

Patel & Joshi (2023)

This study examines consumer behaviour towards sustainable products in the Indian market with a specific focus on e-commerce platforms. The findings indicate that online platforms improve accessibility and visibility for sustainable personal care brands. However, challenges such as higher prices, lack of consumer awareness, and scepticism regarding green marketing claims continue to act as barriers to purchase.

Kapoor & Malhotra (2024)

The research focuses on the influence of e-commerce platforms on consumer purchase intentions for sustainable personal care products. It highlights that brand reputation, availability of credible product information, and user-generated reviews significantly affect online buying behaviour.

Rao & Iyer (2021)

The study explores changing consumer preferences towards natural, organic, and environmentally friendly personal care products. It emphasizes that growing concerns related to chemical ingredients, health risks, and environmental impact have led consumers to shift towards sustainable alternatives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of awareness of consumers regarding sustainable personal care products available on e-commerce platforms.
- To identify the key factors influencing consumer behaviour towards purchasing sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

- To examine the influence of promotional methods on consumers' purchase intention for sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.
- To examine the willingness of consumers to pay a premium price for sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to understanding consumer behaviour related to online shopping. The research focuses on analyzing purchasing patterns, customer satisfaction, and factors influencing online buying decisions.

The study covers aspects such as product quality, pricing, ease of use, delivery services, and customer support. It is restricted to respondents who actively use e-commerce platforms. Since the study is limited to a specific group and time period, the findings may not be applicable to all consumers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**Source of Data Collection**

The study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data to ensure a comprehensive analysis of consumer behaviour towards sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms. Primary data provided direct insights into consumer perceptions and purchasing behaviour, while secondary data supported theoretical understanding and background information related to sustainability and online retailing.

a) Primary Data

Primary data were collected through a structured, close-ended questionnaire administered using Google Forms. The questionnaire was designed in accordance with the objectives of the study and included questions related to demographic details, awareness of sustainable personal care products, purchasing frequency, factors influencing buying decisions, and consumer perceptions towards sustainability claims on e-commerce platforms.

The target respondents included consumers who actively purchase personal care products through e-commerce platforms. A non-probability convenience sampling method was adopted due to ease of access and voluntary participation of respondents. The collected responses were analysed using descriptive statistics and percentage analysis to identify patterns and trends in consumer behaviour.

b) Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected from books, academic journals, research papers, industry reports, company websites, and credible online sources. These sources helped in understanding key concepts such as sustainable consumption, green marketing, consumer behaviour, and the role of e-commerce platforms in promoting sustainable products.

The secondary data also provided insights into consumer trends, sustainability practices, and digital marketing strategies adopted by personal care brands. This background literature strengthened the conceptual framework and supported the interpretation of the primary data findings.

Sample Unit

The sample unit consisted of consumers who purchase personal care products through ecommerce platforms and have awareness of sustainable or eco-friendly personal care products.

Sample Size

Approximately 50+ respondents (the final number will be mentioned after completion of data collection).

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling was adopted due to the accessibility of online respondents and the suitability of collecting survey-based data through digital platforms.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although awareness of sustainable and eco-friendly personal care products has increased in recent years, uncertainty remains regarding how effectively this awareness translates into actual purchasing behaviour on e-commerce platforms. Many consumers express concern for environmental sustainability and personal health; however, the extent to which these concerns influence online buying decisions is unclear. Factors such as higher prices, limited trust in sustainability claims, lack of product knowledge, and brand credibility often create hesitation among consumers.

Furthermore, while e-commerce platforms provide easy access to a wide range of sustainable personal care products, empirical evidence examining consumer confidence in online information, reviews, and certifications remains limited. The gap between consumer intention and actual purchase behaviour highlights the need to understand whether e-commerce platforms effectively encourage sustainable consumption or merely create awareness.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Hypothesis 1:

Null hypothesis (H₀): Consumer awareness does not influence the purchase behaviour of sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

Alternative hypothesis (H₁): Consumer awareness influences the purchase behaviour of sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

Hypothesis 2:

Null hypothesis (H₀): Consumers are not willing to pay a premium price for sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

Alternative hypothesis (H₁): Consumers are willing to pay a premium price for sustainable.

DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter analyses the data collected to understand consumer behaviour towards sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms. Based on responses obtained through structured questionnaires, the analysis identifies key trends and relationships among the study variables.

It examines consumers' levels of awareness, attitudes, and purchase behaviour related to sustainable personal care products in the online marketplace.

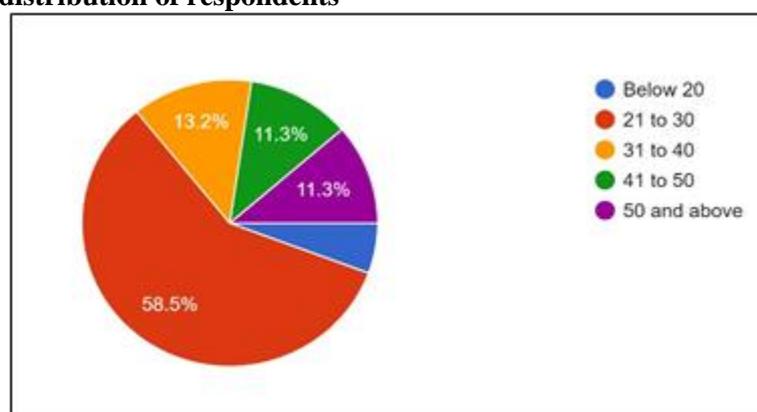
The chapter further analyses factors influencing online purchasing decisions, such as price sensitivity, brand trust, product information, sustainability claims, availability of ecocertifications, and the role of customer reviews on e-commerce platforms.

It also assesses consumer perceptions regarding the credibility of sustainability-related information provided online and the convenience of purchasing sustainable personal care products through digital platforms.

Overall, the findings highlight key drivers and barriers influencing the adoption of sustainable personal care products in e-commerce, along with consumer expectations and challenges. The analysis provides insights into how e-commerce platforms contribute to promoting sustainable consumption and shaping environmentally responsible buying behaviour.

The analysis is as follows:

CHART 1: Age-wise distribution of respondents

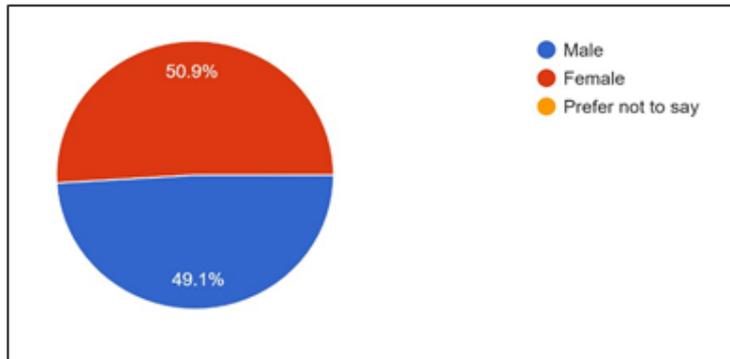


The chart shows that the majority of respondents (58.5%) belong to the **21–30 years** age group, indicating that young adults form the dominant segment of consumers purchasing sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms. This is followed by respondents in the **31–40 years** age group at **13.2%**, reflecting moderate participation from mid-career individuals.

Respondents aged **41–50 years** and **50 years and above** each account for **11.3%**, showing comparatively lower engagement among older age groups. A small proportion of respondents (**5.7%**) fall under the **below 20 years** category.

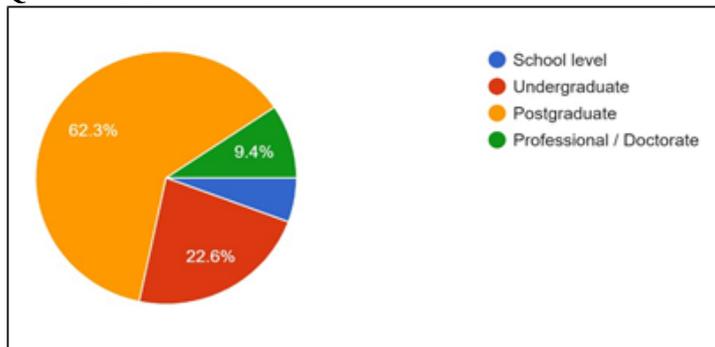
Overall, the chart indicates that awareness and adoption of sustainable personal care products through e-commerce platforms are highest among younger consumers, particularly those aged 21–30 years, who are more digitally active and environmentally conscious.

CHART 2 Gender



The chart indicates a nearly equal distribution of respondents by gender. Female respondents constitute **50.9%** of the total sample, while male respondents account for **49.1%**. This balanced representation suggests that interest in sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms is almost equally shared among both genders.

CHART 3 Educational Qualifications

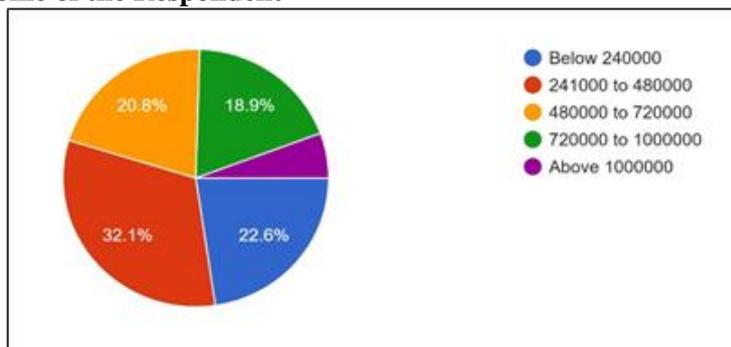


This pie chart shows the educational qualifications of 53 respondents:

- **Postgraduate:** 62.3% – the majority of respondents have a postgraduate degree.
- **Undergraduate:** 22.6% – a smaller portion have completed an undergraduate degree.
- **Professional/Doctorate:** 9.4% – a few respondents have professional or doctoral qualifications.
- **School level:** 5.7% – the least number have only school-level education.

Overall, most respondents are highly educated, with postgraduate degrees dominating the group.

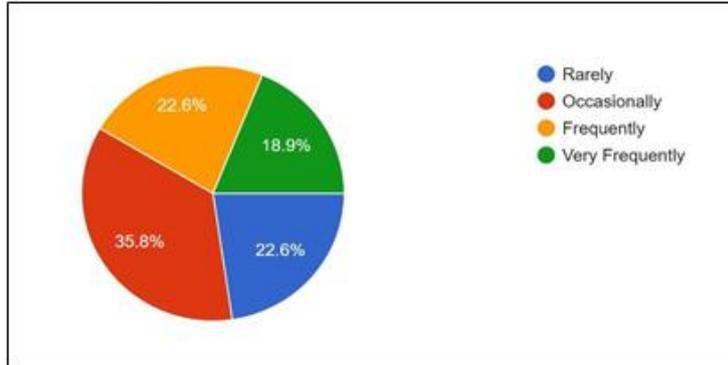
CHART 4 Annual Income of the Respondent



The pie chart shows the annual income distribution of 53 respondents. The largest group (32.1%) earns between 241,000 to 480,000, followed by 22.6% earning below 240,000. Respondents earning 480,000 to 720,000 make up 20.8%, while 18.9% earn 720,000 to 1,000,000. A small portion, 5.7%, earns above 1,000,000.

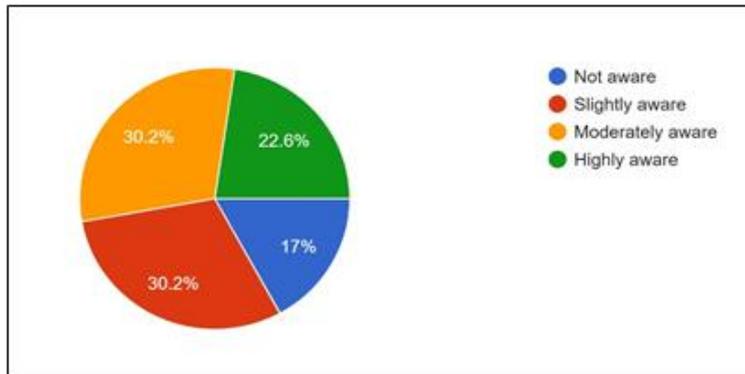
This indicates that most respondents have moderate income, with fewer earning very high amounts.

CHART 5 Frequency of Purchasing



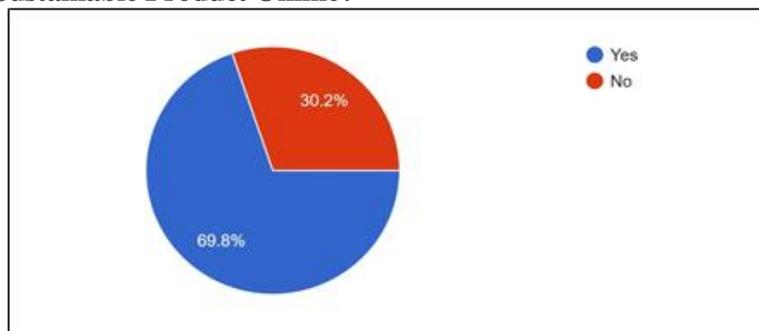
The pie chart represents the frequency of purchasing personal care products online among 53 respondents. The largest portion, 35.8%, reported buying these products occasionally. Both rarely and frequently categories account for 22.6% each, while only 18.9% of respondents purchase personal care products very frequently. This indicates that most people make online purchases of personal care products occasionally, with fewer engaging in very frequent buying. Overall, the data suggests a moderate level of online purchasing behaviour among the respondents.

CHART 6 Arability on E-Commerce Platforms



This chart shows the level of awareness about sustainable personal care products on ecommerce platforms among 53 respondents. A majority of respondents have some level of awareness, with 30.2% being slightly aware and another 30.2% moderately aware. Additionally, 22.6% of respondents are highly aware of such products, while only 17% are not aware at all. Overall, the findings indicate a generally positive awareness of sustainable personal care products, though deeper awareness can still be improved.

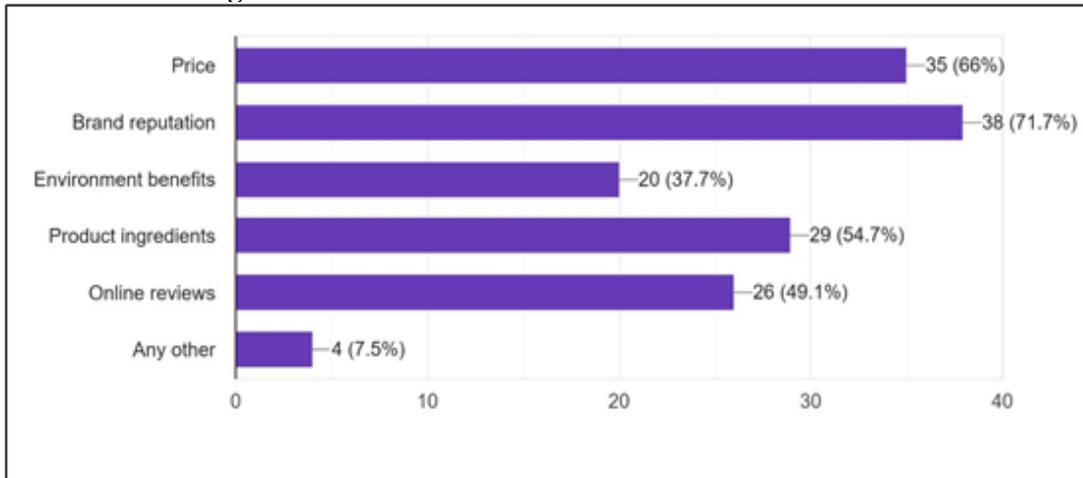
CHART 7 Purchase Sustainable Product Online?



The data reveals a significant trend toward eco-conscious consumerism, as a clear majority of 69.8% have purchased these items online. In contrast, 30.2% of those surveyed have not yet engaged in this market. Overall, the chart indicates that sustainable alternatives have achieved substantial market penetration, suggesting that

most consumers in this group are actively seeking and purchasing environmentally friendly personal care options through digital platforms.

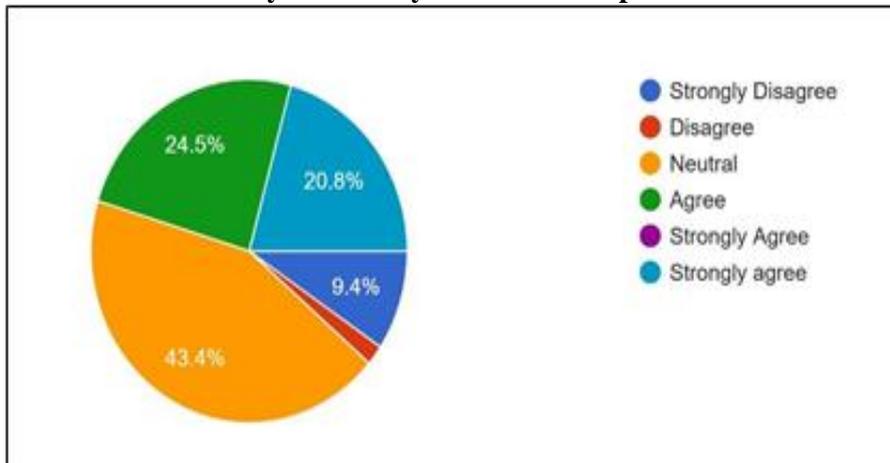
CHART 8 Most Influencing Factor of Purchase



This bar chart illustrates the primary factors influencing the online purchase of sustainable personal care products among 53 respondents. Based on the data, **brand reputation** is the leading influencer, cited by 71.7% of participants (38 people). This is closely followed by **price**, which affects the decisions of 66% of shoppers.

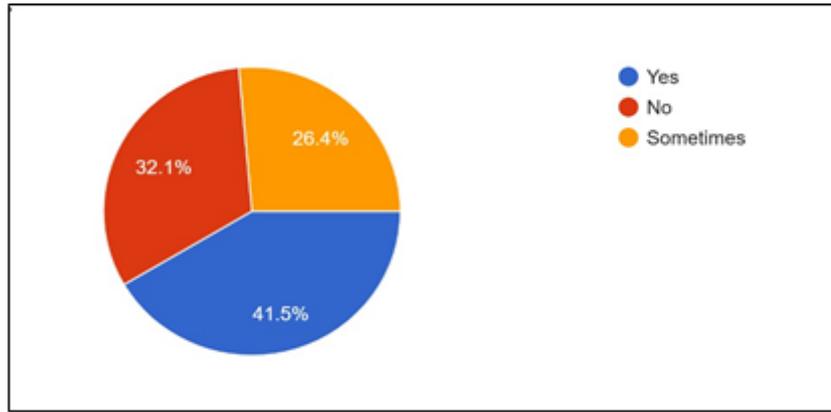
Other significant considerations include **product ingredients** at 54.7% and **online reviews** at 49.1%. Interestingly, while these are all "sustainable" products, **environmental benefits** (37.7%) rank lower than the brand's image, the cost, and the specific ingredients used. A small minority of 7.5% mentioned other unspecified factors. Overall, the chart suggests that while consumers are interested in sustainability, they prioritize trust in a brand and financial value when making a final purchase.

CHART 9 Awareness of Sustainability influence your decision to purchase



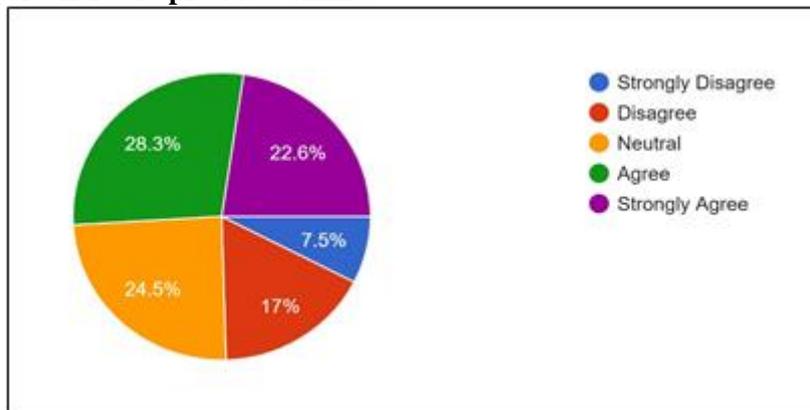
The bar chart reveals that brand reputation is the primary influencer for 71.7% of respondents, followed by price at 66%, whereas environmental benefits specifically motivate a smaller group of 37.7%. This practical focus is mirrored in the pie chart, where the largest segment of consumers, 43.4%, remains neutral regarding whether sustainability awareness actually drives their final purchase. While a combined 45.3% of participants agree or strongly agree that awareness influences them, the data overall suggests that for most consumers, sustainability is a secondary consideration that must compete with brand trust and affordability.

CHART 10 Eco-labels Affects your Decision?



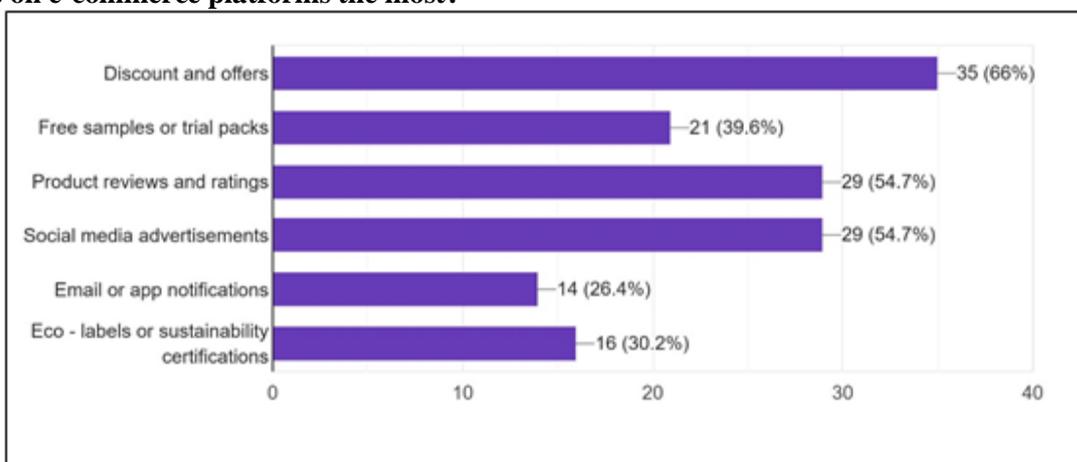
Eco-labels and certifications serve as a vital verification tool for many, with 41.5% stating they influence their decisions and 26.4% saying they sometimes do. However, nearly a third of respondents (32.1%) report they are not influenced by these labels at all. Ultimately, the charts suggest that while consumers value sustainability and utilize labels for guidance, their final choices are most heavily dictated by trust in the brand and affordability.

CHART 11 Promotional methods such as discounts, social media ads, and product reviews encourage me to buy sustainable personal care products online?



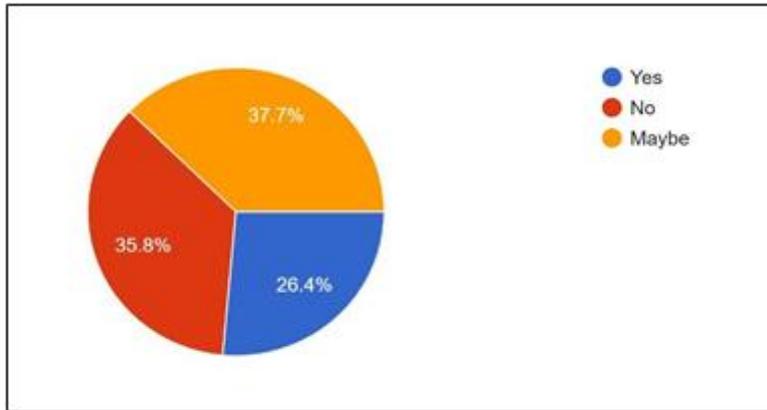
The data shows that a combined majority of **50.9%** are positively influenced by these methods, with **28.3% agreeing** and **22.6% strongly agreeing** that discounts, social media ads, and product reviews encourage their online purchases. While **24.5%** of respondents remain **neutral**, a combined **24.5%** express resistance to these promotions, consisting of **17% who disagree** and **7.5% who strongly disagree**. Overall, the chart indicates that traditional and digital marketing tools are effective for over half of the surveyed market in driving interest toward sustainable options.

CHART 12 Which promotional methods influence your intention to purchase sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms the most?



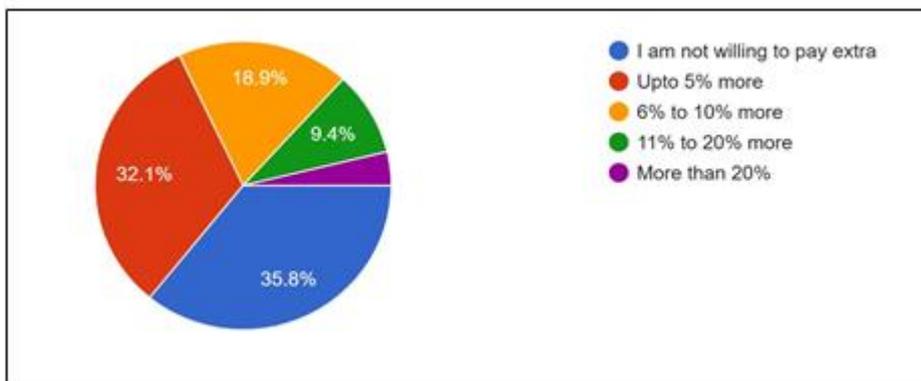
A slight majority of 50.9% indicates that these promotions do encourage their online shopping, with 28.3% agreeing and 22.6% strongly agreeing. On the other hand, 24.5% of the participants remain neutral, while an equal 24.5% express that these tactics do not influence them, including 17% who disagree and 7.5% who strongly disagree. Overall, while marketing efforts are effective for half of the consumers surveyed, the remaining half is either unaffected or indifferent to traditional promotional methods.

CHART 13 Are you willing to pay a higher price for sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms?



The largest segment of the group, 37.7%, expressed uncertainty by answering "Maybe," suggesting that their willingness to pay a premium likely depends on additional factors such as brand value or specific product benefits. A significant 35.8% of respondents stated they are not willing to pay a higher price, while only a minority of 26.4% gave a definitive "Yes". Taken together, these results show that nearly three-quarters of the surveyed consumers are either hesitant or unwilling to pay more for sustainability, making cost a major obstacle for brands in this space.

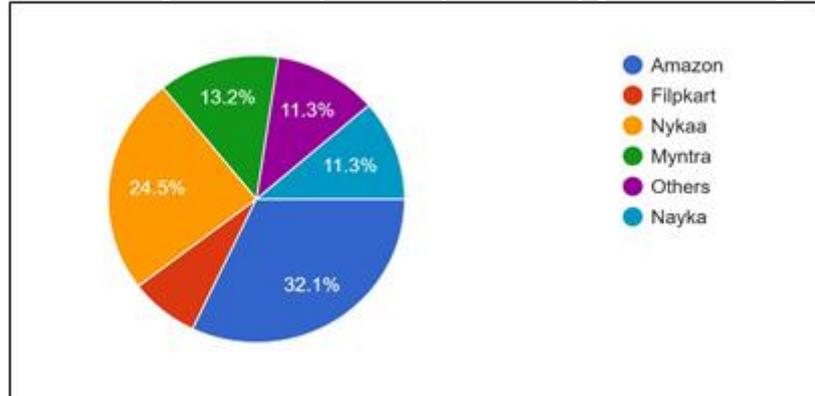
CHART 14 How much more are you willing to pay for sustainable personal care products compared to regular products on e-commerce platforms?



Data from the 53 respondents highlights a significant price sensitivity, as the largest segment of 35.8% is not willing to pay any extra amount at all. Among those open to a premium, the majority favour small increases, with 32.1% willing to pay up to 5% more and 18.9% willing to pay between 6% and 10% more. Willingness drops sharply for higher price points, as only

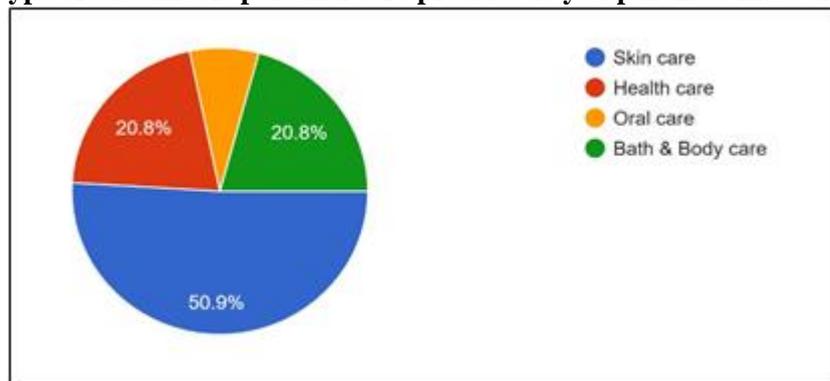
9.4% would pay a 11% to 20% premium, and a mere 3.8% would pay more than 20% extra. Overall, while nearly two-thirds of the market is open to some level of price increase, the vast majority of that group is only comfortable with a premium of 10% or less.

CHART 15 Which e-commerce platform do you mostly use to buy personal care products?



Amazon is the most popular choice, captured by **32.1%** of the surveyed group, while **Nykaa** follows as the second most used platform at **24.5%**. **Myntra** serves **13.2%** of these consumers, while **Flipkart** and **Nayka** (likely a variant or misspelling of Nykaa) each account for smaller segments of the market. Additionally, **11.3%** of respondents use other unspecified platforms for their personal care needs. Overall, the data shows that while major global and local marketplaces lead the category, the consumer base is somewhat fragmented across several specialized beauty and general retail platforms.

CHART 16 What type of sustainable personal care product do you purchase most often?



The data shows a clear preference for certain types of products:

- **Skin Care** is the most popular category, with **45.3%** of respondents having purchased items in this segment.
- **Hair Care** and **Oral Care** follow as significant categories, each representing **17%** of the purchases.
- **Hygiene Products** account for **15.1%** of the total.
- A very small minority of **3.8%** of respondents reported purchasing **other** types of sustainable personal care products.

Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

H₀: Consumer awareness does not influence the purchase behaviour of sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

H₁: Consumer awareness influences the purchase behaviour of sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

The analysis indicates that a majority of respondents possess at least a moderate level of awareness regarding sustainable personal care products (Chart 6), and a substantial proportion (69.8%) have purchased such products online (Chart 7). Further, nearly 45.3% of respondents agree or strongly agree that awareness of sustainability influences their purchase decisions (Chart 9). These findings demonstrate a positive relationship between consumer awareness and purchase behaviour.

Decision:

The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted.

Hence, consumer awareness significantly influences the purchase behaviour of sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

Hypothesis 2

H₀: Consumers are not willing to pay a premium price for sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

H₁: Consumers are willing to pay a premium price for sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

The findings reveal that only 26.4% of respondents are clearly willing to pay a higher price, while 37.7% are uncertain and 35.8% are unwilling to pay a premium (Chart 13). Additionally, most respondents who are willing to pay extra prefer a limited premium of up to 10% (Chart 14). This reflects strong price sensitivity and limited acceptance of premium pricing.

DECISION:

The null hypothesis (H_0) is **accepted**, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is **rejected**. Thus, consumers are generally not willing to pay a significant premium for sustainable personal care products on e-commerce platforms.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study reveals that consumers show mixed willingness to pay a higher price for sustainable personal care products. While only a small proportion is clearly willing to pay extra, a large percentage remains undecided, indicating potential for conversion through awareness and value communication.

A significant number of respondents are price-sensitive, as most consumers are willing to pay only up to 5%–10% extra, and a considerable portion is not willing to pay any premium at all.

Discounts and promotional offers are the most influential factors affecting purchase decisions, followed by product reviews, ratings, and social media advertisements. This shows that consumers rely heavily on price benefits and social proof.

Among e-commerce platforms, Amazon is the most preferred platform for purchasing personal care products, followed by Nykaa, indicating trust, convenience, and product variety as key reasons.

Sustainable skin care products are the most frequently purchased category, highlighting higher consumer awareness and demand in this segment compared to oral care and other categories.

Eco-labels and sustainability certifications influence purchasing decisions but are less impactful than price-based promotions, suggesting limited understanding of sustainability claims among consumers.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

Companies should focus on competitive pricing strategies and introduce sustainable products with minimal price differences to attract price-sensitive consumers.

Brands should offer discounts, combo packs, and festive offers to increase adoption of sustainable personal care products.

Increasing consumer awareness through education-based marketing about long-term health and environmental benefits can convert the “Maybe” segment into actual buyers.

E-commerce platforms should highlight verified eco-labels, certifications, and sustainability information in a simple and clear manner to build consumer trust.

Brands should invest more in customer reviews, influencer marketing, and social media promotions, as these strongly impact buying decisions.

Companies can expand sustainable options in oral care and bath & body segments, as these categories currently show lower adoption.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that online shopping has become an important part of modern consumer lifestyle. Most consumers prefer digital platforms due to convenience, time efficiency, and availability of multiple options.

The findings indicate that price, product quality, and delivery services are the most influential factors affecting online purchase decisions. Consumers also value easy return policies and customer support while choosing an e-commerce platform.

Overall, the study highlights that businesses must focus on improving service quality, customer satisfaction, and user experience in order to remain competitive in the online market.

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