



Sustainable consumption and plastic packaging: Relationships among product involvement, perceived marketplace influence and choice behavior

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationships among human value connotations (instrumental and terminal), product involvement, perceived marketplace influence, and choice behavior in the context of sustainable consumption. Data was collected from 612 urban Indian residents who regularly consume sustainable products, e.g., non-plastic packaging bags. The study operationalizes the partial least square structural equation modeling method in consort with the covariance-based structural equation modeling. The research demonstrates the direct impact of instrumental and terminal values on product involvement and the direct influence of product involvement on perceived marketplace influence towards plastic packaging-related choice behavior. It is pertinent to focus on both instrumental and terminal connotations of human values to augment product involvement for plastic packaging. Limited studies have examined the possible relationships between two distinct yet interconnected connotations of human values on product involvement and perceived marketplace influence in the context of sustainable consumption related to plastic packaging.

1. Introduction

There has been a recent shift in business practice toward environmental (Quach et al., 2022) and green business (Jaiswal et al., 2022; Sreen et al., 2021). Besides, unsustainable production and consumption related to human activities (e.g., plastic usage) are primary drivers of environmental concern in recent years (Bandhyopadhyay et al., 2021). Hence, Consumer choice toward eco-friendly packaging in terms of biodegradable plastics is of great research interest (Gonzalez-Arcos et al., 2021; Moshood et al., 2022).

Customers embrace a favorable disposition concerning the environment, sustainability consciousness, and willingness to adopt a green lifestyle, yet the majority are reluctant to purchase environmentally friendly products (Arli et al., 2021; Meng and Leary, 2021; Sharma et al., 2022a). This psychological reluctance or attitude-behavior gap is owed to social desirability bias, consumer skepticism, high price perceptions, lack of requisite information, and differences in product priorities (Van Riper et al., 2020). Ojea and Loureiro (2007) examined the relative importance of consumers' values and individual characteristics play a crucial role in willingness to indulge in pro-environmental activities (Wei et al., 2018). The study considers value connotations in analyzing

consumer choice toward eco-friendly packaging. These are individualistic human values (instrumental and terminal) that explain consumers' attitudes and judgments (Rokeach, 1973, 1976) and generalized beliefs, which reflect intrinsic beliefs, extrinsic product involvement, and perceived marketplace influence. According to Rokeach (1973), values are 'enduring individualized beliefs towards a particular state of existence or mode of deeds that is the socially choice-based state of existence or mode of deeds' (p. 5). Thus, this paper aims to identify differences in consumers' choice for plastic consumption as determined by human values, product involvement, and perceived marketplace influence, since there is a gap in the literature around the analysis of the relationships between these variables.

Plastic ubiquitous spread became a massive challenge (Moshood et al., 2022), and its ecological implications are profound – the World Economic Forum claims that the use of plastics increased twenty-fold over the last fifty years (Chen et al., 2020). Currently, 400 million tons of plastic are produced annually, but only nine percent of the total plastic waste has been recycled. The rest – over 6.3 billion tons – is buried or cast off into nature, percolating into rivers and carrying it to the oceans as packaging waste (Kautish et al., 2021). Alongside, scientists affirm certain chemicals from plastics make their way into the food

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