

A Systematic Literature Review on the Attitude-Behaviour Divides in Favour of Sustainable Consumption

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable consumption is crucial for sustainable development in the modern era, with various aspects and contexts covered in literature. Research on sustainable consumption has led to the green gap phenomenon, highlighting the discrepancy between customers' actual environmental support and their claims of increasing environmental care. Thus, it's still research on sustainable consumption as a novel forum in various fields is, however, lacking. Accordingly, "overall, this analysis fills in understanding gaps in the "intention-behavior" gaps and suggests areas for future research by shedding light on pertinent literature. In the last ten years, there has been a notable increase in the amount of scholarly research conducted on this topic. The current study fifty-nine papers for a review of the literature pertaining to papers that have been published in a few scientific journals in the last 10 years, starting in 2013 based on the with predetermine inclusion criteria. This study used the systematic literature review (SLR) methodology and the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines.

Keywords: Sustainability, Sustainable consumption, Systematic literature review.

INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-1990s, a few scholars have focused on the problem of consumers' perceptions of ethics. Buying goods and services from socially conscious businesses, while avoiding unethical ones is a form of ethical consumption, which is expressed as consumer activism. Oh & Yoon (2014) have noted that ethical consumption may result from emotional expressions such as self-esteem connected to doing good for society. Accordingly, these moral customers support the use of moral goods and services that don't entail any form of labour exploitation and don't hurt people, animals, or the environment in general (Huh, 2011). Currently, consumers are becoming more ethically conscious and are moving away from rational considerations like product quality and pricing.

As identified by previous scholars, the cost of items produced ethically is a crucial precursor to ethical consumption. Furthermore, it was discovered that variables like subjective norm and perceived behavioural control had less of an impact. Prior research has primarily employed ethical obligation, self-identity, and altruism as the useful antecedents to predict different forms of ethical consumption.

Recent research has shown that there are notable discrepancies between customers' intentions for ethical consumption and their actual purchasing behaviour (Duong, 2024). Further, despite the fact that consumers are becoming more and more concerned with ethical considerations when forming views about products and making decisions about what to buy. Further, most consistent finding within this literature has been inconsistency between what people say and what they actually do - the so-called "attitude-behaviour" and "intention-behaviour" gaps or the motivation-behavior gap (Groening et al., 2018). However, most of the reviews have focused on green behaviour such as the factors that have affected for the sustainable behaviors as individual factors, and situational factors than green behavior gaps (ElHaffar, Durif, & Dubé,2020). Thus, it did not directly focus on the green gap phenomenon in this domain (Although Groening et al. (2018).

Accordingly, the increasing quantity of conceptual and empirical studies in the field of sustainable consumption has resulted in the necessity of implementing methodical techniques for the assessment and compilation of research findings that offer an impartial and even-handed overview of a given subject. The study describes how a systematic literature review approach was applied to published research that was pertinent to subjects in the field of sustainable consumption.

Green gap research expands consumer categories by considering attitude and intention towards eco-friendly items. It's crucial to understand customer attitudes, intentions, and behaviour to select the best paradigm and approach for sustainable consumption, as different paradigms yield varying results.

Thus, this paper aims to explore the impact of these components on intention-behaviour inconsistencies in this work by conducting a narrative and thorough literature analysis that methodically analyses all the theories, techniques, and paradigms used in sustainable consumption gap research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The academic community has conceptualized these consumers' socially conscious and responsible actions since the early 1970s. These concepts include consumption that is socially conscious, consumption that is socially responsible, consumption that is ecologically conscious, ethical consumption, political consumerism, green consumption, consumer empowerment, and sustainable consumption. Moreover, Studies on ethical consumption carried out by different researchers during different time periods and nations were reviewed. During the 1990's, consumers were inclined towards ethical consumption due to pressure group support and communication media (Strong, 1996). So far, research on sustainable consumption is scattered across different disciplines and lacks integration, giving raise to many different definitions of the concept. Research into the responsible, ethical, sustainable, green and socio-political aspects of consumption has grown considerably since the 1990s.

Although these behaviours are not yet common, consumers worldwide are changing their preferences toward more responsible choices (Nielsen, 2018, 2019). However, even if institutional efforts have been made and favourable trends have been observed, consumers are still not changing their consumption habits as needed. The academic community is currently investigating this matter and provides a wealth of evidence indicating the reasons behind the reluctance of socially conscious consumers to alter their purchase habits. This gap phenomenon has dementedly focused on re cling activities and energy consumption green product, and Fairtrade activities (Nguyen et al., 2018; Brandão et al., 2018; Gilli et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2018).

Definition of Sustainable consumption

Fisk (1973)	"Responsible consumption refers to rational and efficient use of resources with respect to the global human population" (p. 24)
Sanne (2002)	SC is the way to achieve sustainable development. Individuals are the catalyst of such behavior change. From the economic point of view, SC is assumed to be based on consumers' decisions on based rational and deliberate considerations of how to satisfy their preferences.
Phipps et al. (2013)	"Sustainable consumption [is] consumption that simultaneously optimizes the environmental, social, and economic consequences of acquisition, use and disposition in order to meet the needs of both current and future generations" (p.1227).
Kushwah et al. (2019)	"[...] Ethical consumption [is] an act of buying products that considers various ethical attributes (e.g., human, environment, animal, etc.) besides the essential product benefits based on individual moral beliefs and values. (p.3)

Kapoor & Dwivedi (2020)	consideration of basic human needs and avoidance of excessive consumption. It also focuses on caring for environmental welfare and fulfilling the needs of future generations.
Fesenfeld et al.,(2021)	Pursuing to meet basic needs and create a better life considering environmental protection, social equity, and other contradictory issues. At the same time, it also pays attention to the next generation’s life.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In academic inquires, the literature review is an essential feature. The purpose of the process is fundamentally advance the knowledge based on prior knowledge as well as the understand breadth and depth of this knowledge while identifying the gap to explore (Brantnell, & Wagrell, 2024). The author utilized a systematic review approach, demonstrating transparency through replicating research. Page et al. (2021) affirmed its adequacy in reviewing the attitude and behaviour gap in marketing and consumer behaviour literature due to its maturity.

A systematic review can be defined as process of evaluate, identify, and interpret all the available relevant studies to the immersed objectives and research questions, research interest. According to guideline of Kitchenham and Charter (2007), during the review follow the three stages as, review planning, conducting and report the review. Throughout these stages, identify the research objectives, formulate the review protocol are major primary area to consider.

Review Protocol

The review protocol is a systematic process designed to improve review accuracy and reduce researcher biases, encompassing research background, objectives, search strategy, quality assessment criteria, data extraction bases, and study selection criteria (Kitchenham and Charter, 2007).

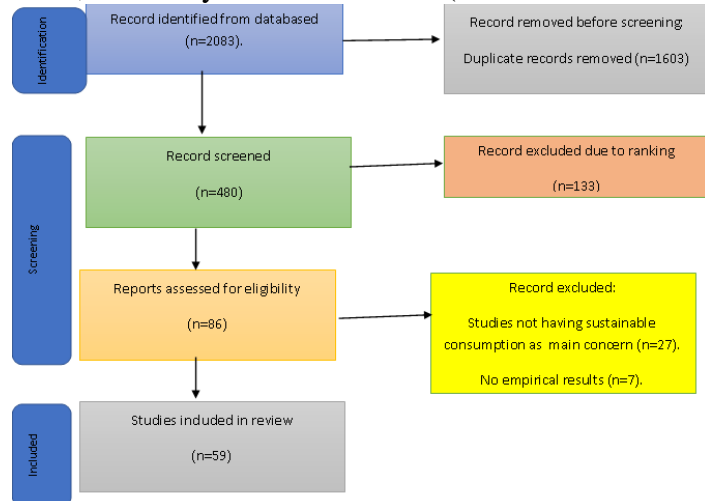


Figure 01: Review protocol

Source: Compiled by author

Data collection: identifying the search key wording and boundaries as an initial preaches of research process. In order to avoid the narrow focused “Sustainable consumption is the selection, acquisition, use and disposal of products and services that considers not only the consumer’s own needs and wants, but also the ones of the current and future population in both an ecological and social respect. Accordingly, major keyword included in various term a combination of key words,search strings (AND and OR) and root terms, e.g. Sustain* Consum* to include all studies using the words sustainable and sustainability, consumers, consumer, consumption, consumerism, etc. and encompassed titles, abstracts, and keywords. Studies were identified by searching three electronic databases – Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar that have published different types of academic journals with the high impact factor. Moreover snowballing, method also applied to retrieve the additional articles (Mattila and Wirtz, 2008).

Study selection and data extraction: Criteria to include and exclude studies were defined and applied to the set of 2083 papers: that were published in the period of 2013–2024, written in English, empirically based sustainable consumption behaviour. After discarding duplicates, within and across databases 1947 titles and abstracts were first extracted to a data sheet and thoroughly reviewed and analysed. Further removed some papers that did not identified clear relationship with sustainable consumption or identified as an antecedent of other constructs based on the recommendation of Kitchenham and Charters (2007). Next exclusion conducted to remove the non-empirical studies likewise case presenting and theoretical model presentation, it's all eighty-six documents were excluded. Accordingly, final list deemed with 59 documents in final list.

FINDINGS

Revolution of the concept

“Sustainability” as an emerging context that has gain high attention in a global setting, that has a notable rise in studies focused on sustainability 'during the 1990s. Further, The JEL categorization evaluation further highlights that, within 11 categories, the number of hits in the sustainability aspect has improved from 6 in 1990 to 200 in 2000, with 330 being the greatest number attained in 2009 (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). Average journals impact factor is 4.2 that emphasis strength and the longevity (Allen, Iliescu, & Greiff, 2022).

Descriptive analysis

Table 02: Primary information about reviewed articles.

Description Results	Description Results
Timespan	2013:2023
Journals	Journals 08
Articles	Articles 49
Average years from publication	Average years from publication 4.9
Average citations per article	Average citations per article 26.61
Average impact factor per journal	Average impact factor per journal 4.3

Source(s): Authors' conception, 2023

Year of publication

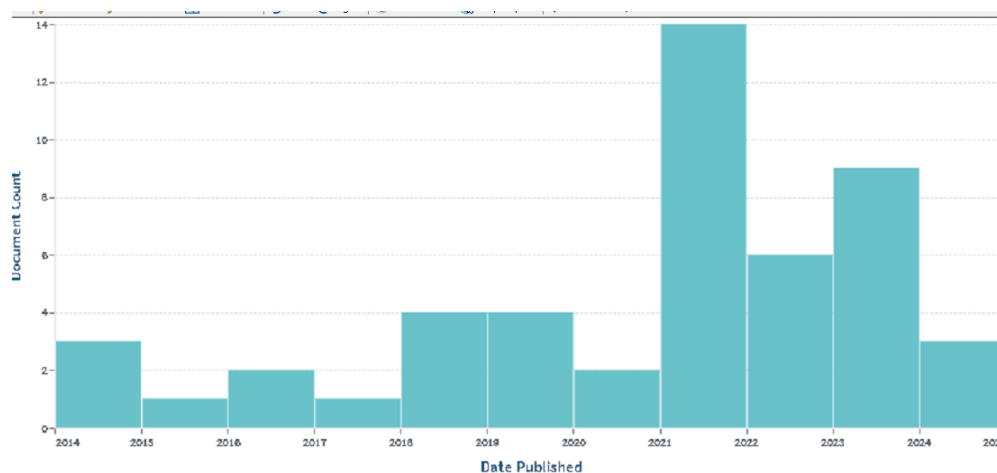


Figure 01: Year of publication

The research on attitudes and intention of sustainable consumption has expanded gradually. As presented Figure 01, from 2014 to 2020, very few publications have published, such as an average of two annual,

publications that has proved by Kerin and Pham (,2019) as few publications throughout the period. However, Studies related to phenomenon has significantly increased after 2020 to that has upgraded into averagely for 8.5 per year.

Journal

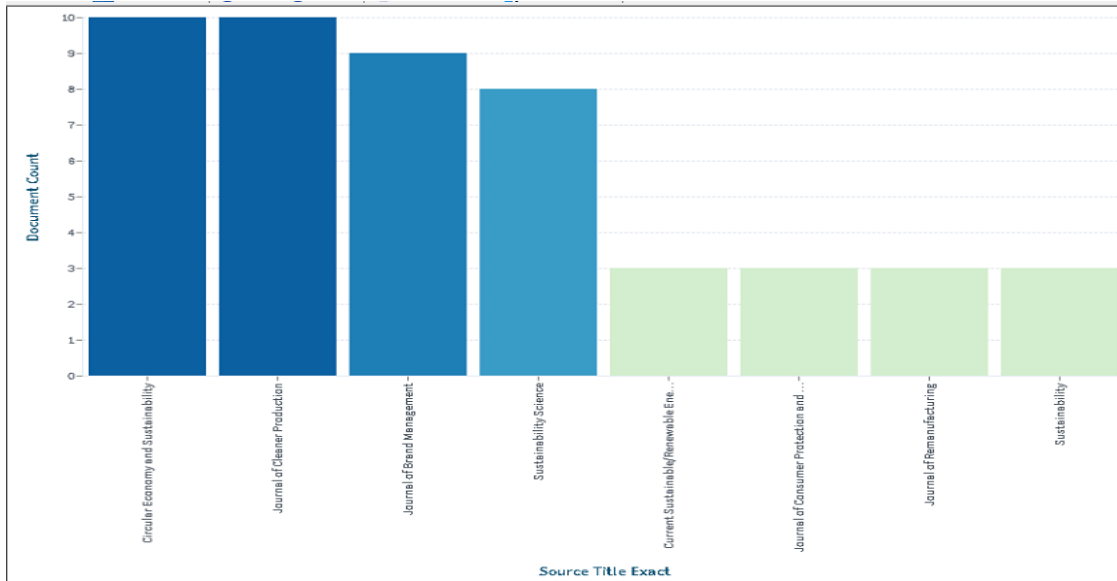


Figure 02: Journals of publication

As a result, figure 02 shows the distribution of the publications that were reviewed by journals. The chosen collection of papers appeared in eight different journals. Among these, prominent journals with the highest number of articles include Sustainability and Circular Economy (10), Journal of cleaner production (10), Journal of Brand Management (09), and Sustainability science (08).

Country region

In sustainability related studies in world academia has mainly focused on European context such as France, Germany and Netherlands (Dinesha,Wijerathna,and Galadolage,2024). Moreover, the discussion of the gaps of consumer attitudes and behaviour also has concentrated on around 31 countries diverse in numerous regions. Canada, Australia and United Kingdom are top hit countries related to the phenomenon.

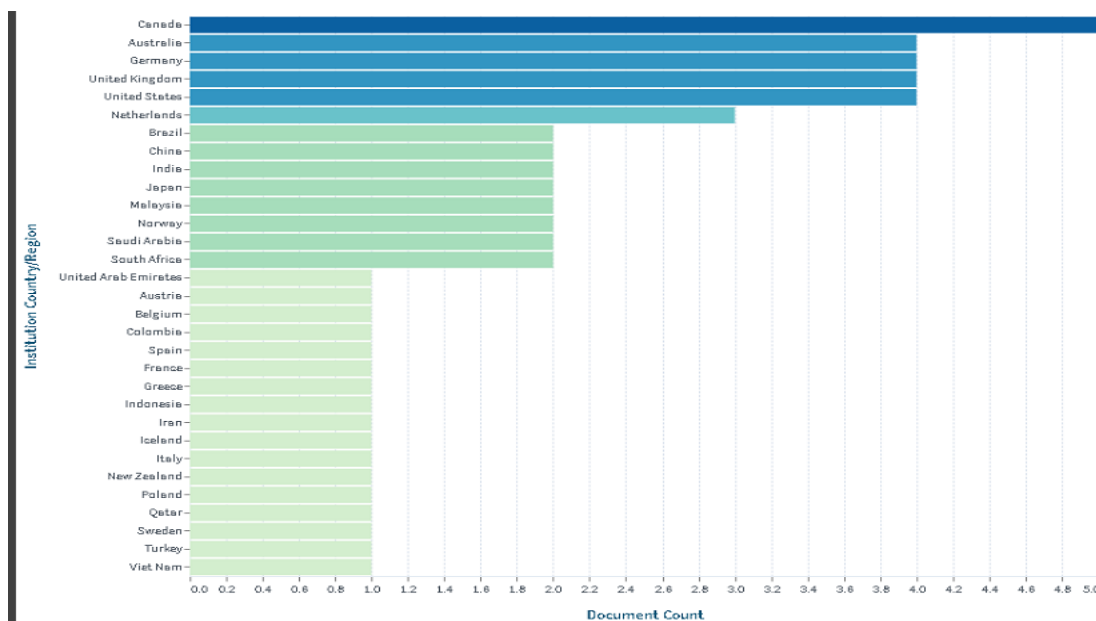


Figure 03: Country region

Attitudes and behaviour gap in sustainable consumption

Researchers argue that in light of the fact that the global market share of green products is now expected to be less than 4% (Islam, et al. 2024) it is imperative to comprehend consumer motives, concerns, and values in order to develop tactics that will encourage green consumption and raise environmental consciousness. Further, Fabio & Croce (2024) mentioned that, It is challenging to change behaviour without also changing attitudes and values, as the research has shown, especially when statements and attitudes may not necessarily correspond to actions. The consumer pro sustainable behaviours have checked based on different attitude-behaviour models that has developed based on different theories such as the theory of reasoned action, the extended theory of planned behaviour, the theory of underlying personal and cultural values orientations.

Prescriptive Analysis

The word co-occurrence network visualization, shown in Figure 4, was created using VOS viewer version 1.6.18 in order to fulfil the study's first objective. It was believed to have been produced by phrases that occasionally and more frequently occurred in the publications. There were twenty-one overall keywords, with the main terms on sustainable consumption as their points of convergence. There are two stages review with occurrence of key words as four times and more than five times. The relationship between these terms is depicted in Figure 4.

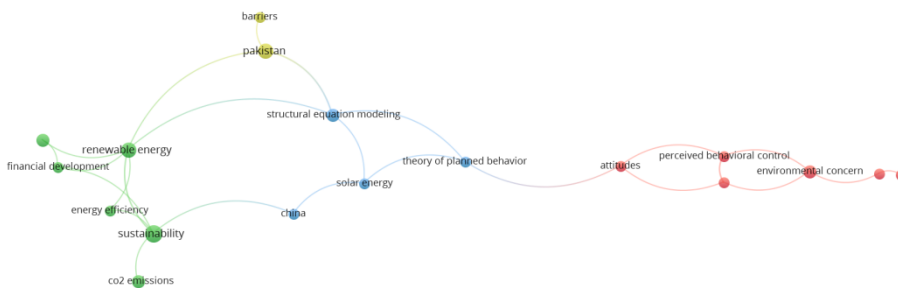


Figure 04: The map of keyword co-occurrence network visualization

As presented in the figure, there main four clusters (present in table 4) have generated on four occurrence on keywords that has the study attempts to analyse the first research issue concerning the connections between the common sectors of sustainable consumption concentrated through keyword co-occurrence analysis. The larger nodes in the thick line indicate the high frequency of occurrence of the keywords, and the thick line itself indicates a strong link between the keywords.

Table 04: Keywords categorized into clusters based on the co-occurrence

Cluster	Cluster theme	Keywords
Green	Sustainable energy	Carbon emission, CO2 emission, energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainability, financial development.
Red	Sustainable attitudes	Attitudes, environmental concern, green marketing, perceived behavioural

		control, sustainable development.
Blue	Environment sustainability	China, solar energy, theory of planed behaviour.
Yellow	Barriers for sustainable consumption	barriers, Pakistan

Source(s): Authors' conception, 2023

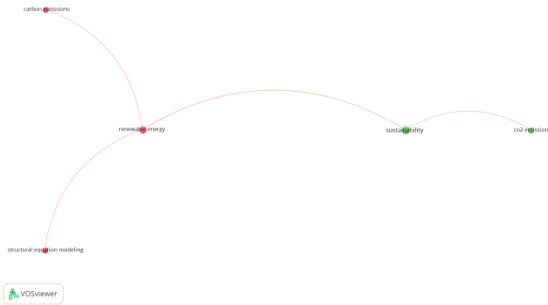


Figure 05: The map of keyword co-occurrence network visualization

Additionally, an analysis of network visualization was carried out using terms that have been strongly appearing more than five times. The result, as shown in the graphic, consists of just two clusters that the red and green nodes supplied.

DISCUSSION

When consider the figure 4 and 5, the result, as shown in the graphic, consists of just two clusters that the red and green nodes supplied. The results of this second examination, however, show that Yellow and Blue have been dropped from the previous four clusters, which were now reduced to two groupings. Carbon emission, renewable energy is the two primary keywords found in the red cluster. This cluster is therefore referred to as "Adaptation to renewable energy." The researchers have named the green cluster "Sustainability" since it encompasses both Sustainability and CO2 emission.

Factors/areas that need to be addressed for future research

Through addressing the study's second objective was to ascertain whether the components or topic areas indicated by the keywords could add to the body of knowledge as the gravity of the existing knowledge on attitudes and behaviour of consumer in terms of sustainable consumption was analysis through the Density visualization maps. Density visualization maps use red, yellow, and green colours, with terms in red indicating extensive research and established knowledge in the relevant field, as per van Eck and Waltman (2014).

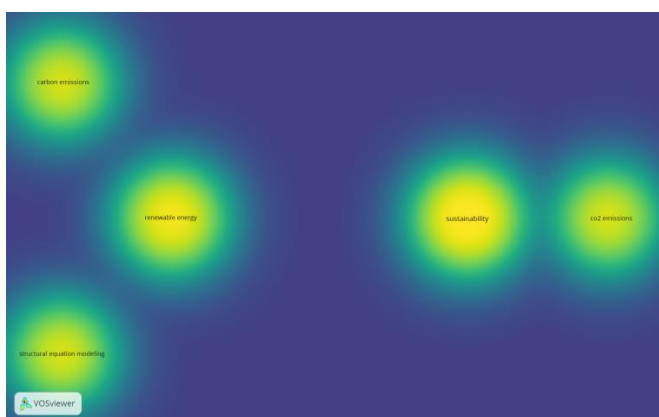


Figure 07: The map of keyword co-occurrence density visualization

According to the output of the analysis, none of the keywords that were taken into consideration for this article have been highlighted in red, indicating that there are still a lot of unexplored regions that need to be covered in future research investigations. Further, the majority of areas that are donated in the yellow area with limited research, whilst terms that are located in the green area show less research. Thus, light or moderate research does not fully add to the corpus of currently known information.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to define a future research agenda and to highlight the significance of theoretical venues and expectations by providing a thorough overview of the literature on attitudes and behaviour gaps in sustainable consumption. Based on the study, 59 papers were ultimately accepted for analysis and the selection, analysis, and reporting of the review findings were primarily based on the "Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA)" criteria. It has a more popular in recent past years. It illustrates the study in the intersection of sustainable consumption has recorded a chronological growth, suggesting that this intersection is a relatively recent phenomenon.

Limitations and directions for future Scholars

Every study has limitations, and the authors acknowledge that by using strict inclusion criteria, they might have overlooked some significant research that have been published in other languages and included in-depth theoretical discussion. Book chapters and reports were not included in the review; future research could look into these as well as studies conducted in other languages and academic databases. Moreover, by specifically targeting customer segments and age categories, the findings will yield greater specificity and relevance, thus enhancing their utility for decision-makers. The study narrowed its focus to research conducted between 2013 and 2024. However, if research from several decades ago were included, a more comprehensive understanding of the concept's evolution could be attained.

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