

**PERCEIVED SUSTAINABILITY KNOWLEDGE AND PROPENSITY
FOR CONSCIOUS CONSUMERISM**

BY

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RECOMMENDATION

CERTIFICATION

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I, Swasti Adhikari declare that this GRP is my original work and that it had fully and specifically acknowledged wherever adapted from other sources. I also understand that if at any time it is shown that I have significantly misinterpreted material presented to SOMTU, any credits awarded to me based on that material may be revoked

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ABBREVIATIONS

PEnSK	Perceived Environment Sustainability Knowledge
PSSK	Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge
PESK	Perceived Economic Sustainability Knowledge
NPR	Nepalese Rupee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study's primary goal was to look into how perceived sustainability knowledge affected Nepali consumers' propensity for conscious consumerism. This study attempts to fill a research gap by investigating how various sustainability knowledge structures influence conscious consumption choices. Also, whereas earlier studies mostly concentrated on environmental knowledge, the goal of this study is to advance understanding of the understudied field of social and economic knowledge. Environmental, social, and economic knowledge were among the various categories of knowledge taken into consideration in this study. Age, gender, money, and education are a few examples of the various moderating values.

Using an online survey, information was gathered from a convenience sample of 300 Nepali customers via an online questionnaire. The statistical analysis tool SPSS was used to analyse the data. The predicted impacts were examined using Pearson Correlation, Descriptive Statistics and Regression Analysis. The findings confirmed the suggested hypotheses. The likelihood of conscious consumption was found to be significantly positively influenced by consumer knowledge and demography.

The findings of this study suggest that practitioners should work to increase consumer understanding in order to promote deliberate purchasing choices. This can be done by launching advertising campaigns that inform customers about the advantages of conscious consumption and by utilizing marketing technologies that advance knowledge.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The topic selection is discussed in this chapter. Both the research background and the research gap that the study will do are introduced. It defines the problem statement, and theoretical contribution along with a statement of the study's research objectives, hypothesis, and limitations.

1.1 Background

Sustainability has become one of the most important topics due to the environmental degradation that the world is experiencing as studied by Chairy and Alam (2019). The rising environmental threat has increased the need for sustainable business strategies and ethical behaviour for consumers per the study by Das and Ramalingam (2019). The perturbation as per global warming and climate change along with the sustainability matters emphasize behaving responsibly. The degradation of natural resources has been brought up leading to the growth of sustainable consumption, also known as conscious consumerism. The growing demand for such reflects the customers growing interest in the environment.

Though, in the face of the improved motivation to choose wisely for the customers' welfare, there is also a lack of knowledge among consumers regarding what conscious consumption means. Feldman and Hamm (2015) state that the preference of consumers can have a significant impact on the solution to environmental degradation. The preference for products that make major contributions to the environment without causing harm to it and the involvement of consumers in environmentalism is crucial. Society should be mindful of consumption. A growing population should aim for sustainability. Conscious consumerism can be achieved by the efforts of the consumers at first. It also includes waste reduction being a sense of obligation for consumers as stated by Jensen (2007). It showcases commitment to environmental action. Considering that consumer behaviour can be easily said to have negative effects on the overall environment, the actions of consumers play a great role. Therefore, it is necessary to promote sustainability and improve the perception associated with it via awareness and knowledge Soma et al. (2020).

Consumers' awareness in regards to the importance of sustainable consumption has begun to appear. It can be attributed to being a positive influence accepted by consumers. As research conducted presents that consumption of sustainable goods boosts environmental protection, it presented that the knowledge of sustainability raises usage of products that are environmentally sound as part of their effort to protect the environment provided by Jensen (2007). Environmental concern is one of the main factors that influence conscious consumption elaborated by Sanchez-Sabate and Sabaté (2019). Conscious consumerism as being a rather evolving topic correlates with the fact that the demand for environmentally conscious products is constantly growing. Buying products sustainably is more prevalent than it has ever been before. It is particularly highlighted when environmental awareness is becoming a trending topic.

Consumer awareness of environmental issues and sustainable development also play a big part. Consumers want that their purchases be not only good for the community but also for the environment. Many consumers don't mind higher prices for environmentally sound goods due to distress about the environment. There are also dimensions to conscious consumerism not limited to environmental impacts such as social impact and economic impact. Conscious consumerism is a way of life that acknowledges that a person's consumption has wider effects than just a small impact on their personal lives. It is thought that consumer power may change the society. People feel that by altering their shopping behaviours, they can have a significant impact on sustainability. Customers are becoming more aware of their power when it comes to selecting sustainable products. As a result, people express their views by supporting socially conscious businesses and abstaining from buying from unsustainable ones.

Moreover, a frequent assumption is harmful behaviours about the environment are mostly propelled by the absence of knowledge about the chief negative impacts as stated by Das and Ramalingam (2019). The said hints at a vital roadblock to participating in ethical behaviour is the insufficiency of knowledge. Therefore, if the said roadblock is addressed, people would not engage in unsustainable behaviour and would correct their behaviour accordingly. Also, considering the significant growth of conscious consumption behaviour, it is essential to gain greater knowledge about the dimensions that promote it, to better satisfy the demands and untapped market.

Particularly, the lack of knowledge that prevails among customers seems to be one of the utmost curbs to conscious consumerism. Thus, focusing on the importance of said knowledge, the discoveries of the study help researchers and professionals better evaluate the need for knowledge for conscious consumption. It attempts to provide for better predictability of sustainable consumer behaviour by focusing on the facilitating factor of perceived sustainability knowledge in the context of Nepalese consumers and illustrates the importance of the same concerning conscious consumerism.

1.2 Problem Statement

The bleak results of human behaviours on the environment have accelerated sizeable research aiming to better advance sustainable consumer behaviour in detail as provided by Roberts and Bacon (1997). The motives leading consumers to buy environmentally friendly products could be varied. At this, the underlying motives, as well as concerns concerning their health, welfare, or environmental concerns, are just among the few often identified to motivate a conscious purchase stated by Magnier and Schoormans (2015). Besides the motivational factors for purchasing sustainably, many studies have also included intention about conscious consumption as provided by Cerri et al. (2018). Another stream of research also focuses on how the perceptions of consumers are shifting. It is known that sustainable purchases are much better for the environment as well as healthier for the consumers but also pricier than their counterparts without taking into account the quality aspect of the products being ambiguous. Consumers also show positive intentions towards sustainable products as they are more ethical.

The attention given to finding the ethical consumer is great in research as Suki (2015) states. However, an in-depth understanding of sustainable behaviours requires understanding the exact nature of specific factors which facilitate or impede such behaviours. The focus on demographic profiling has often been contradictory as they implicate that sustainable consumption can only be explained by demographics in general. For instance, Roberts (1996) conclude that a conscious consumer may come from various profiles and socio-economic background. Needless to say, Sin and Tse (2002) state while younger consumers are more likely to express the desire to be conscious consumers, older consumers tend to be the ones that buy them.

Magnier and Schoormans (2015) examine the influence of environmental knowledge on the attitudes to purchasing sustainably finding the said knowledge to affect judgments. Price acceptance also becomes an integral aspect of it. The existing studies have failed to link consumer knowledge including environmental, social, and economic disparity. Lack of knowledge could be hindering conscious behaviour as stated by Roberts and Bacon (1997). Matter of fact, it can be elaborated that consumers cannot be sure as to what constitutes conscious consumption. This gives a strong indication that knowledge in general has a strong but underappreciated influence on the consumer. Thus, advanced knowledge about how consumers' knowledge influences their behaviour will amplify researchers' and practitioners' appraisal in managing consumer knowledge. It could promote education about environmental-related issues. Therefore, this study addresses the research gap regarding how consumer knowledge the conscious consumerism.

Also, the decision on whether to purchase a product or service is impacted by whether the attributes of a commodity or service fit into the consumer's knowledge of what is sustainable. There is a considerable research gap in addressing the aforementioned. Also, customers have become more knowledgeable and conscious about the environment and sustainable products in developing countries. One study focused on customer behaviour toward eco-friendly and sustainable products in developing countries (Chairy & Alam, 2019). However, a very limited number of studies have focused on the factors that facilitate the propensity toward sustainable consumption in developing countries, especially Nepal. Environmental concern is a crucial reason for consumers to buy sustainably. Thus, promoting a broader understanding of consumer behaviour regarding conscious consumerism and a full transferability of findings from research focusing on the same also appears to be done in vigilance.

As mentioned above, limited research has included an understanding of the knowledge aspect regarding conscious consumerism. The focus concerning the environmentally aware and responsible consumer in terms of one's views of sustainability is lacking. It can be argued that the gap in research constitutes an opportunity that is worth getting an enhanced knowledge of but still hasn't been sufficiently explored by research. Thus, this study deals with the following:

- What impact does the perceived sustainability knowledge have on the propensity for conscious consumerism?
- Do the demographic variables of age, gender, education, and income moderate the relationship of perceived sustainability knowledge on the propensity for conscious consumerism?

1.3 Objectives

The principal objective, investigating the impact of perceived sustainability knowledge on the propensity for conscious consumerism in the context of Nepali consumers. While perceived sustainability knowledge comprises environmental, social, and economic knowledge, this study looks at how it influences conscious consumption behaviour. Thus, the study pursues making a theoretical contribution to the field of sustainability and in particular regarding knowledge of sustainability.

To fulfil the objective of this study, the following sub-objectives were identified:

- To assess the impact of perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, perceived social sustainability knowledge and perceived economic sustainability knowledge on the propensity for conscious consumerism.
- To examine the influence of age, gender, education, and income on the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.

1.4 Hypothesis

Conscious consumerism's connotation is different among researchers' various interpretations (Webster, 1975); (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972). It is because of the complex and ambivalent nature of sustainability and the varying degree of sustainability that it encompasses. The constant transformation of the concept plays a great role in making it a trending topic.

Likewise, knowledge about the environmental issues at hand along with the varying degree of information that the individuals have on the relevant concepts about ethical consumption cannot be denied as provided by Roberts and Bacon (1997). Many researchers (Gam, 2011); (Barbarossa & Pastore, 2015) agree that knowledge does not directly influence sustainable consumption but some are in agreement that knowledge is positively associated with conscious consumerism. Researchers (Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003); (Diamantopoulos et al., 2003) have also argued that demographic variables, such as age, gender, income, and education among others, have a significant moderating influence on the behaviour of consumers. The results are contradictory contextually as well in terms of education level as higher education doesn't directly translate to having more consciousness about the environment. Chen et al. (2014) conclude that older customers are more conscious. Accordingly, young consumers in the context of their knowledge were found to be having a poor conscious attitude. As emphasised by Diamantopoulos et al. (2003) gender could be an important variable while examining sustainable consumption but further research is needed. Income also plays a role in establishing intention and conscious behaviour (Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003). Based on the above review, the following hypothesis are proposed:

H1: Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.

H2: Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.

H3: Perceived Economic Environmental Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.

H4: Age moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.

H5: Gender moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.

H6: Education moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.

H7: Income moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.

1.5 Scope and Significance

The negative effects of human behaviours on the environment have called for research seeking to understand the behaviour of consumers, particularly sustainable behaviour. Still, an understanding of sustainable behaviours is not enough as elaborated by McKenzie-Mohr (2000). Understanding the exact reason that causes sustainable behaviour, and facilitating or impeding such behaviours connects to the research objectives of this thesis.

This study adds to the literature on sustainability by contributing towards sustainable consumer behaviour that includes environmental, social, and economic facets. This is different from earlier sustainability studies of this kind. The Nepalese population is different from that of developed countries. The findings of this study can duly enhance the theoretical grounding of sustainable behaviour. It adds to the construct of conscious consumerism relating to developing countries like Nepal. Sustainable behaviour is in part dependent on the environmental, social, and economic aspects. The findings from developing countries can develop a theoretical understanding of sustainable and conscious behaviour.

Also, this study lays out a discussion of demographics as per sustainable consumerism and contributes to the works of literature on segmentation by surveying a broader range of socio-demographic factors. It also relates to the theoretical understanding of the context of a developing nation.

1.6 Limitations

The aim was to grasp Nepali consumers in general regarding their perceived sustainability knowledge on conscious consumerism behaviour. However, this population is somewhat large comprising varied people. It is intrinsically challenging, regardless of scope, to enlist a sample representing the outlook of all Nepali consumers.

The scope of this study is limited to the perceived sustainability knowledge aspect and how it relates to conscious consumerism. However, conscious consumerism patterns are widely dispersed and caused by various factors, but the scope of this study is only on the knowledge aspect.

1.7 Structure of Report

This study comprised five primary parts. The first chapter initiates the topic introduction and the problem duly explored and the objectives to address the problems studied. The second chapter is a review of the literature which presents some insights regarding the previous research done on sustainability knowledge and how it relates to conscious consumerism. The third part explains the various methods used in collecting data. The fourth part includes the findings presented and analysed. discusses the data analysis and outcomes interpretation. Lastly, the final part concludes the research by addressing the research objectives.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the relevant literature for the context of conscious consumerism is introduced and duly discussed. This chapter summarizes the previous research and literature on the topic of conscious consumerism.

2.1 Perceived Sustainability Knowledge

Perceived sustainability knowledge is what customers think they recognize relating to sustainability. It can be regarded as one of an essential that influence consumer behaviour. Perceived sustainability knowledge is also a vital factor in shaping perceptions as provided by Liao et al. (2020) and intentions. What a person knows about a topic is related to his/her knowledge. Zwickle and Zones (2017) stated that understanding relating to the perceived motivations behind behaving sustainably is necessary for making the changes required to avoid environmental, social, and economic disasters.

Moreover, it can be added knowledgeable people may have better consumer choices as stated by Liao et al. (2020). A person's knowledge base represents his/her perceived competence when choosing a certain product. More knowledgeable people can better comprehend the repercussions which leads to better conscious decision-making. The ever-widening sustainability knowledge of consumers has given ground for research in the fields of environment, sociology, and economics, as elaborated by Valenturf and Purnell (2021).

Compared to economic and social sustainability, perceived environmental sustainability is much simpler. Sustainable use of natural resources refers to taking them out at a pace that is equal to or lower than the rate of replacement. Sustainability may simply refer to maintaining the landscape's current structure and function in terms of ecological health.

It will be difficult to reach an agreement on what is economically or socially viable, though. Depending on an individual's ideological convictions, there will probably be different positive and bad instances of economic and social sustainability. A less publicly supported social safety net and a higher dependence on business, according to Zwicke and Zones (2017), may be vital to maintaining social stability.

2.1.1 Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge

Perceived environmental sustainability knowledge has been referred to as one's cognitive comprehension to understand problems in per environment such as air pollution and using energy efficiently as expressed by Chirilli et al. (2022). The said knowledge leads to customers becoming more and more aware of the environment. They wish to buy environment-friendly goods. The sustainable consumption of goods emerged as a trend and the majority of customers have become more and more aware of the environment and are showing interest in green purchasing as elaborated by Chari and Reddy (2019), and the consciousness is drastically affecting the attitude towards green consumption.

Moreover, knowledge concerning the environment has paved the way for the promotion of marketing tactics, such as green materials and green packaging to make them safe. As stated by Rusyani et al. (2021), consumers are buying products based on the possible environmental repercussions. Policies are also propelled by consumers. Green consumer behaviour happened thanks to knowledgeable consumers and marketers in the context of contemporary consumer research. In addition, Sultana et al. (2022) described, achieving environmental knowledge leads to pro-environmental behaviour which impacts the intention to buy and use a certain service consciously. Thus, the following hypothesis was derived:

H1: Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.

2.1.2 Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge

Sustainability cannot be disconnected from the way humans behave in their social environment. Sustainability is an everchanging concept as revealed by Zwickle and Zones (2017). Social behaviour or social knowledge, including the social elements, can have a positive effect on conscious behaviour as stated by Moncure and Burbach (2013). In particular, social norms act as external influencers of conscious behaviour often discarding the social norms of economic and environmental development.

Thus, social sustainability raises the original philosophical question of what constitutes a good life and a good society. Catlin et al. (2017) believe this is beyond the comprehension of social sustainability. Knowledge encompassing making society sustainable is a requirement to identify what type of society is needed. The symbolic social interaction necessary for understanding everyday consumerism patterns may play a very strong role in environmentally conscious consumption.

Along with social interaction influencing behaviourism, Moncure, and Burbach (2013), people living in society may choose to behave in more sustainable ways because doing so makes them feel like members of society. They may do it to achieve social support. Through their interactions, they actively build and strengthen the idea of a society that consumes more sustainably. It reinforces the need to behave consciously. The following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.

2.1.3 Perceived Economic Sustainability Knowledge

Economic sustainability is a production that is enough but making sure future needs are fulfilled. The perceived economic sustainability knowledge seeks the sustainability of the economic system itself as stated by Purvis et al. (2018). Economic sustainability is repressed by the requisite of environmental sustainability. Economic sustainability at the cost of environmental sustainability is a conundrum as asserted by Zwickle and Zones (2017).

Thus, promoting sustainable consumption and production are important aspects of sustainability and consciousness which also includes achieving long-term economic growth that is consistent with conscious consumption. The promotion of sustainable consumption is equally important to provide markets for sustainable products as unsustainable production practices could be a deterrent that stops conscious consumers from buying from certain companies. Companies are using efficient production processes, renewable resources, and natural processes rather than focusing on the product in light of the perceived economic sustainability knowledge Hameed et al. (2021). However, the increasing demands by consumers bring the situation where companies are conveying a false sense of how a company's products are more environmentally sound than they are. Thus, the proposed hypothesis at:

H3: Perceived Economic Environmental Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.

2.2 Demographic Variables

Pir (2021) provides on the demographic variables having a significant impact on conscious consumerism. Vishnubhatla and Agashe (2022) further concluded that demographic variables have a significant impact on ethical purchases. It can be stated that differences have been achieved between demographic variables and the level of consumer consciousness or conscious awareness. It influences consumption along with the purchasing habits of the consumers. The variables may lead to a positive relationship or negative relationship between the conscious awareness perceptions of consumers. This is because consumers can no longer be oblivious to what they consume without thinking of the environmental impact. Consumption has become duly facile. It is the need of the hour which is influenced by varied demographics.

2.2.1 Age

Age has been explored by Gupta and Singh (2018) stating that the age range of consumers has a considerable impact on conscious purchasing habits. Young consumers showed a greater inclination towards environmentally friendly behaviour. Purchasing habit was following sustainability knowledge.

Likewise, a study was done to detect primary school students' opinions on conscious consumerism found by Malbelegi and Saglam (2013) that a conscious consumer should have quality consciousness and budgetary consciousness among others. Regarding the age demographic, it can be added that the economy is an indispensable part of human life. individuals are that they are all consumers. Zalega (2018) found environmental knowledge and environmentally conscious consumer behaviour of Polish seniors adding the perspective of senior citizens towards conscious consumerism. Thus, the following hypothesis as derived:

H4: Age moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism

2.2.2 Gender

The generalization that women are more environmentally conscious buyers compared to men has been well-heard of. It is generalized that women have a higher level of awareness and knowledge when it comes to environmental issues which sways them towards conscious consumerism more. Trandafilovic et al. (2017) found a correlation between gender and environmentally friendly consumerism.

In addition, women are more prone to environmentally friendly behaviour as concluded by Bloodhart and Swim (2020) because of gender roles. However, what causes the consumer decisions of both females and males are not easily assessed. Females are distinguished more by hedonistic consumption than males as stated by Brochado et al. (2016) even in place of environmentally friendly products. Thus, the hypothesis derived at:

H5: Gender moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.

2.2.3 Education

Mazlan et al. (2014) provide that Consumers are most exposed to risks due to a lack of knowledge regarding products or services. To make sure that the risks are minimized, empowerment via consumerism knowledge is needed. Education is a medium that teaches how to act responsibly. Even though it is hard to understand the complexity of the market, safeguarding their interest and the growing influence of consumerism can be seen which aids society to understand what the consumers' role is in being a conscious consumer.

Also, Harring et al. (2019) state individuals with higher education levels enjoy more access to information and display greater sustainability concerns. It can be provided that behaviour of educated consumers was hardly swayed by marketing as they already have their consumer habits and preferences and mindset regarding products Brochado et al. (2016) that help them make conscious decisions. Thus, education leads to consumers being more responsible towards their consumption and environment which induces marketers to be more responsible for the products they produce and the service they provide. Thus, the hypothesis derived at:

H6: Education moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.

2.2.4 Income

The impact of income cannot be denied when many consumers no matter their level of conscious consumerism are not willing to incur the excess monetary cost of ecologically sound brands. They may be less likely to switch to green alternatives when evaluating the price points Barbarossa and Pastore (2015). It can be said that the most demanding challenge for sustainability includes changing the unsustainable consumption patterns of consumers. Unsustainable consumption patterns are the main driver of the environmental crisis degrading the environment.

Boulanger (2010) argues in the context of whether income suffices in achieving the objective of sustainable consumption that properly transitioning to sustainable consumption requires sufficiency of income. The basic impact of income on conscious consumerism could play an integral role in the concept of sustainability. Moreover, income is positively correlated with sustainability practices. As stated by Özer (2015), a common justification is that ones with higher income can easily handle costs associated with buying sustainable products. Süle (2012) elaborated that nevertheless, it is the knowledge base that at last determines buying behaviour. Thus, the hypothesis derived at:

H7: Income moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.

2.3 The Propensity for Conscious Consumerism

Conscious consumerism resulted from social movements not only including how goods are made but how they are produced, processed, and transported too. Consumers' choice in selecting goods made according to ethical standards as affirmed by Cohen and Munoz (2017) is integral. It is to be said that conscious consumerism primarily focuses on making positive decisions during the purchase process. The intention of helping to balance some of the negative impacts that consumerism has on the earth is emphasized. Consumerism promotes environmentally friendly ways of making products and imparting services. It also includes equal pay and proper working practices driving consumption patterns. The consumers' purchasing power is considered that impacts the environment and society in general about what to purchase.

Consumers have great power and they are considering the businesses they buy from. Creating global impact and supporting businesses that promote the values these consumers see as important are the criteria. It is to be noted that conscious consumerism may require some level of knowledge as well as the ability to make decisions. Heo and Muralidharan (2017) also state that the attention to environmental sustainability is increasing and marketers are claiming that their products help protect the environment. But without proper understanding of how it came to be could lead to futile consumption, thus knowledge of the same is essential. Accordingly, major antecedents, such as environmental, social, and economic knowledge need to be considered.

The idea of consumerism is also expanding quickly. The degree to which one can apply the idea is determined by how conscious of one's purchasing decisions one is. A significant factor is the continually evolving attitudes of consumers. Making decisions about what to buy based on information other than what is listed on the label and understanding the firm's production and supply chain can assist in whether or not the company is affecting the environment, according to Das and Ramalingam (2019). It cannot be overstated that every business operation affects the economy, society, and environment, whether the effect is beneficial or harmful. Choices made by consumers are significant since they help businesses to withstand adverse impacts. Threats from pollution and global warming have prompted businesses to adopt sustainable practices, and conscious consumerism has become a component of the global economy.

According to Chairy and Alam (2019) many consumers are willing to pay a fair premium for environmentally friendly products. Conscious consumerism is a way of life that acknowledges that consumer power may change society and that individual purchasing has bigger effects than just a private impact. As stated by Das & Ramalingam (2019), as a result, consumers express their values by patronizing ethical businesses and refraining from doing business with unethical ones. However, conscious purchases can be impractical and quite expensive, requiring some level of knowledge regarding why it is important. Nasution and Hadiansah (2020), found that environmental concerns had a positive impact on conscious consumer behaviour. The knowledge base had a positive impact on conscious consumer behaviour about the characteristics of the consumer. Zwickle and Zones (2017) explain that knowledge is a crucial quality that affects all stages of the decision-making process. Consumer decision-making processes will be influenced by relevant knowledge when choosing the goods and services they utilize. As per Martinez-Martinez et al. (2019), environmental knowledge is the body of information that provides a comprehensive understanding of the ideas, details, and connections between ecosystems and the natural world. They assert that a higher level of understanding of environmental awareness will result in higher purchasing behaviour for these products because it is obvious that environmental knowledge directly influences purchase intention for environmentally friendly products.

Conscious customers are guided by businesses' effects on social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Understanding the scope of the influence is necessary to accept the consumption process. Due to their knowledge and consciousness, consumers have the power to change the world with every conscientious purchase they make.

According to Catlin et al. (2017), favourable attitudes toward conscious consumerism may be directly related to perceived environmental understanding. Also, consumers who place a high emphasis on self-improvement feel more important and satisfied when they are associated with a product and its ownership. According to Zwickle and Zones (2017), these values are strengthened by products that receive favourable feedback from references. People, therefore, present themselves in a way to be appreciated by society. The inherent perceived need for gaining acceptance in society because of the socially constructed system of social values and norms isn't unknown Xu et al. (2020). Companies are seeking the said social acceptance as per the continuity and credibility of the products and services they impart. It is a way to gain passive and active support from conscious consumers as well.

Similarly, despite a fairly widespread understanding of the kinds of business practices required, as explained by Kalyugina et al. (2021), economic sustainability knowledge, which is defined as consumption practices that support the long-term economic development of a company or nation while also protecting environmental, social, and cultural elements, is a goal that today very few organizations achieve.

It cannot be denied that consumers' interest is duly accelerating toward conscious and sustainable products, the main reason why companies are using greenwashing to attract conscious consumers. The negative impact of greenwashing cannot be denied as it pertains to the purchase behaviour of consumers along with the conscious brand image negatively affected by greenwashing. It can affect the consumerism level.

There is a need to diminish greenwashing for the sake of the promotion of a conscious brand image toward conscious purchase behaviour Hameed et al. (2021). The increasing demands by consumers are also bringing a risk of false impressions and misleading information about how environmentally conscious a certain product is as consumers choose to buy from those businesses that are aware of the same. Nevertheless, the importance of knowledge toward the inclination for conscious consumerism can be emphasized. The related literature can be presented in the form of a literature review matrix in Table 1:

Table 1*Literature Review Matrix*

Author	Study	Method	Findings
Boulanger (2010)	Basic Income and Sustainable Consumption Strategies.	Theoretical Review	The transition to sustainable consumption requires three varied strategies namely ecoefficiency, sufficiency, and decommodification.
Süle (2012)	Can Conscious Consumption be Learned? The Role of Hungarian Consumer Protection Education in Becoming Conscious Consumers.	Survey with 280 respondents	It was concluded that consumer behaviour doesn't form by the means of education, especially in later years. Also, different aspects of consciousness dominate both males and females.
Malbelegi and Saglam (2013)	Primary School 4th Grade Students' Opinions of Conscious Consumerism.	Qualitative study design via semi-structured interview	The findings showed students know the characteristics of a conscious consumer namely, consumer responsibility consciousness, quality consciousness, and budgetary consciousness.

Moncure and Burbach (2013)	Social Reinforcement of Environmentally Conscious Consumer Behaviour at a Grocery Store Cooperative.	A qualitative study exploring one local cooperative grocery store	The findings found that societal like-mindedness aids in discussing topics and issues in the area of environmentally conscious consumer behaviour.
Mazlan et al. (2014)	Consumer Education in Creating a Consumer Conscious Nation.	Qualitative study via in-depth interviews	It was concluded that consumer education should commence in the education system for conscious behaviour.
Barbarossa and Pastore (2015)	Why Environmentally Conscious Consumers do not Purchase Green Products.	-Qualitative study via interview -Cognitive mapping technique	It was found that higher prices and limited availability may be barriers to conscious purchasing decisions.
Özer (2015)	Income-Consumption Relations for the Students of Bingöl University.	Survey of 600 students	It was found that expenses related to education were the same for males and females.
Brochado et al. (2016)	The Ecological Conscious Consumer Behaviour: Are the Activists Different?	Online Survey	It was found that the strongest predictor for ecologically conscious consumer behaviour was activism.

Catlin et al. (2017)	Consumer Perceptions of the Social Vs. Environmental Dimensions of Sustainability.	Qualitative pilot study	It was found that the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability were distinct and not a dimensional construct.
Cohen and Munoz (2017)	Entering Conscious Consumer Markets: Toward a New Generation of Sustainability Strategies	-Multi-study case review	It was found that to cater to the conscious consumer there need to be entry strategies depending on the scope of the marketplace and the value of the conscious consumer.
Heo and Muralidharan (2017)	What triggers young Millennials to purchase Eco-friendly Products? the interrelationships among Knowledge, Perceived consumer effectiveness, and Environmental concern.	Online Survey	It was found that environmental concerns could be a strong driver for conscious behaviour.
Trandafilovic and Blagojevic (2017)	Impact of Demographic Factors on Environmentally Conscious Purchase Behaviour.	Online survey with a questionnaire consisting of closed-choice and Likert scales	It was found that demographic factors do influence a conscious purchase.

Zwickle and Zones (2017)	Sustainability Knowledge and Attitudes— Assessing Latent Constructs.	Revised Assessment	Sustainability knowledge across the three domains was found to be valid and reliable for further theory testing.
Gupta and Singh (2018)	Factors Affecting Environmentally Responsive Consumption Behaviour in India: An Empirical Study.	Survey of 514 respondents	It was concluded that purchase behaviour was the direct impact of purchase intention.
Purvis et al. (2018)	Three Pillars of Sustainability: in search of Conceptual Origins.	Review and discussion of relevant historical sustainability literature	It was found that sustainability remains context-specific. It is ontologically open for understanding.
Zalega (2018)	Environmental Awareness, Green Consumerism and Environmentally Conscious Consumer Behaviour of Polish Seniors.	Survey on a sample of 1786 seniors	It was found that the scale of differences in awareness varies and the age holds even after accounting for other demographics.

Das and Ramalingam (2019)	Does Knowledge Translate into Action? Impact of Perceived Environmental Knowledge on Ecologically Conscious Consumer Behaviour.	-A self-administered questionnaire with 192 respondents	It was revealed that consumers who have high or average concern toward the environment were prone to conscious behaviour.
Harring et al. (2019)	Higher education, Norm Development, and Environmental protection.	A longitudinal study from seven universities	It was concluded that higher education does not necessarily equate to norm development or the intention to protect the environment.
Martinez-Martinez et al. (2019)	Knowledge Agents as drivers of Environmental sustainability and Business performance in the Hospitality sector.	An empirical, longitudinal study of 87 organizations	It was found that the knowledge agent determines the environmental knowledge base firm.
Chiary and Alam (2019)	The Influence of Environmental Concern, Green Perceived Knowledge, and Green Trust on Green Purchase Intention.	Online questionnaire of 300 respondents	It was found that enhancing consumers' environmental concerns and green perceived knowledge and green trust will lead to a stronger green purchase intention.

Xu et al. (2020)	How can an Image of Sustainability be Trusted? the Inner World of Corporate Social Responsibility.	Online survey	It was found that to gain trust, identity orientation to moral legitimacy is needed.
Bloodhart and Swim (2020)	Sustainability and Consumption: What's Gender Got to Do with It?	Review of various social science research on gendered aspects of sustainable consumption	It was found that social influences on gender differences in behaviour exist regarding sustainable consumption.
Nausation and Hadiansah (2020)	Ecologically Conscious Consumer behaviour: Student perspectives as a consumer	-Survey of 207 respondents -Regression methods with a simultaneous and partial test	It was found that environmental concern has a positive influence on conscious consumption behaviour.
Liao et al. (2020)	Perceived Knowledge, Coping Efficacy and Consumer Consumption Changes in Response to Food Recall.	-Survey of 631 respondents -Structural equation model analysis	The relationship between perceived knowledge was shown indicating the importance of education concerning safety.

Hameed et al. (2021)	Greenwash and green purchase behaviour: an environmentally sustainable perspective.	-Empirical study -Structural equation modelling	It was found that greenwash negatively affects conscious purchase decisions.
Kalyugina et al. (2021)	Sustainability of Economic Systems and Business Enterprises.	Proposes a conceptual framework and assessment via Altman and Altman-Sabato models	It was found that economic growth and sustainability can both be achieved if relevant efforts and funds are pro provisioned.
Pir (2021)	The Impact of Conscious Awareness and Consumer Uniqueness on Consumer Ethnocentrism and Demographics Comparisons.	-Survey -Regression -T-test -ANOVA analysis	It was concluded that even though consumer uniqueness positively affects consumer ethnocentrism, differences were found between demographic variables for the same.

Rusyani et al. (2021)	Purchasing Eco-Sustainable Products: Interrelationship between Environmental Knowledge, Environmental Concern, Green Attitude, and Perceived Behaviour.	-Data from 514 respondents -Pearson's correlation -Multiple regression for a multicollinearity test	It was found that environmental knowledge, concern, and green attitude strongly drive the conscious purchase decision.
Velenturf and Purnell (2021)	Principles for a Sustainable Circular Economy.	The systems ecology literature revisit, analysis, and critical reflection.	It was concluded that there is a need to develop a more sustainable circular economy toward a circular study
Chirilli et al. (2022)	Consumers' Awareness, Behaviour and Expectations for Food Packaging Environmental Sustainability: Influence of Socio-Demographic Characteristics.	-The online survey of 648 participants -ANOVA models and t-tests	It was found that sociodemographic factors had a considerable impact on awareness, behaviour, and expectations.

Sultana et al. (2022)	Influence of Perceived Environmental Knowledge and Environmental Concern on Customers' Green Hotel Visit Intention: Mediating role of Green Trust.	Visit perception of 213 customers using the Partial Least Square method.	It was found that environmental knowledge makes customers choose green hotels and practices.
Vishnubhatla and Agashe (2022)	Is Conscious Consumerism a Step Towards Society 5.0?	Review showcasing the organic and sustainable practices prioritizing environmental balance	The study found that newer technologies have contributed significantly to conscious consumer needs.

2.4 Research Gap

Environmental knowledge is presented as a driver in sustainable consumption as studied by Haron et al. (2005). A study by Saari et al. (2021) found that knowledge drives sustainable purchases. Not just environmental but social knowledge is also attributed to making sure the conscious behaviour in terms of purchasing goods and services as studied by Kim et al. (2014). Moreover, Wang et al. (2014) provide that economic knowledge, as provided by implies that sustainability can be achieved only with ample economic knowledge. In terms of demographics, there is reasonable doubt whether it can have a significant impact on conscious consumerism as provided by Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002). Age and gender are among the ones frequently assessed. Education, marital status, and income also play a role. However, there is a disagreement as findings are often contradictory caused by differences in context as evidenced by Tanner and Kast (2003).

This paper builds on the existing literature and evaluates sustainability behaviour relative to demographic attributes as moderators and knowledge aspects in the Nepali setting. The focus of the paper is sustainability knowledge that may signal sustainable behaviour which hasn't been done before on three different domains namely environmental, social, and economic knowledge.

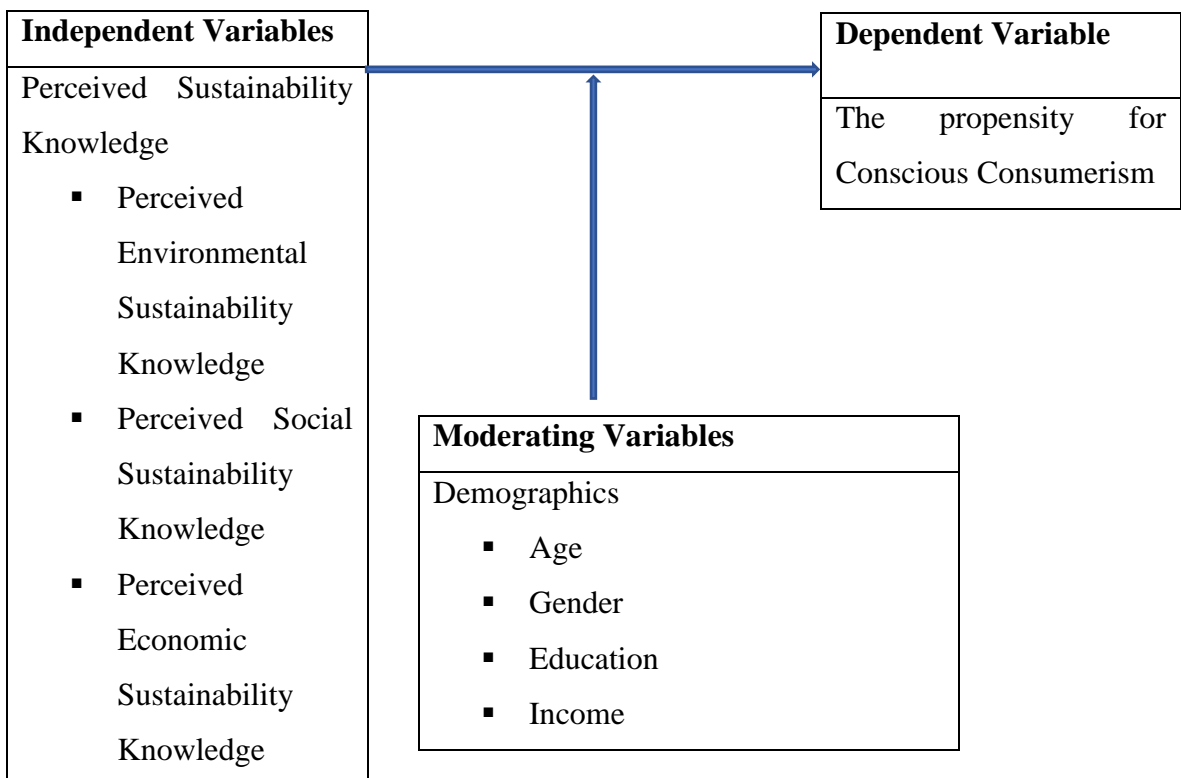
2.5 Conceptual Framework

It can be surmised that sustainability knowledge has an impact on the conscious consumerism behaviour of consumers. Sustainability knowledge includes environmental, social, and economic knowledge. Demographic variables that are expected to have an impact on conscious consumerism behaviour as per their perceived knowledge ultimately impact the propensity for conscious consumerism.

To showcase the same, Figure 1 is presented.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



2.6 Operational Definitions

To assess the relationship between factors and measurements, variables must be defined. The variables employed are defined subsequently.

2.6.1 Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge

Generally accepted definitions of environmental perception refer to being aware of or having emotions about the environment as well as the process of taking in one's environment through one's senses (Zwickle and Zones, 2017). Environmental perception is a multidimensional phenomenon and a process that involved interactions between a person and their surroundings. It is not identical to other aspects of psychological functioning and appropriate to particular environmental situations.

2.6.2 Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge

Following the social knowledge concept, knowledge is produced through links inside a particular group rather than being the sum of all the knowledge in that community. The extent and importance of these social knowledge networks, of which these groups are a part, vary widely from group to group (Zwickle and Zones, 2017). Families, for instance, can be thought of as a social knowledge network because that particular group of people has produced collective knowledge about specific topics through their relationships with one another. This knowledge develops and is shared through casual conversations and interactions within a community.

2.6.3 Perceived Economic Sustainability Knowledge

In line with the economic knowledge aspect, it is reasonable to believe that companies process of operation is one of the most significant sources of economic growth. The said does not limit individual consumption by citizens but rather involves it (Zwickle and Zones, 2017) Successful economic development is enabled by consumption related to personal growth, which is not only possible with the proper assimilation of the company's production and further processes.

2.6.4 Age

The sort of goods needed and the preferred outlet depend on the buyers' ages (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Young people typically consider ethics when making purchases. As a result, people regularly swap between brands that caters to sustainability. Middle-aged consumers are more prone to it than younger consumers because they are more aware.

2.6.5 Gender

Male and female purchasing habits diverge significantly (Tanner & Kast, 2003). Women are more likely to shop, haggle, and visit many stores to evaluate products, services, and prices. Male consumers are more devoted to brands and retailers thus it is also relevant in terms of sustainable purchases.

2.6.6 Education

Education has a direct impact on consumer purchasing behaviour (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). The level of education indicates distinct purchasing habits, such as a preference for visiting multiple stores to evaluate prices, quality, and services, as well as more frequent bargaining. Contrarily, more educated people tend to shop more, bargain less, visit fewer stores, and stick exclusively to brands that are ethical.

2.6.7 Income

Income is the element that has a direct impact on consumers' purchasing decisions (Tanner & Kast, 2003). Higher-income consumers favour branded, high-quality, ethical and sustainable goods. People with higher incomes are generally less price concerned. As a result, people favour products that are robust.

2.6.8 The Propensity for Conscious Consumerism

The concept of the consumer is continually changing, with many consumers today focused on conscious consumerism, the purchasing behaviours prompted by a desire to make decisions that have a favourable impact on the environment, society, and the economy by Zwickle and Zones (2017). This implies that customers are supporting enterprises of all sizes that follow their moral compass and do not sacrifice the welfare of people, animals, or the environment for the sake of maximizing profits. Knowledge is one of the most effective weapons. Spending some time being knowledgeable about how businesses function is imperative for the sake of the environment, society, and the economy.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter informs about the research approach taken along with the research strategies. The methods and techniques used to conduct the research are outlined as well. The sampling technique and data collection method have been explained.

3.1 Research Design

The deductive approach has been chosen for the sake of this study. The deductive research approach involves testing a theory with the help of a strategy as mentioned by Young et al. (2020). As it represents the common view of the relationship between theory and research, it also applies mostly to quantitative research strategies (Young et al., 2020). The aim is to test the cause-and-effect relationships conferring previous research, thus deductive research approach has been chosen to establish the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism. Also, a quantitative research strategy over the qualitative one was chosen. As mentioned previously, quantitative strategy is generally associated with a deductive approach (Young et al., 2020). The choice was made as the data got from the quantitative research strategy aids in testing the hypothesis derived and tests cause-and-effect relationships of variables of this study.

A research design describes the framework that directs how research is carried out and how data is analysed. A causal relationship between the independent variable, knowledge, and the dependent variable, conscious consumerism, has been established in this study by using a cross-sectional research design, according to Creswell (1996). Also, the cross-sectional design has been chosen entailing collecting data at a single point in time (Creswell, 1996) to collect quantitative data to fulfil the relationship between knowledge and conscious consumerism.

3.2 Population and Sampling

All units of the study are the population of the study (Heckathorn, 1997). The population for this study comprises all Nepali consumers aged 16 and above. Due to the immense size of this population, sampling needs to be used. A sample comprises the portion of the population to be investigated (Heckathorn, 1997). Because of the time, and financial restrictions along with the limited access to respondents, convenience sampling was used for the study and the sample was set at 300 respondents for the purpose of this study.

3.3 Sources of Data

Instead of using secondary data for this study, primary data collection has been utilized. While secondary data use information gathered in earlier studies, primary data is information expressly obtained for the study. This study's use of primary data enables better control over the data's quality. The self-administered survey and its specific kind of online questionnaires have been selected as the data collection strategy for this investigation. Due to the numerous advantages of the same, this decision has been reached (Harrell & Bradley, 2017). The online questionnaire was designed by constituting compulsory closed-ended questions for the various constructs as per this study such as perceived environmental, social and economic sustainability knowledge on propensity for conscious consumerism.

3.4 Instrumentation

A questionnaire was carefully formulated to facilitate the response rate (Harrell & Bradley, 2017). Pilot testing was done to refine the questionnaire. Ten respondents were chosen to test the questionnaire which were taken out of the sampling frame. As per the feedback received, some minor alterations were made to increase the face validity.

The online questionnaire was mailed to 315 individuals via email. 300 responses from the sample consisting of 315 respondents were got. "Google Forms" aided in the collection of data. Data analysis was carried out via the statistical analysis program SPSS.

3.5 Construct Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the consistency of the results obtained and validity refers to the truthfulness of the results obtained. Cronbach's Alpha tests were carried out to evaluate the internal reliability of the study's measures, as was mentioned in the chapter before. All measures for the independent and dependent variable have Cronbach's Alpha coefficients higher than 0.7, which is the cut-off point for whether or not a measure may be regarded as reliable as seen in table 2. (Heo et al., 2015). Hence, it is possible to attest to the internal dependability of the study's metrics.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
PEEnSK	5	.818
PSSK	5	.806
PESK	5	.823
PFCC	5	.840

3.6 Data Analysis

If the data analysis method is not taken into account when creating the questionnaire, issues are likely to occur when conducting the actual data analysis (Harrell & Bradley, 2017). The method by which the data will be analysed has been carefully thought out before the data collection to make sure that doesn't happen. In this study, descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis were employed as data analysis methods. As previously noted, the analyses were carried out using the statistical analysis software SPSS.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Researchers must take ethical considerations into account. This study has taken into account several crucial factors including whether or not respondents' privacy has been compromised. By clearly outlining the study's objectives in the introduction section at the start of the questionnaire, the informed consent requirement in this study is met.

The respondents received all the information they required to make an informed decision about taking part in the study. The anonymity of the respondents has been carefully considered throughout the entire study, especially when creating the questionnaire. The handling of data is anonymous. This made it possible to resolve any ethical concerns.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter presents the results from the data collection forming the basis of the analysis done. It will aid the discussion outlined in the next chapter as well.

4.1 Demographic Profile

For assessing the study's sample, four questions were formulated to probe the demographics including gender, age, education, and income. As can be seen in Table 3. More than half of the sample's respondents (51.7%) were male and (48.3 %) were female. 47.7% constituted the age range of 16-25. The second largest age group constitutes 26–35-year-olds (33%) of the sample, following 36 and above-year-olds at 19.3% of the sample. All age groups were covered but there is a clear pre-eminence of the 16-25 age groups because of the sampling technique chosen to be convenience sampling.

Looking over the income of the sample's respondents, the majority (35.7%) of respondents were students/unemployed. It is reflected in the large number of respondents in the 16-25 age range. 24.7 % earned less than 25,000 NPR while 29% earned between 25000 NPR to 50,000 NPR. 10.7% of the sample's respondents indicated that they earned more than 50,000 NPR. As per education, the majority (53%) possessed a Bachelor's degree. 28.7% have completed high school. 18.3% graduated with their Master's degree course.

Table 3*Demographic Profile*

Demographic Profile		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	155	51.7
	Female	145	48.3
Age	16-25	143	47.7
	26-35	99	33.0
	36-Above	58	19.3
Income	Student/Unemployed	107	35.7
	Less than 25000 NPR	74	24.7
	25000 NPR to 50000 NPR	87	29
	More than 50000 NPR	32	10.7
Education	High School	86	28.7
	Bachelor's Degree	159	53
	Master's Degree and Above	55	18.3

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

To acquire a general idea of the outcomes of the data collected, descriptive statistics were computed. The averages of each construct were calculated to determine its central tendency, and the standard deviations of each construct were included to determine how widely respondents' opinions ranged across each construct.

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge

As shown in Table 4, the means of the constructs show a range from 3.74 to 4.26. Standard deviations showed values ranging from 0.813 to 0.854. It is to be noted that on average attitudes towards perceived environmental sustainability knowledge are positive (4.26) but the level of agreement among the respondents on this construct is somewhat not high in comparison as it exhibits the third highest standard deviation (0.850). On average the highest level of disagreement on the construct as standard deviation is the highest of the one construct (0.854). Respondents' knowledge is on average relatively low (3.74 and 3.93) showcasing high level of knowledge.

However, environmental knowledge also varies highly among respondents as the standard deviations for (0.854) and (0.813) are somewhat high. In general, the respondents exhibited strong knowledge regarding the perceived environmental sustainability constructs. However, on average, consumers showcased a moderately stronger concern for construct one (4.26) than other constructs.

Table 4*Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge*

Opinion Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I know of some of the relevant environmental concerns.	300	3.93	.813
The environmental crisis is a critical issue.	300	4.26	.850
I know of some of the relevant causes of environmental pollution.	300	3.96	.841
I know some solutions that could solve the relevant environmental issues.	300	3.74	.854
I believe my purchasing habits could have a considerable impact on the environment.	300	4.14	.872
Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge		4.01	0.846

4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge

The means of varied constructs for ranged from 2.90 to 3.90. Standard deviations' value ranged from 0.956 to 1.229. On average respondents exhibiting the highest level of disagreement on one construct can be seen as the standard deviation highest among others (1.229). It can be seen that respondents related knowledge about constructs on average relatively low (2.90 and 3.04 respectively). In general, the respondents have relatively stronger values regarding two value constructs showcasing high level of favourability towards societal pressures and influence. However, on average, consumers showed a slightly stronger concern for (3.90) than for (3.76) as shown in Table 5.

Table 5*Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge*

Opinion Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I tend to buy from socially-responsible companies.	300	3.10	.956
I buy from companies that give back to society.	300	3.04	1.107
Societal pressure influences my buying behaviour.	300	2.90	1.229
I believe behaving sustainably makes me a good member of society.	300	3.76	.959
The benefit of society as a whole is important.	300	3.90	.981
Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge		3.34	1.05

4.2.3 Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Economic Sustainability Knowledge

As shown in Table 6, the means of diverse constructs ranged from 3.68 to 4.30. Standard deviations showed values ranging from 0.800 to 0.918. It is depicted that the attitude of respondents towards perceived economic sustainability is positive, mainly one construct (4.30), and the level of agreement on this construct is comparatively high exhibiting the third lowest standard deviation (0.860). Respondent's knowledge of economic knowledge is high as construct is on average relatively low (3.68) comparatively which shows a prominent economic knowledge.

Table 6*Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Economic Sustainability Knowledge*

Opinion Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sustainable consumption is important to me.	300	3.68	.869
I am aware that conscious purchases could be expensive.	300	3.97	.918
Goods should be sustainably produced.	300	4.22	.800
Companies should use clean energy sources.	300	4.30	.860
The production and supply processes should adhere to sustainable economics.	300	4.24	.837
Perceived Economic Sustainability Knowledge		4.09	0.86

4.2.4 Descriptive Statistics of Propensity for Conscious Consumerism

As shown in Table 7, the means of the different constructs ranged from 0.68 to 4.30. Standard deviations showed values ranging from 0.800 to 0.918. The knowledge constructs on average are somewhat positive (4.30) and the level of agreement among the respondents on the construct is high in comparison exhibiting the third lowest standard deviation (0.860). The highest level of disagreement is on the construct as its standard deviation is the highest of the constructs under investigation (0.918). It is also to be noted that knowledge of construct is on average relatively low (3.68). However, knowledge also varies highly among participants as the standard deviation is (0.868) being the second highest. However, on average, consumers showed a slightly stronger concern for the most relevant construct at 4.30, thus propensity for conscious consumerism can be seen.

Table 7*Descriptive Statistics of Propensity for Conscious Consumerism*

Opinion Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sustainable consumption is important to me.	300	3.68	.869
I am aware that conscious purchases could be expensive.	300	3.97	.918
Goods should be sustainably produced.	300	4.22	.800
Companies should use clean energy sources.	300	4.30	.860
The production and supply processes should adhere to sustainable economics.	300	4.24	.837
Propensity for Conscious Consumerism		4.09	0.86

4.3 Relationship between Perceived Sustainability Knowledge and Propensity for Conscious Consumerism

The Pearson correlation analysis was done to assess the strength and direction of the relationships between the different constructs that is perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism. The way of assessing the strength and direction of a relationship between two constructs is the main reason for conducting the said analysis (Benesty et al., 2009). As shown in Table 8, the four constructs show that most of the correlations were significant at the level of $p < 0.01$. All significant relationships were positive. As for perceived knowledge regarding the constructs studied show weak or moderate correlation in comparison to the environmental sustainability knowledge.

Table 8*Pearson Correlation*

		PEnSK	PSSK	PESK	PFCC
PEnSK	Pearson Correlation	1	.224**	.370**	.370**
PSSK	Pearson Correlation	.224**	1	.630**	.630**
PESK	Pearson Correlation	.370**	.630**	1	1.000**
PFCC	Pearson Correlation	.370**	.630**	1.000**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.4 Impact of Perceived Sustainability Knowledge on the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism

To investigate the different effects of knowledge and the moderating values on the perceived consumer sustainability knowledge, regression analyses were conducted.

Table 9*Model Summary of Dependent and Independent variables*

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.704 ^a	.495	.490	.53309

a. Predictors: (Constant), pesk, pssk, pensk

b. Dependent Variable: pfcc

Table 9 shows the value of R square is 0.495. Hence, it signifies that 49.5% of the propensity for conscious consumerism is affected by the various constructs of perceived sustainability knowledge. Whereas, 50.5% is affected by constructs not mentioned.

Table 10*ANOVA Table of Dependent and Independent Variables*

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value
1	Regression	82.496	3	27.499	96.761	.000 ^b
	Residual	84.120	296	.284		
	Total	166.616	299			

a. Dependent Variable: pfcc

b. Predictors: (Constant), pesk, pssk, pensk

As per the ANOVA table 10, it can be seen that the P-value for the F-test is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 so the model is an overall fit. We can find the significance of at least one independent variable from this.

Table 11*Coefficient of Dependent and Independent Variables*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	P-value
1	(Constant)	.279	.229		1.217	.224
	PEEnSK	.136	.057	.117	2.381	.018
	PSSK	.484	.042	.512	11.542	.000
	PESK	.291	.058	.256	4.990	.000

Table 11 shows how the regression line's coefficients are distributed. It can be assessed that all independent variables PEnSK, PSSK, and PESK are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. As a result, hypothesis H1, H2, and H3 is accepted.

4.5 Moderating Effect Analysis

Table 12

Coefficient Table with Moderating Effect (Age)

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	P-value
1	(Constant)	3.124	.083		37.669	.000
	PSSK. Age	.086	.012	.373	6.930	.000

a. Dependent Variable: pfcc

Table 12 shows the moderating value of age's coefficient value and p-value for significance (B=3.124, S. E=0.083, P=0.000), as the slope is upward and the p-value is below 0.05 significance, it indicates a significant moderating effect of age on the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism. Thus, hypothesis H4 is accepted.

Table 13

Coefficient Table with Moderating Effect (Gender)

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	P-value
1	(Constant)	2.976	.105		28.434	.000
	PSSK.	.132	.020	.364	6.740	.000
	Gender					

a. Dependent Variable: pfcc

Table 13 shows the coefficient value and the moderating variable's confidence value (p-value) (B = 2.976, S.E. =0.105, P = 0.000), the slope is positive and the p-value is less than the level of confidence of 0.05, indicating that there is a significant moderating effect of gender on the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism. Thus, hypothesis H5 is accepted.

Table 14*Coefficient Table with Moderating Effect (Education)*

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	P-value
1	(Constant)	3.058	.100		30.586	.000
	PSSK.	.090	.014	.340	6.233	.000
	Education					

a. Dependent Variable: pfcc

According to the coefficient value and the moderating variable's confidence value (p-value) (B = 3.058, S.E. =0.100, P = 0.000), the slope is positive and the p-value is less than the level of confidence of 0.05, indicating that there is a significant moderating effect of education on the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism. Thus, H6 is accepted as shown in Table 14.

Table 15*Coefficient Table with Moderating Effect (Income)*

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	P-value
1	(Constant)	3.184	.082		38.752	.000
	PSSK.Incom	.061	.010	.338	6.200	.000
	e					

a. Dependent Variable: pfcc

According to the coefficient value as per Table 15 and the moderating variable's confidence value (p-value) (B = 3.184, S.E. =0.082, P = 0.000), the slope is positive and the p-value is less than the level of confidence of 0.05, indicating that there is a significant moderating effect of income on the relationship of perceived sustainability knowledge and the propensity for conscious consumerism. H7 is accepted.

4.6 Hypothesis Testing Result

Table 16

Hypothesis Testing Result

Hypothesis	P-value	Result
Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.	0.018	Accepted
Perceived Social Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.	0.000	Accepted
Perceived Economic Sustainability Knowledge positively and significantly influences the Propensity for Conscious Consumerism.	0.000	Accepted
Age moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.	0.000	Accepted
Gender moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and the propensity for conscious consumerism.	0.000	Accepted
Education moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and the propensity for conscious consumerism.	0.000	Accepted
Income moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.	0.000	Accepted

4.7 Major Findings

- More than half of the sample's respondents (51.7%) were male and (48.3 %) were female.
- 47.7% constituted the age range of 16-25 which was the highest age group in the study. There's' clear dominance of the 16-25 age groups because of the sampling technique chosen to be convenience sampling.
- As per the income of the sample's respondents, the majority (35.7%) of respondents were students/unemployed. It is reflected in a large number of respondents in the 16-25 age. The majority (53%) of respondents had a Bachelor's degree in terms of education.
- Independent variables namely perceived environment knowledge, perceived social knowledge, and perceived economic knowledge, and the dependent variable propensity for conscious consumerism showed Cronbach's Alpha coefficients higher than 0.7 indicating measures are seen as reliable.
- It was seen as per the descriptive analysis that on average attitudes towards perceived environmental sustainability knowledge are positive (4.26) and the level of agreement is not so high in comparison as it shows the third highest standard deviation (0.850).
- It was seen that respondents related knowledge about constructs as per the perceived social sustainability knowledge on average was relatively low (2.90 and 3.04 respectively).
- As per perceived economic sustainability knowledge, it was seen that the attitude of respondents towards perceived economic sustainability is positive, mainly in construct (4.30), and the level of agreement on this construct is comparatively high.
- As for the propensity for conscious consumerism, the highest level of disagreement is for as its standard deviation is the highest (0.918).
- All significant relationships were found to be positive as per the Pearson correlation.
- All independent variables were found to be statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05 as per hypotheses H1, H2, and H3.

- The moderating value of age's coefficient value and p-value for significance (B=3.124, S. E=0.083, P=0.000), as the slope is upward and the p-value is below 0.05 significance indicating a significant moderating effect of age on the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.
- H5 is accepted as the coefficient value and the moderating variable's confidence value (p-value) (B = 2.976, S.E. =0.105, P= 0.000), the slope is positive and the p-value is less than the level of confidence of 0.05 which indicates that there is a significant moderating effect of gender on the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.
- H6 is accepted as the coefficient value and the moderating variable's confidence value (p-value) (B = 3.058, S.E. =0.100, P = 0.000), the slope is positive and the p-value is less than the level of confidence of 0.05, indicating that there is a significant moderating effect of education on the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism.
- H7 is accepted as the coefficient value and the moderating variable's confidence value (p-value) (B = 3.184, S.E. =0.082, P= 0.000), the slope is positive and the p-value is less than the level of confidence of 0.05, indicating that there is a significant moderating effect of income on the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and the propensity for conscious consumerism.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings from the previous chapter are expanded upon. This chapter also discusses the conclusions regarding whether or not the goals of the research were accomplished, taking into account the research questions and the study's objective. The results are outlined. The study's conclusion and implications are then highlighted.

5.1 Discussion

The prime objective was to investigate the impact of perceived sustainability knowledge on the propensity for conscious consumerism in the context of Nepali consumers. Four sub-objectives were developed to attain the study's main objective. Theoretical and practical contributions concerning how perceived sustainable knowledge influences the propensity for conscious consumerism were aimed. A conceptual model was developed and tested via the collection of statistical data utilizing an online survey with Nepali respondents. The hypothesized influence between the constructs in the conceptual model was duly analysed. These include perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, perceived social sustainability knowledge and perceived economic sustainability knowledge, and propensity for conscious consumerism. The results of this study revealed the propensity for conscious consumerism was influenced by different consumer knowledge factors - environmental knowledge, social knowledge as well as economic knowledge all in terms of sustainability. The regression analysis showcased considered factors have a positive effect on the propensity for conscious consumerism answering the first research question that the impact is positive. Knowledge does drive the consumer's conscious behaviour.

In particular, one form of consumer knowledge, their environmental knowledge and social knowledge were found to exert the greatest effect on the propensity for conscious consumerism which is in line with the research conducted by Brochado et al. (2016). However, it deviates from the study by Barbarossa and Pastore. (2015) signalling by environmentally conscious consumers do not always purchase green products or incline conscious consumers.

In line with the moderation effect, all demographic factors studied, age, gender, education, and income were found to positively and significantly moderate the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism answering the second question studied. The findings are in line with an assessment by Bloodhart and Swim (2020) signalling the importance of gender, as provided by Roberts (1996) in terms of profiling respondents in terms of age, income, and education.

Thus, regarding the first sub-objective of perceived environmental sustainability knowledge impact on propensity for conscious consumerism, it can be concluded that perceived environmental sustainability knowledge plays an important role. This dimension exhibits a strong positive effect and has a strong impact on consumers' inclination for conscious decisions. The perceived social sustainability knowledge impact on propensity for conscious consumerism, it becomes apparent that social knowledge and how they feel about being a member of society and how they feel about purchasing, and whether they intend to purchase sustainably impacts a lot which is in line with Zwickle and Jones (2017). The influence of consumers' economic knowledge on their attitude towards conscious consumption, shows the considered value to have a positive influence on consumers' attitudes towards buying sustainably which is a little different from the study done by Sultana et al. (2022).

The second sub-objective of whether the moderating factors of age, gender, education, and income moderate the relationship between perceived sustainability knowledge and propensity for conscious consumerism was found to be positive and significant showcasing the importance of demographics and context in influencing the relationship which is as per the study conducted by Trandafilovic et al. (2017). But the results vary in terms of Heo and Muralidharan (2017) at least in terms of age.

5.2 Conclusions

This study's main objective was an attempt in assessing the impact of perceived sustainability knowledge on the propensity for conscious consumerism. The study revealed that conscious consumerism may be treated as a reverberation where sustainability knowledge has become one of the main drivers for promoting conscious consumerism which is in line with the study done by Young et al. (2020). Even with the limitations of the sample for this study.

The findings were robust showcasing that sustainability knowledge aids toward the inclination for conscious consumerism as it can offer people a course of action to make a significant contribution to the improvement of the environment and social and economic issues that need to be urgently addressed. What is more important, this idea should come from people, highlighting the importance of individual knowledge as per various facets of the environment, society, and economy.

Social sustainability knowledge nor economic sustainability knowledge was found to be less significant in this study. Additionally, conscious consumerism behaviour was found to be multifaceted, influenced by various factors, in this study by age, gender, education and income. The influence was found to be rather strong. It is also important for better conscious consumerism that people feel that their share of responsibility is fair in comparison to other actors such as the companies producing goods and services for them. The image of said actors needs to be improved to promote conscious consumerism effectively. It can be stated that many people are not practicing conscious consumerism because of the scepticism associated with the credibility of the aforementioned actors. Also, a social marketing approach should be implemented to provide the opportunity for people to practice sustainability from a societal standpoint. Sustainability knowledge as a driver for conscious consumerism can be surmised, but further research is warranted due to the limitations of the current study. The findings suggest the prominence of environmental sustainability knowledge and reaffirm the findings of previous studies (Rusyani et al.,2021); (Sultana et al., 2021) highlighting that environmental sustainability knowledge is significant in promoting conscious consumerism.

5.3 Implications

A theoretical contribution is made as perceived sustainability knowledge has a strong effect on conscious consumerism behaviour. Even though past research (Chairy & Alam, 2019); (Das & Ramalingam, 2019) has looked at consumers' environmental knowledge on environmentally conscious attitudes, no previous study has considered how domains like social knowledge and economic knowledge affect consumer behaviour. Furthermore, no previous research has combined the demographics as this study contributing to existing works of literature.

Along with combining new factors such as consumers' environmental consciousness, social consciousness, and economic concern that have been duly assimilated. Investigating the little-noted sector of what inclines consumers to behave consciously is showcased additionally. Also, the findings help in providing marketing strategies in the field of sustainable consumption. Marketing managers should run campaigns that educate and raises consumer awareness about the impact of their purchase decisions as knowledge has been found to affect attitudes toward consumption and their inclination toward conscious consumerism.

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