

Influence of Consumer Environmental Responsibility on Green Consumption Intention Iniraqi Universities: The Role of Purchase Convenience and Availability of Green Products

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Abstract: Significant amounts of carbon emission and the subsequent adverse effects on nature can be traced back to the unsustainable practices of producers. It is common practice to consider environmental responsibility a prerequisite for engaging in environmentally conscious consumerism and purchasing environmentally friendly products. A growing body of academic research supports this view. This is since being responsible for the Environment is inextricably linked to the well-being of our planet. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between environmental responsibility and the intention to consume green products, with the ease of making the availability of green products serving as a moderator between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention and the convenience of making purchases serving as a mediator between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention. Research on the factors influencing green consumption has seen significant improvement over the past few years, contributing to the overall improvement. However, relatively few attempts have been made to investigate the impact of environmental responsibility on green consumption intention and how this relationship can be explained through the lens of purchase convenience and the availability of environmentally friendly products. In addition, not many attempts have been made to investigate the impact of environmental responsibility on the intention to engage in environmentally responsible consumption. This is especially concerning given that Iraqi consumers are becoming more aware of the importance of environmental protection and are more willing to buy less harmful products. In order to investigate the relationship between environmental responsibility and green consumption, a conceptual framework has been developed to examine the impact environmental responsibility has on green consumption intention. This will allow for investigating the relationship between environmental responsibility and green consumption. This will make investigating the connection between environmentally responsible behavior and environmentally conscious consumption possible. In addition, it was emphasized that one must consider the ramifications, both theoretical and managerial, as well as any limitations and future research goals.

Keywords: Environmental Responsibility, Purchase Convenience, Green Consumption Intention, Availability of Green Product.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Recently, concerns about environmental degradation and sustainability have gained significant attention worldwide. The idea of "green consumption" has emerged as a possible solution to address these concerns as individuals are becoming more aware of the impact that their consumption choices have on the Environment (Bamberg, Hunecke, & Blobaum, 2007; Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017; Magnusson, 2016). Green consumption refers to purchasing products and services that have a minimal negative impact on the natural Environment. The term "green consumption" refers to the conscious selection, acquisition, and use of products and services that, throughout their entire life cycles, have a lower potential for causing harm to the natural world (Tukker, 2004). The growing interest in green consumption has led to a need for research to explore the factors influencing consumers' intentions to engage in environmentally responsible behaviors. One significant factor influencing green consumption intention is the perceived convenience associated with environmentally responsible products or services. Purchase convenience refers to the ease and efficiency consumers can acquire green products or services (Luchs et al., 2010; Trudel & Cotte, 2009; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Consumers

often prioritize convenience in purchasing, as it simplifies their shopping experience and saves time and effort (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Kollat & Willett, 1967; Luchs et al., 2010). Because of this, it is of the utmost importance to investigate the connection between environmental responsibility and the green consumption intention to engage in environmentally conscious consumption, with the ease of the purchase serving as a possible intermediary. In addition, the availability of environmentally friendly products on the market is an additional significant factor that plays a role in the connection between environmental responsibility and the intention to engage in environmentally conscious consumption. The phrase "availability of green products" refers to the ease with which customers can obtain eco-friendly products. This indicates that green products are readily available (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Han, Kim, & Srivastava, 1998; Ramus & Steger, 2000). The presence or absence of green products in the marketplace can shape consumers' attitudes and intentions toward engaging in green consumption (Laroche et al., 2001; Mainieri, Barnett, Valdero, Unipan, & Oskamp, 1997; Peattie & Charter, 2003). As a result, the availability of green products moderates the connection between environmental responsibility and the intention to engage in environmentally conscious consumption. This study investigates the complex relationship between environmental responsibility, green consumption intention, purchase convenience, and the availability of green products. Specifically, we propose that the ease of purchase convenience is a mediating variable in the relationship between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention. Understanding these relationships will provide valuable insights for businesses, policymakers, and marketers to promote sustainable consumption behaviors among consumers. Overall, this study seeks to contribute to the existing literature by examining the mediating role of purchase convenience and the moderating role of the availability of green products in the relationship between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Green Consumption Intention

An individual's conscious effort to support green consumption is known as their green consumption intention (I. Ajzen & M. Fishbein, 1980). It captures two fundamental motivations: intensity of effort and eagerness to perform (R. Yadav & G. Pathak, 2016). Numerous empirical investigations and theories (such as TPB and TRA) of green consumption have shown high relationships between green consumers' intentions and their actual behaviors regarding green purchasing and consumption (G. Jabeen & Q. Zhang, 2021). The expression of voluntary action is GCI (R. Yadav & G. Pathak, 2016; Goyal, M., & Goyal, R. K., 2021). As a result, it serves as a significant signal and a crucial component that must be considered when developing successful green marketing strategies.

The intention to shop, use, and throw away products in a manner that reduces the negative impact of consumption on the natural world is referred to as green consumption intention. Green consumption intention includes all of the steps taken to reduce the impact of consumption on the Environment, including purchasing, using, and throwing away products. The purchase of less harmful products to the Environment is the primary focus of this type of consumer behavior (Pagiaslis & Krontalis, 2014; Paul et al., 2016).

According to Rashid (2009), consumers' willingness to buy eco-friendly products rather than traditional products reflects their intention to engage in environmentally responsible consumption. Other studies on green consumption (Sharma & Dayal, 2016) showed that consumers' intention to buy environmentally green products is positively correlated with their willingness to learn about and take action to buy those products. According to Wagdi et al. (2022) and Bamberg, Hunecke, and Blobaum (2007), this demonstrates that the term "green consumption intention" refers to the desire to buy environmentally green products.

2.2 Environmental Responsibility and Green Consumption Intention

Being environmentally conscious has several factors. These factors may vary for various people and the same people at several points in time. This suggests that the most effective strategy should define the process leading to ecologically responsible conduct. Environmental responsibility is defined as an activity that demonstrates a desire to work toward the resolution of environmental issues without acting in a manner that prioritizes one's financial interests. The concept is "consumers' commitment and endeavor toward protecting the environment and individual-level acts meant to improve the quality of the environment" (Schwartz, 1977; Stone, 1995).

The social psychology model of norm activation is used in various fields, including environmental sociology, environmental education, and consumer behavior. This model is the basis for developing environmental responsibility (Xu et al., 2020). Environmental responsibility encompasses a sense of more profound responsibility that encourages individuals to demonstrate increased attention towards vital environmental issues and motivates them to undertake efforts to take responsibility for protecting their Environment and promote the practice of engaging in pro-environmental behaviors. Environmental

responsibility also includes promoting the practice of engaging in pro-environmental behaviors (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015). Environmental responsibility also includes encouraging individuals to demonstrate increased attention to vital environmental issues (Biswas & Roy, 2015). Responsibility toward the Environment encompasses engaging in environmentally friendly behaviors and promoting those behaviors (Sikandar, S., 2021). Responsibility toward the Environment entails, among other things, encouraging individuals to pay more attention to significant environmental concerns (Pagiaslis & Krontalis, 2014). Engaging in environmental-friendly behaviors is an additional component of environmental responsibility (Peattie & Charter, 2003). Environmental responsibility also includes encouraging pro-environmental behaviors (Stone et al., 1995). For instance, (Kaiser & Scheuthle, 2003) suggested that consumers' environmental responsibility and ecologically responsible consumption practices among Swiss citizens were positively correlated.

Furthermore (Astaran & Celik, 2015) found that customers with severe environmental concerns in the USA are more likely to express green purchasing intentions for green goods. Several studies conducted in China have also emphasized the growing significance of environmental responsibility and its link to environmentally friendly consumer behavior (Xu et al., 2020). Environmental responsibility reflects spiritual traits when resolving ecological issues, including perseverance, courage, public spirit, and self-control. Following this line of thinking will make it evident how crucial environmental responsibility is in motivating people to act appropriately and in an environmentally friendly manner (Wu & Yang, 2018; Sikandar, S. 2021). Therefore, The current study assumes a favorable relationship between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention. Green consumption refers to the deliberate purchase and utilization of products and services that have a reduced negative impact on the Environment throughout their life cycle (Tukker, 2004). Numerous studies have examined the connection between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention. Research has consistently found that individuals who exhibit higher levels of environmental responsibility are more likely to engage in green consumption practices (e.g., Bamberg et al., 2007; Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017; Magnusson, 2016). This association is rooted in the belief that environmentally responsible individuals possess a heightened awareness of environmental challenges and recognize their responsibility in addressing them (Bamberg et al., 2007; Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017; Magnusson, 2016). These individuals, driven by their ethical and moral considerations, are more inclined to make sustainable choices in their consumption intention.

Consumer environmental responsibility has been investigated in several scenarios and nations. According to (Musova et al., 2021), consumer intelligence of green consumption intention and their response to environmental issues have improved in Slovakia because of environmental responsibility. In their 2015 study, Kumar & Ghodeswar looked at the variables influencing Indian consumers' buying of green products. According to (Jaiswal & Bihari, 2020), green product purchases in India positively correlate with consumers' environmental commitment. Consumers tend to be reluctant to engage in activities that require some investment, such as spending more time or effort or altering their behavior (White & Simpson, 2013). Nevertheless, as a psychosocial component, environmental responsibility reflects the person's sense of responsibility or pledge toward the Environment (Hines et al., 1987). In addition, the goal behind making green purchases is crucial when analyzing environmental responsibility (Attaran & Elik, 2015; Durmaz, Y., & Akdoğan, L., 2023). As a result, the hypothesis of this study was that:

H1: Environmental responsibility has a positive influence on green consumption intention.

2.3 Environmental Responsibility and Purchase Convenience

According to Shih et al. (2015), purchase convenience may lead to higher service satisfaction and buy intent since the author underlined that shopping convenience could influence consumers' feelings about receiving good services and their inclination to buy things. Low levels of shopping convenience will affect how consumers feel and how likely they are to make purchases (Hasan, 2018; Wu and Chan, 2011; Lin, C. H. et al., 2018).

Environmental responsibility is understanding that human resource abuse and pollution threaten the Environment's natural state (Franzen & Meyer, 2010). It is frequently called a new environmental (or ecological) paradigm, expressing people's pro-environmental attitudes (Sánchez & Lafuente, 2010). Understanding that the misuse of human resources and the production of pollution threaten the Environment's natural state is an essential component of environmental responsibility (Franzen & Meyer, 2010; Mostafa, 2007). As an expression of the environmentally-conscious attitudes of people, it is frequently referred to as a new environmental (or ecological) paradigm (Sánchez & Lafuente, 2010; Bamberg, 2003).

Consumers who are more concerned about the Environment should, in theory, be more likely to purchase environmentally friendly products than consumers who are less concerned about the Environment; however, this is not always the situation (Kim & Choi, 2005; Mainieri et al., 1997). There is only a weak correlation between caring about the Environment and acting in a way that is good for the Environment, according to the findings of a large body of research (Mainieri et al., 1997; Alhamad, A. M., Junoh, & Eneizan,

2019). Purchase convenience refers to the ease and efficiency consumers can acquire environmentally responsible products (Luchs et al., 2010; Trudel & Cotte, 2009; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). According to research conducted by Mainieri and colleagues in 1997, purchasers' environmental concerns do not automatically translate into their purchasing intention. Bamberg (2003) found that students' environmental concerns only explained about 8% of the variance in their decisions to request environmentally eco-friendly products. After controlling for attitudes specific to the case, it was found that environmental concern had no significant influence on the intention to behave or the actual behavior (Kim & Choi, 2005). As a result, the hypothesis of this study was that:

H2: Environmental responsibility has a positive influence on purchase convenience.

2.4 Mediating Effect of Purchase Convenience

Most of the time, there is a persistent gap between cognitive elements and behaviors. Personal conduct is the ability of an individual's cognitive understanding to work without the influence of social forces. Sometimes, one cognitive component enables others to engage in a genuine activity. Because a reaction's efficacy depends on the action's potential and perceived ability to change any problem, it is essential to consider these factors (Eden, D, 1992). Furthermore, Eden observed that actual activity is frequently positively related to how severe and practical environmental problems are. Individuals are also more inclined to act responsibly toward the Environment when they believe in the importance of their pro-environmental actions and are so by other social actors (Eden, D, 1993). To address the actual behavior gaps, the mediating function of attitude between the threat's severity, the reaction's efficacy, and green purchasing behavior must be explored widely (Tan, B.C., 2011; Zheng G. W et al., 2020). Studies have shown that convenience is pivotal in shaping consumers' purchasing decisions (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Kollat & Willett, 1967; Luchs et al., 2010). When green products are easily accessible and convenient to purchase, consumers are more likely to opt for environmentally responsible alternatives (Luchs et al., 2010; Trudel & Cotte, 2009; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Therefore, purchase convenience mediates between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention. Furthermore, the availability of green products in the market moderates the relationship between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention. As a result, the hypothesis of this study was that:

H3: Purchase convenience mediates between environmental responsibility and green consumption intention.

2.5 Moderating Effect of Availability of Green Products

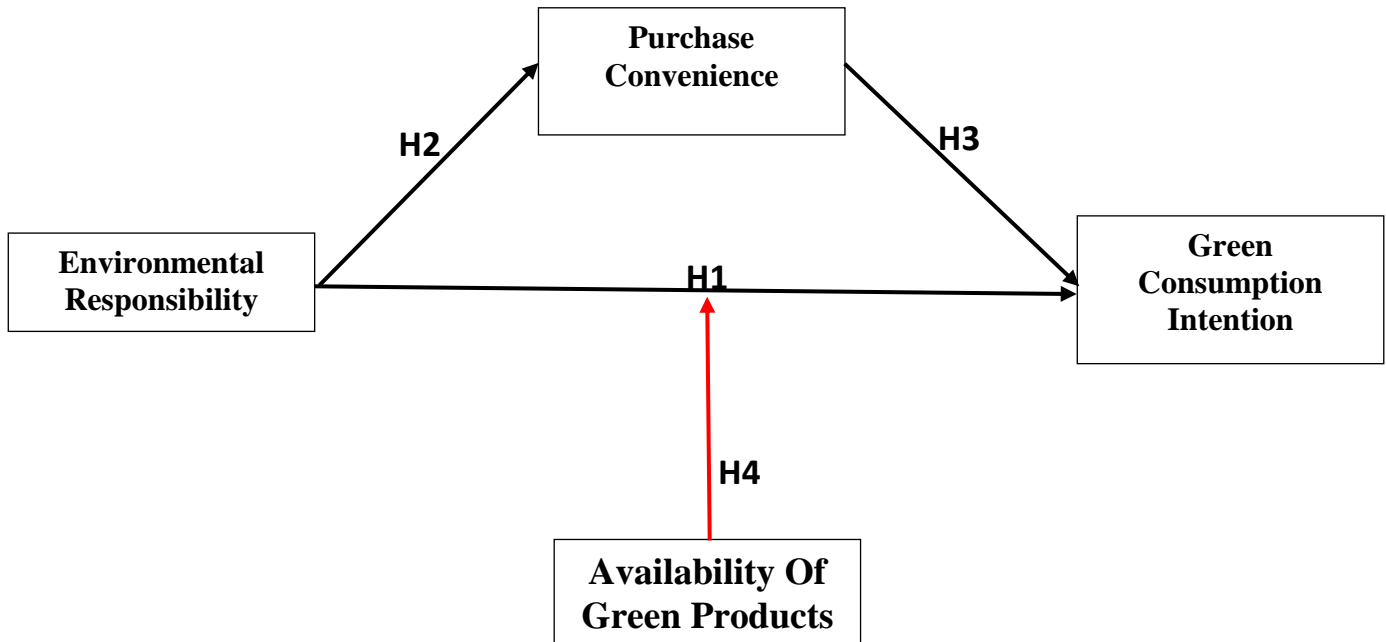
Due to the high rate of environmental degradation, several societal organizations have increased their calls for action to protect and conserve the Environment. Social media platforms' advent and widespread use have made it easier for everyone to access information (Faraj & Alhamad, 2022). As a result, customers are more conscious of their surroundings and the issues wreaking havoc on them. Customers' opinions on how their actions affect the Environment have shifted noticeably because they consume such information daily. When conserving and maintaining their local Environment, today's consumers are more informed, know more, and act more responsibly (Alhamad, Junoh, & Salha, 2019). The involvement of consumers in environmentally friendly consumption practices is one such activity that has been seen. Customers show greater interest in purchasing goods with minimal carbon footprints, are eco-friendly and do not significantly hurt the Environment (Abd Alia & ALhamad, 2022). Green consumption behavior has not been fully activated among the public because those green items are primarily sold at high-end stores, making them only accessible to wealthy consumers. To ensure the successful activation of green consumption behavior, it becomes essential for the organizations and manufacturers of green products to guarantee the availability and ease of access to these items to all sectors of the population (Akram et al., 2022). Green product accessibility primarily refers to items with specific eco-friendly and sustainable characteristics (Zakowska-Biemans, 2011). Demands for adopting and using green products have grown as consumer environmental responsibility and knowledge have increased (Gottschalk & Leistner, 2013; Shahnaei, 2012) assert that one of the key factors encouraging customers to acquire green buying intentions is the availability of green products. Consumers are still poorly informed about green products and their characteristics and attributes despite increasing awareness.

Green product accessibility, according to (Wang et al., 2016), encourages consumers to buy and purchase green products voluntarily. According to Walia et al. (2020) and Sikandar, S. (2021), the organization should take drastic measures to promote green products through extensive marketing campaigns and by ensuring that green products are freely accessible to and readily available to end customers. As a result of these efforts, consumers will be more inclined to purchase and utilize green products, forming behavioral intents and consumption patterns. Green product availability refers to the extent to which environmentally friendly products are accessible and readily available to consumers (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Han, Kim, & Srivastava, 1998; Ramus & Steger, 2000). The presence or absence of green products influences consumers' attitudes and intentions

toward green consumption (Laroche et al., 2001; Mainieri et al., 1997; Peattie & Charter, 2003). When a wide range of green products is available, individuals with higher levels of environmental responsibility are more likely to convert their intentions into actual green consumption behavior (Laroche et al., 2001; Mainieri et al., 1997; Peattie & Charter, 2003). As a result, the hypothesis of this research was that:

H4: availability of green products positively moderates between Environmental Responsibility and Green Consumption Intention.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.



The model that has been proposed model and the influence between the variables are shown in Figure 1. In this study, the dependent variable proposed is green consumption intention. The Independent variable in this model is environmental responsibility, the mediator variable proposed is purchase convenience, and the moderator in this framework is the availability of green products.

III. METHODS

The targeted population for this study would be students in public universities and private universities in different cities in Iraq (Abdulla, Wrya, & Durmaz, 2020). This study will select university students as respondents (Alhamad, Ahmed, Akyürek, & Baadhem, 2023). There are two reasons for choosing the students as respondents; First, the sample members have sufficient knowledge about environmentally friendly products. Second, they do not frequently use green products, influencing their mindset and actions regarding their experiences with green purchases (Abbasi et al., 2013; Alhamad et al., 2023). The primary data collection method will consist of individuals completing questionnaires about themselves. Before they are given the questionnaire, participants will be given a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and reassuring respondents that their responses will be kept confidential.

Additionally, the survey was designed in English. It will be translated into Arabic to be straightforward for the targeted audience in the survey. In assessing Environmental Responsibility will use the four items from the questionnaire adopted by Schwartz et al. (1977); for the Availability of Green Products, three items will also be adopted from Moser (2016) concerning Purchase Convenience, the five items will be adopted the measurement from Jiang, L. A., Yang, Z., & Jun, M. (2013) and Ternier, S. (2010), the four items for Green Consumption Intention will be adopted from Pagiaslis & Krontalis, (2014); Sikandar, S.,(2021). To gauge the participants' responses, a 5-point Likert scale will be used (1= strongly disagree... 5= strongly agree). The scale will be divided in half from this point forward. The initial step involved the collection of demographic data, which included, among other things, information on gender, age, and education level. The second part consisted of the components of the various structures. The SPSS version 26 and the Smart PLS version 4 will be used to analyze the data gathered from this sample (Yue et al., 2020). With the help of SPSS 26, we will analyze

descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients. In evaluating the measurement model, the validity and reliability of the items will be determined using Smart PLS 4.

IV. DISCUSSION

The paper's conceptual framework is developed, as has already been mentioned, based on thoroughly researched secondary data, which has integrated the incoherent frameworks that previous authors have proposed. When conducting the comprehensive review of the relevant literature, it was discovered that earlier studies had disorganizedly proposed various aspects and issues on green consumption intention. For example, Yue, B., Sheng, G., She, S., & Xu, J. (2020). Environmental responsibility has a positive impact on green consumption intention. Durmaz, Y., & Akdoğan, L. (2023) holds altruism; environmental responsibility has been critical in affecting both green consumption intentions. Chaihanchai, P., & Anantachart, S. (2023). find out the moderating effect of the availability of eco-friendly products on the intention of consumers to buy green. In addition, Yue et al. (2020), the study suggested integrating mediating and moderating mechanisms, such as the availability of green products and purchase convenience. Aside from these, only a few types of literature in the body of knowledge have attempted to show and discuss the impact of different variables on the intention to engage in environmentally friendly consumption. These issues are intricately intertwined, and combining them to design a more comprehensive framework to organize all of the critical aspects and variables of green consumption intention is necessary. Define a complete set of the hypothesized explanatory variables this conceptual framework addresses. Because of this, the gap in the existing literature and the body of knowledge has been closed. An illustration of the proposed research framework can be found in Figure 1.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

This study provides valuable insights into the relationship between environmental responsibility, purchase convenience, green product availability, and green consumption intention. The findings suggest that increasing awareness and education is crucial to raise students' awareness of the importance of environmental responsibility and its impact on green consumption intention. Educational campaigns, workshops, and seminars can be organized to provide information and knowledge about sustainable practices. Additionally, businesses should improve the convenience of purchasing green products to facilitate green consumption. This can be achieved through initiatives such as online platforms, mobile applications, and dedicated sections in retail stores that make it easier for consumers to access and purchase environmentally friendly products. Efforts should also be made to increase the availability and variety of green products in the market. This can be done by encouraging businesses to develop and promote eco-friendly alternatives, providing incentives for green product innovation, and collaborating with suppliers to ensure a steady supply of environmentally responsible options. Lastly, governments, businesses, and non-governmental organizations should work together to create a supportive ecosystem for sustainable consumption. This can involve policy interventions, financial incentives, and partnerships to drive collective action toward environmental responsibility. However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study, including the need for further research with more extensive and more diverse samples, the potential for self-reporting bias, the lack of causality, and the need to explore contextual factors. Overall, this study contributes to the existing literature on environmental responsibility and green consumption intention, providing valuable insights for policymakers, businesses, and researchers to promote sustainable consumption patterns and encourage environmentally responsible behaviors. This study has not yet been subjected to any empirical testing; therefore, we recommend that future researchers subject the proposed framework to some form of empirical testing. The empirical results would significantly contribute to environmental responsibility and the intention to engage in environmentally conscious consumption.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study sheds light on the interrelationships between environmental responsibility, the ease of making purchases, the availability of environmentally friendly products, and the intention to make such purchases. The study indicates that students with higher levels of environmental responsibility are more likely to engage in environmentally responsible consumption practices and that the ease of making purchases is a mediator in the relationship between these two factors. In addition, expanding the availability and variety of environmentally friendly products on the market and developing an ecosystem that supports sustainable consumption are additional ways to encourage environmentally responsible behaviors. However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study, including the requirement for additional research to improve the generalizability of the results and investigate the contextual factors. This study contributes significantly to the existing literature on environmental responsibility and green consumption intention. It also offers important insights that policymakers, businesses, and researchers can use to encourage environmentally responsible behaviors and sustainable consumption patterns. We can work toward a more sustainable future and reduce the

adverse effects that human activities have on the Environment if we put into practice the recommendations that are outlined in this study.

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict to disclose.

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