

## SUSTAINABILITY: A CHALLENGE FOR FOOD CONSUMPTION HABITS OF MILLENNIALS

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### **Abstract**

Sustainable development has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development calls for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and planet. For sustainable development to be achieved, it is crucial to harmonize three core elements: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. These elements are interconnected and all are crucial for the well-be. The unsustainability of current arrangements arises from the industrialization and globalization of agriculture and food processing, the shift of consumption patterns toward more dietary animal protein, the emergence of modern food styles that entail heavily processed products.

For food consumption to be sustainable it has to be safe and healthy in amount and quality, and it has to be realized through means that are economically, socially, culturally and environmentally sustainable – minimizing waste and pollution and not jeopardizing the needs of others.

Researcher, understands that there is no research been carried out about the millennials habit of sustainable food consumption and practices the importance of in India. More of research is be carried out in environmentally sustainable food consumption sector. so researcher tries to understand the importance of this in her mind and carried out research.

**Keywords:** Sustainable development, economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection

### **Introduction**

Sustainability as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Further, sustainable consumption means that our food practices meet the dietary needs of today in terms of nutrition and satiation, without compromising the needs of future generations. The challenge of convincing people to change their eating habits toward more environmentally sustainable food consumption (ESFC) patterns is becoming increasingly pressing. More of research is be carried out in EFSC sector, so researcher tries to understand the importance of this in her mind and carried out research.

It becomes obvious that the food consumption to be sustainable it has to be safe and healthy in amount and quality, and it has to be realized through means that are economically, socially,

culturally and environmentally sustainable – minimizing waste and pollution and not jeopardizing the needs of others. An acquired behaviour pattern regularly acquires and expect the behaviour followed until it has become almost involuntary.

Bipin Shyam Sundar Tiwari<sup>1</sup>, University of Toronto has expressed and addressed that the purchasing behaviour of Indian youth population and to find solutions to promote sustainable consumption in India. While environmental awareness does exist amongst young Indians, it does not reflect in their day to day purchasing habits. Multinationals expanding their base in India need to develop sustainable products that not only have a positive impact on the environment but also fulfil functional values of Indian youth population. In order to promote sustainable consumption and create a shift towards consumer behaviour, it is crucial for multinationals to include three key indicators in their decision-making model.

Authors like John Fien<sup>2</sup>, Cameron Neil, Matthew Bentley, in their article *Youth Can Lead the Way to Sustainable Consumption*, highlights to build the capacity of young Australians to be agents of change towards sustainable lifestyles of their communities. According to them, the first is an explanation of consumption as a key defining characteristic of contemporary society and the social and environmental impacts of global consumerism, the second is the rise of post material values and the potential of sustainable consumption to provide alternatives to mainstream lifestyles and finally is the enormous potential for young people to develop skills in questioning the pressures towards unthinking consumption and to create alternative ways of living in the world.

In the article *'Environmentally Sustainable Food Consumption: A Review and Research Agenda From a Goal-Directed Perspective Agenda From a Goal-Directed Perspective'* authors Iris Vermeir<sup>3</sup>, Bert Weijters, Jan De Houwer, Maggie Geuens, Hendrik Slabbinck, Adriaan Spruyt, Anneleen Van Kerckhove, Wendy Van Lippevelde, Hans De Steur and Wim Verbeke highlights in paper that food preferences, choices and eating habits are hard to change, and likewise, that a substantial gap between favorable attitudes and actual purchase and consumption of more sustainable food products remains to be bridged. By identifying and underpinning a future research agenda, the present review aimed to contribute to tackling the challenge of convincing people to change their eating habits toward more ESFC. First, assuming that food consumption is deliberately or unintentionally directed at attaining goals, a comprehensive theoretical framework of goal-directed behavior was presented as a stepping stone for the proposed research agenda. Second, a critical review of the literature on mechanisms that underlie and explain ESFC (or the lack thereof) in high-income countries was presented and integrated into the goal-directed framework. The resulting types of interventions range from for instance priming and activating personal norms as means to activating environmentally sustainable values, to the use of prompts,

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<sup>1</sup> Bipin Shyam Sundar Tiwari, University of Toronto

<sup>2</sup> Authors like John Fien, Cameron Neil, Matthew Bentley, 'article *Youth Can Lead the Way to Sustainable Consumption*'

<sup>3</sup> *'Environmentally Sustainable Food Consumption: A Review and Research Agenda From a Goal-Directed Perspective Agenda From a Goal-Directed Perspective'* authors Iris Vermeir, Bert Weijters, Jan De Houwer, Maggie Geuens, Hendrik Slabbinck, Adriaan Spruyt, Anneleen Van Kerckhove, Wendy Van Lippevelde, Hans De Steur and Wim Verbeke

feedback, implementation intentions and the countering of disgust and food neophobia as means to foster the enacting of the intended ESFC.

Bendegul Okumus (2021)<sup>4</sup> mentioned that millennials' knowledge of healthy eating, eating, restaurant selection, and effects of stress on eating. Further, expresses that knowledge of nutrition and healthy eating, technology usage, daily eating habits, stress, and restaurant selection. This studies talks about healthy eating behaviours of Millennials.

### Research Problem

With the rising global warming, the environment impact has become the utmost important concern to look into. There is a growing push towards sustainable food production and consumption, both at a governmental and personal level. The world has shifted to embrace sustainable practices and policies, primarily through the implementation of sustainable practices. Sustainable food consumption and practices are the one of most challenging area as this has major contribution towards the global warming. The challenge of convincing people to change their eating habits toward more environmentally sustainable food consumption (ESFC) patterns is becoming increasingly pressing. Food preferences, choices and eating habits are notoriously hard to change as they are a central aspect of people's lifestyles and their socio-cultural environment.

Many people already hold positive attitudes toward sustainable food, but the notable gap between favourable attitudes and actual purchase and consumption of more sustainable food products remains to be bridged. The millennials are the people who makes a big impact in society towards that gap as they are the current and future survivors. And there is huge impact on their health is seen at early stage of life.

Thus the following gaps has been identified:

- 1) What is sustainable food consumption means?
- 2) What are the sustainable food practices been followed in Pune?
- 3) What are the current habits of millennials towards sustainable food practices in Pune city?
- 4) Do they choose food based on their perception of sustainable foods?
- 5) What is the gap between their perception and behavior?
- 6) How these habits are affecting their health at early age?

**Research Objectives:** As the title of the proposal suggests, the main aim of the research is to understand the Sustainable Food consumption habits of Millennials, the broader objectives are as follows:

- To study the various Sustainable Food Consumption practices.
- To examine the current habits of millennials about sustainable food practices in Pune city.
- To analyse the perception and awareness of millennials towards Sustainable Food consumption practices

### Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub> : Millennials are not aware of sustainable food consumption practices

H<sub>1</sub> – Millennials are aware of sustainable food consumption practices

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<sup>4</sup> *A qualitative investigation of Millennials' healthy eating behaviour, food choices, and restaurant selection, Food, Culture & Society*

- H<sub>0</sub> – The Current habits of millennials are not towards sustainable food practices.  
 H<sub>2</sub> – The Current habits of millennials are towards sustainable food practices.  
 H<sub>0</sub> – Millennials are not habituated with sustainable food consumption practices  
 H<sub>3</sub> – Millennials are already habituated with sustainable food consumption practices

**Research Design:**

- a. Type of Research: Descriptive research determination used to study the various existing factors of perception and behavior of millennials about SFCP, and to find the gap of behavior approach and its impact of health on millennials.
- b. Methods of Data Collection: Primary data intend to be collected through survey in the following ways: 1. Through personal interviews: Answers resolve to a set of pre-conceived questions through personal interviews. The data motivation be collected in a structured way.  
 2. Through questionnaires: questionnaires determination be designed on parameters, basis on objectives.
- c. Sample selection and design:
- Samples shall be based on random sampling.
  - The study covers millennials of Pune City
  - The questionnaire design determines done with the aid of experts in statistical techniques and taking into account the measurement needs for testing of the hypothesis and the objectives of the study. The questionnaire shall be administered to the sample population and sample size as mentioned below
- d. Inclusion criteria: Age – Millennials residing in Pune City (Anyone born between 1981 and 1996 (ages 23 to 38 in 2019)
- e. Sample Size: (<https://www.calculator.net/>)

Data	Population Size	Confidence level	Margin Error	Population Proportion	Sample size
Millennials	Infinite	95%	5%	60%	369

- f. **Pilot Study:** A pilot study for testing the questionnaire shall be conducted to help minimize the weaknesses of the questionnaire if any.
- g. **Questionnaire – Design and implementation**  
 The questionnaire design shall be done with the aid of experts in statistical techniques and taking into account the measurement needs for testing of the hypothesis and the objectives of the study. The questionnaire shall be administered to the sample population and sample size as mentioned above.
- h. **Data Analysis:** Data collected need to analyzed with the help of experts in statistical techniques. Modern analytical tests will be used for interpretation of data.

## Discussion and conclusion

The idea of sustainability is often broken down into three pillars: economic, environmental, and social—also known informally as profits, planet, and people. The principles of sustainability refer to the three core concepts of environmental, social, and economic sustainability—sometimes broken down as "people, planet, and profits. The UN reports says that Climate change endangers unique eco-systems, leads to more extreme weather events, reduces biodiversity, and in many ways threatens our current way of living (O'Neill et al., 2017). Household food consumption gives rise to more than 60% of global Greenhouse Gas emissions and between 50 and 80% of total resource use (Ivanova et al., 2016). Thus, making people's eating patterns more environmentally sustainable is becoming ever more important. This has impacted the millennials health adversely. At early age hypertension, diabetes are such chronic medical conditions are arising due to habits.

It is important to make the millennials aware about the behavioral gap about sustainable food consumption and practices and that can bring the significant change in overall global issue of sustainability.

Growing global population, sustainability problems arising from food systems will likely become more serious in the future. The unsustainability of current arrangements arises from the industrialization and globalization of agriculture and food processing. The most effective ways for affluent societies are to bring one of the greatest global challenges is to integrate environmental sustainability with economic growth and welfare by decoupling environmental degradation from economic growth and doing more with less. Resource decoupling and impact decoupling are needed to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns and to make the transition towards a greener and more socially inclusive global economy.

By keeping above agenda in mind, it is important to study the perception, understanding and awareness about the sustainable practices of millennials in relation with impact on their health who are current and future consumer at global society.

The study will also contribute in finding the health impact on millennials along with the suggestion of effective sustainable food consumption practices.

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