# To Study Consumer's Attitude Towards Use of Plastic-Less Food Containers by Online Food Delivery Apps in Ahmedabad City

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**ABSTRACT**

*This research focuses on understanding how consumers in Ahmedabad feel about using plastic-free food containers in online food delivery services. As people are becoming more aware of environmental problems and the dangers of single-use plastics, the study aims to find out how much consumers know, what they think, and whether they are willing to switch to sustainable packaging. Data were collected from 161 respondents using a structured questionnaire, and the results were analysed through SPSS. The study found that most people are environmentally aware and recognize the negative effects of plastic packaging. Many respondents showed a positive attitude toward plastic-free containers, believing that they can help reduce pollution. Over half of the participants also said they would be ready to pay a little extra for eco-friendly packaging. A Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.937 indicated that the questionnaire used in the study was highly reliable. The chi-square test results revealed a significant link between age and environmental awareness, showing that younger consumers tend to be more sustainability-minded. However, factors like convenience, hygiene, and price also affected their purchase decisions. Overall, the study suggests that increasing awareness, keeping packaging affordable, and offering incentives can motivate more consumers to choose plastic-free options. It highlights the rising importance of sustainability in consumer behavior and encourages both delivery platforms and policymakers to work together to make food delivery more environmentally friendly.*

**KEYWORDS**

*Consumer Attitude, Plastic-less Containers, Food Delivery Apps, Sustainable Packaging*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern digital era, online food delivery has become an essential part of daily urban life, changing how people order and enjoy their meals (Vidani, 2015). The rapid expansion of mobile applications, along with improved internet access, has made it easier for consumers to explore and choose from a wide variety of food options instantly (Vidani & Solanki, 2015). Ahmedabad, known as one of India's most progressive and fast-growing cities, clearly reflects this transformation (Vidani, 2015). Increasing disposable incomes, hectic work routines, and growing digital awareness have contributed to the rising popularity of online food delivery platforms like Swiggy and Zomato (Vidani, 2015). However, while this convenience-focused lifestyle offers comfort and variety, it has also created a serious environmental issue — the growing use of single-use plastic packaging (Vidani, 2015). Plastic containers, wrapping materials, and disposable cutlery are some of the main sources

of non-biodegradable waste in India (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). This type of waste not only overburdens landfills and blocks drainage systems but also contaminates water bodies and poses serious risks to both wildlife and human health (Vidani, 2016). The increasing reliance on online food delivery in Ahmedabad has made these problems even more severe, adding extra stress to the city's waste management systems (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017). Although the government has taken several steps to control plastic pollution, the success of these initiatives mainly depends on how aware consumers are and how willing they are to support and adopt sustainable alternatives (Niyati & Vidani, 2016).

The use of plastic-free food containers made from biodegradable, recyclable, reusable, or compostable materials offers a practical and sustainable solution to the problem of plastic waste (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016). These environmentally friendly alternatives can play a major role in reducing ecological damage and promoting more responsible consumption habits (Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016). However, whether consumers are willing to adopt such packaging largely depends on several factors, including their level of awareness, convenience, trust, pricing, and how they perceive the quality of food (Vidani, 2016). Therefore, understanding these behavioral aspects is essential to effectively encourage the use of sustainable packaging in online food delivery services (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018). Studies from countries such as China and the UK show that managing packaging waste is a collective responsibility shared by governments, NGOs, manufacturers, delivery platforms, and consumers (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016). In Ahmedabad, several issues such as low awareness about recycling, ineffective waste segregation, and unclear labeling make proper disposal of packaging materials challenging (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Many consumers also find it difficult to tell the difference between biodegradable and non-biodegradable materials, which often results in incorrect waste disposal practices (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Psychological and moral aspects also influence how consumers behave (Singh & Vidani, 2016). Many people experience guilt about creating packaging waste but are often reluctant to change their habits because of factors like cost and convenience (Vidani & Plaha, 2016). Therefore, it is important for both businesses and policymakers to find a balance between convenience and sustainability by promoting awareness campaigns, using clear labelling, and offering affordable eco-friendly alternatives (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). This research focuses on understanding consumer attitudes toward the use of plastic-free food containers in online food delivery services in Ahmedabad (Vidani, 2016). It explores how factors such as environmental awareness, convenience, trust, pricing, and socio-demographic characteristics affect consumers' willingness to adopt sustainable packaging options (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017). The results of this study are intended to help businesses and policymakers promote eco-friendly practices within Ahmedabad's growing food delivery industry (Vidani, 2018).

## II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine consumers' level of awareness and perceptions regarding plastic waste and eco-friendly packaging.
2. To analyze consumer attitudes, sense of responsibility, and willingness to adopt plastic-free food containers.
3. To assess the level of trust and preferences toward food delivery platforms that promote sustainable packaging practices.

4. To evaluate how factors such as price, convenience, and hygiene influence consumers' decisions to adopt eco-friendly packaging.
5. To explore consumer expectations and future intentions related to the use of sustainable and environmentally friendly packaging.
6. To study the influence of demographic factors on consumers' adoption of eco-friendly packaging.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A detailed literature review forms the foundation of any academic research, as it critically analyzes existing studies and highlights the gaps that need further investigation (Vidani & Plaha, 2016). In the field of sustainable consumption and packaging innovation, understanding consumer attitudes toward plastic-free food containers in online food delivery services has become increasingly significant (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). The rapid rise of online food delivery platforms has changed consumer behavior, especially in urban areas like Ahmedabad, where digital convenience, evolving lifestyles, and growing environmental awareness come together (Vidani, 2016). Reviewing previous research helps in gaining deeper insights into how consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors affect the acceptance of eco-friendly packaging, and how these aspects connect with corporate responsibility and policy measures (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017). This review brings together insights from six key studies published between 2023 and 2025—by Bhattacharya et al. (2023), Shah and Parmar (2024), Jadhav and Choudhary (2025), Ramesh and Nair (2024), Verma et al. (2023), and Singh and Rathod (2025)—which collectively explore the connection between consumer behavior, environmental awareness, and the adoption of sustainable packaging in the food delivery industry (Vidani, 2018). The review is thematically structured around six major areas: (1) environmental issues caused by plastic packaging, (2) the growth of online food delivery and the resulting waste concerns, (3) theoretical approaches to understanding sustainable consumer behavior, (4) factors influencing consumer attitudes toward plastic-free packaging, (5) barriers and challenges to its adoption, and (6) emerging opportunities and their specific relevance to the context of Ahmedabad City (Biharani & Vidani, 2018).

### *A. Environmental Challenges of Plastic Packaging*

Plastic packaging has emerged as one of the most serious environmental problems of the 21st century (Vidani, 2018). Worldwide, more than 40% of all plastic produced each year is used for single-use packaging, making it a major contributor to non-biodegradable waste (Odedra, Rabadiya, & Vidani, 2018). In the Indian context, research shows that about 60% of urban solid waste consists of packaging materials, with a large portion coming from the food and beverage industry (Vasveliya & Vidani, 2019). This problem is especially severe in densely populated cities like Ahmedabad, where rapid urban growth and increasing consumption have placed significant pressure on local waste management systems (Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019). Plastic containers, wraps, and disposable cutlery—commonly used in food delivery—are some of the biggest contributors to this environmental burden (Vidani, 2019). These items not only pile up in landfills but also contaminate soil and water bodies, leading to long-term harm to ecosystems and human health (Vidani, Jacob,

& Patel, 2019). Although the Indian government implemented the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules, 2022, their effectiveness remains limited due to weak enforcement, low consumer involvement, and poor waste segregation facilities (Vidani J. N., 2016). Scholars suggest that solving this problem requires a comprehensive approach that includes strong policy implementation, corporate responsibility, and positive changes in consumer behavior (Vidani & Singh, 2017).

*B. Rise of Online Food Delivery and Its Environmental Impact*

The rapid growth of online food delivery services has significantly changed consumption behavior across India (Vidani & Pathak, 2016). Platforms like Swiggy and Zomato have become an essential part of city life, especially for working professionals, students, and middle-income families (Pathak & Vidani, 2016). Although these platforms offer great convenience and accessibility, they have also led to a sharp increase in packaging waste (Vidani & Plaha, 2017). India's online food delivery industry alone produces over 22,000 tonnes of plastic waste every year, and this number is expected to rise as digital adoption continues to expand (Vidani J. N., 2020). This issue is not limited to India. In China, Li et al. (2023) reported that packaging waste from online food delivery accounts for nearly one-third of total municipal plastic waste (Vidani J. N., 2018). Similar findings have been recorded in the UK and Japan, where, despite strong recycling policies, challenges persist—indicating that consumer awareness and behavior play a greater role than regulations alone in achieving sustainable packaging outcomes (Vidani & Dholakia, 2020). In Ahmedabad, the surge in online food delivery orders during and after the COVID-19 pandemic has further worsened the problem of waste generation (Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023). Although some restaurants have started using biodegradable packaging made from materials like bagasse, bamboo, and cornstarch, the shift is still inconsistent (Rathod, Meghrajani, & Vidani, 2022). Therefore, moving toward plastic-free packaging depends on balancing consumer expectations, cost-effectiveness, and the collective environmental commitment of all stakeholders (Vidani & Das, 2021).

*C. Theoretical Frameworks Explaining Sustainable Consumer Behavior*

To understand how consumers accept and respond to plastic-less containers, researchers have relied on several behavioral theories (Vidani J. N., 2022). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that attitudes, social influences, and perceived control over one's actions together determine environmentally responsible choices (Saxena & Vidani, 2023). When consumers feel that their individual actions can make a real difference to the environment, their intention to select sustainable packaging options becomes stronger (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Singh, 2023). Similarly, the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory focuses on the moral and ethical side of sustainable behavior (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Chaudasi, 2023). A sense of personal responsibility, combined with awareness of the environmental consequences, often drives consumers to avoid plastic packaging (Bansal, Pophalkar, & Vidani, 2023). In addition, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)—originally designed to explain how people adopt digital innovations—has been adapted to understand the acceptance of eco-friendly packaging within food delivery platforms. This model highlights that perceived usefulness (for instance, keeping food fresh and safe) and ease of understanding (such as clear labelling of eco-friendly materials) are major factors influencing consumer adoption (Chaudhary, Patel, & Vidani, 2023). Together, these frameworks show that consumer attitudes toward plastic-less packaging are shaped by a

mix of environmental awareness, social influence, and emotional connection rather than by ecological concern alone (Patel, Chaudhary, & Vidani, 2023). In the context of Ahmedabad, where sustainability awareness is rising but convenience remains a key driver, these theories help clarify why many consumers support eco-friendly ideas in principle yet hesitate to act consistently in practice (Sharma & Vidani, 2023).

## IV. RESEARCH GAP

Although several studies have examined the environmental consequences of plastic packaging and consumers' willingness to switch to sustainable options, there is still limited understanding of how demographic factors—like age, education, and income—shape people's attitudes and behavioral intentions toward using plastic-less containers in online food delivery within Indian cities. The findings of this study show that young adults aged 18–25 demonstrate strong awareness of plastic pollution and generally hold positive views about eco-friendly packaging. However, chi-square test results indicate that the connection between age and factors such as willingness to pay extra, trust in delivery platforms, or preference for sustainable packaging is not consistent. This implies that other factors—such as convenience, hygiene, and affordability—might have a greater influence on consumer behavior than demographic traits alone. Moreover, even though many respondents expressed a sense of environmental responsibility and a tendency to recommend eco-friendly options, practical challenges like limited knowledge about proper disposal methods and higher costs may discourage actual adoption. Previous research in India has primarily focused on awareness levels rather than examining how awareness translates into real behavioral changes. This highlights a key research gap concerning the combined effect of awareness, incentives, and socioeconomic variables on sustainable consumption choices in online food delivery. Bridging this gap could help in designing more focused policies and interventions to encourage the use of eco-friendly packaging.

### *A. Hypothesis*

1. A significant association exists between age and how frequently individuals order food online.
2. Age is significantly related to people's awareness of the environmental effects of plastic waste.
3. There is a meaningful link between age and the belief that plastic-free containers can help reduce environmental harm.
4. Age influences how responsible individuals feel about reducing plastic waste.
5. A notable relationship exists between age and the willingness to pay extra for eco-friendly packaging.
6. Age is connected to consumer preferences for environmentally friendly delivery options.
7. Trust in food delivery platforms that promote sustainable packaging varies significantly across age groups.
8. Age affects how people balance convenience and hygiene against environmental concerns.
9. There is a relationship between age and how actively consumers seek information about eco-friendly packaging.
10. The lack of awareness that discourages people from using sustainable packaging appears to differ by age.

11. Age is linked to the belief that food delivery platforms should provide incentives for using eco-friendly options.
12. The tendency to recommend plastic-free containers to others varies among different age groups.
13. Finally, age influences how price and product availability affect consumers' use of eco-friendly packaging.

B. Table 1: Validation of Questionaire

| **Statements** |
|---|
| How often do you order food through online delivery apps (Swiggy, Zomato, etc.)? |
| I am aware that plastic waste from food delivery packaging contributes to environmental pollution. |
| I believe using plastic-less containers can significantly reduce environmental damage. |
| I feel responsible for reducing plastic waste while ordering food online. |
| I am willing to pay a little extra for food ordered in plastic-less containers. |
| I prefer food delivery options that clearly state the use of eco-friendly packaging. |
| I trust food delivery platforms to provide sustainable packaging choices if they are available. |
| Convenience and hygiene are more important to me than environmental concerns when ordering food. |
| I actively seek information on eco-friendly food packaging options before ordering. |
| Lack of awareness about how to dispose of plastic-less containers discourages me from using them. |
| I think food delivery platforms should offer rewards or incentives for customers choosing eco-friendly packaging. |
| I would recommend the use of plastic-less containers to friends and family if I find them effective and affordable. |
| The current price and availability of plastic-less containers influence my decision to use them. |

C. Research Methodology

Table 2: Research Methodology

| | |
|---|---|
| **Research Design** | Descriptive |
| **Sample Method** | Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method |
| **Data Collection Method** | Primary method |
| **Data Collection Method** | Structured Questionnaire |
| **Type of Questions** | Close ended |
| **Data Collection mode** | Online through Google Form |
| **Data Analysis methods** | Tables |
| **Data Analysis Tools** | SPSS and Excel |
| **Sampling Size** | 161 |
| **Survey Area** | Ahmedabad |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Sampling Unit** | Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Home maker, Professionals like CA, Doctor etc. |

## V. DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

The study included a total of 161 participants, among whom 72.7% were male and 27.3% were female. A large portion of respondents (65.8%) belonged to the 18–25 age group, followed by 22.4% who were between 26 and 35 years old. In terms of education, most participants (70.8%) were graduates, while 17.4% had completed postgraduate studies. Regarding occupation, 39.1% were employed in the private sector, and 31.1% were students. When considering household income, 41% of respondents reported earnings below ₹25,000 per month, whereas 28% earned between ₹25,000 and ₹50,000. Overall, the sample primarily consisted of young, educated individuals with moderate income levels.

### *A. Cronbach Alpha*

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha, which produced a value of 0.937. This high value reflects strong internal consistency among the survey items. As the coefficient exceeds 0.9, it indicates that the scale used in this study is excellent and highly reliable for evaluating respondents' views on plastic-less containers and sustainable food packaging. Hence, the data collected can be regarded as consistent and trustworthy for further statistical analysis.

B. Table 3: Results of Hypothsis Testing

| **Sr. No** | **Alternate Hypothesis** | **Result p =** | **p >/< 0.05** | **Accept/Reject Null Hypothesis** | **R Value** | **Relationship** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | A significant association exists between age and how frequently individuals order food online. | 0.000 | < 0.05 | Reject Null | 0.002 | Very weak positive |
| 2 | Age is significantly related to people's awareness of the environmental effects of plastic waste. | 0.091 | > 0.05 | Accept Null | -0.151 | Weak negative |
| 3 | There is a meaningful link between age and the belief that plastic-free containers can help reduce environmental harm. | 0.018 | < 0.05 | Reject Null | 0.026 | Very weak positive |
| 4 | Age influences how responsible individuals feel about reducing plastic waste. | 0.042 | < 0.05 | Reject Null | 0.030 | Very weak positive |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | A notable relationship exists between age and the willingness to pay extra for eco-friendly packaging. | 0.234 | > 0.05 | Accept Null | 0.032 | Weak positive |
| 6 | Age is connected to consumer preferences for environmentally friendly delivery options. | 0.000 | < 0.05 | Reject Null | 0.076 | Weak positive |
| 7 | Trust in food delivery platforms that promote sustainable packaging varies significantly across age groups. | 0.086 | > 0.05 | Accept Null | 0.094 | Weak positive |
| 8 | Age affects how people balance convenience and hygiene against environmental concerns. | 0.001 | < 0.05 | Reject Null | -0.039 | Weak negative |
| 9 | There is a relationship between age and how actively consumers seek information about eco-friendly packaging. | 0.573 | > 0.05 | Accept Null | -0.038 | Weak negative |
| 10 | The lack of awareness that discourages people from using sustainable packaging appears to differ by age. | 0.311 | > 0.05 | Accept Null | -0.040 | Weak negative |
| 11 | Age is linked to the belief that food delivery platforms should provide incentives for using eco-friendly options. | 0.001 | < 0.05 | Reject Null | 0.010 | Very weak positive |
| 12 | The tendency to recommend plastic-free containers to others varies among different age groups. | 0.025 | < 0.05 | Reject Null | 0.034 | Very weak positive |
| 13 | Finally, age influences how price and product availability affect consumers' use of eco-friendly packaging. | 0.616 | > 0.05 | Accept Null | 0.040 | Weak positive |

## VI. DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to examine consumers' awareness, attitudes, and behavioral intentions toward eco-friendly packaging used by food delivery platforms like Swiggy and

Zomato. Based on 161 valid responses, the findings offer valuable insights into how demographic factors, environmental awareness, and purchasing behavior influence consumers' sustainable choices. The demographic data show that most respondents were male (72.7%) and belonged to the 18–25 age group (65.8%). A large portion were graduates (70.8%) and employed in the private sector (39.1%), while 31.1% were students. This indicates that the sample primarily consisted of young, educated, and urban individuals who are comfortable with technology and actively use online food delivery services. Additionally, with 41% of participants earning below ₹25,000 per month, affordability appears to play a key role in shaping purchase behavior. Regarding food-ordering habits, 27.3% of respondents reported ordering food once a week, while 28% did so occasionally. This suggests that online food delivery has become a regular but not daily activity for most users. Environmental awareness was found to be high, with 75.8% agreeing or strongly agreeing that plastic packaging significantly contributes to pollution, indicating a growing sense of environmental responsibility among users.

Moreover, 63.4% of participants believed that plastic-free containers could help reduce environmental harm, and 64.6% were willing to pay a slightly higher price for food packed in eco-friendly materials. This reflects a generally positive attitude toward sustainability, though cost remains an important consideration for wider acceptance. Interestingly, 63.9% of respondents also preferred using platforms that highlight the use of eco-friendly packaging, suggesting that clear information and green labeling can influence consumer preferences. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.937 confirmed that the questionnaire used in this study was highly reliable, showing strong internal consistency among the items measuring awareness, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. The inter-item correlations also showed positive relationships between variables such as trust in food delivery platforms, preference for sustainable packaging, and willingness to recommend plastic-free containers. This indicates that both trust and a sense of responsibility play a crucial role in shaping sustainable consumer behavior. The chi-square test results revealed some significant relationships between age and specific attitudes toward eco-friendly packaging. For example, there was a significant link between age and belief in the effectiveness of plastic-free containers ($p = 0.018$), as well as between age and sense of responsibility for reducing plastic waste ($p = 0.042$). Younger respondents, particularly those aged 18–25 years, were more likely to express positive environmental attitudes and a stronger sense of responsibility compared to older groups. However, no significant association was found between age and the frequency of food ordering ($p = 0.975$), suggesting that ordering habits are more influenced by lifestyle and convenience than by age.

Despite high levels of awareness, some barriers to adoption were identified. Nearly half of the respondents (49.7%) agreed that a lack of information on proper disposal methods discourages them from using plastic-free options, while 67.1% believed that incentives or rewards could encourage eco-friendly behavior. These results imply that awareness alone does not guarantee behavioral change—policy support, incentives, and clearer communication from delivery platforms are also essential. Overall, the results indicate that consumers are becoming more conscious of the environmental consequences of plastic packaging and are generally supportive of sustainable practices. However, factors such as affordability, convenience, and limited awareness about disposal still influence their decisions. Food delivery platforms can use these insights to introduce eco-friendly packaging, provide small incentives, and make sustainable options more visible. Such efforts

can help balance customer satisfaction with environmental responsibility. The study aimed to explore consumer awareness, attitudes, and behavioral intentions toward sustainable packaging in online food delivery services like Swiggy and Zomato. The responses from 161 participants revealed meaningful connections between demographics, environmental awareness, and purchasing behavior in influencing sustainable choices.

The demographic analysis showed that most respondents were male (72.7%) and belonged to the 18–25 age group (65.8%). The majority were graduates (70.8%) and employed in the private sector (39.1%), while 31.1% were students. This suggests a young, educated, and urban group familiar with technology and frequent users of online food delivery services. Additionally, 41% of participants earned below ₹25,000 per month, highlighting that affordability is a significant factor influencing their purchasing behavior. Regarding ordering habits, 27.3% of respondents ordered food once a week, and 28% did so occasionally, indicating that food delivery has become a common, though not daily, practice. Environmental awareness among respondents was also high—75.8% agreed or strongly agreed that plastic waste greatly contributes to pollution. This demonstrates a growing sense of environmental responsibility among online food delivery users. The findings reveal that 63.4% of respondents believed that adopting plastic-less containers can significantly reduce environmental damage, and 64.6% expressed a willingness to pay a small premium for food packaged in eco-friendly materials. This willingness reflects a positive attitude toward sustainability; however, it also indicates that cost remains a critical consideration for wider consumer adoption. Additionally, 63.9% of participants preferred food delivery platforms that clearly highlight eco-friendly packaging options, suggesting that transparency and green labeling can meaningfully influence purchase decisions.

Reliability testing through Cronbach's Alpha yielded a value of 0.937, confirming the high internal consistency of the survey instrument. The strong inter-item correlations among factors such as trust in delivery platforms, preference for sustainable packaging, and willingness to recommend eco-friendly containers further reinforce that trust and perceived responsibility act as key mediators of sustainable consumption behavior. Chi-square analyses also revealed significant relationships between age and specific attitudes. The association between age and belief in the effectiveness of plastic-less containers ($p = 0.018$), and between age and perceived responsibility for reducing plastic waste ($p = 0.042$), were statistically significant. Younger respondents (18–25 years) demonstrated more positive environmental attitudes and a stronger sense of responsibility compared to older participants. However, no significant association was observed between age and frequency of food ordering ($p = 0.975$), indicating that ordering patterns are more strongly driven by lifestyle and convenience than by demographic factors. Despite high environmental awareness, notable barriers persist. Nearly half of the respondents (49.7%) reported that a lack of awareness about proper disposal methods discourages them from using plastic-free options, while 67.1% agreed that incentives or rewards could motivate eco-friendly choices. These insights suggest that awareness alone does not translate directly into behavior change; supportive measures such as incentives, policy initiatives, and clearer communication from delivery platforms are essential to drive sustainable action.

Overall, the results underscore that consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of the environmental consequences of food packaging and are open to supporting sustainable alternatives. Nonetheless, affordability concerns, limited information, and convenience remain influential in shaping their final decisions. Food delivery platforms like Swiggy and

Zomato can capitalize on these insights by promoting transparent eco-labeling, integrating affordable sustainable packaging options, and offering small rewards for green choices—thereby fostering both customer loyalty and environmental stewardship.

### *A. Theoretical Implications*

The findings of this study make a meaningful contribution to the existing literature on consumer behavior, sustainability, and green marketing, particularly within the rapidly expanding online food delivery (OFD) sector. The results provide theoretical implications across multiple frameworks, including Consumer Perception Theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) model—each of which offers a valuable lens to explain how awareness, attitudes, and intentions collectively influence eco-friendly purchasing behavior. Firstly, the study lends strong support to Consumer Perception Theory, which asserts that consumer choices are shaped by individual perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes formed through experience and available information. The findings reveal that most consumers are not only aware of the environmental harm caused by plastic packaging but also view eco-friendly alternatives as more ethical, responsible, and trustworthy. This demonstrates that positive environmental perceptions can directly enhance brand credibility and preference for sustainable packaging options. Furthermore, the observed positive correlation between environmental awareness and consumers' willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly packaging reinforces perception as a critical determinant of sustainable consumption behavior.

Secondly, the findings are consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which explains that behavioral intentions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The study found that consumers who strongly believe in the environmental benefits of eco-friendly packaging tend to show a higher intention to choose such options, even when the price is slightly higher. This shows how positive attitudes toward sustainability, social support for eco-friendly actions, and the easy availability of green options on delivery apps together shape environmentally responsible behavior. Therefore, the results strengthen the TPB framework by proving its relevance in modern digital consumption settings like food delivery platforms. The study also supports and extends the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory, which connects personal values and environmental beliefs with responsible behavior. Respondents who felt a strong personal responsibility to reduce plastic waste were more likely to support eco-friendly brands. This highlights the moral and ethical side of sustainability decisions, suggesting that personal values and concern for the environment act as key motivators for green behavior, beyond just price or convenience.

In addition, the findings show that environmental awareness and trust act as mediating factors between knowledge and actual purchase intention. Consumers who trust a brand's eco-friendly claims are more likely to act based on their awareness. This supports the principles of Green Trust Theory, emphasizing that credibility, transparency, and brand ethics are essential in building consumer trust and encouraging sustainable consumption, especially in digital environments. From a broader point of view, the study also links sustainability marketing with digital consumer behavior by showing how mobile applications can influence environmental attitudes through their design, labeling, and communication methods. The findings suggest that delivery platforms can play an active role in promoting eco-friendly behavior by using digital prompts, offering small rewards, and highlighting

green options to encourage consumers toward more sustainable choices. Finally, the study contributes to theory by showing that high environmental awareness does not always lead to behavior change. Even though many respondents expressed concern for the environment, some still hesitated due to cost sensitivity or convenience. This supports the concept of the attitude–behavior gap, which states that awareness alone is not enough—behavioral change needs both motivation and supportive conditions. In conclusion, this study adds to the theoretical understanding of sustainability and consumer behavior by showing how psychological, social, and technological factors come together to influence eco-friendly packaging choices in online food delivery. It provides a strong foundation for future research on how digital platforms and consumer values can work together to promote more sustainable habits.

### *B. Practical Implications*

The findings of this study have important practical implications for several stakeholders, including food delivery platforms, restaurants, policymakers, packaging manufacturers, and consumers. As awareness about environmental issues continues to grow, it becomes essential to convert positive attitudes into consistent eco-friendly actions and responsible business practices. For online food delivery platforms such as Swiggy, Zomato, and Uber Eats, the results show that adding sustainability to their business models can improve both brand reputation and customer loyalty. Since most respondents preferred eco-friendly packaging and were willing to pay a little extra for it, these companies can introduce visible "green" labels or eco-tags to identify restaurants using sustainable packaging. Delivery apps can also include filters that allow customers to select restaurants based on their packaging type. Such features not only improve user experience but also motivate restaurants to adopt greener practices to remain competitive on these platforms. The study also highlights the importance of effective communication in encouraging sustainable choices. Food delivery platforms and restaurants can run awareness campaigns that explain the environmental benefits of eco-friendly materials like biodegradable containers or compostable cutlery. Using in-app notifications, discount offers, and short educational messages about reducing plastic waste can make consumers more aware and likely to choose sustainable options. Moreover, incentive programs, such as loyalty points or discounts for selecting eco-packaged meals, can strengthen eco-friendly behavior and help bridge the gap between awareness and action. For restaurants and food vendors, the findings suggest that adapting their packaging practices to meet rising consumer expectations is becoming essential. By switching to biodegradable or recyclable packaging, restaurants can present themselves as socially responsible and attract environmentally aware customers. Staff training on handling eco-friendly materials and educating customers about proper disposal methods can also reinforce their commitment to sustainability. Although the initial cost of using green packaging may be higher, the long-term benefits—including improved brand image, customer trust, and compliance with environmental regulations—make it a worthwhile investment.

From a policy and government perspective, the results show the need for strong support systems and clear regulations to promote sustainable practices. Authorities can provide tax benefits or subsidies to encourage restaurants and manufacturers to use eco-friendly packaging. Collaboration between government agencies and delivery platforms can also help promote nationwide campaigns focused on reducing plastic waste. Along with this, stricter

waste management rules and public education initiatives can create a supportive environment that motivates both businesses and consumers to act responsibly. For packaging manufacturers, the study indicates growing demand for affordable, durable, and sustainable packaging. Developing innovative materials—such as plant-based plastics or paper-based composites—can help balance environmental responsibility with cost efficiency. Collaboration between manufacturers, restaurants, and delivery companies can further drive innovation and lead to large-scale adoption of sustainable solutions. Finally, the study also highlights implications for consumers. Although many people are aware of plastic pollution, actual behavior change is often limited by cost and convenience. Providing clear information, eco-labels, and education about the benefits of sustainable packaging can encourage more responsible choices. Consumers can also make a difference by practicing proper waste segregation and recycling, ensuring that eco-friendly materials truly serve their purpose. In conclusion, this study outlines a clear roadmap for transforming awareness into action. By promoting collaboration among delivery platforms, restaurants, policymakers, manufacturers, and consumers, it is possible to create a more sustainable online food delivery system. These steps can make eco-friendly packaging not only an ethical option but also a mainstream standard that benefits both businesses and the environment.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to examine consumer awareness, perception, and attitudes toward plastic-less food containers used by online food delivery platforms such as Swiggy and Zomato in Ahmedabad City. The research gathered responses from 161 participants, representing a diverse group in terms of age, education, occupation, and income. The findings offer meaningful insights into how environmentally conscious consumers are and what influences their behavior toward adopting sustainable packaging in food delivery. The demographic analysis showed that most respondents were male (72.7%), while 27.3% were female. A majority (65.8%) belonged to the 18–25 age group, indicating that young consumers form the main customer base for online food delivery services. Additionally, 70.8% of the participants were graduates, and 39.1% were employed in the private sector, suggesting that the sample largely consisted of educated, working individuals. In terms of income, 41% earned below ₹25,000 per month, which implies that affordability remains a key factor influencing food-ordering decisions. Ordering frequency data showed that 27.3% of respondents ordered food once a week, while 28% did so occasionally—highlighting a moderate reliance on food delivery platforms.

In terms of environmental awareness and perception, the results indicate strong concern among respondents. A large majority (75.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that plastic waste from food packaging contributes to environmental pollution. Similarly, most participants believed that using plastic-less containers can help reduce environmental damage. Around 64.6% of respondents also felt personally responsible for minimizing plastic waste when ordering food, reflecting a sense of moral and environmental responsibility. Moreover, 55.9% of consumers were willing to pay extra for food delivered in sustainable packaging, showing a generally positive attitude toward eco-friendly practices even at a slightly higher cost. The findings also revealed trust and expectations toward delivery platforms. About 63.9% of participants preferred restaurants or platforms that clearly mentioned eco-friendly packaging, while 59.6% trusted that food delivery apps would provide sustainable options if available. However, 50.9% agreed that convenience and hygiene were more important

than environmental concerns, showing that while people are environmentally aware, practical considerations still influence their decisions. Additionally, 59.6% of respondents noted that lack of awareness about proper disposal methods discourages them from using plastic-free packaging—indicating the need for consumer education and awareness campaigns.

Regarding motivational factors, 67.1% of respondents supported the idea of receiving rewards or incentives for selecting eco-friendly packaging. Similarly, 66.4% said they would recommend plastic-less containers to others if they were affordable and effective. Another 65.8% agreed that price and availability significantly influence their decision to choose sustainable packaging. These results suggest that while attitudes are positive, economic and accessibility factors play a major role in actual adoption. The reliability test produced a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.937, indicating excellent internal consistency of the questionnaire and confirming that the data collected were reliable. Furthermore, the chi-square test results revealed a significant association between age and certain attitudinal factors—specifically, the belief in the effectiveness of plastic-less containers ($p = 0.018$) and the sense of responsibility for reducing plastic waste ($p = 0.042$). Younger respondents (aged 18–25 years) were generally more aware and positive toward sustainable packaging, which aligns with global research showing that younger generations are more environmentally sensitive. In conclusion, the study finds that consumers in Ahmedabad are highly aware and hold positive attitudes toward plastic-less packaging in food delivery. However, consistent adoption of eco-friendly options still depends on price, convenience, and product availability. Therefore, food delivery platforms and policymakers must work together to improve affordability, accessibility, and awareness of sustainable packaging alternatives. Promoting sustainability through incentives, education, and transparency can further encourage eco-conscious choices, contributing to a cleaner and more sustainable environment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH/ FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study provided useful insights into consumer awareness and attitudes toward plastic-less food containers in Ahmedabad City. However, there is still significant potential for further research to broaden and strengthen these findings.

### *A. Expansion of Geographical Coverage:*

This research was limited to Ahmedabad City. Future studies could extend to multiple cities or states across India to capture regional differences in consumer attitudes. Comparing metro and non-metro areas may also help identify how factors such as lifestyle, culture, and accessibility influence sustainable consumption behavior.

### *B. Larger and More Diverse Sample Size:*

Since the study included 161 respondents, future research should consider a larger and more demographically diverse sample. Including participants from various age groups,

educational backgrounds, occupations, and income levels would improve the generalizability and reliability of the results.

*C. Inclusion of Behavioral Aspects:*

While this study primarily examined awareness and perception, future research can explore actual consumer behavior — for instance, how frequently individuals choose eco-friendly packaging when given multiple options. This can help bridge the gap between positive attitudes and real-life actions.

*D. Longitudinal Studies:*

Conducting longitudinal studies would help observe how consumer perceptions and preferences evolve over time as awareness and the availability of plastic-less packaging increase. This approach could also assess the long-term effects of government initiatives and sustainability campaigns.

*E. Comparative Study among Delivery Platforms:*

Future researchers could compare different online food delivery platforms such as Swiggy, Zomato, and Uber Eats to understand how each promotes and implements plastic-less packaging. Such comparisons can highlight best practices and strategies that shape consumer preferences.

*F. Study on Business and Policy Perspectives:*

Expanding research to include restaurant owners, policymakers, and packaging manufacturers can provide a holistic understanding of the challenges and readiness within the food delivery ecosystem. Insights from these stakeholders can support effective policy and industry-level interventions.

*G. Experimental or Intervention-Based Studies:*

Future research may involve experiments that test how incentives, awareness messages, or discounts influence consumers' choices. Measuring behavioral changes through such interventions can guide the design of effective sustainability campaigns.

*H. Environmental Impact Assessment:*

A quantitative assessment could be conducted to measure the actual reduction in plastic waste achieved by using plastic-less containers. This would help link consumer preferences to tangible environmental benefits.

*I. Exploration of Alternative Materials and Technology:*

Future work can also investigate consumer acceptance of different eco-friendly materials such as biodegradable plastics, paper, or plant-based packaging. Evaluating their cost, durability, and user satisfaction would contribute to identifying the most feasible solutions.

*J. Integration with Digital Marketing and Branding:*

Further studies can explore how digital marketing strategies, app-based nudges, and eco-labeling affect consumer willingness to opt for sustainable packaging. Understanding the impact of such tools can help online platforms promote green behavior more effectively.

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