



EFFECT OF SUSTAINABILITY PERCEPTION ON CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- The aim of the study is to determine how sustainability perception affects electronic word-of-mouth communication and purchase intention. The perception of sustainability consists of waste utilisation and minimisation, climate change concerns, contributing to environmental protection and recycling. Consumer behaviour is addressed with the dimensions of electronic word-of-mouth communication and purchase intention.

Methodology- The data were collected from consumers who use white goods by online survey method and SPSS statistical programme was used to test the relationships. The population of the study consists of consumers who use white goods. Considering that it is not practically possible to reach the universe, sampling was used. Since it is not foreseen to make a generalisation about the population, convenience sampling method, one of the non-random sampling methods, was used. Accordingly, the participants of the study consisted of 517 people.

Findings- In the study, sustainability perception positively affects electronic word-of-mouth communication and purchase intention. Moreover, sustainability perception components together positively affect electronic word-of-mouth communication and purchase intention.

Conclusion- In recent years, negative impacts on natural ecosystems have increased the importance of the concept of sustainability. Consumers have an important role in ensuring sustainability. Consumers' increasing awareness of sustainability and parallel to this, increasing concerns affect their purchasing behaviour. Perceptions of sustainability strongly influence consumer purchase intentions, which in turn encourage positive online word-of-mouth marketing more effectively than traditional marketing tools.

Keywords: Sustainability perception, electronic word-of-mouth, purchase intention, consumer behavior, environmental sustainability

JEL Codes: M30, M31, M39

1. INTRODUCTION

The complexness of today's global economy is increasing the load on energy, food and natural resources. Increasing consumption has a significant impact on environmental stability, while consumers' consumption patterns and preferences lead to the production of large quantities of packaging. These materials create significant environmental problems. The use of plastics, which threatens ecosystems and creates risks to human health, also causes serious environmental problems. Governments, businesses and all individuals need to fulfil their responsibility for environmental problems. Environmental regulations, rules, legal acts aimed at solving problems and finding solutions, as well as sustainable or green strategies to be developed by businesses are among the things to be performed in this direction. It is an important point that the behaviour of the individuals who direct the change in the society should be in parallel with the sustainable perspective.

As the level of awareness of consumers about environmental problems increases, their environmental concerns increase at the same rate. Increasing concerns make it compulsory for consumers to act by giving importance to the concept of sustainability in their lifestyles and purchasing behaviours. Considering that the level of interconnectedness between businesses and consumers is constantly increasing, it is also important for businesses to develop strategies that match the values of consumers.

The basis of sustainability is to take into account the right to life of future generations; therefore, marketing should undertake a mission within this framework. This situation can be realised primarily through understanding and practices that lead

consumers towards sustainable consumption that will change their consumption patterns. Thus, while this change is beneficial for the consumer, it can also direct production and other business activities in this direction (Yükselen, 2020).

In the digital age, the integration of the concept of sustainability into marketing aims to gain the attention and favour of consumers. Consumers who think that products meet environmental needs tend to form positive purchase intentions. Brands that fulfil their responsibilities towards the environment and carry out activities in this direction can positively affect consumers' behavioural intentions and thus online word of mouth marketing communication. In this direction, determining the impact of consumers' perception of sustainability will contribute to the development of the right strategies as well as providing more efficient and effective marketing messages.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Perception of Sustainability

Sustainable development has emerged as the new development paradigm to help the world overtake current and future environmental and social challenges such as climate change, energy resource and water scarceness. Sustainable development is one of the greatest challenges of the twenty-first century and is recognised as an absolute imperative for the survival of the planet (Khalil et al., 2013).

As environmental issues such as global warming, ozone depletion and loss of species become more apparent, sustainable consumption has emerged as an important social problem. To increase sustainable consumption, some research workers and policy-makers suggest that people should extend product life cycles by engaging in "slow consumption" or decelerating the rate at which goods are consumed (Scott and Weaver, 2018).

The concept of sustainability includes environmental, social and economic aspects; therefore, it has a multidimensional structure. Since the early 1990s, the concept of sustainability has been concerned with urban development issues, while it has now become more widely used in issues such as sustainable cities, urban sustainability and sustainable housing. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development, sustainability is "evolution that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (AlQahtany, 2020). In order to comply with this view and make suitable decisions, society and its several stakeholders need quality data. In the last few years, companies have used sustainability reporting as a way to fulfil at any rate of some of these needs (Coulmont et al., 2022).

As sustainability becomes increasingly important to consumers, manufacturer and retailer merchants are responding with integrated sustainability enterprise, including the introduction of new products and brands with positive social and environmental features (Bezençon and Etemad-Sajadi, 2015).

In addition to international policies and actions to address environmental problems, governments have specific tasks at the national level. Governments have various functions in terms of the environment. Firstly, environmental protection is a public interest. Therefore, the public sector can intervene in the market through instruments such as taxes, subsidies and legal regulations, especially those aimed at limiting overproduction. Although common resources are scarce, there is no limit to their consumption, which increases the possibility of overconsumption. Because of these problems, governments must produce the most appropriate policies to maximise individual and social interests and, through coordination, achieve economic results and sustainable environmental goals (Caglar and Yavuz, 2023). Otherwise, an unsustainable consumption model brings serious environmental sustainability problems. Sustainable consumption is an important model that involves the consumption of environmentally friendly products to reduce the consumption of natural resources, change lifestyles and meet the current needs and wants of future generations (Nath and Agrawal, 2022).

Today the global economy complexness has led to unprecedented population growth. This has increased the burden on energy, food and natural resources. Increased consumption importantly affects the stability of environment; most modern consumers have become aware of the collective impacts on the planet. Concerns arising in this direction affect consumers' lifestyle choices, including purchasing patterns (Ottenbacher et al., 2019).

Although researchers have shown that humans consume goods and use services faster than the natural ecosystem can replenish, process or recycle them, most people still think that the economy is primarily linked to the production and consumption of physical goods (Saari et al., 2021). However, individuals, who directly affect the change of societies, have a very important role in the implementation of the principles of sustainable development. In addition to behaviours aimed at sustainable development, consumers can influence production in various sectors by consuming products and services offered by environmentally friendly or honest commercial organisations. Consumers can also contribute to increasing recycling rates by taking care not to waste water, electricity or petrol unnecessarily (for example, by walking or using public transport). Individuals' attitudes and routines are therefore related to sustainable development (Catenazzo et al., 2010).

Consumer action is crucial for sustainability because aspects of everyday life, such as the heating and cooling systems of homes and water use patterns, have an important impact on greenhouse gas emissions. Individuals' environmental concerns, which are a reflection of a range of factors, are often cited as one of the most significant influences on "reduction behaviour". Other determinants include contextual influences such as values and economic policies (Nauges and Wheeler, 2017).

Globally, everyone, including companies, is under pressure to play their part because of concern about climate change. Strict environmental regulations, aimed at solving problems and finding solutions, are becoming the norm in developed and developing economies alike. Researchers argue that such pressures, strict environmental regulations, sustainable or green strategies have an important role to play in helping firms succeed and are shaping a new competitive environment (Arslan et al., 2021). There is no doubt that among the greatest challenges facing humanity in the future are climate change and biodiversity loss. Climate change has an impact on natural and human systems on all continents and oceans, requiring humanity to adapt to a new reality (Helm et al., 2018).

Excessive use of natural resources, consumption far beyond what the world can sustainably provide, people's consumption patterns and preferences lead to the production of large quantities of packaging. These materials create serious environmental problems. Once the products reach the consumer, packaging is no longer necessary, which leads to the problem of waste. Packaging should be seen as more than just a method of delivering or presenting products safely to consumers. The environmental impact of the packaging produced by the designer should be taken into account. Individuals' decisions on how to purchase pre-consumer packaging, how to use it during consumption and how to dispose of it afterwards are crucial to effectively addressing the waste problem (Escario et al., 2020).

The perception of product sustainability should be considered when designing and developing new sustainable package materials. Consumers should be able to easily recognise sustainable packaging based on direct clues provided by the material itself, without the need for labels and claims (Schoubroeck et al., 2023).

Within the scope of sustainability in the literature, 3-R concepts have been developed, which include the joint action of producers and consumers and consciously managing resources (Kayıkçı et al., 2019):

- Reduce: Choosing the products used in a way that minimises the amount of waste after the consumption and production of the products.
- Reuse: Reuse of all or some parts of the products.
- Recycle: It is the transformation of waste into a new product.

The principle of "first reduce, then reuse and then recycle" can be thought of as an inverted pyramid. According to the pyramid, the more waste is reduced, the less reuse is required and the more waste is reused, the less recycling is required (Kayıkçı et al., 2019).

Recycling is a waste management strategy, but it can also be seen as a current example of the application of the concept of industrial ecology. However, in a natural ecosystem there is no waste, only products. Recycling of plastics is one of the methods used to reduce depletion and environmental impact of resources. Recycling can therefore reduce the energy use and materials per unit of output, thus enabling better eco-efficiency (Hopewell et al., 2009).

The 3Rs, symbolising "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle", have become a similar paradigm for waste management by consumers. Despite increasing the awareness of public of plastic pollution (European Commission-2020), plastic consumption patterns persist (Steinhorst and Beyerl, 2021).

Global environmental pollution caused by plastics not only threatens ecosystems around the world, but also poses a risk to human health. One of the main causes of this pollution is the uncontrolled use of single-use plastic packaging. Reducing the plastics crisis is the focus of both political measures and food industry businesses. Taking political measures into account, the Canadian government classifies manufactured plastics as toxic due to their harmful effects on the environment. The EU has banned the use of plastic cutlery and straws. In addition, many countries of the world have banned single-use plastic bags (Herrmann et al., 2022).

2.2. Consumer Behaviour

Consumers have tendency to prefer brands that are recognised for their sustainability activities. Perceptions of sustainability include perceptions of brand efforts, losses and gains in sustainability efforts. When green products arouse high trust and positive brand attitudes, consumers have tendency to form positive purchase intentions because they think that the products meet their environmental needs. Brands which have transparency and social responsibility efforts strongly influence consumer attitudes and behavioural intentions, which in turn encourage positive WOM and online WOM marketing more effective than traditional marketing tools (Kong et al., 2021).

2.2.1. E-WOM Communication

The rapid growth of electronic commerce has led thousands of businesses which have traditional stores to seek an on-line presence and develop mobile applications, among other strategies, in order to respond to market needs (Siqueira Jr et al., 2019). Through the rapid development of social media and the use of smart devices, e-WOM communication is ubiquitous. Unlike traditional-WOM, e-WOM enables customers to obtain real-time, real-life data from previously inaccessible sources. Social media networks accelerate the spread of e-WOM communication by enabling consumers to easily share and collect brand-related data in a well-timed and cost-effective manner (Sun et al., 2021).

Before the widespread of the internet, consumers shared out their experiences of product or service through personal verbal communication; however, the development of technological progress has provided many opportunities for consumers to interact with businesses and other consumers through multiple channels, such as social media, which helps them to create e-WOM. The e-WOM is described as "an active and continuing information exchange process between potential, current or former consumers about a product, service, brand or business that is made accessible to a large number of individuals and organisations over the internet" (Akbari et al., 2022).

The e-WOM is similar to offline WOM in that consumers share information about products and services directly and indirectly. In addition, since e-WOM marketing communication uses the Internet as an intermediary, it can convey information much more efficiently and quickly than offline WOM communication (Lee and Choi, 2019, 10). Although electronic WOM is an extension of offline WOM, it has a few more unique features that differentiate it. Some of these are speed of information dissemination, wider reach, multi-directional information exchange, availability at all times, greater reliability and greater measurability (Shankar et al., 2020).

The e-WOM is any informal communication to consumers, via Internet based technology, about the features or uses of particular products and services or their sellers. Consumers' evaluations of a product or service can be easily influenced by WOM communication (Kwok et al., 2019). The e-WOM communication is an advertising tool used to share other customers' perspectives with each other due to the customer's awareness of the products (Hussain et al., 2018).

The e-WOM enables consumers to compare alternatives for products or services after searching for information. Moreover, at the final stage of the purchase decision, which involves the choice of product or service, brand and retailer, e-WOM communication reduces the perception of risk, which has an important impact on the consumer decision. E-WOM constantly influences consumer behaviour. The e-WOM communication continuously influences consumer behaviour because the process continues after the purchase and includes the post-purchase stage regarding consumers' expectations and satisfaction (Hussain et al., 2018).

WOM communication in marketing is a consumer-oriented marketing communication channel in which the sender is independent from the market. Consumers tend to see WOM marketing communication as more credible, reliable, useful and therefore more persuasive than information generated by the marketer (Lim et al., 2022).

Online shoppers always consider the comments and experiences of other shoppers before purchasing products online. Millions of people have access to online comments; this is where the power of e-WOM marketing communication lies. Customers who have a good experience with a seller are more likely to engage in favourable WOM marketing communication. Since consumers trust user-generated content more than other forms of communication, they are more likely to be influenced by other consumers in their decision-making process (Duarte et al., 2018).

Studies have shown that people prefer to take into account the opinions of others online when making decisions online. In this respect, positive WOM communication refers to the sharing of positive valuation and satisfactory quality with others after consumption, while negative WOM communication refers to the consumer telling others about the unsatisfactory purchase and use experience and even suggesting not to consume such products (Shu and Wu, 2014).

In the digital age, the integration of the concept of sustainability into marketing directs to gain the prominence and favour of consumers. Sustainable marketing is not only to introduce the product and increase profits, but also to create positiveness in society in the sense of emotionally influencing the consumer to favour responsible brands. When trends in online promotion, consumer behaviour and digital communication are examined, it appears that both customers and the brands are becoming increasingly active on-line, particularly on social media. Previous studies have suggested that social networking can be a good platform for sustainability as it provides the data people aim to make wiser purchasing decisions and authorise customers to demand quality (Anastasiu and Dospinescu, 2019).

2.2.2. Purchase Intention

Intention is defined as "an individual's willingness or capacity to perform a certain behaviour". In marketing, purchase intention is a concept used for the long term prediction of purchasing behaviour as it is related to the willingness to purchase of potential customers (Nguyen et al., 2023).

Purchase intention is the predisposition of customers regarding their purchasing actions. Consumers' willingness to purchase a product can be defined through the extent of purchase intention. Purchase intention is the pre-planning of customers to purchase certain products in the future. Therefore, it explains the individual's preference for product purchase and categorisation of available options. Purchase intention is the consumer's willingness to purchase (Rakib et al., 2022).

Although customers' purchase intention is not the only factor to be considered in marketing, it is a measurement value for predicting future sales of a particular product. Understanding customer purchase intent is a critical part of planning for future sustainability, because achieving a sustainable consumption pattern means, in part, selling sustainable products to as many customers as possible around the world (Panuju et al., 2019).

Environmental anxiety, which has been accepted as a significant determinant of ecological behavioural aim, involves individuals' emotional reactions to ecological problems. Previous research has shown that individuals' feeling that they are more responsible for the environment and taking responsibility for preserving the environment are related to an increase in environmental concern; in addition, when individuals have environmental concerns, they adopt green products. Environmental concerns affect green purchase intention. Individuals with high environmental concern indicate a clear intention to preserve the environment, making it simple for individuals to adopt green products (Yeğın and Ikram, 2022).

Consumers' concern for green issues is a global issue that has led them to significantly change their lifestyles and become more environmentally responsible. As consumer awareness of the benefits of green products has increased, consumers' concerns about saving the world from global warming problems have also increased, leading to the development of green consumerism. Green awareness influences human behaviour in several ways (Lestari et al., 2021).

The buyer intention of consumers who consume green products or services is necessarily influenced by sustainable behaviours that care about the environment; therefore, these behaviours motivate the people to choose products that not harmful for the environment. Therefore, the aim to choose environmentally friendly product or service will result in a high impact on the consumer's sustainable consumption behaviour (Brandão and Miranda 2022).

Sustainable consumption behaviour refers to the extent to which individuals' choices and actions towards products and services reduce environmental impacts, the exchange of available materials or energy in the environment, or change the structure of ecosystems (Jung et al., 2020). The behaviour of sustainable consumption concerns consumers who attach a huge significance to sustainability and aim to meet their basic regular needs, significantly improving the life quality of consumers without menacing the demands and interests of future generations. These consumers accomplish their activities aimed at protecting the environment and preferring this lifestyle by keeping away from behaviours that harm the natural environment, living organisms and other people. Sustainable consumption behaviour takes into account the life cycle of products and services as well as issues such as production, transport, circulation, use, disposal and recycling. Sustainable consumption aims to reduce environmental concerns, increase safety, ensure an adequate distribution of natural resources, increase well-being, create a healthy life and embrace social responsibility (Brandão and Miranda, 2022).

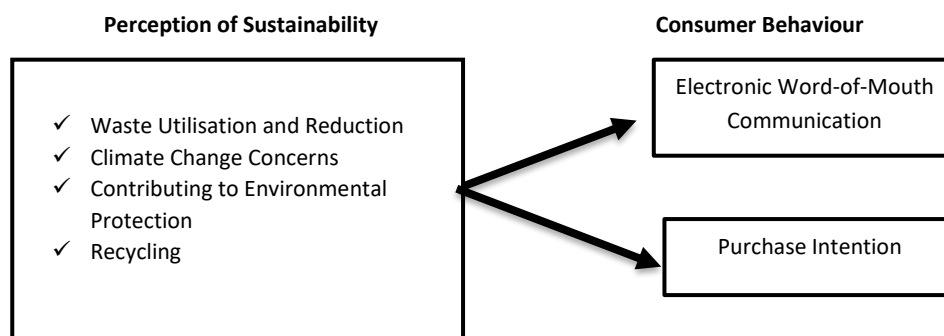
Consumers concerned about sustainability issues may be willing to pay for recycled products. They are therefore more likely to buy recycled products, especially when they are aware of the associated environmental benefits. Discreet consumers understand the environmental challenge facing society today and therefore act in an environmentally sensitive manner and prefer to buy environmentally sustainable products (Queiroz et al., 2021).

When environmentally friendly customers become conscious of environmental degradation and develop a more competent attitude towards ecological protection, their concerns will influence their purchasing choices and lead them to buy green products that have a significant impact on the environment (Wijekoon and Sabri, 2021). Consumers with more environmental knowledge are generally more likely to engage in environmentally friendly purchasing behaviours (Kim and Oh, 2020).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Purpose, Conceptual Model and Scope of the Study

The aim of the research is to determine how sustainability perception affects e-WOM communication and purchase intention of consumers using white goods. The conceptual model of the study is shown in Figure 1. In the conceptual model of the study, sustainability perception consists of waste utilisation and reduction, climate change concerns, contributing to environmental protection and recycling components. Consumer behaviour is addressed with the dimensions of e-WOM communication and purchase intention.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study

The following sources were utilised for the scale questions related to the variables in the conceptual model of the research: Perception of sustainability, Aleixo et al., 2021; e-WOM communication, Siqueira Jr. et al., 2019; purchase intention, Ha et al., 2014.

The population of the study, which aims to determine how consumers' perception of sustainability affects e-WOM communication and purchase intention, consists of consumers using white goods. Considering that it is not practically possible to reach the universe, sampling was used. Since it is not foreseen to make a generalisation about the population, convenience sampling method, one of the non-random sampling methods, was used.

The sample size was determined as follows (Yükselen, 2017):

p: Ratio of consumers influenced by sustainability approach (0.5)

q: 1-p (0.5)

Z: Normal value at safety level (± 2 at 95.5%)

e: Tolerance level ($\pm 4\%$)

$n = p * q * (Z/e)^2 = 0.5 * 0.5 * (2/0.05)^2 = 400$

Online survey method was used as the data collection method and for this purpose, a questionnaire form was created with questions related to the variables that make up the model using a 5-point Likert scale.

3.2. Hypotheses

Individuals who are effective in the implementation of sustainable development can influence the production in different sectors by preferring environmentally friendly and responsible brands. In addition, it is important for the implementation of sustainable development that individuals do not spend resources unnecessarily in their routine actions in their daily lives and display an environmentally sensitive attitude.

Most consumers are concerned about the future as they are aware of the negative impacts on the ecosystem. Increasing concerns influence choices in consumers' lives, including purchasing patterns.

Online platforms, where consumers and brands become active and interact with each other every day, are effective in consumers' purchasing decision processes. Transparent and socially responsible brand efforts encourage online word-of-mouth marketing. Consumers tend to prefer brands that are recognised for their sustainability activities. Based on this point, the hypotheses of the research were determined as follows:

H1. Perception of sustainability positively affects e-WOM communication.

H2. The components of sustainability perception together positively affect e-WOM communication.

H3. Perception of sustainability positively affects purchase intention.

H4. The components of sustainability perception together positively affect purchase intention.

3.3. Data Analysis

3.3.1. Descriptive Information on Respondents and Brands

The distribution of white goods brand users who participated in the survey within the scope of the research according to demographic characteristics is shown in Table 1. The majority of the respondents were males between the ages of 18-30. The majority of the respondents use Samsung and Siemens white goods.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics		Number	Ratio
Gender	Female	238	46.0
	Male	279	54.0
Age	18-30	190	36.8
	31-40	160	30.9
	41-50	104	20.1
	51 +	63	12.2

Table 2: White Goods Brands Used

Brand	Number	Ratio
Samsung	131	25.3
Siemens	192	37.1
Bosh	62	12.0
Vestel	38	7.4
Huawei	58	11.2
Arçelik	36	7.0

3.3.1. Factor Analysis Results Regarding the Perception of Sustainability Variable

In the exploratory factor analysis, four components of sustainability perception were included in the exploratory factor analysis with 17 questions. The KMO value was 0.913, indicating that the sample size was suitable; the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity chi-square value was 4496.327, indicating that the distribution fit the multivariate normal distribution at 1% significance level. In the analysis, the quadruple structure in the model was found to be a triple structure (Table 3). The three-factor structure explains 60.842% of the total variance. Since the factor loading was below 50%, AQA1 was removed from the structure.

Table 3: Factor Structure After Exploratory Factor Analysis

Rotated Structure Matrix			
	Factor		
	1	2	3
AKA2		.598	
AKA3		.771	
AKA4		.762	
AKA5		.685	
AKA6		.612	
AKA7		.525	
IDE1			.732
IDE2			.741
IDE3	.572		
IDE4			.839
CKKB1	.704		
CKKB2	.818		
CKKB3	.778		
CKKB4	.636		
GD1			.509
GD2	.539		

Source: AKA: Waste Utilisation and Reduction, IDE: Climate Change Concerns, CKKB: Contribution to Environmental Protection, GD: Recycling.

As a result of the analysis, the three factors were named as follows:

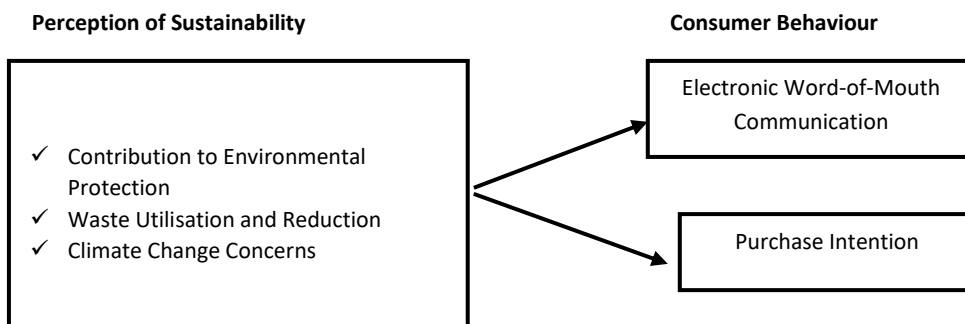
Factor 1: Contribution to Environmental Protection,

Factor 2: Waste Utilisation and Reduction,

Factor 3: Climate Change Concerns.

According to these results, the sustainability perception variables in the conceptual model have been changed and the conceptual model has been arranged as follows:

Figure 2: Conceptual Model after Exploratory Factor Analysis



3.3.2. Reliability Analysis of Scales Related to Model Variables

The reliability analysis of the scales related to the variables in the conceptual model of the research is shown in Table 4. As can be seen in Table 4, the reliability coefficient of the scales related to all variables is high and it can be said that the scales have high reliability.

Table 4: Reliability Analysis

Variables	Number of Questions	Cronbach's Alpha
Perception of Sustainability	16	0.917
Contribution to Environmental Protection	6	0.850
Waste Utilisation and Reduction	6	0.841
Climate Change Concerns	4	0.852
E-WOM Communication	3	0.867
Purchase Intention	3	0.771
Whole Scale	22	0.925

3.3.3. Analysing the Effect of the Perception of Sustainability on E-WOM Communication

The effect of the perception of sustainability on e-WOM communication was tested by simple regression analysis. The correlation coefficient showing the relationship between sustainability perception and e-WOM communication is 0.427 and the determination coefficient is 0.182. In other words, the relationship between the two variables is moderate and sustainability perception explains 18.2% of e-WOM communication. As seen in the table, the significance level of the model is significant at 1% significance level. According to these results, hypothesis H1 is supported; perception of sustainability has a positive effect on e-WOM communication.

Table 5: Relationship between Sustainability Perception and E-WOM Communication

F	p	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²			t	p	
114.573	0.000	0.427	0.182	0.180					
Model					Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
					B	Standard Error	Beta		
Fixed Perception of Sustainability					0.672	0.274	0.427	2.4491	.015
					0.701	0.066		10.704	.000

3.3.4. Analysing the Effect of Sustainability Perception Components on e-WOM Communication

The effect of sustainability perception components together on e-WOM communication was tested with multiple regression analysis. The correlation coefficient showing the relationship between sustainability perception components and e-WOM communication is 0.458 and the determination coefficient is 0.210. In other words, the three components of sustainability perception together explain 21% of e-WOM communication. According to these results, H2 hypothesis is accepted; sustainability perception components together positively affect e-WOM communication. In addition, as seen in the table, although the model is significant, when the regression coefficients are taken into account, this effect is largely due to the contribution to environmental protection and waste utilisation and reduction components.

Table 6: Analysing the Effect of Sustainability Perception Components on e-WOM Communication

F	p	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²			
45.514	.000	.458	.210	.206			
Model	Coefficients		Std. Coefficient	t	p	Co-linearity	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Fixed	.620	.274		2.267	.024		
Contribution to Environmental Protection	.411	.072	.297	5.731	.000	.572	1.749
Waste Utilisation and Reduction	.385	.089	.248	4.330	.000	.469	2.134
Climate Change Concerns	-.065	.075	-.048	-.869	.385	.499	2.005

3.3.5. Analysing the Effect of Sustainability Perception on Purchase Intention

The effect of sustainability perception on purchase intention was tested with simple regression analysis. The correlation coefficient showing the relationship between sustainability perception and purchase intention is 0.570 and the coefficient of determination is 0.325. In other words, sustainability perception explains 32.5% of purchase intention. As seen in Table 7, the model is significant at 1% significance level. According to these results, hypothesis H3 is supported; sustainability perception positively affects purchase intention.

Table 7: Relationship between Sustainability Perception and Purchase Intention

F	p	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²			
247.364	.000	.570	.325	.324			
Model	Coefficients		Std. Coefficients	t	p		
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
Fixed	1.074	.181		5.926	.000		
Perception of Sustainability	.681	.043	.570	15.728	.000		

3.3.5. Analysing the Effect of Sustainability Perception Components on Purchase Intention

The effect of sustainability perception components together on e-WOM communication was tested with multiple regression analysis. The correlation coefficient showing the relationship between the components of sustainability perception and purchase intention is 0.607 and the determination coefficient is 0.368. In other words, the relationship between the three components of sustainability perception and purchase intention is strong and the components of sustainability perception together explain 36.4% of the purchase intention. According to these results, hypothesis H4 is accepted; the components of sustainability perception together positively affect purchase intention. In addition, as seen in Table 8, although the model is significant at 1% significance level, when the regression coefficients are taken into account, this effect is largely due to the contribution to environmental protection and waste utilisation and reduction components.

Table 8: Analysing the Effect of Sustainability Perception Components on Purchase Intention

F	p	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²					
99.216	.000	.607	.368	.364					
Model	Coefficients		Std. Coefficients	t	p	Co-linearity			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF		
Fixed	1.079	.178		6.060	.000				
Contribution to Environmental Protection	.442	.047	.440	9.469	.000	.572	1.749		
Waste Utilisation and Reduction	.264	.058	.234	4.539	.000	.467	2.143		
Climate Change Concerns	-.008	.049	-.008	-.168	.866	.496	2.016		

4. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

With globalisation, the consumption of natural resources, energy and food resources is increasing day by day. This leads to consumption faster than the ecosystem can replenish or recycle. Therefore, the realisation of much more consumption than the world can sustainably provide raises concerns about the future. The reasons for these concerns include problems such as climate change, plastic and air pollution, and loss of biodiversity.

Most consumers are concerned about environmental issues. Increasing concerns affect consumers' preferences. Consumers' conscious behaviour on this issue and doing their part will create pressure on various sectors and encourage them to be sensitive on this issue. Especially on online platforms that are effective in consumers' purchasing decision processes, transparent and socially responsible brand efforts direct consumers' word-of-mouth communication and purchase intentions.

In the study, it was found that sustainability perception positively affects e-WOM communication and purchase intention. In addition, contribution to protecting the environment, climate change concerns, waste utilisation and reduction, which are components of sustainability perception, together positively affect e-WOM communication and purchase intention.

It should be taken into consideration that the findings should be evaluated within the framework of the research sample. The sample size does not allow generalisation for the population. However, considering both the study conducted and previous studies, brands should give importance to the issue of sustainability and emphasise this issue at every point where they interact with their customers, especially in the online environment. They can raise awareness of brands by communicating their sustainability efforts and policies, their contributions to sustainable development to their customers. Considering the findings of the studies in general, it can be said that consumers' sustainability perceptions positively affect their purchase intentions and e-WOM communication.

It would be useful to examine whether the consumer behaviours towards the sustainability perceptions of consumers in white goods brands, which are discussed in the research, support the results obtained by applying them in other products or in different sectors. Applying the effect of sustainability perception on consumer behaviour to a larger sample size will increase the contribution to the validity of the results obtained.

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