

Responsible, Sustainable Production and Consumption through the lens of Inclusion and Diversity.

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Abstract

Responsible, Sustainable Production and Consumption through the lens of Inclusion and Diversity.

In an era characterised by increased environmental concerns and a growing emphasis on sustainability my Major research project (MRP) delves into the realm of Responsible, Sustainable Production and Consumption through the lens of Inclusion and Diversity. My definition of sustainability, for this project, is using services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimising the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emission of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations (World Commission on Environment and Development). For this project, diversity and inclusion are essential lenses through which to understand, address, and advance sustainable production and consumption practices.

My goal is to provide insightful analysis of the intersectionality between sustainability, diversity, and inclusion, particularly focusing on how these factors influence production and consumption patterns within immigrant communities addressing particularly the immigrants of Toronto and develop approaches for supporting the adoption of environmentally friendly practices addressing the needs and particular circumstances in immigrants of our society. I will be looking to and involving the targeted users/community in the process a developing, identifying and evaluating existing or new strategies that improve responsible production and consumption practices within these immigrant groups.

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1. Introduction

In an era characterised by heightened environmental concerns, my Major Research Project (MRP) delves into the realm of responsible and sustainable production and consumption through the lenses of inclusion and diversity. The definition of sustainability for this project encompasses the use of services and products that meet basic needs while enhancing quality of life, all while minimising the consumption of natural resources and the emission of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of these services or products (World Commission on Environment and Development). This approach ensures that the needs of future generations are not jeopardised. The project emphasises that diversity and inclusion are essential lenses through which to understand, address, and advance sustainable production and consumption practices.

The primary goal of this research is to provide an insightful analysis of the intersectionality between sustainability, diversity, and inclusion, particularly focusing on how these factors influence production and consumption patterns within immigrant communities, specifically the South Asian community in Toronto. By engaging with community members, the research aims to identify barriers and drivers of sustainable consumption, ultimately developing strategies that resonate with the unique cultural contexts of these immigrant communities. This participatory approach is crucial for understanding the realities of the community it seeks to serve, ensuring that the findings are relevant and actionable.

1.1 Research Questions

Primary 1. How can existing sustainable practices within the South Asian community in the GTA be understood and adapted to address changing knowledge of environmental and social challenges?

2. What are the barriers and drivers of sustainable consumption in the South Asian community, in the GTA, facing climate change?

Secondary 3. What existing policies or practices support sustainability in these South Asian communities?

4. How do cultural and socio-economic factors shape sustainable behaviours in South Asian communities in the GTA and what strategies can enhance them?

1.2 Rationale and background

The understanding of sustainable production and consumption methods are essential for tackling the urgent environmental and social sustainability of our day motivates this study and Major Study Project (MRP). Some South Asian communities encounter difficulties implementing and reaping the benefits of sustainable practices. Human participation is crucial within this study in order to attain firsthand knowledge and perspectives of the community's members. By using this method, the research is based on understanding the realities of the community it seeks to serve. Through engaging with the South Asian community, the research seeks to understand the community's current sustainable practices, identify the challenges the community member's face in adopting more sustainable behaviours, and explore how the community's cultural practices can be integrated with the most current sustainability approaches. A collaborative setting where all stakeholders, including community members, leaders, business owners, NGO representatives, and academic specialists, can participate in the co-creation of solutions is made possible by the research's use of human participants. In order to provide findings that are pertinent to the context and to promote group action that is inclusive, egalitarian, and long-lasting, this participatory approach is essential. In short, the goal of the research is to figure out how to live more sustainably without making daily life more difficult for the South Asian community in the GTA. By talking to real people in the community, we can learn what works for them and what doesn't, and together we can come up with better ideas that integrate existing cultural approaches with current sustainability practices. We can ensure the solutions we propose are good for the environment and are culturally appropriate for community members.

2. Literature Review

The increasing urgency of sustainable development necessitates a thorough understanding of how cultural values influence consumption practices, particularly within diasporic communities. This literature review focuses on the South Asian community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), exploring the cultural influences on sustainability, the barriers to sustainable practices, and comparative insights from other immigrant communities. By synthesising existing research, this review aims to identify key themes and gaps that will inform future studies in this area.

2.1 Sustainability in South Asian Cultural Contexts

Religious traditions, such as Jainism's emphasis on minimalism and Hinduism's promotion of vegetarianism, foster a culture of sustainability that aligns with environmental stewardship (Jain, P). Additionally, Islamic teachings on ethical consumption further reinforce these values, encouraging community members to engage in responsible resource use. Community-driven sustainability practices, such as shared economies and thrift culture, are also prevalent, demonstrating how cultural norms can promote sustainable behaviours. These practices reflect a collective approach to sustainability, where cultural norms encourage resource sharing and minimising waste. The integration of traditional practices with modern sustainability efforts creates a unique approach to responsible consumption, highlighting the importance of cultural context in promoting sustainable behaviours

The concept of cultural identity plays a crucial role in shaping these sustainable practices. The South Asian community often navigates sustainability through a lens of cultural pride, which can motivate individuals to adopt environmentally friendly practices. The integration of traditional practices with modern sustainability efforts can create a unique approach to responsible consumption.

2.2 Challenges to Sustainable Consumption in Diaspora Communities

Despite the cultural foundations for sustainability, several challenges hinder the adoption of sustainable consumption practices in the South Asian community. Economic factors, particularly the affordability of sustainable options, pose significant barriers. Many community members prioritise immediate economic needs over long-term sustainability goals, leading to a preference for cheaper, less sustainable products. (Saleem Ur Rahman).

Cultural identity and consumption patterns further complicate the transition to sustainable practices. The preference for imported goods, often viewed as a status symbol, can detract from local sustainable options. Generational differences also play a role, as younger members of the community may be more inclined to adopt sustainable practices than their elders, who may hold onto traditional consumption patterns. (Nanjangud Vishwanath Vighnesh).

Policy and structural barriers, such as limited access to sustainable products and a lack of culturally relevant solutions, worsen these challenges. The absence of targeted policies that

address the unique needs of the South Asian community can hinder progress toward sustainable consumption.

2.3 Comparative Insights from Other Diaspora Communities

Research indicates that immigrant communities often navigate sustainable practices through unique cultural lenses, adapting their consumption behaviours to align with both their heritage and the host society's norms. (Carson Duan).

For instance, studies on sustainability initiatives in other ethnic communities highlight the effectiveness of grassroots movements and community engagement in promoting sustainable behaviours. (Sonal Choudhary).

Comparative studies reveal that successful sustainability interventions often involve collaboration between cultural actors and local governments, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility within the community. These insights can inform strategies tailored to the South Asian context, emphasising the importance of culturally relevant interventions that resonate with community values. (Dr. Ege Yildirim)

2.4 Theoretical Frameworks and Interventions

Several theoretical frameworks can guide the development of interventions aimed at promoting responsible production and consumption within the South Asian community. The Circular Economy model, which emphasises resource efficiency and waste reduction, aligns well with cultural values of sustainability (Davide Brocchi). Behaviour Change Models can also provide insights into how to effectively encourage sustainable practices by addressing the psychological and social factors that influence consumer behaviour. (UNEP. Lewis Akenji).

Case studies of successful sustainability interventions in ethnic communities demonstrate the potential for tailored approaches that resonate with cultural values and practices. By leveraging these frameworks, policymakers can develop targeted strategies that promote sustainable consumption within the South Asian community. (Bidit Lal Dey and Sharifah Alwi).

2.5 Inclusion and Disability in Sustainable Environment

Inclusion and diversity play a pivotal role in shaping sustainable development frameworks that leave no one behind. The **United Nations** highlights the central role of disability inclusion across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in relation to responsible consumption and production (Goal 12), poverty eradication, education, and sustainable cities (United Nations, n.d.). Inclusive approaches ensure that different communities especially people with disabilities can access, participate in, and benefit from sustainable initiatives.

The **International Disability Alliance** emphasizes the importance of accessible information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a foundational element of inclusive development. Without access to ICTs, persons with disabilities are systematically excluded from decisions and innovations related to sustainability, production, and consumption.

Built environments also reflect the intersection of inclusion and sustainability. Architectural projects like **Maggie's Lanarkshire** designed by Reiach and Hall Architects embody a holistic approach that integrates emotional well-being, accessibility, and environmental consciousness (ArchDaily, 2019). These built spaces demonstrate how thoughtful design can support inclusive, dignified living while aligning with sustainable principles. At a city scale, the **(European Union's Access City Award)** documents best practices across European cities that embed accessibility into urban planning. These examples highlight the mutual benefit of designing inclusive spaces that also contribute to more sustainable, resilient urban environments.

In the context of education, they (**United Nations Toolkit on Disability for Africa**) provide practical guidance for inclusive education systems. Inclusive education is not only a matter of human rights but also a strategic lever for sustainable societal transformation. This aligns with **UNESCO's (2022)** broader belief that inclusive education systems foster participation, equity, and social cohesion, key ingredients for long-term sustainable development.

Inclusive urban design and disability sensitive policies benefit all city dwellers, promoting sustainability by reducing systemic barriers and increasing access to services and green infrastructure (**Maria Poli**). Moreover, **Ghai** critiques how the Millennium Development

Goals historically overlooked disability, reinforcing the need for current frameworks like the SDGs to be more intersectional.

Also, its emphasis that addressing poverty related disabilities such as those affecting communication and swallowing must be integrated into sustainable development planning, particularly Goal 1 (**Sherratt**). These nuanced links between disability and sustainability call for cross-sector collaboration, inclusive metrics, and targeted interventions.

2.6 Analyse and Synthesise

The literature emphasizes the significant influence of cultural values, socioeconomic factors, and policy environments on sustainable consumption practices, particularly within diasporic communities. The traditions often align with the core values of environmental responsibility and collective well-being. However, this alignment is not always seamless. Economic constraints and generational differences can create tension between cultural heritage and modern consumption patterns. For instance, the preference for cost-effective goods or status-driven consumption, especially among younger generations or recent immigrants, can dilute sustainability efforts (Saleem Ur Rahman, Nanjangud Vishwanath Vighnesh). While the role of cultural identity in shaping consumption choices is well documented, there remains a notable gap in research addressing how disability and broader dimensions of diversity intersect with sustainable development within diasporic contexts. Current literature provides limited insight into how persons with disabilities navigate sustainable consumption, particularly in immigrant communities. This represents a critical area for further exploration, given that both sustainability and disability rights advocate for systemic inclusivity, equity, and access (United Nations, n.d.; Disability Rights Fund).

Moreover, existing frameworks often overlook the structural and physical barriers that inhibit the participation of people with disabilities in sustainability initiatives whether through lack of accessible infrastructure, inaccessible public messaging, or exclusion from policy design. Inclusive urban planning and accessible design, as showcased in examples like Maggie's Lanarkshire and the Access City Award case studies, illustrate how environmental sustainability can be achieved in tandem with universal design principles (ArchDaily, European Union). Similarly, efforts to advance inclusive education and accessible digital environments (Ghai, UNESCO) reveal the potential of cross-sectoral approaches that merge sustainable development with inclusive social development.

Despite these emerging models, intersectional frameworks that integrate cultural, economic, and disability-inclusive perspectives in the context of sustainable production and consumption remain underdeveloped. While economic barriers are frequently cited, fewer studies explore how cultural traditions can both support and hinder sustainability, or how these traditions can be reinterpreted through inclusive and accessible strategies.

In synthesising these insights, it becomes evident that fostering responsible and sustainable behaviours in culturally diverse communities requires a more holistic approach. Culturally informed strategies must be complemented by inclusive design, disability-responsive policies, and equitable access to sustainable alternatives. This comprehensive approach not only aligns with the principles of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) but also supports the broader agenda of social justice and human rights.

In conclusion, the interplay between cultural identity, disability inclusion, and sustainable consumption in the South Asian diaspora in the Greater Toronto Area presents both challenges and opportunities. Future research and policy efforts should prioritise intersectional and community-based approaches that leverage cultural strengths while addressing systemic barriers. Such strategies will be essential for advancing truly inclusive and responsible models of production and consumption in multicultural urban settings

3. Methodology

The methodology for this project is designed to comprehensively explore the cultural influences on sustainable consumption and production practices within the South Asian community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

The exploration of cultural influences on sustainable practices reveals a rich tapestry of values and behaviours that have been ingrained in communities, particularly within the South Asian context. These cultural dimensions not only shape individual attitudes towards sustainability but also inform collective practices that can be beneficial for environmental stewardship. One significant aspect of cultural influence is the intrinsic connection between culture and the natural environment. The term "culture" itself is derived from the Latin "cultura," which means to cultivate, reflecting a deep-rooted relationship between humans and their environment. (Davide Brocchi).

Moreover, the integration of cultural considerations into local governance and sustainable development strategies is crucial. (Dr. Ege Yildirim). Many local governments have begun to incorporate cultural elements into their sustainability frameworks, recognising that culture is a fundamental pillar of sustainable development. This approach not only fosters social inclusion and cooperation but also enhances community engagement in sustainability initiatives. For instance, the emphasis on fostering common values and a culture of peace can lead to more cohesive efforts in promoting responsible consumption and environmental protection. (Dr. Ege Yildirim).

Cultural practices that prioritise sustainability can also be observed in the traditional lifestyles of South Asian communities. For example, many South Asian cultures have long embraced principles of frugality and resourcefulness, often referred to as "jugaad," which emphasises innovative problem-solving with limited resources. (Bidit Lal Dey and Sharifah Alwi).

This cultural mindset encourages individuals to find sustainable solutions to everyday challenges, such as reusing materials and minimising waste. Such practices are not only economically beneficial but also environmentally sustainable, as they reduce the overall consumption of resources.

Furthermore, the spiritual dimensions of many South Asian cultures often promote a deep respect for nature. For instance, Hinduism teaches the concept of "Ahimsa," or non-violence, which extends to all living beings and encourages a harmonious relationship with the environment. (Bidit Lal Dey and Sharifah Alwi).

This spiritual connection fosters a sense of responsibility towards nature, motivating individuals to engage in sustainable practices that protect the environment.

However, it is essential to recognise the challenges that arise from the clash between traditional cultural practices and modern consumption patterns. The globalisation of consumer culture often leads to the erosion of local practices that are inherently sustainable. As noted in the literature, the dominance of a single culture can undermine the diversity of sustainable practices that exist within different communities. (Davide Brocchi).

This cultural homogenisation poses a significant threat to the sustainability efforts of marginalised communities, as it diminishes their ability to draw upon traditional knowledge and practices that have proven effective in resource management. (Davide Brocchi).

In conclusion, the cultural influences on sustainable practices within the South Asian community are multifaceted and deeply rooted in historical, spiritual, and social contexts. By recognising and valuing these cultural dimensions, there is potential to harness traditional practices that favour sustainability while addressing the challenges posed by modern consumerism. This approach not only enriches the discourse on sustainability but also empowers communities to reclaim and adapt their cultural heritage in ways that promote environmental stewardship and social equity.

The approach is informed by a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between cultural values and sustainable behaviours. The research will employ a mixed-methods design, integrating both online and in person survey to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives.

3.1 Research Ethics Board (REB) Process

Given that this research involved human participants, specifically members of the South Asian immigrant community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), obtaining Research Ethics Board (REB) approval was a critical and necessary step to ensure the ethical integrity of the study. The process of acquiring REB approval reflected both the methodological complexity and the emotional and cultural sensitivity of the research.

The initial application was submitted to OCAD University's REB committee and included a detailed research protocol outlining the study's purpose, procedures, recruitment strategies, consent process, and data management plan. Particular attention was paid to addressing issues of cultural sensitivity, informed consent, participant anonymity, and the potential emotional discomfort participants might experience when reflecting on personal or generational practices of sustainability.

Shortly after submission, the REB returned the application with a request for revisions. The feedback was thorough and constructive, focusing on several key areas:

Clarification of participant recruitment strategy, especially ensuring that there was no sense of coercion in community-based or snowball sampling approaches.

Enhancement of the informed consent process included additional information in the consent form about potential emotional discomfort when discussing sustainability challenges, especially those related to migration, socio-economic status, and generational conflict. Refinement of demographic questions to avoid unintended assumptions or pressure for participants to disclose sensitive personal information (e.g., income, disability status, etc.).

Strengthening of data security protocols, ensuring data was encrypted and securely stored, with clear processes for anonymization and destruction after the project's completion.

After incorporating these revisions, the application was resubmitted along with a detailed response letter outlining how each REB concern was addressed. This included updated versions of the consent forms, participant recruitment scripts, interview and survey questions, and data security plans.

Following the resubmission, the REB reviewed the revised application and approved the study. The approval marked a critical milestone, allowing the research to proceed with confidence that it met ethical standards of respect, justice, and beneficence. It also reinforced the project's commitment to building trust with participants and treating their contributions with care and accountability.

Throughout the process, the experience of undergoing REB review proved to be an important reflexive exercise. It required careful consideration of how power, trust, identity, and vulnerability intersect in community-based research, particularly when working with immigrant populations. The REB process ultimately strengthened the methodological design of the study and helped ensure that the research was conducted with empathy, transparency, and integrity.

3.2 Survey

To begin, a structured survey was distributed to members of the South Asian community, focusing on their consumption patterns and attitudes towards sustainability. This survey was designed based on established frameworks that emphasise the importance of cultural context in shaping consumer behaviour. (Saleem Ur Rahman). The survey included questions that assessed participants' awareness of sustainable practices, their perceived barriers to adopting such practices, and the influence of cultural values on their consumption choices.

Data collection was facilitated through online and offline platforms, ensuring accessibility for participants while adhering to ethical guidelines regarding confidentiality and informed consent. The use of digital tools for data collection was particularly relevant in the current context, as it allows for a broader reach within the community and accommodates varying levels of comfort with in-person interactions. (Sonal Choudhary).

Once the data was collected, quantitative analysis was analysed to identify trends and correlations between cultural values and sustainable consumption behaviours.

Simultaneously, qualitative data from interviews was analysed thematically, allowing for the identification of recurring patterns and unique insights that contribute to the overall understanding of the research topic. (Sonal Choudhary).

3.2.1 Online Survey

To promote participation among local communities, the researcher (Neema Biju Jose) visited six community centres across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). At each centre, a printed poster was displayed (with permission) featuring a brief description of the research project along with a QR code that linked directly to the survey. This approach helped bridge physical and digital outreach, ensuring that individuals who may not be active online could still engage with the research in a low-barrier way.

Additionally, the online survey was conducted through a secure digital platform (WhatsApp Community Groups, Facebook Groups) and gathered responses from 23 participants. Prior to participation, all individuals were presented with a digital consent form outlining the purpose of the research, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Only those who provided informed consent proceeded with the survey. The primary objective of this survey was to reach a broader audience, with a particular focus on individuals with physical disabilities. Efforts were made to ensure the survey was accessible and inclusive — it was screen reader-friendly, had clear language, and provided participants with the option to respond at their own pace.

3.2.2 In-Person Survey

In-person surveys were conducted with a targeted group of individuals aged 35 and above, including 7 participants from the general public and 2 elderly individuals with physical

disabilities. Before beginning, participants were provided with a printed consent form, which they read and signed to confirm their voluntary participation and understanding of the research. This format allowed for richer, context-driven interactions, where facial expressions, tone, and gestures could add nuance to the participants' responses.

These sessions were conducted in a familiar and comfortable environment, with attention paid to accessibility and emotional ease, especially for the elderly participants. The face-to-face interaction enabled deeper engagement and allowed the researcher to clarify any misunderstandings and observe non-verbal cues.

Participants were selected intentionally to reflect lived experiences related to age and physical ability. Ethical guidelines were followed throughout, with informed consent obtained before the sessions. The insights from this group added valuable depth, particularly in relation to barriers experienced in physical environments.

3.3 Initial Analysis Process

Responses were categorised based on key themes such as demographics, employment, income, environmental behaviour, and sustainability practices, ensuring a structured analysis of the data. While some imprecise responses were identified, only minor changes were made to preserve their authenticity and maintain the integrity of participants' perspectives.

Quantitative Analysis

Frequencies and distributions were calculated to determine common trends among respondents. Comparative analysis was conducted between variables, such as the correlation between income levels and sustainability behaviours. Data patterns were examined to find significant variations based on age, gender, and residency duration in Canada.

Qualitative Analysis

Open ended responses regarding sustainability, cultural participation, and lifestyle adaptations were assessed. Common themes were extracted from text-based responses to understand behavioural motivations. Noteworthy anecdotes and trends were highlighted to strengthen key findings.

Comparative Analysis

Respondents pre-Canada sustainability habits were compared with their current practices to assess behavioural shifts. Differences in recycling habits, waste segregation, and sustainable consumption were analysed across demographic groups.

The most striking insights were selected based on their relevance and impact, ensuring that the findings effectively highlight key sustainability behaviours. To create a clear and cohesive narrative, the results were thematically grouped, allowing for a structured and logical flow within the report. Additionally, outlier cases were carefully considered to provide a balanced perspective, capturing variations in sustainability practices and offering a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

4. Data Analysis

I will now analyse the survey data and highlights the most significant findings. The report will be organised to ensure clarity and coherence, focusing on key insights derived from the data. This will include an overview of major trends, thematic categorisations, and noteworthy variations, providing a comprehensive understanding of the survey results.

1. **Demographics Overview** – Age, gender, ethnicity, and location.
2. **Disability and Family Status** – Invisible/visible disabilities, number of children, and employment.
3. **Residency and Citizenship** – Duration in Canada and citizenship status.
4. **Income and Education** – Personal and family income, and environmental education.
5. **Cultural and Environmental Practices** – Community involvement, sustainability habits, and recycling behaviours.
6. **Consumption Patterns** – Use of plastic, fast food habits, and awareness of sustainable products.
7. **Sustainability and Behavioural Changes** – Shifts in sustainability practices after moving to Canada.

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Demographics Overview

The survey captured responses from individuals of diverse age groups ranging from 17 to 60 years. 87.5% of participants were of South Asian descent, including Malayalee, Punjabi, Tamilian, Sinhalese, Bengali, and other ethnic identities. The respondents primarily identified as male or female, with a few specifying gender-neutral terms.

4.1.2 Disability and Family Status

19% of participants identified as having an invisible disability, including arthritis, anxiety, migraines, and diabetes. No respondents reported visible disabilities except for one wheelchair user. Family structures varied, with many respondents having children, ranging from one to three children per household. Employment varied, with some working full-time, part-time, or retired.

4.1.3 Residency and Citizenship

All respondents had been living in Canada for a significant period, ranging from one year to over 30 years. 37.5% respondents were Canadian citizens, while 62.5% were still immigrants or recent arrivals.

4.1.4 Income and Education

Personal income ranged from below \$20,000 to above \$80,000 annually, while family income showed a broader spectrum, often higher than individual earnings. 60% of respondents had learned about environmental issues in school, indicating a good level of awareness.

4.1.5 Cultural and Environmental Practices

Respondents were actively involved in their cultural communities through temples, mosques, churches, sports, or advocacy groups. Sustainability practices varied, with a recycling at least some household waste. Participation in sustainability practices prior to arriving in Canada was mixed, engaging in composting, recycling, and minimising car use.

4.1.6 Consumption Patterns

There was a strong reliance on plastic garbage bags, though a segment preferred compostable alternatives. Plastic bag usage at grocery stores remained. Fast food consumption was frequent, with 45% of respondents eating takeout at least once per week.

The use of reusable products was inconsistent with 40% of respondents, reported buying eco-friendly products like bamboo toothbrushes and reusable bags, while 30% did not prioritise sustainability in shopping choices.

4.1.7 Sustainability and Behavioural Changes

65% respondents noted a shift towards more sustainable habits after moving to Canada, such as better waste separation, reduced use of plastics, and public transport use. Also 35% reported no significant changes in their habits.

4.2 Detailed Analysis

4.2.1 Demographics & Sustainability Awareness

The respondents were South Asian, including Malayalee, Punjabi, Tamilian, Sinhalese, and Bengali communities, spanning **ages 17 to 60**. A majority, that is 90.5%, were either immigrants or long-time Canadian residents.

Age and cultural background influenced sustainability awareness (95.2% were aware of Sustainable Fashion, 85.7% were supporting Local Businesses, 81% Know Fast vs Slow Fashion, 71.4% Interested in Thrift/Second-hand) Younger individuals

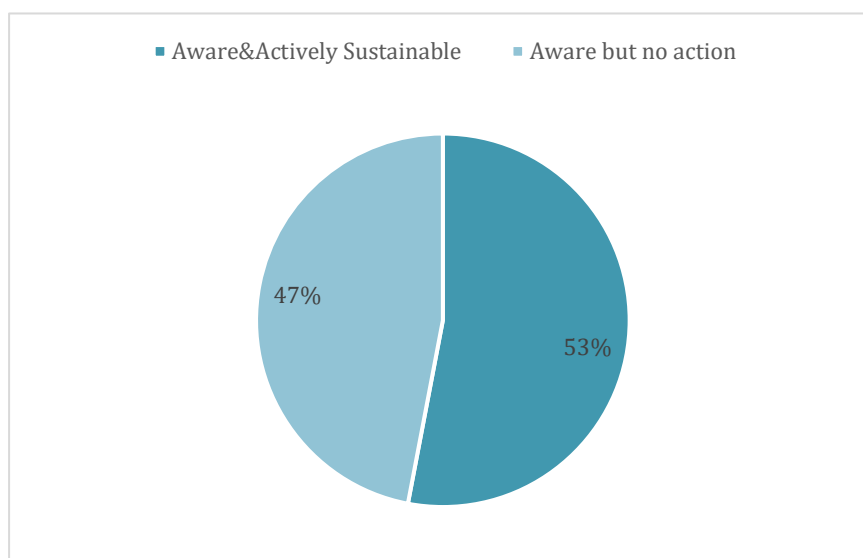


Image 1: Sustainability Awareness vs. Action.

(likely those educated in Canada) showed higher sustainability awareness, while older respondents often followed traditional consumption habits from their home countries. Sustainability awareness seems to be shaped by **education and cultural exposure**, rather than just residency in Canada.

4.2.2 Income & Sustainability Habits

Higher-income individuals were **more likely to invest in sustainable products** (e.g., bamboo toothbrushes, reusable bags). Lower-income individuals prioritised affordability over sustainability, relying more on plastic bags, fast food, and disposable products due to cost and accessibility. 42.9% said that the high cost of products marketed as sustainable makes it challenging for individuals with low incomes to access these items, highlighting the financial barrier that prevents many from adopting a sustainable lifestyle.

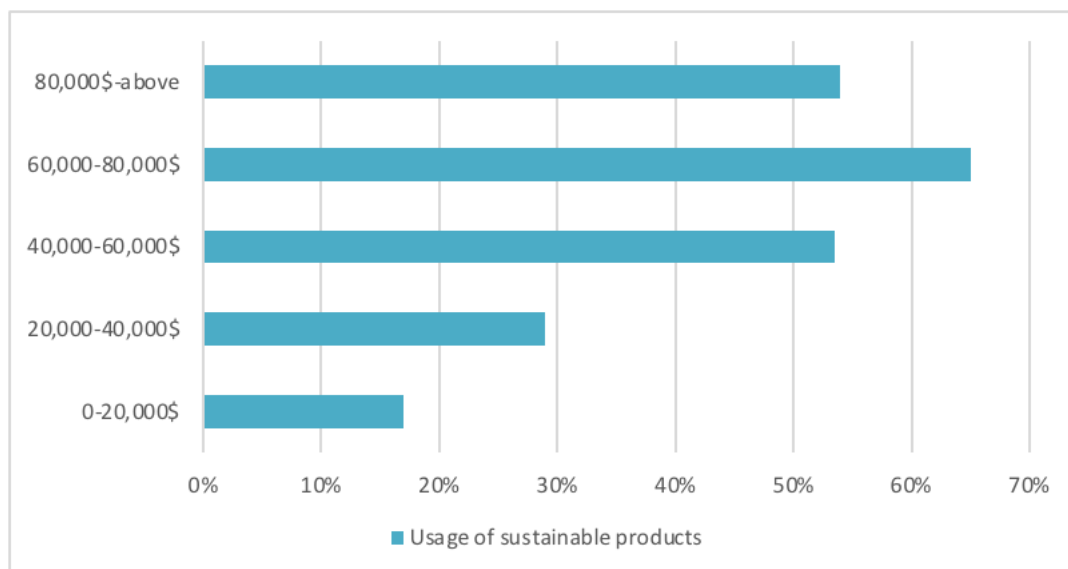


Image 2: Sustainability product vs. Income.

Sustainability can be a privilege. While wealthier individuals can afford eco-friendly alternatives, lower-income groups may struggle with the financial trade-offs. This indicates a need for **affordable sustainable options**.

4.2.3 Consumption Patterns & Awareness of Sustainable Products

Many respondents acknowledged the benefits of reusable items and eco-friendly alternatives. 94.5% people have learned about environmental issues at schools. Although 58% of people have watched documentaries, movies, or advertisements, or read articles related to

environmental issues and sustainability, 35% have not. Interestingly, 61% of them discuss environmental topics with their friends or family.

Despite this awareness, most still relied on plastic garbage bags and disposable products, highlighting that awareness does not necessarily lead to meaningful action. For example, 51% of people continue to use plastic garbage bags for waste disposal, despite knowing the environmental impact. Additionally, 83.5% of individuals do not engage in composting, and 48% still opt for plastic bags when shopping for groceries, suggesting a disconnect between knowledge of sustainability and actual behaviour.

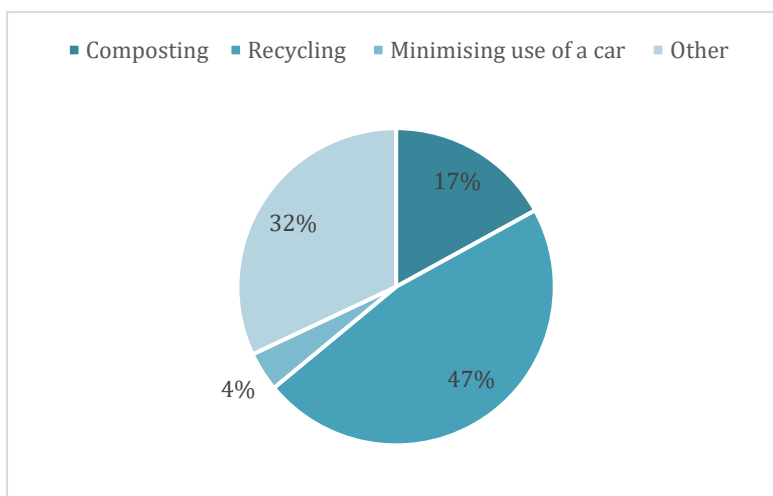


Image 3: Sustainability practices.

Awareness does not **automatically** lead to sustainable behaviour. **Convenience and cost** remain dominant factors in purchase decisions.

4.2.4 Cultural Influence & Sustainability

60% respondents involved in **religious or community groups** (temples, mosques, churches, advocacy groups) showed **some sustainability efforts** in their daily lives. 72% of respondents not engaged in community activities had **weaker sustainability habits**, indicating that **collective cultural values** play a role in shaping environmental responsibility.

Finding

While sustainability doesn't solely depend on community settings, introducing eco-friendly practices into cultural or religious events could be an impactful way to promote participation and inspire change.

4.2.5 Pre-Migration vs. Post-Migration Sustainability Behaviour

Some respondents **improved their sustainability habits** after moving to Canada due to **better waste separation systems and environmental policies**. Others reported **no major change** in habits, continuing to use **plastic, fast food, and high-waste products** despite access to sustainable alternatives.

Canada's infrastructure supports sustainability, but **personal habits and prior experiences** play a huge role in whether migrants adopt these practices.

4.2.6 Fast Food Consumption & Plastic Waste

81% of respondents consumed fast food at least once per week, leading to higher plastic and packaging waste. The high frequency of fast-food consumption exacerbates waste management challenges and underscores the importance of shifting toward eco-friendly alternatives.

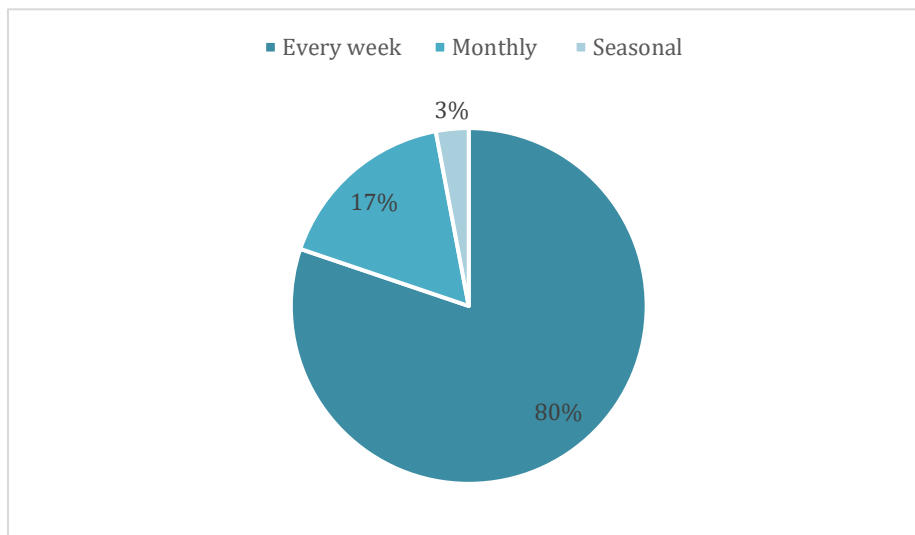


Image 4: People consuming Fast food/ take outs.

Those who actively cooked at home **generated less waste** and had better control over **sustainable consumption habits**.

Reducing fast food consumption could significantly decrease waste. Encouraging home-cooked meals or eco-friendly packaging in fast food could address this issue.

4.2.7 Education & Recycling Behaviour

94.5% people have **learned about environmental issues in school**, which contributed to a broad understanding of recycling. While 81% of people separate recyclables from their

household waste, only 49% ensure that all of their potential recyclables actually make it to recycling. Meanwhile, 6% do not separate recyclables at all, and 13% are indifferent or not motivated to do so. However, this shows only a small portion actively sought products with minimal packaging, showing a gap between awareness and practical action.

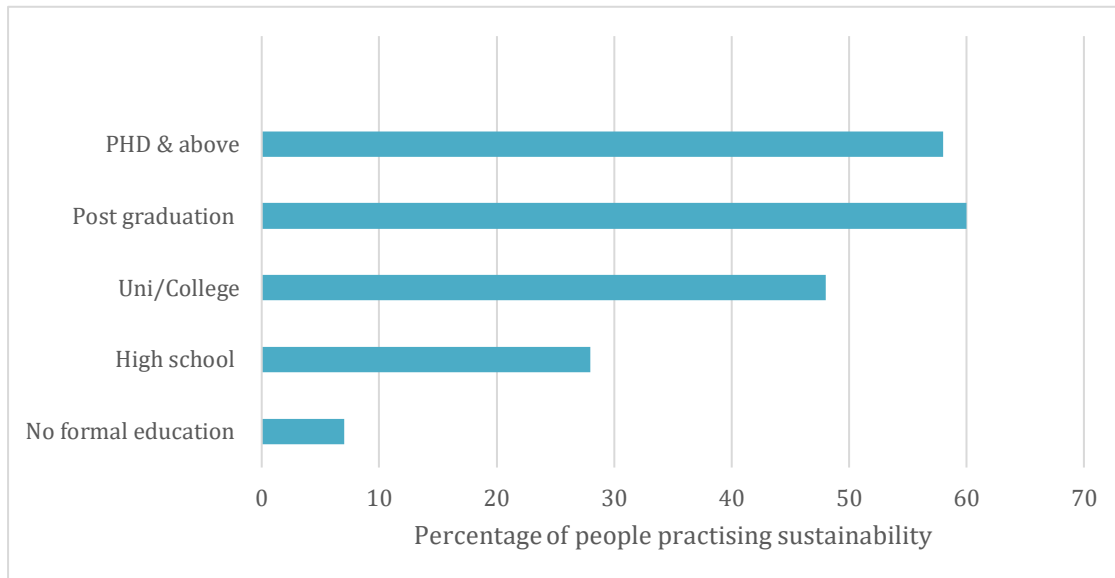


Image 5: Recycling behaviour vs. Educational Level.

Formal education **increases recycling awareness** but doesn't necessarily **change consumption habits**. More **hands-on, real-world initiatives** may be needed.

4.2.8 Disability & Accessibility in Sustainability

72% of disabled individuals reported not actively engaging in sustainable practices. Among 32 respondents, five identified as having invisible disabilities such as arthritis, anxiety, migraines, or diabetes, while only three respondents used a wheelchair. Accessibility barriers in sustainability practices were explicitly mentioned by two respondents, in particular they mentioned that certain eco-friendly habits (e.g., carrying reusable bags, using composting facilities) is challenging for people with disabilities. It also highlights that the challenges

faced by disabled individuals in participating in sustainability efforts go beyond visible mobility limitations.

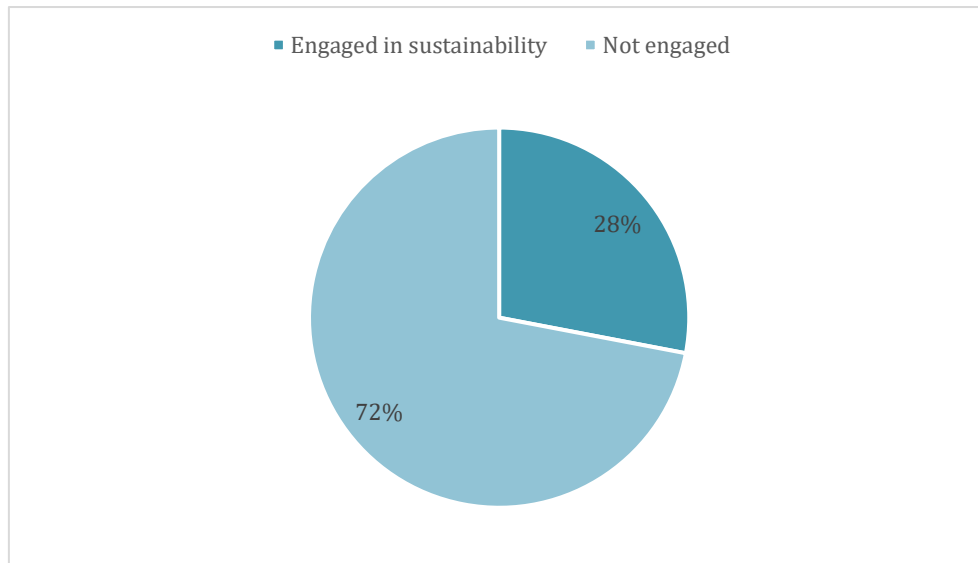


Image 6: Sustainability engagement of disabled participants.

Accessibility barriers were specifically noted by two respondents, who shared that seemingly simple eco-friendly actions like carrying reusable bags, accessing composting facilities, or participating in community cleanups can be physically or mentally taxing depending on their condition. These barriers often go unnoticed in mainstream sustainability initiatives, which tend to adopt a one-size-fits-all approach.

Future sustainability programs should be truly equitable, future programs must intentionally incorporate accessibility as a core principle. This means rethinking systems, infrastructures, and communication to accommodate a wide range of abilities.

4.2.9 Citizenship & Sustainability Adaptation

46% of respondents didn't recycle or practice sustainability before coming to Canada. 80% of Long-term Canadian residents and citizens showed **greater engagement in sustainability efforts**.

17% people do compost in their own before moving to Canada. At the same time newer immigrants were **less likely to shift their consumption habits**, possibly due to cultural preferences or lack of exposure to Canada's sustainability systems.

Length of residency in Canada influences **sustainability adoption**. **Government programs** targeting newcomers could help bridge the gap.

4.2.10 Recycling vs. Packaging Awareness

When asked about sustainable practices, 17% of respondents reported composting, 47% engaged in recycling, only 4% minimised their use of a car, and 32% indicated involvement in other eco-friendly habits. The data suggests that most respondents are engaging in at least **some level of recycling** (Includes using reusable shopping bags, thrifting, donating clothing, reducing plastic bag usage, using reusable kitchen towels, and minimising household waste through repairs and reuse), reflecting a general awareness and acceptance of recycling systems.

In contrast, very few respondents mentioned **actively reducing packaging waste** while shopping, which highlights a gap in sustainable behaviour. This indicates that while people are **willing to manage waste once it's created**, they are less likely to take steps to prevent waste in the first place such as choosing products with minimal or no packaging.

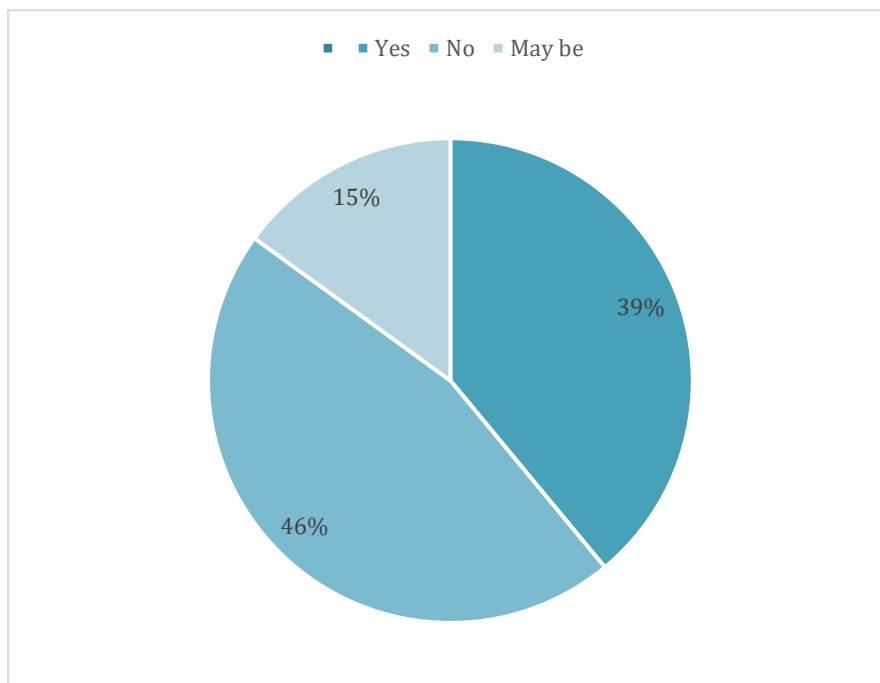


Image 7: Participants practicing Sustainability.

People are more likely to adopt **sustainable practices** when systems and infrastructure (like recycling) are already in place and easy to follow. However, reducing waste at the source such as through **conscious consumption** and avoiding overpackaged products requires a deeper **behavioral shift and a proactive mindset** that is still lacking.

3.4.2 Multivariable Analysis

1. Income, Awareness, and Sustainable Consumption

There is a direct increase in sustainable product usage with rising income up to the \$60,000–80,000 range. Usage jumps from just 17% in the \$0–20,000 group to 65% in the \$60,000–80,000 group nearly a 4x increase. Interestingly, the \$80,000+ group shows a drop to 54%. For instance, high-income individuals (\$80k+) still used plastic bags and takeout containers for convenience.

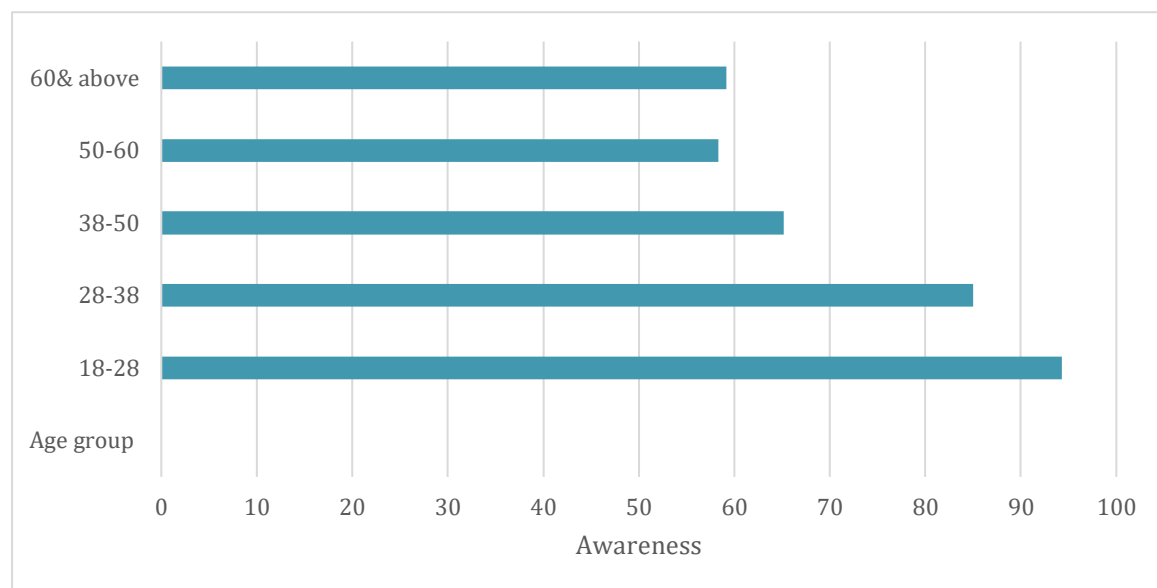


Image 8: Age vs. Awareness of Sustainability.

Awareness is highest in the 18–28 group (94.3%), showing that younger adults are the most informed and engaged when it comes to sustainability. The 28–38 group also shows relatively high awareness at 85%. There is a sharp decline in awareness starting from the 38–50 group (65.2%), continuing through the 50–60 (58.3%) and 60+ (59.2%) groups. This suggests a clear age-based gap in sustainability awareness, with older generations being less informed or engaged. Furthermore, this indicates that higher income doesn't guarantee higher sustainability behaviour.

While 18–28-year-olds are the most aware (94.3%), 62.5% of respondents fall into lower income brackets (\$0–20,000 or \$20,000–40,000), where usage is just 17–29%. This shows a gap between awareness and action among youth, likely due to cost barriers. 38–50-year-olds have moderate awareness (65.2%) and 22% of respondents fall in the \$40,000–60,000 or \$60,000–80,000 income groups where usage is higher (53.5%–65%). This group may have more purchasing power, aligning awareness with ability to act. Older adults (50+), with lower

awareness and likely stable income, still show lower engagement, reinforcing that awareness is essential but not sufficient.

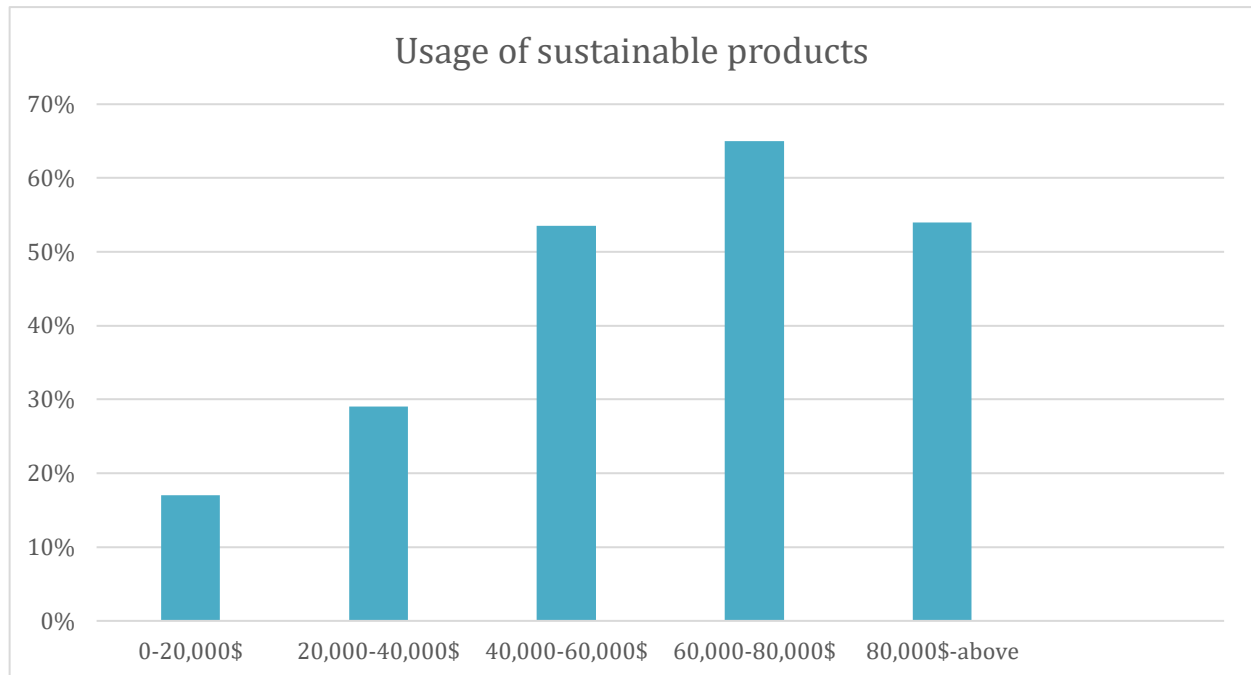


Image 9: Sustainability products vs. Annual income levels.

Income is a partial enabler of sustainable behaviour, but it's not enough. Even high awareness (as seen in 18–28-year-olds) or high income (as seen in the \$80,000+ group) does not guarantee sustainable consumption.

2. Education, Cultural Influence, and Recycling Behaviour

A significant majority of respondents (94.5%) reported learning about environmental issues through formal education. Additionally, 58% have engaged with sustainability-related content via documentaries, movies, advertisements, or articles, while 35% have not, indicating a potential gap in continued awareness-building beyond school settings. Notably, 61% of participants actively discuss environmental topics with friends or family, suggesting that environmental consciousness is a part of social conversations for many.

Despite this general awareness, behaviour does not always align with knowledge. When it comes to choosing products with minimal packaging, only 40% of respondents said they make such choices consistently. In contrast, 36% admitted they do not prioritise packaging in their purchasing decisions, and 24% specifically seek out minimally packaged products when shopping. This highlights a clear gap between environmental education and everyday

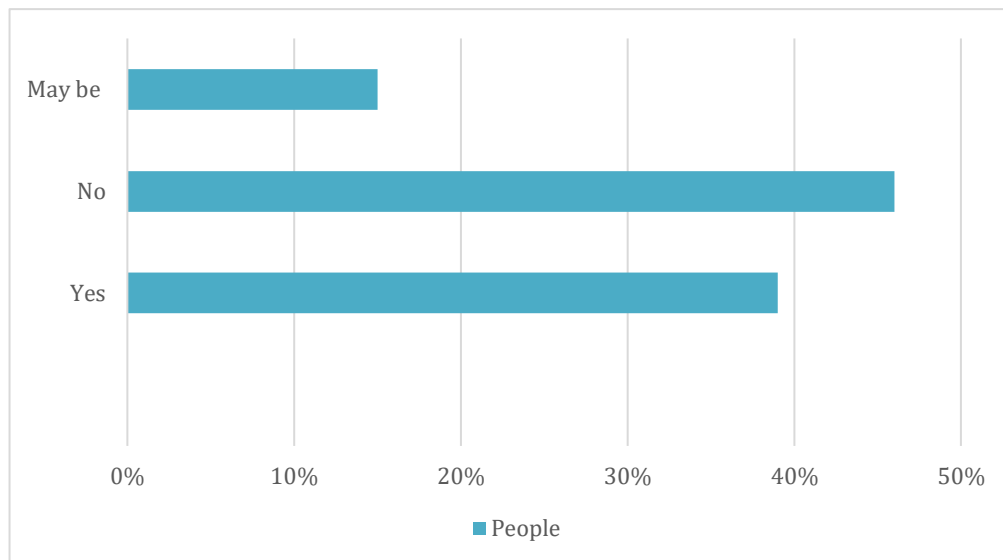


Image 10: People practicing Sustainability.

consumer practices. Among those active in cultural/religious communities were, 45% of participants engaged in sustainable habits, like waste segregation and minimal food waste. However, it clearly shows that even educated individuals did not actively choose products with minimal packaging, showing a disconnect between knowledge and application.

Finding

While formal education plays a significant role in raising awareness about environmental issues (with 94.5% of respondents learning about sustainability at school), it does not consistently translate into sustainable daily habits. Participation in cultural or religious communities reinforces environmental behaviour through shared practices and community norms. Future sustainability efforts should integrate cultural frameworks and community-based incentives to bridge the gap between awareness and long-term sustainable action.

3. Residency Duration, Cultural Background, and Sustainability Adaptation

Short-term residents (≤ 2 years): 80% of participants from India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka who had lived in Canada for less than 2 years continued practices like using plastic bags and struggled with waste separation.

For example, one participant from Pakistan (in Canada for 1.5 years) indicated no recycling habits and continued using plastic bags.

Long-term residents (10+ years): Participants with over 10 years in Canada were more likely to recycle all potential recyclables and use compostable bags.

Cultural habits persisted: multiple South Asian participants practiced reusing containers, repairing clothes, and minimising car use, traditional sustainable habits that predated their move to Canada.

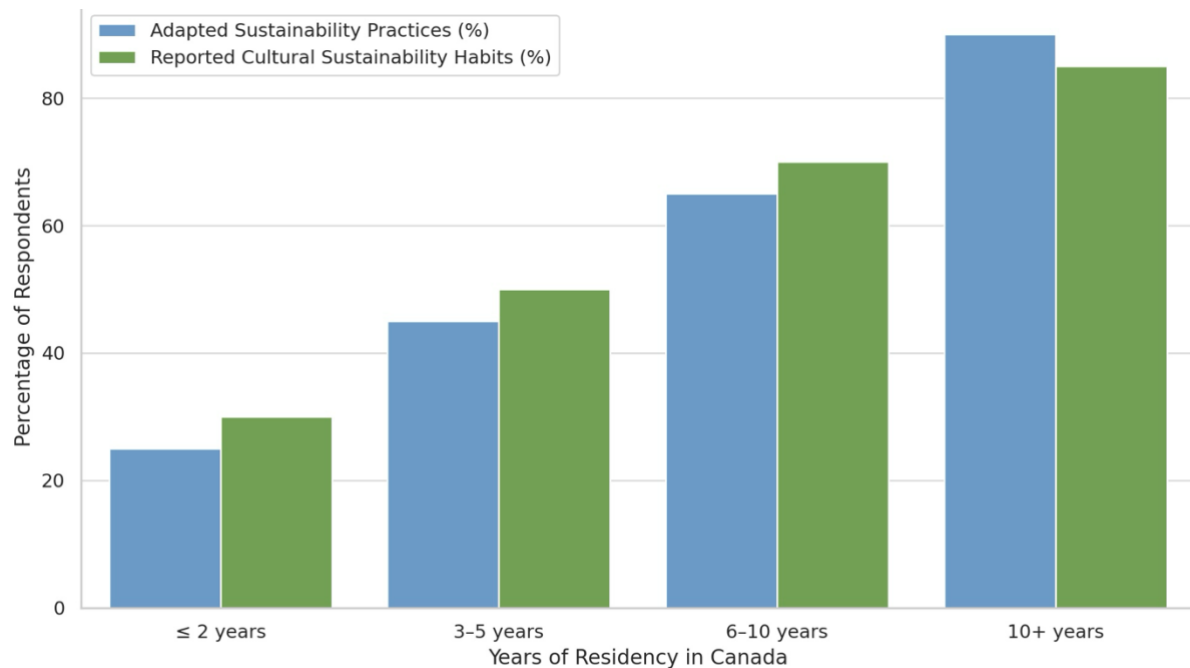


Image 11: Residency duration, cultural background (like reusing containers, repairing clothes, minimising car use, composting, and thrift habits) and sustainability adaptation.

15+ respondents reported having lived in Canada for over 5 years. 90% of those reported improved recycling or adapted Canadian norms. At least 10 participants mentioned cultural sustainability habits such as reusing, composting, or avoiding waste.

Finding

Time in Canada supports better adaptation to local sustainability norms, but cultural upbringing plays a more foundational role. Integrating and encouraging these traditional sustainable habits into public policy could yield better results than enforcement alone.

4. Fast Food Habits, Plastic Waste, and Time Constraints

Across income groups, fast food consumption was frequent. Over 75% participants consumed fast food at least once per week. Even individuals earning \$80,000+ reported regular takeout due to work stress or time constraints. One participant with a \$60k income and 3 children mentioned eating fast food weekly, emphasising time, not money, as the barrier. When it comes to Packaging Waste, Many acknowledged using plastic containers and bags when ordering takeout. Minimal packaging awareness was low, over 50% said they “don’t really care” or “focus on price.”

Finding

Fast food dependency is strongly tied to convenience and time limitations, not just affordability. Sustainability solutions need to prioritise time-efficient, eco-friendly food options, such as bulk meals, tiffin services, or accessible reusable containers.

5. Disability, Accessibility, and Sustainable Practices

Among the 32 respondents, eight individuals identified as living with disabilities: five with invisible conditions such as arthritis, anxiety, migraines, or diabetes, and three using a wheelchair. Despite awareness of sustainability, 72% of disabled individuals reported not actively participating in sustainable practices.

While mainstream sustainability efforts often overlook the unique challenges disabled individuals face, the survey brings these issues to light. Two respondents explicitly cited accessibility barriers, noting that even seemingly minor actions like carrying reusable bags or accessing composting bins can be physically or mentally overwhelming, depending on the nature of their condition. For instance, one participant with arthritis mentioned difficulty in managing heavy or awkward eco-friendly products, while another shared that anxiety made participation in group sustainability events emotionally draining.

Finding

These insights point to a critical gap: the challenges disabled individuals face in sustainability are not limited to mobility issues. Invisible disabilities can shape everyday decision-making

in powerful, often invisible ways. This is further emphasised by the lack of broader discussion in the data, suggesting that such barriers are underreported or normalised, likely because sustainability frameworks are not designed with inclusivity in mind.

To create truly inclusive sustainable practices, design solutions must go beyond one-size-fits-all strategies. This includes ergonomic reusable products, accessible waste management systems, and low-barrier engagement options that account for a range of physical and mental conditions. Recognising and addressing these nuanced needs is essential to ensure equitable participation in sustainability for all.

6. Awareness of Recycling vs. Minimal Packaging Use vs. Actual Waste Reduction

22 out of 32 participants (69%) reported that they recycle “all” or “some” of their household waste. However, only 7 participants (22%) indicated they actively seek out products with minimal or recyclable packaging during shopping. In contrast, 12 participants (38%) explicitly stated that they don’t care about packaging or prioritise price over sustainability. When asked about unused items at home, 17 participants (53%) admitted to having at least 1–5 items (clothing, gadgets, or appliances) that they purchased but never used. Some mentioned items like coffee makers, kitchen tools, and excess clothing as examples.

While a significant majority of participants report regular recycling habits, there is a clear disconnect when it comes to pre-consumption decisions such as avoiding excess packaging or unnecessary purchases. The data shows that only 1 in 5 participants make intentional sustainable choices before buying, while over half accumulate unused items, contributing to hidden waste.

Finding

This indicates that while post-consumption behaviours like recycling are more common, pre-consumption mindfulness—such as reducing overconsumption and waste at the source—is significantly lacking. True sustainability requires not just responsible disposal but a shift in mindset toward conscious purchasing and minimalism.

4. Conclusion

This research offers a nuanced and multidimensional understanding of how sustainability is practiced, challenged, and imagined within the South Asian immigrant community in the GTA. The findings highlight a complex interplay between cultural traditions, socio-economic factors, accessibility barriers, and the evolving environmental consciousness of immigrant populations.

Despite high levels of awareness particularly among younger participants there remains a notable gap between knowledge and consistent sustainable action. Financial constraints, cultural adaptation, convenience, and accessibility issues particularly for those with disabilities emerge as significant barriers. At the same time, the study underscores the presence of traditional sustainable values such as frugality, reuse, and community sharing, which offer powerful foundations for culturally responsive sustainability strategies.

The data suggests that sustainable behaviours are not merely shaped by individual choices but by systemic conditions, including policy structures, infrastructural support, and culturally inclusive education. This underscores the need for intersectional, equity-centred frameworks that account for diverse abilities, migration experiences, income levels, and cultural backgrounds.

Ultimately, this MRP demonstrates that sustainability, when viewed through the lens of inclusion and diversity, demands more than behavioral change, it calls for structural transformation and cultural recognition. By centring immigrant voices, particularly those often excluded from mainstream sustainability discourses, this research contributes to a more just, accessible, and community rooted vision of sustainable futures.

5. Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights into the sustainability practices of the South Asian community, it is not without limitations. The sample size may not fully represent the diversity within the community, as responses were primarily collected from individuals with varying degrees of engagement in sustainability practices. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases, as participants might overstate their sustainable behaviours due to social desirability. Future research should aim for a larger, more diverse

sample and consider longitudinal studies to track changes in sustainability practices over time.

6. Avenues for Future Research

Future research should explore the integration of traditional sustainable practices with modern approaches to sustainability, particularly in the context of immigrant communities. Investigating the effectiveness of community-based interventions that promote sustainability through cultural engagement could yield significant insights. Additionally, addressing the accessibility barriers faced by individuals with disabilities in sustainability initiatives is crucial for ensuring equitable participation. By focusing on these areas, future studies can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how to promote responsible production and consumption in diverse communities.

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Appendix

Appendix A: In-depth Survey Interviews with South Asian Participants Living with Disabilities

Interview 1 – Female Participant

Gender: Female

Age: 45

Community: Indian

The participant, a 45-year-old woman from the Indian community, shared that she occasionally talks about environmental issues with her family, particularly regarding the use of plastic. She mentioned, “My daughter keeps reminding me to carry a cloth bag and reuse containers. It’s slowly becoming a dinner table topic now.”

When asked about her awareness of the energy used in the production of tissue papers, she admitted she wasn’t very familiar with the specifics but said, “I always felt it was wasteful to use tissue for everything, so I’ve made it a habit to use cloth napkins at home.” She uses about two packs of tissue napkins a week, mostly when guests visit or while dining outside.

She eats takeout food once or twice a week, especially on busy days. Although she prefers homemade food, she explained that sometimes it’s the easier option due to her physical condition. Regarding packaging, she said she tries to look for products with minimal packaging but finds it challenging, especially at South Asian grocery stores. “A lot of things come in double plastic or unnecessary wrap, which I feel guilty buying.”

She acknowledged having a few unused items at home, such as kitchen appliances bought impulsively during sales. She tries to be more mindful now and focuses on buying 2–3 eco-friendly products per month, like reusable jars or eco-brushes.

On choosing products with recyclable or minimal packaging, she said she does this around 3–4 times a month. She purchases around 10–12 clothing items a year, largely during festivals or family functions, and donates or recycles about 5–7 pieces annually. “I believe clothes should circulate. If I’m not wearing something, someone else might.”

Appendix B: In-depth Survey Interviews with South Asian Participants Living with Disabilities

Interview 2 – Male Participant

Gender: Male

Age: 58

Community: Bangladeshi

This 58-year-old Bangladeshi man was very enthusiastic about sustainability topics. He regularly discusses environmental issues, especially water conservation and food waste, with friends and within community events. “I used to work in agriculture back in Bangladesh. Water is sacred. Even here, I always remind my grandchildren not to waste it.” His knowledge of the importance of water conservation is rooted in his past work in agriculture in Bangladesh. He emphasises the sacredness of water, a belief likely nurtured by his agricultural upbringing. He recalls that even in his home country, water was a precious resource, and he is keen on passing this value to his grandchildren. He shared how he always reminds them not to waste water, emphasising how mindful use of water is a practice that transcends generations.

When it comes to food, he avoids fast food, recognising that homemade meals are both healthier for his family and kinder to the environment. He believes that preparing food at home is not only a way to ensure better health but also an act of respect toward the planet. He is aware of the energy costs associated with tissue production and prefers using cloth napkins. He uses only about one pack of tissue napkins a week and sometimes not even that. When shopping, he actively avoids plastic-wrapped products and seeks out local markets where minimal packaging is more common. He takes pride in having very few unused items at home, saying “Everything has a purpose, or else it doesn’t come in.”

He purchases at least one eco-friendly product per month like refills for cleaning supplies or bamboo-based brushes. Almost every time he shops, he selects items with recyclable or minimal packaging. He buys about 6–8 pieces of clothing per year, primarily traditional garments or winter essentials, which he believes are long-lasting and necessary. However, his wardrobe isn’t overstuffed. He donates around 10 items of clothing annually, either to local drives or through the mosque, ensuring that his gently used clothes are given to those in need rather than sitting unused.

In his view, “I don’t need much,” a sentiment that embodies his minimalist philosophy toward consumption. His understanding of material needs contrasts sharply with the culture of excess that often defines modern consumerism. He finds satisfaction in giving away things he no longer uses, passing them on to people who might need them, rather than holding onto them for sentimental or unnecessary reasons.

Appendix C: Survey Interview Poster



Your voice Matters!

This survey aims to gather insights on current **sustainable practices, challenges faced**, and culturally relevant solutions within the South Asian community, ensuring that the research is informed by lived experiences and aspirations. For more details contact Neema Biju Jose (Student Investigator): joseneema@ocadu.ca.

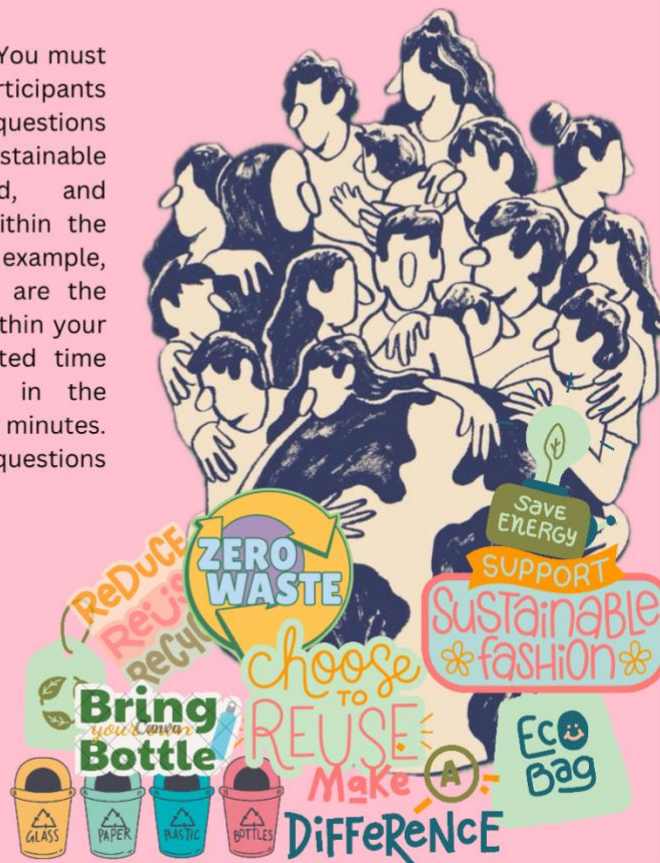
What you have to do

Your participation is voluntary. You must be 18 years of age or older. Participants will respond to a few survey questions that aim to gather insights on sustainable practices, challenges faced, and culturally relevant solutions within the South Asian community. For example, questions may include: "What are the current sustainable practices within your home/community". The estimated time commitment for participants in the survey is approximately 20 to 30 minutes. To respond to a few survey questions scan the QR code at the bottom.



Scan to participate

Disclosure: This research is for Graduate Student research and has received research ethics approval from OCADU.



Appendix D: Survey Interview Questionnaire

Sustainability future

Thank you for considering participation in our research project focused on sustainability, diversity, and inclusion within South Asian communities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The purpose of this survey is to gain insights into how these factors influence production and consumption patterns, and to develop strategies that promote environmentally friendly practices within these communities. As a participant, you will be asked to provide information regarding your demographics, including your age, gender, country of origin, and ethnicity. Additionally, we will inquire about your experiences with disabilities, family structure, and employment status, as these may impact your sustainability practices. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are under no obligation to take part. You may withdraw from the survey at any time without any negative consequences. We assure you that all information collected will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. The data will be analysed to identify trends and develop strategies that can enhance responsible production and consumption practices in your community.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please feel free to reach out to our designated representative, whose contact information provided in the poster. Thank you for your time and consideration in contributing to this important research. Kindly click the link to access the consent form. <https://pdf.ac/2REMr1>

1. How old are you? *

2. Gender *

3. which country are you from? *

- ☐ India
- ☐ Pakistan
- ☐ Bangladesh
- ☐ Sri Lanka
- ☐ Nepal
- ☐ Bhutan
- ☐ Maldives
- ☐ Afghanistan
- ☐ Other

4. What is your Ethnicity ? (Eg: Gujarati,Marathi, Bengalis, Pashtun, Sindhi, Sinhalese, Moors, Maldivian and so on.) *

5. Do you identify as having an invisible disability? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. Do you identify as having a visible disability? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. Do you have children, how many? *

8. Do you work outside of the house? *

9. How long have you lived in Canada? *

10. Are you a Canadian citizen? *

11. What is your gross personal income? *

- ☐ 0-\$20,000
- ☐ \$20,000 to 40,000
- ☐ \$40,000 to 60,000
- ☐ \$60,000 to 80,000
- ☐ \$80,000 and above

12. What is your gross family income?

*

- ☐ 0-\$20,000
- ☐ \$20,000 to 40,000
- ☐ \$40,000 to 60,000
- ☐ \$60,000 to 80,000
- ☐ \$80,000 and above
- ☐ Other

13. Did you learn about environmental issues at school? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Age 5 to 10
- ☐ Age 10 to 15
- ☐ Age 15 to 18
- ☐ Post secondary education (college or university)

14. Do you participate in your cultural or ethnic community and How? (examples....)

*

15. Do you separate your recyclables from your trash at home? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Sometimes

16. What percentage of your household waste do you recycle?

*

- ☐ All of potential recyclables
- ☐ Some of potential recyclables
- ☐ None

17. Do you use plastic garbage bags for your garbage or compostable bags?

*

- ☐ Plastic
- ☐ Compostible
- ☐ Don't know

18. Do you compost?

*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Sometimes

19. How many plastic bags do you use in a week?

*

- ☐ Only for garbage
- ☐ For carrying items
- ☐ For wrapping food
- ☐ For others

20. Do you use plastic bags at the grocery store for veggies? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Sometimes

21. Did you recycle or practice sustainability before you arrived in Canada?

*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Sometimes

22. If 'yes', what were some of these practices?

*

- ☐ Recycling
- ☐ Composting
- ☐ Minimising use of a car
- ☐ Other

23. If 'yes', When you first arrived in Canada did you continue your sustainability practices?

*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Sometimes

24. Have you sustainability practices changed since you arrived in Canada? If 'yes', how have they changed? *

25. Do you carry shopping bag when you go out?

*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

26. Do you have a habit of using reusable kitchen towels?

*

- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

27. Have you tried using reusable straws, and containers instead of single-use plastics?

*

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe

28. Do you drive alone in the car?

*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

29. Have you watched any documentaries, movies, advertisements or read articles about environmental issues and sustainability?

*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

30. Do you talk about environmental issues with your friends or family? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

31. Are you aware of the energy used for the production of tissue papers? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

32. How many packs of napkins do you use it in a week? *

33. How often do you eat fast food or takeout? *

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Seasonal
- ☐ Yearly
- ☐ Never

34. Do you look for products with minimal packaging when you shop? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Dont really care

35. How many items do you have at home which you haven't used after buying them?(Eg: Household appliances, Furnitures, Electronic gadgets, Clothing , Accessories, and so on.) *

36. How many sustainable or eco-friendly products (e.g., reusable bags, bamboo toothbrushes) do you purchase per month? *

37. How many times per month do you choose products with minimal or recyclable packaging? *

38. How many pieces of clothing do you purchase per year or per month?

*

39. How many items of clothing do you donate or recycle annually? *

40. Have you ever tried buying second-hand clothes or items instead of new ones?

*

41. How do you think using a reusable water bottle instead of buying plastic ones can benefit the environment?

*

42. Do you have dedicated garden or green space in the area where you live? *

Appendix E: Survey Data from Excel

How old are you?	Gender	which country are you from? so on.)	What is your Ethnicity ? (Eg: Gujarati,Marathi, Bengalis, Pashtun, Sindhi, Sinhalese, Moors, Maldivian and	Do you identify as having an invisible disability?	Do you identify as having a visible disability?	Do you have children, how many? Do you work outside of the house?
21	Male	India;	Malayalee	No	No	0 Yes
21	Female	India;	Punjabi	No	No	No
	Male	India;	Malayali	No	No	Yes
31	Female	India;	Malayalee	No	No	1 No
28	Man	India;	Malayali	No	No	Yes
29	Male	Other;	Filipino	No	None	Yes
23	Female	Pakistan ;	Punjabi	No	No	Yes
28	Male	India;	Malayali	No	No	No
30	Male	Sri Lanka	Sinhalese	No	No	Yes
28	Male	India	Telugus	No	NO	Yes
35	Male	India	Tamilian	No	No	1 Yes
25	Male	India	Sikh	No	No	0 Yes
51	Male	India	Malayali	No	No	3 Yes
21	Female	Pakistan	Punjabi	Yes	No	Yes
17	Female	Pakistan	Punjabi	No	No	No
21	Female	India	Tamil	No	N/A	Yes
28	Male	India	Malayali	No	No	No
27	Female	India	Keralite	No	No	No
28	Female	India	Malayali	No	No	Yes
30	Male	India	Malayali	No	No	0 Yes
38	Female	India	Malayalee	No	No	2 Yes
37	Female	India	Malayalis	No	No	2 No
27	Male	India	Malayalam	No	No	Yes
45	Woman	Indian	Malayali	No	Yes,3	Part-time
38	Woman	Pakistani		Arthritis	Yes, 1	No
55	Woman	Bangladeshi		Anxiety	Yes, 1	Yes
42	Woman	Sri Lankan		No	Wheelchair user	No
50	Woman	Nepali		No	Yes,2	Yes
60	Man	Indian		Migraines	No	Yes
48	Man	Pakistani		Diabetes	Yes,3	Retired
45	Female	Indian	No	Yes	1 No	12
58	Male	Bangladeshi	No	Yes	3 Yes	20

How long have you lived in Canada? Are you a Canadian citizen? What is your gross personal income? What is your gross family income? Did you learn about environmental issues at school? Do you participate in your cultural or ethnic community and How? (examples....)							Do you separate your recyclables from your trash at home?
10 years	Yes	0-\$20,000;		\$60,000 to 80,000	Yes	Cultural church	Yes
Born in Canada						Yes, through going to the temple, family events and weddings, cultural events in my city	
	Yes	0-\$20,000;		\$80,000 and above	Yes	Yes, I was a member of NSS - Kerala and I had been participated different cultural activities conducted by community	Yes
2 years	No	\$20,000 to 40,000;			Age 15 to 18		Sometimes
	No	0-\$20,000;			Age 10 to 15	No	Yes
1 and half years	2	\$20,000 to 40,000;		\$20,000 to 40,000	Yes	No	Yes
	No	\$20,000 to 40,000;		Not sure	Yes	No	Yes
18 months							
15 years	Yes	\$20,000 to 40,000;		0-\$20,000	Yes	No	Yes
2 years and 3 months						Yes, Participated in cultural and ethnic competitions.	No
	No	\$20,000 to 40,000;		\$20,000 to 40,000	Yes	No	Yes
Two years	No	\$20,000 to 40,000		\$60,000 to 80,000	Yes	No	Yes
5 Years	No	\$40,000 to 60,000		0-\$20,000	Yes	No	Yes
13 years	Yes	\$80,000 and above		\$80,000 and above	Yes	No	Yes
3	No	\$20,000 to 40,000		\$20,000 to 40,000	Yes	No	Yes
	Yes	\$60,000 to 80,000		\$80,000 and above	Yes	No	Yes
10 years							
1 year	No	0-\$20,000		\$20,000 to 40,000	Yes	Yes	Sometimes
8 years	Yes	0-\$20,000		0-\$20,000	Yes	Yes, I go to the mosque and pray	Yes
3	No	\$20,000 to 40,000		\$20,000 to 40,000	Yes	No	Yes
3 years	No	\$80,000 and above		\$80,000 and above	Yes	No	Sometimes
						I don't participate much as I did back in India. I used to go to many festivals in both christian and hindu religions. I used to go to many historic places or visit traditional homes which was converted to museums to get knowledge on those places.	
							Yes
3 years	No	\$20,000 to 40,000		\$20,000 to 40,000	Yes	No	Yes
1 year	No	\$80,000 and above		\$80,000 and above	Yes	No	Yes
7 years	No	\$80,000 and above		\$80,000 and above	Yes	No	Yes
6	No	\$40,000 to 60,000		\$80,000 and above	Yes	No	Yes
4 years	No	0-\$20,000		0-\$20,000	Yes	No	Sometimes
4	No	\$40,000 to 60,000		\$40,000 to 60,000	Yes	Yes	Yes
15	Yes	\$38k		\$92k	Yes	Temple volunteering	Yes
8	No	\$0		\$65k	No	Crickit club	No
3	Yes	\$72k		\$72k	Yes	Bengali poetry group	Yes
22	Yes	\$0		\$110k	Yes	Disability advocacy	Yes
	18	\$85k		\$85k	No	None	Sometimes
5	No	\$45k		\$45k	Yes	LG8TQ+ support group	Yes
30	Yes	\$28k		\$28k	No	Punjabi folk dance	No
Yes	\$35,000	\$70,000		No	Yes, through religious and social events	Yes	75%
Yes	\$55,000	\$95,000		Yes	Yes, volunteering in local Bangladeshi associations	Yes	80%

What percentage of your household waste do you recycle?	Do you use plastic garbage bags for your garbage or compostable bags?	Do you compost?	How many plastic bags do you use in a week?	Do you use plastic bags at the grocery store for veggies?	Did you recycle or practice sustainability before you arrived in Canada?	If 'yes', what were some of these practices?
All of potential recyclables	Plastic	Yes	Only for garbage	Yes	Yes	Composting
Some of potential recyclables	Plastic	No	Only for garbage	Yes	Yes	Recycling
Some of potential recyclables	Compostible	Yes	Only for garbage	No	Sometimes	Composting
Some of potential recyclables	Plastic	No	Only for garbage	No	No	Other
All of potential recyclables	Compostible	No	Only for garbage	Yes	No	Other
Some of potential recyclables	Plastic	Sometimes	Only for garbage	Yes	No	Other
All of potential recyclables	Plastic	No	Only for garbage	Yes	No	Other
None	Plastic	No	Only for garbage	No	Yes	Other
All of potential recyclables	Compostible	No	For others	No	No	Other
Some of potential recyclables	Compostible	Sometimes	Only for garbage	No	No	Other
All of potential recyclables	Compostible	Yes	For carrying items	Yes	Sometimes	Other
All of potential recyclables	Compostible	No	Only for garbage	Sometimes	Yes	Recycling
All of potential recyclables	Plastic	No	Only for garbage	No	Yes	Recycling
Some of potential recyclables	Don't know	Sometimes	Only for garbage	Sometimes	Sometimes	Recycling
All of potential recyclables	Plastic	No	For carrying items	Yes	No	Other
None	Compostible	Yes	For wrapping food	Yes	Yes	Recycling
Some of potential recyclables	Plastic	No	Only for garbage	Yes	No	Other
All of potential recyclables	Compostible	No	Only for garbage	No	Sometimes	Minimising use of a car
All of potential recyclables	Compostible	Sometimes	Only for garbage	No	Yes	Recycling
All of potential recyclables	Compostible	No	Only for garbage	No	Yes	Recycling
Some of potential recyclables	Compostible	No	Only for garbage	Yes	Yes	Composting
None	Don't know	No	For others	Sometimes	Sometimes	Minimising use of a car
Some of potential recyclables	Plastic	Sometimes	Only for garbage	No	Yes	Recycling
60%	Plastic	Yes	Only for garbage	4 Sometimes	Yes	Used cloth diapers
10%	Compostible	No		10 Always	No	N/A
80%	Both	Yes	Yes	2 Never	Yes	Water conservation
50%	Compostible	Yes		8 Sometimes	Yes	Natural fertilizer
30%	Plastic	No		15 Always	No	N/A
70%	Plastic	Yes		3 Never	Yes	Solar drying clothes
20%	Plastic	No		12 Always	Yes	Milk pouch recycling
Plastic	No		5 Yes	Yes	Reusing containers, repairing clothes	Yes
Compostible	Yes		2 No	No	N/A	N/A

If 'yes', When you first arrived in Canada did you continue your sustainability practices?	Have you sustainability practices changed since you arrived in Canada? If 'yes', how have they changed?	Do you carry shopping bag when you go out?	Do you have a habit of using reusable kitchen towels?	Have you tried using reusable straws, and containers instead of single-use plastics?	Do you drive alone in the car?	Have you watched any documentaries, movies, advertisements or read articles about environmental issues and sustainability?
Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Yes	Canadian citizen, unapplicable	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes, reduced use of plastic bags	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
No	Yes. Reusing eco bags	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
No	More use of plastic and paper	No	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
No	No	No	No	Yes	Maybe	No
Sometimes	No	Yes	Maybe	No	No	No
Yes	Reusing shopping bags	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe
Yes	Same as before	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Yes	Yes. Reduced use of plastics and	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
No	No	Maybe	No	No	No	No
Yes	Yeah, after I got here in Canada, I started sorting out the recyclables and non-recyclables. I use public transport a lot for my trips. I became more aware of the little things I can do to make big changes.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Maybe	No	Maybe
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Sometimes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Good	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sometimes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes
Agree	I already do this	I would if it were easier	Yes	Strongly Agree	Depends on cost	Depends on cost
I don't think it's necessary	Depends on cost	Disagree	I would if it were easier	I don't think it's necessary	Sometimes	Disagree
No	I don't think it's necessary	I don't think it's necessary	I already do this	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Neutral
I would if it were easier	I don't think it's necessary	Disagree	I would if it were easier	Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Neutral
Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Yes	Strongly Agree	I already do this	I don't think it's necessary	I don't think it's necessary
Neutral	Yes	I don't think it's necessary	Sometimes	Disagree	No	I don't think it's necessary
No	I would if it were easier	I don't think it's necessary	Neutral	Agree	Yes	I already do this
Yes	Started using more recycling routines available in Canada	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes, documentaries
Yes	Adopted composting and reduced plastic usage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, articles and news

Do you talk about environmental issues with your friends or family?	Are you aware of the energy used for the production of tissue papers?	How many packs of napkins do you use it in a week?	How often do you eat fast food or takeout?	Do you look for products with minimal packaging when you shop?	How many items do you have at home which you haven't used after buying them?(Eg: Household appliances, Furniture, Electronic gadgets, Clothing, Accessories, and so on.)	How many sustainable or eco-friendly products (e.g., reusable bags, bamboo toothbrushes) do you purchase per month?
Yes	No		1 Weekly	Dont really care	None	01-Feb
Yes	Yes		1 Weekly	Dont really care		03-Apr
Yes	No	1 pack	Weekly	No	2,3 clothes	01-Feb
Yes	No		1 Weekly	Yes		1
Yes	No		2 Seasonal	No		0
No	No		1 Weekly	Yes	None	Few
Maybe	No		3 Monthly	Dont really care	Coffee maker	Zero
Maybe	No		0 Weekly	No	4 or 5	1
Maybe	Maybe		1 Weekly	No	I use them all	One or two none
No	Yes	Paper Roll 1	Monthly	Dont really care	none	
Maybe	No	Less than 1	Weekly	Dont really care	None	2
Yes	No	1 Weekly	1 Weekly	Yes	I donate or recycle the items i don't use	02-Mar
Yes	Yes	Half	Weekly	No	None	3
Maybe	No	1 Monthly	Weekly	No	None	01-Feb
Yes	No	1 box	Weekly	Dont really care	None	Once a year
Yes	Yes	No	Seasonal	Yes	No	No
No	No		2 Weekly	No	None	0
Maybe	No		0 Monthly	No	Nothing	Reusable bags
Yes	Yes		1 Monthly	Yes	None	5
Yes	Yes		1 Monthly	Dont really care	Nil	2
Yes	Yes		1 Weekly	Yes	Minimal	Depends
Yes	Maybe		1 Weekly	Dont really care	Not really sure	1
Yes	Yes	Less than 1	Monthly	Yes	None	1 or 2
"Yes, we discuss it during family	"Somewhat aware."	2	"Once a week."	"Always, I check labels."		5
"Occasionally with friends."	"Not really."	3	"Twice a week."	"Sometimes."		3
"Frequently with family."	"Yes, very aware."	1	"Rarely."	"Yes, I avoid plastic."		8
"Often, especially with my kids."	"Aware, but not fully."	2	"Once a month."	"Yes, whenever possible."		3
"Rarely."	"Not aware."	4	"Once a week."	"No, I focus on price."		6
"Yes, with colleagues too."	"Yes, I read about it."	1	"Rarely."	"Always mindful."		10
"Discuss with tourists sometimes."	"Somewhat aware."	2	"Twice a month."	"Yes, for eco-friendly options."		2
						4
						2 or 3
"Occasionally, especially about reducing plastic waste"	Not in detail, but I try to use fewer tissues					
Yes, frequently, especially about water conservation	Yes, and I prefer using cloth napkins instead	1	Rarely, I prefer home-cooked meals	Sometimes, but it's not always available	A few, mostly kitchen gadgets and clothes	2-3 items
				Yes, I actively avoid plastic-wrapped products	Not many, I try to buy only what I need	At least 1, usually a refillable product

How many times per month do you choose products with minimal or recyclable packaging?	How many pieces of clothing do you purchase per year or per month?	How many items of clothing do you donate or recycle annually?	Have you ever tried buying second-hand clothes or items instead of new ones?	How do you think using a reusable water bottle instead of buying plastic ones can benefit the environment?	Do you have dedicated garden or green space in the area where you live?
01-Feb	5		5 Yes	Reduce single use plastic pollution	Yes
0	per year: 10-15, per month 1-2	None	Yes	Reduces single-use plastics, stops them from going into landfills and other places	Yes
2			03-Apr Yes	It's getting common nowadays, we use reusable water in workplaces	No, but I wish I had one
1			0 No	No	No
2			0 No	Not good	No
Few times	Couple per month	None	Yes	Less garbage	No
Sometimes			01-Oct No	Plastic has toxic chemicals in it which gets thrown away and impacts the	Not sure
3	0 or 1		0 Yes	Less garbage and carbon footprint	No
2	Per year 10 to 15	Less than 20	Yes	Yes	Not decided
2		5 None	No	Yes	Yes
4		12	15 No	With reduced waste, less consumption of resources	Yes
02-Mar	3-4 every few months		Oct-15 No	It's good to use usable as we could save	Yes
4	6 per year		6 Yes	It's better obv	No
Sometimes	Depends	Depends	Yes I thrift shop	Less plastic waste	Yes
Idk	Per year 10		2 Never	No	Yes
No	No	No	No	Reusable water bottles are good for the environment as well as for health	No
0	5 per year	10 per year	No		
Almost all the time	The average is atleast once in 2 months	Never done	Yes	Using a reusable water bottle reduces plastic waste, lowers carbon emissions, conserves resources, prevents plastic pollution, and saves money.	No
5	2 or more	Per bag each month	No	Effective method to reduce use of	Yes
4			10 Yes	Yes	Yes
Depends	Depends	Depends	Yes	Yes	Yes
02-Mar		0-3	Yes	Good	No
2	4 per year		4 No	Help decreasing the wastes	No
5	15-18		15 "Yes, often."	Reduces plastic waste, saves resources.	we have a community garden.
2			10 "No, but interested."	"Lowers environmental impact."	"No, but there's a park nearby."
Depends			20 "Yes, I love thrift shopping."	"Prevents waste, encourages reuse."	"Yes, in my backyard."
6			12 "Yes, sometimes."	"Helps reduce landfill waste."	"Yes, our apartment has a small garden."
1			5 "No, prefer new items."	Conserves resources.	"No dedicated space."
10	Depends		22 "Yes, it's economical."	"Significantly reduces waste."	"Yes, a community terrace garden."
4			8 "Yes, occasionally."	"Reduces plastic pollution."	"Yes, near the monastery."
Around 3-4 times	10-Dec		Yes, I regularly thrift clothes and buy second-hand furniture to reduce waste.	It reduces plastic waste and saves money in the long run. I always carry my stainless steel water bottle.	Yes, there's a community garden nearby, and I try to grow some herbs on my balcony.
Almost every time I shop	06-Aug	Around 10	No, I prefer new items, but I do donate my old clothes.	I think it's a great idea, but accessibility is an issue for me. Sometimes I forget to carry one and have to buy plastic bottles.	No, but I wish there were more accessible green spaces for people with mobility issues.