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Measuring the consumer's choice for edible cutlery: A sustainable lifestyle perspective

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Abstract: Edible cutlery is a safe alternative that, if adopted, can act as a panacea to plastic pollution. Consumers who believe in a lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) can motivate others by taking the lead in this direction. This study has explored the psychological variables associated with LOHAS consumers in conjunction with the product attributes of edible cutlery to check whether these variables can influence lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) consumers to adopt edible cutlery. An empirical study on 210 LOHAS consumers using Partial Least Squares Structure Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) and Importance Performance Matrix Analyses (IPMA) showed that social consciousness and subjective norms motivate them to adopt edible cutlery in restaurants. This finding has an implication for hospitality businesses using edible cutlery that can target LOHAS consumers with strategies that affect their social consciousness and subjective norm belief for better adoption intentions.

Keywords: LOHAS; social consciousness; edible cutlery; authenticity; subjective norm; IPMA

1. Introduction

The term “environmental concern” is derived from political discourse and refers to values, attitudes, feelings, perceptions, knowledge and behavior about the environment (Bamberg, 2003; Ogle, 2004). Initially, researchers considered environmental values, perceptions and knowledge as critical to environmental problems (Maloney and Ward, 1973), but later classified them as antecedents of environmental problems. Thereafter, researchers excluded actual behavior from the definition of environmental problems to exclude avoidance (Bamberg, 2003). Essentially, environmental concern is a direct predictor of certain environmental behaviors, which in turn are predicted by consumer attitudes toward certain behaviors (Weigel, 1983). Also, empirically, consumers in developed countries care more about the environment than consumers in developing nations. To prevent environmental pollution, more research is needed to understand consumer purchasing behavior for environmentally friendly products in developing countries, where environmental concerns, beliefs and attitudes differ from those in other parts of the world (Singh and Gupta, 2013). In this context, this paper looks into a few consumers psychological variables that could play a role in the better adoption of edible cutlery by consumers

adopting the lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) in India, a developing country. This research fulfils this contextual gap. This study has used the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) as a base to investigate if such value perceptions consequently affect LOHAS consumers' attitudes and purchasing intentions toward edible cutlery. This study may assist managers in designing desired edible cutlery, enticing customers to purchase, and segmenting LOHAS consumers based on their perceived value from edible cutlery by gaining an understanding of the attributes that raise LOHAS consumers' perceived value of edible cutlery.

LOHAS consumers claim to be socially conscious and seek support from important people in their lives for their lifestyle choices. Therefore, this study has used social consciousness and subjective norm as two psychological variables that define the lifestyle choices of LOHAS consumers. The study has attempted to determine if these variables play a role in adopting edible cutlery by LOHAS consumers. This study has explored if authenticity and price, which are attributes related to edible cutlery and contributors to consumers' perceived value of a product, have any role in motivating LOHAS consumers to adopt edible cutlery.

This study focuses on the adoption of edible cutlery by LOHAS consumers. Cutlery includes "any hand implement used in preparing, serving, and especially eating food" (Patil and Sinhal, 2018). Edible cutlery refers to environment-friendly, bio-degradable, and organic cutlery (Malafi et al., 1994). Edible cutlery offers a viable solution to fight against plastic pollution. Edible cutlery belongs to a group of innovations that can roughly be designated as "eco-innovations". An eco-innovation can be defined as the "production, assimilation or exploitation of a product, production process, service or management or business method that is novel to the organization (developing or adopting it) and which results, throughout its life cycle, in a reduction of environmental risk, pollution and other negative impacts of resources use (including energy use) compared to relevant alternatives" (Kemp and Pearson, 2007). The Restorative Innovation model (Tan et al., 2022; Tan and Cha, 2021) was developed by Tan and Cha, as opposed to "Disruptive Innovation" model. In this model, initial price is substantially higher due to limitations in resources or limitations in efficiency. As economies of scale kick in through reduction of inefficiencies through innovations, price decreases, thus increasing adoption. After decreasing, price always remains within the acceptable range. A restorative innovation does not seek to remove prevalent innovations due to its growth. Harmony and coexistence are thus attributes of the Restorative Innovation model. The edible cutlery is an example of Restorative Innovation.

'Edible Cutlery' is "natural, biodegradable, compostable" and can be designed to be nutritious to eliminate the issue of disposable cutlery made of plastics (Patil and Sinhal, 2018). The Taiwanese company 'Sugu' claims to have created the "world's first edible tableware" in 1986 (Natarajan et al., 2019). There is a growing demand for edible cutlery because it is novel, biodegradable, unique, durable, eco-friendly, and easy to use (Patil and Sinhal, 2018). Countries across the globe are shifting to the use of edible cutlery as an alternative to plastic ones. For example, in Asia, candies are packed using edible packaging made of rice (Patel, 2019). In Poland, a company called 'Biotrem' makes cutlery from edible wheat bran (Natarajan et al., 2019). The London-based firm Notpla manufactures edible drinking pods from seaweed (Patel, 2019). A

New York-based company ‘Loliware’ makes edible straws from agar and seaweed. The straws are highly bio-degradable, tasty, and robust (Gorence and Hunt, 2019). Natarajan et al. (2019) present a more extensive account of producers of edible cutleries globally. Thus, the edible cutlery is an innovative product, probably in the early stages of its Product Life Cycle. Based on the above, this has been taken as the innovative product of choice.

1.1. Literature review and hypothesis development

1.1.1. Consumers’ subjective norm, attitude, and purchase intention towards edible cutlery: Theory of reasoned action (TRA)

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a theoretical framework that has been extensively used in the literature, particularly in consumer research, to study the links between attitude, subjective norm, and purchase intention (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977). According to TRA, each person has a tendency to behave in ways that produce positive sentiments and fulfil other people’s expectations at the same time, which ultimately affects their decision to make a purchase (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Attitude toward a behaviour and the normative factor are two distinct, independent elements that affect purchase intention as per TRA. The attitude toward a behaviour relates to the degree to which a person views particular activities favourably or unfavourably, whereas subjective norm is defined by a person’s normative beliefs, such as perceptions of his or her actions from the point of view of society, family, and friends (Ajzen and Madden, 1986).

1.1.2. Consumers’ perceptions of perceived value derived from use of edible cutlery

Consumers’ perception of value has been identified as a key factor affecting consumers’ feelings of a certain product in general (Sung and Woo, 2019). Understanding how consumers feel about a product is crucial since their attitude and subsequent purchase intention are influenced by how they feel about it (Chi and Kilduff, 2011). Consumers’ total evaluation of a product’s utility based on perceptions of what is supplied and received is referred to as consumers’ perceived value (Zeithaml, 1988). There are four dimensions that reflect consumers’ perceived value toward a product and these include emotional, price, quality, and social dimensions (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001).

1.1.3. The lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) and social consciousness (SC)

The social dimension of consumers’ perceived value, in this study, relates to social consciousness (SC) of consumers. While environmental consciousness refers to a person’s concern for the environment, social consciousness refers to their concern for society and social surroundings (Atkinson, 2012). Organic marketplace behaviours provide a feasible and meaningful approach for socially conscious consumers to integrate their private concerns (e.g., concerns for one’s health) concerning their social surroundings (e.g., concerns for one’s family’s health) (De Maya et al., 2011; Atkinson, 2012). It has been noticed that LOHAS consumers are aware that edible cutlery is eco-friendly and biodegradable. This could make a difference by not using disposable plastic cutlery in everyday life (Patil and Sinhal, 2018). LOHAS consumers are

specifically conscious of the impact of their consumption patterns on society at large (Pícha and Navratil, 2018). So, their value perceptions toward edible cutlery are triggered by social consciousness, which will motivate them to adopt edible cutlery by forming a positive attitude towards the same.

1.1.4. The lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) and subjective norms (SN)

The most popular theory for explaining consumer behaviour towards the adoption of products and services is the “Theory of Reasoned Action” (TRA) (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977). This theory can explain LOHAS consumers’ behaviour towards purchasing or adopting edible cutlery. According to TRA, one of the variables that can estimate consumer behaviour towards buying any product or service is the subjective norm (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Souiden et al. 2019). It has been established in this theory that a compelling subjective norm leads to better adoption intentions. Subjective norm is a “judgment or belief” that buying decisions are supported/not supported by an individual’s family, friends, colleagues, partners, etc. (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Individuals act under the influence of subjective norms (Hee, 2000; Ikhida et al., 2023) mediated by attitude formation. It is assumed that LOHAS consumers will be influenced by the support or otherwise from family and friends to adopt edible cutlery.

1.1.5. The lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) and authenticity of edible cutlery (AUN)

Quality of a product is one of the dimensions that affects consumers’ perception of value toward a product (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). In this study, quality aspect of edible cutlery has been related to authenticity of the same. For the purposes of this study, authenticity refers to consumers’ assessments of the originality of the edible cutlery (from a manufacturing point of view). Here, original refers to organic food being free from chemicals, easily digestible, fresh, healthy, and validated through government certifications (Rana and Paul, 2017). The authenticity of organic foods encourages consumers to purchase them (Deliana, 2012) since they prefer authentic organic food (Rana and Paul, 2017). Extending the concept of authenticity to edible cutlery, it can be argued that LOHAS consumers will be encouraged to adopt edible cutlery if they perceive it to be authentic. It is projected that the authenticity of edible cutlery will help them to perceive value and form a positive attitude towards the same.

1.1.6. The lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) and price of edible cutlery (P)

Price is one of the dimensions of consumers’ perceptions of value from a product (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Price consciousness refers to “the sensitivity of consumers towards the price of products” (Sproles and Kendall, 1986). People who follow the LOHAS lifestyle are more likely to pay a significant premium for intangible product features such as environmental quality (Wan and Toppinen, 2016). From consumers’ perspective, a high price is equivalent to higher product quality and vice versa (Hans et al., 2001). Organic foods are frequently perceived as high-priced products that provide more benefits to consumers than conventional foods (Hsu et al., 2017; Joshua et al., 2023). Price has been identified as a crucial factor influencing

customers' willingness to purchase organic food (Wang et al., 2020). Highly price-conscious consumers may purchase less organic and more conventional products if they perceive organic products to be more expensive than traditional products (Chekima et al., 2019; Kriwy and Mecking, 2012).

In contrast, less price-conscious consumers may not consider price an essential factor while purchasing organic products. They may give higher weightage to the quality of organic products other than price (Boobalan and Nachimuthu, 2020). According to the observation to LOHAS consumers, it can be said that adoption intention towards edible cutlery will be more vital for less price-conscious LOHAS consumers than highly price-conscious LOHAS consumers. Hence, the price of edible cutlery will influence attitude formation and adoption intention towards the same.

1.1.7. The Lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) and attitude towards edible cutlery (ATT)

Previous studies have discovered that LOHAS customers' attitudes about organic products are highly influenced by all aspects (i.e., emotional, social, price, and quality) of their perceived value. For example, studies have shown that LOHAS consumers regularly buy environment-friendly and organic products that are certified for their quality (Jain and Kamboj, 2020; Lajante and Ladhari, 2019). LOHAS consumers support socially conscious behaviour, which is reflected in their inclination toward organic products that benefit society (Edbring et al., 2016). Since LOHAS consumers are socially conscious, they have a positive attitude towards products and services that endorse the concept of environmental friendliness (NMI, 2008). LOHAS consumers pay attention to the well-being of others, and this is reflected in their positive attitude towards adopting sustainable consumption practices (Jain and Kamboj, 2020). In line with TRA, a subjective norm is incorporated to show how LOHAS customers' attitudes and purchasing intentions regarding edible cutlery are influenced by what other people think. The development of a good attitude in response to subjective norms surrounding edible cutlery is anticipated to increase purchase intention. Hence it can be hypothesized that:

In view of sections 1.1.3. through 1.1.7., we have the following hypotheses:

- H1: Socially conscious LOHAS consumers exhibit stronger adoption intentions towards edible cutlery by forming a positive attitude towards the same.
- H2: Subjective norms play a role in the adoption intention of edible cutlery by LOHAS consumers through formation of a positive/negative attitude towards the same.
- H3: Authenticity of edible cutlery plays a role in their adoption by LOHAS consumers through formation of a positive/negative attitude towards the same.
- H4: The price of edible cutlery plays a role in their adoption by LOHAS consumers through forming a positive/negative attitude towards the same.
- H5: The attitude of LOHAS consumers towards edible cutlery has a role in adoption intention towards the same.

The conceptual model has been depicted in **Figure 1**.

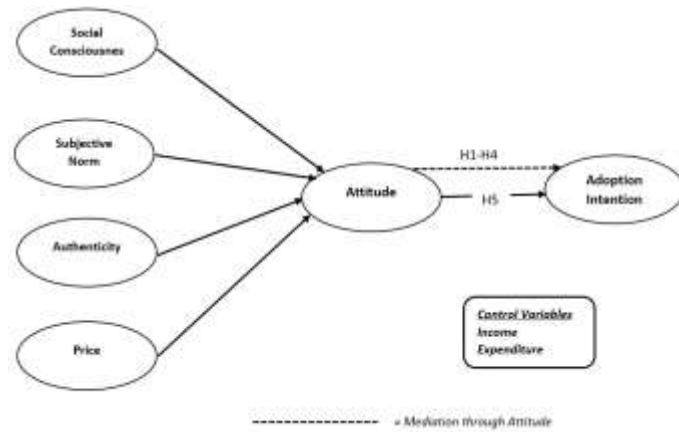


Figure 1. The conceptual model.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Data collection

Data was collected through a structured questionnaire focusing on consumers from various parts of India who have adopted a lifestyle of healthy and sustainable consumption practices. The questionnaire had three parts. The first part focused on collecting demographic information, the second part collected information about the lifestyle preferences of respondents, and the third part measured the constructs used in the conceptual model. Data was collected from 250 respondents using Google survey forms, out of which 210 completed the survey successfully and satisfied the LOHAS criteria for participation. The respondents ranged from 18 to 65 years, with an average age of 30. Among the respondents, 69.5% (N = 146) were male 30.4% (N = 64) were female. Regarding awareness about edible cutlery, 95% (N = 201) were aware of edible cutlery and 82.9% (N = 174) respondents had used it at least once.

2.2. Measures

A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the items used in the study (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). The measurement items of social consciousness (SC) were assessed using six items adapted from Lin and Huang (2011). The six items for measuring subjective norms (SN) were adopted from Dilotsotlhe (2021). Similarly, authenticity (AUN) was measured using eight items adopted from Chen et al. (2015), price (P) was measured using eight items adopted from Lin and Huang (2011), Peter and Chung (2006), Lichtenstein et al., (1993). The items for measuring attitude (ATT) and adoption intention (AI) were adopted from Dilotsotlhe (2021) and Delcea et al., (2019), respectively. The items for measuring the constructs have been shown in Exhibit 1. In the current study, the adoption intention of edible cutlery is operationalised as the intention to visit restaurants where edible cutleries are used. Respondent's income and experience with edible cutlery are controlled for in this study as they could influence the outcome of hypothesized relationships and variables such as price and authenticity.

2.3. Analysis and results

Hair et al. (2011) maintained that structural equation modeling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) is ideal for testing and validating exploratory models at an early stage of theoretical development, as is the case in the LOHAS and edible cutlery fields of study. The PLS-SEM model is more flexible in the absence of assumptions regarding data distribution, and sample size. It yields more insights from the other data analyses such as Impact-performance analysis (IPMA) and PLS-predict.

2.3.1. Common method bias and measurement model

As the data was obtained from a single source, to avoid misgiving regarding the findings of the study owing to common method bias, Harman’s (1976) single-factor test was conducted using SPSS. The single factor variance explained 34.51% (less than the prescribed 50%). Subsequently, Bagozzi et al. (1991) method of checking CMB found that the maximum correlation between any two constructs was 0.8 (less than the prescribed 0.9). Finally, via the variance inflation factor (VIF) index of <3.3 (Kock, 2015), it is confirmed that there is no collinearity issue. From the result of these three tests, it appears the study has no CMB issues. Further, to evaluate the model fit, the reliability, discriminant and convergent validity of all six latent variables were tested and all were of fair values (Nunnally, 1978; Mackenzie et al., 2011; Henseler et al., 2015). This is presented in Exhibit 2. Furthermore, VIF analysis of the study’s constructs revealed the data’s robustness and no collinearity issues; all have VIF values < 5 (SC: 2.286, SN: 2.656, AUN: 2.176, P: 1.984, ATT: 1.000) as recommended by Hair et al. (2016). **Table 1** provides the model fitness data. Discriminant validity of the constructs using Fornell–Larcker criterion is shown in **Table 2**.

Table 1. Model fit indices.

Sl.No	Model fit/Quality index	Score	Criteria	Information
1	Average path coefficient	0.345, $P < 0.001$	$P < 0.05$	Significant
2	Average R-squared	0.656, $P < 0.001$	$P < 0.05$	Significant
3	Average adjusted R-squared	0.652, $P < 0.001$	$P < 0.05$	Significant

Table 2. Fornell–Larcker criterion.

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6
Adoption Intention	0.717	-	-	-	-	-
Attitude	0.833	0.729	-	-	-	-
Authenticity	0.643	0.705	0.718	-	-	-
Price	0.574	0.619	0.639	0.761	-	-
Social Consciousness	0.673	0.71	0.622	0.561	0.713	-
Subjective Norm	0.72	0.755	0.657	0.637	0.721	0.715

2.3.2. Structural model

The relationship between the study’s variables and their path coefficients (standardised) is presented in **Figure 2**. The hypothesised relationships are tested, and the results are shown in **Table 3**. **Table 4** shows the error diagnostics of various

pathways as shown in **Figure 2** (both PLS and LM). It is seen that both with regard to Root Mean Square Error (RMSE) and Mean Absolute Error (MAE), the PLS shows better results. Also measured is the predictive accuracy of the model, and the coefficients of determination (R^2) values are ATT (0.680) and AI (0.692), indicating 68% and 69.2% variance explained, respectively. To determine the predictive relevance of the model, Stone-Geisser's Q^2 value is evaluated, and the results were > 0 and thus satisfactory (ATT: 0.304; AI: 0.297). Further, to determine the effect size of the predictors, the F^2 value is estimated. Kenny (2005) suggested that an effect size of > 0.025 is large, > 0.01 is medium and > 0.005 is small. Authenticity (0.108), Social Consciousness (0.072) and subjective norm (0.135) have a significant effect size on Attitude, while Price (0.015) has a medium effect size. Moreover, attitude (1.950) has a considerable effect size on adoption intention.

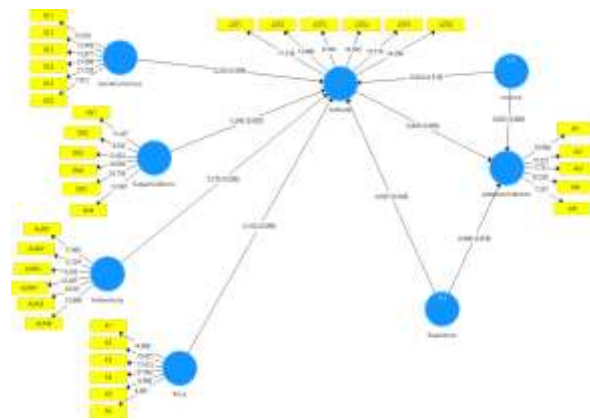


Figure 2. Structural model with estimates and loadings.

Table 3. Fornell–Larcker criterion.

Hypotheses	Path Estimate	T-statistics	95% CI	Results
H1	0.194**	2.693	<i>LCI:</i> 0.047, <i>UCI:</i> 0.323	Supported
H2	0.282***	4.222	<i>LCI:</i> 0.164, <i>UCI:</i> 0.417	Supported
H3	0.228***	4.143	<i>LCI:</i> 0.122, <i>UCI:</i> 0.334	Supported
H4	0.083	1.657	<i>LCI:</i> -0.012, <i>UCI:</i> 0.176	Not Supported
H5	0.829***	31.105	<i>LCI:</i> 0.777, <i>UCI:</i> 0.883	Supported

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 4. PLS predict.

Items of outcome variables	PLS		LM	
	RMSE	MAE	RMSE	MAE
ATT1	0.361	0.234	0.405	0.266
ATT2	0.46	0.385	0.496	0.406
ATT3	0.42	0.353	0.455	0.365
ATT4	0.474	0.369	0.536	0.404
ATT5	0.474	0.367	0.51	0.388
ATT6	0.411	0.285	0.421	0.309
AI1	0.329	0.204	0.363	0.24

Table 4. (Continued).

Items of outcome variables	PLS		LM	
	RMSE	MAE	RMSE	MAE
AI2	0.453	0.389	0.488	0.397
AI3	0.455	0.382	0.491	0.392
AI4	0.454	0.377	0.494	0.401
AI5	0.407	0.306	0.451	0.328

Finally, the model’s out-of-sample predictive power was evaluated using PLS prediction. Results revealed great predictive power, as not one of the indicators used during the PLS-SEM analysis had a mean absolute error (MAE) or root mean squared error (RMSE) value more significant than the naïve linear regression model benchmark (Table 1).

2.3.3. Impact-performance analysis

To enhance the studies’ relevance for managerial actions, an importance-performance analysis is conducted to provide vital insights into the individual role of antecedent variables. IPMA offers a practical and helpful contrast of performance (average latent variable scores) and importance (total effect of antecedent variables in predicting an outcome). Ringle and Sarstedt (2016) stated that the objective of IPMA is to determine which predecessors have high importance but relatively low performance for the outcome variables. An increase of one-unit point in the performance of an antecedent variable will raise the version of the outcome variable by the total effect size (i.e., importance) of the same antecedent variable (Ringle and Sarstedt, 2016). In the study, the adoption of edible cutlery is the outcome construct predicted by five antecedents (see Figure 1). The outcome of the IPMA conducted is presented in Figure 3. Results of hypotheses testing is presented in Tables 3 and 4.

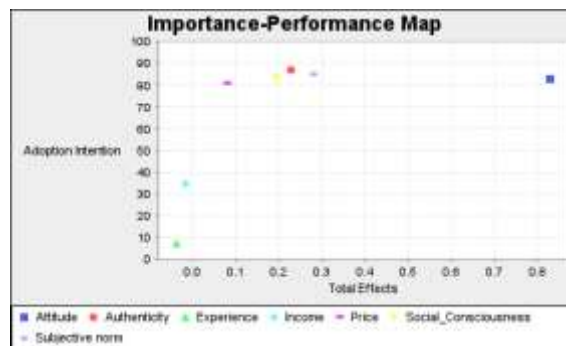


Figure 3. Importance-performance map analysis for adoption intention.

3. Discussion of results

Health and fitness, the environment, personal growth, sustainable living, and social justice are part of the Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS) market category. This idea is sweeping through society and markets (Barber, 2001). One cannot help but notice this current trend and development moving towards a new emphasis on a healthy and sustainable lifestyle in all walks of life (Cortese, 2003;

Rogers, 2005). Individual benefits coupled with social responsibility and sustainability are the new focus of LOHAS consumers.

The present study has attempted to map a few social and product-related factors to the adoption intention of edible cutlery. This study provides a unique insight by demonstrating the adoption intention of edible cutlery is resultant of social consciousness enunciated through subjective norms undeterred by price and driven by value.

The study has preferred to use PLS-SEM over the usual linear regression model (LM) since the study used a relatively small sample size and the goal was prediction of attitude and intention rather than just drawing an inference about a probable shift in attitude or adoption intention. **Table 2** shows the advantage of PLS over the use of LM by comparing the root mean squared errors (RMSE) with mean absolute errors (MAE). Lower values of RMSE and MAE for PLS-SEM over LM shows better model prediction with the former.

The results of the present study show those socially conscious LOHAS consumers are more likely to adopt edible cutlery since they form a positive attitude towards the same. LOHAS consumer decisions are lifestyle and community centric, and a reflection of their amalgamated East and West values, identifying themselves as global citizens. The lifestyles of LOHAS consumers are a conscious symbol of their specific individual and group taste allowing them to exclude outsiders. Through the adoption of edible cutlery, two significant dimensions of socially conscious LOHAS consumers are indicated. One, their role in the postmodern society gives significance to their idiosyncratic but personally aesthetically pleasing symbolic lifestyle (Yeh and Chen, 2011) According to Anderson and Cunningham (1972), socially conscious consumers have a liberal outlook on life, do not care about social status, and are personally competent compared to their less socially conscious counterparts. Two, the social consciousness is a bridge across cultures, contributing their global citizenship (Emerich, 2011; Pícha and Navratil, 2018). Extending these observations to the results of the present study, it can be said that since socially conscious consumers are not conservative, personify a new lifestyle; they might find it easy to adopt edible cutlery into their everyday life.

The edible cutlery may not look fashionable, but socially conscious LOHAS consumers may adopt it since they do not care about social status and taboos. They are more concerned about society's well-being and may be willing to adopt edible cutlery to save the environment, which ultimately benefits humanity. The study results also show that subjective norm is significant for LOHAS consumers' attitudes towards edible cutlery. This result could be interpreted in two ways. First, it could be that LOHAS consumers like to get support from important people in their lives for their choice of sustainable consumption practices, which include the adoption of edible cutlery. The support from important people in their lives helps create a positive attitude towards adopting edible cutlery as a part of their lifestyle choice. This result is consistent with the observation of Yeh and Chen (2011), who pointed out that family support exerts a subtle influence on the lifestyle choice of individuals. Second, it could be that as an emerging lifestyle and a minority in the marketplace, LOHAS consumers are often "swimming against the tide" in their attitude formation towards sustainable consumption and could thus benefit more from a social norm that is more pro-

sustainable consumption. That is, an increase in subjective norms towards edible cutleries will increase LOHAS consumers' attitudes towards edible cutleries, and a decrease in personal criteria towards edible cutleries would mean LOHAS consumers have to put in more intentionality in the formation of positive attitude, which could result in a significant decline in a positive attitude—confirming that subjective norms significantly and positively correlate with LOHAS consumers' attitudes.

Additionally, on one hand, the price insensitivity of fashion, lifestyle, organic food, clothing, of LOHAS consumers is well demonstrated in scholarly research (French and Rogers, 2006; Mora and Jiang, 2014; Rácz and Horváth, 2011). The cost dimension of edible cutlery along with durability, and ease of handling makes it an earnest option, also while adding newness to the routine. It is this unique combination that is extended through this study. Further, contrary to the hypothesized significant relationship between price and attitude, the results reveal that for LOHAS consumers, there is no meaningful relationship between the cost of edible cutlery and perspective towards edible cutlery. This finding is unlike Yeh and Chen's (2011) report that LOHAS consumers are willing to pay a premium for sustainable products such as edible cutlery due to high income and education. This study extends this body of knowledge and assumptions by controlling for revenue in the study's analysis. It was found that with income held constant, prices of edible cutlery do not positively or negatively influence attitude toward the cutlery, as all that ultimately matters for LOHAS consumers is health and sustainability. The results also reveal that the authenticity of edible cutleries positively relates to the attitude and adoption intention. This shows that edible cutleries' perceived approval from relevant authorities, health benefits, ease of digestion and fewer chemicals could trigger positive attitudes and adoption intention among LOHAS consumers. Rana and Paul (2017) confirmed that these authenticity attributes of "quality and safety" is "essential" antecedent of attitude and intention toward organic products such as edible cutleries. Edible cutlery represents the granular changes in the lifestyle of the LOHAS consumer. This lifestyle modification is biodegradable, sustainable, an easier replacement of plastic cutlery, and fulfills the ethics and personally sensitized integration of the LOHAS consumer. This biaxial compensation of both product and psychological variables is central to the further adoption of the LOHAS lifestyle.

3.1. Theoretical implications

First this study adds empirical data about the significance of consumer lifestyles (such as LOHAS) and decision-making styles to the literature on sustainable consumption. We discovered that LOHAS customers' perceptions of the value of edible cutlery and their attitudes toward it is particularly accurate. It minimizes the gap in the literature by presenting a contemporary examination of the intention to use edible cutleries. Prior remotely similar tests (Malafi et al., 1994;1995) were decades ago and did not consider antecedents most relevant to contemporary consumers. It examines the adoption antecedents of a consumer-segment most vital for edible cutleries. This consumer segment is often the primary target of sustainable products and services; thus, the study expands the scanty edible cutlery literature and lays a theoretical foundation and nomology of adoption among LOHAS consumers.

Second, the findings of this study bolster the theory of reasoned action (TRA) as subjective norms have been found to influence the purchase intention of consumers with LOHAS toward edible cutlery. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggested that attitude and subjective norm might be independent of one another, but Tarkiainen and Sundqvist (2005) contend that this is not the case. This study demonstrates that positive attitude and subjective norm are the main factors that influence people's decisions to use edible cutlery. As a result, the TRA is a reliable prediction model. Behaviours have shown that subjective norms have an impact on attitude. But the attitude component is also important. Subjective norm plays a significant role in the context of a multiracial and multicultural country like India, where family members, friends, and coworkers are powerful referent points.

Third, the findings of this study indicated that consumers with LOHAS who had favorable attitudes toward edible cutlery formed by their perceived value eventually enhanced their purchasing intentions toward edible cutlery. This demonstrates how consumers' perceptions of edible cutlery's value can ultimately influence their attitudes and buying intentions. Customers' LOHAS and decision-making approaches can either increase or decrease their perception of the value of edible cutlery, which ultimately affects their attitudes and purchase intentions toward this product. Thus, this study lends support to the concept of consumers' perceived value from any product, which again depends on their lifestyle and decision making.

3.2. Practical implication

First, an IPMA analysis was conducted to enhance the practical applicability of this study. It revealed, not surprisingly, that attitude has the highest impact and performance on the intention to visit restaurants where edible cutlery is used. Thus, there is no significant room for improvement for managers in this area. Second, the most impactful construct in adopting edible cutlery is authenticity, although its performance is low. For restaurants with edible cutlery, this provides avenues for improvement. To improve LOHAS consumers' intention to use edible cutlery in their restaurants, they should communicate the authenticity of the cutlery. This includes promoting its accreditations, safety, and quality. Third is subjective norm with high impact but low performance, even performing lower than authenticity. To increase the intention to use edible cutlery, restaurant managers should pay attention to the subjective norms influencing their LOHAS consumers. For example, they can communicate its acceptability among family and friends, its approval among opinion leaders in society and its efficiency in family and group dining. Fourth, social consciousness has a lower impact compared to authenticity and subjective norms. This finding is similar to Rana and Paul's (2017) report from a systematic literature review that social consciousness is a "less important" antecedent of attitude towards organic foods such as edible cutlery. Fifth, from the IPMA, though LOHAS consumers' income and experience of edible cutlery have low performance, they have low impact. Thus, restaurant managers should not pay much attention to these to increase LOHAS consumers' adoption intention.

4. Conclusion

The study focused on understanding how the psychological, and product-related variables can trigger the adoption of edible cutlery by LOHAS consumers. Further, LOHAS consumers claim to be socially conscious and seek support from important people in their lives for their lifestyle choices. Therefore, this study has used social consciousness and subjective norm as two psychological variables that define the lifestyle choices of LOHAS consumers. The study has attempted to determine if these variables play a role in adopting edible cutlery by LOHAS consumers. This study has explored if authenticity and price, which are attributes related to edible cutlery, have any role in motivating LOHAS consumers to adopt edible cutlery. It was shown that price had no role, whereas authenticity had positive adoption intention. The findings from the study have implications for marketers of edible cutlery and restaurant using them, who can use the observations from this study to design effective marketing strategies for creating better consumer adoption intention towards edible cutlery. The results of the present study show that LOHAS consumers who are socially conscious are more likely to adopt edible cutlery since they form a positive attitude towards the same. The study results also show that subjective norm is significant for LOHAS consumers' attitudes towards edible cutlery. This result could be interpreted in two ways. First, it could be that LOHAS consumers like to get support from important people in their lives for their choice of sustainable consumption practices, which include the adoption of edible cutlery. The support from important people in their lives helps create a positive attitude towards adopting edible cutlery as a part of their lifestyle choice.

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