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Attitude, Norms and Trust: Exploring Green Purchase Intention of Gen Z consumers in India

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KEYWORDS

Generation Z, Consumer Behavior, Sustainability, India, Behaviour.

ABSTRACT

The Indian market is dominated by customers born between 1997 and 2012. This generation's eco-consciousness influences their purchases. This study examines Generation Z customers' green purchase intentions in India using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) framework and trust. Metropolitan India has 437 Gen Z residents in this mixed-methods study. Faith in green claims substantially impact green purchase intentions (\u03b2=0.38, \u03b2=0.29, \u03b2=0.24, \u03b2=0.31). The bigger TPB model accounts for 68% of green purchasing intentions, according to structural equation modeling. Peer pressure and genuine environmental concerns reveal that Indian Gen Z shoppers are environmentally concerned and make eco-friendly purchases. Their purchases demonstrate price sensitivity. This study may help marketers, policymakers, and environmentalists engage this crucial client population.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable consumption habits are a big concern in business strategy and public policy due to environmental degradation and climate change. Green consumerism—buying eco-friendly products, reducing waste, and conserving resources—has expanded worldwide, according to Jaiswal and Kant (2018). Sustainability in consumer behavior is crucial in rising economies like India, which is growing rapidly and has many environmental issues.

"Generation Z" consumers were born between 1997 and 2012 (Dimock, 2019). This generation's attributes affect buying. Growing up with environmental knowledge, internet access, and information, Generation Z may be more environmentally conscious than previous generations (Kumar et al., 2021). India may have the most generation Z people, 472 million. This group accounts up 34% of the population (UNFPA, 2022). Their purchases will shape market trends and the environment for decades.

The environmental challenges of Indian Gen Z customers are important yet unknown. Jaiswal and Kant (2018) and Yadav and Pathak (2017) explored green consumption in India, mostly among elderly individuals and professionals. Younger environmentally conscious consumers have unknown consumption patterns. TPB has been widely employed in environmental behavior research, but applying it to Indian Gen Z customers with trust as an extension might lead to theoretical knowledge.

Gen Z Indian buyers want to buy ecologically friendly products employing a superior TPB architecture. This article examines how environmental beliefs, subjective standards, perceived behavioral control, and green promises affect the desire to buy eco-friendly items. This article addresses green marketing skepticism, which supports TPB. This is critical in greenwashing-affected areas (Jaiswal & Mishra, 2022).

This study conceptually explains sustainable purchase behavior among youthful developing country customers. It also suggests how sustainability experts, policymakers, and marketers may encourage green consumerism in India. To build successful marketing strategies and goods, one must understand what motivates and deters Generation Z from buying environmentally friendly products. Sustainable value is offered by various enterprises.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Green Purchase Intention

Chan (2001) defines "green purchase intention" as a consumer's readiness to buy eco-friendly products. The practice includes buying items made from recycled materials, have little packaging, or are made using environmentally friendly techniques.

Demographic variables helped early research on customers' readiness to buy environmentally conscious products (Roberts, 1996). Nevertheless, studies on green buying intentions have advanced notably on psychological and social factors because of the many connections between personal beliefs, social context, and situational factors affecting environmental behavior (Peattie, 2010). Over several decades, this shift in study occurred.

Studies on the tendency of Indian customers to choose ecologically friendly items have produced conflicting results. Jaiswal and Kant's (2018) study shows that Indian customers are become more conscious of environmental concerns. Factors like price surcharges, concerns about availability, and doubt about promises of being environmentally friendly cause this knowledge not always to translate into purchasing behavior (Khare, 2015). Though they are digital natives and socially aware, Generation Z in India has been the subject of very little study as they grow more significant part of the market.

2.2 The Planned Behavior Theoretical Framework

Attitudes, subjective standards are the three elements shaping behavioral intentions. Ajzen created this theory. According to Paul et al. (2016) has been widely used to understand and predict the behavior of environmentally concerned customers.

A person's attitude toward a certain activity is the degree to which they like or dislike it. Yadav and Pathak (2017) describe green consumerism as the environmental viewpoints of consumers on the use of resources. Societal pressure to act or not act shapes subjective norms. Han et al. (2010) claim that consumer choices are shaped by larger social networks comprising family, friends, and family. People's views of their perceived behavioral control, says Ajzen (1991), are a reflection of their assessment of their ability to carry out a task. From this angle, all three factors—product availability, cost, and information access—are considered.

In some situations, including additional elements might help to enhance TPB projection (Paul et al., 2016). Though TPB does a fantastic job of clarifying environmental behavior. The consumer in the framework of environmentally responsible consumption considers all three: morality, environmental concern, and past behavior.

2.3 Believe in the claim that you are ecologically aware.

Delmas and Burbano (2011) claim that in green consumption, trust is a necessary extension of TPB. Greenwashing, which is corporate activities, is becoming more and more common and so this is the case. Chen and Chang (2013) define "trust in green claims" as the consumer confidence in the environmental data companies offer on their goods and services.

Do Paco and Reis as of 2012 The results of study indicate that customer uncertainty about environmental commitments might greatly reduce people's willingness lack of confidence is especially problematic in developing nations such as India, where environmental claim requirements are less severe and consumer understanding of greenwashing is expanding (Khare, 2015).

Francis and Hoefel (2018) say that Generation Z customers, who are more critical of the message a business sends and have access to information in ways never previously known, may find trust to be especially important in the process of forming green buying intentions. Kumar et al. 2021 study Being digital in nature allows them to quickly explore allegations and spread knowledge. Businesses wanting to enter this market category must speak honestly and freely about the surroundings.

2.4 Generation Z's Sustainable Consumption

Francis and Hoefel (2018) claim Generation Z is the first generation to have grown up in a digital setting. Modern technology and social media, as well as global issues like climate change, have shaped the buying patterns of this age. Pripporas et al. (2017) claim that Generation Z is more environmentally sensitive and gives the values and ethics of businesses greater weight when making purchases on their own.

Research by Nielsen (2018) reveals Generation Z consumers in developed countries and consumers also choose companies that show real environmental concern. Though they are a large population and have a major economic impact, relatively little research has been done on the green purchasing patterns of Indian generation Z members.

Given the rapid economic growth of this market, environmental concerns, changing consumer knowledge, and cultural background influencing consumption patterns, it is absolutely crucial to understand how TPB factors and trust shape green buy intentions among Indian Generation Z. Using a revised TPB paradigm, this paper analyses the interactions among these components, thereby addressing this gap.

Hypotheses:

H1: Indian Gen Z green buying intention is favorably influenced by environmental mindset.

H2: Subjective norms boost Indian Gen Z green buying intention.

H3: Perceived behavioral control increases Indian Gen Z green buying intention.

H4: Indian Gen Z customers' green purchasing intention increases with green claim trust.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The willingness of Indian Gen Z consumers to purchase environmentally friendly items, this study utilized a variety of research approaches. In the beginning of the inquiry, there was a qualitative exploratory phase that consisted of four focus group meetings and 32 participants. These arguments provide light on important construct characteristics in India. On the basis of this initial phase, the quantitative survey instrument was developed. This verified that the survey instrument was appropriate for the context and incorporated all of the criteria that pertain to environmentally conscious purchasing decisions.

During the major research period, a survey consumers belonging to the Gen Z demographic in metropolitan India data collecting was utilized throughout the months of January and March 2023 all demographic groups within the population.

3.2 The Requirements for Data and Sampling

In this case, the target demographic consisted of urban Indian Generation Z customers who were born between 1997 and 2012. For the purpose of ensuring enough representation in India's North, South, East, and West regions, as well as in metro, tier-1, and tier-2 cities, stratified random selection was utilized. The student records of educational institutions and the customer panels of market research agencies were used to create sample frames.

A total of 437 valid replies were obtained from the sample after incomplete entries and outliers were eliminated. 52% of the sample consisted of females, and 76% of the participants were between the ages of 18 and 24. Generation Z's older, more self-sufficient consumers are shown by this age distribution. There was a wide range of educational backgrounds represented among the participants, with 64 percent of them either pursuing or finishing their undergraduate degree and 24 percent enrolled in postgraduate studies.

3.3 The Measures

On the basis of literature scales, the survey questionnaire was updated based on qualitative results in order to give contextual relevance for clients who are members of the Indian Gen Z demographic. All of the components were evaluated using items based on a Likert scale with five points. Between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree), it was a spectrum of responses.

The six-item measure developed by Kaiser et al. (1999) was utilized in order to evaluate environmental attitude. This measure was used to evaluate the respondents' opinions regarding responsible consumerism and environmental protection ("Environmental protection is important to me when making purchase decisions").

Subjective Norms (SN) were evaluated using a four-item measure that was developed by Yadav and Pathak (2017). This scale was used to quantify the amount of pressure that society exerts on individuals to purchase environmentally friendly products (for example, "People who are important to me would want me to buy environmentally sensitive products").

A six-item questionnaire developed by Paul et al. (2016) was used to evaluate perceived behavioral control. Such statements like "I have the resources and opportunities to purchase environmentally friendly products" were evaluated with the use of this scale.

There was a seven-item scale developed by Chen and Chang (2013) that was used to test trust in green claims. As an example, "The environmental performance of green products is generally trustworthy" was one of the statements that this scale tested the respondents' level of confidence in regarding corporate environmental declarations.

Green Purchase Intention (GPI) was evaluated using a five-item questionnaire developed by Chan (2001). By utilizing this scale, we were able to determine the extent to which individuals intended to make purchases of environmentally friendly items ("I am willing to pay more for products that are environmentally friendly").

In order to offer context for the investigation, the survey also evaluated individuals' demographics, purchasing patterns, and environmental consciousness.

3.4 Analysis of the Data

IBM SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 26.0 were utilized in order to carry out a number of different data analysis procedures. For the purpose of evaluating the quality of the measure, a descriptive statistics and reliability studies approach was utilized in the third phase of the process in order to analyze the anticipated linkages within the expanded TPB model..

4. RESULTS

4.1 Statistics and Reliability

Table 1 displays research construct descriptive statistics and reliability measures. Hair et al. (2010) report that all scales had

Cronbach's alpha values over 0.70, indicating high internal consistency.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Environmental Attitude (EA)	3.92	0.78	0.87	0.89	0.58
Subjective Norms (SN)	3.45	0.86	0.82	0.84	0.52
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	3.27	0.92	0.84	0.85	0.54
Trust in Green Claims (TGC)	3.18	0.96	0.89	0.90	0.60
Green Purchase Intention (GPI)	3.63	0.84	0.86	0.88	0.57

Note: AVE = Average Variance Extracted

The results show that people usually have good views of the environment (mean = 3.92) and that, to a little degree, they wish to buy ecologically conscious items (mean = 3.63). With an average score of 3.18, the group had the lowest mean score for trust in green claims. This suggests that Indian consumers who belong to the Gen Z age seem to be sceptical about environmental commitments.

4.2 Measuring Model

Evaluation of the measurement model used confirmatory factor analysis. Just a few alteration indices changed the model to suit well. Modification index values: \u03c72/df = 2.41, CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.057, SRMR = 0.044. After deleting an EA and PBC item, high cross-loading triggered this.

AVE values more than 0.50, CR values greater than 0.80, and factor loadings greater than 0.60 indicate convergent validity, according to Hair et al. (2010). When each concept's square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) exceeded the correlations between constructs, discriminant validity was proven (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2: Correlation Matrix and Discriminant Validity

Construct	1	2	3	4	5
1. Environmental Attitude	**0.76**				
2. Subjective Norms	0.42	**0.72**			
3. Perceived Behavioral Control	0.36	0.33	**0.73**		
4. Trust in Green Claims	0.40	0.38	0.45	**0.77**	
5. Green Purchase Intention	0.53	0.47	0.44	0.49	**0.75**

Note: Bold diagonal values represent the square root of AVE

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

The postulated links in the larger TPB model were investigated using structural equation modeling. With values of 2.58, CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.060, and SRMR = 0.048, the structural model presented a fair degree of fit.

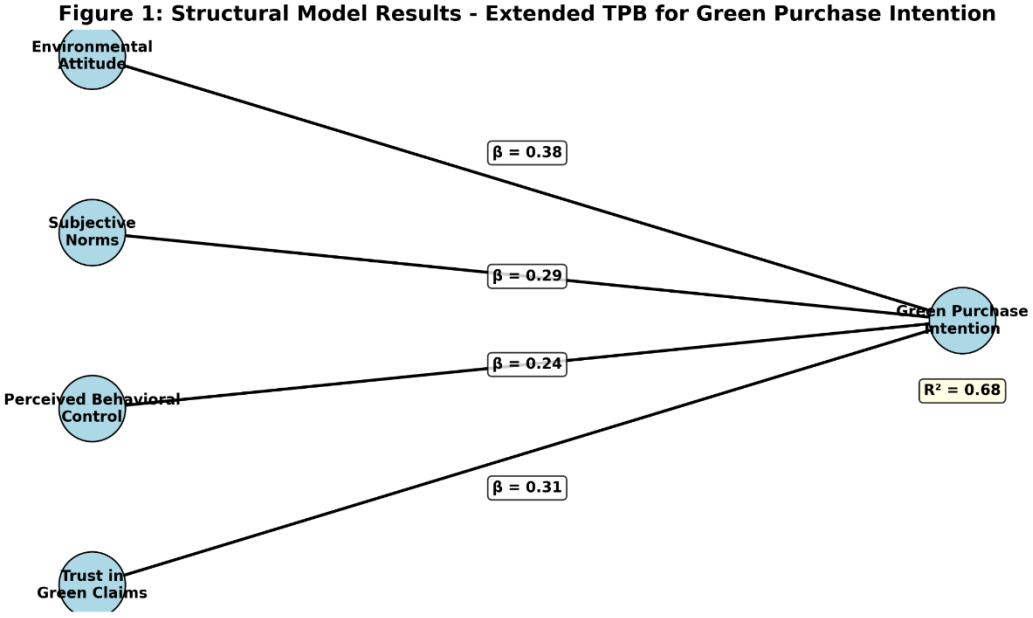
Because it explained 68% of the variation in eco-friendly product purchases, the model was powerful. Click here to examine Table 3's standardized route coefficient hypothesis testing results.

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	EA → GPI	0.38	7.24	<0.001	Supported
H2	SN → GPI	0.29	5.63	<0.001	Supported
H3	PBC → GPI	0.24	4.72	<0.001	Supported
H4	TGC → GPI	0.31	6.18	<0.001	Supported

Every association that was postulated was found to be credible. The environmental attitude was shown to have the most significant impact on the intention to purchase environmentally friendly products (β = 0.38, p < 0.001). This was followed by faith in green claims (β = 0.31, p < 0.001), subjective norms (β = 0.29, p < 0.001), and perceived behavioral control (β = 0.24, p < 0.001).

Figure 1: Structural Model Results - Extended TPB for Green Purchase Intention



4.4 Additional Findings

Several studies were conducted to explore Indian Generation Z's green shopping intentions.

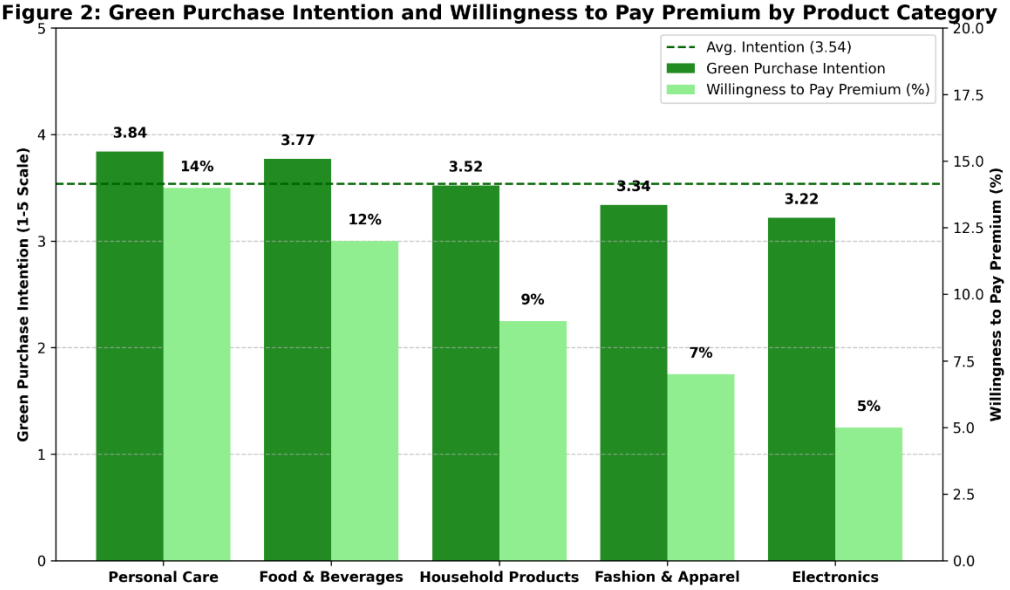
A multi-group study examined gender, education, and city tier inequalities. According to study, gender moderates the relationship between environmental attitude and the desire to buy green. Female respondents had a greater impact than male respondents (βfemale = 0.43; βmale = 0.32; $\Delta\chi^2 = 5.87$, $p < 0.05$). Education affected behavioural control perception.

When comparing those with higher education to those with lower education, it was shown that those with higher education had a bigger influence (β postgraduate = 0.31, β undergraduate = 0.22, β high school = 0.18; $\Delta\chi^2 = 6.92$, $p < 0.05$). In each city tier, there were no disparities discovered.

According to the findings of a research on price sensitivity, 67 percent of respondents would be willing to pay more for environmentally friendly items, but just 34 percent would spend more than ten percent more. In spite of worries about the environment, Indian Generation Z places a higher value on cost.

Intentions to buy environmentally friendly products differed greatly across product categories. The consumer's desire to purchase personal care goods was the greatest (mean = 3.84), followed by the intention to purchase meals and beverages (mean = 3.77). However, consumers with a lower desire to purchase ecologically friendly products were more likely to be interested in fashion (mean = 3.34), and technology (mean = 3.22).

Figure 2: Green Purchase Intention and Willingness to Pay Premium by Product Category



5. DISCUSSION

This study used an upgraded TPB framework with trust in green promises to examine Indian Gen Z buyers' green purchase intentions. The findings inform theory and practice.

5.1 Options As per Theory

This study suggests that TPB may assist understand this population's green purchase aspirations. This suggests that TPB is important to all Indian cultures, especially Generation Z.

Francis and Hoefel (2018) found Generation Z ecologically savvy. Environmental attitude's 0.38 coefficient supports this view. Though independent, Indian Generation Z is influenced by social referents when shopping. Group norms are culturally significant in India (Khare, 2015). The high effect of subjective norms (\u03b2 = 0.29) supports this argument.

Adding TPB, which embraces green promises, increased the desire to buy eco-friendly products (\u03b2 = 0.31). Environmental claim skepticism must be addressed, especially in greenwashing-prone areas. This study adds to the evidence that trust drives sustainable consumption (Chen & Chang, 2013). The report stresses the importance of trust for digitally connected customers, especially Gen Z, who can instantly verify brand claims.

The model's high explanatory power (R2 = 0.68), which outperforms many past TPB research on environmental behavior, suggests that the enlarged framework accurately depicts Indian Generation Z's environmentally friendly product purchase decision-making process. Gender disparities in environmental attitude and purchase intention show how demographic factors impact TPB interactions in environmental situations.

5.2 Daily Impact

Marketers, lawmakers, and sustainability activists worldwide may assist Indian Generation Z make ecologically friendly purchases with these findings.

Given the huge impact environmental attitude has on marketing, messaging about the benefits of environmental preservation may connect with this demographic. However, subjective factors had such a big influence that social acceptance and peer approval of environmentally friendly items may be just as significant in India. Peer recommendations and social media influencers may entice Gen Z buyers.

Environmental communication must be honest and dependable since people's acceptance of ecologically desirable promises depends on it. Businesses should prioritize third-party certificates and environmental data above ambiguous or overstated statements that may raise suspicions. Since Generation Z in India had an average trust level of 3.18, honest communication and sustainable practices will build trust.

Statistical research on price sensitivity may guide pricing strategy. Though ecologically sensitive, Indian Generation Z is not willing to pay high fees. One-third of buyers would pay over 10% more on eco-friendly items. Businesses should provide eco-friendly solutions at reasonable pricing. Improved production methods or materials reduce costs without losing environmental advantages.

Infrastructure, incentive programs, and educational campaigns can help governments boost access to green products. These possibilities are shown by perceived behavioral control's little influence. Policy that makes sustainable solutions more affordable and environmentally friendly should aid younger Indians.

5.3 Future research suggestions and limitations

Despite its shortcomings, this work opens up research. First, cross-sectional research cannot infer causality; longitudinal studies can follow how green purchasing intentions change over time and become action. The sample was big, but most buyers were urban Gen Z with higher education. Rural residents with less education may not find the results useful.

Future study on true green shopping patterns and goals may reveal the difference. Understanding how Generation Z's green shopping intentions differ throughout India's numerous states and languages may help one understand the cultural implications. Experimental studies modifying environmental claims and trust cues may assist this group find effective communication tactics.

Comparative studies of Generation Z and previous generations in India can help us understand how cultural and generational variables impact sustainable buying. Monitoring Generation Z's eco-conscious shopping habits will help set long-term sustainability goals as their buying power rises.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined Indian Gen Z buyers' green purchasing intentions using an upgraded TPB framework and green promise confidence. In this group, environmental attitudes acquire eco-friendly items. The expanded model explains much of the diversity in buying intentions.

Though they care about the environment and want to buy green products, Indian Gen Z customers' confidence in environmental commitments should be enhanced. Though price sensitive, this generation emphasizes environmental considerations when buying food and personal care goods.

This study clarifies sustainable shopping habits in the world's youngest developing nation. Generation Z in India is getting more economically independent and can buy more. Generation Z's spending habits will impact the environment and commercial trends. Businesses and governments must understand their sustainable purchase incentives to reach this big client group.

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