

Bridging the intention–behavior gap in sustainable FMCG purchasing among Generation Z: An integrated innovation resistance theory and intention–behavior gap framework

Dr. Monirul Islam^{*1} and Dr. Rahanuma Aftab²

¹Associate Professor, Department of Management, Sister Nivedita University, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Sister Nivedita University, India

Email: rahnuma2019@gmail.com²

*Correspondence: moni05081985@gmail.com

Abstract

Fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) firms contribute substantially to packaging waste and emissions, and Generation Z consumers express strong environmental concern, yet their sustainable purchases lag behind their stated intentions. This paper reviews research on the intention behaviour gap in green purchasing and integrates it with innovation resistance theory to explain why green intentions often fail to become purchases among Gen Z consumers in India. Following PRISMA reporting guidance, the review synthesises 70 studies identified through database searches covering 2016 to 2026. The synthesis indicates that environmental consciousness, sustainability knowledge and social media exposure shape green purchase intention, whereas functional barriers (perceived risk, price and inconvenience) and psychological barriers (greenwashing, image concerns and low trust) weaken the conversion of intention into purchase. Green trust, credible sustainability communication and peer validation appear to reduce resistance and to support repeat purchase and electronic word of mouth. Building on these themes, the paper proposes a conceptual framework in which barriers link intention to behaviour and trust and peer validation act as moderating conditions. Most of the available evidence comes from intention based surveys and from settings outside India, so the framework offers propositions for testing rather than established findings. The paper provides guidance for FMCG managers on verified eco claims, affordability and convenience, and sets out a research agenda that uses observed purchase data.

Keywords: Generation Z, Intention Behaviour Gap, Innovation Resistance Theory, Sustainable Consumption, Green Purchase Behaviour, Fast Moving Consumer Goods, Greenwashing, Green Trust, India

JEL Classification: M31, D91, Q56

1. Introduction

The FMCG sector contributing implicitly to consumer expenditure and GDP and this sector is categorized by high-volume, low-cost products with rapid turnover. This sector of industry is considered as a foundation of global economies. The global FMCG market was valued at approximately \$171.9 billion in the year 2023 with projections to reach \$671.5 billion by 2033, in view of the rising demand and premiumization trends (Marketresearch.biz, 2023). However, packaging waste, carbon emissions, and resource-concentrated supply chains, are business practices that is contributing to environmental footprint and it has drawn enquiry from different bodies of concern. The term “sustainability” has become a critical area of consideration across industries due to the unprecedented social and environmental challenges. Sustainable marketing safeguard long-term economic capability by promoting products and services in ways that minimize environmental harm, enhance social welfare (Banzai.io, 2024). In the FMCG context, this practice may include adopting eco-friendly packaging, reducing carbon footprints, and ensuring ethical sourcing. Leading companies like Unilever, Nestlé, and P&G have set ambitious sustainability goals, while others, such as Mondelēz, navigate challenges in aligning global operations with local expectations (A. B. Mishra et al., 2025). Nevertheless, 15% of FMCG companies globally have end-to-end supply chain traceability that limits their accountability for sustainability claims (BCG, 2024). Researchers highlighted that 42% of FMCG sustainability claims lack third-party verification, resulting consumer skepticism (Terra Choice, 2023). It was observed that 66% of global consumers considering sustainability a key purchase motivation including 80% of Millennials preferring brands with verified eco-friendly practices (NielsenIQ, 2024). According to Casalegno, age was a significant condition in choosing sustainable products (Casalegno et al., 2022). Furthermore, to understand how consumers’ value, attitude and behaviours were shaped by any social conditions or historical events, experienced by them in their formative years, researchers recommended Generational Cohort Theory (Inglehart, 1977). Distinctly different consumption patterns across generations have been observed by the scholars owing to the embracing of digital tools with an surging environmental consciousness. Issues like climate change or social sustainability have been drawing more attention from the Generation Z (Dimock 2019; Tyson et al., 2021; Confetto et al., 2023). In comparison to different cohorts, Gen Z and Millennials were often represented foremost environmentally, socially conscious and an active group of people (Robinson and Schanzel, 2019; Kaplan, 2020; Tyson et al., 2021; Petro, 2021; Prayag et al., 2022; Djafarova and Fouts, 2022). Sustainability-oriented behaviours distinguished these generations from other cohorts. A purchase trend of Gen Z, like considering the carbon footprint before purchase decision had been observed (Skeirytė et al., 2022). Scholars highlighted the fact that Gen Z consumers actively pursued and selected eco-friendly products (Seemiller and Grace, 2019; Djafarova and Fouts, 2022; Prayag et al., 2022, Gomes et al., 2023), and also a behaviour pattern to boycott non-sustainable brands had been observed (Wee, 2019; Seyfi et al., 2023). As per Ribeiro, this new generation cohort was more inclined to sustainability

lifestyle choices due to the positive impact of environmental education from an early age (Ribeiro et al., 2023) and tend to purchase products from companies they considered ethical (Francis and Hoefel, 2018). External influences like social media and internal factors like sense of responsibility or awareness played pivotal role in shaping the environmentally friendly behaviours in Gen Z (Salinero et al., 2022). Allen and Spialek (2018) posited that Gen Z and Millennials were two generational cohorts who tend to share green word-of-mouth recommendations with their peers. Furthermore, scholars observed how engagement with sustainability content in social media platform boosted their inclination to promote sustainability-related issues and encourage sustainability advocacy (Confetto et al., 2023; Seyfi et al., 2023). Gen Z's participation in WoM recommendations about businesses CSR was considered as one of the important metrics of their engagement (Muntinga et al., 2011). Additionally, investigations through objective methodologies were recommended to identify the gap between stated sustainability intentions and actual purchase behaviour (D'Acunto et al., 2024). Though pro-environmental attitudes were displayed by Gen Z and other consumers, scholars observed their struggle to translate that behaviour into consistent purchasing behaviour (D'Acunto et al., 2025). Theory-driven explanations of consumer resistance to sustainability purchase were recommended as an important area of research to address this gap. The intention – behaviour gap (IBG) was revealed as critical challenge as it was hindering environmentally conscious young customers from adopting sustainable alternatives. On the other hand, this was a strategic opportunity for the FMCG companies to understand the resistance factors for accelerating the industry's transition to sustainability. The theory of planned behaviour is commonly practiced to examine the intention-behaviour gap in consumers. However, most of the studies have focussed to identify the parameters that have influenced consumer sustainable green consumption behaviour yet the factors that might have restricted to transform green intention or pro-sustainable behaviour to actual green purchase decisions have not been explored. The Innovation resistance theory is recommended as a suitable theoretical framework to address this research gap. Functional and psychological barriers were distinguished by this framework (Laukkanen, 2016). Ram and Sheth (1989) recommended IRT framework to explain how consumer resistance to innovations were triggered by the conflicts with personal beliefs or interruptions of the status. Although in technology and service sector, this theory is widely recommended, its Operationalization within green living remains in paucity, especially among Gen Z users in Indian FMCG context, which motivates the researchers of this paper to further go for the expansion of this methodological approach.

The present study makes an attempt to integrate the IRT with IBG in expansion of this methodological approach of how innovation resistance deployed in sustainability perspectives. The results of the study may offer tangible takeaways for FMCG brands looking for to operationalize Gen Z's environmental consciousness into actual purchasing behaviour. The findings may have direct relevance for different stakeholders of the organizations for developing communication strategies for target customers, reframing greener product lines, restructuring

involvements to quicken green consumption. The goal of the study is to target FMCG organizations, firms or startups that are leading innovators in sustainable solutions and intend to gain more insights into Gen Z consumers behaviour and the factors that may be resisting them to translate their pro-sustainability attitude to consistent sustainable purchase behaviour. Any organizations, seeking different perspective of Gen Z consumers sustainable purchase behaviour may find this paper beneficial. It may help them to better design the marketing practices by keeping in mind the behaviour of their consumers' target market.

2. Literature Review

This review of literature aids as a linkage between futuristic research and current studies on intention – behavior gap (IBG) of Gen Z consumers across the different culture, societal context. The present study examines the existing empirical literature on intention -behavior gap (IBG) in green purchasing and makes an attempt to integrate the framework with Innovation resistance theory (IRT) and develops a conceptual framework that demonstrates the predominant factors that influence intention of consumer and hinder real purchase motivation toward sustainable products with marketing strategy that may be adopted by the organizations to address the functional and psychological barriers of customers and encourage them in sustainable purchasing. Results of the study show that Gen Z consumers environmental consciousness and sustainability knowledge due to social media exposure are major triggers for green purchase intention. Additionally, while psychological image barrier like greenwashing and functional barrier like risk of adopting green products hindering the green purchase behavior, the factors like green trust, peer validation reassure customers to overcome the barriers and motivate in frequent sustainable purchase and encourage them in e-WOM recommendation.

In India's population structure, the Generation Z represent a dominant demographic cohort (Bhojwani, R., (2025). The increasing economic influence of this generation and understanding the changing pattern of buying behaviour of young consumers have become imperative for the marketers, striving to remain relevant in the ever-changing industry landscape. Furthermore, Raza (2023) pointed out the huge influence of social media and corporate social responsibility on Gen Z customers buying behaviour that significantly impacted their purchase intentions. Furthermore, Kahawandala (2020) highlighted the importance of effective marketing strategies to reach this demographic cohort, as the influence of social media was counted as one of the most important factors in shaping their purchase decision. Social media had been playing a dominant role in refining millennial mindset over sustainable consumptions (Ali et al.,2023). Vojvodic (2019) explained how Gen Z made informed decisions using technology and study also pointed out that this generation had more spenders than savers. Additionally, to mitigate the environmental impacts, Gen Z endorsed labelling and recommended certification systems for communicating the production information (Bollani et al., 2019). Besides, Budac (2014) and Ameen (2020) found out different perspectives of Gen-Z consumers, like how they valued personalized experiences and

authenticity. Bhojwani, R. (2025) posited that purchasing behaviour of Gen Z was not solely driven by necessity and affordability but also by unique experiences, emotional engagement or authenticity of the brand and peer influence. However, in the FMCG industry, convenience had been considered as most important factor in shaping consumer behaviour and a powerful driver in every purchase decision (Bhojwani, R. 2025). In a recent study, Bayecha (2024) highlighted, consumers perceived convenience of finding any goods in nearby shops and availability of the items, significantly influences brand choice in FMCG markets. Notwithstanding ecological concerns and plus attitudes of consumers towards green and also the handful of people eager to Adopt green purchasing habits has amplified in recent times. However, there is dearth of evidence that refer green product purchase has increased in FMCG sector. Mobrezi and Khoshtinat (2016) revealed the market share of green products, restricted to just 7–8% of the international market. Hence, locating the drivers that create intention behaviour gap (IBG) and integrate the model with innovation resistance theory (IRT) to narrow down the gap is very imperative to increase green product purchasing and sustainable consumption. Consequently, a comprehensive literature review on IBG and IRT is crucial to interpret Gen Z's purchase patterns for enhancing product positioning, safeguard brand loyalty, and stay viable in a dynamic marketplace. Thus, the challenge and interest is to explore how Practice green purchasing initiatives can be buoyance to influence brand loyalty in FMCG context where the industry is characterised by low involvement and frequent purchase cycles.

2.1 Intention Behaviour Gap

Green consumption has become a central topic of research. However, the attitude-behavior gap in sustainable consumption has been the recurring theme in previous researches. Green product availability and perceived consumer effectiveness were identified as two key drivers to explain the relationship between green consumption intention and behavior (Nguyen,2019). The review of prior literature reported the practicality of Theory of Planned Behaviour in predicting the young consumer' intention towards purchasing sustainable products (Yadav and Pathak,2016). Additional variables like environmental concern and knowledge were integrated with the existing model for further recommendations. In another study, Uddin and Khan (2016) explored the psychological factors of GenZ users that influenced the green purchasing behaviour. Findings of the study exposed presence of five fundamental variables i.e. environmental attitude, environmental consciousness, sustainable consumption behaviour, environmental involvement and apparent efficiency of environmental behaviour (Uddin and Khan,2016). Furthermore, scholars identified five broad psychological paths: social influence, habit formation, the individual self, cognition & feeling and tangibility for encouraging sustainable consumer behavior change (White et al.,2019). This framework would be helpful in assisting stakeholders interested in nurturing sustainable consumer behavior. In addition to this, the review of ethical consumerism literature addressed signification limitations of one of the holistic conceptual models and recommended different ways in understanding ethical consumer behaviour (Carrington et al.,2010)

and offered valuable insight for organizations and also and strategic direction to bridge the intention–behaviour gap of the ethical consumers. In another attitude - behaviour inconsistencies related study, environmental concern and products functional attributes were identified as major factors of consumer sustainable consumption behavior (Joshi and Rahman,2017). Rising research inclination for sustainable consumption intentions discovered the significance of proposed theories that might have explained the existing relationships amidst consumer’s approaches and green purchase behavior. Scholars attempted model integration of green purchase behavior and existing theory of planned behavior meta analytically to analyze the practical fit of the assimilated framework and intervention importance of consumer inclination was identified in the formulation of sustainable purchase intention (Zeinab Zaremohzzabieh et al.2021).In a different socio-culture set up, the impact of social media information sharing on Gen Z customers green purchase intention in China was explored (Sun and Xing,2022). A novel study was conducted for Malaysian Gen Z consumers to compare eco-friendly and non-eco-friendly product purchase behaviour. Ewe and Tjiptono (2023) explored, green consciousness and chronic promotional focus to compare the differences in consumer purchase behavior. A recent study highlighted that the social appeals towards a sustainable behaviour could be changed and highlighted the roles of educational institutions in promoting green consumption choices among Gen Z consumers in Egypt (Saadeldin et al.,2026). Impact of green advertising and green product innovation on building green brand image were examined with 250 Gen Z customers in Indonesia and significant positive influence on green purchase intention was observed (Khoiriani and Triwinarso,2025). Exploring different paths to sustainable consumption among Gen Z in Thailand, one of the studies showed that individual and contextual factors shaped purchase intentions (Kara et al.2026). The need for policy-makers to create community-oriented environmental programs and fit their marketing strategies to enhance pro-environmental purchasing were recommended by a study in Vietnam Gen Z were considered as a demographic cohort, influenced by collectivistic cultural values, generational characteristics, and dynamic economic conditions (Quang-Huy Ngo et al.2025). A study in Poland with 438 respondents, between the ages 18 and 27 showed that, attitudes and knowledge were significant predictors of sustainable food consumption (Dominika Jakubowska, Aneta Dąbrowska et al..2024). Importance of educational campaigns and marketing strategies were recommended that might enhance consumer knowledge and shape positive attitudes towards sustainable food (Dominika Jakubowska, Aneta Dąbrowska et al..2024). A comprehensive analysis of scholarly articles published in the Scopus database (2017-2023) was conducted to explore the dynamic landscape of green purchase behavior (Megatama et al.2024). Scholars identified the most prolific authors, vastly cited works, and emerging research themes. The research study examined the evolving focus within the field by analyzing keyword co-occurrence, co-authorship, and bibliographic coupling patterns. A surge in publication volume in the year 2023 pointed out a growing academic interest in green consumerism and one of the critical areas of focus in green purchase behavior research was food. The analysis also revealed that China, USA,

and India were leading contributors to this area of research (Megatama et al.2024). Another prior study aimed to look at green consumer orientation among different generations in various Indian cities through awareness pricing, perceived green benefits and quality, and green future valuation. The results showed these factors had direct influence on decisions related to eco-friendly products (Gawshinde et al.2025).The facilitating role of green purchasing intention in the relationship between environmental knowledge ,attitude concern , subjective norms , perceived behavioral control and green purchasing behavior were investigated in a developing country setting like India (Kumar and Sinha, 2025).On the other hand, these findings highlighted the primacy of internalized values and attitudes over social influence or economic considerations in shaping eco-conscious behaviours among millennial consumers in emerging markets like South Africa. (Mabaso et al.2025).Green purchase behavior of Bangladeshi young consumers was investigated and findings highlighted consumers' unique personal and societal values as mediator in relation to green purchase (Maisha and Shetu,2025). Another study was conducted in a developing country setting like Pakistan to address the green gap. It was calculated based on the influence of inward and outward environmental attitude. Policymakers and marketers were recommended to design targeted educational campaigns and consumer-centric green policies that may address both internal and external motivation and barriers to sustainable consumption. (Khan et al.,2025). Witek and Kuzniar (2023) revealed that past behaviour along with knowledge, and trust in green food were powerful drivers and had a positive effect on the intention to purchase green food products in Poland, the food sector managers were provided with relevant guidelines for the design of marketing strategies. Consumers attitude towards brand and perceived behavioural control was examined for a sample of 441 urban residents of Bangladesh and it was reported that environmental concern only had a passive influence where as digital communication had both active and passive influences on consumer attitude towards any brand (Niloy et al.2023). Consumers' motives for high involvement green products like EV purchase were explored to investigate the impact of hedonic, gain and normative motives on green purchase behavior (Chaturvedi et al.2023). The relationship between environmental concern and green products purchase intention were examined based on TPB framework in Indian context and result pointed out that consumer attitude and perceived behavioral control significantly predicted purchase intention whereas subjective norm did not (Modi and Patel,2016). In another study in Indian, Joshi & Rahman (2017) identified few variables like supportive behaviours for environmental organizations, subjective norms, consumer attitude towards sustainable purchasing, perceived marketplace influence, consumers' knowledge regarding sustainability related issues, and environmental concern, for predicting sustainable purchasing behaviour of young Delhi consumers. Furthermore, in a developed country setting like Italy, consumer knowledge about organics, health consciousness and perceived behavioral control influenced purchase intentions (Testa et al.2019). Despite the fact that sustainable marketing had a progressive but statistically insignificant impact on buying decisions, a study in Indonesia highlighted that both environmental awareness and price perception

significantly influenced consumers' decisions to adopt eco-friendly alternatives. The importance of increasing sustainability messaging and augmenting pricing strategies were recommended to encourage extensive adoption of green products in emerging markets (Nabilah Rosa Azzahra, 2025).

2.2 Innovation Resistance Theory (IRT)

A theoretical framework for customer resistance was proposed by Innovation resistance theory (IRT) and it was posited that the success or failure of innovations were significantly shaped by consumer resistance (Ramand Sheth, 1989). Ram and Sheth (1989) suggested a terminology “resistance-oriented behavior” among users that could be prompted due to the change take place in any user’s behaviour as a result of any innovation practice. The term was further explained as behavior of user that might had been influenced from rational thinking (Hew et al., 2017). Scholars pursued the situation like deviations from the existing belief system and making-decisions for the adoption and usage of innovation as critical as the variations brought by alterations to the existing status quo. Heidenreich and Handrich (2015) explained customer resistance as active and passive resistance. Innovation resistance theory proposed functional barriers as active resistance, developed from the characteristics of innovations and passive resistance was explained through psychological barriers (Yu and Chantatub, 2016). Yu and Chantatub (2016) suggested “the use, value, and risk of the innovation resulted behavioral contradictions that could cause conflict and psychological barrier emerged due to the conflicts with the existing beliefs”. Tradition and image were considered as the two forms of psychological barriers. Innovation resistance theory was considered as a suitable framework for inspecting users’ resistance toward innovations due to its inclusive characteristics (Ma and Lee, 2018). The core focus of IRT theory was to assist scholars with a theoretical basis for explaining resistance toward innovations. Kaur et al. (2020) explained how scholars reviewed the prior literature on innovation resistance toward different internet-based services and products for longer period of time. Scholars demonstrated the rising trend of conducting several empirical studies between 2012 and 2018 that clearly indicated growing interest among the researchers toward understanding the different barriers against the innovation adoption and to examine innovation resistance, Innovation resistance theory had been the preferred choice among scholars. Theory of planned behavior (Joachim et al., 2018) and the behavioral resistance theory (Gupta and Arora, 2017) were few of the other frameworks that were utilised by the scholars to inspect consumer resistance to innovations.

This theoretical model had been referred to examine the barriers and resistance to different user innovations in different industries like e- shopping (Lian and Yen, 2014), internet-banking (Gupta and Arora, 2017), e- commerce (Hew et al., 2017), mobile marketing (Joachim et al., 2018), mobile banking (Borraz-Mora et al., 2017), online gaming (Oktavianus et al., 2017), and digital travel websites (Jansukpum and Kettem, 2015). Scholars across different countries used this framework, including Malaysia, Taiwan, Germany, Finland, Spain, Thailand and India (Moorthy et al., 2017;

Oktavianus et al., 2017; Yu et al., 2015; Joachim et al., 2018; Laukkanen, 2016; Borraz-Mora et al., 2017; Jansukpum and Kettem, 2015; Yu and Chantatub, 2016; Gupta and Arora, 2017). Prior empirical studies mainly focused on a broad age group of consumers however researchers highlighted three empirical studies, considered young adults as sample for the study (Jansukpum and Kettem, 2015; Lian et al., 2012; Oktavianus et al., 2017). Furthermore, perceived barriers to green consumption were explained at different stages of life cycle by integrating two theoretical models, Innovation Resistance Theory (IRT) and Stages of Behavioural Change (SOC) (Szaban & Stefańska, 2023). As a result of the study, Szaban & Stefańska (2023) highlighted that knowledge and image barriers evolved and had a distinct impact whereas barriers like tradition, value, usage, and risk created a stronger inhibitory effect in the early stages of green consumption. One of the noble studies of recent time, integrated Consumer Behavior Theory and Innovation Resistance Theory to explain the psychological barriers and functional barriers that could shape the intention–behavior gap of Gen Z customers (Fulya Acikgoz et al. 2026). Moreover, the impact of environmental consciousness and sustainability awareness of Gen Z consumers have been examined by integrating these drivers with IRT and the findings of the study highlighted that, environmental concern and sustainability knowledge positively influenced the intention of the Gen Z customers to adopt sustainable fashion clothing whereas the image barriers reduced the likelihood of embracing the sustainable alternatives (Fulya Acikgoz et al. 2026). Even though, the focussed domain of the study was apparel sector, scholars examined the drivers of resistance and psychology of consumers and the findings and recommendations are relevant to broader sustainable consumption contexts.

3. Objective of the Study

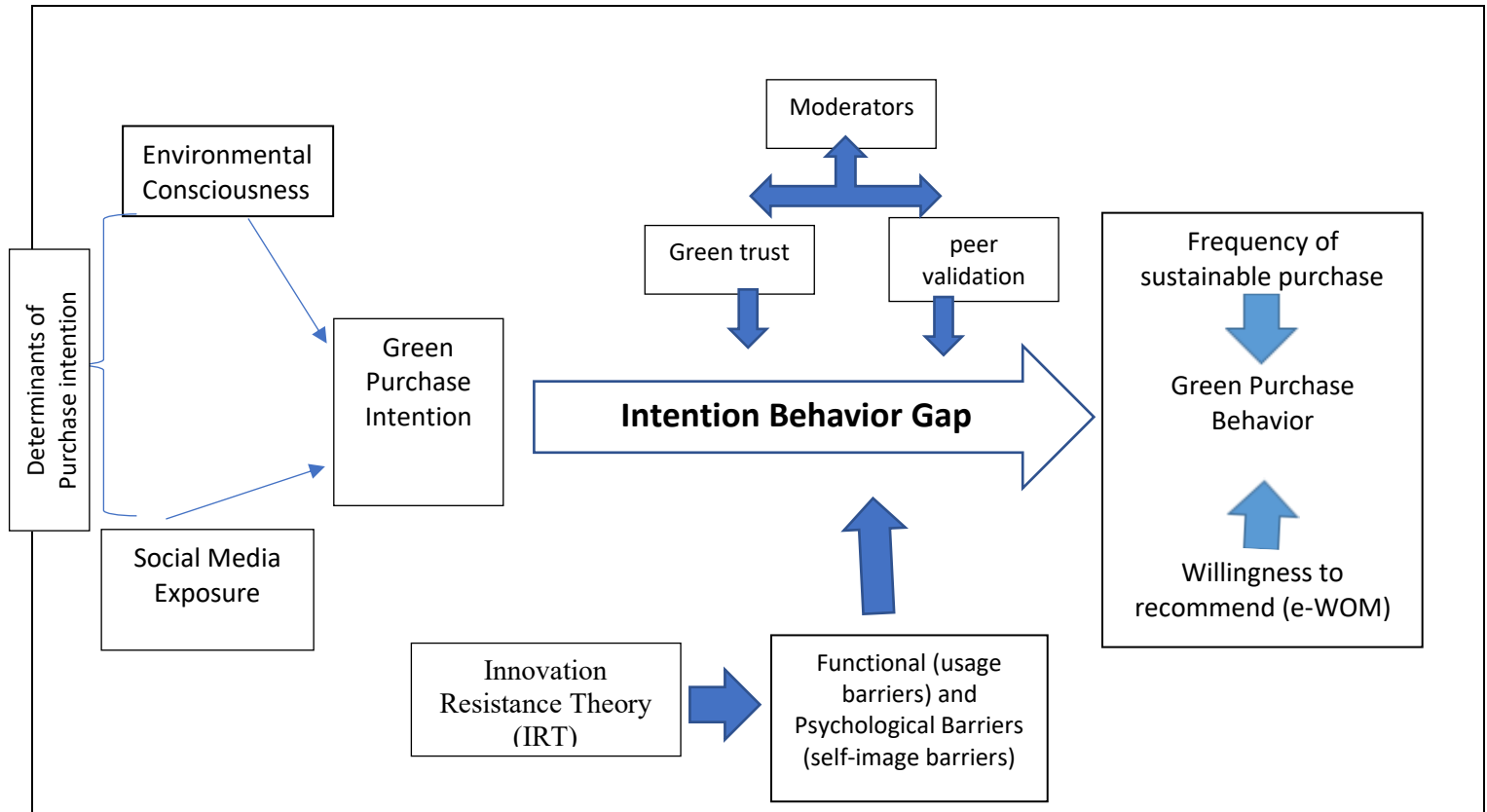
The objective of this paper is as follows:

To analyse the role of functional and psychological barriers in hindering the conversing the green intentions into actual purchase behaviour among Indian Gen Z.

3.1 Conceptual Model

The proposed framework integrates the Intention–Behavior Gap (IBG) Model with Innovation Resistance Theory (IRT) to explain why Generation Z consumers in the Indian FMCG sector often express positive attitudes toward sustainable products but do not consistently translate those intentions into actual green purchasing behavior. The model as illustrated in figure 1 conceptualizes green purchasing as a two-stage decision process, where the transition from intention to behavior is influenced by facilitators and barriers. Innovation Resistance Theory (IRT) is embedded in the middle stage to explain why consumers fail to convert intention into actual purchasing.

Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Model



Source: Author creation

4. Research Gap

The results of this work provides both practical and theoretical implications for the GenZ consumer and sustainable marketing practices (SMP) literature. Moreover, it lays down platform for brands considering to outshine and perform in a tightly competitive companies. This paper will investigate the impact of sustainability considerations manifestation in Gen Z's buying behaviour. Additionally, investigations through objective methodologies were recommended to identify the gap between stated sustainability intentions and actual purchase behaviour (D'Acunto et al., 2024). Though pro-environmental attitudes were displayed by Gen Z and other consumers, scholars observed their grapple with rendering that behaviour into repeat patronage behaviour (D'Acunto et al., 2025). Theory-based elucidations of consumer confrontation to sustainability purchase were recommended as an important area of research to address this gap. The intention – behaviour gap (IBG) was revealed as critical challenge as it was hindering environmentally conscious young customers from adopting sustainable alternatives. On the other hand, this was a strategic opportunity for the FMCG companies to understand the resistance factors for accelerating the

industry's transition to sustainability. Albeit, the TPB has been broadly used to examine the intention-behaviour gap in consumers. However, most of the studies have focussed to identify the parameters that have influenced consumers sustainable green consumption behaviour yet the factors that might have restricted to transform green intention or pro-sustainable behaviour to actual green purchase decisions have not been explored. Moreover, IRT is recommended as a suitable frame of reference to address this research gap. Functional and psychological barriers were distinguished by this framework (Laukkanen, 2016). 'Ram and Sheth (1989)' recommended IRT framework to explain how consumer resistance to innovations were triggered by the conflicts with personal beliefs or interruptions of the status. Although in technology and service sector, this theory is widely recommended, its implication to green purchase is dearth, especially among Gen Z buyers in Indian FMCG context, which motivates the researchers of this paper to further go for this theoretical foundation. Nevertheless, given these gaps, the literature on GenZ consumer and sustainable marketing practices (SMP) is still underdeveloped. Furthermore, majority research findings are focused in Western consumer behavior, and currently there is a dearth of knowledge of the impact of sustainability on GenZ consumer buying behavior in developing economy like India or Southeast Asia.

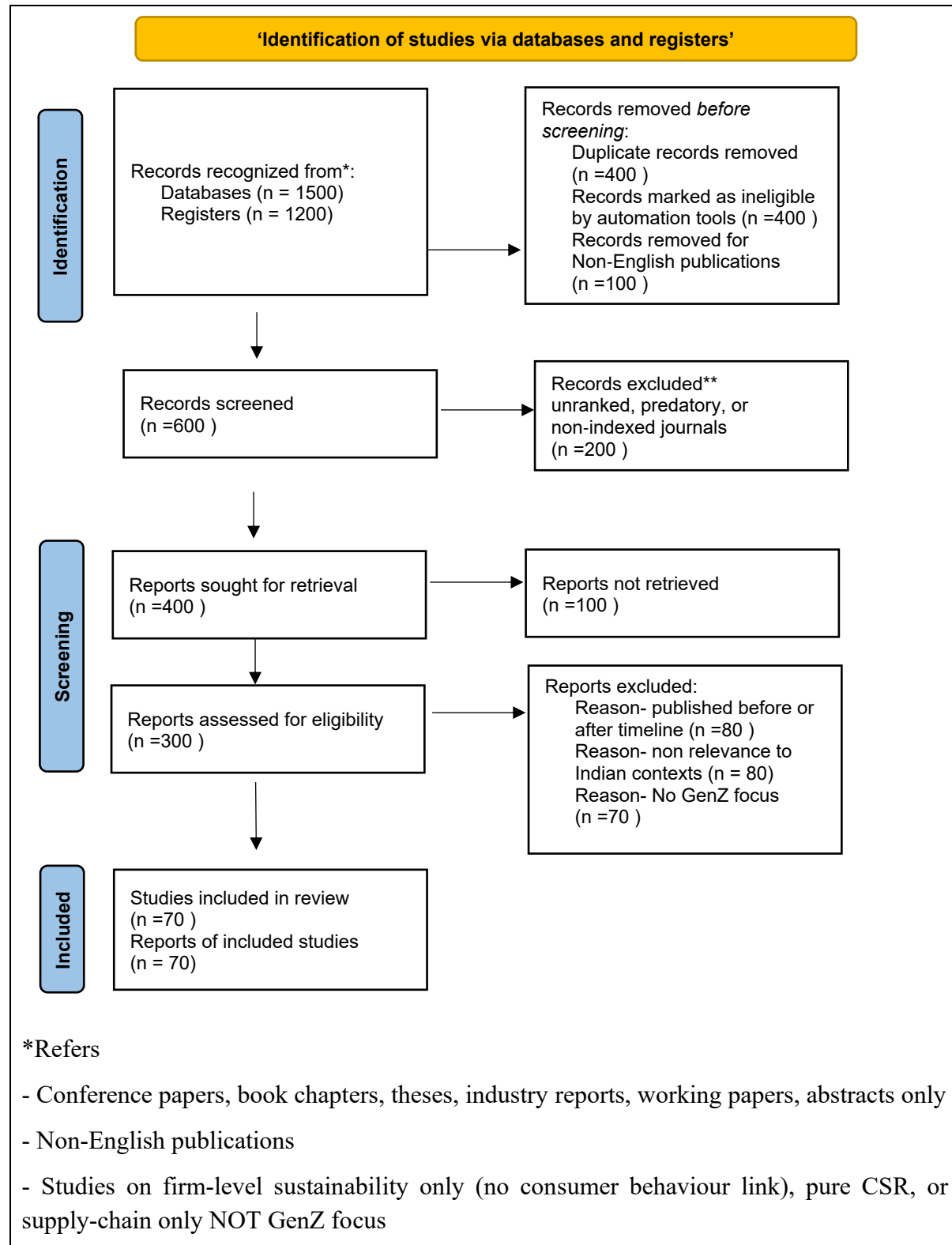
5. Research Methodology

The researcher utilizes the (SLR) 'systematic literature review and meta-analysis technique' to deliver a substantial and comprehensive of sustainable marketing. The present review synthesizes the prior research and strengthens theoretical as well as practical nuances that help India's fast evolving consuming segment to be more sustainability conscious. The Process Flow / Flowchart is shown in the below Figure 2.

5.1 Prisma Framework

'PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework' was selected as it is considered as the "benchmark" for SLRs in social sciences and humanities providing a structured approach to identifying, screening, and synthesizing evidence from peer-reviewed sources. The methodology as propagated in the guidelines, is divided into important phases: Protocol development, criteria- inclusion and exclusion, screening, selection, quality appraisal, thematic synthesis and analysis, and limitations. The initial search included large number of literatures as displayed in Figure 2. The figure depicts the prisma process, illustrating the filtering of records from identification to exclusion to final inclusion. A total 1200 articles were found to be published between 2016-2026. The diversity of data is related to the domain of sustainable marketing practices. This comprehensive search has been executed in Scopus database, Web of Science, Sage, Springer, Elsevier, MDPI, Emerald, Wiley, and Taylor and Francis databases.

Figure 2. Prisma Framework Flow



****Refers- Endnote 2025**

unranked, predatory, or non-indexed journals

Before March 10, 2016 and after March 10, 2026

Purely Western, European, North American, or other contexts with no stated relevance to India

In order to be more specific vis-à-vis Indian context, searches incorporated terms like “Indian authors” or site-specific operators (emerald.com for Emerald journals with Indian focus). Backward and forward citation tracking was performed on seminal papers (Nguyen et al., 2022) to identify additional sources. The search yielded 1,500 initial records, reflecting a broad yet targeted approach justified by the need to balance comprehensiveness with feasibility. The select screening of the 1200 articles from March 10, 2016 to March 10, 2026 is conducted. Below mentioned diagram reflects the steps and resources within sustainable marketing practices domain.

6. Results and Analysis

The analysis of 70 research works from 2015 to 2025 captures the widespread, diverse sustainable practices adopted in the FMCG sector influencing GenZ and allied consumer behaviour as shown in Table 1 with the key findings.

Table 1. Summary of Select 35 studies (2015-2025)

Sl. No.	Year	Authors	Objectives	Methodology	Key Findings
1	2026	Nalinee Mohprasit	Analyze sustainable grocery purchase intentions	Survey, SEM	Perceived behavioral control and attitude significantly influence intention
2	2026	Ali Kara, Maung Min, Sathaporn Opananon	Identify combinations of factors leading to sustainable consumption	Survey, SEM	Multiple pathways lead to sustainable consumption behavior
3	2026	Acikgoz, F., Busalim, A., Lynn, T., & Iahad, N. A.	Examine barriers to sustainable fashion	PLS-SEM, fsQCA	Examine barriers to sustainable fashion

4	2026	Vishal Kumar Laheri	Study role of environmental consciousness	Survey	Environmental consciousness strongly predicts intention
5	2026	Yadav, P., Yadav, A., Sharma, A. P., Singh, S., Paliwal, M., & Gupta, S.	Assess moderating role of price	Survey	Price weakens intention-behavior conversion
6	2026	Dimitrios Theocharis, George Tsekouropoulos, Greta Hoxha, Ioanna Simeli	Explain how Gen Z traits affect the gap	Empirical survey	Digital connectivity and social influence shape behavior
7	2026	Annida Khoiriani, Arif Triwinarso	Examine drivers of green purchase intention	SEM	Green advertising and innovation improve intentions through brand image
8	2026	Mostafa Mahmoud Kamel Saadeldin ;Mahmoud Abogabal;Mahitab Mohamed Shahin	Explore Gen Z consumer motives towards consuming sustainable food products from local brands in Egypt.	Qualitative interviews	Gen Z consumers have demonstrated more tendency to purchase green food products.
9	2026	Nguyen Thi Viet Ha, Nguyen Ha Trang, Nguyen Thi Thao Linh	Analyze green packaging purchase intention in FMCG	Survey	TPB factors significantly influence green packaging intention
10	2025	Ngo, Q.-H., Nguyen, T.-L., & Nguyen, M.-H.	Examine green intention-behavior relationship	Survey, SEM	Intention predicts behavior but contextual barriers remain

11	2025	Nabi Khan, S., Minhas, N., & Neale, N.	Examine green intention- behaviour gap	SEM	Trust reduces gap
12	2025	Mishra, A. B., Khan, S., & Gurjar, R.	Examine how 7 FMCG firms implement sustainable marketing strategy	Qualitative comparative case study based on secondary data	FMCG sector as a whole navigate challenges in aligning global operations with local expectations
13	2024	Jakubowska, D., Dąbrowska, A., Pacholek, B., & Sady, S.	Examine sustainable food intentions	TPB, CAWI survey	Attitude and knowledge significantly predict intentions; subjective norms less influential.
14	2023	Szaban, Marta & Stefańska, Magdalena.	Understand resistance barriers	Qualitative interviews	Resistance affects behaviour
15	2022	Ana Lisboa, Liliana Vitorino, Raquel Antunes	Explore sustainable packaging choices	Survey	Convenience moderates sustainable choices
16	2022	Yongbo Sun, Jiayuan Xing	Examine social media effects	Survey, SEM	Social media enhances green purchase intention
17	2022	Ham, C.-D., Chung, U. C., Kim, W. J., Lee, S. Y., & Oh, S.- H.	Compare green purchase intentions across generations	Survey	Gen Z more environmentally aware
18	2022	Khan, K. U., Atlas, F., Arshad, M. Z., Akhtar, S., & Khan, F.	Examine impact of green marketing	SEM	Trust mediates purchase behavior

19	2022	Michel, J. F., Mombeuil, C., & Diunugala, H. P.	Identify antecedents of green consumption	Survey, SEM	Environmental responsibility and perceived effectiveness are important predictors
20	2022	Khan, K., Iqbal, S., Riaz, K., & Hameed, I.	Investigate behavioural adoption	SEM	Behaviour differs from intention
21	2022	Casalegno, C., Candelo, E., & Santoro, G.	Examine if generational cohort matters in purchasing green products	Survey	Age was a significant condition in choosing sustainable products
22	2021	Tyson, A., Kennedy, B., & Funk, C.	Explore how Americans across different generations responds to environmental issues	Survey	Younger generations are more active in addressing climate change issues
23	2021	Zaremohzzabieh, Z., Ismail, N., Ahrari, S., & Abu Samah, A.	Synthesize green purchase studies	Meta-analysis	Attitude strongly predicts intention
24	2021	Rausch, T. M., & Kopplin, C. S.	Identify mechanisms reducing the gap	Empirical survey	Habits strongly affect outcomes
25	2021	Mohd Sadiq, K., Bharti, K., Adil, M., & Singh, R.	Study actual purchase behaviour	Survey	Behavioural barriers persist
26	2020	Chaturvedi, P., Kulshreshtha, K. and Tripathi, V.	Examine intention-behaviour discrepancy	SEM	Intentions weakly predict behaviour

27	2020	Dabija, D.-C., Bejan, B. M., & Dinu, V.	Assess Gen Z environmental behavior	Survey	Knowledge influences intention
28	2020	Talwar, S., Talwar, M., Kaur, P., & Dhir, A.	Explore resistance impact	SEM	Resistance lowers behaviour
29	2019	Nguyen, H. V., Nguyen, N., & Hoang, T. T. B.	Close intention-behaviour gap	SEM	Attitude alone insufficient
30	2019	Testa, F., S. Sarti, and M. Frey.	Understand behaviour gap	SEM	Social norms insufficient
31	2018	Allen, M., & Spialek, P.	Explore how pro environmental values of younger cohorts influence product purchase decision and willingness to spread green WOM information	Survey	Younger generations tend to share green word-of-mouth recommendations with their peers.
32	2016	Heidenreich, S., Handrich, M., & Kraemer, T.	Explore resistance processes	SEM	Resistance predicts rejection
33	2016	Caruana, R., Carrington, M. J., & Chatzidakis, A.	Explain behaviour gap	Conceptual	Contextual barriers matter
34	2013	S. Heidenreich, P. Spieth	Examine innovation barriers	SEM	Risk barrier critical
35	2013	Gleim, M. R., Smith, J. S., Andrews, D., & Cronin Jr, J. J.	Examine adoption barriers	Survey	Convenience affects behaviour

Source: Author Compilation

6.1 Theoretical Contribution

This framework advances the literature in several ways. It combines the Intention–Behavior Gap perspective with Innovation Resistance Theory to explain not only *why* green purchase intentions form but also *why they often fail to translate into behavior*. This justifies the new integrative framework. Perhaps, policymakers would mandate attempt to standardise eco-labels and subsidise green premiums for potential segments to accelerate supply-chain and other distributional infrastructure. Moreover, it incorporates digital trust, peer validation, and emotional gratification, which are especially salient for digitally connected consumers. Overall, the model proposes that green purchase behavior is not determined by intention alone. The resulting theoretical sequence can therefore be expressed as: Environmental Consciousness and Social Influence → Green Purchase Intention → Intention–Behavior Gap → IRT Barriers and Facilitating Moderators → Green Purchase Behavior. This provides a comprehensive explanation for sustainable consumption behavior among Generation Z consumers in the Indian FMCG sector.

7. Discussion

Across the dataset, environmental knowledge and environmental concern emerged as the strongest predictors of positive green attitudes. Labels such as Ecomark, USDA Organic, and Fairtrade were shown to significantly reduce consumer scepticism by substantial percentage. The findings confirm that sustainable packaging influences Gen Z behavior through three key mechanisms. From a managerial perspective, FMCG companies should invest in transparent packaging communication by providing clear, credible, and verifiable information about environmental claims, materials, recyclability, certifications, and product traceability, as greater transparency can strengthen green trust and reduce greenwashing scepticism. Firms should also maintain price competitiveness, because excessive eco-premiums can intensify the value and price-sensitivity barriers identified by Innovation Resistance Theory and prevent consumers from converting favourable intentions into actual purchases.

8. Limitations and Future directions

The proposed model has certain limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, a cross-sectional research design captures consumers' environmental consciousness, purchase intentions, perceived barriers, and green purchase behaviour at a particular point in time, making it difficult to determine how these relationships change as consumers gain experience with sustainable products. Second, the use of self-reported data may introduce social desirability and recall biases, as consumers may overstate their environmental concern, intention to purchase green products, or frequency of sustainable purchases while their actual behaviour may differ. Overall, future research and managerial practice should focus not only on increasing environmental awareness and purchase intention but also on making sustainable FMCG choices credible, affordable, convenient, socially validated, and personally meaningful,

thereby reducing the Intention–Behavior Gap and encouraging more consistent green purchase behaviour.

9. Conclusion

This literature review analysed 70 studies (2015-2025) by adopting PRISMA flowchart analysis. Sustainable packaging is an important and pivotal conditional stimulator of Gen Z consumer behavior. Thereby, it increases purchase intention, level of trust, brand switching amongst other factors. The suggested framework suggests a blueprint for future research by accentuating multi-level studies. Therefore, by reconciling academia with real-world execution, this study heralds a more sustainable Indian FMCG ecosystem. . Finally, companies should target Generation Z through identity-driven marketing by presenting sustainable consumption as contemporary, socially desirable, authentic, and compatible with consumers' lifestyles rather than as a sacrifice made only by environmental activists. Eco-influencers, sustainability campaigns, user-generated content, peer recommendations, and social-media communities can strengthen social validation and make green consumption part of consumers' desired identities.

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