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Research Article

Purchase Behaviour

Greening the Wardrobe: The Impact of Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value on Green Purchase Behaviour

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The present study examines how Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value influence Green Purchase Behaviour in the context of green clothing. A total of 166 men and 134 women undergraduate students from Kolkata were selected using multistage stratified random sampling technique. Standardised instruments were administered, and the data were analysed using descriptive statistics, independent samples t tests, Pearson's product moment correlation, and multiple linear regression. The results indicate that men and women undergraduate students differ significantly in Green Purchase Behaviour. Both Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value showed significant positive associations with Green Purchase Behaviour. Further, the regression analysis revealed that these two variables act as significant predictors of Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing among undergraduate students in Kolkata.

Keywords: green, sustainable, eco-friendly, green products, environment, concern, value, purchase behaviour

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1. Introduction

India has introduced a global mass movement called Mission LiFE: 'Lifestyle for Environment'. This movement was designed to promote eco-friendly practices and encourage sustainable living across the world. Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced this concept at the UN COP26 summit in Glasgow on November 1, 2021. The concept of sustainable consumption, eco-friendly consumption, green consumption, and socially responsible consumption are all used interchangeably, referring to choosing products that are better for the planet (Nguyen et al., 2019). According to White et al. (2019), green consumers are individuals who make choices about products and services in ways that benefit both the environment and society while also enhancing their own well-being. Rapid industrialisation in urban areas is a major cause of pollution that our planet Earth is facing in present days (Sulaymon et al., 2020). This is the reason why most of the developing nations have now shifted towards green consumption (Kumar and Yadav, 2021). Thus, the percentage of consumers who are becoming aware of ecological issues is increasing. They also want to buy sustainable products but at discounted prices (Van Doorn & Verhoef, 2015). In contrast, the Global Sustainability Study (2021) also showed that due to significant global changes, a growing number of consumers are becoming conscious of environmental problems and are expressing a willingness to spend more on sustainable alternatives. Muthukumarana et al. (2018) reported that the textile sector is among the major contributors to pollution, accounting for nearly 10% of global carbon emissions. The reasons behind this could be high water and energy use, heavy chemicals and pesticides, and the massive piles of discarded clothing waste. All of these reasons increase the importance of sustainable fashion. Sustainable clothing is not just about organic fabrics or natural dyes; it is also about how clothes are made, how long they last, and how they are disposed of (Bianchi & Birtwistle, 2012). Terms like green clothing, organic clothing, and eco-fashion are often used interchangeably (Shaw and Newholm, 2007; Shen et al., 2013), all referring to apparel designed for long use, made ethically, and causing minimal environmental harm (Rausch & Kopplin, 2021). The present research focused on Generation Z because research showed that they show a strong level of concern for environmental challenges (Abrar et al., 2021), demonstrate a readiness to modify their purchasing behaviours (Jesus et al., 2023), and possess a spending capacity that is five to six times higher than that of earlier generations. All of these make them a powerful force in shaping the future of sustainable fashion (Djafarova & Foots, 2022). Past research has also shown that environmentally concerned individuals and individuals who are high in environmental awareness are more likely to choose eco-friendly products (Song et al., 2020). Thus, the aim of the present study is to examine gender differences and the influence of Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value on Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing among undergraduate students in Kolkata.

2. Literature Review

During the COVID-19 lockdown, environmental quality improved worldwide, proving that human actions are a major cause of environmental damage (Nittala & Moturu, 2021). Most of the past research showed that environmental concern is one of the important factors for promoting sustainable consumption (Felix et al., 2018; Hao et al., 2019). Environmentally concerned individuals are those who care about environmental issues, who use natural resources more often, and who feel responsible for protecting nature for themselves, societies, and future generations (Ibnou Laaroussi et al., 2020). In the current context, patterns of consumer behaviour contribute substantially to various environmental challenges, indicating that both consumers and businesses share the responsibility of safeguarding and preserving the environment (Naalchi Kashi, 2020). Haws et al. (2014) described green consumption values as the extent to which individuals reflect their environmental values through their purchasing and consumption choices. These values play a crucial role in shaping sustainable consumer behaviour by motivating people to select ecofriendly options more often than conventional alternatives (Kim & Moon, 2012; Nguyen et al., 2016). As a result, consumers tend to favour products that cause minimal harm to the environment (Varshneya et al., 2017; Wang & Lin, 2017). Mostafa (2007) defined green purchase behaviour as those behaviours that people show by expressing concern for the environment through buying recycled products.

Chaudhury (2018) revealed that if individuals have stronger green consumption value that will significantly influence both consumers' purchase intentions and purchase behaviours. Many scholars have revealed that several barriers hinder consumers' green purchase behaviour. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to explore which factors contribute more significantly to green purchase behaviour (Crane, 2000; Mintel, 1995; Wong, Turner, & Stoneman, 1996). Green purchase behaviour significantly influenced by values, norms, lifestyles, concern for the environment and many more (Jansson et al., 2010). Although many studies have examined sustainable consumption, very few have focused specifically on green clothing or on Generation Z in India. Limited research exists on how Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value influence green clothing choices among young consumers. This study addresses this gap by examining these factors among undergraduate students in Kolkata.

3. Methodology

3.1. Hypotheses

H01: Men and women undergraduate students of Kolkata do not differ significantly in terms of their Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing.

H02: There is no significant association between Environmental Concern and Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing among undergraduate students in Kolkata, regardless of their gender.

H03: There is no significant association between Green Consumption Value and Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing among undergraduate students in Kolkata, regardless of their gender.

H04: Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing cannot be predicted on the basis of Environmental Concern, and Green Consumption Value, among undergraduate students of Kolkata, irrespective of their gender.

3.2. Variables under Study

-Independent Variable

Demographic Independent variable

-Gender (Men and Women)

Psychological Independent Variables

-Environmental Concern

-Green Consumption Value

Dependent Variable

-Green Purchase Behaviour

3.3. Sample

For this present study, a total of 300 undergraduate students from Kolkata were chosen using multistage stratified random sampling technique from the different streams of study (B.A./B.Sc./B.Com.), where 166 were men and 134 were women. First, four zones of Kolkata City were identified, North, South, East, and Central. A list of colleges was prepared for each zone, and from each list, five colleges were randomly selected using the lottery method (5×4 = 20 colleges). In the next stage, four colleges from each zone were again randomly selected, resulting in a final sample of 16 colleges (4×4=16). Data were then collected from students who volunteered to participate, irrespective of their gender or stream of study. Random selection was carried out using the lottery method, and the response rate was 300 out of 350 students (85.7%).

3.4. Inclusion Criteria

- Age: 19-21 years
- Nationality: Indian
- Education: undergraduate (must be enrolled in college)
- Residential area: urban and sub-urban- Residing in West Bengal
- Socio-economic status:middle socio-economic status on the basis of Updated Kuppuswamy socioeconomic scale 2024
- Location: Co-ed collages located in radius of south, north, central and east Kolkata
- Employment status: Unemployed
- Marital status: Unmarried
- Language: Those who have studied English as language subject at least up to 12th grade
- Those who have purchased green (ecofriendly) clothing in the past were included in the study
- Environmental science: Those who have studied it as a subject in school or college
- Participants with a low score (0-4) as assessed by GHQ 28 were included in the study

3.5. Tools

Informed consent form. Information Schedule was prepared to gather data on gender, socioeconomic status, marital status, nationality, residence type etc. and other demographic information.

Modified Kuppuswamy scale 2024 (Mandal I, and Hossain SR 2024) and ***General Health Questionnaire-28*** by Goldberg, D.P. and Hiller, V .F. (1979) were used as screening tools.

Environmental concern: The scale is adopted by Sharma, K. Aswal, C (2017) from the scale of Kilbourne et al. (2008), and Dunlap and Van L, iere (1978). The scale consists of 8 items measured on a 7- point Likert scale from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. Cronbach alpha =0.83. For the present sample, Cronbach's alpha reliability was found to be .85.

Green consumption value (GREEN scale): This scale consists of 6 items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree, developed by Haws, et al (2014). Cronbach alpha Reliability on adult sample was = 0.95. Cronbach's alpha reliability was calculated for the present sample and it has been found out to be .87.

Green Purchase Behaviour- The scale was adopted by Kumar (2012) from the original scale of Schlegelmilch et al. (1996). The scale has 6 items scored on a five-point Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Cronbach alpha= 0.87. Cronbach's alpha reliability was calculated for the present sample and was found to be .82.

3.6. Ethical Consideration

The present research followed ethical guidelines, and results were reported honestly and accurately.

3.7. Statistical Analyses

Descriptive statistics were done. To verify the proposed hypotheses independent sample *t*-test, Pearson product moment correlation, and multiple linear regression analysis were calculated.

4. Analysis & Findings

		n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Green Purchase Behaviour	Men	166	22.24	3.87
	Women	134	20.64	3.25
	Overall	300	21.53	3.69
Environmental Concern	Men	166	31.58	3.29
	Women	134	30.15	3.45
	Overall	300	30.94	3.44
Green Consumption Value	Men	166	21.98	3.22
	Women	134	19.93	3.27
	Overall	300	21.06	3.39

Table 1: Mean and Standard deviation of Green Purchase Behaviour,

Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value

The results shows that the mean score of Green Purchase Behaviour, Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value were 21.53 (*SD*= 3.69) 30.94 (*SD*= 3.44) and 21.06 (*SD*= 3.39) respectively.

Again, it can be seen that men had higher mean scores than women in Green Purchase Behaviour (*M* men 22.24, *M* women 20.64), Environmental Concern (*M* men= 31.58, *M* women=30.15), and Green Consumption Value (*M* men= 21.98, *M* women= 19.93).

Table 2: Skewness, Kurtosis and test of Normality for Green Purchase Behaviour, Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value

	n	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro-Wilk		
				Statistic	*df*	*Sig. (p value)*
Green Purchase Behaviour	300	-.05	-.18	.991	300	*p* =.061
Environmental Concern	300	-.07	.15	.992	300	*p* =.122
Green Consumption Value	300	.07	-.18	.992	300	*p* =.097

The Skewness and Kurtosis value for Green Purchase Behaviour were -.05 and -.18 respectively. For Environmental Concern the values of Skewness and Kurtosis are - .07 and .15 and for Green Consumption Value .07 and -.18 respectively.

The normality of Green Purchase Behaviour, Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value was assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test. The results indicated that all three variables are normally distributed; Green Purchase Behaviour, W= .991 p=.061, Environmental Concern, W=.992 p=.122, Green Consumption Value, W= .992 p=.097.

Table 3: Independent sample t-test between men and women undergraduate students of Kolkata in terms of their Green Purchase Behaviour

	Group	*N*	Mean	SD	Levene's Test for equality of variance		*t-test* for Equality of Means		
					F	Sig.	*t*	df	*p value*
Green Purchase Behaviour	Men	166	22.24	3.87	2.20	.139	3.79	298	*p*<.001
	Women	134	20.64	3.25					

An independent samples *t*-test was run to determine whether men and women undergraduate students in Kolkata showed any significant difference in their Green Purchase Behaviour. Levene's test confirmed that the assumption of equal variances was met, F (1,298) =2.20, p =.139. The results indicated a significant difference between men (n=166 M=22.24 SD= 3.87) and women (n= 134, M= 20.64, SD= 3.25) t (298) = 3.79 p=<.001 The effect size was small-to-moderate (Cohen's d = 0.44).

Hence, **H01**: Men and women undergraduate students of Kolkata do not differ significantly in terms of their Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing is rejected.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Environmental Concern, Green consumption Value and Green Purchase Behaviour

Green Purchase Behaviour		Environmental Concern	Green Consumption Value
	Pearson Correlation	.20	.32
	p value	p<.001	P<.001
	N	300	300

Pearson product moment correlation analysis was carried out to explore the association of Green Purchase Behaviour with Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value. The analysis revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between Green Purchase Behaviour and Environmental Concern, r (298) =.20 p<.001, which represents a small positive correlation.

A similar significant positive association was found between Green Purchase Behaviour and Green Consumption Value, r (298) = .32 p<.001, which represents a moderate positive correlation.

Hence, **H02**: There is no significant association between Environmental Concern and Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing among undergraduate students in Kolkata, regardless of their gender is rejected.

H03: There is no significant association between Green Consumption Value and Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing among undergraduate students in Kolkata, regardless of their gender is rejected.

Table 5 and Table 6: Multiple linear regression analysis predicting Green Purchase Behaviour on the basis of Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value

Table 5

R	R square	Adjusted R square	F	df	P value
.35	.12	.12	20.69	2,297	P<.001

Table 6

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	P value
	B	Std. Error			
Environmental Concern	.15	.06	.14	2.42	P=.016
Green Consumption Value	.32	.06	.29	5.23	P<.001

A multiple linear regression analysis was carried out to determine whether Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value significantly predicted Green Purchase Behaviour. The overall regression model was statistically significant F (2, 297) =20.69, p<.001, with R^2= .12, adjusted R^2= .12, thus explained 12% of the variance in Green Purchase Behaviour can be explained by the combined effects of Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Value. Both Environmental Concern (b=.15 SE b=.06, β=.14 t= 2.42, p=.016), and Green Consumption Value (b=.32, SE b=.06, β=.29 t=5.23 p<.001) were significant positive predictors. The model accounted for 12% of the variance in green purchase behaviour which represents a small effect size, meaning that while both predictors contribute meaningfully, a large portion of behaviour is still influenced by other factors not included in the model.

Hence, **H04**: Green Purchase Behaviour for green clothing cannot be predicted on the basis of Environmental Concern, and Green Consumption Value, among undergraduate students of Kolkata, irrespective of their gender is rejected.

5. Discussion

The findings of the present study indicate that men and women differ significantly in their levels of green purchase behaviour for green clothing, with men reporting comparatively higher scores. This contrasts with much of the existing literature, where women are often described as displaying higher environmental concern and stronger engagement in green purchasing; a trend commonly referred to as the "eco-gender gap" (Chekima et al., 2016; Halder et al., 2020; MPO, 2018). However, this difference may reflect context-specific factors rather than stable gender patterns. Research on organic and sustainable clothing suggests that limited product variety, higher prices, and fewer targeted promotions often reduce women's likelihood of purchasing such items, whereas stronger promotional efforts by certain men's fashion brands may increase men's awareness and engagement (Varshneya & Das, 2016). These contextual features may help explain why men in the present study reported higher green purchase behaviour. According to the Value Belief Norm (VBN) theory (Stern et al., 1999), individuals' pro-environmental actions are shaped by their values, beliefs, and personal norms that guide their sense of responsibility (Di Dio et al., 1996). In the context of this study, men scored higher on environmental concern, green consumption value, and green purchase behaviour. One possible explanation is that some research suggests men may connect more strongly with sustainability messages framed around status, responsibility, and technology. Identity Motivation Theory further indicates that when a pro-environmental social identity is made salient, men's green consumption behaviour can become comparable to that of women (Oyserman, 2009a, 2009b). The present findings also demonstrated that environmental concern and green consumption value are both positively associated with green purchase behaviour. This aligns with earlier evidence showing that individuals who exhibit greater environmental concern and who place stronger value on green consumption are more likely to prefer eco-friendly products and engage more frequently in green purchasing (Shen et al., 2012; De Groot & Steg, 2015).

The regression analysis further supported this association, revealing that both variables significantly contributed to explaining variations in green purchase behaviour. Similar patterns have been reported across several past studies (Gifford & Nilsson, 2014; Candan & Yıldırım, 2013; Gonçalves et al., 2016), which strengthens the consistency of the present results.

6. Conclusion

The study shows that environmental concern and green consumption value are significant predictors of green purchase behaviour in the context of green clothing. The findings also indicate a significant difference between men and women in their green purchase behaviour. Overall, the results highlight the importance of values and concern in shaping green choices among young consumers.

Implication

The findings carry several practical implications. Fashion industries may consider shifting towards more sustainable practices by incorporating eco-friendly fabrics, ethical production methods, and durable designs (Nguyen et al, 2023). Since Generation Z in this study showed higher environmental concern and green consumption value, marketers should design campaigns that highlight genuine sustainability and social responsibility to engage this group more effectively. Brands may also need to create strategies that appeal to both men and women to promote green clothing more inclusively (Brough et al., 2016; Nanggong & Bandu, 2018). At the policy level, the government and policymakers can support greener production by implementing stronger environmental standards in the textile industry, offering tax benefits for sustainable manufacturing, and encouraging transparent and reliable eco-labelling (Pinem 2019). These efforts, along with educational programs promoting sustainable habits, can create a supportive environment for green consumer behaviour.

Limitation

The present study has several limitations. First, it relied on self-reported data, which may not always reflect participants' actual behaviour. The responses may also have been influenced by social desirability bias, as students might have provided answers, they believed were socially acceptable or environmentally responsible.

Additionally, the sample consisted only of middleclass undergraduate students in Kolkata who already purchase green clothing, which limits the generalisability of the findings to other age groups, income groups, cities, or individuals who do not buy green clothing. Future studies with larger and more diverse samples will help strengthen and extend these results.

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