

## FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS - A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON GEN Y AND GEN Z IN BENGALURU CITY

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### **Abstract**

*In the recent past, the concept of sustainability has gained immense significance due to the ongoing climatic changes and environmental degradation. It has thus become imperative that consumers consider measures towards ensuring the environment is protected, we consume just what is required and leave it for future generations to cherish. One of the measures to start is to shift towards sustainable products. The purpose of this paper is to study the factors influencing the purchase of sustainable products among Gen Y and Gen Z in Bengaluru City. This descriptive type of research employed a well-structured questionnaire and Simple random sampling method was used. The questionnaire was validated through Pilot study and reliability analysis. The primary data was collected from 250 respondents and the same was analysed using descriptive statistical tools and inferential analysis including exploratory factor analyses (EFA). Findings show that Gen Y and Gen Z were equally aware of sustainable products. Friedman test revealed that among various reasons, the purchase of products to serve the purpose had the highest mean rank while concern for the environment secured the lowest and thus, the purchase of sustainable products is driven by personal reasons rather than environmental reasons. The contribution of media to increase the awareness levels of sustainable products among Gen Y and Gen Z was significant, though the sources of media engagement were different. Thus, while marketers are advertising sustainable products, care should be taken to convey the environmental benefits of such products along with enhancing customer knowledge.*

**Keywords:** Consumer Behaviour, Gen Y, Gen Z, Sustainable Marketing and Sustainable Products.

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## **Introduction**

With the rapid spurt in technological advancement, unsustainable practices have had a negative impact on the environment and the environmental problems have now become a global concern for immediate action. Environmental degradation has now become a global issue that needs immediate intervention and this requires support from every individual. In recent times (mid-19th century), the term sustainability has been advocated by environmentalists around the world to promote mindful consumption and ethical economic development. The United Nations global assessment reports show that human society is under great threat as a result of human impact (United Nations, 2019). According to Forbes Report 2019, 77 per cent of the people want to learn how to live more sustainably and 93 per cent of the people are concerned about the environment in terms of plastic pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for the people and planet. There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is a call to action for all countries to do their bit in helping achieve these goals. The 12<sup>th</sup> goal of the SDGs aims to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns by making fundamental changes in the way we produce and consume goods and services. To achieve these goals, every individual should first be made aware of the current state of the environment and the necessary measures to be taken to revive the same that would eventually help sustain it. The Sustainable Development Goals will be achieved only if there are consistent efforts taken by all stakeholders towards ensuring sustainable practices at every possible level.

Millennials / Gen Y are people born between the years 1981 to 1996 and make up the world's largest population. This generational cohort is considered to be socially responsible and keeps in mind environmentally friendly products while shopping, so brands today have to meet those expectations. Gen Y usually chooses to either follow their instincts or decide according to their peers' preferences. (Forbes Report, 2019). Due to the earning capacity of this generational cohort, they will be the nation's highest spenders in comparison to other generational cohorts. The results of a poll conducted by

Clinton Global Initiative and Microsoft revealed that 76% of millennials are more focused on the environment than their parent's generation was. 66% of them accept that the earth is getting warmer, and 75% agree that it is a result of human activity.

Gen Z are people born between the years 1997 to 2012 and these are a generational cohort that will soon become the change-makers in the world, hence it is imperative to ensure that they are made aware of sustainable products and the current situation of our natural resources. According to Deloitte, it was noted that Gen Z is adopting more sustainable behaviours compared to other generational cohorts: the research found that a good 50% of the individuals reduced the number of actual purchases and 45% of them due to ethical and sustainability issues stopped buying from certain brands. Research suggests that this generation feels more motivated to reduce the effects of climate change and pollution. (Forbes Report 2022). Pagiaslis and Krontalis (2014) have also proven that environmental concern was a major motivator behind the purchase intention of eco-friendly products.

According to a 2020 Deloitte survey of millennials, about four in five respondents believed businesses and governments should make even greater efforts to protect the environment. The term corporate social responsibility has now become sustainable development goals (SDG); environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices; and sustainability accounting standards boards (SASB) (Forbes Report 2022). Manufacturers and organisations today try to promote their products whilst talking about the sustainable practices followed at their respective workplaces and processes involved in manufacturing a product. They take immense pride in those measures to help sustain the environment by doing their bit and giving back to the environment. Customers are also made aware of these practices through several ways such as advertising, packaging, information displayed on company websites, etc.

The triple bottom line is an important framework which comprises three aspects – social, environmental and economic or in other words – people, planet and prosperity. This reminds organisations that they should not only focus on profits but at the same time consideration to be given to the people and the environment in which they operate. 75%

of Millennials / Gen Y consider that being responsible and doing our bit to help sustain the environment is of immense importance than focusing only on making a profit (Forbes Report, 2019). In today's digital age, it has become easy to share information on social media about the practices followed in the organisation. This information helps the organisation to increase their goodwill and sometimes if organisations indulge in unethical practices that are harmful to the environment and if the same information is brought to the media, it leads to a reputation risk for the organisation. In today's profit-driven motive, organisations are reminded about the importance of sustaining the natural resources that we use which are being exploited for our selfish needs. Hence, organisations today proclaim their devotion to sustainable measures in their processes.

The finance minister while presenting the Union Budget 2023-24 announced the Green Credit programme to encourage behavioural change and the same will be notified under the Environment Protection Act. This step will incentivise the environmentally sustainable and responsive actions of individuals, local bodies and organisations. The programme will give a boost to many organisations to start acting green in their daily operations.

Sustainable Marketing is the process of creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers in such a way that both natural and human capital are preserved or enhanced throughout (Martin & Schouten, 2014). Sustainability marketing philosophy guides the behaviour, strategy and processes of an entire organisation, understanding its place in society and its obligations to current and future generations (Chamorro & Bañegil, 2006; Peattie, 1999; Peattie & Crane, 2005). The definition of Sustainable Marketing has changed and evolved according to the growing relevance of environmental sustainability. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), Green Marketing is defined as the promotion of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. The emergence of green marketing as a concept can be traced back to 1980 when the term was first coined as 'ecological marketing' during a workshop conducted by the AMA.

### **Literature Review**

Pagiaslis, A., & Krontalis, A. K. (2014) states as long as sustainable consumption remains one of the top priorities of European and global societies, understanding the

behaviour of green, ecology-sensitive consumers is a key issue. In this study, the researchers examine the effect and interrelationships of consumer environmental knowledge, environmental concern and beliefs. Environmental knowledge represents what consumers know about the environment and about fundamental relationships that lead to adjusted environmental views and have significant ecological effects. The analysis of the data collected reveals that consumers appear to be strongly concerned about the environment and also hold strong beliefs regarding the potency of green consumption but lack specific knowledge about products. Thus, marketers should focus on providing information about these products.

Kumar, P., & Ghodeswar, B. M. (2015) in their research paper have studied the various factors that affect consumer's decision towards the purchase of green products. A well-structured questionnaire was surveyed and the data obtained was analysed using confirmatory and exploratory factor analyses. The results observed some of the important factors which influenced the purchase decision of green products were care for the environment, supporting the environment and its protection, the experience of using green products and the social appeal of using green products. The paper revealed that consumers prefer to buy green products from companies that are environmentally friendly and were in support of consuming green products in their daily lives. Hence, firms should work on promoting green products that would eventually lead to creating a sustainable environment.

Antonides, G. (2017) in this paper, an innovative experiment was conducted and about 6000 cards were distributed to shoppers and on each card a task was given. The task was as follows - easy (I carried my groceries home in either a fabric bag, a backpack, or a basket), moderate (I bought all fruits and vegetables without plastic wrapping, and got them home in either a fabric bag, a backpack, or a basket), or difficult (I did my entire shopping entirely without plastic). After performing the challenge, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire online which included questions about collective efficacy, self-efficacy, and trust in collective performance, among others. The results revealed that moderate tasks resulted in higher collective efficacy, whereas task difficulty did not affect self-efficacy. The experiment shows that trust in the collective performance of environmental behaviour depends on task difficulty, which may be

useful for how collective actions can be stimulated.

Prakash, G., & Pathak, P. (2017) their paper aims to understand the intention to buy eco-friendly packaged products among young consumers. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data and the results of the analysis revealed that consumers are environmentally conscious and want to protect the environment. The results revealed that, among others, personal norms were one of the most important predictors of purchase intention of eco-friendly packaged products.

Maichum K. et al., (2017) their study aimed to investigate the determinants that influence purchase intention towards purchase of green products in Thailand. Data was collected from 425 young individuals of the age group 18 to 25 through a face-to-face interview and quota sampling was used to select the respondents. According to Stutzman and Green, environmental knowledge is important in creating the necessary attitude toward green consumption. The analysis revealed that environmental consciousness, environmental knowledge and environmental attitude had significant positive influences on purchase intentions towards green products. Further analysis revealed that environmental attitude mediates the relationship between environmental consciousness, environmental knowledge and purchase intentions.

Zahid, M. M. et al., (2017) their paper aimed to study the factors affecting purchase intention and social media publicity of green products to understand the mediating role of concern for consequences. The moderating role of economic factors was also analysed. The data was collected from 347 respondents and the analysis revealed that social factors and benefits that consumers gain upon the purchase were found to be significant contributors to the purchase of green products. Thus, marketers must highlight the benefits of using these products in their advertisements or marketing campaigns. It is also important that marketers position the firm as environmentally friendly; as consumers today are cautious about where they buy their products from and more importantly, consumers tend to pass on the message on social media.

Masocha, R. (2018) focused on investigating the awareness levels, perception of consumers and knowledge about sustainable marketing practices and their relationship with the purchase of sustainable products. Primary data was collected through a self-

administered questionnaire using convenience sampling and data was analysed through descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of the analysis showed that customer awareness levels and the marketing efforts of the organisations were positively linked to the purchase behaviour of the consumers concerning sustainable products. Thus, the paper recommends that marketers, government, educational institutions, etc should encourage and create awareness of sustainable products which will in turn help consumers make wise decisions when they have enough knowledge about such products and the benefits to the environment. Though the paper focuses on university students, it suggests that the government should also take the initiative to educate community members about the benefits of using sustainable products.

Arli, D. et al., (2018) tries to explore the consumers' perceived readiness to be green and how green products affect the purchasing decisions. The study uses the Theory of Planned Behaviour which is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). 917 responses were analysed and the same revealed that attitude toward green products significantly influences consumers' readiness to be green. The findings in this research argue that a positive attitude towards purchasing a green product may not necessarily translate into purchase intention unless the consumer feels that they are ready to be green. Further, they suggest that the readiness to be green comes from internal factors such as a sense of being responsible, and concern for the environment and not external influences.

Byrd, K., & Su, J. (2020) their study tried to investigate the perception of consumers and their behaviour towards apparel labels and environmental, sustainable and social apparel. Quantitative research was conducted and primary data was collected from 300 respondents. The findings of the study revealed that consumers lacked knowledge about environmentally friendly practices in the apparel industry but expressed positive sentiments towards apparel sustainability. The study further shows that respondents have an interest in environmental labelling but are unaware of brands that sell sustainable apparel.

Osarodion, O. (2021), studied the factors influencing Generation Y with regards to the purchase of green products in Nigeria by applying the theory of planned behaviour. The variables in the study included green behavioural control, green product trust, green

product value, green environmental awareness and green price sensitivity. Data was collected from 300 respondents within the age bracket of 18 to 32 living in urban areas. The data was processed and the empirical results revealed that the level of environmental awareness was low and the Theory of planned behaviour positively influences Gen Y and thus the policymakers could formulate appropriate strategies to create awareness among Gen Y to purchase green products as they believed it is their responsibility to protect the environment.

Saut, M., & Saing, T. (2021) their research applied the Theory of Planned Behaviour and studied environmental concern and willingness to pay and then investigated the intention to purchase environmentally friendly products among Gen Z. The analysis revealed that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control, were found to have significant relationships with the purchase intention. Willingness to pay has the most significant effect on the purchase intention, whereas subjective norm has the weakest influence; meanwhile, environmental concern affects both attitude and purchase intention. Attitude and willingness to pay were found to be the most influential drivers of purchase intentions.

### **Relevance of the Study**

With the ongoing climatic changes and the environment degradation issues, it is more than important to drive consumers towards adopting sustainable measures at all levels. It is now time to consider the harmful practices that have resulted in the present situation of the environment. As a start towards ensuring consumers indulge in sustainable practices and sustainability measures, it is important to check the awareness levels of the current and immediate future generations. Thus, this paper aims to study the awareness levels of sustainable products among Gen Y and Gen Z and examines the factors that influence the two generational cohorts under study. The results of the study would help marketers plan strategies to create awareness and drive consumers towards consuming sustainable products. Millennials are better educated and better connected to information and the world (Morgan Stanley, 2017). Therefore, India with the world's largest number of millennials (400 million), who constitute more than one-third of the working population (Morgan Stanley, 2017) becomes a hot market to understand for the green marketers.

### **Objectives of the Study**

To study the awareness levels of sustainable products among Gen Y and Gen Z.

To examine the factors that influence Gen Y and Gen Z to purchase sustainable products.

To analyse the association between purchase of sustainable products with generation and gender.

### **Research Methodology**

With the help of a well-structured questionnaire, a total of 250 responses were collected from Gen Y and Gen Z in Bengaluru City and secondary data was collected from reliable sources that provided valuable insights to this research. Simple random sampling method was used and descriptive statistical tools such as Mean, Standard Deviation, frequency analysis and inferential analysis including exploratory factor analyses (EFA) were used to analyse the collected responses. The questionnaire was validated through Pilot study and reliability analysis. Friedman test, a non-parametric statistical test was conducted to understand the difference in respondent's ranking for reasons to purchase a sustainable/green product. The mean rank for all the reasons was calculated. Cluster profile of 250 participants on the role of media in awareness of sustainable products was developed using a two-step cluster analysis.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to find the most important factor that influenced the purchase of sustainable products. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.804 indicated sampling adequacy and a significant Bartlett's test of Sphericity ( $p < 0.001$ ) indicated appropriateness of items for factor analysis. EFA was performed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation for all items that measured the factors which influenced Gen Y and Gen Z to purchase suitable products.

The Chi-Square test was performed to show the association of the purchase of sustainable products with generation.

## Results / Analysis and Interpretation

### Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of 250 respondents who participated in this study. The majority of respondents were female (51.6%), residing in the South zone of Bangalore (44.4%), pursuing under graduation (63.2%) and occupied as students (57.2%). About 64% were Gen Z and earned an annual income of less than 3,00,000 per annum (62.4%).

**Table1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	121 (48.4)
	Female	129 (51.6)
<b>Generation</b>	Gen Z (13-27 years)	160 (64)
	Gen Y (28-43 years)	90 (36)
<b>Education Level</b>	High School (10th grade)	1 (0.4)
	Higher Secondary (12th grade)	13 (5.2)
	Undergraduate	158 (63.2)
	Postgraduate	66 (26.4)
	Doctorate	8 (3.2)
	Others (Hotel Management, Engineering, Computer Science)	4 (1.6)
<b>Occupation</b>	Private employee	42 (16.8)
	Government employee	12 (4.8)
	Homemaker	10 (4)
	Business	17 (6.8)
	Professional	26 (10.4)
	Student	143 (57.2)

<b>Place of Residence</b>	Bangalore North Zone	74 (29.6)
	Bangalore South Zone	111 (44.4)
	Bangalore East Zone	40 (16)
	Bangalore West Zone	25 (10)
<b>Annual Income</b>	Below 3,00,000	156 (62.4)
	3,00,000 - 4,99,999	25 (10)
	6,00,000 and above	45 (18)
<b>Total</b>		<b>250 (100)</b>

Source: Computed from Primary Data

**Objective 1: To study the awareness levels of sustainable products among Gen Y and Gen Z**

#### **Difference in level of awareness of sustainable products among Gen Y and Gen Z**

The mean value of awareness of sustainable products was higher in Gen Y ( $3.787 \pm 0.768$ ) than Gen Z group ( $3.633 \pm 0.828$ ), however, the difference was statistically insignificant ( $t = -1.446$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). It can be inferred that both Gen Z and Gen Y were equally aware of sustainable products.

**Table 2: Difference in Level of Awareness of Sustainable Products Among Gen Z and Gen Y**

	<b>Gen Z (Mean <math>\pm</math> SD)</b>	<b>Gen Y (Mean <math>\pm</math> SD)</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p value</b>
<b>Awareness</b>	3.633 $\pm$ 0.828	3.787 $\pm$ 0.768	-1.446	0.149

Source: Computed from Primary Data

#### **Difference in the Respondent's Rank for Reasons to Buy a Sustainable/green Product**

Friedman test showed a significant difference among mean ranks of the respondent's reasons to buy a sustainable/green product ( $\chi^2 = 578.082$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Among various reasons, the purchase of products to serve the purpose had the highest mean rank (6.496)

while concern for the environment had the lowest mean rank (1.752). It can be inferred that the purchase of sustainable or green products is driven by personal or individual reasons rather than environmental reasons. Government support in protecting the environment stands to be the second important reason to buy green/sustainable products with a mean rank of 6.1640. Societal pressure tends to be the third important reason for buying green/sustainable products with a mean rank of 5.96.

**Table 3: Difference in the Respondent's Rank for Reasons to Buy a Sustainable/Green Product**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>
Concern for the Environment	1.752
Enhance the quality of life	4.224
Advertisements about green products	4.368
Potential increase of product value	4.596
Support the manufacturers of green products	5.524
Sustainable living	5.916
Societal pressure	5.960
Support Government in helping protect the environment	6.164
Purchase product to serve the purpose	6.496

Chi-square = 578.082 (p=0.000)

Source: Computed from Primary Data

### **Media for Awareness of Sustainable Products and Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Cluster profile of 250 participants on the role of media for awareness of sustainable products was developed using two-step cluster analysis. Cluster 1 had 103 (41.2%) participants and cluster 2 had 147 (58.8%) participants with a cluster ratio of 1.43 (Figure 1 and Figure 3). Silhouette measures of cohesion and separation showed that the generated clusters were in the fair zone (Figure 2). Occupation followed by generation

was the most important predictor for clustering (Figure 1). Government employees, homemakers and professionals of Gen Y (cluster 1) gained awareness of sustainable products through media such as radio, newspaper advertisements, company websites/magazines/prospectus, while students of Gen Z (cluster 2) gained awareness on sustainable products through media such as friends/family/neighbour /word of mouth/visiting shop and social media ads/YouTube/ Instagram /whilst shopping (Table 4). Overall, the contribution of the media to increase the awareness of sustainable products was different between Gen Z and Gen Y as both the generations used different sources of media.

**Table 4: Cluster Profile**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cluster 1 %</b>	<b>Cluster 2 %</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	35.5	64.5
	Female	46.5	53.5
<b>Generation</b>	Gen Z	8.1	91.9
	Gen Y	100.0	0.0
<b>Education level</b>	High School (10th grade)	100.0	0.0
	Higher Secondary (12th grade)	7.7	92.3
	Undergraduate	15.2	84.8
	Postgraduate	98.5	1.5
	Doctorate	100.0	0.0
	Others (Hotel Management Engineering, Computer Science)	100.0	0.0
<b>Occupation</b>	Private employee	92.9	7.1
	Government employee	100.0	0.0
	Homemaker	100.0	0.0
	Business	94.1	5.9
	Professional	100.0	0.0
	Student	0.0	100.0

Annual Income	Below 3,00,000	12.8	87.2
	3,00,000 – 4,99,999	76.0	24.0
	5,00,000 – 5,99,999	100.0	0.0
	6,00,000 and above	88.9	11.1
Television advertisements		40.1	59.9
Radio		56.5	43.5
Newspaper advertisements		58.7	41.3
Company websites / magazines / prospectus		49.6	50.4
School/ College/Research/ Blogs and articles		41.7	58.3
Friends/Family/Neighbour/word of mouth/visiting shop		18.2	81.8
Social media ads/YouTube/ Instagram /whilst shopping		20.8	79.2

*Source: Computed from Primary Data*

***Objective 2: To examine the factors that influence Gen Y and Gen Z to purchase sustainable products***

**Factors that Influence Gen Y and Gen Z to Purchase Sustainable Products**

Exploratory factor analysis was performed to find the most important factor that influenced the purchase of sustainable products. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.804 indicated sampling adequacy and a significant Bartlett's test of Sphericity ( $p < 0.001$ ) indicated appropriateness of items for factor analysis.

EFA was performed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation for all items that measured the factors which influenced Gen Y and Gen Z to purchase suitable products. The factor loading for each item was above 0.5 and was in the range of 0.62 - 0.88, hence was considered acceptable. The total variance of 73.43% was explained by a total of 6 factors including environmentalism and responsible consumption, pricing and availability, social influence, product and packaging, responsible advertisement, and government initiatives. The highest variance of 30.10%

was contributed by 'environmentalism and responsible consumption' while the lowest variance of 4.49% was contributed by government initiatives suggesting that irrespective of government initiatives to promote sustainable products, the Gen Z and Gen Y concerns for the environment and social acceptance influenced the purchase of sustainable products.

**Table 5: Factors that Influence Gen Y and Gen Z to Purchase Sustainable Products**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Loadings</b>	<b>% of Variance</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
<b>Environmentalism and responsible consumption</b>		<b>30.010</b>	<b>30.010</b>
Supporting/ Contributing to protect the environment make me socially acceptable	0.822		
I encourage my friends/family members to buy sustainable products	0.766		
<b>Pricing and availability</b>		<b>16.365</b>	<b>46.375</b>
Companies should make green products more accessible to customers	0.759		
Limited availability of Green products in the stores	0.720		
For sustainable products, very few options are available in various categories	0.768		
<b>Social Influence</b>		<b>8.823</b>	<b>55.197</b>
I convince others to buy green products	0.695		
I join environmental groups and actively participate because I want to contribute to protecting the environment	0.882		
I join environmental groups because it instills a sense of pride in me	0.869		
<b>Product and Packaging</b>		<b>7.124</b>	<b>62.321</b>
I buy Green products if the packaging provides enough information about the same	0.756		

My purchase depends on the ingredients used to make that particular product	0.835		
<b>Responsible Advertisements</b>		<b>6.615</b>	<b>68.937</b>
Advertisements should talk about the sustainable practices used in the manufacturing processes of that product	0.835		
Advertisements use the term 'sustainable product' as a marketing tool to attract customers	0.882		
Advertisements should focus on the benefits to the environment, when a green product is used	0.711		
<b>Government Initiatives</b>		<b>4.497</b>	<b>73.434</b>
Government should make it mandatory for companies to provide information about the sustainable practices used in the organization either in ads or packaging	0.727		
Government should mitigate the use of non-eco-friendly products	0.820		
Government should encourage and recognize companies that use eco - friendly ingredients in the manufacturing processes	0.627		

Source: Computed from Primary Data

***Objective 3: To Analyse the Association between Purchase of Sustainable products with Generation and Gender***

**Association Between the Purchase of Sustainable Products with Generation and Gender**

The Chi-Square test was performed to show the association of sustainable products indulged in buying with generation (Table 6) and gender (Table 7). For the analysis purpose, participants' 'yes' and 'no' responses for sustainable products were used. To avoid redundancy, participants who responded 'no' to sustainable products were omitted. Among different sustainable products, the association of sustainable food products ( $\chi^2 = 13.146, p < 0.001$ ) and sustainable cosmetics ( $\chi^2 = 9.651, p < 0.001$ ) with

generation was significant (Table 7). Gen Z (72.3%) were more indulged in buying sustainable food products than Gen Y (27.7%). Other sustainable products such as hygiene products, apparel, furniture and stationeries did not show any significant association with generation.

**Table 6: Association Between the Purchase of Sustainable Products and the Generation**

Products	Gen Z	Gen Y	Total	Chi square	p value
Sustainable food products	115 (72.3%)	44 (27.7%)	159	13.146	0.000
Sustainable hygiene products	79 (64.2%)	44 (35.8%)	123	0.005	0.941
Sustainable cosmetics	36 (49.3%)	37 (50.7%)	73	9.651	0.002
Sustainable apparel	45 (61.6%)	28 (38.4%)	73	0.248	0.618
Sustainable furniture	30 (54.5%)	25 (45.5%)	55	2.736	0.098
Sustainable stationeries	57 (67.9%)	27 (32.1%)	84	0.817	0.366

*Source: Computed from Primary Data*

Further, the sustainable food products ( $\chi^2 = 5.659, p < 0.05$ ) and sustainable cosmetics ( $\chi^2 = 28.954, p < 0.001$ ) were significantly associated with gender. Males indulged in buying sustainable food products (54.1% vs. 45.9%) while females indulged in buying sustainable cosmetics (78.1% vs. 21.9%). When it comes to the case of selecting cosmetic products most of the females tend to identify and choose a product which is 100% natural (Junaid et al., 2013). Other sustainable products such as hygiene products, apparel, furniture and stationeries did not show any association with gender.

**Table 7: Association Between the Purchase of Sustainable Products and Gender**

Products	Male	Female	Total	Chi square	P Value
Sustainable food products	86 (54.1%)	73 (45.9%)	159	5.659	0.017
Sustainable hygiene products	54 (43.9%)	69 (56.1%)	123	1.961	0.161
Sustainable cosmetics	16 (21.9%)	57 (78.1%)	73	28.954	0.000
Sustainable apparel	38 (52.1%)	35 (47.9%)	73	0.551	0.458
Sustainable furniture	28 (50.9%)	27 (49.1%)	55	0.178	0.673
Sustainable stationaries	43 (51.2%)	41 (48.8%)	84	0.394	0.530

*Source: Computed from Primary Data*

## Discussion

The current research explored the reasons for purchasing sustainable products and the results indicated that among the various reasons such as advertisements about green products, potential increase of product value, concern for the environment, sustainable living, societal pressure, support government in helping protect the environment, purchase product to serve the purpose, enhance the quality of life and support the manufacturers of green products; 'concern for the environment' secured the least rank which means this was the last reason to purchase a sustainable product. This calls for initiatives to be taken at the government level or the marketers through the advertisements should inform the consumers about the current state of the environment. It is surprising to see that concern for the environment was the last chosen reason and this should eventually change to see substantial progress in the overall sustainable development.

## Findings

The paper studied the awareness levels of both the generational cohorts - Gen Y and Gen Z and since the difference was statistically insignificant, we understand that both generations were equally aware of sustainable products. Various reasons were analyzed to understand the factors that influence the generational cohorts to purchase sustainable products. The study revealed that among the various reasons, 'purchase of products to serve the purpose' received the highest mean rank while 'concern for the environment' was ranked the least. Kalafatis et al. (1999, pp. 442–443) report that several studies

carried out between 1989 and 1990 show an increase in the number of consumers claiming to have purchased environmentally friendly products while expressing heightened environmental concern, whereas studies after 1990 report a low correlation between “environmental concern and consumers' willingness to change their buying behaviour in favour of environmentally friendly products.” Bang et al. (2000) note that consumers expressing a higher concern about the environment are not necessarily more knowledgeable about the products. The next reason to secure the highest rank was to extend support to the government in helping protect the environment. Thus, the government should take measures to ensure sustainable practices are employed at all organizations.

The two-step cluster analysis revealed that Gen Y gained awareness of sustainable products through media such as radio, newspaper advertisements, company websites/magazines/prospectus, while Gen Z gained awareness of sustainable products through media such as friends/family/neighbour/word of mouth/visiting shop and social media ads/YouTube/ Instagram /whilst shopping. Enterprises have increased their investments in green marketing in a move towards promoting sustainable products and have emphasized the importance of social media in the promotion of green products. Sun, Y., & Wang, S. (2019).

### **Conclusion**

The results of this study will help organisations and marketers better understand the reasons for purchasing sustainable products, work on increasing awareness about them and understand the factors that influence Gen Y and Gen Z to make green purchases. Marketers could tap the potential generational cohort accordingly and this in turn will help build marketing strategies to suit the needs of both, the customers and the organisations. If organisations can work towards creating awareness regularly and inform customers about the benefits of using sustainable products, this will help sustain and preserve our environment.

### **Future Scope for Study**

The study has some limitations and this opens avenues for future research. As this study is conducted only in Bengaluru City and among Gen Y and Gen Z, it cannot be

generalized to a large extent and hence a lot of scope lies in further research by extending the same to rural or other geographical areas and a different generational cohort could be chosen for the same.

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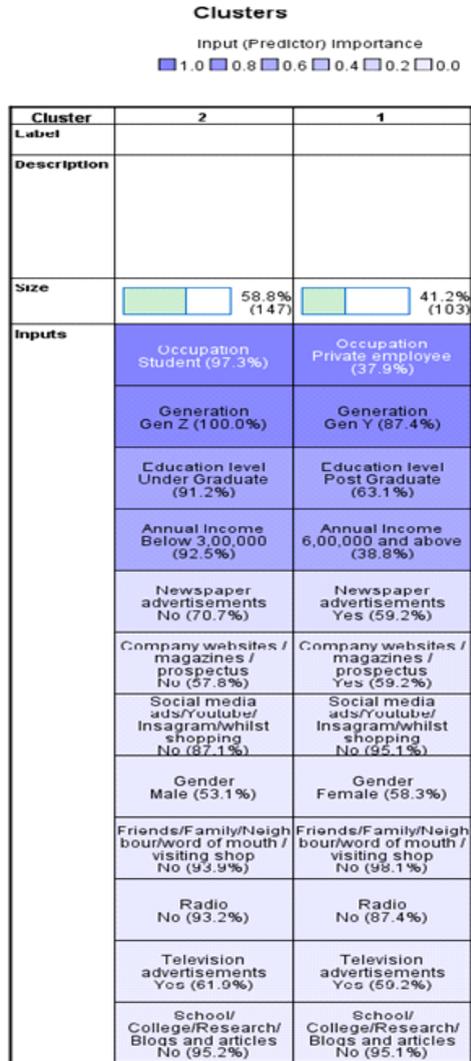
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**Appendix:**

**Figure 1: Cluster Distribution**



**Figure 2: Model Summary, Cluster Size, and Cluster Quality**

