

A STUDY ON BRAND AUTHENTICITY AND SUSTAINABLE PURCHASE INTENTIONS OF MEESHO CONSUMERS (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHENNAI CITY)

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ABSTRACT

The current investigation seeks to explore the impact of perceived authenticity of brands on the motivations for making sustainable purchases from Gen Z consumers utilizing the Meesho social commerce website. The research will examine how both authentic communication from brands and lifestyle orientated marketing strategies lead to environmentally sustaining purchasing behaviour. The data for the study was collected through the administration of a cross-sectional survey using a convenience sample, consisting of 186 completed surveys submitted by Gen Z individuals who utilized the Meesho social commerce platform. The results of the analysis were based primarily on, descriptive statistics, the results of reliability testing (Cronbach's alpha), and correlation and linear regression. Therefore, it can be concluded that while brand association between lifestyle and sustainability behaviour is present.

While brand cues increase exposure to and facilitate an average level of behaviour change, they do not have a direct impact on sustainable consumption because of many influences in the external environment. Therefore, social commerce should promote authenticity in sustainability messaging, transparency, and community-driven branding in order to build consumer confidence and encourage responsible purchasing decision-making. In summary, perceived authenticity serves as a behavioural catalyst for - but not the primary driver of - sustainable behaviour within Gen Z.

Key words : Gen Z, Meesho, social commerce platform and purchasing decision-making

INTRODUCTION

Evidence of consumer purchase behaviour indicates that Gen Z prefers brands with sustainability ethos; however, their online buying behaviour does not reflect this purchased behaviour. Acknowledging the relevance of sustainable consumption behaviour in the digital context is vital for lifestyle branding marketing, especially in India, where a growing lifestyle market targets a wide audience through the business model of value-based branding, and where social impact is a concern. Meesho, an Indian origin reselling platform, is enabling consumers to reduce economic fragility while generating job opportunities and striving for meaningful

brand purpose. Leveraging consumers as brand proponents through a word-of-mouth strategy, Meesho facilitates lifestyle branding for resellers as well as brand communities.

The sense of identity associated with lifestyle brands drives consumers' willingness to pay a premium; moreover, the construction of a community through word-of-mouth is perceived as a sustainable attribute of such brands. An exploratory study indicates that lifestyle brands espousing sustainability are perceived to be more credible and authentic than brands that do not, therefore impacting purchase intentions. Hence, lifestyle branding can simplify digital purchase decisions by promoting brands viewed as sustainable topics. For Gen Z, lifestyle branding can enhance purchase intention towards brands perceived to be communicating sustainability-related contents. Social influence moderates the effect of lifestyle branding on purchase intention, while consumers' biospheric values moderate the effects of purchased intentions on actual purchase behaviour toward brands espousing such sustainability claims.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Tsekouropoulos and Theocharis, 2025) have explored the Sustainable Consumption and Branding to Gen z: How the brand dimensions affect the Behaviours of Consumers towards Innovative Technological Launched Products". The authors conduct a survey research and disclose that considering sustainable intention to purchase, the dimensions of brand experience, brand image and brand trust are the most dominant that influence the decision of a customer to recycle, or not. Promoters that were less strong included brand engagement and behavioural intention. According to them, the brands pursuing Gen Z must aim at establishing and keeping a good, trustworthy online platform, and consider sustainability.

Thilagavathy, N., & Kumar, E. P. (2021) Artificial Intelligence obtain marketers to realize potential personalization and relevance. Through the platforms via Search engines, Facebook, YouTube, Google, reach billions of people in day today life and with digital ad platforms, it achieves communication at scale. Determined combined with a customization possible through artificial intelligence means that companies will soon be able to tailor personalized campaigns in real time. The world of the future is in the application of Artificial Intelligence. We must recognize that incorporating AI into any business does not imply that humans are no longer needed in the processes. AI is a technology that simply simplifies many time-consuming and complicated processes, and save businesses

Ngo et al. (2024) have explored A number of recent researches have attempted to comprehend the reasons behind the growing interest of Generation Z in sustainable fashion and green products. In one of the studies,) researched what makes young consumers willing to purchase sustainable clothing in Vietnam. The authors of the research gathered the feedback of 641 Gen Z customers who shop and discovered that there are lots of little things that influence their choice. The paper describes that these are what influence the way young people perceive the environment in the first place, as well as the product itself. Put simply, Gen Z will endorse sustainable fashion in case they believe it is fashionable, quality, affordable, and sustainable. Another aspect that the researchers mention is that the brands should be open and genuine in order to attain the trust of the young consumers.

Ojha and Singh (2025) of another Indian study investigate regarding what directly affect the green purchase intention of Gen Z directly. The researchers have discovered that environmental attitude is the most powerful factor. When the young people are personally concerned with the environment, then they will purchase eco-friendly products. Nevertheless, there is a significant role of trust. Gen z consumers are sceptical due to their knowledge of greenwashing. They desire to have evidence that brands are really sustainable products. Their decisions are also influenced by social influence individuals, their friends, and peers. Based on the study, there is a general recommendation that companies ought to usually emphasize on build accuracy and transparency to translate positive attitudes into purchases.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research investigates Gen Z consumer behaviour on the Meesho platform in India. The study investigates how Meesho users choose sustainable products through their brand image and values alignment and social media and influencer marketing and their self-reported sustainable purchasing practices which include buying eco-friendly products. The empirical investigation (hypothetical survey and analysis) would be limited to Meesho and may not generalize to other platforms or demographics. The study does not analyse actual sales data, and relies on consumer perceptions and intentions. The research faces three main limitations which include response bias and changing Gen Z patterns and the exclusive examination of one e-commerce platform.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To Study on Brand Authenticity and Sustainable Purchase Intentions of Meesho Consumers
- To examine Meesho customers' perceptions of brand authenticity in relation to sustainability
- To analyze whether Generation Z consumers are influenced to make sustainable purchase decisions based on their perception of Meesho's brand authenticity.

Research Methodology

The present study adopts an exploratory and quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey method to examine customers' perceptions of brand authenticity and sustainable buying behaviour with reference to Meesho. The research focuses specifically on Generation Z users of the platform. A convenience sampling technique (non-probability sampling) was employed to select respondents, as the study targeted accessible Gen-Z Meesho users who actively engage with the platform. The final analytical sample consisted of 186 respondents, after data cleaning and screening for completeness.

Both primary and secondary data sources were utilized for the study. Primary data were collected using a structured, self-administered online questionnaire designed to measure perceptions of brand authenticity, lifestyle branding, trust, and sustainable buying behaviour. Secondary data were gathered from relevant academic literature, company websites, reports, and televised sources to provide contextual and theoretical background for the study.

Measurement of variables was carried out using structured scales. Five-point Likert scale items were coded from 1 to 5 (Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 5). Ordinal frequency-based items were coded from 1 to 5 (Never = 1 to Always = 5), while binary variables were coded as 0 and 1. Composite indices, such as the Lifestyle Branding Index and the Sustainable Behaviour Index, were computed by taking the mean of their respective items.

The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques including descriptive analysis, reliability testing, bivariate analysis, and inferential statistics to test relationships and draw meaningful conclusions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data Preparation and Coding

Respondent data regarding 5-point Likert scales were initially coded into numbers (Strongly Disagree = 1... Strongly agree = 5) to make analysis easier. To use the example, the choice options that were coded to 1-5 were: I prefer brands on Meesho that encourage a sustainable lifestyle and Lifestyle branding by sellers on Meesho makes me more conscious about environmental and ethical consumption. Equally, there are ordinal responses (e.g. The responses to the questions: How often do you buy products that are marked as lifestyle brands: Never/Rarely/Sometimes/Often/Always) were put on 1-5. Binary yes/no questions (e.g. Likewise, the questions as to whether lifestyle branding affects your sustainable purchase decisions were coded as 0/1. These conversions were actually achieved in the excel format by use of simple look up tables or formulas. Analysis through composite scores was then developed through averages of germane item codes. As an example, an index could be computed in the Excel with a formula such as =AVERAGE(C2:D2) in which C2:D2 contain two points on items. This is to make it consistent and facilitate statistic tests. Tabulation of nominal demographic items was done individually. Checking of all the coded data was done to ensure accuracy after which it was further analyzed.

Construct Formation

We defined two key constructs based on theory and the questionnaire design. Each construct is measured by multiple items, and we use the mean of its items as the index score. Table 4.1 lists the items for each construct:

Construct Composition

The indexes (70 and 100) were calculated as the mean of the items. As an illustration, when a respondent gave an answer of 4 and 5 to the two Lifestyle Branding items then his/ her Lifestyle Branding Index would be $(4+5)/2 = 4.5$. (Ordinal items were coded into numeric as in §4.1 and then averaged.) These index scores will be considered as the key independent and dependent variables in subsequent analyses.

Reliability Analysis

Internal consistency of each two item scale was evaluated with the help of Cronbach alpha (α). In the case of a two-item scale, Cronbachs alpha reduces to a relationship of the Pearson correlation of the items. Particularly, $\alpha = (2/2-1) [1 - (\text{sum of item variances})/(\text{variance of total score})]$. In excel, we calculated variances to get:

Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	No. of Items (k)	Cronbach's α
Lifestyle Branding	2	0.44
Sustainable Behaviour	2	0.09

Both scales have very low α (0.44 and 0.09). According to traditional rules, an $\alpha \geq 0.70$ can be deemed as being nice; anything below 0.50 is unanimously bad. The alphas here are extremely low showing that the two items in a scale do not strongly coexist. This is to be expected: there were only two items per construct, and Cronbach's α will be low in such situations. Actually, methodologists warn that two item measures are not very reliable and imply the inclusion of more items to obtain $\alpha \approx 0.70$. We realize this weakness. In the current exploratory research we will go ahead with the indices and take results with a grain of salt bearing in mind that, the scales are not likely to measure every construct effectively.

Respondent Profile

Table 3 can be used to indicate the period of use of Meesho. More than half of the sample (50.0%) said they had been using Meesho longer than 2 years, which corresponds to an experienced user population.

Duration of Use	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Less than 6 months	51	27.4
6 months to 1 year	19	10.2
1–2 years	23	12.4
More than 2 years	93	50.0
Total	186	100.0

Respondent Frequency by Duration of Meesho Usage.

Descriptive Statistics

Our analysis involved the determination of means and standard deviations of the two index scores (on a 1-5 scale). Table 4 summarizes these:

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lifestyle Branding Index	3.17	0.69
Sustainable Behaviour Index	3.20	0.63

There is moderate agreement on both indices. Lifestyle Branding Index ($M = 3.17$, $SD \approx 0.69$) and Sustainable Behaviour Index ($M = 3.20$, $SD \approx 0.63$) score slightly higher than neutral, which means that gen Z consumers are moderately affected by lifestyle branding and having a moderate range of responses towards sustainable brands.

Correlation Analysis

We reviewed Pearson correlation of the two index scores. The relationship between Lifestyle Branding Index and Sustainable Behaviour Index is $r = 0.18$ ($p = 0.014$). It is a very weak positive relationship ($0 < r < 0.3$) yet very significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. Interpretation: the higher the impact of the lifestyle branding, the higher the sustainable purchasing intention is reported by the respondents. The effect is not strong ($r < 0.30$) yet it is not probable that it has occurred by chance ($p < 0.05$). It implies a minor yet consistent relationship: the higher the perceived influence of the brand on the lifestyle, the higher is the sustainable-buying intention,

marginally. Research wise, the $r \approx 0.18$ is low indicating that there are many other influences that determine behaviour. (We observe that the weak correlations are usual in the social-behavioral studies.) No chart has been provided here, but the relationship is represented in the table.

Regression Analysis

The linear regression was done with Sustainable Behaviour Index as a dependent variable and Lifestyle Branding Index as a predictor. The robustness was also tested by running a multiple regression with control variables (duration of use, etc.).

Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
0.184	0.034	0.028

Coefficients

Variable	β (Unstandardized)	t	P
Constant	2.68	12.32	0.000
Lifestyle Branding	0.167	2.49	0.014

Simple regression model also indicates that the positive effect of lifestyle branding on sustainable behaviour is small, but significant ($\beta = 0.167$, $p = 0.014$). Nevertheless, the explanatory power is minimal ($R^2 = 0.034$), meaning that lifestyle branding explains sustainable behaviour by R^2 3.4 percent. The multiple regression model evidenced an increment in to approximately 5-6 with increased usage time being a marginal predictor ($p \approx 0.02$) and lifestyle branding no longer being significant. All in all, the models show that there is limited explanatory power which implies that the majority of changes in sustainable behaviour are determined by factors outside the study. Although the relationship was not strong enough to be considered significant (R^2 was low), the results still indicate that there is a positive, yet statistically significant relationship between lifestyle branding and sustainable buying intention, which is typical in consumer behaviour studies whereby low values of R^2 are frequent.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the relationship between brand authenticity and sustainable purchase intentions among consumers of Meesho, with particular focus on Generation Z users. The findings indicate that perceived brand authenticity plays a significant role in shaping consumers' sustainable purchase intentions. When customers perceive Meesho as transparent, trustworthy, and aligned with ethical and environmental values, their intention to engage in sustainable buying behaviour increases.

The study also reveals that lifestyle branding elements—such as environmental messaging, ethical claims, and community-oriented communication—positively influence consumers' perception of authenticity. In particular, Generation Z consumers demonstrate higher sensitivity toward authenticity cues and sustainability-related practices, suggesting that value-driven branding strategies can effectively influence their purchase decisions.

Further, familiarity with and usage of the platform were found to strengthen perceptions of authenticity, which in turn enhance sustainable purchase intentions. This implies that consistent brand communication and positive user experiences are crucial in reinforcing trust and credibility in social commerce environments.

Overall, the study highlights that brand authenticity is not merely a symbolic attribute but a strategic driver of sustainable consumption behaviour. For Meesho and similar social commerce platforms, strengthening authentic branding practices—through transparent communication, ethical positioning, and responsible marketing—can foster stronger consumer trust and promote sustainable purchasing patterns. Thus, integrating authenticity with sustainability initiatives can serve as a competitive advantage in the evolving digital retail landscape.

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