

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE FACTOR INFLUENCING BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF GEN Z AND GEN X WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ORGANIC PRODUCTS

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Abstract:

Researchers and marketers are paying close attention to the increasing demand for organic products, especially when it comes to comprehending how consumer behaviour varies by the two generations. The purpose of this study is to compare the variables affecting Generation Z and Generation X's purchasing decisions, with a focus on organic goods. The study looks at important factors such price sensitivity, brand trust, product availability, environmental concern and health consciousness. The results show that Gen Z and Gen X customers have quite different buying behaviour and preferences and reasons for making purchases. Gen X tends to prioritize health benefits, environmental concern and are more price sensitive whereas Gen Z priorities, brand trust, environment concerns as well as accessibility and the availability of organic products.

Keywords: Generation Z, Generation X, Buying Behaviour, Organic Products, Consumer Preferences, Health Consciousness, Environmental Sustainability, Marketing Strategy

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Introduction:

Growing knowledge of living a natural and chemical-free lifestyle has led to a huge surge in the popularity of organic products in particular. Researchers and marketers are now interested in learning what influences consumers' choices of organic products. Two different generations are at the centre of this study: Gen Z (born between 1997 and 2012) and Gen X (born between 1961 and 1980). These two generations' purchasing habits regarding organic goods are probably impacted by distinct variables. For example, Gen Z may be more motivated by social media influence and environmental concerns, but Gen X may place a higher priority on health advantages and quality. For marketers and legislators looking to encourage sustainable consumption and capitalize on the rising demand for organic goods, it is essential to comprehend these distinctions. The purpose of this comparison study is to investigate the variables influencing Gen X and Gen Z consumers' purchasing decisions regarding organic goods.

Statement of the Problem:

1. Price sensitivity: When it comes to organic products, Gen X and Gen Z customers may be more or less price sensitive, which may influence their purchase choices. For example, Gen Z consumers might be more willing to pay a premium for organic items, but Gen X consumers might be more inclined to emphasize price above

organic certification.

- 2. Accessibility and availability:** Organic products accessibility and availability can have a big impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. Gen X and Gen Z customers may choose conventional alternatives if organic items are not easily accessible.
- 3. Health and safety :** Health and safety play a distinct role in shaping the organic- products purchase behaviour of Gen Z and Gen X consumers Gen Z may integrate health benefits into a life style narrative while Gen X may adopts a pragmatic, result- focused health perspective.

Review of Literature:

Smith, A., & Jones, R. (2023) carried a study on “Organic Food Consumption and Generational Differences” This study explores generational differences in organic food consumption, with a focus on the health and environmental motivations behind purchasing decisions. The researchers employed a quantitative methodology using structured questionnaires distributed to a sample of individuals from both cohorts. The study aimed to identify key motivating factors and barriers that affect the purchase decisions of organic products among the two generations. Statistical tools such as ANOVA and regression analysis were used to analyze the data and uncover significant behavioral patterns. The findings revealed clear generational distinctions. Generation Z consumers were more likely to be driven by environmental sustainability, ethical consumption, and personal health consciousness.

Gupta, R., & Patel, S. (2023) studied the “Impact of Digital Influence on Gen Z's Organic Food Purchases”. This study examines how digital channels including social media and influencer marketing, influence Gen Z's purchasing decisions. The findings revealed that digital platforms, particularly influencer content and user-generated reviews, significantly shaped both purchase intentions and actual buying behavior. The study concluded that digital influence, especially through trusted influencers and interactive content, plays a critical role in motivating Gen Z consumers to choose organic products.

Pandya and Rao (2023) conducted a comprehensive study titled “*Sustainability and Green Consumption: Exploring the Role of Social Media on Gen Z's Purchase Intentions for Organic Products*”, with a focus on the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. The study aimed to understand how social media influences the sustainable purchasing behaviour of Generation Z, particularly in the context of organic products. The findings of the study revealed that social media has a profound impact on Gen Z's green consumption habits. In conclusion, Pandya and Rao emphasized the growing importance of social media as a tool for promoting green consumerism among Gen Z. They recommended that organic brands leverage influencer partnerships, user- generated content, and cause-based campaigns to engage Gen Z audiences..

Kattige and Patil (2022), in their exploratory study titled “*An Exploratory Study on Factors Influencing the Buying Behavior of Organic Food Consumers in the Mumbai Region*”, published in the *International Journal of Health Sciences*, examine the emerging dynamics of organic food consumption in an urban Indian context. The study's abstract outlines the growing awareness and demand for organic products in India, especially in metropolitan areas like Mumbai, where rising health consciousness, lifestyle changes, and environmental

awareness are reshaping food choices. In conclusion, Kattige and Patil highlighted that while the organic food market in Mumbai is still evolving, it is strongly influenced by consumer values around health, sustainability, and authenticity. They recommended continued investment in awareness campaigns, supply chain development, and policy support to foster sustainable growth in the sector.

Objectives of the study:

- 1) To study the concept of organic products.
- 2) To understand the concept of generation cohorts of Gen X and Gen Z towards organic products.
- 3) To study the buying behaviour of Gen X and Gen Z towards organic products.
- 4) To determine the key factors influencing the buying behaviour of Gen X and Gen Z towards organic products.
- 5) To compare the buying behavior of the Gen X and Gen Z towards organic products.

Scope of the Study:

The study is confined to the Mumbai region, which includes Mumbai city. It focuses on two specific generations: Gen X (born between 1961 and 1980) and Gen Z (born between 1997 and 2012) and is specific to organic products.

Significance of the study:

- 1. Organic Products Are Safer for Consumers:** The study will emphasize how crucial organic products are to guaranteeing the security and welfare of consumers. Organic products are healthier for consumers because they don't include synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or dangerous chemicals.
- 2. Increased Awareness:** The study will raise customers' knowledge of the advantages of organic products, which may help them make wise purchases.
- 3. Market potential:** The study will pinpoint market potential for companies who manufacture and sell organic goods, which may result in the creation of jobs and new business prospects.

Research gap:

Even though organic products are becoming more and more important in urban markets like the Mumbai Region, there is a noticeable lack of research on the factors that influence Generation Z (born 1997–2012) and Generation X (born 1965–1980) consumers' purchasing decisions. Although there has been a lot of research on the consumption of organic food, most of it has concentrated on large consumer groups or single generational cohorts. Additionally, research on the use of organic products in India typically focuses on consumers who are either health-conscious or motivated by sustainability, but it does not thoroughly explore how these motives differ between generations. Therefore, the purchasing habits of these two generations will be the main focus of this study.

Expected Outcome:

The expected outcome of the study is to identify and compare the key factors influencing the buying behaviour of Gen Z and Gen X toward organic products. While both generations may be influenced by price, health awareness, environmental concerns, brand image, and product availability, the level of impact is expected to

differ. Gen Z is likely to be more influenced by social media, sustainability trends, and ethical consumption, whereas Gen X may focus more on health benefits, quality, and brand reputation.

The study may also reveal differences in willingness to pay premium prices, with Gen X having greater purchasing power and Gen Z being more price-sensitive. Overall, the findings are expected to help businesses design generation-specific marketing strategies and improve their approach to promoting organic products.

Limitations of the study:

1. Study is restricted only to Mumbai Region form a specific age group.
2. Study will only take into consideration Generation Z (Gen Z) and Generation X (Gen X).
3. There is a possibility that primary data will not give exact details due to personal bias.
4. The study faces the time and financial constraints as the study is conducted by an individual researcher.

Research Methodology:

Nature of Study:

A comparative, descriptive research design will be adopted for this study.

a. Population:

The population for the study would comprise of different Generation Z (Gen Z) and Generation X (Gen X) in Mumbai region.

b. Sampling technique:

For this study, a stratified random sampling technique will be employed to ensure balanced representation of both Generation Z (born approximately 1997–2012) and Generation X (born approximately 1965–1980). The Population of the study to consist the customers in Mumbai region. The sample size to be covered would be 100 respondents approximately. (Gen X - 50 Respondents and Gen Z - 50 Respondents.)

Data Collection:

Research involves getting primary and secondary data.

a. Primary Data:

Primary data will be collected through both individual and group interviews. Structured questionnaires will be used during the interviews, designed specifically to explore the factors influencing the buying behavior of organic products among Generation Z (Gen Z) and Generation X (Gen X).

b. Secondary Data:

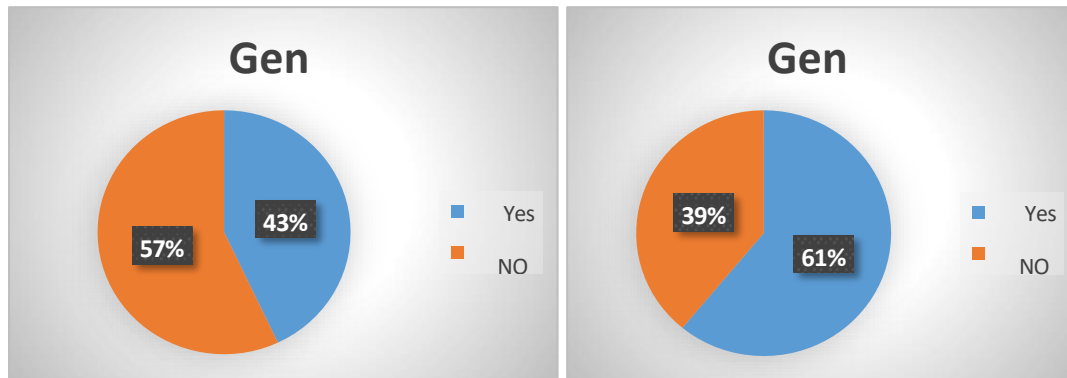
Secondary data will be sourced from various credible materials. These include government reports, official website databases, journal articles, research papers, and academic theses.

Data Processing:

This will include Tabulation and Graphical Representation of the data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

1. Do you mainly purchase organic products due to health and safety reasons?



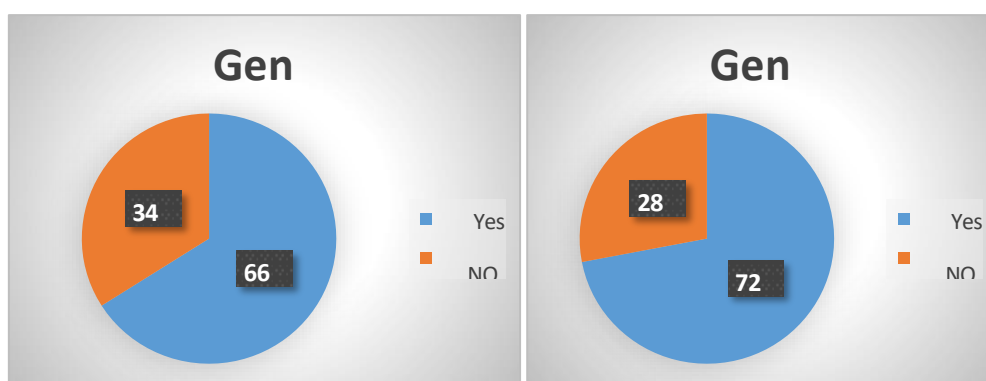
Interpretation:

Gen Z : 43% buy organic food products for health benefits; 57% do not buy organic products for health benefits.

Gen X: 61% buy organic food products for health benefits; 39 % do not buy organic products for health benefits.

Implications: Health is stronger motivator for Gen X than Gen Z.

2. Do you think environment factors strongly influence buying behaviour of organic products?



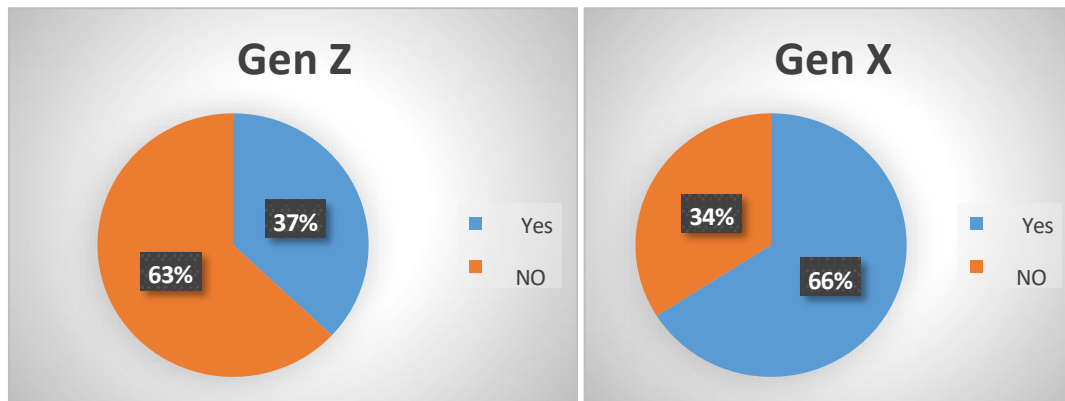
Interpretation:

In Gen Z : 66% say environmental factors strongly influences the buying behaviour of organic products ; 34% say environmental factors do not influences the buying behaviour of organic products..

In Gen X: 72% say environmental factors strongly influences the buying behaviour of organic products ; 28% say environmental factors do not influences the buying behaviour of organic products.

Implications: Generations X are more concerned about the environment factors than Gen Z

3. Are you price sensitive while purchasing organic products?

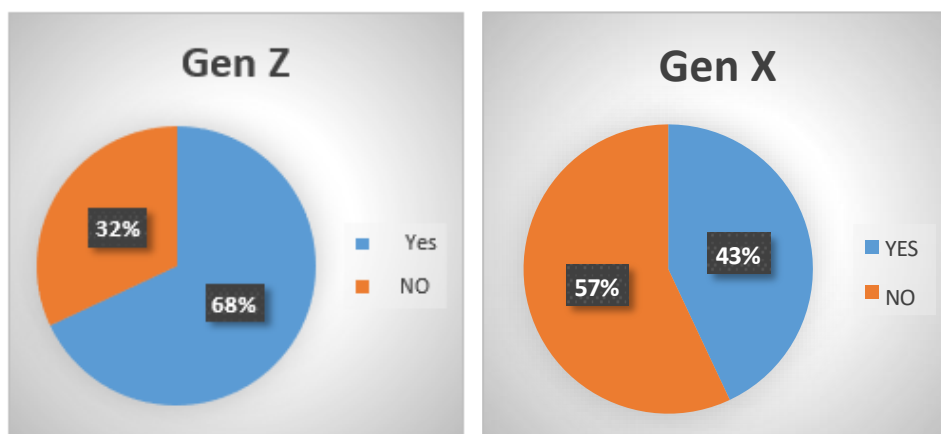


Interpretation:

In Gen Z : 37% feel the impact of price while purchasing organic products ; 63 % say that they are not price sensitive and would purchase the organic products irrespective of the price. In Gen X: 66% are price sensitive while purchasing organic products ; 34 % say that they are not price sensitive while purchasing organic products.

Implications: Gen X are more price sensitive than Gen Z.

4. Do you think brand loyalty plays a stronger role in buying behaviour of organic products?



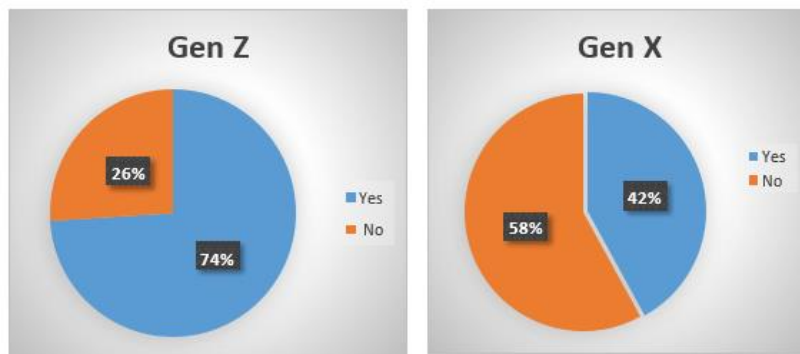
Interpretation:

Gen Z : 68% think brand loyalty plays a stronger role in buying behaviour; 32% do not think brand loyalty plays a stronger role in buying behaviour of organic products.

Gen X: 43% think brand loyalty plays a stronger role in buying behaviour; 57% do not think brand loyalty plays a stronger role in buying behaviour of organic products.

Implications Gen Z rely heavily on brand loyalty than Gen X.

5. Do you think accessibility and availability of organic product affects your buying behaviour ?



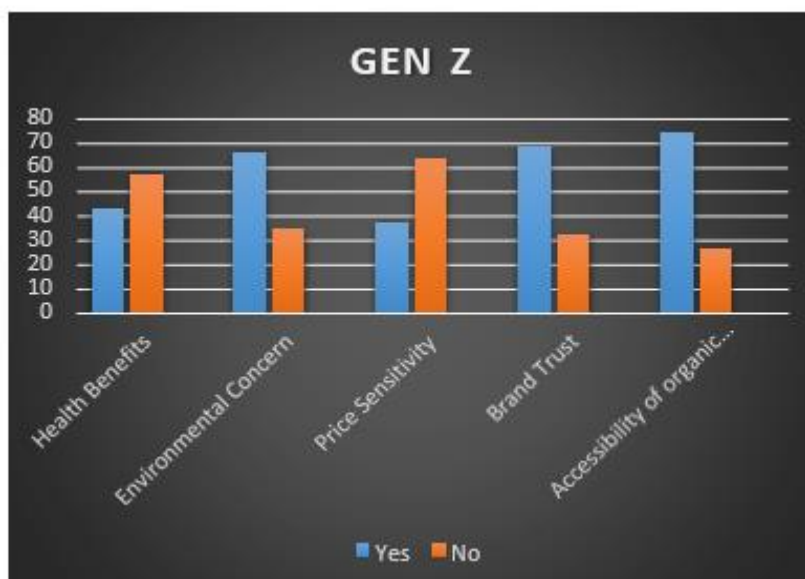
Interpretation:

Gen Z : 74 % say that accessibility and availability organic product affect buying behaviour 26% say that accessibility and availability organic product does not affect buying behavior of Gen Z .

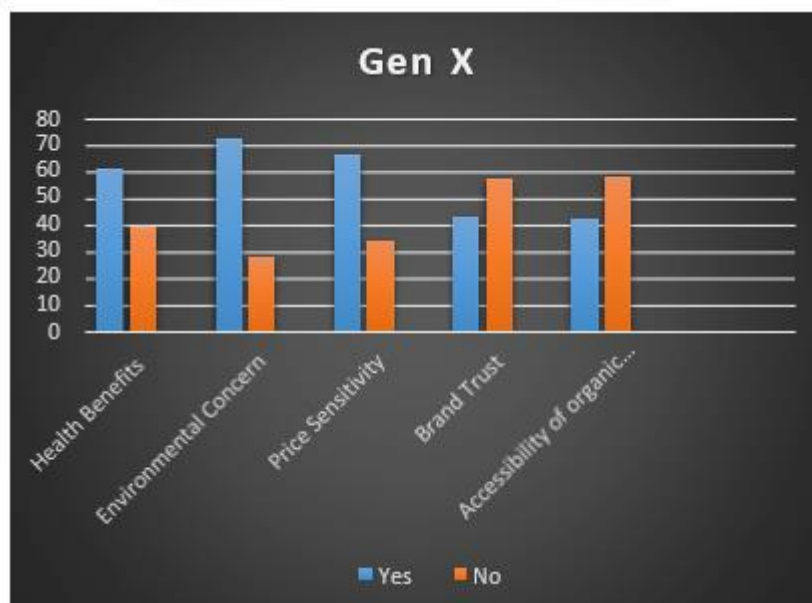
Gen X : 42% say that accessibility and availability organic product affect buying behaviour where as 58% say that accessibility and availability organic product does not affect buying behaviour of Gen X.

Implications: Gen Z is more impacted by the accessibility and availability of organic products.

Factors influencing Purchase	Gen Z (%)	
	Yes	No
Health Benefits	43	57
Environmental Concern	66	34
Price Sensitivity	37	63
Brand Trust	68	32
Accessibility of organic Product	74	26



Factors influencing Purchase	Gen X (%)	
	Yes	No
Health Benefits	61	39
Environmental Concern	72	28
Price Sensitivity	66	34
Brand Trust	43	57
Accessibility of organic Product	42	58



Analysis:

- The data clearly shows substantial differences between Gen X and Gen Z for every factor.
- There is a significant difference in the buying behaviour of Gen X and Gen Z towards organic products.
- Gen X tends to prioritize health benefits, environmental concern and are more price sensitive whereas Gen Z priorities, brand trust, environment concerns they are also affected by the accessibility and the availability of organic products.

Overall Observation:

- Across all factors, there is a mixed response from both Gen X and Gen Z as there is a generational difference in purchasing organic products.
- This indicates that Gen X is more deliberate and selective when purchasing organic products focussing on prioritize health benefits and price sensitivity whereas Gen Z priorities, brand trust, and accessibility.
- Both the generations prioritise environment concerns.
- Gen X and Gen Z both are influenced by these factors. However Gen Z may have different priorities or are less experienced with organic product purchasing.

Findings of the Study:

The findings of the study highlight significant differences between Gen Z and Gen X in their buying behaviour toward organic products. Gen X is more strongly motivated by health benefits, with purchasing organic products for health reasons compared to 43% of Gen Z. Environmental factors also influence both groups, but Gen X shows slightly higher concern than Gen Z. In contrast, Gen Z places greater emphasis on brand loyalty as compared to Gen X, indicating stronger brand attachment among younger consumers. Accessibility and availability have a major impact on Gen Z, while less than half of Gen X consider it important. Interestingly, Gen X is more price sensitive, whereas a majority of Gen Z are willing to buy organic products regardless of price. Overall, Gen X prioritizes health and environmental concerns, while Gen Z is more influenced by brand loyalty and product availability

Recommendations:

- 1. Awareness and Education Programs:** Companies and policymakers should conduct awareness programs highlighting the long-term health and environmental benefits of organic products..
- 2. Pricing and Value Communication:** As price remains a major concern for both generations, organizations should adopt competitive pricing strategies and clearly communicate the value proposition of organic products, such as superior quality and long-term health advantages.
- 3. Improved Accessibility and Availability:** Expanding distribution channels, including online platforms and local retail outlets, can improve product accessibility. Convenient availability may encourage repeat purchases, especially among younger consumers.

Conclusion:

The current study reveals notable distinctions between the variables affecting Generation Z and Generation X consumers' purchasing decisions regarding organic goods. The results show that although both generations show an increasing knowledge of environmental and health issues, their purchase priorities and reasons differ significantly. The study comes to the conclusion that in order for marketers and manufacturers of organic products to create successful, focused marketing strategies, it is essential to comprehend generational disparities. By aligning promotional efforts with the specific values and expectations of each generation, organizations can enhance consumer engagement and encourage wider adoption of organic products. The research also provides a foundation for future studies to explore evolving consumer trends and the long-term growth of the organic product market.

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