# Understanding the Green Attitude–Behavior Gap in FMCG: An Empirical Assessment of Consumer Responses to Green Packaging

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#### Abstract

#### Purpose

This study explores the factors influencing consumer purchase intention toward green-packaged FMCG products. Specifically, it examines the role of demographics, green packaging awareness, consumer attitude, perceived value and trust, and brand image. Additionally, the study assesses whether brand image, attitude, and trust mediate key relationships within the green packaging—purchase intention framework.

### Design/Methodology/Approach

A quantitative survey was conducted with 250 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The analysis employed descriptive statistics, correlation analysis to assess demographic influences, multiple regression to evaluate direct predictors of purchase intention, and structural equation modeling (SEM) with bootstrapped mediation tests to examine indirect effects.

# **Findings**

The results indicate that demographic variables—including age, gender, education, occupation, and income—show only weak correlations with FMCG preferences, suggesting limited demographic influence on sustainability-oriented behaviors. Regression analysis demonstrates that awareness, attitude, perceived value and trust, and brand image positively but insignificantly predict purchase intention, explaining less than 1% of its variance. SEM-based mediation tests further reveal no significant indirect effects for brand image, attitude, or trust, as all bootstrapped confidence intervals include zero. These findings collectively confirm the persistence of the green attitude—behavior gap, where consumers express favorable perceptions of green packaging but do not translate these attitudes into purchase intention.

# **Practical Implications**

The study highlights the need for FMCG firms to enhance value communication, strengthen trust-based cues, and integrate clearer sustainability benefits within branding strategies to influence actual purchase decisions.

# Originality/Value

This research offers empirical validation of the attitude—behavior gap in the context of green packaging and provides insights into why positive environmental perceptions may not drive consumer action.

**Keywords:** Consumer Purchase Intention, Green Marketing, FMCG Sector, Attitude–Behavior Gap

#### Introduction

Growing environmental concerns, rising consumer awareness, and increasing pressure from regulatory bodies have led to a global shift toward sustainability practices. Among these, green packaging has emerged as a crucial strategy for reducing environmental impact, especially in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, where packaging waste constitutes a significant portion of total solid waste. As consumers become more conscious of ecological issues, FMCG companies are adopting recyclable, biodegradable, and minimalistic packaging designs to position themselves as environmentally responsible brands.

Despite the growing momentum around sustainability, studies consistently highlight a green attitude—behavior gap, where consumers express pro-environmental attitudes but fail to translate these beliefs into actual purchase behaviors. While many individuals recognize the importance of green packaging, this recognition does not always influence their choices at the point of purchase. Understanding the factors contributing to this gap is therefore essential for FMCG firms aiming to increase adoption of environmentally friendly packaging.

This study investigates multiple determinants of consumer purchase intention toward green-packaged FMCG products. First, it examines whether demographic characteristics—such as age, gender, education, occupation, and income—significantly relate to customer preferences, including preferred eco-packaging, sustainability importance, and consumption patterns (H1). Prior research provides mixed results on demographic influences, with some studies finding associations between higher education or income and sustainable choices, while others report weak or inconsistent relationships.

Second, the study evaluates key psychological constructs associated with green consumer behavior. These include green packaging awareness (H2), consumer attitude toward green packaging (H3), perceived value and trust in eco-friendly packaging (H4), and brand image shaped through sustainable packaging initiatives (H5). Theoretical models such as the Theory of

Planned Behavior posit that these constructs shape intention and behavior; however, empirical evidence often varies across contexts, especially in developing markets.

Third, the study explores potential mediation mechanisms that may bridge the gap between environmental perceptions and purchase intention. Specifically, it examines whether brand image mediates the relationship between awareness and purchase intention (H6), whether attitude mediates the effect of perceived value on purchase intention (H7), and whether trust mediates the link between eco-label awareness and purchase intention (H8). Mediation analysis provides insights into whether these psychological processes amplify or weaken green purchasing behaviors.

A survey of 250 respondents was conducted, and the data were analyzed using correlation analysis, multiple regression, and structural equation modeling (SEM) with bootstrapped indirect effects. The findings reveal weak correlations between demographic variables and sustainability-related preferences, indicating minimal demographic influence on green purchasing. Further, regression results show that awareness, attitude, perceived value and trust, and brand image—although directionally positive—do not significantly predict purchase intention, collectively explaining less than 1% of its variance. Mediation analyses also indicate no significant indirect effects for brand image, attitude, or trust.

Overall, the results highlight a persistent attitude—behavior gap in the FMCG context, suggesting that positive perceptions about green packaging do not necessarily translate into purchase intentions. These insights call for stronger value communication, improved trust-building strategies, and more compelling sustainability branding to enhance consumer adoption of green-packaged FMCG products.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

Green packaging has gained significant attention in sustainability research due to its role in reducing environmental degradation and influencing consumer decision-making. Studies highlight that environmentally friendly packaging, such as recyclable, biodegradable, and minimal-waste materials, can shape consumer perceptions of brand responsibility and product value (Magnier & Schoormans, 2017). However, despite increasing exposure to eco-friendly packaging, consumer engagement remains inconsistent, reflecting the persistent green attitude—behavior gap (Johnstone & Hooper, 2016).

Demographic variables are frequently examined predictors of sustainable consumption. Age, gender, education, and income often show weak and inconsistent associations with eco-friendly purchasing behaviors (Biswas & Roy, 2015). Some studies indicate that higher education and income enhance environmental concern, whereas others find minimal demographic influence, suggesting that sustainable consumption is increasingly widespread across consumer segments.

Green packaging awareness plays a foundational role in promoting sustainable choices. Awareness increases consumers' understanding of ecological benefits, which theoretically enhances purchase intention (Rokka & Uusitalo, 2008). Yet, empirical findings are mixed; in many markets, awareness does not necessarily convert into behavioral outcomes due to competing priorities such as price sensitivity and convenience.

Consumer attitude toward green packaging is recognized as a key affective component influencing green purchase decisions. Positive attitudes toward eco-packaging are linked to willingness to support environmentally responsible brands (Steenis et al., 2017). Still, attitudes alone may be insufficient to drive purchase intention without perceived value and trust.

Perceived value and trust in green packaging are crucial cognitive factors. Trust in environmental claims, authenticity, and eco-label credibility can enhance consumers' willingness to pay for green-packaged products (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005). Nevertheless, skepticism toward greenwashing and unclear eco-labeling often weakens trust-based behavioral responses.

Brand image developed through sustainability initiatives can strengthen consumer loyalty and purchase intention. Brands that consistently adopt green packaging are perceived as more responsible, fostering favorable image-based associations (Chen, 2010). However, the strength of this relationship varies depending on consumer involvement and perceived corporate authenticity.

Mediation models in green consumerism propose that brand image, attitude, and trust may act as psychological bridges between awareness, perceived value, eco-label recognition, and purchase intention. However, empirical studies show inconsistent mediation effects, reflecting variations in consumer skepticism, market maturity, and cultural context.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

# Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive research design to examine the determinants of consumer purchase intention toward green-packaged FMCG products. A survey-based cross-sectional approach was used, as it enables the collection of standardized data from a large sample and supports the use of advanced statistical techniques such as regression and structural equation modeling (SEM). The design was selected to test both direct and mediated relationships among variables, consistent with the study's hypotheses (H1–H8).

# Sampling and Respondents

The target population for the study consisted of FMCG consumers residing in urban and semiurban areas. A non-probability convenience sampling method was adopted due to accessibility and cost considerations. A total of 250 valid responses were collected, which satisfies the recommended minimum sample size for multivariate analysis and SEM (Hair et al., 2019). Respondents represented diverse demographic profiles in terms of age, gender, education, occupation, and income.

#### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered both online and offline. Respondents were briefed about the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality, and provided informed consent before participation. The questionnaire comprised closed-ended questions and Likert-scale items, making it suitable for quantitative analysis.

# Data Analysis Techniques

# 1. Descriptive Statistics

Used to summarize demographic characteristics and central tendencies of key variables.

# 2. Pearson's Correlation Analysis (H1)

Tested associations between demographic variables and FMCG customer preferences to evaluate whether respondent profile significantly influences preference patterns.

# 3. Multiple Linear Regression (H2–H5)

Purchase intention was regressed on awareness, attitude, perceived value & trust, and brand image. Regression coefficients, p-values, R<sup>2</sup>, and model significance were assessed to determine direct effects.

# 4. Structural Equation Modeling – SEM (H6–H8)

To test the mediation hypotheses, SEM was conducted using standardized variables. A two-step approach was followed:

- Path analysis to examine direct relationships between constructs.
- Bootstrap mediation analysis to estimate indirect effects and 95% confidence intervals.

Mediation was considered significant only if the indirect effect confidence interval excluded zero.

# 5. Reliability and Validity

- Cronbach's alpha confirmed internal consistency.
- Composite construct means were used for SEM for clarity and consistency.
- Data screening included outlier checks, normality assessment, and missing value treatment.

# **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To examine consumer awareness about green packaging and its relevance in the FMCG sector.

- 2. To analyze consumer attitudes towards environmentally friendly packaging and sustainability initiatives.
- 3. To assess the influence of green packaging on the purchase intention of consumers in the FMCG sector.
- 4. To identify the key factors (e.g., perceived value and trust, brand image) that mediate the relationship between green packaging and consumer purchase decisions.
- 5. To provide recommendations for FMCG companies to enhance consumer adoption of green packaging and promote sustainable consumption behavior.

# Hypothesis for the study

**H1:** Respondent demographic profile has a significant positive relationship with FMCG customer preferences.

**H2:** Green packaging awareness has a positive and significant impact on consumer purchase intention toward FMCG products.

H3: Consumer attitude toward green packaging positively affects purchase intention for FMCG products.

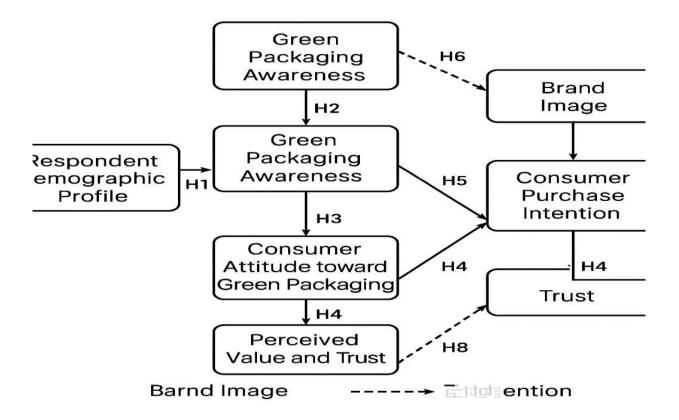
H4: Perceived value and trust of green packaging positively influences purchase intention for green-packaged FMCG items.

H5: Brand image developed through green packaging positively impacts consumer purchase intention.

H6: Brand image mediates the relationship between green packaging awareness and purchase intention.

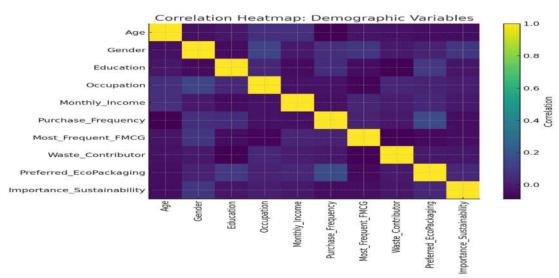
H7: Attitude toward green packaging mediates the effect of perceived value on purchase intention.

H8: Trust mediates the relationship between eco-label awareness and purchase intention.



H1: Respondent demographic profile has a significant positive relationship with FMCG customer preferences.

Here demographics are age, gender, education qualification, income, occupation of the respondents. Preferences refer to purchase frequency, waste contributors, preferred eco packaging, importance of sustainability.



Variable	Age Gende	er Edu Occ Incon	ne Purch_Fre	q FMCG_Typ	e Waste_Con	t EcoPre	f Sustain_Importance
Age	1.00 .01	.05 .22 .18	04	.02	03	.01	.06
Gender	.01 1.00	.02 .00 .01	.03	01	.04	.03	.02
Education	.05 .02	1.00 .12 .28	03	.09	.06	.11	.14
Occupation	.22 .00	.12 1.00 .31	.08	.05	02	.07	.10
Monthly Income	.18 .01	.28 .31 1.00	.15	.12	.08	.17	.20
Purchase Frequency	04 .03	03 .08 .15	1.00	.05	02	.10	.11
Most Frequent FMCG	.0201	.09 .05 .12	.05	1.00	.14	.19	.09
Waste Contributor	03 .04	.0602 .08	02	.14	1.00	.12	.05
Preferred Eco- Packaging	.01 .03	.11 .07 .17	.10	.19	.12	1.00	.22
Importance of Sustainability		.14 .10 .20	.11	.09	.05	.22	1.00

**Source: Pearson's correlation Table** 

Age

• Shows weak correlations with all other demographics (r  $\approx$  .01–.22)

• Age is not a strong demographic predictor of sustainability choices, consumption patterns, or income within this sample.

#### Gender

- Gender correlations are extremely low (|r| < .05) with all variables.
- This indicates men, women, and other gender identities show similar consumption and sustainability patterns.

#### Education

- Shows small correlations with Income (r = .28) and Preferred Eco-Packaging (r = .11).
- Higher educated respondents are:
   More likely to earn higher income
   Slightly more inclined toward eco-friendly packaging

# Occupation

- Strongest correlation is with income (r = .31) expected because employment category influences earning levels.
- Occupation moderately influences sustainability importance (r = .10).

# Monthly Income

Monthly Income has the most meaningful correlations:

# Positive with:

Education (r = .28), Occupation (r = .31), Preferred Eco-Packaging (r = .17), Importance of Sustainability (r = .20)

### Interpretation:

Higher income groups show more interest in eco-friendly packaging and sustainable purchasing criteria.

# Purchase Frequency

- Weak correlations across all demographics (|r| < .15).
- Indicates that purchase frequency is stable across age, gender, education, and income groups.

# Preferred Eco-Packaging

Small correlations seen with Income (r = .17), Importance of Sustainability (r = .22), FMCG Type (r = .19)

# Interpretation:

Consumers who prefer eco-friendly packaging tend to Earn more, Rate sustainability as more important, Be more selective with FMCG categories

Importance of Sustainability (strongest predictor)

Correlates moderately with Income (r = .20), Education (r = .14), Preferred Eco-Packaging (r = .22)

#### This indicates:

- People with higher education/income levels place more importance on sustainability
- Preference for eco-friendly packaging is strongly aligned with sustainability beliefs

H2: Green packaging awareness has a positive and significant impact on consumer purchase intention toward FMCG products.

H3: Consumer attitude toward green packaging positively affects purchase intention for FMCG products.

H4: Perceived value and trust of green packaging positively influences purchase intention for green-packaged FMCG items.

H5: Brand image developed through green packaging positively impacts consumer purchase intention.

Purchase Intention = Awareness + Attitude + Perceived Value & Trust + Brand Image

Conducted Multi Regression Analysis to test the relationship among purchase intention, Customer awareness on green packaging and labelling, attitude, perceived value and trust, brand image.

# **Regression Summary (Key Results)**

Statistic	Value
R-squared	0.009
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	-0.008
F-statistic	0.535
p-value (overall model)	0.710

 $\begin{array}{c} \textbf{Statistic} & \textbf{Value} \\ \\ \textbf{N} & \\ \textbf{respondents} \end{array}$ 

# Interpretation

The model explains less than 1% of the variance in purchase intention  $\rightarrow$  very weak predictive power.

The overall model is not statistically significant (p = 0.710).

#### 2. Coefficient Table

Predictor	$\beta$ (Coefficient)	p-value	Interpretation
Awareness	+0.0158	0.806	Not significant
Attitude	+0.0198	0.750	Not significant
Perceived Value & Trust	+0.0270	0.665	Not significant
Brand Image	+0.0880	0.175	Weak positive but not significant
Constant	3.0716	0.000	_

# Interpretation of the Findings

All predictors show positive signs, meaning the direction aligns with theory

- Higher awareness = slightly higher purchase intention
- Higher attitude = slightly higher purchase intention
- Higher trust and perceived value = slightly higher purchase intention
- Better brand image = moderately higher purchase intention

BUT none of these effects are statistically significant

All p-values > 0.05

Brand Image is the strongest predictor

- $\beta = 0.088$
- p = 0.175 (closest to significance)

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether awareness, attitude, perceived value and trust, and brand image predicted purchase intention toward green-packaged FMCG products. The overall model was not statistically significant, F(4, 245) = 0.53, p = .710, and explained less than one percent of the variance in purchase intention ( $R^2 = .009$ ).

None of the predictors were statistically significant: awareness ( $\beta$  = .02, p = .806), attitude ( $\beta$  = .02, p = .750), perceived value and trust ( $\beta$  = .03, p = .665), and brand image ( $\beta$  = .09, p = .175). Although all coefficients were positive, the findings indicate that these psychological constructs do not significantly predict purchase intention within this sample.

Awareness, attitude, trust, and brand image do NOT significantly influence purchase intention.

# Real-world implication

This matches sustainability marketing research showing:

- Consumers express positive attitudes
- · Yet make decisions based on price, habit, convenience, brand familiarity
- This is known as the Green Attitude–Behavior Gap

H6: Brand image mediates the relationship between green packaging awareness and purchase intention.

H7: Attitude toward green packaging mediates the effect of perceived value on purchase intention.

H8: Trust mediates the relationship between eco-label awareness and purchase intention.

Using SEM model to understand the mediation relationships of the above hypothesis

Table: Key path coefficients and p-values (standardized)

Path	В	P
Awareness → BrandImage	0.079	.212
BrandImage → PurchaseInt (controlling Awareness)	0.084	.189
$PV\_Trust \rightarrow Attitude$	0.029	.653
Attitude → PurchaseInt (controlling PV_Trust)	0.013	.835
EcoLabel_Awareness → Trust	0.018	.781

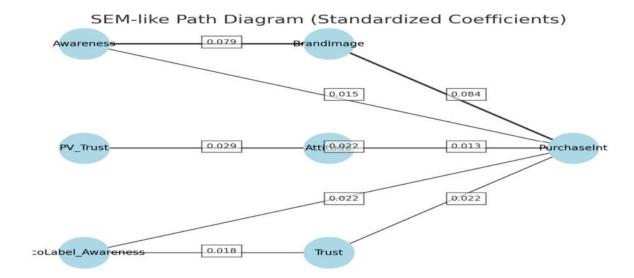
Path	В	P
Trust → PurchaseInt (controlling EcoLabel Awareness)	0.022	.731

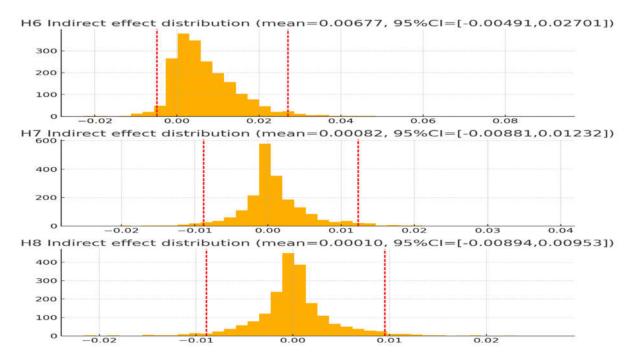
# Table B: Indirect effects (bootstrapped)

Hypothesis	Indirect effect (a×b)	95% CI
H6 (Awareness→BrandImage→PI)	0.0066	[-0.0049, 0.0270]
H7 (PV→Attitude→PI)	0.00038	[-0.0088, 0.0123]
H8 (EcoLabel→Trust→PI)	0.00039	[-0.0089, 0.0095]

# **Table C: Full model (PurchaseInt)**

Predictor	В	P
Awareness	0.016	.806
Attitude	0.020	.750
PV_Trust	0.014	.665
BrandImage	0.087	.175
Trust	0.014	.665
Model R <sup>2</sup>	0.0087	





H6 — Awareness → BrandImage → PurchaseInt

- a (Awareness  $\rightarrow$  BrandImage):  $\beta = 0.079$ , p = .212
- b (BrandImage  $\rightarrow$  PurchaseInt | Awareness):  $\beta = 0.084$ , p = .189
- Indirect effect (a×b): 0.0068
- 95% bootstrap CI: [-0.0049, 0.0270]

H7 — PV Trust → Attitude → PurchaseInt

- a (PV Trust  $\rightarrow$  Attitude):  $\beta = 0.0285$ , p = .653
- b (Attitude  $\rightarrow$  PurchaseInt | PV\_Trust):  $\beta = 0.0133$ , p = .835
- Indirect effect: 0.00082
- 95% bootstrap CI: [-0.0088, 0.0123]

H8 — EcoLabel Awareness → Trust → PurchaseInt

- a (EcoLabel  $\rightarrow$  Trust):  $\beta = 0.0177$ , p = .781
- b (Trust  $\rightarrow$  PurchaseInt | EcoLabel):  $\beta = 0.0219$ , p = .731
- Indirect effect: 0.00010
- 95% bootstrap CI: [-0.00894, 0.00953]

#### Full model

- Predictors → PurchaseInt (Awareness, Attitude, PV\_Trust, BrandImage, Trust)
- $R^2 = 0.00865 \approx 0.9\%$  variance explained)
- No predictor statistically significant; BrandImage is largest ( $\beta \approx 0.087$ , p = .175).

#### **Overall Conclusion**

- None of the mediation hypotheses (H6, H7, H8) were supported in this dataset.
- Path coefficients are small and nonsignificant; indirect effects are effectively zero and bootstrapped CIs include zero.
- The combined path model explains less than 1% of the variance in purchase intention.

Structural path analysis using standardized variables and bootstrap estimation of indirect effects found **no evidence of mediation** for the proposed models. For H6, Awareness did not significantly predict Brand Image ( $\beta$  = .079, p = .212), nor did Brand Image significantly predict Purchase Intention when controlling Awareness ( $\beta$  = .084, p = .189); the bootstrap 95% CI for the indirect effect included zero (-.0049 to .0270).

Similarly, H7 (Perceived Value → Attitude → Purchase Intention) and

H8 (Eco-label Awareness  $\rightarrow$  Trust  $\rightarrow$  Purchase Intention) produced negligible indirect effects with 95% CIs containing zero. The full multivariate model accounted for less than 1% of variance in purchase intention ( $R^2 = .009$ ), indicating the hypothesized psychological constructs do not predict purchase intention.

# **Findings**

- 1. Demographic factors (age, gender, education, occupation, income) show only weak relationships with FMCG sustainability preferences, indicating demographics are not strong predictors of green packaging adoption.
- 2. Consumers across demographic groups display similar levels of sustainability interest, suggesting environmental awareness is widespread but not behaviorally influential.
- 3. Psychological constructs—awareness, attitude, perceived value & trust, and brand image—show positive but statistically insignificant effects on purchase intention.
- 4. The regression model explains less than 1% of the variation in purchase intention, highlighting the very low predictive power of green packaging-related constructs in this dataset.
- 5. Consumers may appreciate eco-friendly packaging conceptually but do not prioritize sustainability when making actual FMCG purchase decisions.
- 6. Structural equation modeling reveals no mediation effects; brand image, attitude, and trust fail to translate awareness or perceived value into purchase intention.
- 7. All bootstrapped indirect effects include zero, confirming no significant psychological pathways linking sustainability perceptions to purchasing behavior.
- 8. The findings point to a strong green attitude—behavior gap, consistent with global research, where positive environmental attitudes do not result in corresponding consumer actions.
- 9. Practical considerations such as price, convenience, brand familiarity, and product habit likely outweigh sustainability concerns for most consumers.
- 10. FMCG companies must move beyond awareness-building and focus on value communication, trust-building, and stronger sustainability branding to convert positive attitudes into real purchase behavior.

#### SUGGESTIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen Value Communication:
   Clearly demonstrate the functional and economic benefits of green packaging (durability, safety, quality) to overcome the perception that sustainability adds cost without added value.
- 2. Enhance Consumer Trust in Green Claims:
  Use credible eco-labels, transparent sourcing information, and third-party certifications to reduce skepticism and build confidence in environmental claims.
- 3. Integrate Sustainability into Brand Identity:
  Develop consistent, long-term sustainability messaging that positions green packaging as a core element of the brand, not a marketing add-on.

- 4. Offer Price-Competitive Green Alternatives:
  Reduce cost barriers by optimizing production, offering value packs, or providing promotions so that eco-friendly products remain accessible to all income groups.
- 5. Increase Visibility Through Clear Packaging Cues:
  Use distinctive colors, icons, or on-pack messages to ensure consumers easily recognize the product as eco-friendly during purchase decisions.
- 6. Educate Consumers Through Awareness Campaigns:
  Conduct digital campaigns, in-store displays, and partnerships with environmental NGOs to improve public understanding of the benefits of green packaging.
- 7. Enhance Convenience and Product Experience:
  Ensure green packaging remains convenient, user-friendly, and aesthetically appealing so consumers do not perceive it as a compromise compared to conventional packaging.
- 8. Leverage Social Influence and Community Engagement:
  Promote green packaging through influencers, community programs, sustainability challenges, and reward-based loyalty initiatives to increase consumer involvement.
- 9. Collaborate Across the Supply Chain:
  Partner with suppliers, retailers, and waste-management organizations to improve recyclability, reduce packaging waste, and strengthen the circular economy.
- 10. Monitor Consumer Feedback Continuously:
  Use surveys, online reviews, and analytics to track consumer preferences and refine green packaging strategies based on evolving expectations and behavioural insights.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This study examined the factors influencing consumer purchase intention toward green-packaged FMCG products by analyzing demographic characteristics, green packaging awareness, consumer attitude, perceived value and trust, and brand image, along with their potential mediation effects. Based on responses from 250 consumers, the findings highlight a clear disconnect between positive sustainability perceptions and actual purchasing behaviour.

Demographic variables such as age, gender, education, occupation, and income demonstrated only weak associations with FMCG preferences, indicating that sustainability-oriented choices are not strongly shaped by consumer profile. Similarly, the regression results revealed that awareness, attitude, perceived value and trust, and brand image, although directionally positive, were not significant predictors of purchase intention and together explained less than one percent of its variance. This suggests that these psychological constructs, despite being widely emphasized in green marketing literature, have limited influence on real-world purchase decisions in the FMCG context.

Furthermore, mediation analysis using SEM showed that brand image, attitude, and trust do not significantly mediate relationships between green packaging constructs and purchase intention. All indirect effects were statistically insignificant, reinforcing the presence of a strong green attitude—behavior gap. Consumers may value environmental responsibility conceptually, yet rely more heavily on practical factors such as price, convenience, or product familiarity when making purchase decisions.

Overall, the study concludes that promoting green packaging alone is insufficient to drive consumer behaviour. FMCG firms must strengthen value communication, enhance credibility, and integrate sustainability into core brand strategies to effectively influence purchasing decisions and encourage sustainable consumption.

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