

Communicating with a Green Generation: A Global Analysis of Gen Z's Consumer Values

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Generation Z (Gen Z) is a significant market for social ideas and is willing to invest in environmentally friendly products. Analyzing Gen Z's green consumption behavior helps science communicators develop messages that align with their sustainability values. Economic and cultural contexts across regions shape how these values influence perceptions of sustainability and green consumerism, showing the need for context-specific communication strategies. This study used an online survey with a convenience sample of 563 Gen Z consumers from universities in Nepal, the United States, and Kenya to assess the impact of geographic location on green consumption values and behaviors. Descriptive statistics showed that most participants from the United States were white females, while the samples from Nepal and Kenya had a more balanced gender ratio. The average age of Kenyan students was higher than that of students in Nepal and the United States. A comparative analysis revealed significant differences in mean green consumerism scores across the three groups. These findings suggest that science communicators and agricultural educators should use targeted strategies to enhance environmental awareness and promote pro-environmental intentions among Gen Z, given the reported differences and potential for growth in green consumption.

Keywords: Green-consumerism, pro-environmental, United States, Kenya, Nepal, Generation Z, young consumers

Introduction

The 1970s saw a major shift in ecological thinking because of green consumer movements that were aimed at reducing environmental degradation and encouraging sustainable development (Chan, 2001; Obayelu, 2016; Rahman & Reynolds, 2017). Scholars have long agreed that population growth and higher consumption are the main causes of environmental damage (Goldblatt, 2005). Subsequent research shows that these problems are intensified by economic growth, industrialization, fossil fuel use, and urbanization, all of which accelerate environmental decline (Burki & Tahir, 2022; Huang et al., 2024; Kartal, 2024; Muradov et al., 2024; Pakrooh et al., 2025). Despite substantial efforts to encourage eco-friendly lifestyles and community stewardship (Akenji, 2014; Cinderby et al., 2023; Mey et al., 2016; Wan et al., 2025; Wilkie & Trotter, 2022), a central question regards, *what factors explain the persistent gap between positive environmental attitudes and actual green purchasing behavior, especially among the emerging Generation Z (Gen Z) consumers across different global contexts?* (see Acikgoz et al., 2026). Organizations and communities continue to launch programs to support environmental, economic, and social cooperation, yet the reasons behind this attitude–behavior discrepancy are yet to be understood (Cinderby et al., 2023; Mey et al., 2016; Wan et al., 2025; Wilkie & Trotter, 2022).

Pro-environmental initiatives have emerged as key strategies for advancing green consumer behavior. Building on these community-level efforts, initiatives include eco-labeling schemes, public awareness campaigns, eco-efficient production standards, green technologies, green public procurement, and recycling activities (Akenji, 2014). These measures may not just provide information or resources but could also influence the underlying beliefs and motivations that drive consumer behavior (Ajzen, 1991). For example, eco-labeling and green procurement initiatives target consumers' attitudes by highlighting environmental benefits, set social norms regarding sustainable consumption, and enhance perceived behavioral control by making green choices more accessible and visible (see Ajzen, 1991). In this regard, international organizations, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2009) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2008), have established regulatory frameworks that support green consumption through product labeling systems, national recycling standards, and corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Green consumer initiatives aim to reduce consumption patterns that harm the environment and society (Cherian & Jacob, 2012). The success of these initiatives depends on the presence of green products, supportive policies, and how consumers perceive, interpret, and prioritize environmentally responsible behaviors within their social and economic settings (Hosta & Zabkar, 2021). In this context, consumers' perceptions of the practicality, acceptability, and personal relevance of green practices strongly influence their willingness to adopt sustainable consumption (Hosta & Zabkar, 2021; Khan et al., 2023). Therefore, understanding how consumers interpret green messages is key for agricultural communicators who may want to create messages that connect with eco-friendly preferences. This is important because sustainability and nutritious diets are major global priorities promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2019). Additionally, research shows how people's perceptions of green messages influence their willingness to make sustainable choices (Abong et al., 2021). Drawing on this, the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) posits that people's motivations and beliefs guide their purchasing decisions, underscoring the need for persuasive communication to encourage eco-friendly consumption (G. Thapa, 2019). Without sufficient knowledge or

effective communication, unsustainable practices and poor environmental behaviors may persist (Abong et al., 2021).

Considering the influence of younger consumers, it is crucial to consider Gen Z, defined as individuals born between the years 1993 and 2005 (Priporas et al., 2017). This consumer segment has grown up amid rapid technological advancement, including the proliferation of smartphones, social media, and digital media platforms (Turner, 2015). As a digitally fluent and highly connected generation, Gen Z frequently exchanges experiences across geographic boundaries and often bases purchasing decisions on influence-driven content shared via social media (Nadanyiova & Sujanska, 2023). Their reliance on digital platforms for information and social interaction highlights the need to understand how communication channels affect message exposure and engagement in agricultural communication research (Adhikari & Baral, 2025). Additionally, Gen Z has demonstrated a willingness to invest financially, participate in civic responsibilities (Rudolph et al., 2020; Turner, 2015), and prioritize health-conscious values, particularly food quality and environmentally responsible practices (Kamenidou et al., 2019). Consequently, this cohort is often more likely than previous generations to seek sustainable products (Deloitte, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2019). Thus, examining Gen Z as a target audience provides agricultural communicators and educators with valuable insights into a growing consumer segment whose values may shape future markets and workforce priorities (Byrd et al., 2023; Nguyen et al., 2019).

In response to the evolving generational trends highlighted above, green consumerism is intrinsically connected to the communication training programs that prepare students for careers in the agricultural sector. As graduates pursue diverse professional paths, including advocacy, public relations, photography, and advertising, communication programs must provide students with adaptable skills relevant across agricultural industries (Morgan, 2012). Agricultural communication courses are essential for preparing students for communication roles in both public and private sectors (Tucker & Napier, 2002). The increasing demand for communicators who can address complex issues such as food safety, environmental protection, and genetic modification underscores the need for comprehensive communication training (Tucker et al., 2003).

Alongside these curricular needs, agricultural communicators must account for the unique characteristics of Generation Z, the first generation to grow up fully immersed in smartphones, social media, and continuous internet connectivity (Talmon, 2019). Understanding Gen Z's perspectives on green consumerism is essential for effectively communicating agricultural messages to a demographic whose purchasing behaviors are likely to influence future sustainability practices and policies. As communication programs adapt to meet these evolving expectations, it becomes increasingly important to understand how students learn and develop critical thinking skills for curriculum design (Lamm et al., 2025). Without targeted communication training, future agricultural workforce may struggle to tailor messages to distinct audiences and engage them effectively (Norris-Parish et al., 2023).

In this study, green consumerism—or green purchasing and consumption—means buying or utilizing products or practices that are environmentally responsible, sustainable, and eco-friendly (Emekci, 2019). These choices help preserve the environment, reduce pollution, conserve resources, and protect animals and biodiversity (Musthafa & Sajila, 2013). Green consumers look for recyclable, organic, or eco-friendly products and favor companies that reduce environmental impacts, such as those selling low-carbon vehicles (Akenji, 2014; Connolly &

Prothero, 2008; Ichsan et al., 2019). Green consumption has achieved global prominence in part due to expanded internet access, which has increased public awareness of environmentally responsible practices (Bullock, 2017). Green marketing strategies reinforce this awareness through eco-labels and educational messaging that promote sustainable purchasing (Nguyen et al., 2019).

Research highlights the influence of green movements on business practices and marketing strategies worldwide (Kumar, 2010; Paco et al., 2019). Nonetheless, green initiatives are more prevalent in developed countries, where higher disposable incomes and greater environmental awareness support sustainability efforts (M. Thapa et al., 2025; Singh, 2015). In these settings, entrepreneurs increasingly establish environmentally oriented businesses, while regulatory frameworks contribute to mitigating environmental degradation (Cao & Chen, 2024; Guliyev, 2024; Quarter, 2000). In contrast, understanding of green consumerism in many developing countries remains limited, underscoring the need to strengthen awareness and identify factors influencing green purchasing behavior (Choudhury et al., 2024; Emekci, 2019; G. Thapa, 2019). The persistent gap between consumer attitudes and actual green purchasing behaviors remains, despite these global trends and rising environmental awareness (Crane, 2000; Ghoshal, 2010). Many consumers still depend on governments and industry to address environmental issues rather than prioritizing environmental stewardship in their own actions (G. Thapa, 2019; Truc, 2024). As a result, positive environmental attitudes do not consistently lead to pro-environmental behaviors such as production, distribution, or purchase of green products (G. Thapa, 2019; Truc, 2024).

Empirical research further shows that green purchasing behavior is influenced by environmental responsibility and concern for social and ecological issues (Makatouni, 2002). Consumers frequently associate organic and environmentally friendly products with responsible production practices, which affects purchasing decisions (Makatouni, 2002; Padel & Foster, 2005). These behaviors are also linked to perceived behavioral control, subjective norms, and attitudes toward environmental protection (J. Kang et al., 2013; K. H. Kang et al., 2012). Subjective norms influence behavior through social expectations and perceived pressure from others (Gupta & Ogden, 2009). Environmental concerns are further shaped by moral obligations, personal norms, and considerations of family welfare (Cerjak et al., 2010; Doran, 2009). Emotional responses, such as guilt and concerns about personal safety, may also motivate sustainable purchasing decisions (Paco et al., 2013).

Factors such as product availability, perceived environmental quality, functional benefits, and health attributes significantly influence green consumption (Aertsens et al., 2011; Doran, 2009; Young et al., 2010). Products with strong ethical and functional value are more likely to convert positive attitudes into purchasing behavior (Gleim et al., 2013). In contrast, poor product quality or limited environmental benefits can deter consumers and contribute to the well-documented attitude-behavior gap (Tsakiridou et al., 2008). Scholars offer differing interpretations of the primary drivers of green purchasing. Some emphasize product-related attributes such as quality and health benefits (Aertsens et al., 2011), while others focus on ethical or philanthropic motivations (Padel & Foster, 2005; Tsarenko et al., 2013). In practice, many consumers balance environmental concerns with functional product needs (Tsarenko et al., 2013). While individuals concerned with environmental and social impacts often seek green attributes, those who prioritize personal benefits may focus more on practicality and product performance (Follows & Jobber, 2000). As a result, favorable attitudes toward green

consumption do not always translate into purchasing behavior, as contextual barriers and individual differences may moderate this relationship (Follows & Jobber, 2000; Gleim et al., 2013; Tsakiridou et al., 2008).

Given persistent environmental challenges and the growing influence of younger consumers, understanding Generation Z's approach to green consumerism is increasingly important. Despite expressing strong environmental attitudes, many Gen Z consumers continue to engage in environmentally harmful behaviors, such as improper waste disposal, pinpointing a persistent gap between beliefs and actions (Azrai et al., 2019). This discrepancy is significant because climate change and environmental protection are among Gen Z's most pressing global concerns (Deloitte, 2021). Enhancing Gen Z's awareness of responsible consumption is therefore critical for fostering long-term environmental stewardship (Azrai et al., 2019; Ichsan et al., 2019; Musthafa & Sajila, 2013). Simultaneously, developing countries require expanded public awareness and more robust green communication strategies targeting Gen Z consumers (Dagher & Itani, 2014).

In summary, green consumerism differs across global contexts, with individuals in developed economies typically benefiting from higher incomes, greater market access, and stronger institutional support for sustainable consumption, while structural and economic constraints continue to limit green purchasing in developing economies (Ferrell & Hartline, 2011; Singh, 2015; Vicente-Molina et al., 2013). As a culturally shaped and context-dependent behavior, green consumerism influences both green self-identity and purchasing intentions (Becerra et al., 2023). Government policies, industry regulations, and market incentives can enhance environmental awareness and increase willingness to pay for sustainable products (Zhu et al., 2016). Accordingly, this study compares perceptions of Generation Z consumers in Kenya, the United States, and Nepal to examine how green consumerism manifests in diverse global contexts.

Purpose and Research Objectives

The purpose of the study was to explore the green consumer behavior of Gen Zs in Kenya, the United States, and Nepal. These three countries were selected because of their differences in economy and culture, and locations in Africa, North America, and Asia. The study sought to address two research objectives:

1. To describe the demographic characteristics and tendencies toward green consumerism among the Gen Z in Kenya, the United States, and Nepal.
2. To determine whether there are statistically significant differences in green consumerism levels among the Gen Z in Kenya, the United States, and Nepal.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the theory of planned behavior ([TPB] Ajzen, 1991), which proposes that behavioral intentions are determined by three core constructs: attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. According to TPB, individuals are more likely to engage in environmentally eco-friendly consumption when they hold favorable evaluations of the behavior, perceive social support for it, and believe they have the ability and resources to perform it (Ajzen, 1991, 2002). Together, TPB constructs provide a well-established model for investigating intention formation across social, economic, and cultural contexts (Armitage & Conner, 2001).

TPB extends earlier models of reasoned action by clearly considering perceived behavioral control, recognizing intentions may not translate into behavior when individuals face real or perceived constraints (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Within the conceptual framework, behavioral intention represents an individual's motivational readiness to perform a behavior and is the most proximal predictor of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

In consumer behavior research, purchase intention refers to an individual's conscious willingness to acquire a product or service (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015). Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that intention is a strong antecedent of environmentally responsible purchasing and sustainable consumption behaviors (M.F. Chen & Tung, 2014; Y.S. Chen, 2010). Positive attitudes toward green products have been shown to strengthen intentions to engage in sustainable consumption behaviors (Chan, 2001; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). By integrating attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, TPB offers a thorough framework for understanding green consumer intentions.

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a non-experimental, cross-sectional explanatory survey design, appropriate for examining group differences in attitudes and behaviors at a single point in time (Ary et al., 2019; Creswell, 2014). The design allowed for the comparison of Gen Z's green consumerism levels across national contexts without manipulation of variables.

Population and Sampling

The target population for this study consisted of Generation Z undergraduate students enrolled at three universities in Kenya, the United States, and Nepal. A convenience sampling technique was employed to recruit participants from each university based on accessibility and feasibility (Hibberts et al., 2012). Gall et al. (1996) note that convenience sampling is acceptable when the researcher clearly articulates the selection rationale and procedures. The three countries were purposely selected due to their distinct economic and cultural contexts, representing developing and developed nations across Africa, North America, and Asia, thereby allowing for meaningful cross-national comparison.

A total of 563 usable responses were collected across the three universities. Overall, the study achieved an approximate 70% response rate, calculated based on the number of completed surveys relative to the number of students invited to participate through the institutional channels. This response rate meets accepted standards for survey research in the social sciences (Baruch & Holtom, 2008) and is indicative of the population of interest.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument consisted of two primary components—the GREEN Scale (Haws et al., 2014) used to measure green consumerism and a series of demographic items (country, gender and race).

Instrument Development, Review, and Validity

Although the GREEN scale is a previously validated measure, the full survey instrument was reviewed prior to administration to ensure content clarity, cultural appropriateness, and contextual relevance for an international undergraduate population. The review panel included science communication experts and field specialists with expertise in environmental and

ecological studies, who evaluated the instrument for face validity, construct relevance, and wording precision. Minor revisions were made based on expert feedback before final deployment.

A post hoc reliability analysis conducted after data collection yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .78, exceeding the acceptable threshold of .70 (Cortina, 1993), indicating adequate internal consistency for the study population.

Measurement of Green Consumerism

The GREEN scale operationalizes green consumerism as a multidimensional construct comprising six items (Haws et al., 2014), including:

It is important to me that the products I use do not harm the environment; I consider the potential environmental impact of my actions when making many of my decisions; My purchase habits are affected by my concern for our environment; I am concerned about wasting the resources of our planet; I would describe myself as environmentally responsible, and I am willing to be inconvenienced to take actions that are more environmentally friendly. (Haws et al., 2014, p. 339)

Respondents indicated their level of agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (5).

A green scale index score (*GSI*) was a weighted mean of the six GREEN scale items:

$$GSI_i = \frac{1}{K} \sum_{k=1}^K GSI_{ki}. \quad (1)$$

Where $K = 6$ items. The sample mean of this index was computed as:

$$\overline{GSI} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N GSI_i = \frac{1}{NK} \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{k=1}^K GSI_{ki}, \quad (2)$$

The green consumerism score $GSI_{max} = 5$; the respondent's actual *GSI* (total *GSI* of each respondent on the six green consumerism items) was used to compute the *GSI* as follows: where K represented the total number of items or statements in the GREEN scale; k represented the index for each separate statement (item); GSI_{ki} represented the score for the k th item of the i th individual; GSI_{max} represented the highest point (5) on the *GSI* scale. It is known from these definitions: $1 \leq GSI_i \leq GSI_{max}$ and $1 \leq \overline{GSI} \leq GSI_{max}$. The computed index quantitatively represented students' perceived level of green consumerism and ranged from 1 to 5. Higher *GSI* scores indicated a more positive inclination toward green consumerism.

Demographic Variable

The independent variables were three nominal-level demographic items and included country of residence (Kenya, United States, Nepal), gender, and race.

Data Collection

Data collection followed Dillman et al.'s (2014) tailored design method for online surveys. The finalized instrument was administered via Qualtrics and distributed through university administrations and program instructors at participating institutions. Participants were recruited using an initial email invitation followed by reminders during the data collection period. Undergraduate students at the University of Georgia were invited in class from five agricultural leadership courses to complete a voluntary online survey.

At Egerton University and Agriculture and Forestry University in Nepal, survey links were distributed through institutional email announcements, faculty email lists, WhatsApp groups, peer referrals, and limited in-person facilitation to enhance response rates. Consistent with the recommendations of Kirkman and Chen (2011), this study acknowledges its integration within a larger research project. The current analysis focuses exclusively on green consumerism variables, although additional data collected from the same respondents will be analyzed in future studies. The broader project received approval from the University of Georgia Institutional Review Board (IRB STUDY00006653; approved October 31, 2018).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS statistics (version 29). Descriptive statistics were computed for all variables. A one-way Welch ANOVA was conducted at .05 alpha level set a priori to examine differences in Gen Z's green consumerism levels across countries. Assumptions of ANOVA were evaluated prior to analysis. No outliers were detected, and normality was supported using boxplots and the Shapiro-Wilk test ($p > .05$). No outliers were detected, and normality was supported using boxplots and Shapiro-Wilk test ($p > .05$). Homogeneity of variances was violated, as indicated by Levene's Test ($p = .003$), therefore, a Games-Howell post hoc comparison was used to test pairwise country differences in respondents' green consumerism levels. Frequencies, percentages, and summary statistics were also cross tabulated by country to describe demographic characteristics of the sample.

Results

Objective 1: Respondents' Characteristics and Associated Green Consumerism Levels

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of respondents from three countries. Participants had varied academic standings and gender identities. In Kenya, nearly half of the sample were senior students (47.7%). In the United States, juniors and seniors made up more than two-thirds (71.0%) of respondents. The Nepalese sample showed a more balanced distribution between male and female students. A small proportion of respondents in each country did not specify their gender.

Respondents' mean ages and green consumerism scores by country of origin are presented in Table 2. Students from Kenya were, on average (23.91 ± 3.19), older than those from the United States (21.63 ± 6.51), and Nepal (21.36 ± 2.02).

Table 1

Green Consumers' Demographic Distribution by Country (n = 563)

	Kenya %	United States %	Nepal %
Year of Study			
First-year student	5.40	5.71	25.81
Sophomore	8.04	17.14	28.57
Junior	7.19	35.71	25.81
Senior	47.70	35.71	6.45
Other	3.46	4.01	9.22
Not specified	27.21	1.72	4.32
Gender identity			

	Kenya	United States	Nepal
Female	43.88	70.00	47.47
Male	33.45	28.57	47.93
Gender variant/non-conforming	0.00	0.00	1.84
Not specified	23.00	1.43	2.76

In terms of green consumerism, respondents from the United States (4.11 ± 0.37) reported the highest overall levels, followed closely by students from Kenya (4.11 ± 0.37), while students from Nepal reported comparatively lower levels (3.66 ± 0.59). These descriptive results suggest meaningful cross-national variation in both age and environmentally oriented consumer attitudes.

Table 2

Mean Ages and Green Consumerism of Young Consumers by Country of Origin (n = 563)

Country	n	Age				Green Consumerism			
		M	SD	Min	Max	M	SD	Min	Max
Kenya	277	23.91	3.19	19.00	45.00	4.07	0.66	1.00	5.00
United States	70	21.63	6.51	18.00	70.00	4.11	0.37	3.17	5.00
Nepal	216	21.36	2.02	18.00	41.00	3.66	0.59	2.00	5.00

Note. Green Consumerism Scale is 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*; Age is ratio-level.

Objective 2: Differences in Green Consumerism Across Countries

A one-way Welch ANOVA was conducted at the .05 alpha level to determine whether green consumerism, the dependent variable, differed significantly across countries (the United States, Nepal, and Kenya). The analysis revealed that green consumerism varied significantly by country of origin, $F(2, 560) = 33.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$. The partial eta squared value of .11, based on Cohen's benchmarks can be interpreted as moderate effect size, and implies country-of-origin accounted for approximately 11% of the model-adjusted variance in green consumerism scores (Cohen, 2013).

Respondents from the United States and Kenya exhibited similarly high levels of green consumerism, while respondents from Nepal reported lower levels. These findings suggest differences in environmental awareness, access, or cultural norms related to green consumption. Results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

One-Way ANOVA Table of Green Consumerism by Country of Origin (n = 563)

Term	SS	df	F	p	η_p^2
Country	24.59	2	33.33	<.001	0.11
Residuals	206.63	560			

Note. Green Consumerism Scale is 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*; Country of Origin is 0 = Kenya, 1 = United States, 2 = Nepal.

Post hoc comparisons using the Games-Howell procedure are presented in Table 4. The results indicate that green consumerism levels differed significantly and statistically between respondents from Kenya and Nepal ($p < .001$) and between the United States and Nepalese ($p =$

.03) students. In contrast, no statistically significant difference was observed between respondents from Kenya and the United States ($p = .54$). These patterns reinforce the descriptive patterns reported earlier in this study and highlight Nepal as the group with comparatively lower green consumerism levels among the three countries examined

Table 4

Multiple Comparisons of Green Consumerism by Country of Origin (n = 563)

Country (I)	Country (J)	Mean Difference	SE	<i>p</i>	Lower-Upper
Kenya	United States	-.04	.06	.77	[-.18 - .10]
	Nepal	.41	.06	<.001	[.28 - .54]
United States	Kenya	.04	.06	.77	[-.10 - .18]
	Nepal	.45	.06	<.001	[.31 - .59]
Nepal	Kenya	-.41	.06	<.001	[-.54 - .28]
	United States	-.45	.06	<.001	[-.59 - .31]

Note. Green Consumerism (DV) Scale is 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*; Country of Origin (IDV) is (0 = Kenya, 1 = United States, 2 = Nepal)

Discussions

This study compared preferences for green consumerism among Generation Z university students in Kenya, the United States, and Nepal using cross-national survey data. The research was guided by the theory of planned behavior, which posits that attitudes are key antecedents of intentions and behavior. Green consumerism was conceptualized as a general attitude toward responsible consumption. Kenya and Nepal were selected to represent developing economies in Africa and Asia, while the United States represented a developed economy. Prior research demonstrates that green consumerism varies across economic, social, and cultural contexts (Grimmelt et al., 2020). The present study offers comparative insights into how these attitudes differ across the three national settings.

Descriptive statistics indicated demographic differences by country; however, all respondents averaged under 24 years of age, consistent with Generation Z (Deloitte, 2021). Mean green consumerism scores ranged from 3.66 to 4.11, indicating favorable pro-environmental attitudes in all three countries. These results are consistent with prior studies demonstrating that Generation Z is environmentally knowledgeable, supportive of conservation, and interested in green products (Deloitte, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2019).

The country of origin significantly influenced respondents' reported levels of green consumerism. Participants from the United States recorded the highest mean score, followed by those from Kenya and Nepal. While differences between the United States and Kenya were not statistically significant, Nepal's scores were significantly lower than those of both countries. These findings indicate heterogeneity in green consumerism rather than uniform patterns across national or economic categories. Previous research attributes such variation to differences in economic conditions, levels of environmental knowledge, and broader contextual factors (Vicente-Molina et al., 2013). Additional studies indicate higher environmental consciousness in industrialized nations, where sustainable practices and environmentally responsible industries are more prevalent (Ferrell & Hartline, 2011; Singh et al., 2011).

Existing scholarship provides context for the lower green consumerism scores observed in Kenya and Nepal. Abong et al. (2021) found that more than half of the surveyed consumers in Nairobi had never heard of sustainable or green consumption, and purchasing decisions were primarily influenced by price and product quality. While some Kenyan consumers considered themselves environmentally conscious, many were uncertain whether their purchases were environmentally friendly. In Nepal, G. Thapa (2019) reported limited awareness of green product features, with high prices serving as a key barrier to green purchasing. These findings suggest possible reasons for cross-country differences. However, the current dataset does not allow for direct examination of these mechanisms, highlighting the need for future research to explicitly investigate these pathways.

Overall, the findings indicate that Generation Z consumers in all three countries held positive attitudes toward green consumption, although notable differences exist across national contexts. While attitudes are favorable, there remains potential to further strengthen pro-environmental values. The research underscores the global importance of promoting eco-consciousness and green consumption (Singh, 2015). High prices for green products and packaging constitute a major barrier in developing economies (Rajendran et al., 2019). Furthermore, confusing, or insufficient green marketing messages hinder green purchasing (Abong et al., 2021; G. Thapa, 2019). These challenges underscore the need for more effective and targeted communication strategies.

Conclusion and Implications

Reported levels of green consumerism raise questions about Gen Z's understanding of the environmental consequences of their purchasing decisions. Although mean scores were positive, there remains significant potential for improvement. This highlights the necessity for agricultural communicators to enhance environmental awareness and encourage sustainable purchasing, particularly if the objective is to influence future agricultural practices. Gen Z represents a critical market for green products and social causes (Deloitte, 2021), underscoring the need for messaging that aligns with their sustainability values. When adequately informed, Gen Z can serve as leaders in promoting responsible behaviors within their communities and workplaces (Azrai et al., 2019; Ichsan et al., 2019). Comparative research between Gen Z and other generations is recommended to inform the development of age-specific environmental programs.

The findings demonstrate how green consumerism is expressed among Gen Z across various economic and cultural contexts. As an influential and socially conscious cohort, Gen Z encourages food and agriculture professionals to reconsider production methods and to engage younger populations through nutrition education and agricultural literacy initiatives (Kamenidou et al., 2019; Nadanyiova & Sujanska, 2023). Gen Z places high value on quality, health, and transparency, directly linking their consumption choices to sustainability outcomes. Many individuals in this group perceive sustainable nutrition as essential for preserving both human and planetary health, a perspective endorsed by global organizations. The World Health Organization (2019) defines sustainable healthy diets as those that promote health, have minimal environmental impact, and are accessible, affordable, safe, equitable, and culturally appropriate. Agricultural communicators should explicitly demonstrate how producers contribute to environmental sustainability, strengthen communities, and offer products consistent with sustainable nutrition principles. The results suggest that equipping Gen Z with green behaviors

and leveraging their influence could enhance food and environmental sustainability. Prior to implementing such programs, research should assess feasibility, effective strategies, and potential unintended consequences.

Given Gen Z's significant representation within undergraduate populations, agricultural educators could proactively shape green consumer attitudes and intentions (Ajzen, 2002; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Specifically, curricula should incorporate systems-oriented experiential learning to foster environmental consciousness among Gen Z students (Byrd et al., 2023). Additionally, delivering well-structured and targeted environmental education at universities can enhance students' awareness and engagement, particularly when aligned with their learning processes and the cultivation of critical thinking skills (Lamm et al., 2025).

Although this study provides valuable insights into green consumerism across different economies, it has certain limitations. The sample comprises Gen Z participants from three universities in Kenya, the United States, and Nepal, which may not fully represent the broader Gen Z populations in these countries. Replicating this research with larger and more representative samples, particularly from developing economies, would enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Further research should examine how Gen Z's green values relate to their knowledge gaps in sustainable practices and identify areas that need targeted intervention. Scholars should also determine which communication strategies and platforms best engage Gen Z across cultures and strengthen awareness of product sustainability. Additional work is needed to understand how cultural and personal factors shape green behaviors and to use experimental, psychophysiological, and longitudinal methods to assess whether pro-environmental attitudes translate into actual behavior. In-depth interviews may also clarify cross-country differences.

Despite these limitations, Gen Z continues to show strong interest in green consumerism. Strengthening agricultural communication and undergraduate environmental education remains essential for advancing sustainable agricultural production and improving environmental outcomes.

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