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An Analysis of Industry Trends and Consumer Behaviour for Consumer Goods

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Abstract

India's manufacturing and consumer-goods sector sits at the intersection of industrial output, household consumption and employment, reshaped over recent decades by liberalisation, urbanisation, rising incomes, digital adoption, e-commerce and a growing focus on sustainability.

This paper examines the sector through four lenses — industry trends, consumer behaviour, marketing strategy and future opportunity — using an exploratory-descriptive design built on secondary sources, with a conceptual framework offered for later empirical work. Methodologically, the paper borrows its logic from Shukla and Jha (2026), whose study of "real skin" marketing in beauty and health-care influencer culture used bibliometric and qualitative analysis of consumer comments. Rather than repeating that study, this paper adapts the same idea — treating consumer-generated content as a genuine data source — to the wider consumer-goods space.

The literature shows price, quality, brand trust, availability and promotions still drive most purchase decisions, while digital reviews, social media, authenticity and convenience play an increasingly large role. Interest in green marketing, sustainable consumption, CSR and circularity is rising sharply, and manufacturing research shows increasing capital intensity alongside a shifting relationship between output growth and employment.

Building on this, the paper proposes a conceptual model connecting manufacturing and marketing factors to consumer perception, purchase intention and behaviour, along with a five-point Likert questionnaire framework for future primary research. Seven hypotheses cover the effects of product quality, price-value perception, digital/social-media influence, brand trust, sustainability perception and convenience on purchase intention, and the link between intention and behaviour.

The broad conclusion: competitiveness going forward depends on manufacturing efficiency and consumer intelligence working together. Companies that combine solid production, data-informed marketing, honest communication, sustainability and easy omnichannel access are best placed to hold their ground.

Keywords: Manufacturing, Consumer Goods, FMCG, Consumer Behaviour, Marketing Strategy, Digital Marketing, Sustainability, Brand Trust, Consumer Purchase Intention, India

1. Introduction

Manufacturing and consumer goods form the link between what factories produce and what households actually use. It is a broad category, spanning food and beverages, personal care, household products, textiles and apparel, durables and more. Because these products touch everyday life so directly, even small shifts in what people want feed straight back into product design, distribution and marketing.

India's consumer-goods market looks very different today than a generation ago. Liberalisation opened the door to more competition, both domestic and foreign, and urbanisation, rising incomes, changing lifestyles and easier access to information have pushed consumption patterns further still.

Today's consumer is far better informed than in the past. People compare prices across brands, read reviews, watch demonstration videos and ask around before they buy, which means marketing has shifted from a one-way broadcast into something closer to an ongoing conversation between brand and customer.

Digital engagement matters because consumers no longer just receive marketing messages — they participate in brand communities and create their own content, which shapes what other consumers think (Brodie et al., 2011). Electronic word-of-mouth has become a real force in how people decide what to buy, since many now lean on the experiences of other users rather than advertising alone (Cheung & Thadani, 2012).

Manufacturing is changing at the same time. Automation, analytics, AI and more sophisticated supply chains can lift productivity, but they also raise harder questions about investment, workforce skills and employment. Recent work using India KLEMS data spanning 1991–92 to 2019–20 finds real differences across industries in how capital intensity affects job creation (Batra & Singh, 2025a, 2025b).

Consumer behaviour itself is far from uniform. Rural consumers don't necessarily share the same priorities as their urban counterparts, given differences in income, access, household structure and how products reach them. Verma et al. (2023), drawing on 550 rural respondents, found that demographic factors shaped the decision rules used for FMCG personal-care purchases.

Sustainability adds one more layer. Awareness of environmental issues, sustainable products and CSR is climbing, but so is scepticism about greenwashing and how authentic these claims really are (Mishra et al., 2025; Hong et al., 2026). Making sense of consumer goods, then, calls for looking at both sides — how things are made and how they're bought — together rather than separately.

2. Background of the Study

Consumer-goods manufacturing is really a cluster of several industries, each with its own technology base, capital needs, labour structure and market: food and beverages, personal care, household goods, textiles and apparel, durables, and health and wellness products.

These industries don't look alike on paper either. Batra and Singh (2025a), using India KLEMS data specifically for consumer-goods manufacturing, report meaningful gaps in output, labour productivity, capital intensity and employment elasticity from one sub-industry to the next.

3. Industry Trends

Digital transformation is arguably the biggest force reshaping this sector. AI, IoT, cloud computing, predictive analytics, automation and digital inventory systems feed into faster, better decisions — manufacturers use demand signals to forecast sales and cut waste, while marketing teams mine customer data to build sharper campaigns.

E-commerce has rewritten the customer journey. Where the old path ran from advertisement to retailer to purchase, today it runs through search or social feeds, reviews, comparison shopping, and a recommendation afterward — making logistics part of the customer-experience story, not just a back-end concern. Tripathi et al. (2024), studying 515 Indian online shoppers, looked at how marketing logistics ties into satisfaction and post-purchase behaviour.

Indian consumers also show two behaviours that seem to contradict each other but don't: premiumisation and value-consciousness at the same time. Many will pay more for quality, health benefits, convenience or a better experience, even as they stay price-sensitive on everyday purchases.

4. Rural Consumer Markets

Rural India is a genuine growth opportunity, but not simply a smaller version of the urban market. Affordability, distribution reach, local taste, household composition, income and retailer influence all matter in ways that don't map onto city behaviour.

Verma et al. (2023) found that education and family structure shaped rural FMCG buying decisions. Barik et al. (2025), studying 300 rural consumers in Odisha, examined how personal income relates to FMCG usage, while a 2025 study of 386 rural respondents in Patna found lifestyle and personal values tied to brand loyalty — together making a strong case for rural strategies built for rural conditions rather than adapted urban playbooks.

5. Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behaviour covers the arc from recognising a need through evaluating options, buying, using and judging the experience — a mix of rational calculation and plain emotion. Price still carries weight, especially for frequent purchases, though a low price alone rarely closes the sale. Quality shapes satisfaction and repeat purchase through durability, performance, safety and consistency.

Brand trust lowers perceived risk, mattering most where health, food safety or sustainability claims are involved. Convenience — easy availability, simple ordering, quick delivery, hassle-free returns — has climbed the priority list as people get busier. Social media lets consumers shape each other's opinions directly through reviews, demo videos and public comparisons; this electronic word-of-mouth effect is well established in the literature (Cheung & Thadani, 2012).

6. Authenticity and Consumer Engagement

The paper this study borrows its methodology from — Shukla and Jha's (2026) look at "real skin" marketing in beauty and health-care influencer culture — treated authenticity as something studyable through consumer-generated content rather than just theorised about. The lesson travels well beyond beauty: comments people leave online are a legitimate window into what they actually think.

Applied to consumer goods broadly, the same logic works on product reviews, social posts, forum discussions and demo videos, with recurring words grouped into broader themes. This complements surveys rather than replacing them, since survey answers are shaped by researcher-chosen questions while online comments capture what people bring up unprompted — consistent with engagement research framing participation as value-creating (Brodie et al., 2011).

7. Sustainability and Green Marketing

Sustainability has moved from nice-to-have to genuine strategic factor, with consumers regularly encountering recyclable packaging, natural-ingredient and ethical-sourcing claims. But making a claim and having consumers believe it are different things — Peattie and Crane (2005) flagged this early, arguing green marketing needs substance, not just surface messaging.

Mishra et al. (2025) examined how sustainability initiatives connect to perception and brand behaviour across 500 consumers. Hong et al. (2026), reviewing 70 studies from 2015–2025, identified green promotion, place and product as the main drivers of green buying, while flagging greenwashing and the attitude-behaviour gap. Mishra and Farooqi (2024), studying 651 Indian millennials, found affordability, awareness and availability all shaped green purchase behaviour — meaning sustainability strategy can't rest on values alone.

8. Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumer Purchase

CSR shapes how consumers see a company, not just a product. Shetty et al. (2026) examined CSR and sustainable consumption in India's FMCG sector through the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which holds that intention and

behaviour are shaped by attitude, subjective norms and perceived control (Ajzen, 1991) — a framework that fits sustainable-consumption research well since it draws a direct line from attitude to intention to behaviour.

9. Branding, Social Media and Impulse Buying

Brand recognition and recall matter more than ever given how many competing options consumers face. K and Menon (2026), using data from 411 Kerala consumers, studied how recognition, attitude, purchase intention, social media and recall interact in cause-related FMCG marketing. Singh (2026), surveying 506 Indian consumers, identified visual merchandising, utilitarian motives, promotions, product variety and pricing as the main drivers of impulsive purchases.

10. Manufacturing Challenges

Manufacturers face volatile costs across raw materials, energy, transport, packaging and labour, squeezing margins or forcing price increases. Automation and digitalisation take real capital and skill — smaller manufacturers can struggle with technology costs, skilled staff and cybersecurity. Batra and Singh (2025a) document shifts in employment elasticity and capital intensity, showing growing output doesn't automatically mean growing headcount, while companies compete against national, multinational, regional, private-label, digital-first and unorganised players all at once.

11. Future Opportunities

AI has clear applications in demand forecasting, segmentation, personalised recommendations, inventory planning and sentiment analysis. Social listening can catch problems early, sustainable packaging and circular-economy models offer environmental and marketing upside, and linking rural distribution with digital ordering and payments could open real opportunity.

12. Literature Review

Author(s)	Year	Focus	Method/Sample	Major Relevance
Shukla & Jha	2026	Authenticity & influencers	Bibliometric + qualitative comments	Consumer engagement/authenticity
Batra & Singh	2025	Consumer-goods manufacturing	KLEMS data	Employment/capital intensity
Verma et al.	2023	Rural FMCG behaviour	550 respondents	Demographic effects
Tripathi et al.	2024	E-shopping	515 respondents	Logistics & satisfaction
Mishra & Farooqi	2024	Green buying	651 respondents	Awareness/affordability
Mishra et al.	2025	Sustainability	500 respondents	Trust/authenticity
Barik et al.	2025	Rural FMCG	300 respondents	Income/consumption
Prakash & Raunaque	2025	Rural FMCG	386 respondents	Psychographics/loyalty
K & Menon	2026	Cause-related marketing	411 respondents	Brand recognition/social media
Singh	2026	Impulse buying	506 respondents	Promotion/display/pricing
Shetty et al.	2026	CSR & sustainability	Questionnaire	TPB/sustainable purchase
Hong et al.	2026	Sustainable FMCG marketing	70 studies	Green marketing
Peattie & Crane	2005	Green marketing	Conceptual review	Sustainability
Ajzen	1991	Planned behaviour	Theoretical	Purchase intention

Author(s)	Year	Focus	Method/Sample	Major Relevance
Brodie et al.	2011	Customer engagement	Conceptual	Engagement/value creation

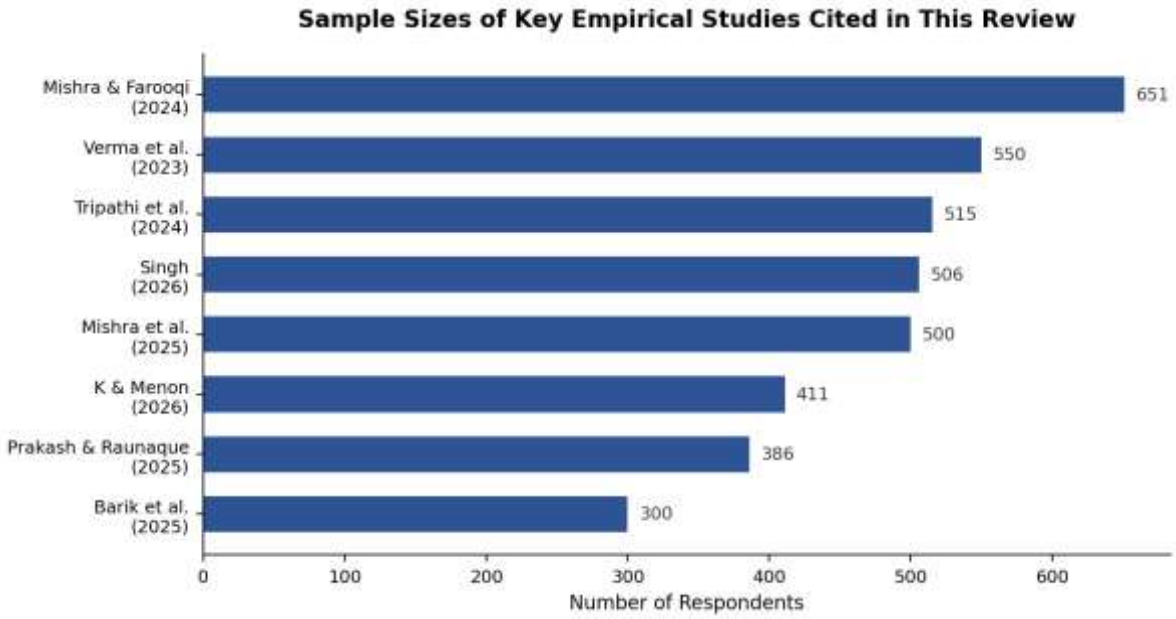


Figure 2: Sample sizes of key empirical studies cited in this review.

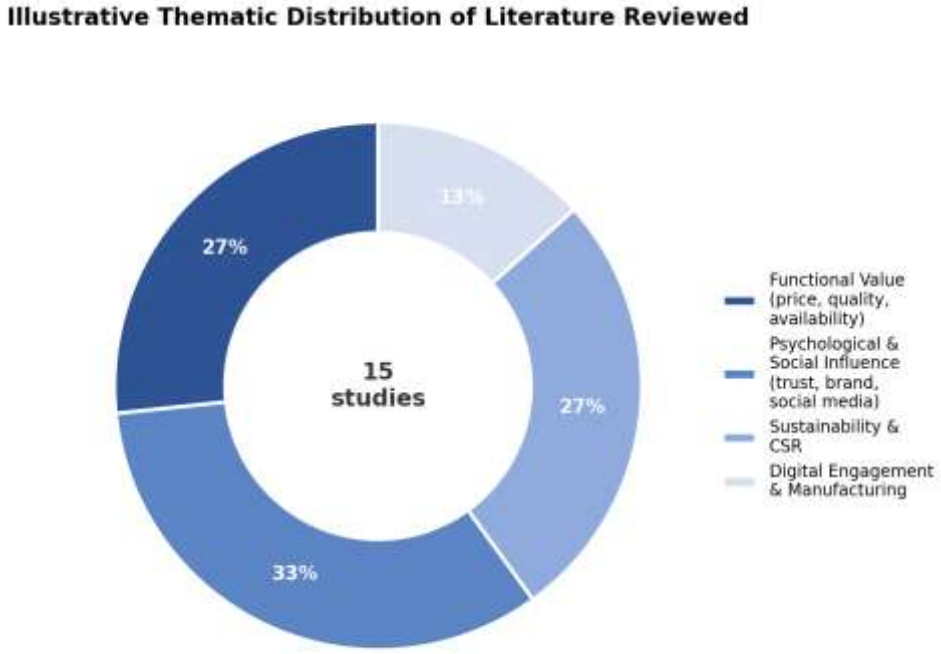


Figure 3: Illustrative thematic distribution of the literature reviewed.

Theme 1 — Functional value: price, quality and availability haven't lost any of their importance.

Theme 2 — Psychological and social influence: brand trust, lifestyle, social media and engagement are carrying more weight in the decision than they used to.

Theme 3 — Sustainability: awareness keeps rising, but affordability and credibility remain the sticking points.

Theme 4 — Digital transformation: digital commerce and consumer-generated content are opening up new ground for marketers and researchers alike.

13. Research Gap

Manufacturing research and consumer-behaviour research tend to run on separate tracks rather than together, and many FMCG studies stay narrowly focused on one region or category. Sustainability research usually looks at consumer perception in isolation, without tying it back to manufacturing, marketing and digital engagement as a whole.

Traditional surveys also have a blind spot: they can't easily capture opinions people form and share on their own, outside a researcher's set questions. The reference study shows what keyword and sentiment analysis of consumer-generated content can do, and there's a clear opening to extend that approach across the wider consumer-goods space — the gap this paper addresses, proposing an integrated framework where Manufacturing Factors + Marketing Factors + Digital Influence + Sustainability feed into Consumer Perceptions, which drive Purchase Intention and eventually Consumer Behaviour.

14. Research Objectives

- Examine the major trends shaping India's manufacturing and consumer-goods sector.
- Identify the key factors that drive consumer behaviour toward consumer goods.
- Look at how price-value perception and product quality affect purchase intention.
- Assess the role brand trust and digital/social-media influence play in decision-making.
- Examine the relationship between sustainability perception and purchase intention.
- Examine how convenience and availability shape purchase behaviour.
- Develop a conceptual framework linking manufacturing, marketing and consumer behaviour.
- Propose a methodology that pairs survey research with consumer-generated content analysis.

15. Research Questions

- What are the major trends affecting the manufacturing and consumer-goods sector?
- Which factors most strongly influence consumer purchase intention?
- Does perceived product quality meaningfully influence purchase intention?
- Does price-value perception influence purchase intention?
- Does brand trust influence purchase intention?
- Does social-media influence affect purchase intention?
- Does sustainability perception influence purchase intention?
- Does convenience influence purchase intention?

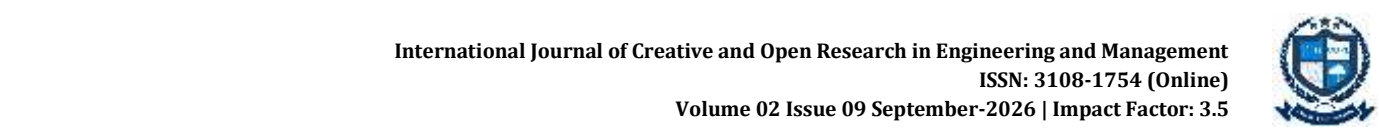
16. Hypotheses

H1: Product quality has a significant positive influence on consumer purchase intention toward consumer goods.

H2: Price-value perception has a significant positive influence on consumer purchase intention toward consumer goods.

H3: Brand trust has a significant positive influence on consumer purchase intention toward consumer goods.

H4: Social-media influence has a significant positive influence on consumer purchase intention toward consumer goods.



H5: Sustainability perception has a significant positive influence on consumer purchase intention toward consumer goods.

H6: Convenience and product availability have a significant positive influence on consumer purchase intention toward consumer goods.

H7: Consumer purchase intention has a significant positive influence on purchase behaviour and recommendation intention.

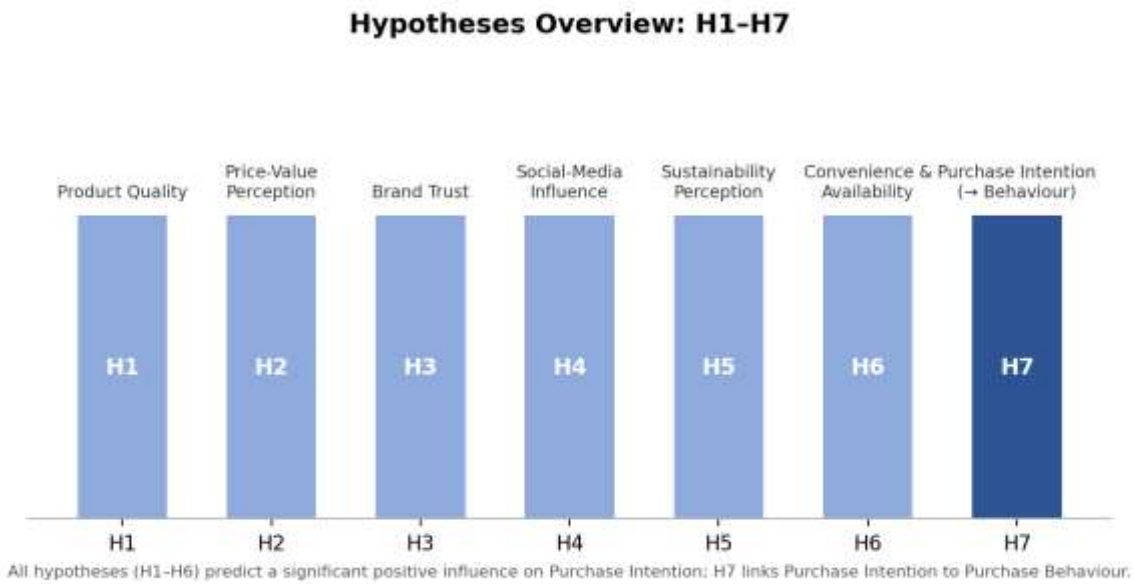


Figure 4: Overview of the seven hypotheses and the variables they connect.

17. Conceptual Framework

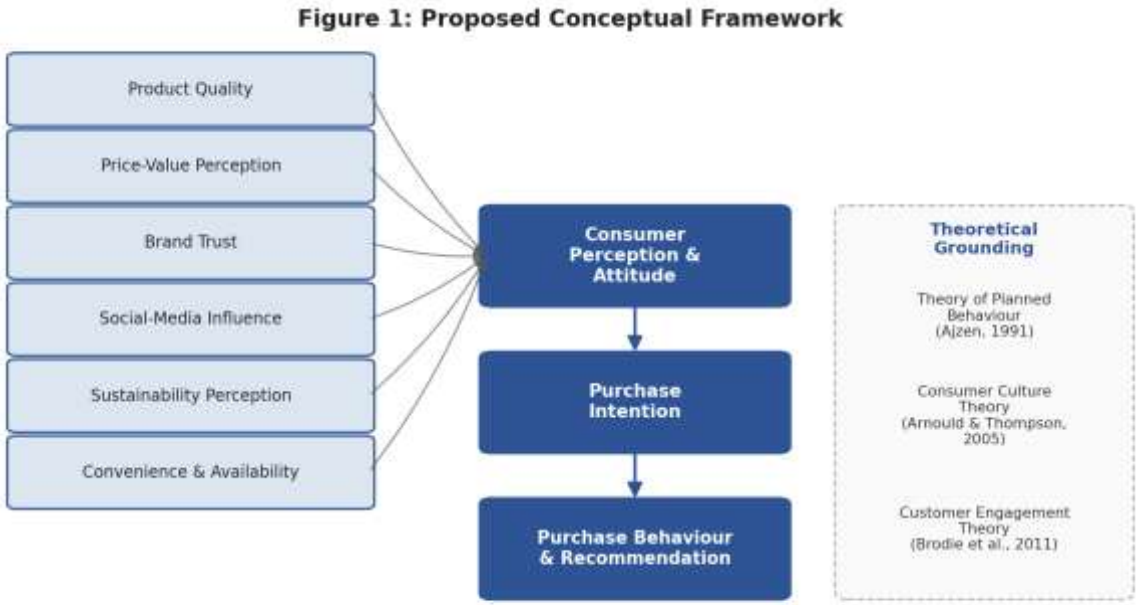


Figure 1: Proposed conceptual framework linking manufacturing and marketing factors to purchase behaviour.

The framework leans on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) and Customer Engagement Theory (Brodie et al., 2011).

18. Research Methodology

18.1 Research Design

The study uses an exploratory-descriptive design — exploratory to surface emerging themes, descriptive to characterise consumer perceptions and behavioural patterns once identified.

18.2 Research Approach

Two components: secondary research drawing on published academic studies, and a proposed primary-research stage built around a structured questionnaire.

18.3 Target Population

Consumers aged 18 and above who purchase consumer goods or FMCG products.

18.4 Proposed Sample

A target sample of roughly 400 respondents is recommended, reasonable for an MBA-level study, using convenience or purposive sampling depending on access.

18.5 Measurement Scale

A five-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

18.6 Data Analysis

Data can be analysed using frequency counts, percentages, mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha, correlation, multiple regression, exploratory factor analysis and t-tests/ANOVA as appropriate, with PLS-SEM as an option if sample size and measurement quality support it.

19. Proposed Data Analysis Model

$$PI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PQ + \beta_2 PV + \beta_3 BT + \beta_4 SM + \beta_5 SP + \beta_6 CA + \varepsilon$$

Where PI = Purchase Intention; PQ = Product Quality; PV = Price-Value Perception; BT = Brand Trust; SM = Social-Media Influence; SP = Sustainability Perception; CA = Convenience & Availability; ε = error term.

A second model can test: $PB = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PI + \varepsilon$, where PB represents Purchase Behaviour.

20. Ethical Considerations

Because this paper works from secondary sources, it doesn't involve human participants directly, so no consent or debriefing procedures apply at this stage. The proposed primary-research phase would need standard safeguards before any data collection begins: informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymised responses and secure data storage, with institutional ethics approval sought wherever the researcher's affiliation requires it. Where the future methodology extends into analysing consumer-generated content such as reviews or social posts, only publicly available comments would be used, with no attempt to identify individual authors or reproduce personal information in reporting.

21. Expected Contribution of the Study

Academic contribution: brings manufacturing, consumer behaviour, marketing, digital engagement and sustainability together under one framework instead of treating them separately.

Managerial contribution: gives managers a clearer view of which consumer factors matter for product development, pricing, communication, sustainability strategy and distribution.

Methodological contribution: adapts the consumer-generated-content approach that Shukla and Jha (2026) used in a narrower context to the broader consumer-goods setting.

22. Managerial Implications

- Put consumer insight at the centre of product development rather than treating it as an afterthought.
- Lead with value in communication instead of leaning on discounts alone.
- Use social listening and consumer-generated content to pick up on real concerns early.
- Keep sustainability claims transparent and back them with evidence.
- Build genuine omnichannel availability across traditional retail and digital platforms.
- Tailor rural strategy around affordability, accessibility and local preference rather than porting urban approaches wholesale.
- Invest in employee training and digital skills as manufacturing becomes more technology-driven.

23. Future Opportunities at a Glance

Opportunity	Potential Business Benefit
Artificial intelligence	Better forecasting and personalisation
Social listening	Real-time consumer insights
Sustainable packaging	Brand differentiation
Rural digital commerce	Market expansion
Omnichannel retail	Greater consumer access
Circular economy	Waste reduction / new business models
Product personalisation	Higher consumer relevance
Data analytics	Better decision-making
Authentic influencer marketing	Consumer trust and engagement
Smart manufacturing	Productivity improvement

24. Limitations

- The study rests mainly on secondary research and doesn't present newly collected consumer data.
- Consumer goods covers many product categories, each with its own purchase logic.
- Consumer behaviour varies by income, age, location and cultural context.
- The proposed questionnaire still needs empirical testing before any hypothesis can be confirmed or rejected.
- Online comments can carry selection bias and may not represent the full consumer population.
- Sentiment analysis can struggle with sarcasm, multilingual content and context-dependent meaning.

25. Scope for Future Research

- Urban–rural comparison of consumer behaviour.
- Generational comparison across Gen Z, Millennials and older consumers.
- Product-category comparison across FMCG, durables, personal care, food and household products.
- Digital content analysis using keyword frequency, topic modelling, clustering and sentiment analysis.
- Structural Equation Modelling to test the full conceptual model.
- Longitudinal research tracking how sustainability and digital influence shift over time.

26. Conclusion

The manufacturing and consumer-goods sector is moving away from the old model of mass production paired with mass marketing, toward something more integrated, technology-enabled and genuinely centred on the consumer. Price, quality and availability still matter as much as ever, but brand trust, convenience, online reviews, social media, authenticity and sustainability now sit alongside them, making decision-making more layered than before.

Manufacturing is changing too, through automation, capital investment, analytics and digital tools — research built on India KLEMS data points to real shifts in capital intensity and employment responsiveness within consumer-goods manufacturing (Batra & Singh, 2025a, 2025b). The reference study demonstrates how online comments, examined through keyword, pattern and sentiment analysis, can reveal how consumer perceptions are shifting — a lens that can be turned on reviews, social posts and discussion threads across the wider sector.

The central point is that manufacturing efficiency and consumer intelligence need to work in tandem. Staying competitive means producing efficiently, understanding what consumers value, communicating honestly, responding quickly to feedback, building in sustainability and making the buying experience convenient across physical and digital channels — bringing together Smart Manufacturing, Consumer Analytics, Authentic Marketing, Sustainability, Omnichannel Distribution and Continuous Innovation as one connected strategy.

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Appendix A: Hypothesis–Analysis Matrix

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Suggested Test
H1	Product Quality	Purchase Intention	Regression
H2	Price-Value Perception	Purchase Intention	Regression
H3	Brand Trust	Purchase Intention	Regression
H4	Social-Media Influence	Purchase Intention	Regression
H5	Sustainability Perception	Purchase Intention	Regression
H6	Convenience & Availability	Purchase Intention	Regression
H7	Purchase Intention	Purchase Behaviour	Regression

Appendix B: Proposed Research Process

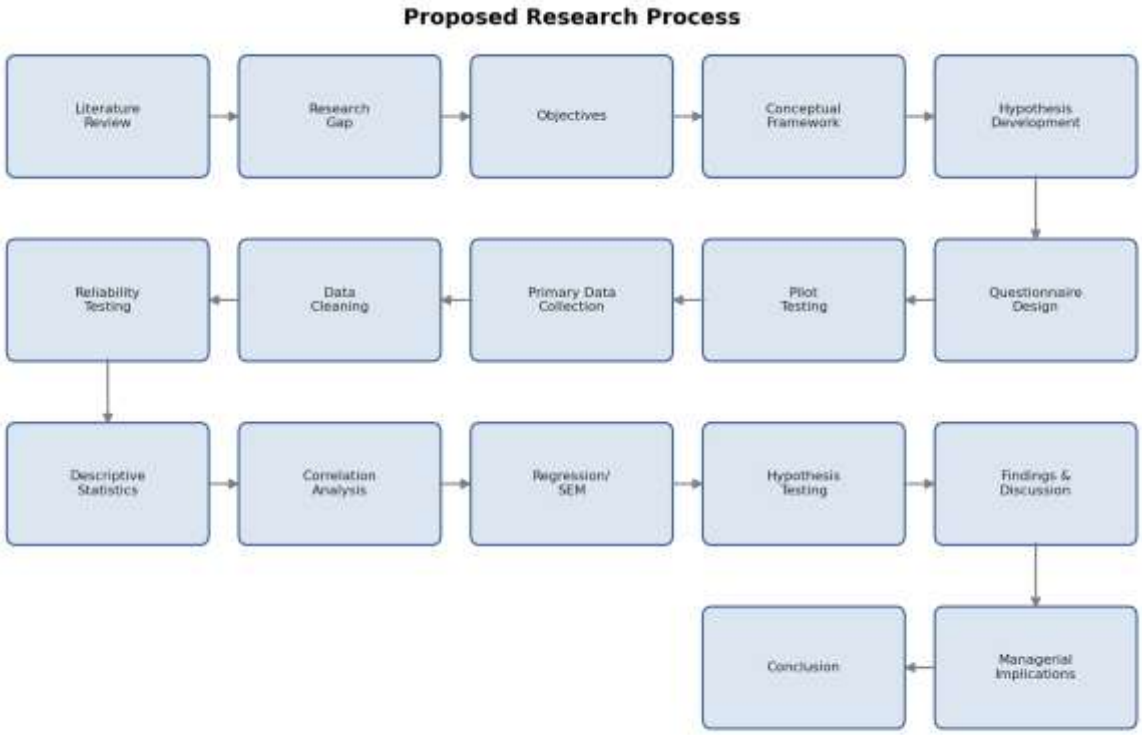

Figure 5: Proposed step-by-step research process.

Literature Review → Research Gap → Objectives → Conceptual Framework → Hypothesis Development → Questionnaire Design → Pilot Testing → Primary Data Collection → Data Cleaning → Reliability Testing → Descriptive Statistics → Correlation Analysis → Regression/SEM → Hypothesis Testing → Findings & Discussion → Managerial Implications → Conclusion