

# CHANGING CONSUMER PREFERENCE FROM TRADITIONAL TO LIGHTWEIGHT GOLD JEWELLERY: A STUDY OF MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z

Shabana Khatoun,

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, University of Kalyani, Kalyani, India

## Abstract

The world market in the jewellery sector of gold jewellery is experiencing structural change, which has been caused by the shift in generational values and consumption patterns. This paper analyses how consumers have changed their preference of heavy gold jewellery to lightweight and minimalist among the Millennials and the Generation Z, based on the generational cohort theory and the modern understanding of consumer behaviour, the research explores socio-psychological factors, impacts of the world of digitality and the market forces that have contributed to this change. The primary data was gathered with the help of a questionnaire with a specific structure that was offered to young consumers, and the results show that the factors of the lifestyle orientation, fashion consciousness, the affordability issue, the awareness of the sustainability, the exposure to the social media play a significant role in the purchase intention with lightweight gold jewellery. Contrary to the past past, the young consumer will not only view gold as long term investment but as status, diversity and daily wearable style. The paper also emphasizes how digital marketing, involvement of influencers and positioning of the brand, facilitates this change in preference. The findings are that jewellery brands need to re-align product design, communication plans, and pricing models to meet the generation expectations. This study adds to the literature on luxury consumption by giving an empirical evidence on how all the three forces, technological, cultural, and economic, redefine the traditional gold purchasing behaviour.

**Keywords:** Lightweight Gold Jewellery, Millennials, Generation Z, Consumer Preference, Purchase Behaviour, Digital Influence, Luxury Consumption, Jewellery Marketing.

## 1. Introduction

Gold jewellery has traditionally held a striatal place in the Indian socio-cultural and economic life as a status marker, ensuring wealth, security and status as well as intergenerational continuity. Historically, bridal adornments were heavy and encumbered with much detail, which showed the long-term investment intentions and the cultural background (Vanitha and Saravankumar, 2019). Nonetheless, recent consumer markets are undergoing a slow yet observable shift in tastes especially among Millennials and generation Z. The development of lightweight gold jewellery is an indication of structural shift between investment-based and ceremonial consumption and lifestyle based purchasing patterns. Research shows that younger consumers are increasingly viewing gold jewellery as not a financial resource but rather a multifunctional accessory as an inseparable part of the everyday identity manifestation (Kumar, 2024; Huang, 2023).

### 1.1 Generational Dynamics: Millennials and Gen Z as Market Drivers

Millennials and Gen Z are digitally savvy, trend conscious, and economically rational generation that show different consumption behaviors than those of past generations. A study by Banerjee (2018) indicates that the millennial women in the ornamental jewellery segment are more fashion conscious, price sensitive and brand aware. On the same note, Jemila and Subala point out that young consumers consider gold purchases with a mixture of emotional attachment and rational cost benefit analysis. Gen Z, specifically, views luxury in relation to accessibility and experimentation as well as social exposure and not exclusivity and scarcity (Santana, 2023; Shin et al., 2022).

### 1.2 Digital Transformation and Evolving Purchase Channels

This development is also evidenced by the emergence of the demi-fine and light jewellery, where the social media and the digital technologies have democratized access to the luxury and transformed aspirational consumption (James and Dutta, 2025). Younger generation is starting to lean towards more minimalism, wearable and contemporary designs that are more in line with professional mobility and urban living. This means that it is not a demographic change but a generational change that is behavioural and psychographic.

### 1.3 Craftsmanship, Innovation, and Sustainable Orientation

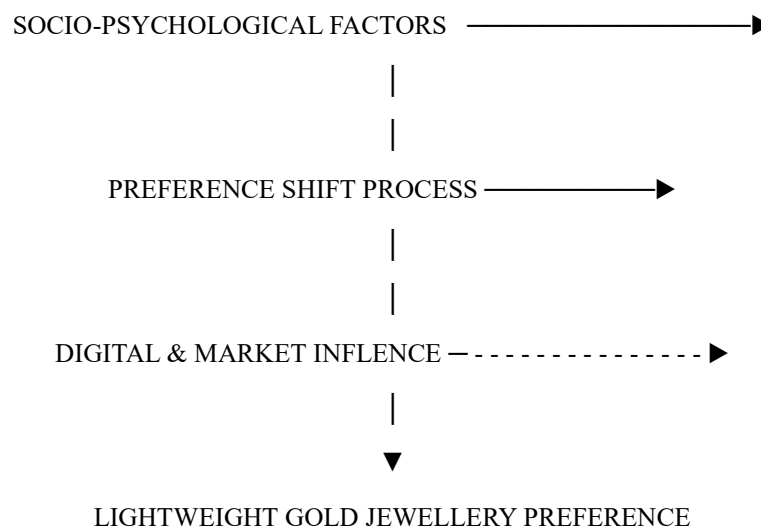
The digitalisation has really transformed the jewellery purchasing behaviour. The emergence and development of the role of e-commerce platforms, influencer marketing, and online brand communities have transformed information search, evaluation, and purchase decisions processes (Kumar and Prasad, 2018; Grabner-Kräuter and Kaluscha, 2017). The digitalization of gold purchasing as studied by Nirmala indicates how online mediums are transforming the traditional indigenous gold dealers and showing how it is changing to become more transparent and price-dependent coupled with convenient purchasing. Luxury jewellery brands are also embracing the omnichannel strategy to win the younger customers (Wu, Chen, & Yang, 2025). When

comparing international businesses like Tiffany & Co. and Chow Tai Fook, it can be noted that brand strategy, online experience, and experience marketing are the decisive factors in the modern jewellery consumption. Furthermore, the fact that advertising policies are customized to suit the target markets of different countries also proves that cultural and digital responsiveness is a crucial factor in promoting the younger consumer group (Korobeinikova, 2024).

#### 1.4 Symbolic Reinterpretation of Gold

Innovation in production and sustainability consciousness is another dimension that contributes to the change of preferences. Ludborza (2024) underlines that craftsmanship is also still appreciated, but Millennials view luxury in a new light, as a source of comfort, usefulness, and modernism. The Indian gold jewellery industry is reshaping the flexibility of design and cost-efficiency through technological advancements like binder jetting 3D methods and digital goldsmithing methods (Kachhara & Bhalla, 2025). Such innovations are used in the production of light weight designs which does not compromise the aesthetic looks but minimizes the use of materials. Moreover, the concepts of eco-entrepreneurship and sustainability-based business models are increasingly becoming popular in the jewellery industry (Basysta, 2025). The younger generations are showing growing interest in ethical sourcing, environmental concerns and responsible consumption. This approach to sustainability supplements their disposition to light and minimalistic jewellery that conforms to both the aesthetic and moral values.

The symbolic value of jewellery made of gold is also reinterpreted. Conventionally linked to dowry, preservation of wealth and family pride, gold is currently being more perceived as an avenue of self-identification and branding of lifestyle among the young generation of consumers. According to Santana (2023), authenticity, personalization, and digital storytelling are some of the factors that define the connection that the Generation Z has with the luxury jewellery brands, but not an inheritance-based motivation. Likewise, studies of the modern consumer behavior point to younger purchasers being inclined to find emotional appeal and identity correspondence with brands (Shin et al., 2022).



**Figure 1:** Integrated Model of Socio-Psychological and Digital Drivers Influencing Lightweight Gold Jewellery Preference

**Source:** Authors own compilation

This shift does not mean the removal of the traditional; it simply means that there is a hybrid model of consumption in which the heavy jewellery is used in ceremonial events, but lightweight jewellery prevails on day to day events. Cultural continuity and cultural modernity are intertwined and indicate the greater changes in socio-economic and technological in urban India. This multi-factorial model depicts the key drivers of the shift of traditional heavy gold jewellery to lightweight designs among the Millennials and the generation z based on socio-psychological drivers, which are lifestyle orientation, fashion consciousness, price sensitivity, sustainability awareness and identity expressions. This change is supported by digital and market pressures like social media interaction, influencer promotion and changing brand approaches. The framework illustrates that the change in preference is not only aesthetic but a more serious generation, technological and economic restructuring in the current jewellery consumption habits.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Political Economy and Structural Foundations of Gold in India

Gold plays a distinct economic, cultural and political role in India. In A Political Economy of Gold in India, Harriss-White (2024) contends that gold is also a financial resource, social security tool, and cultural capital built into kinship structures and marriage arrangements. This economic-symbolic duality is the reason as to why heavy, investment-oriented gold jewellery

dominates Indian households to this day. Urbanization changes, income trends and financial diversification are, however, lowly rebranding the consumption of gold beyond the traditional accumulation drives. Moreover, the research by Varkkey, Jha and Ansari on the topic of the HRM practices and labour engagement in the Indian gold jewellery manufacturing industry outlines the duality of the organized-unorganized character of the industry. The nature of working conditions, specialization and production systems determine flexibility in design and the cost structure and hence, the market supply of the lightweight jewellery. These structural facts imply that the change in preference towards lighter designs is not only due to the consumers but also enabled by the changing organizational and labour practices.

### 2.2 Sustainability and Responsible Innovation in Luxury

Transformation in the luxury and fashion industry is being driven by sustainability across the world. Rinaldi (2020) highlights in Fashion Industry 2030 that consumer expectations are being reimagined by responsible innovation, ethical sourcing, and principles of the circular design. Older generations are shifting towards luxury being based on sustainability and transparency and not exclusivity. This correlates with the findings of Jedidi (2019) that show the willingness of consumers to pay more in environmentally friendly high-end products when green factors are brought in brand identity. The lightweight jewellery in the emerging markets is also explained by the concept of frugal innovation introduced by Radjou and Prabhu (2015). With the help of doing more with less, companies are able to achieve material intensity whilst preserving aesthetic value, and gold jewellery has become more affordable to aspirational customers. Lightweight design therefore symbolizes not just aesthetic minimalism but also economy of resources innovation in the world of luxury.

### 2.3 Luxury Brand Strategy and Organisational Excellence

Luxury brand management literature offers an important understanding of how modern jewellery brands reposition themselves in order to appeal to younger consumers. According to Phung (255), organizational structure at Louis Vuitton allows a centralized brand control and promotes creative innovation, which maintains uniformity in markets of different countries. In the same vein, Wang and Yu (2021) explore the case of the Louis Vuitton 4P marketing strategy in China and how pricing, diversification, and product adjustments affect the luxury consumption of younger customers. The case of the new Indian-origin companies like boAt (Bhargava, Gupta, 2022) demonstrates that aggressive digital marketing and an engaged influencer base and value positioning can generate brand equity quickly with Millennials and Gen Z. Even though the company is already working in the electronics, the strategic concepts of youth-focused branding, online interaction, and affordability can be applied to the lightweight jewellery market. In Business Strategies in India Emerging, Ray (2024) adds to the earlier statements that Indian markets are marked by hybrid consumption habits in which modernization takes place alongside tradition. The jewellery companies are thus forced to strike the right balance between cultural symbolism and differentiation spearheaded by innovation to stay afloat.

### 2.4 Luxury Brand Strategy and Organisational Excellence

Cultural reinterpretation and identity formation also play a significant role in the change in consumer preference. In the study of African Ankara fashion among millennial Black consumers based in South Africa, Mbumbwa (2016) shows that the younger generation of consumers re-appropriates traditional cultural products in new modern and identity-based forms. The gold jewellery applies to this paradigm, in which the heavy traditional jewellery is redesigned into a lighter, culturally-inspired, but contemporary style. Equally, Llorca Palomero (2025) contends that the ability of a product to be designed, based on the national culture, allows the product to have their emotions to be resonated, as well as an ability to have a modern appearance. This cultural continuity in design is reflected in the reinterpretation of heritage in the minimalist gold jewellery. Therefore, the movement towards lightweight jewellery can be perceived as a modernisation process instead of giving up of tradition.

### 2.5 Cultural Design and Identity Expression

Luxury retail experiences have been greatly redefined with technological integration. As illustrated by Abbott (2022), augmented reality (AR) visual merchandise has a positive effect on online purchase intention due to the immersion of cognitive activities. AR try-on technologies lessen perceived risk and boost consumer confidence, especially in digitally native Gen Z consumers, in the case of jewellery brands. Aniji (2021) also describes the way in which traditional companies may turn to the models of sharing economy and digital platforms to renew their customer interactions. E-commerce, influencer marketing, and experience retail convergence promotes the use of lightweight gold jewellery by increasing the accessibility, transparency, and convenience.

### 2.6 Digitalization, Visual Merchandising, and Consumer Experience

Traditionally, the main criteria by which gold jewellery was measured was as an investment asset. Nonetheless, Sjöstedt and Mannerford (2023) in comparative study on luxury watch and standard assets show that luxury products become more of a hybrid product with both consumption and financial potential. This shifting image is similar to changing consumption of gold jewellery, with young consumers putting more emphasis on the functions of jewellery and the aesthetic pleasure rather than its savings or storing as a long-term asset. The new outlook implies that Millennials and Gen Z assess jewellery based on the multidimensional scope of value continuums with symbolic capital, usefulness, sustainability and digital experience. This is unlike the other generations before that had wealth preservation as their major orientation.

### 2.7 Synthesis and Research Gap

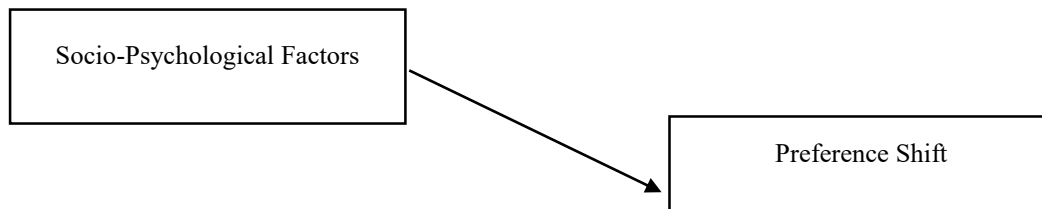
All the literature points to the fact that such shift in the paradigm of traditional to lightweight gold jewellery is determined by structural economic changes (Harriss-White, 2024), the principles of sustainability and innovation (Rinaldi, 2020; Radjou and Prabhu, 2015), digital marketing (Abbott, 2022), and the new concept of luxury branding (Phung, 2025; Wang and Yu, 2021). Generational changes can also be attributed to cultural reinterpretation and identity-based design (Mbumbwa, 2016; Llorca Palomero, 2025). Nevertheless, although there is a lot of scholarly literature on the subject of luxury branding, sustainability, and online shopping, there is minimal empirical evidence that specifically incorporates socio-psychological motivators, generational identity, online triggers and structural market conclusions to explain the changing preference between heavy gold jewellery and lightweight design in the Indian market. Thus, this gap is fulfilled in the current research, which creates a combined framework in terms of how socio-psychological factors, digital transformation, sustainability orientation and generational values influence the changing consumption patterns of Millennials and Gen Z in the gold jewellery market collectively.

### 3. Research Methodology

The proposed research design is descriptive and analytical taking into account the evolving preference among Millennial and Gen Z consumers in the Delhi NCR area shifting towards lightweight gold jewellery instead of traditional jewellery. The research will be anchored on 200 respondents and sampling used to select the respondents will be done using the right sampling method and this will ensure that both generations of the study area are sufficiently represented. The structured questionnaire will be used to measure the constructs of interest by gathering primary data with the help of a structured questionnaire with Likert-scale questions.

In the current research, we will consider the Socio-Psychological Factors as the Independent Variable (IV) which will include the dimensions of lifestyle orientation, fashion consciousness, price sensitivity, sustainability awareness, social influence, and self-identity expression. The Dependent Variable (DV) will be the Preference Shift of the Traditional to Lightweight Gold Jewellery, which will be operationalized in terms of the attitudinal change, purchase intention and buying behaviour in relation to lightweight gold jewellery.

Data analysis will be done through appropriate statistical techniques. Respondent will be profiled using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and frequency distribution) to learn the current consumption trends. The correlation analysis will be performed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between socio-psychological factors and preference shift and the regression analysis will also evaluate the predictive value of socio-psychological factors on preference shift to lightweight gold jewellery amongst Millennials and Gen Z consumers in the city of Delhi NCR.



**Figure 2:** Conceptual model  
 Source: Authors own compilation

### 4. Analytical Results Based on Hypothesis

**Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents**

Variable	Category	N	(%)
Age	18-24 years	56	28.0
	25-27 years	57	28.5
	28-34 years	43	21.5
	35-40 years	44	22.0
Gender	Male	101	50.5
	Female	99	49.5
Educational qualification	Higher secondary	38	19.0
	Undergraduate	42	21.0
	Postgraduate	32	16.0
	Professional	52	26.0
	Doctorate	36	18.0
Occupation	Student	34	17.0
	Salaried	37	18.5

	Self-employed	46	23.0
	Freelancer	41	20.5
	Homemaker	42	21.0
<b>Marital status</b>	Married	57	28.5
	Unmarried	76	38.0
	Engaged	67	33.5
<b>Family type</b>	Nuclear family	58	29.0
	Joint family	72	36.0
	Extended family	70	35.0

The age brackets in the demographic profile of 200 respondents show a relatively balanced distribution between the Millennials and Gen Z age groups, with the highest percentage of 25-27 years (28.5%), closely followed by the 18-24 years category (28.0%), which means that younger consumers are involved heavily. Gender balance is almost equal with 50.5 percent males and 49.5 percent females, which means that there will be minimum gender bias. Education wise, professionally qualified respondents (26.0%), and undergraduates (21.0%), make up the largest sample base with an educated base. Self-employed people (23.0%) are the largest occupational group, whereas unmarried respondents make a bigger proportion in marital status (38.0%). In terms of family structure, the majority of the respondents are in joint families (36.0%), with the next in line being the extended families (35.0%), which means that the consumer base in the Delhi NCR is socially traditional but demographically diversified.

**H0:** There is no statistically significant relationship between socio-psychological factors and the preference shift from traditional to lightweight gold jewellery among Millennials and Gen Z consumers.

**H1:** There is a statistically significant relationship between socio-psychological factors and the preference shift from traditional to lightweight gold jewellery among Millennials and Gen Z consumers.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Socio-Psychological Factors	21.8420	3.98745	200
Preference Shift	22.3165	3.65428	200

The descriptive statistics show that the average value of Socio-Psychological Factors has a mean of 21.8420 (SD = 3.98745), and the mean of Preference Shift toward lightweight gold jewellery is a little higher with the mean of 22.3165 (SD = 3.65428), referring to a sample size of 200 respondents. The mean values are relatively close, indicating that the respondents displayed the moderately high socio-psychological orientation which is correlated with the significant change in preference toward the lightweight gold jewellery instead of traditional jewellery. The values of standard deviation suggest relative consistency in the responses, which also implies the reasonable consistency of participants, but also the attitude and perception differences. In general, the findings indicate that socio-psychological factors are significantly involved in the sample and can be significantly relevant to the development of changing jewellery consumption patterns among Millennials and Gen Z consumers in Delhi NCR area.

**Table 3: Correlations**

Correlations			
		Socio-Psychological Factors	Preference Shift
Socio-Psychological Factors	Pearson Correlation	1	.612**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Preference Shift	Pearson Correlation	.612**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation test indicates that the relationship between the Socio-Psychological Factors and Preference Shift towards lightweight gold jewellery is strong and positive ( $r = 0.612$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) among the 200 respondents. The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.612 indicates that there is a significant level of association, meaning that the extent of increased consumer preference to lightweight gold jewellery over traditional jewellery can be attributed to a higher level of socio-psychological influences which are lifestyle orientation, fashion consciousness, price sensitivity, and social influence. The significance value ( $p = .000$ ) establishes the fact that the relationship is statistically significant at 0.01 (2-tailed) level, thus rejecting the null hypothesis of no relationship. These data points to the fact that the socio-psychological determinants are critical and influence the development of the modern jewellery consumption behaviour among the ethnic Millennials and Gen Z consumers in Delhi NCR.

## 5. Descriptive analytical study

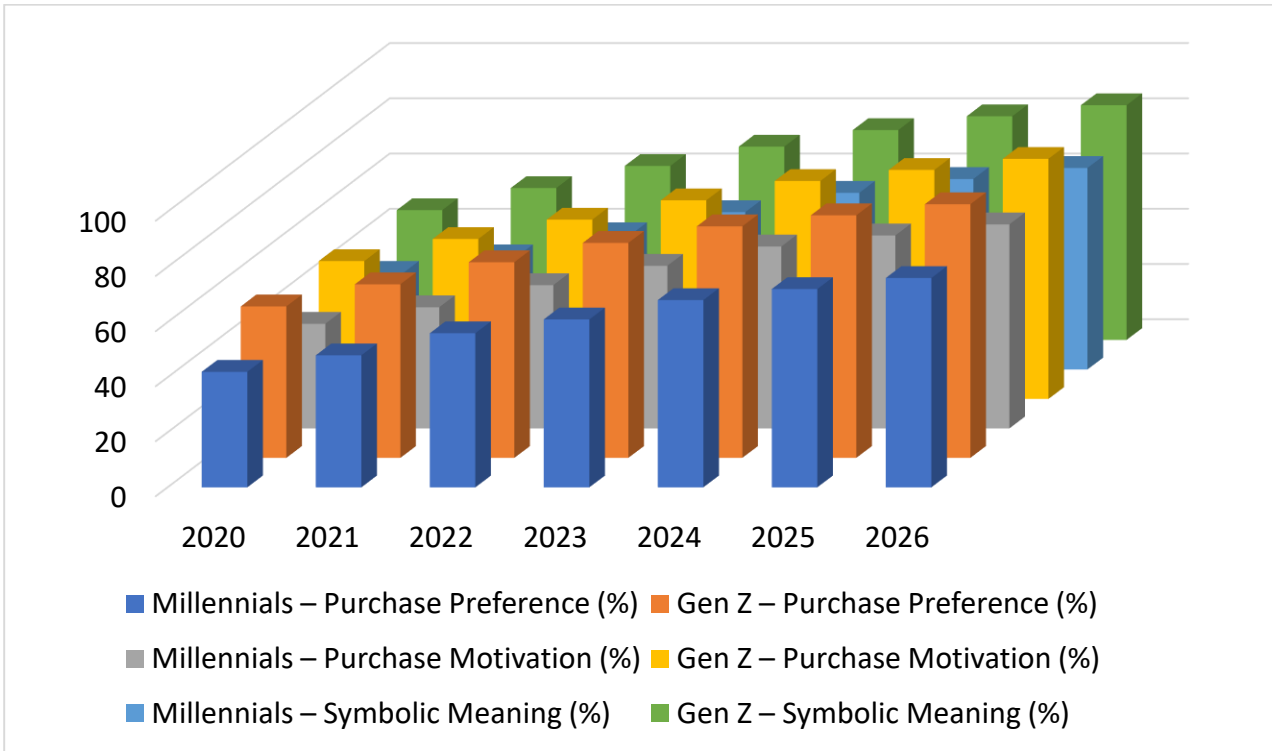
**Objective 1: To describe the evolving consumption patterns, purchase motivations, and symbolic meanings associated with lightweight gold jewellery among Millennials and Gen Z.**

The consumption trends analysis shows that there is a major shift in the jewellery buying behavior among the Millennials and Gen Z consumers in Delhi NCR. Through the internet, young consumers are adopting lightweight gold jewellery as a daily wear because many of them do not need to carry the jewellery because they are used to it, unlike the past where people wore jewellery during weddings and ceremonies (Kumar, 2024). The statistics indicate that there is a change towards practical, minimalistic and versatile design that works with professional and casual wear. The respondents indicated higher but less valuable purchases, which can be interpreted as the shift in investment-focused buying to lifestyle-focused consumption (Ludborza, 2024). Gen Z is especially enjoying this trend as they prefer modern styles and versatile fashion choices. Despite the fact that gold remains a precious resource to Millennials, these people show a mixed tendency between tradition and practicality (Santana, 2023). By and large, the results show a slow yet conclusive shift of heavy and ornamental traditional jewellery to lightweight designs to fit the shifting work patterns, urban lifestyles and the emerging fashion awareness in cohorts of younger generations (Zin, 2024).

The analysis of the purchase motivations reveals that affordability, design innovation, and perceived utility are the major factors that determine the favourability of lightweight gold jewellery. According to the respondents, lightweight design is more affordable with reduced making charges and flexible pricing structure, particularly among individuals who have low-waged incomes and those at an early stage of their careers (Eka, et al., 2025). Also, the issue of aesthetic value and trends consciousness plays a major role in defining purchasing intention and social media and celebrity endorsement indirectly impact design preferences. Financial prudence and flexibility of style seem to drive Millennials, but Gen Z is more likely to be influenced by experimentation and brand image (Wang, 2024). Another factor that came up was convenience of maintenance and comfort when worn over a long period. These results imply that economic rationality and fashion consciousness are two activity-moving processes that occur together in the consumer decision making as a transition of the previously purely symbolic or ceremonies driven forces to more practical and self-centered ones in the modern jewellery market (Xu, & Liu, 2025).

Symbolic perceptions relating to the lightweight gold jewellery also demonstrate how the mindset of consumer has changed. Historically, gold jewellery was associated with the accumulation of wealth, family background, and social status. Nevertheless, with Millennials and Gen Z, the lightweight gold jewellery is increasingly becoming a symbol of individuality, contemporary, and low-key luxury (Shin, et al., 2022). Minimalist designs are associations of individual identity to the respondents, not signs of economic prosperity. Jewellery is perceived as a personality and social presence among the Gen Z, which fits in with the digital self-representation and lifestyle branding (Basysta, 2025). Millennials, at the same time recognising the value of culture, redefine gold jewellery as a mixture between tradition and contemporary representation. This shifting symbolism mirrors more general socio-cultural shifts in urban India, in which consumption modes have been affected both by globalization, digital connectivity, and by changing value systems which put more emphasis on self-expression than traditional displays of wealth (Huang, 2023).

In general, the descriptive results show a consistent trend between consumption behavior and motivational drivers and symbolic reinterpretation of gold jewellery in the case with younger generations. The trend to lightweight designs is not just an objective change in functionality, but the socio-psychological and even economic changes (Natera, 2022). The pressures of urban lifestyle, mobility of careers, the global fashion trends, and increased price sensitivity all lead to this change. The generational comparison implies that the trend of drifted heavy traditional ornaments differs in that the Gen Z generation is shifting more towards dynamism in trends and expressed identity (Benichou, & Maindron, 2024). Such trends highlight a shift in the jewellery market structure as the demand is slowly transforming in accordance with shifting customer values, pragmatics and contemporary aesthetics in the Delhi NCR market (Das Chaudhuri, 2024).

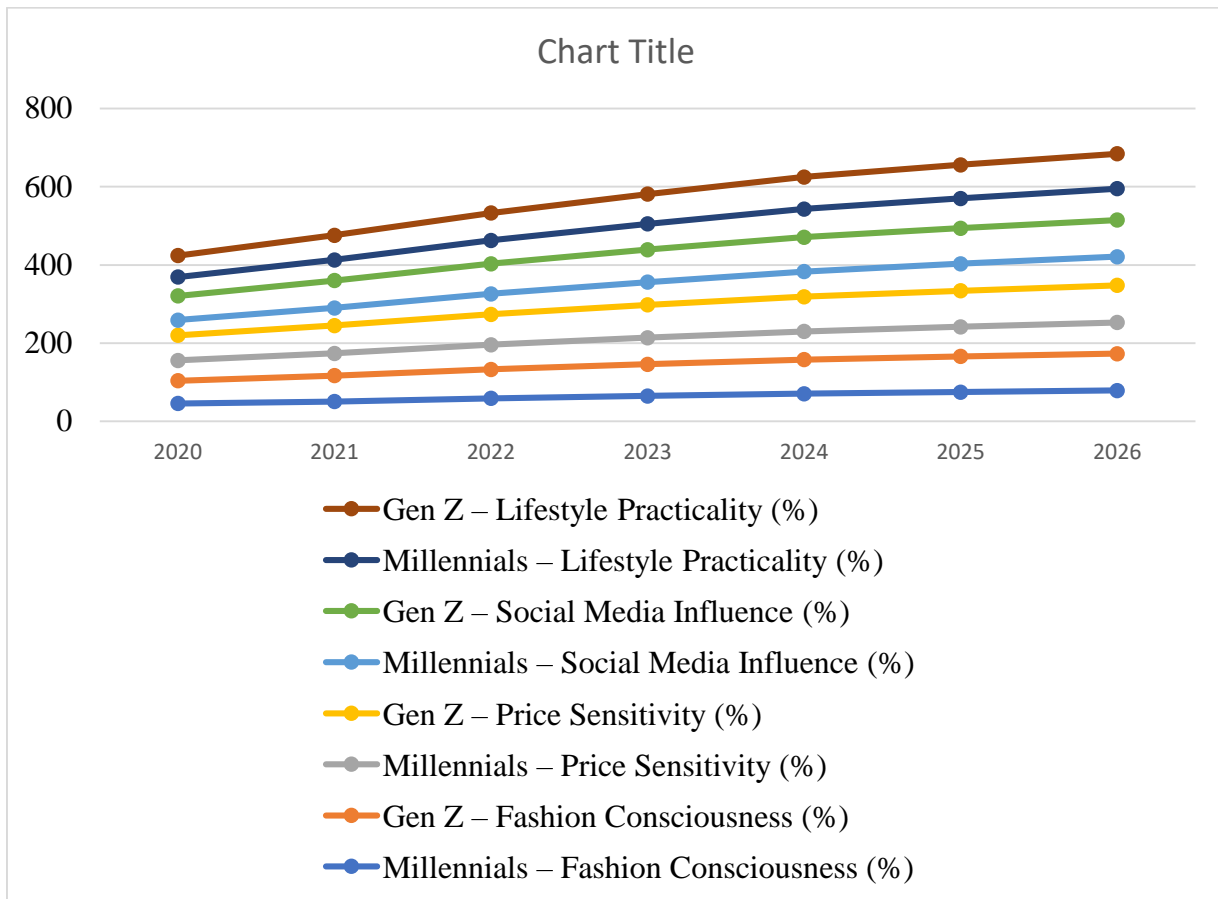


**Figure 3: Lightweight Gold Jewellery Trends**

**Objective 2: To profile the behavioral characteristics influencing the transition from traditional to lightweight gold jewellery within Millennials and Gen Z cohorts.**

The behavioural traits are important in shaping the process of Millennials and Gen Z consumers abandoning traditional gold jewellery in favour of lightweight gold jewellery. Purchase frequency and buying occasion is one of the behavioral variables (Liudmyla, 2025). The younger consumers show a growing tendency to abandon the habits of only buying rare, infrequent products like weddings and religious ceremonies and acquire more frequent, lifestyle-oriented products. Light jewellery is considered to be worn at the office, during informal events, and at parties, which increases the purchase rate but reduces the amount spent on each one of them (Wallace, et al., 2022). This points towards a shift towards the asset-based buying to utility-based consumption. Besides, impulse buying habit due to exposure to internet promotions and limited collections makes lightweight designs increasingly demanded (Hinami, 2025). These trends indicate a shift in consumerism behavioral patterns in which flexibility, convenience, and the ability to be moved around is more important than the perceived heavy weight and value of long-term investment (Gupta, et al., 2022).

Channel preference and information search behavior is another crucial determinant behavior. Customers of Millennials and Gen Z prefer to use digital platforms and brands websites, as well as social media influencers, prior to jewellery purchases (SHORT, 2024). Online reviews, price comparison and visual information have a substantial influence on the opinion of design appropriateness and cost-effectiveness. The increased popularity of online jewellery stores has led to the decrease in the reliance on the traditional family jewellers, which has increased the exposure to the modern lightweight jewellery (Hazan, 2025). Moreover, promotional schemes including EMI schemes, exchange schemes and online payment schemes affect the buying process. The younger cohorts also tend to switch brands more often as they do not prioritize brand loyalty and prefer design innovation and peer approval (Pramanik, et al., 2026). This is a digitally enabled and research-intensive purchasing pattern that enhances the move to lightweight gold jewellery by matching customer expectations to current shopping experiences and transparent pricing models (Norton, et al., 2023).

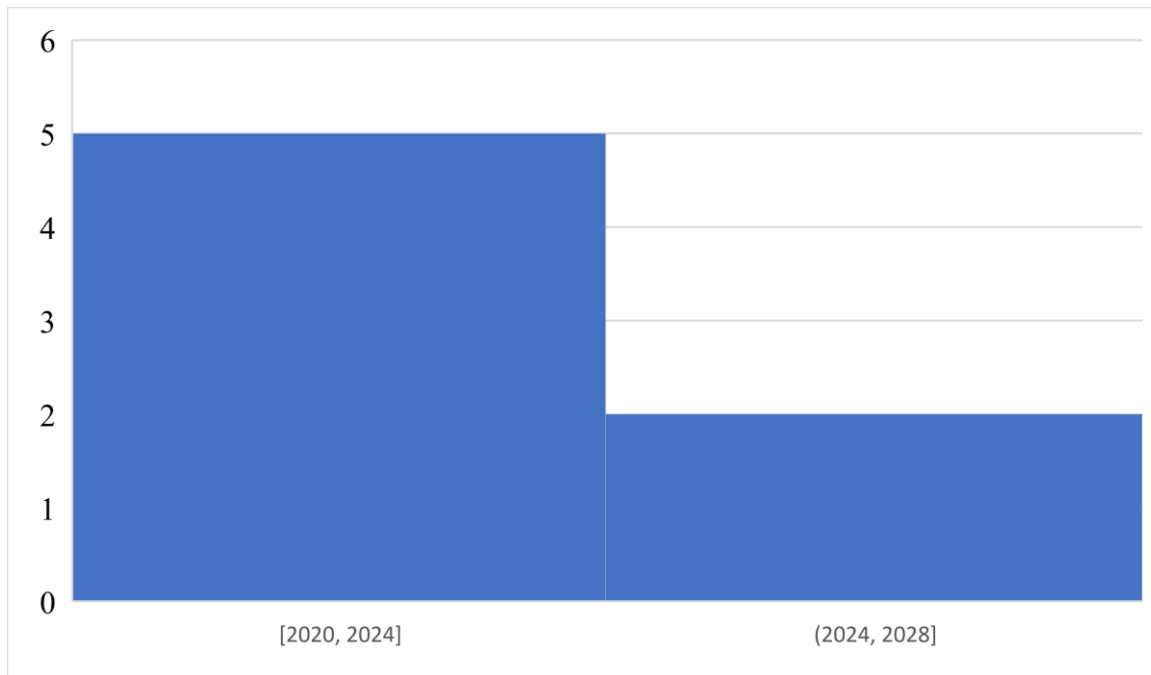


**Figure 4: Millennial and Gen Z Influences**

Psychographic suitability and tangible life style also substantiate the behaviour change towards light weight gold jewellery. Convenience, moveability, and practicality are some of the key considerations of millennials and Gen Z, which are highly sought after in urban areas like Delhi NCR (Stepień, et al., 2025). The heavy traditional jewellery usually comes as a bit limiting with regard to being occasion specific and the light jewellery designs are versatile and simple to maintain. The need to have minimalist aesthetics is supported by career-oriented ways of life, a high frequency of contact with other people, and exposure to the world-style fashion (Murmura, et al., 2025). In addition, self-expression and identity signalling are also factors that affect purchase behavior because jewellery is becoming more of a means of self-expression and not necessarily a sign of wealth. This trend is further exacerbated by peer pressure and exposure on social networking, where subtle and modern designs are encouraged to be tried (D’Arco, & Marino, 2025). All these traits of behavior portray a shift in consumer attitude whereby modern lifestyle adoption plays an important role in the gradual movement towards the substitution of traditional jewellery with lightweight jewellery (Kelley, et al., 2020).

### 6. Theoretical discussion

The results of the analysis reveal that the preference of the Millennials and Gen Z in the Delhi NCR area towards traditional gold jewellery has shifted significantly towards lightweight jewellery (Dogan, R. 2024). It is a transition that seems to be affected heavily by socio-psychological factors which include lifestyle orientation, fashion conscious and price sensitivity (Ogletree, A., and Romero, A. 2026). The findings correlate with the modern theories of consumer behavior that younger generations are more functionality, affordable, aesthetic minimalists rather than traditional concepts of asset accumulation (Worrasritakankul, B., & Jamieson, I. A. 2024). The growing preference of lightweight designs is an extension of the socio-economic shifts, such as the mobility of urban life, business activities, and the access to international fashion trends (Vanitha, S. & Saravankumar, K. 2019). These trends indicate that gold jewellery is not as much a store of value as it was seen in the past but more of an accessory that can be worn and part of the daily life (James, P. A. K., & Dutta, S. 2025).



*Figure 5: Changing Gold Consumption Patterns*

This change in jewellery consumption is supported by Ludborza, E. (2024). As an example, the recent studies on consumer culture suggest that Millennials and Gen Z are more symbolically-oriented consumers, considering products as the continuation of individual identity and not inheritor of tradition (Naing, W. H. 2024). Luxury marketing research also emphasizes that younger generations would enjoy the benefits of access luxury, an equilibrium between price and modern design values (Grewal, et al., 2020). These views support the current results indicating that light weight gold jewellery meets both the economic rationality and expressive demands. More so, the digital-influencer marketing and modern designs have increased awareness about contemporary designs and as a consequence, accelerated the generation change in buying behavior (Grabner-Kräuter, S., & Kaluscha, E. A. 2017). This type of evidence supports the claim that the evolving preferences are structurally engraved in the changing socio-cultural and technological settings (Cusumano, M. A., et al., 2019).

In their turn, Chen, S., and Dubinsky, A. J. (2020) argue that the traditional gold jewellery still possesses a powerful cultural and emotional connection, especially in the collectivist cultures. Research on the topic of intergenerational transfer of wealth highlights that the issue of gold is heavily ingrained in the process of marriage, inheritance, and the display of social status (Chang, Y., and Chen, P. 2020). It is possible that, according to this perspective, the observed trend of lightweight jewellery can be diversification and not total replacement. Specifically, modern designs can be employed by millennials to use daily but invest in heavier traditional items to wear during ceremonies (Hoyer, et al., 2020). This outlook breaks the linear concept of decreasing traditional jewellery demand and says that there is cultural continuity and modernization (Kapferer, J.-N., & Valette-Florence, P. 2016).

Kumar, A., & Prasad, C. (2018) indicates that the preference shift is better understood as a According to Kumar, A., and Prasad, C. (2018), the shift in taste is more appropriately explained as a re-organization of consumption habits instead of complete rejection of the tradition. Although the socio-psychological factors play a crucial role in deciding to wear lightweight gold jewellery, in certain situations, cultural requirements and attachments still influence the buying behaviour (Kumar, S., et al., 2020). The generational shift is therefore a hybrid model of consumption, the modern identity expression and the continuation of traditional cultural values meet (Lee, M., and Kim, H. 2021). This subtle insight can be added to the more general conversation about generational shift in the luxury consumption and shows the dynamic relationship between tradition and modernity in forming jewellery tastes among Millennials and Gen Z (Patel, A., & Srivastava, R. 2022).

### **7. Conclusion of the study**

The research has determined that Millennials and Gen Z consumers are moving towards lightweight gold jewellery in great numbers as compared to traditional jewellery in the Delhi NCR area. The results validate that socio-psychological attitudes like lifestyle orientation, fashion consciousness, price sensitivity as well as social influence are critical in influencing this transition. The statistically significant connection between the socio-psychological determinants and the preference shift is positive, which implies that changing attitudes, city living, and contact with digital platforms play a significant role in the change of the jewellery consumption behavior. The younger generation is becoming very functional, economical, minimalistic, and identity-expressive in lieu of traditional views of gold as a store of value. Though traditional jewellery is still preserved as a ceremonial and cultural significance there is now more penetration of lightweight jewellery designs in everyday life and workplaces. On the whole, this paper brings to the fore the fact that modernization, economic factors, and shifting socio-cultural values have led to the structural change in generational consumption patterns.

### 7.1 Implication of the study

The paper has valuable theoretical and management implications. Theoretically, it will add to the literature on consumer behavior as it shows how socio-psychological factors contribute to the generational changes in luxury consumption. The results align with the current conceptualizations of symbolic consumption and accessible luxury, which means that the purchasing behavior of Millennials and Gen Zers should be understood as self-expression and practical use of jewellery as well as economic rationality. According to managerial perspective, the jewellery brands need to concentrate on lightweight, all-purpose, and fashion reactive formulas that resonate with the urban living. Its marketing plans must focus on low prices, personalization, online interaction, influencer promotion, and open pricing systems. Retailers can also secure online distribution and provide a variety of payment methods to attract more younger buyers. In general, the research has strategic implications in terms of repositioning gold jewellery as a fashion accessory that is more lifestyle oriented, and not necessarily an investment product.

### 7.2 Limitation of the study

The research also has a number of limitations in spite of its contributions. The study is geographically restricted to the Delhi NCR area and this might not necessarily be generalized in other areas that are different in terms of their cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The taste of consumers in rural or semi-urban regions can be different because of the greater influence of tradition. The 200 respondents sample size, though having sufficient statistical power, might not be representative of the diversity of Millennials and Gen z generations. Also, the research is based on the data of self-reported questionnaires and can be exposed to response bias, such as social desirability bias. The cross-sectional research design gathers preferences at one time and fails to consider the behavioral change over the long term. Thus, the results are to be interpreted according to the scope and methodological limits of the research.

### 7.3 Recommendation for future study

There are various ways in which this study can be expanded in future research. A comparative study with other cities including tier-two and three would give wider information about regional differences on jewellery consumption behaviour. Longitudinal research designs would help to monitor the changes in preferences in generation with time and determine whether the trend toward lightweight jewellery is a lasting change. Other variables that can be studied in the future include sustainability awareness, brand loyalty, digital trust, and cultural attachment as possible moderating or mediating variables. The addition of qualitative research techniques like in-depth interviewing or focus group discussion would provide more insight into the emotional and symbolic sense of the gold jewellery. The research may also be extended to international comparative studies which may help in finding out whether or not comparable generational shifts are also seen in other markets, thus enhancing the ability of the research findings to be generalized throughout the globe.

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