Factors Affecting the Purchase Intention of Generation Z for Sustainable Fashion Products in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, there has been a growing interest among fashion consumers towards more sustainable and environmentally friendly clothing, particularly among Generation Z (Gen Z) buyers. With a significant demand for fashion products in Vietnam and a noticeable shift towards more environmentally conscious consumption behaviors, this study aims to identify and analyze the key factors influencing Gen Z's intention to purchase sustainable fashion products in major cities. This article employs the quantitative research methods, utilizing 300 surveys conducted in Vietnam to gather data on Gen Z consumers' aspirations concerning sustainable fashion goods. The findings reveal that Gen Z's inclination to buy sustainable clothing is positively impacted by six factors: Quality, Price, Brand, Environmental Concern, Subjective Norm, and Attitude. This research offers valuable insights and evidence to assist in shaping the sustainable consumption behaviors of Gen Z buyers in Vietnam.

JEL Classification: D12, M31, Q56

Keywords: Generation Z; Purchase intention; Sustainable fashion products; Vietnam

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INTRODUCTION

Generation Z (Gen Z) refers to a segment of the population who were born between 1996 to 2012. This cohort possesses distinct characteristic and strength that set it apart from other generational groups, such as millennials and Generation X (Kim et al., 2020). The authors also suggest that one of Generation Z's advantages is their ease of access to vast online knowledge, which has heightened their interest in social and environmental issues, fostering a sense of responsibility in their consumption behaviors, particularly when purchasing fashion products. In other words, the rise of the Internet and ubiquitous social media platforms has significantly bolstered awareness among consumers, especially those from Gen Z, regarding sustainable fashion products. Today's Gen Z consumers are increasingly mindful of the environmental impact of their purchases, including those made in the realm of fashion, and this desire to adopt pro-environmental practices in the shopping process is what makes this generation unique (Chaturvedi et al., 2020). This upward trend in environmentally conscious consumption indicates a growing preference for sustainable clothing. The research also suggests that the popularity for sustainable clothing among Gen Z consumers is not only increasing but also significantly influencing their purchasing intentions and behaviors – driven by factors such as environmental concern and willingness to pay (Chaturvedi et al., 2020). Moreover, this shift towards sustainability is making substantial contributions to environmental protection and pollution reduction initiatives, as consumer preferences drive changes in business practices and manufacturing processes (Chaturvedi et al., 2020).

According to the Global Fashion Agenda (2017), a research collaboration between the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and the Global Fashion Agenda, the textile industry produced 92 million tons of waste in 2015, with projections indicating an increase to 148 million tons by 2030. This equates to an average of 17.5 kg of waste generated per person annually. Additionally, managing textile waste consumes substantial energy, resulting in high costs and inefficiencies. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2017), approximately one truckload of textile waste is landfilled or incinerated every second. Projections suggest that by 2030, water consumption in this industry will surge by 50%, reaching 118 billion cubic meters. Furthermore, recent data from the European Parliament (2024) reveals that the textile industry accounts for 10% of global carbon emissions, surpassing the combined emissions of the shipping and aviation sectors. This figure is expected to rise to 26% by 2050 if no action is taken.

Currently, environmental pollution caused by the textile industry – primarily through wastewater discharge – is poorly regulated. Most businesses employ rudimentary wastewater treatment methods, resulting in the release of harmful substances that pollute the natural water sources. A report by the United Nations in 2020 stated that over 80% of wastewater from industrial and domestic activities is inadequately treated, resulting in detrimental effects on both human health and the environment (Asian Development Bank 2021). This problem is particularly prevalent in craft villages and industrial parks (Sai Gon Giai Phong News, 2022), where it leads to severe local water contamination, environmental degradation, and even health issues for nearby residents. Furthermore, incineration of textile waste contributes significantly to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. According to Caterbow (2020), created by the Health and Environment Justice Support organization, more than 70% of total textile waste ends up in landfills or is incinerated – practices that are neither eco-friendly nor sustainable – resulting in increased toxic emissions and other environmental consequences.

Faced with these challenges, many fashion enterprises are now adopting more sustainable manufacturing practices to align with the growing environmental consciousness among consumers (Agu et al., 2024). This shift reflects a positive change in consumer behavior, where social and environmental values increasingly influence purchasing decisions alongside traditional concerns such as cost.

Sustainable fashion, also known as ecological fashion, encompasses products made from eco-friendly materials or recycled materials (Khan et al., 2024), thus reducing production waste and cost. Embracing products from the sustainable fashion industry brings numerous benefits, such as lowering environmental damage - a growing concern especially pronounced among adolescents. As a result, consumer preferences are increasingly gravitating toward businesses that prioritize ecological responsibility in their branding, as reflected by an increase in brand loyalty (Khan et al., 2024). This growing awareness may spark a "domino effect" in the industry, encouraging more companies to adopt sustainable practices and reduce pollution.

In addition to the environmental dimension, sustainable fashion also includes the social aspect. It improves the quality of life for both workers and consumers by encouraging ethical labor practices and reducing harmful chemical use (Liute and De Giacomo, 2022). Sustainable production not only minimizes environmental damage - such as excessive water usage in dyeing and finishing processes - but also supports healthier and safer working conditions that fosters employee well-being. Additionally, products from sustainable fashion are generally non-toxic, alleviating consumer concerns about chemical exposure - a common issue in conventional fashion, where prolonged exposure to chemicals poses health risks to workers and their offspring. Ultimately, sustainable fashion raises awareness of the fashion industry's social and environmental drawbacks and promotes harmony between people and the planet.

Recognizing the detrimental environmental impact of the traditional fashion industry and the emerging trend of green consumption among Gen Z consumers, this research examines the key factors influencing the intention to purchase sustainable clothing products in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The study aims to underscore the importance of balancing personal interests with social responsibilities, thereby enhancing the overall awareness of Generation Z consumers regarding the significance of sustainable fashion. Ultimately, the paper provides valuable insights and evidence to help address the environmental challenges facing the fashion industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Sustainable Consumption Behavior and Sustainable Fashion Products

Sustainable consumption behavior arises from the awareness among both consumers and producers regarding the negative consequences of industrial activities on the natural environment (Kadic-Maglajlic et al., 2019). In essence, sustainable consumption focuses on reducing environmental harm as part of broader sustainable development goals, aiming to protect ecosystems and promote their health and growth (Dhandra, 2019). Various practices can be adopted daily to embrace sustainable consumption, including environmentally informed decisions such as conserving energy, using reusable shopping bags, and purchasing eco-friendly products (Dong et al., 2020).

The terms eco-, green-, and ethical fashion are often used interchangeably with sustainable fashion, which is a core component of the slow fashion movement - a shift that has gained momentum over the past few decades (Carey and Cervellon, 2014). The sustainable fashion movement first gained traction in the 1960s when consumers became aware of the environmental impact of clothing production and called for improvements in industry practices (Jung and Jin, 2014). Although initially met with skepticism, eco-fashion gradually garnered global consumer support. Key moments, such as the anti-fur movements in the 1980s and 1990s and growing interest in ethical clothing in the late 1990s, reshaped consumer perceptions. Ethical fashion encompasses fair working conditions, sustainable company strategies, the use of organic and eco-friendly materials, certification schemes, and traceable supply chains (Henninger, 2015). It is a common misconception that sustainable fashion, as part of the slow fashion movement, is the antithesis of fast fashion. In reality, slow fashion movement is grounded in a value-driven approach that prioritizes thoughtful consumption, improved working conditions, and environmental protection. This philosophy encourages transparency between companies and stakeholders, slows down production to reduce waste, challenges the culture of disposability, and empowers workers through fair treatment and ethical choices, thereby challenging the fast fashion paradigm.

Similar to sustainable consumption, sustainable fashion encompasses various strategies and practices to achieving sustainability, ranging from environmentally friendly production methods that raise consumer awareness of social and ethical aspects to the promotion of responsible consumption behaviors. Sustainability within the fashion industry extends beyond production and includes the entire lifecycle of a product. For example, Brismar (2019) has developed a framework outlining seven significant forms of sustainability in both fashion production and consumption, as shown in Figure 1 below:
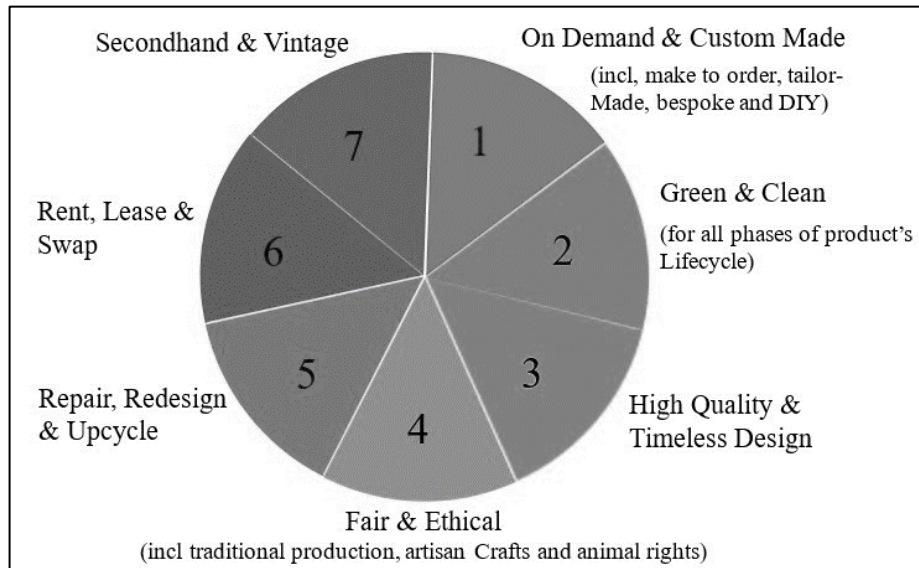
Source: Brismar (2019)

Figure 1 Seven Forms of Sustainable Fashion

Generation Z and Their Consumption Behavior

Gen Z refers to individuals born between 1997 and 2012 and represents a rapidly growing generation characterized by distinct traits (Nanda, 2020). This young demographic is known for its rapid development, extensive education, technological prowess, access to global connectivity, and deep concern for ethical and social issues (Nanda, 2020; Stahl and Literat, 2023). Representing the future market, Gen Z consumers are notably open-minded towards alternative ideas and evolving trends. Recent studies have highlighted their influence not only in shaping fashion trends but also in advocating for sustainable practices within the global and local fashion industries (Wang, 2021).

Gen Z's consumption ideals, beliefs, and habits have garnered significant scholarly and commercial interest. Compared to previous generations, Gen Z customers wield greater purchasing power and exhibit a preference for fashion brands that embrace environmental and social responsibility (Nanda, 2020). Gen Z members gravitate towards brands that resonate with their self-concepts, reflect their values and promote a sense of fashionability in their lifestyle (Nanda, 2020). Notably, Gen Z consumers predominantly use mobile devices for browsing and purchasing products, particularly through content and videos on social media platforms (Kim et al., 2020). Businesses can leverage this characteristic to tailor their marketing strategies and convey environmental messages more effectively to targeted consumers.

Considering all these factors, this paper will examine the purchase intention of Gen Z consumers in Vietnam toward sustainable fashion products. The research scope is limited to Vietnam in an effort to address the geographic gap in the current academic literature on the topic of sustainability in the fashion industry. According to a systematic review conducted by Schiaroli et al. (2025), which surveyed significant studies on sustainable fashion from the consumer perspective from 1998 to 2023, fewer than ten papers focus on Vietnam. Hence, researching in Vietnam can contribute to bridging both geographic and cultural gaps in the current literature. The systematic review also noted that while there are many studies conducted to examine consumer purchase intention towards sustainable fashion, very few specifically address Gen Z. In fact, only one paper explicitly referring to Gen Z in its title out of the 187 studies reviewed from 1998 to 2023 (Schiaroli et al., 2025). For this reason, the study focuses on Gen Z consumers, aiming to provide new insights into the behavioral tendencies of this unique group.

The Behavioral Intention of Consumers in the Circular Economy

The circular economy came into existence in the 1970s with the goal of minimizing input consumption in industrial production and reducing waste generation (Queiroz et al., 2021). The circular economy is a concept based on principles and measures aimed at contributing to sustainable development and enhancing the overall welfare of society (Pisitsankkhakarn et al., 2020). The core principles of circular economy revolve around the

idea of reducing waste and conserving resources by enhancing the production efficiency and dematerialization. As opposed to the regular linear economy with the business model "take-make-dispose," circular economy promotes a closed-loop system, where waste materials and end-of-life products are re-used as new inputs or energy sources (Pisitsankkhakarn et al., 2020). Product recovery and transformation into new goods are central to this model. In other words, the circular economy is all about tackling and recycling waste, managing the processes, and utilizing by-products to manufacture new products. The circular economy has proved its importance to the national sustainable development due to its efficiency and pro-environmental effects. Hence, recent government policies around the world have directed their focus on promoting circular practices in both manufacturing and consumption (Khan et al., 2020).

Due to its substantial and sustainable impact on the well-being of society, the circular economy has stoked the attention and interest of many scholars and industry practitioners. The relationship between circular economy practices and consumer behavior in the wake of its emergence has become the primary interest in recent academic and industry literature. Consumers' behavioral patterns have been significantly altered in response to circular economy principles, as they appear more engaged in adopting pro-environmental practices such as purchasing recycled products (Pisitsankkhakarn et al., 2020). Sustainable consumption has gradually become a significant concern in many individuals, which in turn stimulates the adoption of circular economy practices in many manufacturing businesses (Coderoni and Perito, 2020). Consumers are deeply connected to the implementation of a circular economy, as their purchasing behaviors control decisions across production and distribution processes of many enterprises (Vidal-Ayuso et al., 2023). Their purchase intentions, as well behavior shifts, strongly drive the extent to which one company integrate principles of the circular economy. Therefore, understanding sustainable consumption intent is key to constructing marketing strategies and promoting products and services aligned with circular values (Santos-Corrada et al., 2024).

As the role of consumer behavioral intentions in the circular economy has become more widely acknowledged and included in academic literature, researchers have conducted many studies exploring the determining factors that drive this sustainable consumption intent. Environmental awareness is the most direct and crucial determinant of consumption intention in a circular economy (De Guimarães et al., 2023). In addition, factors such as attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control have been shown to have a significant influence on the intention to adopt circular practices (Khan et al., 2023). External stimuli like industry trends or social pressures on current environmental issues can also impact consumers' beliefs, which contribute to the ultimate behavioral intentions (Abbasi et al., 2022). The perceived image and representation of circular products and services also substantially drive pro-environmental intentions among consumers (Calvo-Porral et al., 2020). Favorable perceptions of a product evoke positive emotions and psychological stimuli inside people's minds, which in turn shape their choices and intentions. Research has posited that positive emotions and cognitive responses enforce a lasting effect on proactive consumers behaviors as they are associated with individuals' internal motivations and psychological mechanisms. These internal stimuli have a more direct and significant impact on consumers than external ones such as price discounts (Chao et al., 2024). Other studies have highlighted the effect of personal norms like environmental identity, self-congruity, and perceived value (Confente et al., 2020). Understanding these internal psychological and cognitive mechanisms of consumers is the heart of promoting and encouraging the usage intentions to adopt sustainable and circular products.

Factor Affecting the Purchase Intention of Generation Z for Sustainable Fashion Products

Quality. Product quality reflects consumers' assessment processes of a product's value, which in turn increase their willingness to purchase it (Yuan et al., 2021). Rational consumers, as noted by Oktavian and Wahyudi (2022), typically evaluate product quality before forming purchase intentions. Thus, product perceived as high quality by customers are more likely to drive consumer purchases. Furthermore, numerous recent studies have demonstrated the positive influence of product quality on purchase intentions, demonstrating its role in consumer behavior across various industries and sales platforms (Lamasi and Santoso, 2022).

In the context of green and sustainable products, quality is considered a key health parameter that significantly influences consumers' health consciousness and motivates them to act on their purchase intentions (Wijekoon and Sabri, 2021). The paper also highlights the heightened that the effect of product quality on purchase intention is even stronger among younger generations, driven by early technological exposure and heightened awareness following recent global health crises. Additionally, Lee et al. (2020)

suggest that consumers are more likely to develop high purchase intentions for products with sustainability labels, as they are perceived to possess superior quality.

H1: Quality positively impacts the purchase intention of Generation Z for sustainable fashion products.

Price. Price is defined as monetary cost that clients exchange for a service or product or the value they receive in return (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Because price represents the sacrifice of resources, customers are often sensitive to any price changes when purchasing a product. Price plays a crucial role in the final decisions regarding brand, product, and store selection (Suhud et al., 2022). In addition, research conducted by Levrini and Jeffman dos Santos (2021) further suggests that the price factor induces positive reactions in consumers' cognitive and emotional evaluations, ultimately increasing purchase intention.

Regarding the new trend in sustainable products, Lee et al. (2020) found that while consumers perceive these products to be of high quality, they may still hesitate to purchase them due to their exorbitant and excessive pricing. In other words, affordability can outweigh product quality and other perceived benefits. Therefore, the cost of eco-friendly products must fall within a comfortable range for most consumers. Wijekoon and Sabri (2021) also emphasized the importance of pricing strategies in driving green purchase intentions. When a brand can strike a balance between its green policies and pricing strategies, it can appeal to a broader consumer base.

According to Kumar and Mohan (2021), price acts as a moderator that channels sustainable apparel to consumers. The study also pointed out the heightened awareness among young consumers about environmental issues. By offering sustainable products at competitive prices, businesses can further boost the demand for green clothing among Gen Z buyers, which is already high.

H2: Price positively impacts the purchase intention of Generation Z for sustainable fashion products.

Brand. A brand reflects the values and images that consumers associate with a company or its products, which differentiates one company from others in the marketplace and affects consumers' purchase choices (Parris and Guzmán, 2023). Many companies employ personification and semi-personalization techniques to portray their brand image and foster emotional connections, which in turn boost loyalty and increase purchase intentions (Mete and Davies, 2017).

A study by Chen et al. (2021) identified the brand image as a factor that validates consumers' evaluation of a brand's products and significantly influences their purchase behaviors. They also underscored the importance of a sustainable brand image in the realm of clothing consumption, where a sustainable brand identity guides consumers' subjective evaluations and decisions.

In today's modern society, where environmental issues top the agenda, many companies are focusing on building eco-friendly and sustainable brand identities. Zameer et al. (2020) noted that a green brand image not only provides a business with critical competitive advantages over others in the market but also attract environmentally aware consumers. Conversely, as more consumers adopt greener consumption behaviors, enterprises are increasingly motivated to implement sustainable production methods. Another study by Ahmed et al. (2021) highlighted the significant awareness of the environment among Gen Z. Therefore, they are more responsive to brands that reflect sustainable values and claim environmental responsibilities.

H3: Brand positively impacts the purchase intention of Generation Z for sustainable fashion products.

Environmental Concern. Environmental concern refers to an individual's level of concern, emotional attachment, and environment-related conservation effort to current environmental problems and risks (Dagher and Itani, 2014). Over the past few decades, there has been a wealth of consistent empirical evidence supporting the relationship between environmental concerns and the intention to purchase sustainable products (Prakash and Pathak, 2017). Wijekoon and Sabri (2021) also affirmed that ecological concern can serve as an incentive for consumers to pick up green consumption practices. As consumers become more concerned about environmental issues, they are likely to acquire more knowledge in this realm, which enhances their interest in eco-friendly products and minimizes negative impacts on the natural world.

In a survey conducted on Gen Z consumers in Phnom Penh, Saut and Saing (2021) concluded that high concern for the environment significantly influences consumers' attitudes and willingness to pay, which ultimately determines their intentions to purchase sustainable products. Abrar et al. (2021) found that by understanding the consumer environmental concerns, particularly those of Gen Z, businesses can tailor marketing strategies towards eco-friendly products. Additionally, a study by Chaturvedi et al. (2020) linked the increase in demand for recycled clothing products within the Gen Z community to the growing influence of environmental concern on the younger generation.

H4: Environmental concern positively impacts the purchase intention of Generation Z for sustainable fashion products.

Subjective Norm. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior developed by Ajzen (1991), subjective norm is one of the key factors influencing purchase intentions and behaviors. It revolves around an individual's belief important others approve or disapprove of a specific action. Ajzen's theory serves as the theoretical basis for future research exploring the impact of subjective norms on consumers' purchase intentions. Subjective norms represent social influences derived from others' experiences and opinions when performing a specific action (Noor et al., 2020). When most people express a favorable attitude towards a product, the subjective norm is considered positive, which can strengthen an individual's intention to purchase. Additionally, Joshi and Rahman (2016) discovered that close social circles, such as family, friends, colleagues, or business partners, play a crucial role in shaping individuals' norms and beliefs, thus enhancing behavioral intentions.

As mentioned, subjective norms reflect the social pressures stemming from the perceived expectations and opinions of others. When these social pressures are applied to current environmental concern, they can reshape consumers' subjective norms and significantly alter their daily consumption behaviors. Xu et al. (2022) demonstrated the direct effect of subjective norms on green purchase intentions and behaviors. When consumers realize that many others are engaging in green purchasing behaviors, they are more likely to develop the intention to follow suit (Zhuang et al., 2021). This phenomenon resembles the "herd behavior effect," in which the intention to perform an action is intensified by the awareness of widespread participation. According to Xie and Madni (2023), this effect is even more pronounced among younger generations, who are often more reliant on social media and more susceptible to the latest trends.

H5: Subjective norm positively impacts the purchase intention of Generation Z for sustainable fashion products.

Attitude. Attitude is another key factor affecting the ultimate purchase intentions in the Theory of Planned Behavior, characterized as the cognitive evaluation and psychological emotions towards a behavior or action (Ajzen, 1991). Since an individual's attitude refers to their perception of a brand and indicates their preference for one brand over another, it impacts the overall purchase intention and decision-making process (Charton-Vachet et al., 2020). Additionally, Costa et al. (2021) explained that consumers' attitude toward a product usually results from past experiences, whether on their own or from others, which help validate future purchasing decisions. According to Joshi and Rahman (2016), attitude represents a cognitive appraisal process where consumers determine their intentions by assessing whether the purchase decision is favorable or not.

Several studies in the past have found that a positive attitude toward environmental concern and sustainable consumption significantly increases purchase intention. A survey by Zaremohzzabieh et al. (2021) showed a shift in consumers' attitudes toward sustainable products, which acts as a mediating factor for the development of green purchase intentions. Social media platforms and the emergence of influencer culture have also been shown to affect consumers' attitudes and enhance their intention to buy sustainable products (Kurdi et al., 2022). In the specific context of sustainable fashion, Jung et al. (2020) investigated the role of positive attitudes in influencing the overall purchase intention for eco-friendly apparel. According to the study, attitude is shaped by both consumption values and social norms, and these two factors are proven to exert profound impacts on consumers' sustainable purchasing behaviors. The conceptual model has been shown in Figure 2.

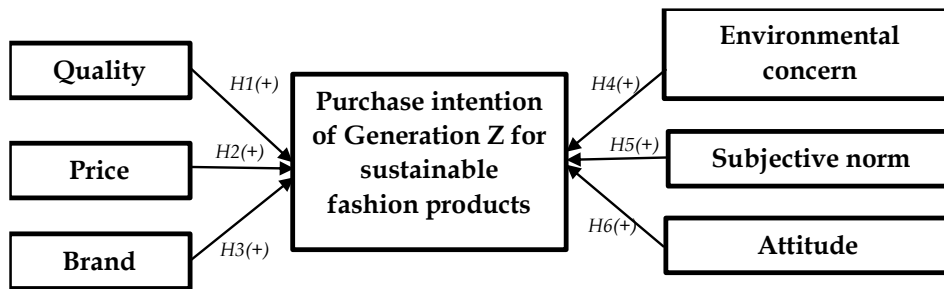*H6: Attitude positively impacts the purchase intention of Generation Z for sustainable fashion products.*

Figure 2 Research Model for Factors Affecting the Purchase Intention of Generation Z for Sustainable Fashion Products

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Prior to the main data collection process, in-depth interviews with five experts who have over ten years of experience in the fashion industry were conducted. The objective was not only to explore and validate the factors influencing Gen Z's purchase intention of sustainable fashion products, but also to adapt the research scales and language to fit the Vietnamese context. Insights from these interviews were used to refine the questionnaire, enhancing its clarity, relevance, and cultural alignment. Although a small set of expert interviews was conducted to refine the survey instrument and ensure contextual relevance, the study primarily follows a quantitative research design.

The quantitative phase of the study consists of three main steps. First, a questionnaire was designed, comprising an introduction, core statements related to the constructs, and personal questions for the participants. Subsequently, a pilot test was conducted with ten respondents through face-to-face interviews to ensure that the phrasing of the statements was clearly understood and accurately interpreted. Each sentence in the questionnaire corresponds to a specific criterion in the concept model. The formal questionnaire included of 29 observational variables measured on a five-point Likert scale, as shown in Table 1. Finally, an online survey was distributed to collect the sample data, which was then analyzed to answer the research questions.

In this research, the measurement scales in the model were evaluated for reliability and subjected to Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The multiple linear regression model was utilized to determine the factors affecting Generation Z's purchase intention for sustainable fashion products. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 25.0 software.

Table 1 Measurement Items

No	Observed variables	Code	Source
I. Quality		**Q**	
1	I think sustainable fashion products possess a high level of quality.	Q1	Lili et al. (2022) (Q1, Q5) Nekmahmud and Fekete-Farkas (2020) (Q2, Q3, Q4)
2	I believe in the reliability and quality of sustainable fashion products.	Q2	
3	I think sustainable fashion products are highly durable	Q3	
4	I think the usage of sustainable fashion products is beneficial to my health.	Q4	
5	I consider sustainable fashion products to be a leader in quality compared to other products in the fashion industry.	Q5	
II. Price		**P**	
1	I think the price of sustainable fashion products is fairly high.	P1	Ansu-Mensah (2021) (P1, P2) Nekmahmud and Fekete-Farkas (2020) (P3, P4)
2	I am willing to pay more for sustainable fashion products.	P2	
3	I will switch to using sustainable fashion products if they are priced the same as my usual brands.	P3	
4	I will switch to using sustainable fashion products if they are less expensive.	P4	
III. Brand		**B**	
1	I can recognize major sustainable brands like Uniqlo, H&M because of their dynamic campaigns and advertisements.	B1	Lili et al. (2022)
2	I am highly aware of and acquainted with sustainable fashion brands.	B2	
3	I can identify branded sustainable fashion products to a certain extent.	B3	
4	I am not aware of sustainable fashion brands (e.g. using unbranded products or not paying attention to the brand).	B4	

Table 1 Cont

No	Observed variables	Code	Source
IV. Environmental concern		**EC**	
1	I believe in the preservation of the environment, as it has a significant impact on our lives.	EC1	
2	I have the knowledge and understanding of the environment and sustainable products.	EC2	Ansu-Mensah (2021) (EC2, EC3)
3	I consider buying sustainable fashion products as a contribution to a sustainable future.	EC3	Nekmahmud and Fekete-Farkas (2020)
4	I feel my shopping behavior has an impact on the environment.	EC4	(EC1, EC4, EC5)
5	I think purchasing sustainable fashion products is a way to be environmentally responsible.	EC5	
V. Social norms		**SN**	
1	Most of my friends and family members share my views about sustainable fashion products.	SN1	
2	My decision to buy sustainable fashion products is influenced by my friends and family.	SN2	Wang et al. (2023)
3	The opinions of people important to me influence my intention to use sustainable fashion products.	SN3	
VI. Attitude		**ASF**	
1	I think it is pleasant to engage with environmentally friendly brands and products.	ASF1	
2	I think sustainable fashion products are more valuable than conventional ones.	ASF2	
3	I think using sustainable fashion products is wise because it shows concern for environmental issues.	ASF3	Ahmed et al. (2023) (ASF4, ASF5) Chen et al. (2020) (ASF1, ASF2, ASF3)
4	I think using sustainable fashion products is satisfying because it helps protect the environment for future generations.	ASF4	
5	I think using sustainable fashion products is favorable due to their excellent environmental benefits.	ASF5	
VII. Purchase intention in sustainable fashion products		**PIS**	
1	I would like to buy sustainable fashion products to help support sustainable production.	PIS1	
2	I will increase my purchase or usage of sustainable fashion products in the future.	PIS2	Nekmahmud and Fekete-Farkas (2020)
3	I will recommend the use of sustainable fashion products to my friends and family.	PIS3	

RESULTS

The results of the reliability analysis indicate that all six concepts demonstrate high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.7 (Table 2). This suggests that the items within each construct are closely related and measure the same underlying concept, thereby confirming the internal consistency reliability of the measurement scales used in the study. Such consistency is essential for ensuring the validity of subsequent analyses and for drawing accurate conclusions from the data.

Table 2 Result of Reliability Test

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Quality	5	0.828
Price	4	0.775
Brand	4	0.795
Environmental concern	5	0.821
Social norms	3	0.784
Attitude	5	0.822
Purchase intention of sustainable fashion products	3	0.809

Table 3 presents the mean and standard deviation for all items under each variable. Among the constructs, quality receives the highest overall mean score, followed by price, brand, environmental concern, social norms, attitude, and purchase intention. All items score above 3.0, indicating a generally positive response across variables.

The results of the EFA analysis revealed the six distinct factors extracted from 26 variables, with two variables excluded because they did not meet the required factor loading criteria. All retained items achieved a factor loading score above 0.5, indicating good construct validity. The Barlett test of sphericity was statistically significant (Table 4). Therefore, the dataset was suitable for factor analysis.

Table 3 Result of Factor Analysis

Factor	Items	Factor loadings	KMO	Eigenvalue	Variance explained (%)
ASF	5	0.702-0.748		6.540	27.250
B	4	0.711-0.786		2.019	35.663
P	4	0.699-0.779	0.872	1.672	42.630
EC	4	0.688-0.746		1.617	49.367
Q	4	0.691-0.756		1.512	55.667
SN	3	0.771-0.801		1.435	61.647
PIS	3	0.836-0.858	0.713	2.170	72.342

Table 3 displays the multiple regression results between all the independent variables and the dependent variable. Consistent with the correlation coefficient results, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all the variables were below 3, meaning there were no multicollinearity issues. This indicated that the variables could be used for regression analysis. The regression model demonstrated good fit, exhibiting a positive, statistically significant F-values. Plus, the adjusted R-squared value of 0.685 indicated that four dimensions explained 68.5% of the variance in purchase intention. The result shows that all the individual paths were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. As such, there are six accepted hypotheses: H1 through H6.

Table 4 Coefficients

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
							Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	-0.568	0.178		-3.196	0.002		
	Q	0.338	0.040	0.316	8.443	0.000	0.752	1.330
	P	0.144	0.042	0.130	3.428	0.001	0.738	1.356
	B	0.161	0.037	0.163	4.340	0.000	0.746	1.341
	EC	0.179	0.038	0.175	4.696	0.000	0.759	1.318
	SN	0.198	0.034	0.215	5.814	0.000	0.772	1.296
1	ASF	0.241	0.038	0.238	6.401	0.000	0.764	1.309
	R	0.832			R^2_1 adjusted			0.685
	Dependent: Purchase intention of sustainable fashion products							

MAIN FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study is conducted to delve into factors influencing Vietnamese Generation Z's purchase intention toward sustainable fashion products. The findings of this study indicate that internal psychological mechanisms like environmental concern, attitude, and social norms all have a positive and significant impact on Gen Z's intention to purchase sustainable fashion products. This is consistent with previous studies on the impact of the internal or consumer-specific factors in sustainable consumption (Istiasih, 2023; Jin et al., 2024; Wadhwa and ARYA, 2023). On the other hand, external factors such as brand, quality, and price also exude a positive influence on the ultimate purchase intention of Gen Z consumers in Vietnam, supporting findings from earlier studies (Jin et al., 2024; Lee and Lee, 2023; Puspita and Chae, 2021; Testa et al., 2021). Among all six determinants, product quality emerged as the most influential factor affecting purchase intention, unlike in many previous studies where quality factors are less mentioned (Levrini and Jeffman dos Santos, 2021) or their impact is lower than other variables (Oktavian and Wahyudi, 2022). This suggests that consumers who are more environmentally conscious has a favorable attitude toward environmental issues and sustainable consumption or receives positive influence from people living in their social circle, will likely show a stronger intention to purchase sustainable clothing. The research also shows that well-established brand reputations and accessible pricing also boost Gen Z's purchase intention. This means if the products come from a brand with a great image and/or have a more affordable price, the purchase intention from consumers will be much higher.

Quality. The quality factor (Q) emerges as the most influential determinant, with a coefficient (β) of 0.316. This result provides meaningful insights in the behavioral tendencies of Gen Z consumers in Vietnam as they place strong emphasis on product quality when making the sustainable purchase decisions. Empirical data from Vietnamese Gen Z consumers provides valuable insights to academic research, especially given the limited scholarly attention this specific geographic and demographic context has received (Schiaroli et al., 2025).

To enhance product quality, sustainable fashion businesses should address the following three areas:

(i)   Apply the principles of sustainable production and circular economy by recycling used materials into new inputs for product design and manufacturing (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). These materials should be rigorously processed to guarantee the quality of the output product.

(ii)   Pay attention to consumers' perceptions of product quality (Yuan et al., 2021) by selecting input materials that balance environmental friendliness and optimal product performance. Market surveys, consumer feedback, and product reviews can inform improvements for future product lines.

(iii) Implement market survey strategies to identify design styles that resonate with consumers, such as minimalist or genderless aesthetics, while maintaining quality standard throughout product development and marketing efforts (Lamasi and Santoso, 2022).

Attitude. The attitude factor (ASF) ranked as the second most influential on Gen Z's purchasing intention for sustainable fashion products, with a coefficient (β) of 0.238. Perceptions of product quality, closely related to attitudes toward sustainable fashion products, plays a significant role in purchase intention. Consumers may perceive sustainable clothing as being of higher quality due to factors such as durability, craftsmanship, and attention to detail, which can collectively enhance purchase intention through positive attitudes (Wijekoon and Sabri, 2021). The reputation and image of sustainable fashion brands that emphasize ethical and functional characteristics also impact consumer attitudes and purchase behavior (Wijekoon and Sabri, 2021). Brands with a strong commitment to sustainability, transparency, and corporate social responsibility are likely to be viewed more favorably by consumers seeking ethical and environmentally conscious clothing options.

Consumer attitudes toward sustainable fashion are shaped by their awareness and understanding of sustainability, as well as the accessibility of information about sustainable clothing options (Chaturvedi et al., 2020). Education campaigns, marketing efforts, and transparent communication from brands can foster positive attitudes and strengthen purchase intention. In addition, the research results posited that attitudes regarding affordability also impact purchase intention. While some consumers are willing to pay a premium for eco-friendly clothing, others may perceive sustainable fashion as financially impractical due to higher prices. However, an increasing level of favorable attitude product value and ethical business practices can still induce purchase intention within consumers, despite the price hurdle (Chaturvedi et al., 2020). By examining these attitudinal factors, marketers and researchers can better understand the motivations and preferences behind consumer behavior in the sustainable fashion market. This understanding can inform strategies to promote and normalize the purchase of sustainable clothing, contributing to the growth of the sustainable fashion industry.

Social Norms. The social norms (SN) factor emerges as the third most influential factor on Gen Z's purchasing intention for sustainable fashion products, with a coefficient (β) of 0.215. Finding high-quality products can be challenging for many consumers, but individuals usually make purchases based on their high perceived value (Ansu-Mensah, 2021). Nowadays, with the strong influence of social media, product reviews can reach hundreds or even thousands of followers, significantly shaping their purchasing decisions (Yuan et al., 2021). Moreover, the implementation of e-commerce provides fashion brands an additional, powerful sales channel, complementing in-store retails. E-commerce transcends geographic limitations, allowing customers to shop anytime, anywhere (Yuan et al., 2021). In this context, sustainable fashion practices should be embedded into both social media and e-commerce strategies to reinforce social norms and encourage environmentally conscious behavior. With the rapid dissemination of opinions among peers, connections between individuals are formed faster than ever before. Therefore, meticulous attention in every detail can help individuals leave a strong impression on those around them, as everyone often value how others perceive and comment on their choices.

Environmental Concern. The environmental concern (EC) factor emerges as the fourth most influential on Gen Z's consumption behavior in sustainable fashion ($\beta = 0.175$). These results indicate that survey participants broadly agree on the impact of environmental concern on Gen Z's purchasing intention. A majority of Gen Z individuals are cognizant of the ecological consequences of their shopping behavior, particularly given the rise of fast fashion and growing clothing consumption (Chaturvedi et al., 2020). The continuous cycle of purchasing and production in fast fashion has led to the depletion of raw materials and

environmental degradation. Businesses should actively implement practices that show environmental engagement and effectively communicate these efforts to consumers, reinforcing sustainability values (Chaturvedi et al., 2020). In addition, detailed information about the environmental impact, quality, and sustainability benefits of the products should be sufficiently conveyed to consumers on packaging and across digital platforms.

Brand. Businesses aiming to enhance Gen Z's purchase intention for sustainable fashion products should prioritize bolstering brand value, as brand ranks as the fifth most influential factor ($\beta = 0.163$). Brand is a combination of visual entities, perceived as an image imprinted in consumers' memory (Suhud et al., 2022). Therefore, businesses should focus on building brands to raise awareness and leave a lasting impression on consumers. While implementing these strategies and plans, businesses must also consider pricing, as it affects how consumers assess and choose between options (Wijekoon and Sabri, 2021). To achieve effective branding, businesses should:

(i) Define Goals, Mission, and Core Values: Clearly establish goals, craft a compelling mission, and define core values to build a strong business foundation.

(ii) Understand Target Audience: Gain insights into the requirements, habits, demographics, and psychographics of the target audience to tailor communication strategies.

(iii) Create a Value Proposition: Develop a value proposition that highlights the unique benefits and sustainability attributes of the brand or product.

(iv) Develop Brand Assets: Create brand assets and integrate branding throughout the business to ensure consistent brand identity.

By implementing these strategies, businesses can effectively build their brand trust and influence Gen Z's purchasing behavior toward more sustainable fashion consumption.

Price. The product price factor (P) ranks as the sixth most influential factor on Gen Z's purchasing intention for sustainable fashion products (with $\beta = 0.130$). This reflects participants' recognition that price indeed influences their decision to consume sustainable fashion. Undoubtedly, price plays a crucial role in consumer preferences for any product. Lower prices typically drive increased demand, while higher prices may deter potential buyers (Ansu-Mensah, 2021). Hence, producers must devise suitable pricing strategies that balance the interests of both producers and consumers. Efforts to bring the price of sustainable products down to the same level as the price of conventional brands can significantly promote individual purchase intentions (Ansu-Mensah, 2021). To support this goal, businesses should formulate rational pricing strategies by first analyzing market prices of competitors with similar product lines while also considering the income levels and spending behaviors of their target customers. Additionally, businesses implement incentive-based policies to motivate consumers to opt for sustainable products, thereby fostering brand loyalty and long-term engagement among Gen Z shoppers.

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

This study was conducted to examine Generation Z's intention to purchase sustainable fashion products. The research found that sustainable purchase intention was positively influenced through different mechanisms, particularly quality, price, brand, environmental concern, social norms, and attitude. The results of the study are consistent with previous research papers on sustainable purchase intention (Khan et al., 2023; Saut and Saing, 2021; Wijekoon and Sabri, 2021; Zameer et al., 2020). Among the six significant determinants discussed in the study, product quality is shown to have the most considerable impact on Gen Z consumers' intention to purchase sustainable fashion products. The other five factors also substantially demonstrate strong influence and should be considered alongside quality when developing strategies to promote sustainable fashion. These key factors of purchase intention are valuable for developing and implementing strategies to gain consumers' interest in sustainable products and services.

In terms of theoretical implications, the study underscores the combined influence of internal and external mechanisms in explaining the purchase intention, particularly among Generation Z consumers in Vietnam. While many studies delved into internal factors (Abrar et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2022) or external ones separately (Lamasi et al., 2022; Oktavian et al., 2022), few studies have combined both aspects in analyzing

consumers' purchase intention in the fashion industry. This integrated view on both internal and external factors provides a deeper understanding of what drives sustainable behavior, which can promote higher intention within individuals towards sustainable fashion products. As such, these findings can be seen as a theoretical foundation for future research on consumer behavioral intention concerning sustainability.

The growing appeal to sustainable products and consumption practices has resulted in a lot of studies consumer attitudes toward green products (Dong et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2023). However, in the context of a circular economy, particularly with regard to circular and remanufactured products, few studies have been examined the impact of this alternative manufacturing approach from consumer's perspective (Pisitsankkhakarn et al., 2020). Most studies have focused on how circular economy principles are applied within organizations and production systems (Barreiro-Gen et al., 2020; Duque-Acevedo et al., 2020). The concept of circular economy is also frequently used to analyze waste management processes and is studied in many fields like food production, construction, supply chain, and chemical refinement (Alzate Acevedo et al., 2021; Fackler et al., 2021; Ginga et al., 2020).

Hence, this study offers valuable bases on how consumers' intentions and behaviors in driving businesses to adopt circular economy practices in their operations. This can assist researchers and practitioners who want to delve into the perspective of consumers in the circular economy - a topic still underrepresented in the academic landscape (Pisitsankhakarn et al., 2020). In addition, the empirical data from Vietnamese Gen Z consumers within this study can be used to substantiate and validate future research involving this group.

The study sheds light on the various mechanisms through which individuals' purchase intention of sustainable products is generated and influenced. Some existing research treated sustainable purchase intention under a one-dimensional scope, which is only impacted by consumers' awareness and concern for environmental issues (De Guimarães et al., 2023). By contrast, the findings of this study present a more exhaustive, multi-dimensional approach to studying how sustainable purchase intention is influenced. Furthermore, the quality of sustainable products is proved by this study to be of the most significant factor, indicating an important area for further exploration in future sustainability-focused scientific works.

Managerial Implications

As for practical implications, businesses and policymakers can utilize the six factors in the research model to further engage consumers towards sustainable fashion products. Since quality has the greatest impact on purchase intention, enhancing product quality should be put at the top of the agenda when implementing any marketing and production policies. The other five factors also have positive impacts on consumers' purchase intention, so businesses and policymakers should integrate these determinants into strategic planning to engage consumers further. The findings in the research also provide valuable insights and evidence for companies to implement strategies and make informed management decisions to capture consumers' interests. Each of the factors discussed in this study can be incorporated into the company's branding and marketing plans. Individual intentions to use sustainable products usually emanate from social influences and contemporary trends, expressed through the roles of social norms and environmental concern (Chaturvedi et al., 2020; Yuan et al., 2021). Hence, it is essential for marketers to keep up with the current social trends and as well as consumption habits to adjust their products and marketing plans so that they better align with consumer expectations.

Establishing a favorable brand image is also critical, as it helps build positive emotional responses and brand perceptions (Suhud et al., 2022; Wijekoon and Sabri, 2021). Promotional channels such as advertising and social media marketing can be capitalized to create a strong brand and attract consumers' attention to the company's products. In addition, financial incentives - such as regular discounts, sensible product pricing, and psychological pricing - are highly effective in promoting the usage of sustainable goods among consumers, as price is a significant driver of consumer decision-making (Ansu-Mensah, 2021).

Finally, as scientifically proved by this study, the quality of sustainable products is the most crucial determinant of purchase intention. Hence, businesses managers need to focus on ensuring and improving product quality. To truly qualify as sustainable, products must not only be eco-friendly but also possess durability and a long product life cycle (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). Enhancing product quality is the key to securing firm purchase intention, especially in the case of sustainable items, and to developing a sense of loyalty and long-term attachment.

CONCLUSION

The research developed a scale of factors influencing Gen Z's purchase intentions regarding sustainable fashion products in Ho Chi Minh City. The findings of this research are especially relevant for companies and businesses selling sustainable fashion products in this region. These findings serve as the foundation for providing solutions to increase Gen Z's intention to purchase sustainable fashion products, ultimately leading to increased market share and profits for these companies.

Based on the data analysis, the influencing factors are ranked by their level of impact on purchase intention as follows: Quality ($\beta = 0.316$); Attitude ($\beta = 0.238$); Social norms ($\beta = 0.215$); Environmental concern ($\beta = 0.175$); Brand ($\beta = 0.163$); Price ($\beta = 0.130$). Notably, quality emerges as the most influential factor among the six factors studied, a finding that has been rarely emphasized in previous research.

LIMITATION AND SUGGESTION

This study only mentions six factors affecting the purchase intention of Gen Z toward sustainable fashion products in Vietnam namely quality, price, brand, environmental concern, social norms, and attitude without exploring other influential factors such as government policies, cultural values, or other demographic characteristics (e.g., income level, gender, or education). These additional factors represent new directions for future research and deeper comprehension on sustainable fashion consumption behavior.

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