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Psychological Drivers of Sustainable Cultural Fashion Exploring Generation Z's Behavioral Intentions toward Circular Economy Adoption

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the psychological factors influencing Generation Z's engagement in a circular fashion. A sustainable approach aimed at reducing waste by promoting the reuse, recycling, and repurposing of fashion products. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Customer Decision-Making Model, this research examines the roles of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in shaping Gen Z's intentions toward circular fashion consumption, as well as the impact of these intentions on actual purchase decisions and post-purchase evaluations. Data was collected from Gen Z consumers through an online survey, and the hypotheses were tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results indicate that Gen Z's attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control significantly influence Gen Z's intentions to engage in a circular fashion. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate a significant relationship between customer intention and both purchase decisions and post-purchase satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of positive post-purchase experiences for fostering customer decision-making. This research integrates TPB with the Customer Decision-Making Model, offering a comprehensive understanding of the psychological and behavioral factors driving circular fashion adoption among Generation Z. Practical implications include strategies for fashion brands to enhance accessibility, leverage social influence and reinforce the environmental and ethical benefits of circular fashion to resonate with this sustainability-conscious generation.

Keywords: Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Customer Decision-Making Model, Gen Z's Behavioral Intentions, Circular Fashion Consumption, Circular Economy

INTRODUCTION

The global fashion industry has faced increasing pressure to reduce its environmental footprint, leading to the rise of circular fashion—a sustainable model designed to minimize waste by reusing, recycling, and repurposing fashion items (Seidu et al., 2024). Circular fashion represents a shift from the traditional fashion model (produce, use, discard) toward more sustainable practices that align with growing consumer awareness of environmental and social issues. Among various consumer groups, Generation Z stands out as a critical demographic driving the shift toward circular fashion. Gen Z's behaviors and attitudes towards environmentally conscious and socially aware, especially in the fashion industry, offer a promising avenue for research.

Circular fashion practices include using recycled or organic materials, designing for durability and longevity, and promoting the reuse of garments through second-hand markets, clothing swaps, or rental services (Mahanty and Domenech, 2024). Brands that embrace circular fashion are also increasingly exploring take-back programs, to extend the garments' life and reducing landfill waste (Papamichael et al., 2022).

This study is to explore the relationship between critical psychological constructs (attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control) and Gen Z's intentions and behaviors in circular fashion. Specifically, this study aims to assess the influence of Gen Z's attitudes toward circular fashion on their intention to customers of circular fashion products. Secondly, the researchers also want to explore the role of subjective norms, including peer influence and social media, in shaping Gen Z's purchasing intentions. Thirdly, the researchers would like to investigate the effect of perceived behavioral control (e.g., convenience, accessibility, and affordability) on their intention to buy circular fashion. Lastly, the researchers want to examine how intention strengthens purchase decisions and Post-Purchase Evaluations. Based on the research objectives, the researchers propose four research questions below:

1. How do Generation Z's attitudes toward circular fashion influence their purchasing intentions?
2. To what extent do subjective norms (social pressures and influences) affect Gen Z's intention to engage circularly?
3. How does perceived behavioral control impact Gen Z's intention to participate in circular fashion consumption?
4. How does Gen Z's intention to customer circular fashion strengthen actual purchasing behavior and post-customer satisfaction?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Circular Fashion and Sustainability

Circular fashion is an emerging culture which is broader than sustainability. Circular fashion focuses on reducing the fashion industry's environmental impact by extending the life cycle (D'Adamo et al., 2022). The concept is based on the principles of a circular economy, which strives to reduce waste and make the most of resources by maintaining products, materials, and resources in circulation (Elf et al., 2022). Circular fashion practices include using recycled or organic materials, designing for durability and longevity, and promoting the reuse of garments through second-hand markets, clothing swaps, or rental services (Ikram, 2022). Brands that embrace circular fashion are also increasingly exploring take-back programs, where consumers are encouraged to return used clothes for recycling or repurposing, extending the garments' life and reducing landfill waste. This concept has gained traction due to the rising demand for sustainable cultural fashion and increased awareness of the social and environmental damage caused by fast fashion(de Aguiar Hugo et al., 2021).

Dissanyake and Weerasinghe (2021) highlight how circular fashion aligns with slow fashion principles, emphasizing quality, longevity, and ethical production practices. While circular fashion is still in its developmental phase, it is becoming increasingly important due to the fashion industry's significant contribution to environmental degradation, including pollution, excessive resource use, and carbon emissions. Ki et al. (2021) propose that adopting circular economy principles in fashion could mitigate these negative impacts by creating value from waste and driving innovation in sustainable design and manufacturing.

Generation Z and Ethical Consumption

Generation Z represents a unique cohort of consumers who drive sustainability demand across industries, including fashion. Born between 1997 and 2012, Gen Z is frequently described as the most environmentally generation (Chen et al., 2021). Unlike previous generations, Gen Z grew up in a digital-first world, with extensive access to information about global issues such as climate change. As a result, they have developed heightened expectations of brands, demanding transparency, ethical business practices, and sustainability.

Several studies have highlighted Gen Z's commitment to ethical consumption. Passaro et al. (2024) find that more than 70% of Gen Z consumers prefer to buy products from brands they perceive as ethical or environmentally responsible. Gen Z's consumption patterns reflect their desire to align their purchasing behaviors with their values, particularly those related to sustainability, climate action, and social justice. For instance, Dissanyake and Weerasinghe (2021) found that Gen Z consumers are intended to boycott brands associated with unethical practices and prefer supporting companies that actively engage in sustainability initiatives. Research also suggests that Gen Z consumers are willing to pay a premium for sustainable products. According to a study by Rathinamoorthy (2019), more than 60% of Gen Z consumers are willing to spend an additional 10% on sustainable products, further reinforcing their commitment to supporting ethical fashion brands. This behavior is underpinned by social responsibility and the belief that individuals can drive change through conscious consumption(Ki et al., 2021).

In the fashion landscape, Gen Z is significantly impacted by the perspectives and actions of their peers, especially within social media circles. Influencers and online communities play a crucial role in guiding Gen Z's

views on circular fashion and sustainability, actively shaping their attitudes and choices toward eco-friendly practices. Platforms like Xiaohongshu, Weibo, and WeChat have become powerful tools for disseminating information about sustainable cultural fashion trends, encouraging peer-to-peer sharing (Abbate et al., 2024). Influencers who promote sustainable lifestyles and ethical brands help shape Gen Z's values and purchasing intentions.

Despite Gen Z's apparent interest in Sustainable Cultural Fashion, barriers still exist. Sandvik and Stubbs (2019) found that challenges such as the higher price points of sustainable products, limited availability, and the perception that Sustainable Cultural Fashion is less trendy can deter Gen Z consumers from consistently adopting circular fashion practices. Convenience and affordability remain key factors in influencing purchasing decisions, and while Gen Z values sustainability, they are also highly cost-conscious (Kumar and Malhotra, 2024).

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Ajzen (1991) proposed the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) for analyzing and forecasting consumer behavior. According to TPB, three primary factors shape behavioral intentions, which, in turn, predict actual behavior. Firstly, attitude toward the behavior, pertains to how positively or negatively a person views a specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the circular fashion, a positive attitude towards sustainability and ethical fashion is likely to increase the intention of customers to purchase circular fashion products. Subjective norms involves perceived social pressures that either encourage or discourage certain behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). For Gen Z, subjective norms are significantly influenced by peer groups, family, and social media, which can encourage or discourage participation in circular fashion consumption (Kim et al., 2021). perceived behavioral control reflects an individual's sense of their own ability to perform a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In circular fashion, this sense of control is often affected by factors like cost, product accessibility, and ease of acquisition. When Gen Z consumers feel empowered to purchase Sustainable Cultural Fashion through available resources, their intention to engage in circular fashion is likely to rise (Aramendia-Muneta et al., 2022).

Previous studies have successfully applied TPB in the context of Sustainable Cultural Fashion consumption. For instance, Colucci and Vecchi (2021) found that TPB effectively predicted the customer intentions of environmentally conscious consumers. Similarly, D'Adamo and Lupi (2021) demonstrated that TPB could be used to understand the ethical decision-making process in fashion, particularly about organic and fair-trade clothing. In Gen Z, TPB provides a valuable framework for understanding how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control over the customers of circular fashion products affect their behavioral intentions and purchase decisions.

Moreover, TPB's ability to integrate social influence (via subjective norms) and individual control (via perceived behavioral control) makes it especially relevant for studying Gen Z's fashion choices, as their social networks and online communities strongly influence them. Dragomir and Dumitru (2022) argue that for Gen Z, perceived behavioral control is significant, as access to affordable and appealing Sustainable Cultural Fashion products can enhance their likelihood of engaging circularly. Applying TPB in circular fashion consumption can provide insights into the psychological and social factors that drive Gen Z's purchasing behaviors. By understanding these influences, brands and policymakers can develop strategies to encourage greater participation in a circular fashion and help overcome barriers to sustainable consumption.

Customer Decision-Making Model

While TPB provides a strong foundation for understanding behavioral intentions, it must fully explain how intention leads to actual purchasing behavior and Post-Purchase Evaluation. To address this gap, the researchers incorporate a Customer decision-making Model, which details how intentions lead to decisions and how Post-Purchase Evaluations shape future behaviors. Customer decision-making Models have long been central to understanding consumer behavior, offering insights into how individuals move from recognizing a need to making a customer and ultimately evaluating their experience post-customer (Ki et al., 2021).

The intention to buy circular fashion products should ideally lead to actual customer behavior (Chen et al., 2021). However, the decision-making process involves further considerations such as product attributes (e.g., quality, style, and functionality) and the consumer's experience with the customer. Gen Z is highly discerning when aligning their values with their purchasing decisions. If circular fashion products meet their ethical production, style, and affordability expectations, they are likelier to follow customer intention (Kumar and Malhotra, 2024).

After purchasing circular fashion items, Gen Z consumers are likely to engage in Post-Purchase Evaluation, wherein they assess their satisfaction with the product and the brand's commitment to sustainability. Suppose the product meets or exceeds its quality, durability, and ethical sourcing expectations. In that case, they will likely

develop positive brand loyalty and continue purchasing from the brand. On the other hand, if the product fails to meet expectations (e.g., it wears out quickly or the brand's sustainability claims are overstated), this could lead to dissatisfaction and reluctance among customers from the brand again.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Attitude and Customer Intention in Sustainable Cultural Fashion

Wagner and Heinzel (2020) indicates that positive attitudes toward environmentally friendly practices directly influence customer intentions among young consumers. They argue that fashion consumers who perceive sustainability as necessary are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward circular fashion, affecting their purchase decisions. Shirvanimoghaddam et al. (2020) explore how Generation Z, more than any other age group, demonstrates strong attitudes toward environmental issues. The researchers found that Gen Z consumers are highly influenced by their values when considering sustainable customers, such as circular fashion. A positive attitude toward eco-friendly clothing materials and recycling enhances customer willingness in the fashion industry. Vehmas et al. (2018) found that consumer attitudes towards the circular economy, including practices like reuse and recycling in the fashion industry, are identified as critical determinants of intention to customers. The study highlights how individuals with strong pro-environmental attitudes are naturally inclined to consider circular fashion more seriously.

H1: Attitude positively influences Gen Z's intention to purchase circular fashion products.

Subjective Norms and Customer Intention

Research by Huynh (2021) shows that subjective norms, particularly those from peers, family, and influencers, significantly impact young consumers' decision-making in purchasing ethical or Sustainable Cultural Fashion. Generation Z is especially prone to making customers that align with societal expectations around sustainability, a critical factor that increases the likelihood of purchasing circular fashion. Papamichael et al. (2024) explores how peer influence affects Sustainable Cultural Fashion choices, particularly among younger generations. They found that social pressure from environmentally conscious friends or social media influencers often leads to increased engagement with sustainable and circular fashion, supporting the idea that subjective norms shape consumer behavior. Chen et al. (2021) shows that social media influencers play a significant role in forming subjective norms that drive consumer intention. Their study showed that influencers who advocate for circular fashion or sustainable consumption can heavily change Gen Z's purchasing decisions, as this generation is highly responsive to online personalities and peer-driven norms.

H2: Subjective norms positively influence Gen Z's intention to customer circular fashion products.

Perceived Behavioral Control and Customer Intention

Vehmas et al. (2018) examined how perceived behavioral control influences the likelihood of sustainable consumption. They found that consumers can control over their ability to make sustainable choices (e.g., availability and affordability of circular fashion) are likelier to act on those intentions. Toşa et al. (2024) highlight how perceived behavioral control, specifically related to affordability and access, significantly affects consumer intentions sustainably. Gen Z consumers are more inclined to customer circular fashion when they feel products are accessible in terms of price and availability in the market. The easier it is to find and afford Sustainable Cultural Fashion, the higher the likelihood of customers. Dainelli et al. (2024) explore the barriers to Sustainable Cultural Fashion consumption, such as limited access or perceived high costs. The study found that consumers are more likely to engage with sustainable practices when they can overcome these barriers. For Generation Z, removing these perceived obstacles (through pricing, education, or convenience) significantly enhances their willingness to purchase circular fashion products.

H3: Perceived behavioral control positively influences Gen Z's intention to customer circular fashion products.

Customer Intention and Purchase Decision

Toşa et al. (2024) explore the gap for buying behavior in ethical consumption. Their study highlights that while many consumers express strong intentions to buy sustainably, customer behavior may need to catch up due to various barriers, such as price or convenience. Nevertheless, those with robust and consistent customer intentions, particularly among Gen Z, are more likely to follow through with purchasing circular fashion when

conditions are favorable. Dragomir and Dumitru (2022) found that the customer intention and actual behavior was examined through the lens of the theory of planned behavior. It supports that consumers are more likely to transition from intention to customer when they have a high intention, mainly based on ethical considerations. This is particularly true for Generation Z, whose ethical values strongly influence their shopping habits. Arrigo and Flavio (2024) examine how intention strengthens actual behavior in a circular fashion. The study showed that consumers who intend to buy circular fashion are more likely to do so when their concerns about sustainability align with the product offerings available. This is especially true for Gen Z, who will likely convert their intention into action when brands effectively communicate their sustainability practices.

H4: Gen Z's intention to customer circular fashion products positively influences their purchase decision.

Customer Intention and Post-Purchase Evaluation

Hellström and Olsson (2024) emphasizes that post-customer satisfaction with Sustainable Cultural Fashion products is critical to fostering customer loyalty. Their study found that when consumers are satisfied with the durability and environmental benefits of their customers, they are more likely to engage in repeat customers and recommend products to their peers, especially relevant for Generation Z. Sehnem et al. (2024) explore the role of cognitive dissonance in post-customer behavior. They argue that when Gen Z consumers feel their customer aligns with their values, they are more satisfaction and spread positive word-of-mouth. Abbate et al. (2024) also mentioned that Post-Purchase Evaluation in influencing future purchasing behavior, mainly through social media and peer recommendations. Positive post-customer experiences can lead to customers advocating for a brand online, which is highly influential for Generation Z. If circular fashion products meet or exceed expectations, Gen Z consumers are likely to share their positive experiences, driving future sales through social proof.

H5: Gen Z's intention positively influences their Post-Purchase Evaluation of circular fashion products.

This study's conceptual framework (Figure 1) is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), a foundation for understanding the factors that shape Generation Z's intentions to engage circularly. Additionally, the framework incorporates a Customer decision-making Model to explain how these intentions lead to actual purchasing behavior and Post-Purchase Evaluations.

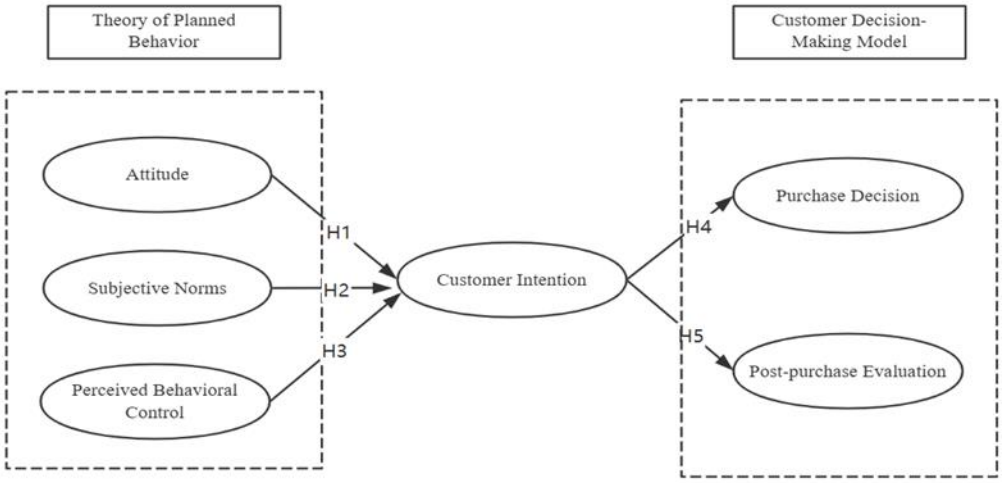

Fig.1: The proposed conceptual framework

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative research design to test critical psychological factors—attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control—and Gen Z's intentions and actual behaviors regarding circular fashion. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and a Customer Decision-Making Model serve as conceptual frameworks. The TPB framework is particularly suited for predicting and understanding behaviors based on individual psychological factors. At the same time, the Customer Decision-Making Model provides insight into how intentions strengthen actions and post-purchase evaluations. A structured questionnaire will be developed to target Gen Z consumers. This questionnaire will measure each variable identified in the hypotheses section, focusing on factors influencing circular fashion intentions, purchase decisions, and post-purchase evaluations.

The target population comprises Generation Z consumers aged 18 to 26 who are familiar with circular fashion through personal experiences, social media, or exposure to brands and influencers advocating sustainability. This age group is chosen because of its significant influence on sustainable consumption trends,

particularly in fashion. The study aims to collect data from at least 300 Gen Z respondents across various demographics, including gender, age, income levels, and education in China. This diverse sample will help generalize the findings across the broader Gen Z population. Random sampling will capture diversity in attitudes and behaviors, considering socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural influences. Online surveys will be the primary mode of data collection, distributed across social media platforms frequented by Gen Z, such as Weibo, TikTok, and WeChat.

During the data collection, the researchers collected 434 valid data from online questionnaires. Data analysis is conducted using statistical techniques to test the proposed hypotheses. Descriptive statistics summarizes demographic characteristics, while Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) explores the relationships between attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and intentions.

RESULTS

Measurement model

Table 1: Demographic information (N=434)

Items	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	220	50.7%
	Female	214	49.3%
Age	18-20	51	11.8%
	21-22	157	36.2%
	23-24	129	29.7%
	24-26	97	22.4%
Education level	High school or below	75	17.3%
	Undergraduate	190	43.8%
	Graduate	155	35.7%
	Postgraduate or above	14	3.2%
Income level	4,000 or below	38	8.8%
	4,001 to 6,000	37	8.5%
	6,001 to 8,000	262	60.4%
	8,001 to 10,000	76	17.5%
	Above 10,001	21	4.8%

The sample comprises 220 male respondents (50.7%) and 214 female respondents (49.3%). The age distribution skews towards the younger segment of Generation Z, with the majority (66%) of respondents aged between 21 and 24 years. The majority is undergraduate (43.8%) and graduate (35.7%) education, Respondents have an income level between 6,001 and 8,000, indicating a moderate income within this Gen Z.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

In order to test the factor analysis, this study used KMO Test and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were performed. These tests help determine which is crucial in understanding the underlying dimensions within the observed variables related to Gen Z's behavioral intentions toward circular fashion.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin		0.913
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx.Chi-Square	5312.245
	Df	276
	Sig.	0.000

The KMO and Bartlett's test results confirm that the dataset is appropriate for factor analysis. With a high KMO value of 0.913 and a significant result for Bartlett's test ($p = 0.000$), it is clear that the variables are interrelated and that the sample size is adequate. This validation allows us to proceed with factor extraction to uncover the key dimensions influencing Gen Z's intentions and behaviors related to circular fashion. This factor structure will shed light on the latent constructs in the Theory of Planned Behavior, focusing specifically on attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intentions.

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix (N=434)

Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
ATT1	0.650					
ATT2	0.834					
ATT3	0.786					
ATT4	0.741					
SN1		0.735				
SN2		0.813				
SN3		0.871				
SN4		0.713				
PBC1			0.666			
PBC2			0.810			
PBC3			0.793			
PBC4			0.704			
CI1				0.806		
CI2				0.778		
CI3				0.748		
CI4				0.624		
PD1					0.748	
PD2					0.771	
PD3					0.839	
PD4					0.797	
PPE1						0.700
PPE2						0.689
PPE3						0.865
PPE4						0.807

Note: Extraction Method: Exploratory Factor Analysis

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is to test the factor structure related to Gen Z's behavioral intentions toward circular fashion consumption. The Rotated Component Matrix shown in Table 3 represents the factor loadings after rotation, which helps clarify the relationship between observed variables and latent factors. A factor loading threshold of 0.6 is generally used to interpret the component structure, ensuring that each item strongly correlates with only one factor. The study shows that all are well-supported by the observed item loadings, which are more than 0.6. Each item loads strongly on its respective factor. It indicates that the constructs used in this study effectively capture the psychological and behavioral elements relevant to circular fashion consumption among Generation Z.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is to test convergent validity, reliability, and internal consistency of the constructs related to Generation Z's intentions toward circular fashion consumption. Table 4 details each construct's factor loadings, means, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Cronbach's Alpha values.

Table 4: Convergent validity and reliability analysis (N=434)

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading	Mean	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
Attitude (ATT)	ATT1	0.715	3.993	0.586	0.848
	ATT2	0.841	4.062		
	ATT3	0.777	4.101		
	ATT4	0.718	4.000		
Subjective Norms (SN)	SN1	0.768	3.887	0.623	0.865
	SN2	0.791	3.836		
	SN3	0.846	3.857		
	SN4	0.739	3.813		
Perceived Behavior control (PBC)	PBC1	0.728	4.069	0.565	0.836
	PBC2	0.778	4.023		

	PBC3	0.778	4.001		
	PBC4	0.716	4.023		
Customer Intention (CI)	CI1	0.798	4.016	0.563	0.836
	CI2	0.782	4.005		
	CI3	0.727	4.028		
	CI4	0.688	4.007		
Purchase Decision (PD)	PD1	0.788	3.779	0.636	0.874
	PD2	0.766	3.763		
	PD3	0.834	3.820		
	PD4	0.800	3.680		
Post-purchase Evaluation (PPE)	PPE1	0.695	3.935	0.594	0.852
	PPE2	0.750	3.945		
	PPE3	0.823	3.901		
	PPE4	0.801	3.975		

The CFA results confirm that each construct exhibits convergent solid validity and reliability. All constructs meet the requirements for factor loadings (⩾0.6), AVE (⩾0.5), and Cronbach's Alpha (⩾0.7). These findings indicate that the items are good for measuring their respective latent constructs, supporting the theoretical model of Gen Z's behavioral intentions toward circular fashion. These constructs' established reliability and validity enable us to test the hypotheses.

Table 5: Discriminant validity analysis

Constructs	ATT	SN	PBC	CI	PD	PPE
ATT	0.766					
SN	0.367	0.789				
PBC	0.413	0.402	0.752			
CI	0.494	0.409	0.440	0.750		
PD	0.441	0.419	0.368	0.454	0.797	
PPE	0.336	0.414	0.386	0.464	0.383	0.771

Note: The square root of AVE for each latent construct is given in diagonals.

The results confirm that all constructs meet the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Ab Hamid et al., 2017), as the square root of AVE for each construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs. This suggests that each construct is distinct and measures a unique aspect of Gen Z's attitudes and behaviors toward circular fashion. The discriminant validity established here strengthens the reliability of the measurement model, indicating that each construct captures its intended concept without significant overlap with others. The confirmed discriminant validity supports the use of these constructs in structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the hypothesized relationships, ensuring that the constructs operate independently and contribute uniquely to the model's explanatory power.

To assess the fit of the structural model for Gen Z's behavioral intentions toward circular fashion, various Goodness-of-Fit (GOF) indices were calculated. Table 6 presents the model fit indices, their threshold values, the observed values for this model, and the remarks on its overall fit. These indices collectively confirm whether the model structure adequately represents the observed data.

Table 6: 'Goodness-of-fit' statistics for the structural model

Model Fit Indicators	**Required Values**	**Model Result**	**Remarks**
'CMIN/DF'	1-3	1.43	Acceptable
'RMSEA'	<0.08	0.031	Good
'SRMR'	<0.08	0.031	Good
'GFI'	>0.90	0.984	Good
'CFI'	>0.90	0.980	Excellent
'IFI'	>0.90	0.980	Excellent
'TLI'	>0.90	0.977	Excellent

The goodness-of-fit indices confirm that the structural model fits well. All indices meet or exceed the recommended thresholds, demonstrating that the model is well-suited for representing the relationships among

the constructs. This robust model fit provides confidence in proceeding with hypothesis testing and analyzing the structural paths within the model.

Structural Equation Modeling

Table 7: Hypotheses test result

Hypotheses	Estimate	P	Supported (Yes/No)
H1	0.494	<.001	Yes
H2	0.409	<.001	Yes
H3	0.440	<.001	Yes
H4	0.454	<.001	Yes
H5	0.464	<.001	Yes

All five hypotheses were strongly supported with statistically significant results ($p < 0.001$). The estimates range from 0.321 to 0.678, indicating moderate to strong relationships between the variables of interest.

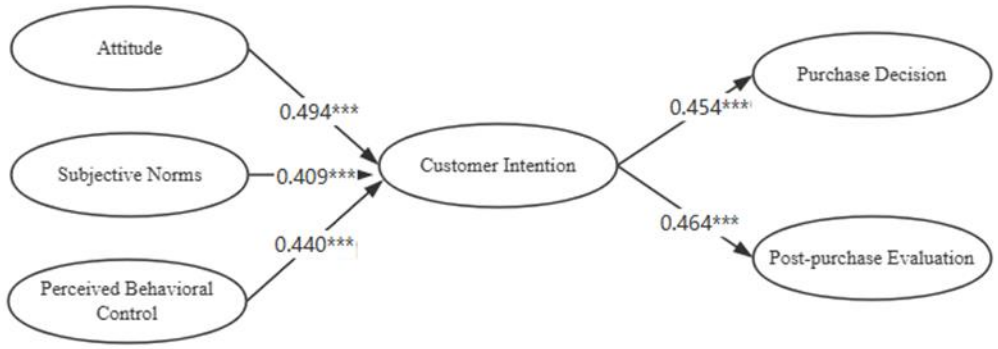

Fig.2: Modeling Results
Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

The structural model's results confirm that all hypothesized relationships are significant, underscoring the importance of the TPB constructs (Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control) in predicting Customer Intention. Furthermore, integrating the Customer Decision-Making Model highlights how these intentions manifest in Purchase Decisions and Post-Purchase Evaluations. These findings provide valuable insights into the factors driving Gen Z's engagement with circular fashion. They suggest that marketing strategies targeting this demographic should emphasize social influence, accessibility, and the positive impact of circular fashion to strengthen their sustainable consumption intentions and behaviors.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings find that the significant influence of psychological constructs—attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control—on Generation Z's intentions to engage in circular fashion consumption. By applying the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and integrating the Customer Decision-Making Model, this research sheds light on how these intentions strengthen purchase decisions and post-purchase evaluations, offering practical insights for the fashion industry to understand better and engage this key demographic. The results demonstrate a robust positive relationship between attitudes and customer intention, indicating that Generation Z's favorable perceptions of circular fashion significantly drive their intention to adopt Sustainable Cultural Fashion practices. This finding aligns with previous research, emphasizing that positive attitudes toward sustainability are crucial for fostering eco-friendly behavior among young consumers (Hellström and Olsson, 2024). This suggests that brands aiming to appeal to Gen Z should continue emphasizing circular fashion's environmental and ethical benefits. Additionally, campaigns that highlight the alignment of circular fashion with Gen Z's values, such as climate action and social justice, may further reinforce their positive attitudes and enhance purchase intentions.

Subjective norms also emerged as a significant predictor of customer intention, underscoring the role of social influence in shaping Gen Z's behavior. This result supports the notion that peers, family, and social media influencers significantly impact Gen Z's purchasing decisions, a finding consistent with prior studies (Dragomir and Dumitru, 2022). The power of subjective norms in influencing circular fashion adoption highlights the

potential for leveraging influencer marketing and peer-based campaigns by partnering with influencers who advocate for sustainable practices and by encouraging peer discussions on platforms like Weibo and TikTok, brands can effectively tap into the social dynamics that shape Gen Z's consumption behaviors. Perceived behavioral control strongly influenced customer intention, reflecting Gen Z's need for accessible, affordable, and convenient circular fashion options. This result reinforces previous findings that perceived ease of access and affordability are essential for fostering sustainable consumption (Wagner and Heinzel, 2020). Many Gen Z consumers may face financial constraints, limiting their ability to engage in circular fashion consistently. Addressing these barriers by offering affordable, easy-to-access options can increase the perceived feasibility of sustainable choices. Furthermore, enhancing accessibility through user-friendly online platforms and affordable product ranges can empower Gen Z to make environmentally conscious choices.

The study confirms a significant path from customer intention to purchase decision, highlighting the intention-behavior link within the TPB framework. This result supports the idea that solid behavioral intentions lead to actual purchases when favorable conditions exist, as Shrivastava et al. (2021) suggested. For Gen Z, who prioritize ethical values, having a firm intention to buy Sustainable Cultural Fashion often strengthens actual purchases, mainly when brands effectively communicate their sustainability practices. The implication for brands is clear: by maintaining transparency about circular practices and providing clear value propositions that align with Gen Z's ethical standards, they can facilitate the transition from intention to action. The positive relationship between customer intention and post-purchase evaluation emphasizes the role of post-purchase satisfaction in building long-term consumer loyalty. When Gen Z consumers experience satisfaction with their purchases, such as through perceived durability, quality, and ethical sourcing, they are more likely to develop a positive evaluation of the brand. This result aligns with research by Peleg Mizrachi and Tal (2022), which suggests that post-purchase satisfaction fosters brand loyalty and encourages repeat purchases. Consequently, brands should focus on delivering high-quality products that meet sustainability claims. Positive post-purchase experiences will solidify Gen Z's loyalty and encourage word-of-mouth advocacy within this socially connected cohort.

Recommendations and Further Study

The growing environmental impact of the fashion industry, particularly due to fast fashion practices, has intensified the need for sustainable consumption models. This study has explored the key factors influencing Generation Z's engagement in circular fashion, identifying significant roles for attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Integrating insights from the circular economy, which aims to reduce waste by maximizing the life cycle of products, this research proposes several recommendations for fashion brands and stakeholders to promote circular fashion among Gen Z. These recommendations include enhancing accessibility, leveraging social influence, designing for durability, implementing recycling programs, educating consumers, and supporting policy-driven change.

Firstly, this study contributes to the existing literature by applying TPB to circular fashion consumption among Generation Z and integrating it with the Customer Decision-Making Model. The findings affirm TPB's applicability in understanding sustainable consumption, particularly the strong influence of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control on intention. This dual framework provides a comprehensive understanding of the psychological and behavioral factors driving circular fashion adoption, bridging the intention-behavior gap in Sustainable Cultural Fashion consumption.

Secondly, this study offers actionable insights into designing targeted interventions that appeal to Gen Z's values and motivations. Fashion brands can utilize this information to develop strategies that leverage social influence, highlight the ethical benefits of circular fashion, and address perceived barriers, such as cost and accessibility. By aligning marketing messages with Gen Z's sustainability values and addressing their practical challenges, brands can foster a stronger connection with this consumer segment and drive sustainable consumption patterns.

Thirdly, while this study provides important insights into Generation Z's behavioral intentions and engagement with circular fashion, certain limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample predominantly represents specific demographic segments, particularly within a single cultural and geographic context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should broaden the sample to include diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of circular fashion adoption across different populations.

Lastly, this study focuses on the psychological factors influencing circular fashion adoption. Future studies could examine other influential factors, such as economic incentives, brand-specific sustainability practices, or technological advancements in Sustainable Cultural Fashion. By integrating these additional variables, future

research could provide a more nuanced view of the complex drivers and barriers affecting sustainable consumption among Generation Z.

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