

The Influence of Sustainable Clothing on Generation Z: A Comparative Study of Environmental Awareness and Consumer Behavior

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CHAPTER1 ABSTRACT

In recent times, global advocacy for social and environmental responsibility has intensified, prompting businesses to re-evaluate their operational practices, particularly with regard to environmental sustainability. This growing pressure has created a significant opportunity for companies to develop greener products and commit to enhanced transparency in their supply chains and operations. Interestingly, the COVID-19 pandemic acted as a major turning point, increasing public awareness and involvement in sustainable consumption. As highlighted by Granskog et al. (2020), over half of survey participants claimed to have altered their lifestyles to minimize ecological harm, and more than 60% reported actively engaging in recycling and opting for environmentally conscious products.

This global health crisis also presented the fashion industry with a unique chance to shift towards more sustainable models. Granskog et al. (2020) advocate for solutions such as minimizing seasonal trends and adopting circular economy principles, which emphasize reuse, recycling, and waste reduction. These strategies not only address environmental concerns but also help establish a more responsible industry framework. Despite this positive momentum, many consumers continue to face challenges, skepticism, or inertia when it comes to embracing sustainable fashion on a broader scale.

Terms like "sustainable fashion," "ethical fashion," "slow fashion," and "eco-fashion" are frequently used interchangeably, though they encompass a range of practices (Fletcher, 2014). These include the use of eco-conscious materials, ethical labor practices, and waste reduction during production. While environmental values do influence some consumers to purchase sustainable clothing, others may continue buying fast fashion regardless of their stated concerns, suggesting a gap between personal values and actual behavior (Shen et al., 2013). In fact, consumer decisions are shaped by a complex mix of factors including awareness of sustainability issues, level of concern, interest in fashion, sensitivity to price, and perceptions of quality (Park et al., 2017). Among these, researchers have consistently found that pricing remains one of the most influential determinants in the decision-making process.

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, there has been a growing wave of global activism urging corporations to become more transparent and responsible, especially concerning environmental practices. This shift has created momentum for businesses to develop greener products and implement clear, honest communication about their sustainability efforts. Interestingly, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic significantly boosted public consciousness around environmental sustainability. A study by Granskog et al. (2020) revealed that over half of the respondents made deliberate changes to their daily habits to lessen their ecological impact, with more than 60% actively engaging in recycling and choosing products that were marketed as eco-friendly.

The pandemic also offered a turning point for the fashion sector, opening up possibilities to transition towards more sustainable models. According to Granskog et al. (2020), strategies such as reducing reliance on seasonal fashion cycles and embracing circular economic practices could pave the way for long-term transformation. These approaches could

drastically curb waste generation and promote more responsible consumption. However, despite this increased awareness and gradual behavioral shifts, many consumers still hesitate to fully embrace sustainable shopping habits. Cost, availability, and skepticism around product claims often act as obstacles to eco-conscious choices.

Terminologies such as "sustainable fashion," "ethical fashion," "slow fashion," and "eco-fashion" are often used interchangeably, though they encompass a wide spectrum of practices (Fletcher, 2014). Sustainable fashion typically involves using environmentally friendly materials, ensuring fair labor standards, and minimizing waste throughout the production process. Although many consumers express concern about environmental degradation and aspire to support ethical fashion, their actual shopping behavior may not always align with those values (Shen et al., 2013). The decision to purchase sustainably is rarely influenced by just one factor—it is shaped by a blend of awareness, concern, personal style preferences, cost sensitivity, and perceived quality (Park et al., 2017). Notably, several studies have pointed out that price often outweighs other considerations, acting as the most decisive element.

The concept of sustainable clothing itself is multifaceted, encompassing environmental, social, ethical, and economic dimensions (Kang et al., 2013; Lundblad & Davies, 2016; Shen et al., 2013). Kumar et al. (2017) emphasized the necessity for all stakeholders in the fashion value chain—from researchers to retailers—to adopt a common language when discussing sustainability. Narrow research that focuses only on specific items, such as organic cotton, may restrict the broader understanding of what sustainable clothing means to consumers (Kang et al., 2013). Although Kang et al. described sustainable apparel as garments produced and used without depleting resources, this definition primarily emphasizes environmental concerns and falls short of incorporating social and ethical considerations, which are increasingly important to modern consumers. Shen et al. (2013) found that even within academic settings, where fashion students were asked to interpret sustainability in apparel, perspectives remained fragmented and were limited by sample diversity and size.

Reda and Kapoor (2021) highlighted that Gen Z—those born between 1997 and 2012—are significantly more inclined to make environmentally and ethically responsible purchases than previous generations. This cohort demonstrates heightened awareness of the environmental and social fallout of fast fashion, including overconsumption of resources, exploitative labor practices, and waste accumulation. As a result, many within this group are actively searching for alternatives that reflect their commitment to sustainability and align with their ethical beliefs.

What truly differentiates Generation Z is their fluency with digital technologies and social media, which they skillfully use to promote sustainability, challenge unethical practices, and advocate for greater accountability from brands. Online influencers and celebrities play a crucial role in shaping Gen Z's attitudes, as many in this generation turn to social platforms to find inspiration, information, and validation for their eco-conscious lifestyle choices.

Despite their growing commitment to sustainability, Gen Z still faces notable challenges in adopting these practices at scale. The cost and limited availability of sustainable fashion options often deter broader adoption. Eco-friendly clothing is frequently perceived as expensive or inaccessible, creating a disconnect between ideals and action.

Nonetheless, this generation's interest in ethical fashion offers a valuable opportunity for brands willing to evolve. Companies that emphasize transparency, provide affordable yet stylish sustainable options, and communicate openly about their practices are more likely to win Gen Z's loyalty and drive meaningful change within the industry.

1.1 Research Purpose

This study aims to examine how sustainable fashion influences Generation Z's purchasing decisions, with a specific focus on their environmental awareness and the behavioral patterns that emerge as a result. It also seeks to identify the primary factors that shape their attitudes and preferences when choosing between sustainable and conventional clothing.

1.2 Research Objectives

- To evaluate the level of awareness among Generation Z regarding sustainable fashion, and to understand their interpretations and personal definitions of what constitutes sustainable clothing.
- To investigate how the degree of concern for social, ethical, and environmental consequences within the fashion industry impacts their willingness to choose sustainable garments over traditional ones, while also analyzing the effect of pricing as a potential barrier.
- To explore the influence of social media, influencers, and celebrity endorsements in shaping Gen Z's attitudes towards sustainability in fashion, and how these factors contribute to their purchasing priorities.

- To determine if individuals who express strong concern about ethical and environmental issues are also more likely to engage in responsible behaviors, such as recycling or repurposing their unwanted clothing.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Understanding Sustainable Fashion

The concept of sustainable fashion emerged in the 1960s when public awareness of the negative environmental consequences of the clothing industry began to grow (Jung & Jin, 2014). Over time, the idea has developed into a multidimensional approach, with three primary pillars: environmental integrity, social responsibility, and ethical production. Environmental sustainability relates to reducing waste, using renewable resources, and lowering emissions. Social sustainability focuses on ensuring fair labor conditions, adequate wages, safe work environments, and protection of workers' rights (Joergens, 2006). Ethical fashion, on the other hand, stresses transparency, local production support, and the development of long-term relationships throughout the supply chain (Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2014).

Sustainability, in this context, is about integrating ethical values into business practices while minimizing ecological harm (Kihl & Vähänen, 2018). This framework is essential in evaluating marketing strategies used by brands promoting sustainable fashion. However, several challenges hinder the widespread adoption of sustainability in the fashion industry. For instance, maintaining complete transparency throughout global supply chains is difficult, as cost-cutting pressures may drive some manufacturers to compromise ethical standards (Alevizou, Henninger, & Oates, 2016). Additionally, consumer behavior does not always align with their environmental values. A lack of understanding can create a disconnect between what consumers believe in and how they shop.

A common issue is the misuse of environmental terms in marketing—often referred to as “greenwashing”—which can lead consumers to lose trust in a brand’s authenticity. This skepticism, combined with the higher price point of sustainable fashion compared to fast fashion alternatives, further complicates matters (Henninger, Alevizou, & Oates, 2016). Although many shoppers support the idea of sustainability, affordability remains a major barrier. Persuading consumers to invest in higher-cost eco-friendly products remains an ongoing challenge. Interestingly, Henninger and colleagues (2016) found that people often overestimate the cost of sustainable fashion, suggesting that clearer messaging could help reshape consumer perception and position sustainable fashion as both aspirational and accessible.

2.2 Sustainable Fashion Consumption

While many consumers express interest in environmentally responsible products, their purchasing decisions continue to be heavily influenced by price and quality. A sustainable label alone is often insufficient to drive sales if the product doesn’t meet consumer expectations regarding durability, design, or aesthetic appeal (Gardetti & Girón, 2013). Even eco-conscious buyers may be discouraged by unattractive styles or poor fabric choices.

Cost remains a significant deterrent, especially among younger demographics such as college students. Many in this group want to support sustainable practices but must balance their values against limited budgets. As Hill and Lee (2012) note, these consumers are price-sensitive and will only proceed with a purchase if it fits within their financial means. Therefore, brands targeting sustainable fashion enthusiasts need to find a balance between ethical production and affordability to ensure market acceptance.

2.3 Consumer Behavior and Fashion Choices

The fashion industry is known for its fast-paced, ever-changing nature, and consumer behavior within this realm is equally complex. Shopping habits are shaped by numerous factors, including personal values, social identity, financial constraints, and perceived brand image. Sustainable fashion itself is a subjective idea—what it means can differ widely from person to person (Ard, 1995). Understanding this diversity is critical in analyzing consumer motivations.

According to Evans, Jamal, and Foxall (2009), consumer behavior encompasses all activities related to acquiring, using, and disposing of products, along with the cognitive and emotional processes that drive these decisions. In the context of sustainable clothing, these processes are influenced by values like ethical responsibility and environmental concern but are also filtered through practical considerations such as price, style, and convenience. The following section focuses specifically on Generation Z, a group whose behavior and preferences are central to this study.

2.4 Generation Z: The New Wave of Conscious Consumers

Generation Z, generally defined as individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, represents a unique and influential consumer group (“Generation Z-Affiliate Marketing Product Review Site,” 2021). Compared to earlier generations, Gen Z is more digitally connected, socially conscious, and aware of the broader implications of their purchasing choices. While they are often praised for their progressive values, they also face high levels of stress and

anxiety, making their consumption habits even more layered.

Social media plays a significant role in shaping Gen Z's buying behavior. Their perception of brands is closely tied to social identity and online presence (Thilina, 2021). They rely heavily on digital platforms and influencers—such as bloggers, celebrities, and key opinion leaders (KOLs)—to guide their fashion choices. These figures not only promote trends but also help Gen Z align their purchases with personal values like sustainability and authenticity.

Interestingly, Gen Z may be more inclined to buy second-hand or vintage clothing than new eco-friendly items. Joshi and Rahman (2015) observed that this generation often prioritizes affordability and trendiness, which second-hand fashion can provide. Buying pre-owned luxury or branded items offers them social cachet while aligning with values like reducing waste. As Machado et al. (2019) noted, while affordability and sustainability are strong motivators, the appeal of used clothing is also tempered by concerns over hygiene, wear-and-tear, and fashion relevance.

Ultimately, Gen Z's fashion consumption reflects a blend of ethics, identity, and practicality. Their purchasing power may still be limited, but their influence is substantial. Brands that understand and authentically engage with their values—while offering affordable, well-designed, and sustainable options—stand the best chance of earning their loyalty.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Using a characterization-focused research approach, this study investigates how Gen Z's ecological awareness and purchasing habits are influenced by eco-friendly apparel. The objective is to outline the degree of environmental consciousness among Generation Z and This study uses a survey approach and a quantitative research design to examine how sustainable apparel affects Generation Z's shopping behavior and environmental awareness. To choose participants, the study design combines convenience sampling and snowball sampling methods.

3.1 Research Questions

1. Are people aware of the concept of sustainable fashion and how do they define sustainable clothing?
2. How does Generation Z's perception of sustainable fashion relate to their belief in the power of social media, influencers, or celebrities, and how does this impact their inclination to purchase sustainable clothing rather than conventional fashion items?
3. How much does consumers' inclination to choose sustainable clothing over traditional fashion items depend on their concerns about the fashion industry's effects on ethics, the environment, and society, as well as the impact of price?
4. Do people who express concern about the ethical, societal, and ecological implications of the apparel industry have a higher propensity to choose sustainable disposal methods for their used clothing?

Research Objectives

1. To determine how well-informed people are about the idea of Green Fashion and to investigate how they define and see eco-friendly apparel.
2. To evaluate the relationship between Generation Z's preference for eco-friendly clothing over traditional options and their views of social media, influencers, or celebrities as advocates for sustainable fashion.
3. To determine the extent to which consumers' concerns about the ethical, social, and environmental effects of the apparel industry affect their propensity to buy ecologically friendly clothing rather than traditional clothing, while also acknowledging the crucial role that price plays in their decision-making.

3.2 Sampling

We used a combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling to select study participants. The questionnaire was first distributed to people who were easily accessible, including friends, family, and students. These participants were then requested to share the questionnaire with their personal networks, allowing the sample to expand in a snowball fashion through referrals.

3.3 Data Collection

Data was gathered using a standardized questionnaire created especially for this research. An online survey tool called Google Forms was used to produce the questions. In order to get reliable information on consumer behavior, environmental awareness, and the variables driving the adoption of sustainable clothes, the survey included both multiple-choice and Likert-scale items.

Data Analysis

This data has been collected with the help of Google Forms survey will be analyzed descriptively, using frequencies and percentages, to summarize the responses. The results obtained from Google Forms will give a summary of the participants' responses to the survey questions.

Additionally, the data will be imported into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), a statistical software programme. SPSS will be used for more in-depth analysis

Limitations

The use of convenience sampling and snowball sampling introduces potential biases as participants may share common characteristics or perspectives due to their connection to the researcher. Furthermore, the findings might not apply to the larger Gen Z population.

By employing combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling and utilizing Google Forms for data collection, this study aimed to provide insights into the influence of sustainable clothing on Generation Z's environmental awareness and consumer conduct. The research questions & objectives guided the procedure for gathering and analyzing data. This analysis was conduct both through results obtained from Google Forms and the more advanced statistical analysis performed in SPSS, allowing for a comprehensive examination of the dat

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

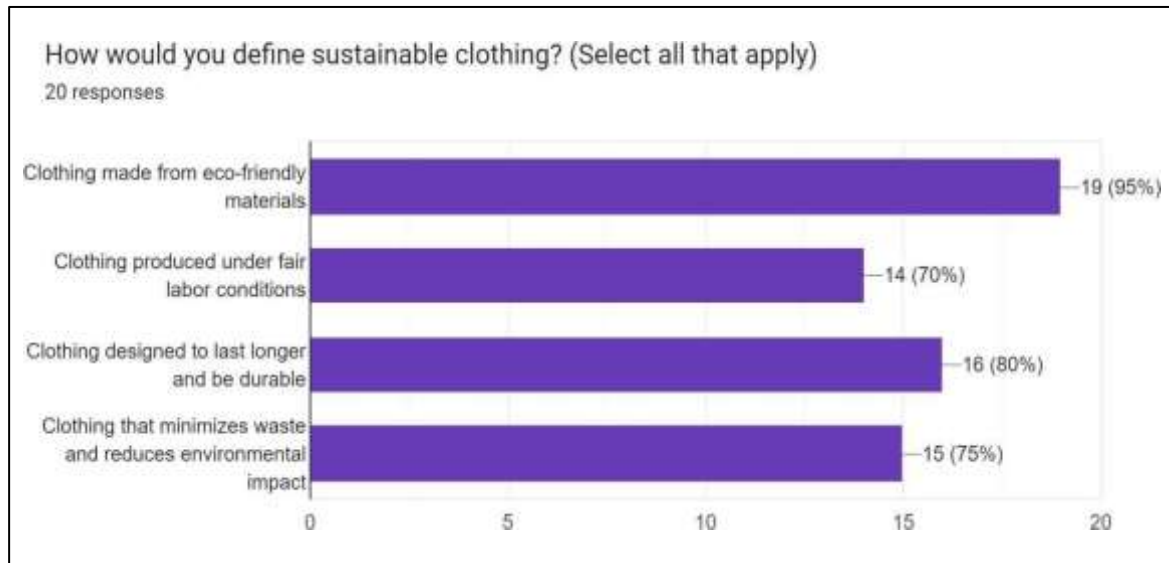
Variable view : SPSS

	Name	Type	Width	Decimals	Label	Values	Missing	Columns	Align	Measure	Role
1	Gender	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, male)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
2	age	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, 18-24)	None	8	Right	Ordinal	Input
3	concept_su	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, yes)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
4	define_susc	Numeric	8	2		None	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
5	concerned_f	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, not at	None	8	Right	Scale	Input
6	influences_	Numeric	8	2		None	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
7	priorizesus	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, very u	None	8	Right	Scale	Input
8	premiumsus	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, Yes, I	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
9	priceinfluen	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, not at	None	8	Right	Scale	Input
10	suscidenti	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, never)	None	8	Right	Scale	Input
11	socialmedpl	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, not in	None	8	Right	Scale	Input
12	sourcesofinf	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, officia	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
13	purchasesu	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, yes)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
14	willingtopay	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, yes)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
15	Donate_cha	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, yes)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
16	self_exchan	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, yes)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
17	give_friends	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, yes)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
18	repurpose_u	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, yes)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input
19	dispose_reg	Numeric	8	2		(1.00, yes)	None	8	Right	Nominal	Input

Data View : SPSS

1. **Are individuals aware of the concept of sustainable fashion and how do they define sustainable clothing?**





Interpretation

The pie chart shows that every responder is aware of the concept of sustainable fashion, suggesting that most Gen Z consumers are now significantly aware of it. This generation actively looks for sustainable alternatives because they are aware of the negative social . Based on the graph, the responses from the respondents offer a thorough explanation of what constitutes sustainable clothing:

1. Eco-friendly clothing: A sizable majority of the respondents (95%), or 95%, agreed with this criterion. It highlights the use of eco-friendly materials, including recycled or organic textiles, which lessens the garment's environmental impact.
2. Fair labor conditions: Around seventy percent of respondents said that this factor was essential to defining sustainable apparel. It emphasizes how crucial it is to guarantee ethical sourcing, equitable pay, and secure working conditions all the way through the apparel production process.
3. Clothing designed to last longer and be durable: Approximately 80% of the respondents recognised the significance of longevity and durability in sustainable clothing. This indicates a preference for well-constructed garments that can withstand time, reducing the need for frequent replacements and minimising waste.
4. Clothing that minimises waste and reduces environmental impact: About 75% of the respondents identified waste reduction and environmental impact mitigation as essential factors in sustainable clothing. This includes practises such as reducing textile waste, implementing recycling programmes, and utilising sustainable production techniques.

Collectively, these responses suggest that sustainable clothing encompasses multiple dimensions. It involves using eco-friendly materials, ensuring fair labour practises, promoting durability, and implementing waste reduction strategies. This holistic approach reflects the growing awareness and concern among consumers about the environmental and social aspects of fashion industry.

2. What is the relationship between the perceived influence of social media platforms, influencers, or celebrities and Generation Z's perception of sustainable fashion, and how does it impact their likelihood to prioritise purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items?

H0: There is no significant correlation between the perceived influence of social media platforms, influencers, or celebrities in shaping Generation Z's perception of sustainable fashion and their likelihood to prioritise purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items.

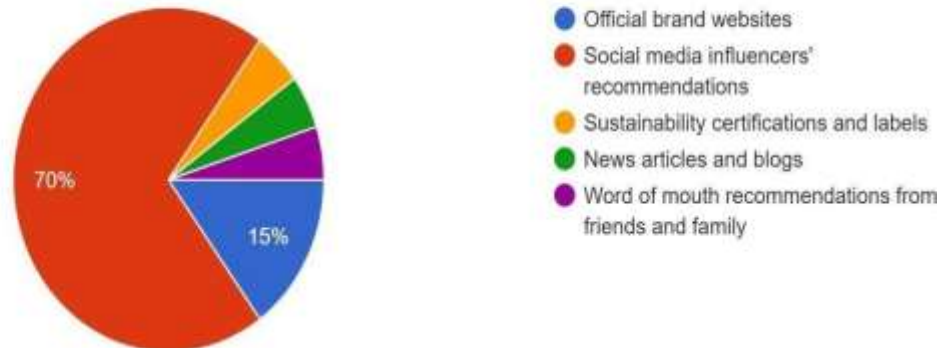
H1: There is a significant positive correlation between the perceived influence of social media platforms, influencers, or

celebrities in shaping Generation Z's perception of sustainable fashion and their likelihood to prioritise purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items.

Correlations			
		prioritizesuscloth_c onventionalfasitems	socialmedplat_influencers_cel_i nfluentia
prioritizesuscloth_conventionalfa sitems	Pearson Correlation	1	.522*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.018
	N	20	20
socialmedplat_influencers_cel_i nfluentia	Pearson Correlation	.522*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	
	N	20	20
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

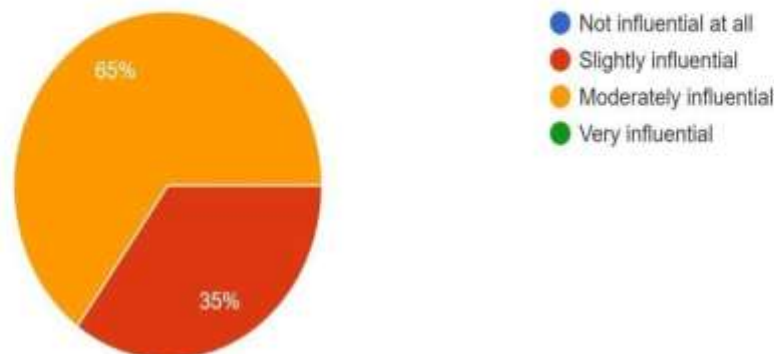
What sources of information do you trust the most when it comes to understanding the sustainability practices of clothing brands?

20 responses



How influential do you think social media platforms, influencers, or celebrities are in shaping Generation Z's perception of sustainable fashion?

20 responses



Interpretation

From the given table, as we can see that the significant value is less than 0.05 we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which is there is a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.522$, $p = 0.018$) between the perceived influence of social media platforms, influencers, or celebrities in shaping Generation Z's perception of sustainable fashion and their likelihood to prioritise purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items.

The pie charts show that gen z customers have confidence in social media influencers the most understand the sustainable practises of clothing brands.

These findings indicate that the influence of social media on Generation Z's purchase of sustainable clothing is significant. Social media platforms have become powerful tools for shaping consumer behavior, and Generation Z, being digital natives, heavily rely on these platforms for information and inspiration. Social media influencers and celebrities play a crucial role in endorsing sustainable fashion brands and promoting sustainable lifestyles, which directly impact Generation

Z's perception and purchasing decisions.

Through visually appealing posts, relatable content, and authentic storytelling, social media influencers create a sense of aspiration and desirability around sustainable clothing. They showcase the latest trends, eco-friendly materials, and ethical practices, influencing Generation Z to adopt sustainable fashion choices. The interactive nature of social media platforms also allows for direct engagement, enabling influencers to answer questions, provide recommendations, and establish trust with their followers.

Moreover, social media platforms offer a space for Generation Z to connect and share their sustainable fashion experiences. They engage in conversations, share personal style inspirations, and contribute to the collective knowledge and awareness of sustainable fashion. By being part of these digital communities, Generation Z is continually exposed to sustainability messages, making it a significant factor in their purchasing decisions.

3. To what extent does consumers' level of concern about the social, environmental, and ethical impacts of the fashion industry, along with the influence of price, influence their likelihood to prioritize purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items?

H0: There is no significant relationship between consumers' level of concern about the social, environmental, and ethical impacts of the fashion industry, the influence of price, and their likelihood to prioritise purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items.

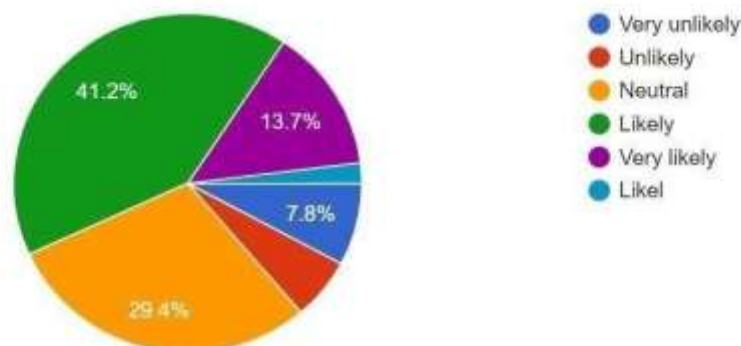
H1: There is a significant relationship between consumers' level of concern about the social, environmental, and ethical impacts of the fashion industry, the influence of price, and their likelihood to prioritise purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items.

Correlations				
		prioritizesuscloth_ conventionalfasite ms	concerned_fashio nindustry	priceinfluence_sus clothing
prioritizesuscloth_ conventionalfasite ms	Pearson Correlation	1	.638**	-.520*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.019
	N	20	20	20
concerned_fashion industry	Pearson Correlation	.638**	1	-.135
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002		.570
	N	20	20	20
priceinfluence_sus clothing	Pearson Correlation	-.520*	-.135	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019	.570	
	N	20	20	20
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				



How likely are you to engage in alternative consumption practices for clothing, such as second-hand shopping or clothing rental?

20 responses



Intepretation

As the significance values are less than 0.05 we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which is that there is a significant relationship between consumers' level of concern about the social, environmental, and ethical impacts of the fashion industry, the influence of price, and their likelihood to prioritise purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items.

From the above table we can see that there is a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.638^{**}$, $p = 0.002$) between prioritizing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items and being concerned about the social, environmental, and ethical impacts of the fashion industry. This indicates that consumers who are more concerned about the fashion industry's impacts are more likely to prioritize sustainable clothing.

And there is a significant negative correlation ($r = -0.520^{*}$, $p = 0.019$) between prioritizing sustainable clothing and the influence of price on purchasing decisions. This suggests that as the influence of price increases, consumers are less likely

to prioritize sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items.

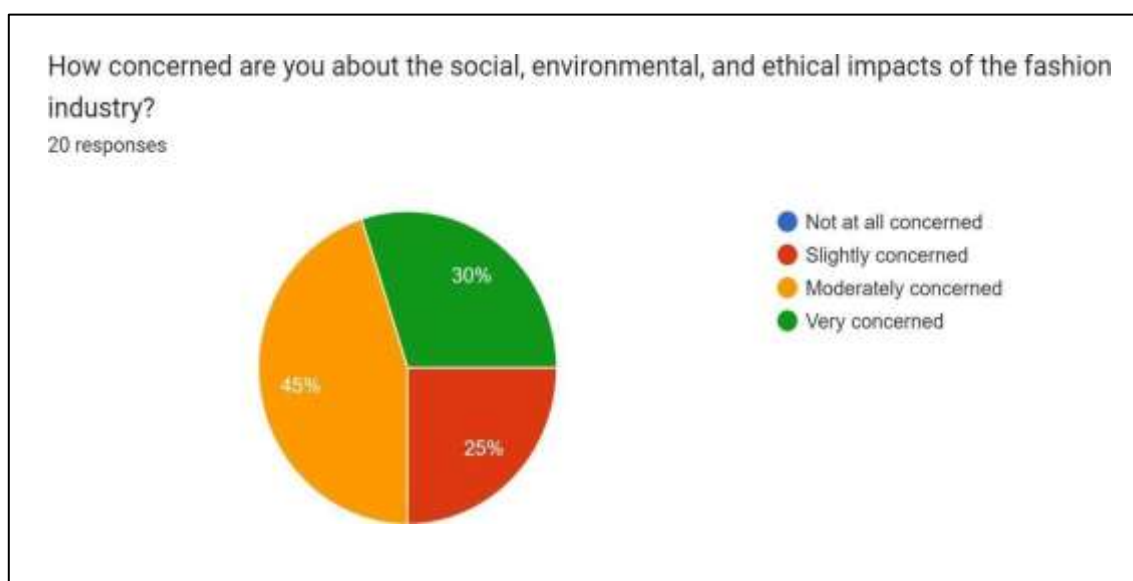
Also from the bar graph, we can see that when buying clothing, Generation Z considers price and affordability to be an important factor. While sustainability and ethical considerations are gaining importance, the financial aspect remains a significant consideration for consumers, particularly in younger demographics. Generation Z, often characterized by their cost-consciousness and budgetary constraints, may prioritise more affordable options over sustainable clothing if the price difference is substantial.

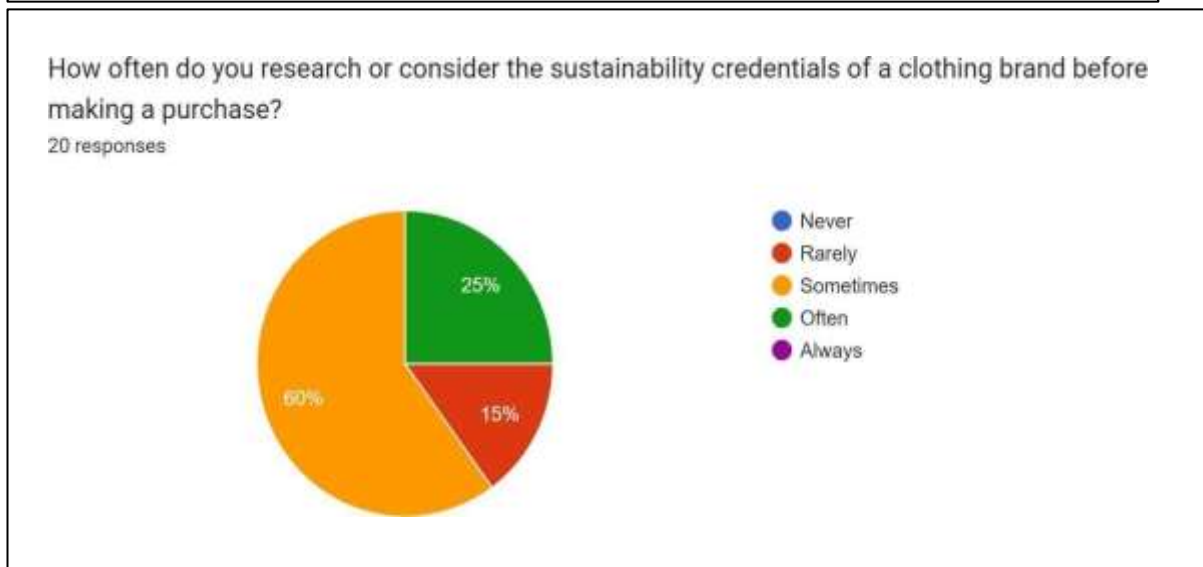
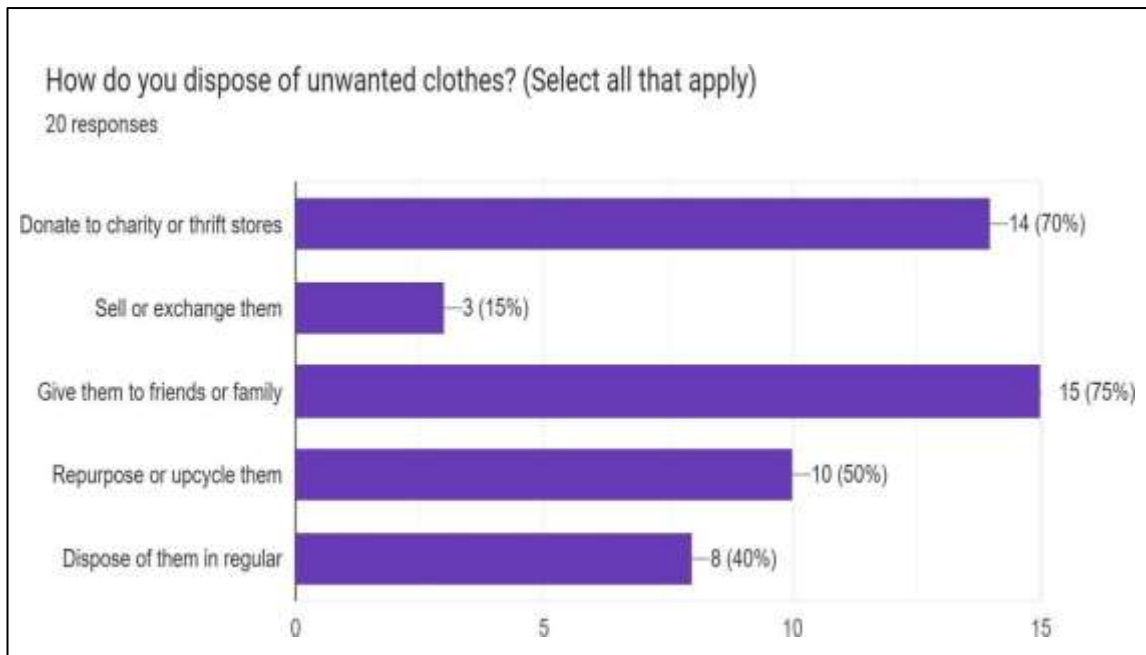
From the pie chart, we can infer that Generation Z is more towards buying used clothing compared to eco-friendly clothing due to various reasons. Firstly, this generation tends to make purchases that align with current social trends. Environmental awareness and consumption reduction have become popular trends, and second-hand stores offer high-end brands that follow these trends. These items are also reasonably priced, making them attractive to Generation Z, who are conscious of their limited financial resources. Moreover, purchasing used items reflects their developed personalities and helps fulfil their self-image requirements. However, it is important to note that the motivation behind buying used clothing is primarily driven by environmental sustainability and cost savings rather than following fashion trends. One of the reasons for this preference is that younger Generation Z consumers often lack the financial means to buy brand-new sustainable products. On the other hand, used clothing may have drawbacks such as a lack of market appeal and potential issues related to hygiene or wear and tear.

In conclusion, Generation Z demonstrates a strong concern for the impact of sustainable fashion and a desire to prioritise sustainable buying practises. However, the constraint of affordability often plays a significant role in their purchasing decisions. Due to limited financial

resources, many members of Generation Z opt to buy clothing from second-hand shops, where they can find high-end brands that align with environmental trends at affordable prices. While their motivation to support sustainability is evident, the practicality of budget-friendly options often leads them to choose used clothing over fresh, market-ready sustainable products. Despite potential drawbacks such as compromised market appeal and concerns about hygiene or wear and tear, Generation Z's inclination towards second-hand shopping highlights their commitment to sustainable choices within the constraints they face.

4. Do individuals who shows about the social, environmental, and ethical impacts of the fashion industry have a greater tendency to adopt more sustainable methods of disposing of unwanted clothes?





Interpretation

From the pie charts it can be interpreted that a significant number of Generation Z consumers, demonstrate a high level of concern regarding the social, environmental, and ethical impacts of the fashion industry. This heightened concern is reflective of a growing understanding and awareness of the industry's negative effects on various aspects of society and the environment. They recognize the industry's significant environmental footprint and are committed to combating issues such as resource depletion, pollution, and waste generation.

For college Gen Z students, a clothing brand's sustainability credentials are important. They are concerned about the environmental and social consequences of their fashion choices. Though most of them live on a low budget, they may go thrift shopping or buy goods from a secondhand market on occasion as cheaper options.

According to the graph, gifting clothes is the most widely adopted sustainable practise among college-going Gen Z students. This aligns with their inclination to share and promote sustainable fashion choices with their peers. Additionally, contributing to thrift stores, a newer concept that is gaining popularity among youth, is another sustainable practise embraced by this generation.

In Indian culture, giving clothes to family members is a deeply ingrained tradition that holds both sentimental and sustainable value. This practise allows for the continuation of clothing use within the family, minimising waste and

extending the lifespan of garments.

Furthermore, college Gen Z students are increasingly embracing the concept of repurposing or upcycling their clothes. By transforming old or unused garments into new and creative pieces, they not only showcase their individual style but also reduce the demand for new clothing items.

However, it is important to note that disposal methods for clothing remain a challenge. While disposing of clothes in regular waste bins is still prevalent, college Gen Z students are becoming more aware of the negative environmental impact it can have. They are seeking alternative disposal options, such as textile recycling programmes or donating to organisations that repurpose fabrics.

Overall, college Gen Z students are deeply concerned about the environmental and social impact of the fashion industry. They are actively adopting sustainable choices in their day-to-day lives, including gifting clothes, contributing to thrift stores, repurposing garments, and exploring responsible disposal methods. Their commitment to sustainable practises showcases their dedication to making a positive difference in the fashion industry and creating a more environmentally conscious future.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

In summary, Generation Z's significant awareness, care, and commitment to sustainable fashion are demonstrated by the data analysis. This generation, distinguished by their social and environmental awareness, actively looks for sustainable alternatives and demonstrates a clear role of the detrimental effects of the fashion business.

words of Generation Z, eco-friendly materials, good working conditions, longevity, and waste minimization are all components of sustainable apparel. This all-encompassing strategy shows their wish for apparel that minimizes adverse social and environmental effects while still being consistent with their ideals.

In that way that Gen Z views sustainable fashion is greatly active by social media, influencers, and celebrities. Fashion firms may take advantage of this impact by collaborating with eco-friendly influencers and displaying their long-lasting designs, ethical sourcing, and eco-friendly practices on social media. By doing this, firms may win over Gen Z consumers, who are on social media for knowledge and information of fashion inspiration.

Furthermore, the data shows that Gen Z customers continue to place a high value on cost. Fashion firms may solve this by providing affordable, sustainable solutions, enforcing clear pricing policies, and informing customers about the durability and long-term worth of sustainable apparel. Brands can reach a larger spectrum of Gen Z consumers by highlighting the financial benefits of sustainable options and dispelling myths that sustainability is just for those with larger budgets.

In addition, through setting in place take-back programs, allowing textile recycling, and promoting second-hand marketplaces, firms can participate in circular fashion practices. Brands can support a more sustainable fashion ecosystem and satisfy Gen Z's desire to purchase used clothing by extending the life of clothing and cutting waste.

All things considered, fashion firms have a chance to modify their methods and satisfy the changing needs of this significant consumer group thanks to Generation Z's dedication to sustainable fashion. Brands can connect with Gen Z's beliefs and win their allegiance by emphasizing eco-friendly materials, fair labor practices, durability, and waste reduction. By using strategic

Through collaborations with eco-friendly influencers, open pricing policies, and circular fashion projects, companies can cultivate a win-win connection with Generation Z, promoting constructive transformation in the fashion sector and building a more sustainable

future

Recommendations

Minimize the price of Sustainable Fashion

Increase cost of sustainable apparel is one of the major problems the survey found. To make ideal solutions more affordable for Gen Z consumers on a tight budget, brands could investigate cost-effective production techniques, implement circular fashion models like rental and resale, and offer transparent pricing strategies.

Social Media and Influencer Marketing

According to the study, Generation Z's preference for sustainable fashion has a strong positive correlation with social media influence. To build trust and influence consumer decisions, brands should work with real influencers and content producers who sincerely support sustainability.

Increase Transparency and Consumer Education

Through transparent labeling, certifications, and behind-the-scenes material, sustainable fashion companies should actively promote their ethical and ecological business practices. College students can benefit from educational initiatives that raise awareness and address the knowledge-behavior gap.

Innovate Design and Style

Gen Z should find sustainable apparel visually appealing:

- Give focus on designs that are gender-neutral, fashionable, and adaptable.
- Start small-scale eco-collections in association with young designers or artists.
- Promote pieces that are flexible or modular and can be styled in many ways.

Foster Community and Peer Advocacy

Gen Z puts greater confidence in their peers than in businesses, so establish brand ambassador initiatives on college campuses.

- Create forums or community platforms where customers may exchange reviews, fashion advice, and anecdotes.
- Organize sustainability meet-ups, clothes exchanges, or pop-up secondhand stores.

Integrate Technology for Engagement

Technology can might improve the collaborative nature and attraction of sustainable fashion:

- To encourage simplicity and curb impulse buying, use Augmented try-on capabilities or virtual closet applications.
- To validate sustainability claims, digital product passports should be introduced.
- Reduce waste and return rates by using AI-based adjustments.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Your Name*

your gender*

Male Female Non-binary

Prefer not to say

Specify your age*

18-24 years

25-30 years

31-40 years

Above 40 years

Are you aware of the concept of sustainable fashion?

Yes No

How would you define sustainable clothing? (Select all that apply)

Clothing made from eco-friendly materials Clothing produced under fair labor conditions Clothing designed to last longer and be durable

Clothing that minimizes waste and reduces environmental impact

How concerned are you about the social, environmental, and ethical impacts of the fashion industry?

Not at all concerned Slightly concerned Moderately concerned Very concerned

What influences your purchasing decisions when shopping for clothes? (Select all that apply)

Style and fashion trends Price and affordability Comfort and fit

Brand reputation Quality and durability

Sustainability and ethical practices

How likely are you to prioritize purchasing sustainable clothing over conventional fashion items?

Very unlikely Unlikely Neutral Likely

Very likely

Would you be willing to pay a premium for sustainable clothing compared to conventional alternatives?

Yes, I would pay more for sustainable clothing

No, I prefer more affordable options regardless of sustainability It depends on the price difference and my personal budget
How much does the price of sustainable clothing influence your purchasing decision?

Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

How often do you research or consider the sustainability credentials of a clothing brand before making a purchase?*

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

How influential do you think social media platforms, influencers, or celebrities are in shaping Generation Z's perception of sustainable fashion?

Not influential at all Slightly influential Moderately influential Very influential

What sources of information do you trust the most when it comes to understanding the sustainability practices of clothing brands?

Official brand websites

Social media influencers' recommendations Sustainability certifications and labels News articles and blogs

Word of mouth recommendations from friends and family

Have you ever purchased sustainable clothing from brands such as Zara, H&M, etc.?

Yes No

Are you willing to pay anywhere between ₹2,000 to ₹4,000 for a more sustainable piece of clothing? (Tops/shirts on the lower end and dresses on the higher end)*

Yes No

How likely are you to engage in alternative consumption practices for clothing, such as second-hand shopping or clothing rental?

Very unlikely unlikely neutral

likely very likely

How do you dispose of unwanted clothes? (Select all that apply)

Donate to charity or thrift stores Sell or exchange them

Give them to friends or family Repurpose or upcycle them Dispose of them in regular

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