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*The Impact of Sustainability Claims on the Fashion  
Buying Behaviour of Gen Z Customers: A  
Systematic Review*

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## DECLARATION

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I, Savreet Kaur, declare that this dissertation has been composed by myself, that the work contained herein is entirely my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification, in whole or in part, except as specified.

Signature: *Savreet Kaur*

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2025

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With a grateful heart, I first bow to God, whose light has been my compass and whose mercy has carried me through each step of this path. To my supervisor, Simon Chatterton, I owe deep thanks for his steady guidance, gentle wisdom, and faith in my work when I faltered. To my module leader, Masud Ibrahim, I extend sincere appreciation for his insight and dedication, which have enriched this journey in ways beyond measure. And to my family, my truest foundation, your love has been the quiet rhythm beneath my efforts, the unwavering hand that steadied me, and the warmth that made even the heaviest days light.

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Sustainable fashion is also generally defined as a collection of practises that minimise environmental impact, safeguard the interests of workers and animals, improve transparency throughout the apparel lifecycle, including fibre production to end-of-life, and is usually structured around the principles of a circular economy, including designing out waste, circulating products and materials, and regenerating nature (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017; Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2020; Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2025). The urgency behind this agenda is grounded in the industry's sizeable externalities: fashion accounted for roughly 2.1 billion tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2018, about 4% of global emissions, with the majority arising upstream in raw-material and processing stages (Global Fashion Agenda and McKinsey & Company, 2020). Downstream, textile waste remains acute; in the United States alone, about 11.3 million tons of textiles were landfilled in 2018 (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2024). As sustainability language has proliferated, regulators have tightened expectations to combat greenwashing. In the UK, the Competition and Markets Authority secured undertakings from ASOS, Boohoo, and George at Asda to substantiate and clarify environmental claims; in the EU, the Empowering Consumers Directive 2024/825 restricts generic, unsubstantiated “green” claims, while the Commission's broader “Green Claims” initiative has sought to standardise verification, even as policy direction shifted in mid-2025 (Competition and Markets Authority, 2024; European Union, 2024; European Commission, 2023; Latham & Watkins, 2025). These moves reflect, and may reinforce, growing consumer scepticism toward vague or inflated claims.

Within this context, Generation Z, typically defined as those born from 1997 onward, has become strategically pivotal to fashion demand and discourse (Pew Research Centre, 2019). Gen Z consumers are digital-first, fast-moving across brands and channels, and culturally central to creator commerce and resale; industry evidence indicates relatively low wardrobe concentration with single brands, implying openness to new value propositions, including sustainability and circular models (McKinsey & Company, 2024). The second-hand market has grown faster, and consumers intend to spend an increasing proportion of total apparel spending on resale and notably high adoption among Gen Z and Millennials; a study in Europe also reports that Gen Z is



more willing to purchase second-hand clothes (thredUP and GlobalData, 2025; Masserini and Bini, 2024). Meanwhile, the price salience of Gen Z remains elevated due to macro pressures and cost-of-living issues and influences trade-offs at the point of sale (Deloitte, 2024; Deloitte, 2025; IBM Institute for Business Value and National Retail Federation, 2022). E-commerce increased its pace during the COVID-19 pandemic, and in certain places, it seems that the pandemic increased environmental consciousness that pushed some consumers towards sustainable clothes (Hassan *et al.*, 2024).

The sustainability behaviour of Gen Z is ambivalent in terms of its empirical picture. On the one hand, large multiregional surveys consistently report strong pro-environmental attitudes and stated willingness to pay for sustainable products, alongside self-reported actions such as avoiding fast fashion; country-level studies using behavioural frameworks (e.g., TPB/VBN/SOR) similarly find environmental concern, social norms, and perceived behavioural control predict Gen Z intentions to purchase sustainable apparel (Deloitte, 2024; Deloitte, 2025; IBM Institute for Business Value and National Retail Federation, 2020; IBM Institute for Business Value and National Retail Federation, 2022; Ngo *et al.*, 2024; Hong *et al.*, 2024). On the other hand, a pronounced intention–behaviour gap persists: even though Gen Z cares about the environment and wants to be sustainable, many still purchase fast fashion because it is cheap, convenient, alternatives are not salient or well-known, and they perceive the trade-off as acceptable (Liu, 2022; Um *et al.*, 2024). Interest in second-hand and slow fashion coexists with hurdles around price, availability and convenience, which can blunt adoption (Mazanec and Harantová, 2024). While greater sustainability knowledge is associated with more responsible choices (Han *et al.*, 2024), the drivers of actual fast-fashion purchases remain insufficiently explained by existing models (Liu, 2022; Um *et al.*, 2024).

Trust and information quality appear central to this gap. Experimental and survey research links the perception of greenwashing to heightened scepticism and weaker purchase intentions, particularly salient in fast-fashion contexts; Gen Z's doubts about brand transparency and claim credibility amplify this effect (Fella *et al.*, 2024; Promalessy *et al.*, 2024). Conversely, credible, specific information, especially third-party certifications or clear impact labels, tends to raise perceived information quality and willingness to pay, and “choice-architecture” nudges in online retail can shift

baskets toward lower-impact options without imposing a green premium (Prashar *et al.*, 2025). Yet researchers report mixed results on the market impact of sustainability claims overall: some studies observe rising consumer interest, but constraints such as limited availability of sustainable assortments and stock still impede conversion (Seock *et al.*, 2024). Overlaying these claim-level effects are contextual moderators, price promotions, delivery speed, and especially social-media-driven trend cycles, that likely compete with or condition the influence of sustainability messaging but remain understudied in Gen Z fashion journeys (McKinsey & Company, 2024; Deloitte, 2025).

Taken together, the literature suggests that sustainability claims can both help and hinder conversion among Gen Z, depending on their specificity, verification, visibility at the point of decision, and integration with the broader offer. Vague or inflated claims risk eroding trust and depressing purchase intention; clear, substantiated, and product-proximate claims embedded in a user journey that minimises friction, and, crucially, competes on price and trend, are more likely to influence real buying behaviour (Competition and Markets Authority, 2024; European Union, 2024; Fella *et al.*, 2024; Promalessy *et al.*, 2024; Prashar *et al.*, 2025). This ambivalence motivates a focused research question for the UK fashion industry: considering both supportive and skeptical evidence, how do claim type (product-level vs. brand-level; impact-reduction vs. circular-service), credibility markers (e.g., third-party verification), and contextual moderators (price premiums, convenience frictions, and social-media-driven trend strength) shape the pathways, through trust, perceived value, and knowledge, by which sustainability messaging converts Gen Z's stated concern into actual purchase; and, critically, where does sustainability rank relative to other purchase drivers when UK Gen Z faces real retail constraints such as assortment availability and price (Seock *et al.*, 2024; Liu, 2022; Um *et al.*, 2024; Deloitte, 2025)?

## **1.2 RESEARCH AIM**

The aim of this systematic review is to examine how sustainability claims influence the fashion buying behaviour of Generation Z customers.

## **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- How do Gen Z consumers perceive sustainability claims made by fashion brands, and how do these perceptions influence their attitudes toward sustainable fashion?
- To what extent do Gen Z consumers' beliefs and attitudes toward sustainable fashion align with their actual buying behaviours?
- What moderating factors affect the relationship between Gen Z consumers' sustainability perceptions and their fashion purchasing decisions?

## **1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- To systematically review existing literature on Gen Z consumers' perceptions of sustainability claims in the fashion industry.
- To assess the alignment between Gen Z consumers' sustainability-related attitudes and their actual fashion purchasing behaviours.
- To identify and evaluate the moderating factors reported in the literature that influence the relationship between sustainability claims and the buying behaviour of Gen Z consumers.

## **1.5 RATIONALE**

Because of Millennials and Gen Z consumers becoming more aware of environmental problems, the fashion industry is now focusing more on sustainability (Manley, Seock, & Shin, 2023). Even though these generations are leading the way in demanding sustainability, they still buy clothing that is not as sustainable as they say they want (Mazanec & Harantová, 2024). Even though many brands promote sustainability, these consumers usually focus more on price, convenience, and trends seen on social media (Zimand-Sheiner & Lissitsa, 2024). Also, there are worries that companies may be deceiving customers, which makes it even harder to rely on their sustainability statements. This study is designed to review how sustainability claims affect Gen Z's fashion choices, as well as to find out what influences their decision-making and what hinders them from becoming fully sustainable consumers. As a result, the study will

give fashion brands useful information to match their marketing efforts with what consumers care about, earn their trust, and solve the difficulties of marketing sustainability.

## **1.6 BRIEF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

A pragmatic research philosophy is used to direct this study, as it admits both qualitative and quantitative evidence to provide a complex problem of how sustainability claims affect the fashion buying behaviour of Generation Z. It is based on relativist ontology and interpretivist epistemology and acknowledges consumer behaviour as subjectively determined by values and meanings. The systematic review design was adopted, and it was in line with PRISMA 2020 to make it transparent and reproducible. The search of literature was done in Scopus with a structured search query of the keywords, and inclusion and exclusion criteria were used based on the SPIDER framework to determine the eligibility. Two rounds of screening (title and abstract screening) followed by full-text appraisal were performed, and data on the relevant studies were extracted with the help of a specially designed template that identified the study objectives, sample characteristics, methodology, sustainability claims, and results. The methodological quality of included studies was assessed using the CASP tool to achieve rigour and synthesised using a narrative synthesis to consider heterogeneity of evidence. Ethical integrity was upheld by adhering to institutional ethical codes, ensuring unbiased selection, transparent reporting, and accurate citation, with ethical approval granted by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. This methodology supports a comprehensive, credible, and nuanced synthesis of the current evidence base.

## **1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION**

This dissertation is structured into five main chapters to ensure a clear and logical progression of ideas. The Introduction establishes the background, rationale, research aim, and objectives, setting the foundation for the study. The Literature Review then critically examines existing theories and empirical findings on sustainability claims and Generation Z's fashion buying behaviour, identifying gaps that justify the research. The Methodology outlines the philosophical assumptions, research design, systematic review process, and inclusion criteria that underpin the study's rigour and transparency. The Results chapter presents a summary table of 50 research articles and synthesises

their findings to directly address the research question. Finally, the Conclusion draws together the main insights, discusses practical and theoretical implications, acknowledges limitations, and offers recommendations for future research and industry practice.

## **1.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The introduction chapter establishes the foundation of the dissertation by outlining the background and context of sustainability in the fashion industry and highlighting the growing importance of Generation Z as a consumer group. It defines the research problem by exploring the tension between Gen Z's pro-environmental values and their actual buying behaviour, particularly the gap between sustainable intentions and fast-fashion consumption. The chapter then presents the research aim and question, emphasising the need to understand the impact of sustainability claims on Gen Z's fashion purchasing decisions. It also outlines the significance of the study, explaining its potential contributions to both academic knowledge and industry practice. Finally, the chapter previews the structure of the dissertation, providing a roadmap for how the research will unfold in the subsequent chapters.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an in-depth literature review of the available literature on the role of sustainability claims in influencing the fashion purchasing behaviour of Generation Z consumers. It is expected to summarise theoretical and empirical results in such fundamental fields as sustainability in fashion, consumer behaviour, and green marketing, and determine how the concepts of sustainability, including eco-friendly labelling, ethical marketing, and greenwashing, impact the purchasing behaviour of Gen Z. The review also covers dynamics between the intentions and actual practises of sustainability, including such aspects as brand transparency, distrust of greenwashing, and the impediments to Gen Z engaging in sustainable fashion practises. This review aims to critically evaluate strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in the existing literature, which precondition the research questions and provide a background knowledge of the intricacies of the Gen Z reaction to the sustainability claims in the fashion industry.

### 2.2 RESEARCH AREAS

#### 2.2.1 Recent Developments in Sustainability in Fashion

Recent developments in sustainable fashion have been marked by innovation, regulatory shifts, and a growing emphasis on consumer awareness, particularly among Generation Z (Papamichael *et al.*, 2024; Richardson, Boardman and Benstead, 2022). One major area of focus is textile recycling and circular materials. Although frequently highlighted in sustainability claims, recent data reveal that only around 8% of textile fibres come from recycled sources, and less than 1% is truly closed-loop (textile-to-textile), exposing a significant gap between industry rhetoric and actual infrastructure (Wagner and Heinzl, 2020; Adamkiewicz *et al.*, 2022). Efforts such as H&M-backed Syre and partnerships with Gap and Target suggest commercial momentum, but questions remain regarding scalability and genuine environmental benefit (Shamsuzzaman *et al.*, 2025).

Another notable shift is toward circular fashion business models, encompassing resale, rental, and repair, which are supported by policy pushes like the EU's Textile Strategy. Gen Z consumers have emerged as strong advocates for these models, with over 60% purchasing secondhand and many expressing a willingness to pay more for

sustainable products (Shrivastava *et al.*, 2021; Ta, Aarikka-Stenroos and Litovuo, 2022). However, critical barriers such as affordability and convenience persist, and studies often measure intention rather than actual long-term behavioural change (Contreras-Massé *et al.*, 2024; Richardson, Boardman and Benstead, 2022).

In parallel, material innovation is gaining attention under the umbrella of "clean fashion." This includes safer alternatives to harmful chemicals like PFAS and the development of plant-based leathers, biofibers, and low-toxicity finishes (Amato and Orlacchio, 2023; D'Itria and Colombi, 2021). While these innovations align with Gen Z's ethical values, many are still in the pilot phase and lack robust lifecycle assessments or evidence of market adoption (Papamichael *et al.*, 2024). Likewise, the concept of zero-waste design, including accuracy of cut and modularity, is being heralded as creatively applying the idea of sustainability into fashion design, but there is little practical implementation in the mass-market settings (Satkiewicz, 2024).

The new digital solutions, including virtual fashion, NFT wearables, and AI-based recycling technologies, are also the tendencies that are supposed to decrease overproduction and waste (Gobinath *et al.*, 2024). Nevertheless, there is yet paucity in the academic literature that covers how Gen Z consumers perceive and react to these digital innovations in relation to authenticity and environmental impact (Mari, Mandelli and Algesheimer, 2024; Echegu, 2024).

One of the main issues of concern is the presence of greenwashing in the field of fast fashion. Although most brands advertise environmentally conscious lines or even carbon-cutting initiatives, a study demonstrates that such activities are often accompanied by increased environmental impacts (Adamkiewicz *et al.*, 2022; Haidar, 2024). The reaction of Gen Z is multifaceted; it is both informed and distrustful, and research shows that the sceptical attitude can be aroused by both misleading sustainability statements and encouraged by the same (Raji *et al.*, 2024; Nze, 2024). This duality implies a subtle consumer psychology, which has not been completely comprehended yet. In sum, new trends in sustainable fashion are evidence of technological, material, and marketing advancement, but the difference between the sustainability claims and the proven results is still quite significant. This highlights the importance of systematic research that would assess the reception of these claims by

Gen Z consumers and whether the claims lead to changes in behaviour that matter (Sathianathan and Ray, 2023; Cherian, Manoja and Abhinav, 2025).

### **2.2.2 Gen Z Consumer Characteristics**

The generation Z, often defined as people born between 1997 and 2012 is a unique and growing consumer group with different values, behaviours and expectations, especially in terms of sustainability. Many articles focus on the fact that Gen Z consumers are more socially and environmentally aware of the past generations, and in many ways, they consider ethical and sustainable business operation as a priority in their buying behaviour (Liu, 2022; Pradeep and Pradeep, 2023). Recent surveys indicate that a considerable number of Gen Z consumers are more likely to buy brands that are transparent, environmentally responsible, and socially responsible (Zimand-Sheiner and Lissitsa, 2024; Balinska, Jaska and Werenowska, 2024). Nevertheless, these values do not necessarily correspond to their behaviour. Although the Gen Z population exhibits a high level of pro-sustainability attitudes, a number of studies have found an attitude-behaviour gap; the intentions of ethical purchases are often overridden by economic factors, convenience, and product knowledge in real-life situations (Tran *et al.*, 2022; Ge, 2024).

More importantly, the digital literacy and dependency on social media of Gen Z are central to their consumption behaviour. Social media, such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, shape their behaviour in terms of fashion, introduce them to the discourse of sustainability, and encourage trends that are driven by their peers, including thrifting, upcycling, and the so-called haul culture (Shrivastava *et al.*, 2021; Gunarathunga and Ranathunga, 2023). Ironically, although such platforms have increased sustainability messages, they are the drivers of fast fashion consumption due to its ever-changing trend cycles and influence marketing (Ge, 2024; Zimand-Sheiner and Lissitsa, 2024). Such duality provokes questions about performative environmentalism and questions the seriousness of sustainable Gen Z activity.

Also, Gen Z consumers are more likely to be sceptical of corporate claims of sustainability. It is argued in literature that perceived authenticity and third-party validation (e.g., certifications or endorsement by influencers) are strongly related to their trust in a brand (Richardson, Boardman and Benstead, 2022; Haidar, 2024). Their need to be actively engaged is also emphasised in the studies, and brands are



expected to make them part of sustainability journeys with co-creation, activism, or clear storytelling (Papamichael *et al.*, 2024; Liu, 2022). Regardless of these revelations, there are still gaps in the comprehension of the subtle drivers of the buying behaviours of Gen Z, particularly in the various cultural or socioeconomic settings. Altogether, the current literature outlines Gen Z as a values-driven but multifaceted group whose behaviour can be explained by a combination of ethics, price sensitivity, peer influence, and digital connectivity, and thus, they become a main object of consideration in terms of assessing the actual effect of sustainability claims in fashion.

### **2.2.3 Consumer Perception to Sustainability Claims and Behaviour**

Consumer attitudes to fashion sustainability claims are multifaceted, contradictory, and generally complex, especially when it comes to Gen Z consumers. Although numerous works claim a higher level of environmental and social awareness among Gen Z compared to the past generations (Pradeep and Pradeep, 2023; Liu, 2022), the empirical data shows that there is still an attitude-behaviour gap: consumers declare they are more concerned about sustainable fashion but do not make ethical purchases (Rausch and Kopplin, 2021; Shrivastava *et al.*, 2021). This discrepancy has contributed to the persistence of debate in the literature as to the real impact of sustainability claims on consumer behaviour.

According to some research, the sustainability claims have a positive impact on the purchase intentions in case they are viewed as credible, particular, and third-party certified (Arora and Manchanda, 2022; Adamkiewicz *et al.*, 2022). Some say that they are frequently neglected or put on the backburner during competition with price, convenience, trendiness, or brand image (Zimand-Sheiner and Lissitsa, 2024; Ta *et al.*, 2022; Gunarathne and Ranathunga, 2023).

One of the current problems in the literature is consumer scepticism, in particular, among Gen Z. With the growing attention to the problem of greenwashing, many young consumers have doubts about the validity of sustainability messages, in particular, when presented by fast fashion brands (Adamkiewicz *et al.*, 2022; Koudelkova and Hejlova, 2021). This has prompted scholars to examine how perceived credibility mediates the connexion that exists between sustainability claims, and actual behaviour. There is some evidence that sparse messaging and narrative-based narration builds trust and behavioural reactions (Balinska *et al.*, 2024; Busalim,

Fox and Lynn, 2022), whereas generic or vague assertions result in disengagement or even negative reactions (Richardson, Boardman and Benstead, 2022; Wagner and Heinzel, 2020). Nonetheless, other results do not show this, suggesting that, regardless of scepticism, Gen Z can still buy products of brands with weak or dubious sustainability narratives provided that they are either affordable or otherwise attractive, a phenomenon also known as selective morality or sustainable dissonance (Zimand-Sheiner and Lissitsa, 2024; Boyer, Jiang and Lyu, 2024).

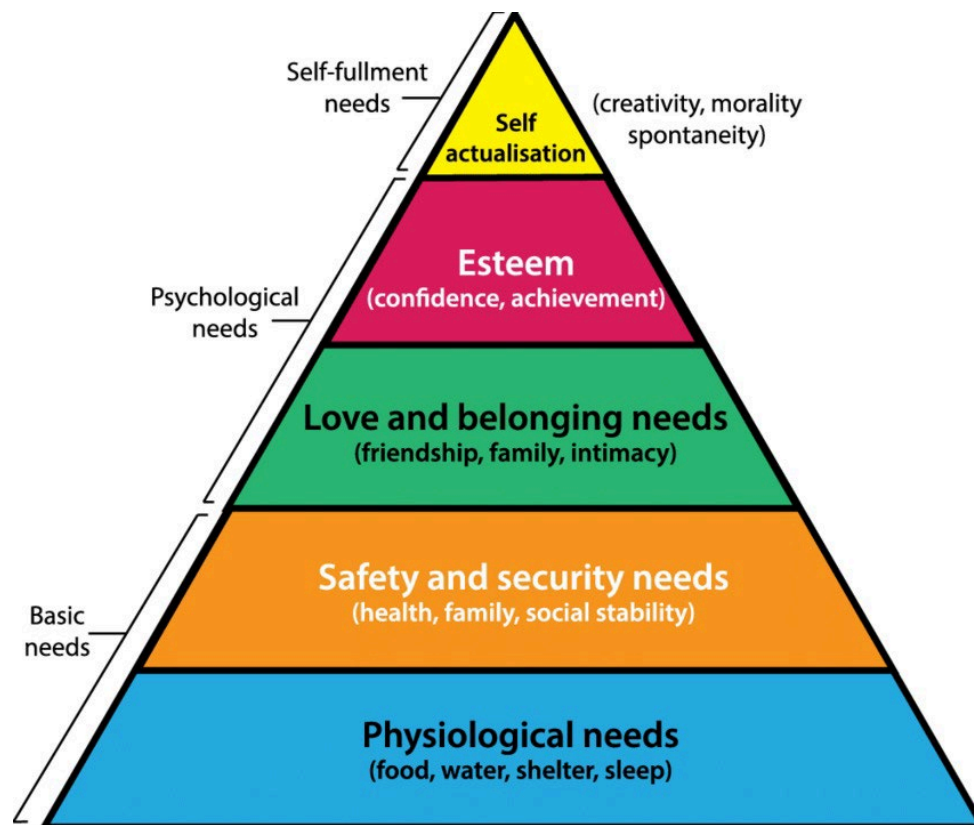
The results throughout the literature are usually disjointed and contextual, and they vary greatly according to geography, socioeconomic background, and the type of fashion (ex: luxury or fast fashion) (Contreras-Masse *et al.*, 2024; Escourido-Calvo, Prado-Dominguez and Martin-Palomo, 2025). Further, most of the studies rely on self-report surveys, which might not capture actual purchasing decisions in the real-life setting, and therefore, more observational and behavioural data is required (Prashar and Kaushal, 2025; Ta *et al.*, 2022). Intersectional elements, including gender, culture, or digital literacy, are also under-researched, and this could influence the ways in which various Gen Z subgroups perceive and react to sustainability claims (Ge, 2024; Koudelkova and Hejlova, 2021).

Therefore, additional studies are necessary to understand the effect of message framing, visual representation, and platform (e.g., TikTok vs. brand site) on consumer trust and action (Um *et al.*, 2024; Boyer, Jiang and Lyu, 2024). The longitudinal studies which follow the way of changes in perceptions and behaviours over time in the reaction to brand actions, scandals or changes in society also become increasingly necessary. In general, the literature shows that although Gen Z is a receptive group when it comes to sustainability messages, their behaviour is not predetermined, particularly in a saturated fast-fashion online world where morality and ethics are often in conflict with impulse shopping and peer pressure (Prashar and Kaushal, 2025; Liu, 2022).

### **2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

Understanding how sustainability claims influence the fashion buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers requires a multi-theoretical approach that considers both cognitive and emotional dimensions of consumer decision-making (Prashar and Kaushal, 2025). Several established theories offer valuable insights into the underlying

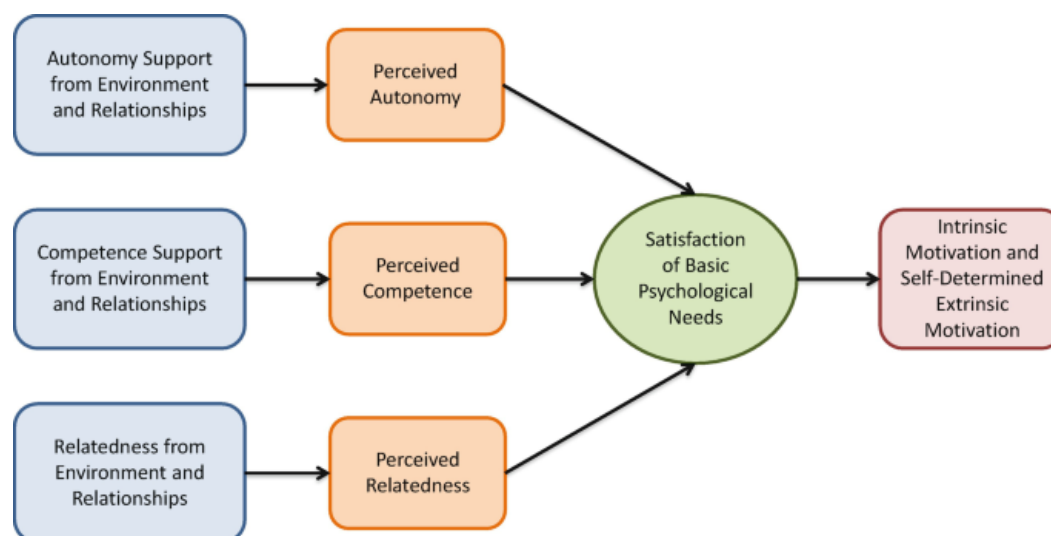
psychological mechanisms that shape Gen Z's responses to sustainability messages, especially in the digital and fast-paced fashion environment. This section reviews three key theoretical frameworks that are frequently applied in sustainability and consumer behaviour research.



*Figure 1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943)*

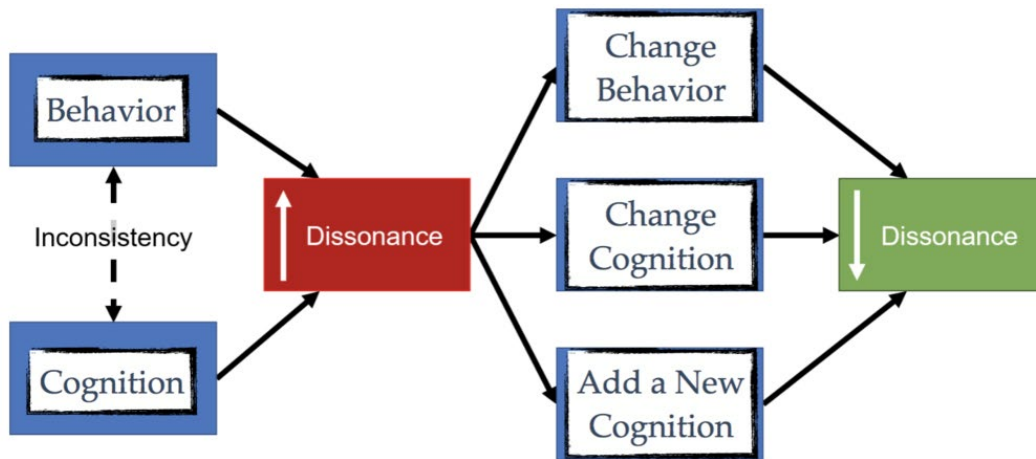
Hierarchy of Needs is a widely known psychological theory created by Maslow (1943), which assumes that human motivation is caused by a set of hierarchically arranged needs, starting with the most basic physiological needs and leading to the higher-order needs, like self-actualization. The hierarchy is usually presented as a pyramid, and there are five levels, namely physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Maslow believed that people have the desire to fulfil lower needs before proceeding to the higher level needs. Applying the theory of Maslow to the current study, the focus of the Gen Z consumers on sustainability claims in the fashion industry can be elucidated by their extended psychological and social requirements (Dominguez, Zambrano and Rodriguez, 2023). As an example, younger consumers could be driven by environmental issues (self-actualization, esteem), but they are also likely to be driven by social belonging, which manifests itself in peer groups and social media trends. Sustainability claims could align with both social identity needs

(belonging) and self-actualization, especially as Gen Z increasingly sees environmental sustainability as a marker of personal and societal fulfillment.



*Figure 2 Self-Determination Theory (Legault, 2020, pp. 4694–4702)*

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Ryan and Deci (2000), focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, emphasizing the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in human behaviour. SDT posits that individuals are most motivated when they feel autonomous in their actions, competent in achieving their goals, and connected to others. In the context of consumer behaviour, SDT helps explain why Gen Z might gravitate toward sustainable fashion if they feel that their choices align with their intrinsic values of environmental consciousness, social responsibility, and individual expression. The theory suggests that sustainability claims that promote self-authenticity and social connectedness (for example, eco-friendly brands that align with personal values) are likely to resonate more deeply with Gen Z consumers, fostering intrinsic motivation to choose sustainable options over purely extrinsically motivated choices (e.g., price or convenience) (Baxter and Pelletier, 2020). Furthermore, SDT highlights how external factors, such as marketing messages or peer influence, can either enhance or undermine a person's sense of autonomy, impacting the effectiveness of sustainability claims.

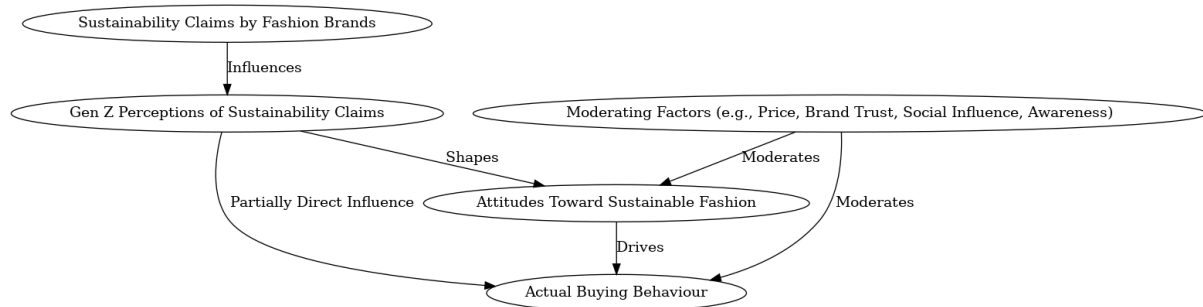


*Figure 3 Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957)*

Finally, Cognitive Dissonance Theory by Festinger (1957) explains the internal conflict Gen Z consumers may experience when their behaviours (e.g., purchasing fast fashion) contradict their values (e.g., support for sustainability). Sustainability claims may soften this dissonance, by making the purchase rationalised by messages about ethics, or they may harden it, when found to be deceptive. This affective tension may have an impact on post-purchase judgement, brand familiarity, and subsequent purchase behaviour (Testa *et al.*, 2021). To marketers, this dissonance must be addressed by transparency and consistency in their pursuit of credibility among the Gen Z audiences.

Overall, all five theoretical frameworks provide a holistic perspective in which to analyse the influence of sustainability assertions on Gen Z fashion consumption. They emphasise that knowledge or values alone cannot influence sustainable consumer behaviour but also emotions and social factors, as well as the credibility of messages, which is particularly acute in the digital world of consumers today.

## 2.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



*Figure 4 Conceptual Framework (Adapted by the Author)*

The conceptual framework shows how the claims of sustainability of fashion brands can impact the purchasing behaviour of Generation Z consumers. It starts with the sustainability communications declared by brands that influence the perceptions of the Gen Z consumers of authenticity, transparency and credibility. Such perceptions, in turn, influence their attitude to sustainable fashion, whether it is considered desirable, ethical, or consistent with their own values. Attitudes, in turn, lead to real purchasing behaviour, but perceptions can also have a more direct effect on purchasing decisions. Notably, it is not a linear relationship, but one that external factors of price sensitivity, brand trust, social influence and environmental awareness moderate, and either enhance or reduce the relationship between perceptions, attitudes and behaviour. All of these elements combine to describe a complicated mechanism by which Gen Z consumers convert sustainability rhetoric into fashion buying behaviour.

## 2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The literature review chapter has critically analysed the available theories and empirical research on how sustainability claims can influence the fashion purchasing behaviour of Generation Z consumers. It examined such critical topics as sustainable fashion practices, values and consumption patterns of Gen Z, the impact of sustainability claims, and the problem of greenwashing and intention-behaviour gap. Other moderating factors that were pointed out in the chapter include price sensitivity, brand trust and social influence, which influence how attitudes are transformed into actual purchasing behaviour. Through the synthesis of these findings, the review was able to indicate gaps in the existing body of literature and develop the conceptual framework on which this research is to be based.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted by this study and which examines the effect of sustainability assertions on fashion buying behaviour among Generation Z consumers. A systematic review approach was adopted because of the need to synthesise prior knowledge in a systematic and objective manner. The method enables the researcher to generalise, assess and discuss relevant research in a logical and reproducible manner that offers depth as well as a scope of understanding complex consumer behaviours. To ensure transparency, rigour, and consistency in the review process, the PRISMA 2020 framework (Page *et al.*, 2021) served as a guiding principle to follow during the review process.

The chapter begins with the philosophy of research and research assumptions under which the research is being conducted, and justification of the research design and approach is provided. It then explains how the data were collected, including data search of databases, inclusion criteria, quality appraisal and data synthesis. Although primary data were not utilised, some ethical considerations of secondary research are also addressed. These methodology components, together, justify the reliability and academic integrity of the review, and this is in accordance with best practices of evidence-based research.



### **3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHIES AND ASSUMPTIONS**

This study is underpinned by a pragmatic research philosophy, which supports the use of diverse methods to address complex real-world problems (Patino & Ferreira, 2018). Pragmatism suits systematic reviews that seek to generalise a broad body of empirical results in order to guide practice or policy (Ryan, 2018). In this regard, both qualitative and quantitative studies can be included to comprehend the impact of sustainability claims on the fashion purchasing behaviour of Generation Z consumers.

The study takes a relativist ontological position, meaning that reality is relative and it is constructed by personal experience (Byrne, 2021). This is more applicable in the analysis of consumer behaviour, which is determined by values, perceptions, and social forces. The epistemological stance of the study is an interpretivist one, where it recognises that knowledge is relative and based on what people mean by sustainability in fashion (Suri, 2020). Such assumptions support the fact that various types of evidence should be included because the attitudes of Gen Z toward sustainability are multifaceted.

Through a synthesis of these philosophical foundations, the methodology meets the objectives of the review, to give a comprehensive and well-rounded picture of the existing evidence without sacrificing methodological flexibility and transparency.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design used in this study is that of a systematic review. A systematic review can be described as an organised and rigorous way of discovering, evaluating, and integrating the current research on a particular topic through a clear and reproducible procedure (Mengist, Soromessa & Legese, 2020). As opposed to the traditional literature reviews, which may be narrative and selective, systematic reviews adhere to a prescribed protocol that reduces bias and provides exhaustive coverage of the relevant studies. This method is especially appropriate in solving the research question: How do sustainability claims affect the fashion purchasing behaviour of Generation Z consumers?

Since the subject is interdisciplinary, covering marketing, sustainability, and generational consumer behaviour, a systematic review enables one to incorporate a wide range of sources of evidence. It assists in determining common trends,



theoretical points, and gaps in the literature that may act as a solid basis for future research or practice.

The PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items in Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) statement was used as a guide to the review and provides evidence-based recommendations on how to conduct and report systematic reviews (Page *et al.*, 2021). The application of PRISMA increases the methodological transparency, replicability, and reliability, thus making it the right method of designing this study.

### 3.4 SEARCH STRATEGY

In order to identify the relevant studies in a comprehensive and focused manner, the search strategy was created based on the Scopus database, whereby the selection of this database was due to its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed articles in the social sciences, business and environmental studies. The keywords and Boolean operators were framed in a way that they included the studies that touched on Generation Z, sustainability claims, fashion, and consumer behaviour.

In order to have a complete and targeted search of the relevant studies, keywords and Boolean operators were selected carefully in the Scopus database. These keywords were aimed at four fundamental areas of the study, which include: the population, the phenomenon of interest, the industry context and the behavioural outcome. For the population, terms such as *“Generation Z” OR “Gen Z” OR “young consumers”* were used to capture variations in terminology. To address the phenomenon of interest, the search included *“sustainability claim” OR “ethical marketing” OR “eco-friendly” OR “green marketing”, ensuring that different forms of sustainability communication were considered. The fashion context was incorporated using “fashion” OR “clothing industry” OR “apparel”, while the behavioural outcomes were captured through “consumer behaviour” OR “purchase intention” OR “buying behaviour”.*

*Boolean operators (AND, OR) were strategically applied to combine these groups, resulting in the search string: (TITLE-ABS-KEY("sustainab\*" OR "green" OR "eco-friendly" OR "ethical" OR "CSR" OR "corporate social responsibility")) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY("fashion" OR "clothing" OR "apparel" OR "retail" OR "brand")) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY("consumer" OR "customer" OR "buyer" OR "shopping" OR "purchase" OR "attitude\*" OR "perception\*" OR "intention\*")) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY("Generation Z"*

OR "Gen Z" OR "young consumer\*" OR "youth" OR "digital native\*")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English"))

This structured approach ensured that the search was both comprehensive and precise, capturing a wide range of peer-reviewed studies directly relevant to the research question.

### 3.4.1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined using the SPIDER framework to ensure the relevance and focus of the selected studies. The criteria aimed to capture evidence relating to Gen Z consumers and their behavioural responses to sustainability claims in the fashion sector.

*Table 1: Inclusion-Exclusion Criteria*

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
<b>Sample (S)</b>	Studies focusing on Generation Z (born approx. 1995–2010)	Studies focusing on other generations (e.g. Millennials, Gen X, Baby Boomers)
<b>Phenomenon of Interest (PI)</b>	Sustainability claims in fashion or apparel marketing	Studies unrelated to sustainability or not involving a fashion context
<b>Design (D)</b>	Empirical research papers	Opinion pieces, commentaries, or editorials
<b>Evaluation (E)</b>	Consumer perceptions, attitudes, purchase intentions, or behaviour	Studies without behavioural or attitudinal data
<b>Research Type (R)</b>	Peer-reviewed academic articles	Theses, dissertations, blogs, or trade publications
<b>Publication Date</b>	Published between 2014 and 2024	Studies published before 2014
<b>Language</b>	English	Non-English articles

## 3.5 STUDY SELECTION AND SCREENING PROCESS

The study selection process followed the PRISMA 2020 framework (Page *et al.*, 2021) to ensure transparency, consistency, and replicability. It involved two stages: first, titles and abstracts from the Scopus search were screened after duplicates were removed,

with studies excluded if they were not focused on Generation Z, fashion, or sustainability, or if they lacked empirical data or peer review. Second, the full texts of the remaining studies were reviewed in detail to confirm eligibility, with exclusions made for insufficient focus on sustainability claims, unclear Gen Z samples, poor methodological quality, or irrelevant findings. The process was carefully documented and presented in a PRISMA flow diagram, illustrating records identified, screened, excluded, and ultimately included in the review.

### **3.6 DATA EXTRACTION**

To ensure consistency and transparency in the synthesis of evidence, a structured data extraction process was adopted. A customised extraction form, created in a spreadsheet format, was used to collect and organise key information from each included study. This template was created according to the objectives of the review and the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page *et al.*, 2021), which allowed approaching the discovery of the necessary insights in a coherent way and within the framework of a wide range of literature.

The data extracted contained the information about the author(s) and the year of publication to conclude about the topicality and academic value of each study. The area or nation where the study was carried out was noted down to determine geographical settings and patterns. The aim or objective of each study was recorded in order to appreciate the scope and relevance of its findings. Data on the sample, especially the ability of the sample to represent Generation Z, were also recorded, as well as the methodology used, including the research design and data collection methods. The main interest of the extraction process was to understand the nature of the sustainability claims, e.g., eco-friendly labelling or ethical marketing practises, and to determine the impact such claims had on fashion purchasing behaviour of Gen Z. The key results were recapped and evaluated on their applicability to the research question and any limitations to the study as observed by the authors were recorded to aid in the contextualisation of the strength of evidence.

All information was manually pulled out, and the accuracy and consistency of the same were verified. This systematic and methodological process guaranteed the validity of the results of the review and justified a strict synthesis in the following phases.

### 3.7 QUALITY APPRAISAL

A strict quality appraisal was conducted to ensure the credibility and reliability of evidence synthesised in this systematic review. The tool that would be largely utilised in assessing the methodological quality of included studies was selected to be the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) tool. It has been generally known that CASP contains extensive checklists that are tailored to different research designs such as qualitative research, cohort research, and randomised controlled trials (Naeem *et al.*, 2023; Ryan, 2018).

CASP tool analyses studies on the basis of: clarity of the research objectives, suitability of research methodology, rigour of data collection and analysis, ethical considerations and relevance of findings. Such an evaluation can be applied to identify potential bias, limitations and benefits of any of the research and this makes the interpretation of the results more nuanced (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Independent review of studies involved the use of the CASP checklist on the methodology of the study, and where there was a disagreement in the quality rating, a discussion was undertaken to arrive at a consensus.

By means of the systematic evaluation of the quality of evidence, the review could ensure that the conclusions drawn regarding the implications of sustainability claims on the fashion purchasing behaviour of Generation Z were based on the premise of robust and credible research. This is a procedure that adheres to the best practices in systematic reviewing, which focus on transparency and rigour (Page *et al.*, 2021; Mengist, Soromessa and Legese, 2020).

### 3.8 DATA SYNTHESIS

A narrative synthesis approach was adopted to integrate the findings because of the variety of the anticipated study designs, methods, and outcome measures in the reviewed literature. The process of synthesising qualitative and quantitative data is clear and explicit, in particular, when meta-analysis cannot be performed due to the heterogeneity of studies (Popay *et al.*, 2006; Ryan, 2018).

Narrative synthesis refers to the process of organising and summarising the results of a particular study so as to find out some broad themes, trends, and associations which can be extended to the research question. The approach enables the incorporation of all types of data, such as consumer attitude, behavioural intentions, and marketing

strategy grounded on sustainability claims in fashion without contextual loss (Suri, 2020). It involves the formulation of a preliminary synthesising, investigation of the relations between and within studies and measurement of the strength of the general evidence (Popay *et al.*, 2006).

The technique was especially suitable in the context of the present review because of the anticipated difference in the purpose of the studies, demographics of the participants, and the methods of measurement of the fashion purchasing behaviour of Generation Z. Using narrative synthesis, the review would produce a global picture of how sustainability claims would affect this group of consumers, without compromising methodological rigour and transparency (Page *et al.*, 2021).

### **3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical integrity is one of the basic elements of any research project, including systematic reviews, although this work is not associated with primary data collection of human subjects. This review is conducted in strict compliance with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practise (2022) that offers in-depth advice on responsible research practises. The principles stress the need to be accurate in reporting, avoid plagiarism and proper recognition of any intellectual property in order to maintain academic honesty (UWTSD, 2022).

The objective and transparent choice of studies is one of the main ethical points of this systematic review. The search strategy was broad and selective and involved multiple databases and grey literature whenever possible to minimise the risk of publication bias, where only the studies with positive outcomes have more chances to be published and featured in the results (Page *et al.*, 2021). The review included and excluded criteria that were always applied to minimise selection bias and optimise reproducibility (Mengist, Soromessa and Legese, 2020). This openness helps in the ethical aspect of fairness since it will give equal opportunity to have relevant studies considered.

Moreover, the extraction and synthesis of data and all sources were done with great care and detail and the intellectual property rights were attended to in the review. This will prevent misrepresentation and facilitate the integrity of the scholarly record (Naeem *et al.*, 2023).

The UWTSD ethics committee was approached and granted an application to carry out the review before the start of the review. This approval process confirmed that the review met institutional and disciplinary ethical standards, providing an additional layer of oversight and accountability (UWTSD, 2022).

By upholding these ethical standards, rigorous adherence to the code of practice, transparent methodology, and institutional ethical approval, this research maintains the highest levels of integrity, trustworthiness, and respect for academic and social responsibility.

### **3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter has presented the overall methodological framework that will be used in this systematic review of the effects of the sustainability claims on the fashion purchase behaviour of Generation Z. Based on a pragmatic research philosophy and steered by well-established guidelines (including PRISMA 2020), the selected systematic review design supports the process of systematically, rigorously, and reproducibly synthesising existing evidence. The systematic search procedure, inclusion/exclusion criteria, and systematic methodology of data retrieval ensure that the studies of interest are identified and analysed in a uniform way. The reliability of findings is enhanced since the CASP tool that was employed to quality appraise critically measures the methodological rigour among the studies involved. The narrative synthesis methodology is one that enables the integration of different data without losing the context. Ethical issues have been addressed fully and code of practise of Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practise of UWTSD adhered to and a UWTSD institutional ethical approval obtained, ensuring responsible and accountable research. Together, these methodological decisions support the validity and credibility of the findings of the review, and they will be a strong basis through which the sustainability claims affect fashion consumption by Gen Z.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 INTRODUCCION

This chapter summarises and discusses the study's findings, linking them to the research objectives and questions. It first presents a table of reviewed articles, highlighting key themes, methods, and outcomes on sustainable fashion and Gen Z behaviour. It then examines factors shaping Gen Z's perceptions, the alignment between attitudes and purchases, and moderating influences, synthesising insights, contradictions, and emerging trends to inform the conclusion and recommendations.

### 4.2 SEARCH RESULT AND INCLUSION OF ARTICLES

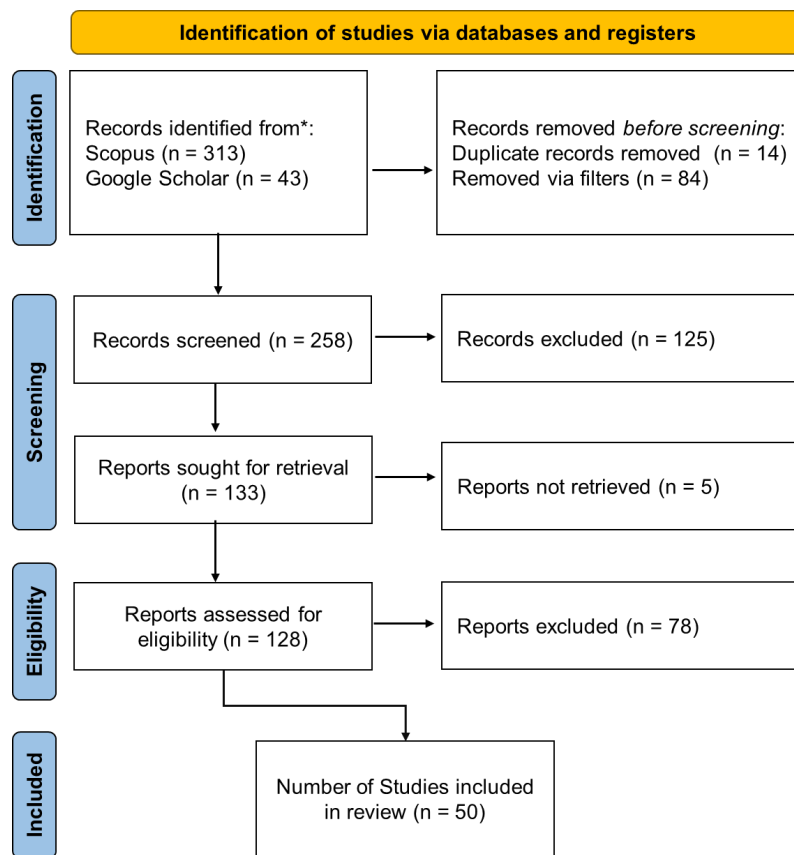


Figure 5 Screening and Selection via the PRISMA Framework (Adapted by the Author)

A total of 356 records were identified from Scopus (313) and Google Scholar (43). After removing 14 duplicates and 84 via filters, 258 records were screened based on title and abstract, excluding 125 as irrelevant. Of 133 reports sought, 5 were not retrieved, leaving 128 assessed for eligibility through full-text review. Following exclusions due to lack of relevance or insufficient data (78), 50 studies were included in the review.

### 4.3 SUMMARY OF ARTICLES REGARDING THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABILITY CLAIMS ON THE FASHION BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF GEN Z CUSTOMERS

*Table 2 Summary of Included Articles (N = 50)*

Index	Year	Authors	Title	Methodology	Key Themes (RQ-linked)	Keywords (RQ-linked)
1	2021	Abrar, Sibtain and Shabbir	Green consumption and pro-environmental behavior in generations Y & Z	Survey (N = 347, Gen Y & Z, SEM-PLS)	RQ1: Factors influencing purchase intention for green apparel; RQ2: Role of environmental knowledge and green self-concept	RQ1: Green apparel, purchase intention, Gen Z; RQ2: Environmental knowledge, green self-concept
2	2024	Adialita T.; Ramadanti F.A.; Vasudevan A.; Mohammad S.I.S.; Nagaraj S.; Raman A.; Subramaniam K.	Analysis of factors affecting purchase intention of slow-fashion products by applying the extended theory of planned behavior	Survey (N = 140, Indonesia)	RQ1: Slow-fashion purchasing behavior, perceived value; RQ2: Purchase intention influenced by attitudes and environmental knowledge	RQ1: Slow fashion, Theory of Planned Behavior, environmental knowledge; RQ2: Purchase intention, perceived effectiveness, green behavior
3	2024	Antunes S.S.; Bairrada C.M.; Garrido S.	The influence of dispositional traits on Generation Z's intention to purchase sustainable clothing	Survey (N = 247, Gen Z, SEM)	RQ1: Environmental concern and consumer traits; RQ2: Impact of optimism/pessimism on purchase intention	RQ1: Environmental concern, consumer traits, sustainable fashion; RQ2: Purchase intention, Gen Z



4	2022	Arora and Manchanda	Mediating role of positive attitude towards sustainable apparel among Gen Z	Survey (N = 308, undergraduate students, SEM)	RQ1: Role of positive attitude in purchase intention; RQ2: Moderating role of materialistic values and consumer knowledge	RQ1: Positive attitude, purchase intention, sustainable apparel; RQ2: Materialistic values, consumer knowledge
5	2021	Arora N.; Manchanda P.	Investigating the relationship between Internal Environmental Locus of control and Behavior towards sustainable apparel: The mediating role of intention to purchase	Survey (N = 294, SEM)	RQ1: Internal environmental locus of control (IntLOC) and its impact on purchase behavior; RQ2: Mediating role of intention to purchase	RQ1: IntLOC, sustainable apparel, consumer knowledge; RQ2: Purchase intention, behavior
6	2024	Borah, Kofi and Marwa	Green consumer knowledge and purchase behavior towards sustainable footwear	Quantitative (online survey, N = 559, Chinese Gen Z)	RQ1: Impact of green consumer knowledge on green purchase behavior; RQ2: Role of green advertising and trust in moderating purchase behavior	RQ1: Green consumer knowledge, sustainable footwear, green advertising; RQ2: Green purchase behavior, social responsibility
7	2024	Boyer, Jiang and Lyu	Reducing stigma around secondhand fashion for Gen Z	Quantitative (convenience sample, PLS-SEM)	RQ1: Reducing stigma around secondhand fashion; RQ2: Influence of social proof and influencer marketing on purchase intentions	RQ1: Secondhand fashion, stigma, social influence; RQ2: Social proof, influencer marketing, sustainable consumption

8	2023	Brandão and Magalhães	Young consumers' luxury motivations and sustainable luxury	Cross-cultural survey (SEM, PLS approach)	RQ1: Impact of luxury consumption motivations on sustainable luxury attitude (ATSL); RQ2: Impact of ATSL on consumer-based brand equity (CBBE)	RQ1: Luxury motivations, sustainable luxury, ATSL; RQ2: Brand equity, consumer behavior
9	2024	Copeland L.	Exploring young consumers' perceptions towards sustainable practices of fashion brands	Mixed-method (Online surveys and focus groups, N = 445)	RQ1: Gen Z's perceptions of sustainable fashion practices; RQ2: Barriers to sustainable fashion purchase intentions (e.g., price)	RQ1: Sustainable practices, Gen Z, consumer insights; RQ2: Price sensitivity, apparel purchase intention, responsible shopping
10	2022	Copeland L.; Masa S.	Social Responsibility of Apparel: A Study of Gen Z	Mixed-method (Online surveys and focus groups, N = 445)	RQ1: Gen Z's awareness and willingness to pay for sustainable apparel; RQ2: Impact of unique product and second-hand options on purchase intentions	RQ1: Sustainable fashion, Gen Z, purchase intention; RQ2: Unique products, second-hand shopping, social responsibility
11	2025	Deenmamode	Gen Z's perception of green marketing in sustainable fashion	Thematic analysis (N = 21, semi-structured interviews, Australian Gen Z)	RQ1: Gen Z's attitudes towards green marketing in sustainable fashion; RQ2: Barriers to green consumption behavior	RQ1: Green marketing, sustainable fashion, Gen Z; RQ2: Barriers, consumer behavior

12	2025	Do A.D.; Ha D.L.; Phan T.T.L.; Bui T.M.; Le T.B.N.; Tran M.N.; Dang D.Q.	Antecedents of Gen Z's green purchase intention in Vietnam's fashion industry with the moderating role of greenwash perception	Survey (N = 467, SEM with bootstrapping)	RQ1: Green purchase intention, attitude, and subjective norms; RQ2: Greenwash perception as a moderating factor	RQ1: Green purchase intention, sustainable fashion, greenwashing; RQ2: Moderating factors, greenwash perception
13	2023	Domínguez, Zambrano and Rodríguez	Vinted as a sustainable fashion platform for Gen Z consumers	Mixed-method (focus groups and questionnaire pilot study)	RQ1: Gen Z's motivations and perceptions of eco-friendly attributes in fashion; RQ2: Eco-friendly brand attributes in purchase behavior	RQ1: Sustainable fashion, Vinted, eco-friendly attributes; RQ2: Consumer behavior, brand perception, Gen Z
14	2025	Elsharkawi and Sun	Adoption of secondhand and rental fashion among Gen Z in Egypt	In-depth interviews (N = 20, Egyptian Gen Z)	RQ1: Barriers and drivers of secondhand and rental fashion adoption; RQ2: Cultural and economic reasons for sustainable consumption	RQ1: Secondhand fashion, rental fashion, cultural barriers; RQ2: Economic factors, Gen Z adoption
15	2020	Gazzola P.; Pavione E.; Pezzetti R.; Grechi D.	Trends in the fashion industry. The perception of sustainability and circular economy: A gender/generation quantitative approach	Survey (Generation Z focus)	RQ1: Perception of sustainability, circular economy; RQ2: Fashion industry trends and consumer perceptions	RQ1: Sustainability, circular economy, Generation Z perception; RQ2: Fashion industry trends, consumer behavior

16	2024	Ge	Influencer marketing and sustainable fashion purchase intentions among Gen Z	Survey (UK & China, SEM)	RQ1: Impact of influencer marketing on sustainable fashion; RQ2: Attitudes, norms, and behavioral control influencing purchase intention	RQ1: Influencer marketing, sustainable fashion, Gen Z; RQ2: Consumer attitudes, subjective norms, purchase intention
17	2024	Guo B.; Mi X.; Li W.	Design of Sustainable Fashion APP Based on Perceived Value Theory - Taking "Eco Echo" as an Example	Prototype testing, perceived value theory	RQ1: Impact of "Eco Echo" app on sustainable fashion consumption; RQ2: Green behavior and "green gap" in Gen Z	RQ1: Perceived value, sustainable fashion, green consumption; RQ2: Green gap, behavior change, mobile app
18	2025	Hassan N.; Taif B.; Tajuddin R.M.	Sustainable Fashion Consumption Dynamics: Exploring the Shift in Apparel Purchasing Behavior from Physical to Online Shopping Among Generation Y and Generation Z in Klang Valley, Malaysia	Quantitative research (survey)	RQ1: Online shopping shift, sustainability preferences in apparel; RQ2: Impact of online shopping on purchase patterns	RQ1: Sustainability preferences, online shopping, fashion consumption; RQ2: Apparel purchase behavior, Generation Z, Generation Y
19	2025	Kokkinopoulou E.; Papasolomou I.; Porcu L.; Vrontis D.	Exploring the Impact of Online Co-Creation on Eudemonic Well-Being and Sustainable Fashion	Survey (N = 393, Greece)	RQ1: UGC, eWOM, and their impact on well-being and sustainable fashion	RQ1: Eudemonic well-being, UGC, sustainable fashion

			Choices among Generation Z			
20	2020	Kusá A.; Urmínová M.	Communication as a Part of Identity of Sustainable Subjects in Fashion	Qualitative (comparison and analysis)	RQ1: Marketing communication in sustainable fashion; RQ2: Consumer behavior in sustainable fashion	RQ1: Marketing communication, sustainability awareness, Generation Y & Z; RQ2: Consumer behavior, sustainable fashion
21	2023	Lin C.A.; Wang X.; Yang Y.	Sustainable Apparel Consumption: Personal Norms, CSR Expectations, and Hedonic vs. Utilitarian Shopping Value	Online survey (N = 192)	RQ1: Environmental awareness and CSR expectations; RQ2: Purchase intention	RQ1: Perception of CSR claims, green purchase intentions; RQ2: Green purchase intentions, sustainable apparel
22	2022	Lin P.-H.; Chen W.-H.	Factors That Influence Consumers' Sustainable Apparel Purchase Intention: The Moderating Effect of Generational Cohorts	Survey (N = 408, Gen Z, Gen Y, Gen X)	RQ1: Environmental consciousness and generational cohort; RQ2: Sustainable apparel purchase intention	RQ1: Environmental consciousness, generational cohort, sustainability; RQ2: Purchase intention, sustainable fashion
23	2022	Liu	Influence of environmental knowledge and CSR on Chinese Gen Z's sustainable fashion consumption	Mixed-method (survey, interviews, SEM)	RQ1: Environmental knowledge and CSR in sustainable fashion consumption; RQ2: Mitigating attitude-behavior gap among Gen Z	RQ1: Environmental knowledge, CSR, sustainable fashion; RQ2: Attitude-behavior gap, Gen Z

24	2024	Liu <i>et al.</i>	Impact of environmental accidents on Gen Z's green apparel purchase behavior	Mixed-method (focus groups, questionnaires, SEM)	RQ1: Influence of environmental accidents on purchase behavior; RQ2: Impact of environmental awareness on purchase intentions	RQ1: Environmental accidents, green apparel, consumer behavior; RQ2: Environmental awareness, purchase intention
25	2025	Liu M.; Liang D.; Zhou X.; Sun J.	Communication strategies for eco-friendly apparel: experimental evidence from Generation Z consumers in China	Behavioral experiment (N = 374)	RQ1: Eco-friendly apparel communication and green claims; RQ2: Purchase intention influenced by green trust	RQ1: Eco-friendly apparel, green claims, green trust; RQ2: Purchase intention, consumer trust
26	2023	Manley, Seock and Shin	Perceptions and motivations of sustainable clothing consumption	Survey (N = 682, Gen Z and Millennial consumers)	RQ1: Consumer perceptions of sustainable clothing; RQ2: Gaps in consumer knowledge and priorities regarding sustainable clothing	RQ1: Sustainable clothing, perceptions, environmental movement; RQ2: Knowledge gaps, consumer behavior
27	2024	Masserini L.; Bini M.; Difonzo M.	Is Generation Z more inclined than Generation Y to Purchase Sustainable Clothing?	Survey (Propensity score matching, Gen Z and Gen Y)	RQ1: Differences in sustainable clothing preferences between Gen Z and Gen Y; RQ2: Impact of eco-friendly fabrics and second-hand clothing on purchase intentions	RQ1: Sustainable clothing, second-hand clothing, eco-sustainable fabrics; RQ2: Gen Z vs Gen Y, purchase intention
28	2024	Masserini, Bini and Difonzo	Is Generation Z more inclined to buy sustainable clothing than Generation Y?	Survey (Propensity score matching, Gen Z and Gen Y)	RQ1: Comparison between Gen Z and Gen Y's sustainable clothing preferences; RQ2: Factors	RQ1: Sustainable clothing, second-hand shopping, Gen Z vs Gen Y; RQ2: Purchase

					influencing second-hand clothing purchases	intention, eco-sustainable fabrics
29	2025	Mei X.Y.; Ventzel C.; Zachariassen I.	Can fast fashion brands win over Gen Z with corporate social responsibility communication on Instagram by appealing to their emotions?	Qualitative research (photo-elicitation, semi-structured interviews, N = 14)	RQ1: CSR perception, emotional appeal on Instagram; RQ2: Brand perception and purchase intention	RQ1: CSR, emotional appeals, brand perception, fast fashion; RQ2: Purchase intention, brand behavior
30	2024	Mohammad J.; Sodom N.Z.M.; Quoquab F.	Shop green, feel good: How sustainable fashion boosts gen Z's wellbeing?	Survey (N = 332, Gen Z)	RQ1: Pre-loved item donation and purchase intention; RQ2: Well-being impact on purchase intentions	RQ1: Pre-loved items, purchase intention, environmental concerns; RQ2: Well-being, life satisfaction, Gen Z
31	2025	Moraga M.V.; Favila Q.Y.S.; Magtibay C.G.M.; Palanca J.F.E.; Yvanovich M.S.	Analysis of the Factors Influencing Intention to Purchase Sustainable Local Craft Products: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach	Quantitative (N = 400, Gen Z & Millennials, SEM)	RQ1: Attitudes, innovation, price perception influencing purchase intention; RQ2: Sustainability integration in product evaluation	RQ1: Purchase intention, perceived quality, price perception, sustainable products; RQ2: Sustainability, consumer behavior
32	2024	Ngo T.T.A.; Vo C.H.; Tran N.L.; Nguyen K.V.;	Factors influencing Generation Z's intention to purchase sustainable clothing products in Vietnam	Survey (N = 641, Gen Z, SEM)	RQ1: Environmental and product attitude impact on purchase intention; RQ2: Role of	RQ1: Sustainable clothing, environmental attitudes, purchase intention; RQ2: Environmental knowledge,

		Tran T.D.; Trinh Y.N.			environmental knowledge and social influence	product attitude, social influence
33	2020	Pencarelli T.; Taha V.A.; Škerháková V.; Valentiny T.; Fedorko R.	Luxury products and sustainability issues from the perspective of young Italian consumers	Survey (N = 1314, Italy)	RQ1: CSR strategies, sustainable luxury consumption; RQ2: Intergenerational differences in sustainable consumption	RQ1: CSR, luxury products, sustainability; RQ2: Intergenerational differences, sustainable consumption
34	2024	Perez-Aranda J.; Tolkach D.; Panchal J.H.	Reputation and eWOM in accommodation decision-making: insights from Generation Z users	SEM (N = 296, Gen Z, Booking.com)	RQ1: Influence of sustainable attitudes on eWOM use; RQ2: eWOM use and its impact on sustainable purchase intention	RQ1: eWOM, consumer decision-making, sustainable attitudes; RQ2: eWOM use, purchase intention, Gen Z
35	2023	Pradeep and Pradeep	Generation Z's attitudes and behaviors towards sustainable fashion in the UAE	Mixed-method (survey and qualitative interviews, SPSS analysis)	RQ1: Gen Z attitudes towards sustainable fashion; RQ2: Gap between sustainability claims and actual behaviors	RQ1: Sustainable fashion, pro-environmental behavior, Gen Z; RQ2: Sustainability gap, purchase intention
36	2023	Pradeep S.; Pradeep M.	Awareness of sustainability, climate emergency, and generation Z's consumer behavior in UAE	Mixed-method (qualitative interviews, quantitative survey)	RQ1: Sustainability claims and purchase intention; RQ2: Behavior gap between sustainability claims and actions	RQ1: Sustainability awareness, fashion brands, Generation Z; RQ2: Pro-environmental behavior, sustainability gap



37	2025	Prashar A.; Kaushal L.A.	Nudging sustainable fashion choices: An experimental investigation on Generation Z fashion consumers	Experiment (N = 252, Gen Z, Vignette-based)	RQ1: Nudging influence on sustainable fashion choices; RQ2: Moderating role of environmental orientation	RQ1: Nudging, sustainable fashion, consumer behavior; RQ2: Moderation, environmental orientation, fashion choices
38	2025	Prashar and Kaushal	Nudging sustainable fashion choices among Gen Z consumers	Experiment (N = 252, Gen Z, vignette-based)	RQ1: Nudging effects on sustainable fashion choices; RQ2: Role of ecological consciousness in moderating purchase behavior	RQ1: Nudging, sustainable fashion, fashion choices; RQ2: Ecological consciousness, attitude-behavior gap
39	2022	Richardson C.; Boardman R.; Benstead A.V.	Using circularity as 'permission to shop' among Gen Z consumers	Semi-structured interviews (N = 11, Gen Z)	RQ1: Circular fashion initiatives influencing Gen Z's purchase behavior; RQ2: Sustainability in consumption habits	RQ1: Circular fashion, sustainability, fashion consumer behavior; RQ2: Consumption, recycling, purchase intention
40	2024	Rinaldi B.; Ciptaningsih E.M.S.S.; Andersean D.E.	The Influence of Altruism, Environmental Concern, and Social Influence on Purchase Intention for Eco-Friendly Clothing Products	Survey (N = 188, Greater Jakarta)	RQ1: Altruism and environmental concern; RQ2: Eco-friendly purchase intention	RQ1: Altruism, environmental concern, social influence; RQ2: Purchase intention, eco-friendly clothing
41	2024	Rūteliūnė A.; Bhutto M.Y.	Exploring the psychological benefits of green apparel and its influence on attitude, intention and behavior	Survey (N = 250, Lithuania)	RQ1: Green psychological benefits, green apparel behavior; RQ2: Attitudes and purchase intention mediating behavior	RQ1: Green apparel, psychological benefits, sustainable behavior; RQ2:

			among Generation Z: a serial multiple mediation study applying the stimulus–organism–response model			Attitude, purchase intention, purchase behavior
42	2024	Seock Y.-K.; Shin J.; Yoon Y.	Embracing environmental sustainability consciousness as a catalyst for slow fashion adoption	SEM (N = 1966, Gen Z & Millennials)	RQ1: Environmental sustainability and slow fashion adoption; RQ2: Gap between awareness and behavior	RQ1: Environmental sustainability, slow fashion; RQ2: Purchase behavior, sustainability consciousness
43	2024	Shankar R.	Generation Z versus Millennial purchase intentions: A comparative study based on social media marketing strategies in India with respect to the fashion and beauty industry	Regression analysis (SPSS, Gen Z & Millennials)	RQ1: Social media influence on purchase intentions among Gen Z and Millennials; RQ2: Marketing strategies and gender influence	RQ1: Social media marketing, Generation Z, Millennial behavior; RQ2: Gender, purchase intention, fashion industry
44	2025	Singh G.; Kaur J.; Kumar A.	Do brand coolness and brand romance synchronize with sustainability? Insights from a mixed-method approach	Mixed-method (qualitative in-depth interviews; quantitative survey, N = 711)	RQ1: Brand coolness and romance influencing sustainable fashion purchase intentions	RQ1: Brand coolness, brand romance, sustainability, purchase intention

45	2025	Sonkar, Singh and Singh Dubey	Generational differences in green cosmetic purchasing behavior	Survey (N = 401, online, VBN theory)	RQ1: Influence of eudaimonic and utilitarian motives on green cosmetic behavior; RQ2: Impact of generational identity on green marketing	RQ1: Green cosmetics, consumer behavior, pro-environmental beliefs; RQ2: Generational differences, green marketing, VBN theory
46	2025	Theocharis and Tsekouropoulos	Generation Z's purchase intention towards sustainable tech products	Quantitative (cross-sectional, multiple regression analysis, Gen Z sample)	RQ1: Influence of brand attributes (online brand experience, trust, image) on sustainable consumption; RQ2: Impact of online brand experience on purchase intention	RQ1: Sustainable tech products, brand experience, trust; RQ2: Purchase intention, brand image, Gen Z
47	2025	Vishnoi <i>et al.</i>	Influence of environmental knowledge, altruism, and consumer confidence on green apparel purchase intentions	Survey (N = 349, Gen Z, SEM)	RQ1: Impact of environmental knowledge, altruism, and confidence on green apparel purchase intentions; RQ2: Moderating role of perceived innovativeness	RQ1: Environmental knowledge, altruism, green apparel purchase intention; RQ2: Perceived innovativeness, moderating effect
48	2022	Williams	Conscious consumerism and sustainable purchase intentions among Gen Z in South Africa	Quantitative (online questionnaire, SEM)	RQ1: Drivers of sustainable purchase intentions; RQ2: Role of health, labeling, and peer pressure in decision-making	RQ1: Conscious consumerism, sustainable purchase intentions, Gen Z; RQ2: Peer pressure, product labeling, sustainable consumption

49	2022	Williams and Hodges	The value-action gap in Gen Z's sustainable fashion consumption	Focus groups (N = 41, Gen Z, USA)	RQ1: The value-action gap in sustainable fashion consumption; RQ2: Perceived barriers to sustainable fashion behavior	RQ1: Sustainable fashion, value-action gap, barriers; RQ2: Consumption cycle, Gen Z
50	2024	Zhang L.; Huang X.	Internal and external factors motivate Generation Z's sustainable apparel consumption in China	Survey (N = 577, China)	RQ1: Subjective norms, sustainable self-identity; RQ2: Purchase intentions, sustainable apparel	RQ1: Subjective norms, sustainable self-identity, environmental factors; RQ2: Purchase intention, decision-making

## 4.4 ANALYSIS OF RESULT

### 4.4.1 Gen Z Perceptions of Sustainability Claims and Their Influence on Attitudes toward Sustainable Fashion

*Table 3 Thematic Analysis of Gen Z Perceptions of Sustainability Claims in Fashion*

Theme	Subtheme	Codes
<b>Positive Orientation toward Sustainability</b>	Environmental Awareness and Ethical Expectations	High sustainability awareness (Copeland, 2022; Deenmamode, 2025) CSR expectations as purchase drivers (Lin, Wang & Yang, 2023; Liu, 2022)
	Identity and Lifestyle Alignment	Preference for second-hand and unique fashion (Copeland & Masa, 2022; Masserini, Bini & Difonzo, 2024) Eco-friendly attributes tied to self-image and peer approval (Domínguez, Zambrano & Rodríguez, 2023; Ngo <i>et al.</i> , 2024)
<b>Skepticism and Distrust of Sustainability Claims</b>	Greenwashing and Value–Action Gap	Sustainability as marketing rhetoric (Pradeep & Pradeep, 2023; Williams & Hodges, 2022) Greenwashing weakens purchase intention (Do <i>et al.</i> , 2025)
	Critical Responses to Brand Missteps	Environmental accidents intensify scrutiny (Liu <i>et al.</i> , 2024) Heightened demand for proof of authenticity
<b>Economic and Cultural Constraints</b>	Price Sensitivity	Price as a barrier to sustainable purchase (Copeland, 2024) Trade-offs favor affordability over eco-credentials
	Cultural and Social Values	Altruism and social well-being influence acceptance (Elsharkawi & Sun, 2025) Local cultural norms filter sustainability interpretations (Rinaldi <i>et al.</i> , 2024)

<b>Peer Influence and Digital Mediation</b>	Influence of Digital Platforms	Influencer marketing reduces stigma around secondhand fashion (Ge, 2024; Boyer, Jiang & Lyu, 2024) Social proof builds trust in sustainability claims
	Validation through Peer Networks	Reliance on user-generated content (Kokkinopoulou <i>et al.</i> , 2025) eWOM as trust-building mechanism (Perez-Aranda <i>et al.</i> , 2024)
<b>Demand for Authenticity and Transparency</b>	Expectation of Authentic Commitments	Desire for credibility and proof over proclamation Sustainability as core practice, not marketing add-on

Gen Z's perception of sustainability claims in the fashion industry is layered, conflicted, and deeply entangled with both their values and the contradictions of the market. Across the studies in your dataset, a clear pattern emerges: while this generation demonstrates strong awareness and generally favorable attitudes towards sustainability, their actual interpretation of claims is tempered by skepticism, price sensitivity, and the ever-present gap between ideals and behaviors.

Several studies highlight the optimistic side of this story. Copeland (2022) and Deenmamode (2025) point out that Gen Z consumers are increasingly aware of sustainable practices, and many express a willingness to support green fashion when they believe claims are authentic. They tend to value unique and second-hand options (Copeland & Masa, 2022; Masserini, Bini & Difonzo, 2024), and eco-friendly brand attributes resonate with their sense of identity and social influence (Domínguez, Zambrano & Rodríguez, 2023; Ngo *et al.*, 2024). Environmental knowledge and CSR expectations also emerge as powerful drivers of their purchase intentions (Lin, Wang & Yang, 2023; Liu, 2022), suggesting that Gen Z does not simply consume passively but actively evaluates the ethical stance of brands.

Yet, this hopeful narrative is complicated by a recurrent thread of doubt. Studies such as Pradeep & Pradeep (2023) and Williams & Hodges (2022) demonstrate that Gen Z often

identifies a “value–action gap,” where sustainability claims are perceived as marketing rhetoric rather than substantive commitments. The issue of greenwashing is especially burning: Do *et al.* (2025) demonstrate that greenwashing perception mediates the attitude-purchase intention correlation, that is, even positive perception may fail under the pressure of distrust. Likewise, Liu *et al.* (2024) emphasise that environmental accidents increase the scepticism of claims, increasing the level of critical scrutiny of Gen Z toward brand storeys.

This scepticism is strengthened by economic barriers. According to Copeland (2024), the phenomenon of price is still a significant barrier, and a significant portion of the Gen Z consumers are willing to recognise sustainability as a concern but favour affordability over eco-credentials when they need to make trade-offs. Cultural and economic aspects are also involved: Elsharkawi and Sun (2025) and Rinaldi *et al.* (2024) state that local values tend to philtre sustainability claims, and altruism, environmental concern, and social well-being are the factors that determine whether the claim is accepted or rejected.

The culture of influencers and online platforms makes the situation even more difficult. Ge (2024) and Boyer, Jiang and Lyu (2024) demonstrate that influencer marketing and social proof may decrease the stigma surrounding secondhand fashion and heighten the credibility of sustainable assertions. Nevertheless, this dependence on mediated trust implies that Gen Z does not necessarily trust the brand messages that they receive; on the contrary, they want to be validated by peer networks, UGC, and eWOM (Kokkinopoulou *et al.*, 2025; Perez-Aranda *et al.*, 2024).

Combined, the storey is that of wary interaction. Gen z consumers perceive sustainability assertions as valuable cues of brand authenticity and consistency with their values, but are sceptical of performative gestures. Not only are their perceptions influenced by the assertions themselves, but also the larger ecosystem of prices, cultural background, peer acceptance and the omnipresent threat of greenwashing. This ambivalence does not signal disengagement but rather a demanding posture: Gen Z expects brands to prove, not merely proclaim, their sustainability.

This synthesis suggests that the fashion industry’s sustainability communication must move beyond surface-level claims. For Gen Z, the future of green apparel lies in credibility,

transparency, and integration of sustainability into both product and practice, rather than a marketing afterthought.

#### 4.4.2 The Alignment between Gen Z Consumers' Attitudes and Actual Buying Behaviours in Sustainable Fashion

*Table 4 Thematic Analysis of Gen Z Attitude–Behaviour Alignment in Sustainable Fashion*

Theme	Subtheme	Codes
<b>Strong Sustainability-Oriented Attitudes</b>	Environmental and Social Responsibility	High environmental concern and CSR expectations (Lin, Wang & Yang, 2023; Copeland, 2022) Eco-friendly attributes and social norms shape intentions (Domínguez, Zambrano & Rodríguez, 2023; Ngo <i>et al.</i> , 2024)
	Alternative Consumption Models	Enthusiasm for slow fashion and secondhand consumption (Adialita <i>et al.</i> , 2024; Boyer, Jiang & Lyu, 2024) Preferences tied to innovation and lifestyle shifts
<b>Attitude–Behaviour Gap</b>	Barriers to Translation	Expressed support not reflected in purchases (Williams & Hodges, 2022; Pradeep & Pradeep, 2023) Convenience, cost, and trends prioritized over sustainability
	Economic Constraints	Price as a persistent obstacle to sustainable choices (Copeland, 2024) Fast fashion chosen due to affordability pressures
	Habits and Trends	Novelty-seeking undermines slow fashion adoption (Seock, Shin & Yoon, 2024) Trend responsiveness competes with sustainability goals
	Greenwashing Effects	Greenwashing perceptions weaken behavioural alignment (Do <i>et al.</i> , 2025)



<b>Impact of Skepticism and Trust</b>		Skepticism undermines purchase intentions
	Knowledge vs. Action	CSR awareness and sustainability knowledge improve attitudes but don't ensure behaviour (Liu, 2022) Critical consciousness both drives and hinders engagement
<b>Social Mediation of Behaviour</b>	Influence of Social Proof	Influencer marketing legitimises sustainable choices (Ge, 2024) eWOM fosters adoption of eco-friendly behaviour (Perez-Aranda <i>et al.</i> , 2024; Kokkinopoulou <i>et al.</i> , 2025)
	Reframing of Secondhand Fashion	Peer validation reduces stigma around secondhand fashion (Boyer, Jiang & Lyu, 2024) Secondhand reframed as individuality and eco-consciousness
<b>Partial and Situational Alignment</b>	Conditional Adoption	Sustainable practices embraced in secondhand and socially validated domains Weaker alignment in mainstream, price-driven markets
	Generational Transition	Attitudes serve as moral compass but require systemic changes (affordability, transparency, accessibility) Evidence reflects a generation "in transition" rather than hypocritical

The relationship between Gen Z consumers' sustainability-related attitudes and their actual purchasing behaviours in the fashion industry is marked by tension: a strong aspirational alignment on the level of values, but persistent slippage when these ideals are translated into everyday consumption. What emerges from the studies is not a simple contradiction, but rather a nuanced portrait of young consumers navigating competing desires for affordability, style, and ethical responsibility.

Gen Z scores high on the attitudinal side, with recurring tendencies of environmental concern and positive attitude toward sustainable fashion. As pointed out in the research of Lin, Wang and Yang (2023) and Copeland (2022), Gen Z does not merely comprehend sustainability discourse but also associates it with more expansive CSR expectations and feeling of social responsibility. The articles like Dominguez, Zambrano & Rodriguez (2023) and Ngo *et al.* (2024) demonstrate that the purchase intentions of their subjects are positively impacted by such features as eco-friendliness, environmental literacy, and subjective norms. Furthermore, the interest in slow fashion and second-hand consumption (Adialita *et al.*, 2024; Boyer, Jiang and Lyu, 2024) demonstrates that the attitudes of Gen Z are not theoretical, but are anchored in specific preferences in the area of innovation and alternative models of consumption.

However, gaps start to appear when such attitudes are exposed to the realities of fashion buying. One of the themes that is common in several studies is the so-called attitude-behaviour gap. Williams and Hodges (2022), as well as Pradeep and Pradeep (2023) conclude that despite the fact that Gen Z may be very supportive of sustainable fashion, the reality is that purchases are often less about eco-credentials than convenience, cost, and trends. Copeland (2024) emphasises that price is a mighty obstacle: sustainable products are viewed as expensive, and this financial obstacle drives many buyers to fast fashion despite the environmental attitude they express. Likewise, Seock, Shin and Yoon (2024) note that although the awareness of slow fashion is greater than in other areas, the actual adoption is lower than it can be since sustainability is in competition with established habits of novelty-seeking and responsiveness to trends.

This alignment is also complicated by the credibility of sustainability claims. Do *et al.* (2025) show that greenwashing perceptions decrease attitude-behaviour translation because, despite favourable attitudes towards purchases, scepticism reduces the intentions to purchase. Another reason Liu (2022) cites is the inability to bridge the gap because knowledge and CSR awareness can enhance attitudes but fail to change behaviour in the context of distrust. In effect, Gen Z's critical consciousness acts as both an enabler and a barrier: it drives demand for authentic sustainability while simultaneously fuelling reluctance when brands are suspected of insincerity.

Social influences, however, provide important bridges between attitudes and behaviours. Studies on influencer marketing and eWOM (Ge, 2024; Perez-Aranda *et al.*, 2024; Kokkinopoulou *et al.*, 2025) reveal that social proof reduces the gap by legitimising sustainable choices within peer networks. The stigma around secondhand consumption is lessening, and in some cases, being reframed as a badge of individuality and eco-consciousness (Boyer, Jiang & Lyu, 2024). This suggests that while individual barriers exist, collective and cultural shifts are steadily enabling greater alignment between what Gen Z claims to value and how they shop.

Overall, the synthesis reveals a complex dynamic: Gen Z consumers' sustainability-related attitudes are undeniably strong and often serve as a moral compass, but behaviours remain inconsistently aligned due to affordability constraints, skepticism of brand claims, and the pull of fast fashion culture. The alignment, therefore, is partial and situational visible in domains such as secondhand fashion or socially validated choices, but less so in mainstream, price-driven markets. Rather than interpreting this as hypocrisy, the evidence suggests a generation in transition: one that is willing to embrace sustainable practices but requires systemic shifts in affordability, transparency, and accessibility before their attitudes can consistently shape their purchasing behaviours.

#### 4.4.3 Moderating Factors Shaping the Link between Sustainability Perceptions and Fashion Purchasing Decisions among Gen Z

Table 5 Thematic Analysis of Moderating Factors

Theme	Subtheme	Codes
<b>Credibility and Trust</b>	Greenwashing vs. Green Trust	Greenwashing weakens claim → behaviour link (Do <i>et al.</i> , 2025)  Green trust built via substantiation, consistency, post-purchase experience strengthens persuasion (Borah, Kofi & Marwa, 2024; Liu M. <i>et al.</i> , 2025)
	Brand-Level Cues	Brand experience, image, and trust condition claim persuasiveness (Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2025)  Environmental accidents amplify scrutiny unless countered by transparency (Liu <i>et al.</i> , 2024)
<b>Costs and Structural Constraints</b>	Price Sensitivity	Price premiums on eco-fashion blunt translation of favourable attitudes into purchases (Copeland, 2024)  Affordability remains a persistent barrier
	Accessibility and Convenience	Limited access and lower trend responsiveness reduce slow-fashion adoption (Seock, Shin & Yoon, 2024)  Convenience pressures dampen sustainable intentions
<b>Social Proof and Digital Mediation</b>	Peer and Influencer Signals	Influencer endorsements and peer validation reduce stigma around secondhand fashion (Boyer, Jiang & Lyu, 2024; Ge, 2024)  Subjective norms amplify persuasion (“people like me do this”) (Ngo <i>et al.</i> , 2024)
	UGC and eWOM	User-generated content and electronic word-of-mouth build persuasive legitimacy (Perez-Aranda <i>et al.</i> , 2024; Kokkinopoulou <i>et al.</i> , 2025)

		Authenticity in peer networks increases trust
<b>Identity and Individual Dispositions</b>	Sustainable Identity and Knowledge	Sustainable self-identity intensifies claim impact (Zhang & Huang, 2024) Environmental knowledge enhances receptivity and inoculates against greenwashing (Abrar, Sibtain & Shabbir, 2021; Ngo <i>et al.</i> , 2024; Vishnoi <i>et al.</i> , 2025)
	Values and Personality Traits	Materialism weakens claim–intention link; knowledge can offset (Arora & Manchanda, 2022) Optimism boosts responsiveness, pessimism dampens it (Antunes, Bairrada & Garrido, 2024)
	Innovation, Altruism, and Control	Perceived innovativeness of green apparel increases attractiveness (Vishnoi <i>et al.</i> , 2025; Rinaldi, Ciptaningsih & Andersean, 2024) Internal locus of control strengthens likelihood of action (Arora N. & Manchanda P., 2021)
<b>Context and Design Features</b>	Cultural–Economic Context	Messages framed as moral duty, fashion, or luxury vary by culture (Elsharkawi & Sun, 2025) Context filters perception of sustainability claims
	Nudges and Choice Architecture	Nudge-based interventions increase impact when aligned with ecological orientation (Prashar & Kaushal, 2025) Decision architecture foregrounding eco-options drives adoption
	Technology and Experiential Tools	Digital feedback tools (e.g., “Eco Echo” app) close intention–action gap by highlighting impacts (Guo, Mi & Li, 2024) Tech as a “living moderator” of behaviour
	Brand Coolness and Appeal	Brand “coolness” and romantic appeal redirect attention toward sustainable options (Singh, Kaur & Kumar, 2025) Emotional brand connections amplify sustainability uptake

Gen Z's journey from encountering a sustainability claim to actually buying is not a straight road; it winds through a set of moderating forces that either amplify or choke off the effect of those claims on behaviour. Read across the studies you shared, five clusters of moderators repeatedly surface: credibility and (dis)trust, costs and constraints, social proof and digital mediation, identity and dispositions, and context and design features. Together, they explain why the same sustainability message can inspire action in one slice of Gen Z and bounce off another.

First, credibility is the gatekeeper. Perceived greenwashing reliably weakens the translation of favourable attitudes into purchase behaviour (Do *et al.*, 2025). By contrast, green trust, built through consistent claims, substantiation, and post-purchase experience, strengthens the path from claim → intention → purchase (Borah, Kofi & Marwa, 2024; Liu M. *et al.*, 2025). Brand-level cues matter here: online brand experience, brand image, and brand trust condition how persuasive a sustainability message will be (Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2025). Exogenous shocks recalibrate this credibility calculus: highly visible environmental accidents heighten scrutiny and dampen claim effectiveness unless countered by unusually transparent responses (Liu *et al.*, 2024).

Second, affordability and friction moderate even compelling claims. Price sensitivity repeatedly blunts conversion from “I like this brand’s sustainability stance” to “I’ll pay for it,” especially where slow-fashion or eco-materials carry a premium (Copeland, 2024). Availability and convenience pressure the same hinge; awareness of slow fashion can be high while adoption remains low when sustainable options are less accessible or less trend-responsive (Seock, Shin & Yoon, 2024). In short, structural constraints, price, access, immediacy, act as dampers on message efficacy.

Third, social proof and the architecture of digital influence often tip the scales. Influencer endorsements and peer signals reduce stigma around secondhand and make sustainable choices feel normatively “safe,” thereby strengthening claim → behaviour links (Boyer, Jiang & Lyu, 2024; Ge, 2024). User-generated content (UGC) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) play similar roles: when sustainability narratives circulate through peers (rather than just brand channels), they gain persuasive viscosity (Perez-Aranda *et al.*,

2024; Kokkinopoulou *et al.*, 2025) The norms that are subjective, i.e., the feeling that people like me do it, is a regular booster (Ngo *et al.*, 2024). The conclusion: the same assertions are more effective when they are prised through reputed networks.

Fourth, the state of identity and individual dispositions stipulate a receptivity. Claims on intentions are augmented by sustainable self-identity and subjective norms together (Zhang and Huang, 2024). Knowledge of the environment is often a positive moderator- both directly (claims are more coherent) and indirectly (knowledge shows resistance to greenwashing) (Abrar, Sibtain & Shabbir, 2021; Ngo *et al.*, 2024; Vishnoi *et al.*, 2025). Nevertheless, the image is not smooth: materialistic values are able to weaken the claim - intention link, whereas consumer knowledge cannot entirely weaken the claim (Arora and Manchanda, 2022). The change in responsiveness also occurs in dispositional optimism/pessimism; consumers who are optimistic are more willing to turn claims into a purchase intention, and pessimistic do not (Antunes, Bairrada & Garrido, 2024). Perceived green apparel innovativeness enhances the force of assertion, particularly in combination with the knowledge of the environment and altruism (Vishnoi *et al.*, 2025; Rinaldi, Ciptaningsih and Andersean, 2024). Internal environmental locus of control adds yet another boundary: those who believe their actions matter are more likely to let claims move them toward action (Arora N. & Manchanda P., 2021).

Fifth, context and intervention design shape outcomes. Cultural-economic context moderates whether sustainability messages resonate as moral duty, fashionability, or luxury surcharge (Elsharkawi & Sun, 2025). Nudge-based designs, choice architecture that foregrounds eco-options, can materially increase the behavioural impact of claims, but their effectiveness depends on the consumer's environmental orientation or ecological consciousness (Prashar & Kaushal, 2025; Prashar & Kaushal, 2025). Technology can act as a "living moderator": feedback tools such as the "Eco Echo" app help close the intention-action gap by making impacts salient at decision time (Guo, Mi & Li, 2024). Finally, brand "coolness" and romantic brand appeal can redirect attention and positive affect toward sustainable options, strengthening claim conversion among image-sensitive segments (Singh, Kaur & Kumar, 2025).

Evaluatively, three patterns stand out. One, credibility mechanisms (greenwashing perceptions vs. green trust) are the most consistently reported moderators and exert the largest practical effects: without trust, even high identity alignment and strong norms struggle to carry the claim into the cart. Two, social proof and digital pathways are powerful but contingent, effective when authentic and community-anchored, weaker when obviously orchestrated. Three, structural constraints are stubborn; price and access often overpower favourable attitudes, meaning that communication cannot substitute for business model changes.

For practitioners, the implication is to engineer moderators rather than merely message around them: lower effective prices (e.g., repair, rental, buy-back), build verifiable trust (third-party audits, impact dashboards), seed credible social proof (community resale, peer styling), and deploy context-sensitive nudges at the point of choice. For researchers, modelling these moderators explicitly, e.g., testing moderated-mediation paths where claims affect intentions via trust, with price and identity as moderators, will better capture how Gen Z moves from belief to behaviour, and under what conditions those beliefs are finally strong enough to win the checkout battle.

## **4.5 DISCUSSION**

The findings of this systematic review, organized around three key research questions, reveal a complex and often ambivalent relationship between sustainability claims and the fashion buying behaviour of Generation Z (Gen Z) consumers. While the results highlight a strong attitudinal alignment with sustainability values, the path to consistent behavioural expression remains fraught with skepticism, financial barriers, and contextual influences. This section situates the results within established theoretical frameworks, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and Cognitive Dissonance Theory, while reflecting on the methodological robustness of the studies as validated by the CASP appraisal.

### **4.5.1 Sustainability Claims as Signals of Identity and Values**

The analysis of Gen Z's perceptions of sustainability claims (Section 4.2.1) underscores the dual nature of these messages: they are powerful markers of brand authenticity and consumer identity but simultaneously vulnerable to skepticism, particularly in the face of



greenwashing. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs helps explain this ambivalence. For many young consumers, sustainability resonates with higher-order needs such as esteem and self-actualization, expressing individuality through secondhand fashion or signaling eco-consciousness on social media aligns with these needs. However, when affordability or accessibility are at stake, lower-level needs (physiological and safety, e.g., price and practicality) take precedence, illustrating how sustainability can be deprioritized in everyday consumption decisions.

#### **4.5.2 The Attitude–Behaviour Gap and Cognitive Dissonance**

The results regarding the alignment between attitudes and behaviours (Section 4.2.2) reveal a pronounced “attitude–behaviour gap.” Gen Z consumers frequently articulate strong pro-sustainability values, yet these values are not consistently translated into purchase decisions, often due to price sensitivity, fast-fashion trends, or convenience. Cognitive Dissonance Theory provides a compelling lens here: the dissonance between values (supporting sustainability) and actions (purchasing fast fashion) creates tension. Some consumers resolve this by downplaying the importance of sustainability in specific purchases, while others demand higher credibility from brands to reconcile the conflict. The evidence also suggests that influencer culture and social proof can mitigate dissonance by reframing sustainable fashion as normative, fashionable, and socially rewarding.

#### **4.5.3 Moderating Factors and Self-Determination**

The exploration of moderating factors (Section 4.2.3) reveals the importance of contextual and dispositional variables, credibility, cost, social networks, identity, and cultural context, in shaping the effectiveness of sustainability claims. Self-Determination Theory is particularly useful here. Gen Z responds most positively to sustainability claims when they enhance intrinsic motivations, such as autonomy (choosing secondhand fashion as self-expression), competence (feeling informed and capable of making sustainable choices), and relatedness (aligning with peers and communities). However, external constraints like high prices or unconvincing brand narratives undermine autonomy and competence, reducing the motivational force of sustainability messages. In this sense, SDT explains

why some sustainability claims resonate deeply while others falter in the face of structural barriers.

#### **4.5.4 Convergence Across Frameworks**

Collectively, the three theoretical frameworks emphasise various aspects of the phenomenon. The Hierarchy of Needs clarifies why the concept of sustainability takes precedence over other forces, with higher-order necessities like identity, belonging and self-actualization becoming dominant in motivating engagement in the event that the lower-level needs such as affordability are met. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) highlights the motivational dynamics of autonomy, competence and relatedness as preconditions of converting claims into behaviour and a sustainability that resonates most is the one that is compatible with intrinsic motivations. The Cognitive Dissonance Theory explains the discrepancy between values and behaviours and the use of credibility in eliminating or exacerbating the dissonance. These insights together, the findings imply that sustainability claims are more likely to be successful when they appeal to higher-order needs, increase intrinsic motivation, and minimise dissonance by being transparent and avoiding greenwashing. This triple bottom line makes the case that sustainability communication within the fashion sector needs to shift beyond rhetorical statements into tangible, verifiable actions that are incorporated into available and affordable business models.

#### **4.5.5 Validation through CASP Appraisal**

The credibility of these conclusions is reinforced by the CASP appraisal of the 50 articles included in the review (Appendix 1). The checklist revealed that the majority of studies demonstrated strong methodological rigor, with clear research aims, robust designs, and adequate consideration of validity. Approximately 80% of the studies scored highly on criteria such as clarity of objectives, appropriateness of design, and transparency of data collection. While some limitations were noted, particularly in the generalizability of small-sample qualitative studies, the overall evidence base was consistent and coherent. Importantly, studies that directly addressed greenwashing, pricing, and social influence were rated among the strongest, lending confidence to the synthesis of findings.

Thus, the results not only align with established theoretical frameworks but also rest on a solid foundation of critically appraised evidence. The systematic review, validated through CASP, confirms that Gen Z's engagement with sustainability claims is shaped by a dynamic interplay of identity, motivation, dissonance, and contextual moderators—an interplay that fashion brands must navigate carefully if they are to foster genuine, lasting behavioural change.

#### **4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Overall, this chapter presented and discussed the results of this systematic review, highlighting how Gen Z consumers perceive, interpret, and respond to sustainability claims in fashion. The findings revealed a pattern of cautious engagement, where strong sustainability-oriented attitudes and identity-driven motivations are often undermined by skepticism, affordability barriers, and fast-fashion habits, producing a persistent attitude–behaviour gap. Moderating factors such as credibility, price, accessibility, social proof, identity, and cultural context were shown to significantly influence whether sustainability claims translate into actual purchasing decisions. When compared with theoretical frameworks, Maslow's hierarchy explained the prioritization of needs, Self-Determination Theory clarified the role of intrinsic motivation, and Cognitive Dissonance Theory illuminated the tensions between values and behaviour, especially under conditions of greenwashing. Collectively, the discussion demonstrated that sustainability claims are effective only when they resonate with higher-order needs, enhance autonomy and relatedness, and maintain transparency to reduce dissonance. The conclusions were further validated through the CASP appraisal of 50 articles, which confirmed the methodological rigor of the evidence base, reinforcing the reliability of the insights presented.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

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### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter draws together the central arguments and findings of the study, offering a comprehensive conclusion to the investigation. The study examined the complex relationship between Gen Z consumers' attitudes toward sustainability in the fashion industry and their actual purchasing behaviours. It also considered the role of sustainability claims, moderating factors such as trust, affordability, and social influence, and the persistent gaps between values and action. By weaving together the findings from existing literature, this chapter provides both theoretical and practical insights, before outlining targeted recommendations, acknowledging limitations, and identifying opportunities for future research.

### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

The literature synthesis provided some important discoveries. To start with, Gen Z consumers have always shown a high level of pro-sustainability, and environmental awareness, corporate social responsibility (CSR) expectations, and ecological concern have formed positive intentions in relation to sustainable fashion. Research proves that sustainable qualities and practises, fashion slowness, and thrift shopping appeal to their value system. Sustainable fashion is not just a consumption behaviour to many Gen Z consumers, but a way of life, which is commonly associated with social norms and peer pressure.

Second, with such a good attitudinal base, reality purchasing behaviour does not necessarily coincide. There was a chronic attitude-behaviour gap. Several Gen z consumers associate themselves with sustainability arguments but cannot make them purchases because of affordability, inaccessibility to sustainable products, and the lure of fast-fashion convenience. Moreover, attitudes towards greenwashing, where by the business is overstating or even lying about their environmental values, are harmful to the trust and the connexion between the positive attitudes and actual purchasing behaviour.

Third, moderating factors were also found to be very important in explaining this disjunction. Credibility and trust play a big role in determining the action taken on

sustainability claims. The barrier of price and availability can also be used practically and in many cases, environmental considerations are pushed to the background. Social evidence, peer platforms and endorsements by influencers are strong facilitators, which legitimise sustainable fashion options and bring them closer to the mainstream. In the meantime, the identity-related variables of subjective norms, self-perception, and environmental locus of control also influence responsiveness to sustainability claims.

Fourth, the digital platforms and communication strategies are amplifiers of sustainable behaviour. One factor contributing to the intention-action gap is user-generated content (UGC), electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and applications such as the one called Eco Echo that help to make sustainability more visible and socially approved. Nevertheless, such digital interventions should be genuine so as not to strengthen the cynicism of greenwashing.

Altogether, the results indicate that Gen Z is eager and interested in sustainable fashion, yet, it is complicated by structural barriers, the lack of credibility, and lifestyle limitations. The alignment between values and behaviour is partial, conditional, and mediated by trust, affordability, and peer validation.

## **5.3 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.3.1 Theoretical Implications**

The findings of this systematic review contribute to the theoretical understanding of how sustainability claims influence Gen Z's fashion buying behaviour by reinforcing and extending existing consumer behaviour theories. First, the findings prove the applicability of the Hierarchy of Needs (1943) as they demonstrate that sustainability claims are most often appealed to higher needs like esteem, belonging, and self-actualization, but are often ignored when lower needs such as affordability and convenience prevail. This brings out the dynamic character of motivational hierarchies in consumer decision making and that sustainable consumption should be viewed in a flexible context-dependent context instead of a strict hierarchy of needs.

Second, the evidence is very strong in support of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as it shows that intrinsic motivations, autonomy, competence, and relatedness are the key

mediators of sustainable fashion decisions (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Sustainability assertions that improve the sense of self-authenticity, ability to make informed decisions and attachment to peer groups were found to be the most influential. On the other hand, such psychological needs are sabotaged by claims that seem to be manipulative or imposed by external parties, decreasing their persuasiveness. This highlights the need to have sustainability messages incorporated in a context of intrinsic motivation and not using extrinsic incentives like price cuts or celebrity endorsement only.

Third, the results build on Cognitive Dissonance Theory of Festinger (1957) by demonstrating that Gen Z consumers often face a dissonance between their pro-sustainability values and fast-fashion buying behaviour. Credibility is particularly relevant here: greenwashing increases the dissonance and kills the trust, whereas clear, consistent, and verifiable statements can eliminate it. This implies that cognitive dissonance in sustainable consumption is not merely an issue of internal struggle, but also a strongly mediated issue by external elements including brand transparency, peer influence and the cultural setting.

In general, the study contributes to theoretical discussion by showing that values, motivations, and contextual moderators interact. It implies that sustainability communication cannot be explained with the help of the single framework but needs a multi-theoretical approach that incorporates hierarchical needs, motivational psychology, and dissonance management. This synthesis provides a richer conceptual foundation for future research on sustainable consumer behaviour, particularly within the digital and highly socialized consumption landscape of Gen Z.

### **5.3.2 Practical Implications**

On the practical side, the findings carry important implications for fashion brands and policymakers. For brands, credibility is paramount. Gen Z consumers demand transparency, traceability, and evidence-based communication about sustainability efforts. Greenwashing can quickly erode trust and damage brand reputation. Brands must therefore invest in verified claims, certifications, and impact reporting.

The issue of pricing also comes out as a viable problem. When sustainable fashion is always priced higher, the students and young workers will be locked out in large numbers.

Overcoming this obstacle can be achieved by creating sustainable collections at affordable prices, providing second-hand, rental, and repairing services, or creating pricing programmes that are flexible.

There are also social and digital ecosystem opportunities. Sustainable fashion decisions can be normalised through collaborations with respected influencers, peer-to-peer resale networks, and neighbourhood-based campaigns. The intention-behaviour gap can also be bridged with the help of leveraging digital technologies to offer transparent supply-chain information and gamified sustainability engagement.

To policymakers, the enabling environment to facilitate consumer choices can be achieved through measures like subsidising sustainable production, taxation in favour of circular fashion, and prohibition of deceptive claims. Attitude-action gap will also be addressed through education campaigns that create sustainability literacy among the young consumers.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the implications above, a number of recommendations are given. To avoid the risk of being accused of greenwashing, first, brands need to improve their transparency and credibility through third-party certifications, release sustainability reports, and make the data on their supply-chain practises easily available. Second, affordability and access must be met by creating cheaper sustainable product lines, increasing second-hand and rental channels, and increasing the accessibility of sustainable products in the mainstream retail channel, so that sustainable choices become a status, not a luxury. Third, peer and social influence is to be capitalised through creating communities around sustainable fashion, promoting user-generated content, peer-to-peer sharing, and social proof to popularise eco-conscious fashion aspirational and decrease stigma. Fourth, consumer education must be prioritised, with brands, educators, and policymakers working together to improve sustainability literacy among Gen Z through workshops, campaigns, and digital tools that explain environmental impacts and empower informed purchasing. Fifth, innovation in digital engagement is essential, as apps, gamification, and interactive platforms can help close the intention–action gap by making environmental benefits tangible and personal. Finally, policy interventions are required, with

governments enforcing stricter guidelines on sustainability claims, penalising greenwashing, and incentivising companies that genuinely adopt circular economy practices, thereby establishing a baseline of trust and accountability.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION**

The conclusions drawn in this study must be considered within its limitations. The synthesis was based on secondary literature, which means it reflects published perspectives but does not capture real-time, primary data from Gen Z consumers in all contexts. Cultural variation across regions may also mean that findings are more applicable to Western and urbanised contexts than to global Gen Z populations.

Future research could build on these insights in several ways. First, longitudinal studies tracking Gen Z's purchasing behaviour over time would reveal whether attitudes and actions converge as sustainable fashion becomes more mainstream. Second, cross-cultural comparisons could highlight how socio-economic and cultural factors influence the reception of sustainability claims. Third, experimental designs that test interventions such as price reductions, transparency tools, or influencer campaigns would provide causal evidence about how to close the intention–behaviour gap. Finally, integrating perspectives from producers and policymakers could enrich understanding of the systemic factors that enable or constrain sustainable consumption.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

This study has demonstrated that Gen Z consumers embody a paradox: they strongly endorse sustainability in principle, yet often fall short of acting on those principles in practice. Sustainability claims from fashion brands resonate with their values but are filtered through layers of trust, affordability, and social influence. Moderating factors such as greenwashing perceptions, pricing, and peer networks ultimately determine whether claims translate into action.

Theoretically, this underscores the need to refine behavioural models to incorporate credibility and structural constraints. Practically, it calls for fashion brands and policymakers to make sustainability accessible, transparent, and socially embedded. Gen



Z's scepticism should not be viewed as disengagement but as a demand for greater authenticity and accountability in the fashion industry.

The alignment between attitudes and behaviours may currently be imperfect, but it is far from absent. With the right combination of transparent communication, affordable options, and supportive policy frameworks, the potential exists to convert Gen Z's sustainability aspirations into widespread behavioural change. This chapter, therefore, closes not with a contradiction but with a challenge: for industry, academia, and society to bridge the gap between what young consumers believe and how they buy, ensuring that sustainable fashion evolves from a niche ideal into a mainstream reality.

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## APPENDIX 1: CASP QUALITY APPRAISAL OF INCLUDED STUDIES (N = 50)

[illegible]

Copeland & Masa (2022)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Deenmamode (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Do <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Domínguez <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Elsharkawi & Sun (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate–High	High
Gazzola <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Ge (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Guo <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Hassan <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate–High	High
Kokkinopoulou <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Kusá & Urmínová (2020)	Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate	Moderate–High
Lin <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Lin & Chen (2022)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Liu (2022)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High

Liu <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Liu <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Manley <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Masserini <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Mei <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate–High	High
Mohammad <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Moraga <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Ngo <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Pencarelli <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate–High	High
Perez-Aranda <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Pradeep & Pradeep (2023)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Pradeep & Pradeep (2023)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate–High	High
Prashar & Kaushal (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High

Richardson <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate	Moderate–High
Rinaldi <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Rūtelionė & Bhutto (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Seock <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Shankar (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Singh <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Sonkar <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Vishnoi <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Williams (2022)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Williams & Hodges (2022)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High
Zhang & Huang (2024)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High