Sustainability or Overconsumption? Examining the Effect of Gen Z Consumer Motivations and Social Media Content on Second-Hand Fashion Behavior

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Abstract

Title: Sustainability or Overconsumption? Examining the Effect of Gen Z Consumer Motivations and Social Media Content on Second-Hand Fashion Behavior

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This thesis explores how Gen Z consumer motivations and social media content influence sustainable and excessive purchasing behavior in second-hand fashion. Although second-hand fashion is often portrayed as a sustainable alternative to fast fashion, its presentation on digital platforms increasingly reflects fast-paced, trend-driven dynamics. To investigate this paradox, a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design was applied. The qualitative phase involved focus groups and expert interviews, which confirmed and supported five key motivations previously identified in the literature, namely affordability, uniqueness, environmental concern, trendiness, and social or moral approval. These insights informed an online survey that tested their impact on overconsumption and sustainable behavior, alongside the moderating role of social media content.

The results revealed that uniqueness significantly predicts overconsumption, while environmental concern fosters more sustainable purchasing. Other motivations did not show significant effects. Although no moderation effects were confirmed for social media content, further analysis indicated meaningful direct influences. Content emphasizing trends and influencer visibility tended to increase overconsumption, whereas portrayals focused on sustainability and engagement with eco-conscious content promoted ethical purchasing. These findings highlight a persistent intention-behavior gap in sustainable fashion consumption, where expressed values do not always translate into action. They also challenge traditional models such as the TRA and the TPB by emphasizing the influence of symbolic and emotional drivers in digital settings.

This study contributes to marketing theory by bridging consumer psychology with platform dynamics. It also provides practical implications for resale platforms, influencers, and policymakers aiming to encourage more authentic sustainable behavior among Gen Z consumers.

Keywords: Second-Hand Fashion, Fast Fashion, Generation Z (Gen Z), Sustainability, Overconsumption, Social Media Content, Consumer Motivations, Intention-Behavior Gap, Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Sumário

Título: Sustentabilidade ou consumo excessivo? Examinando o efeito das motivações e dos conteúdos das redes sociais no comportamento da Geração Z relativamente à moda em segunda mão

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Esta dissertação analisa como as motivações da Geração Z e o conteúdo das redes sociais influenciam comportamentos sustentáveis ou excessivos no consumo de moda em segunda mão. Embora esse tipo de moda seja frequentemente apresentado como uma alternativa sustentável ao fast-fashion, a sua presença nas plataformas digitais reflete cada vez mais uma lógica acelerada e orientada por tendências. Para investigar esse paradoxo, utilizou-se uma metodologia mista sequencial. A fase qualitativa contou com focus groups e entrevistas com especialistas, que confirmaram e reforçaram cinco motivações principais previamente identificadas na literatura, entre as quais se destacam a acessibilidade, exclusividade, preocupação ambiental, atualidade e aprovação social ou moral. Essas percepções fundamentaram um inquérito online que testou o impacto dessas motivações sobre o consumo excessivo e o comportamento sustentável, bem como o papel moderador do conteúdo das redes sociais.

Os resultados mostraram que a exclusividade influencia significativamente o consumo excessivo, enquanto a preocupação ambiental estimula um consumo mais sustentável. As demais motivações não apresentaram efeitos significativos. Apesar de os efeitos de moderação não terem sido confirmados, análises adicionais revelaram influências diretas relevantes. Conteúdos que destacam tendências e a visibilidade de influenciadores aumentaram o consumo excessivo, enquanto representações sustentáveis e o engajamento com conteúdos ecológicos favorecem decisões de compra mais éticas. Os resultados evidenciam um gap persistente entre intenção e comportamento, onde valores expressos nem sempre se traduzem em ações. O estudo também desafia modelos tradicionais como TRA e TPB ao destacar a influência de fatores simbólicos e emocionais em contextos digitais.

Palavras-chave: Moda em segunda mão, Fast Fashion, Geração Z (Gen Z), Sustentabilidade, Consumo excessivo, Conteúdo das redes sociais, Motivações do consumidor, Lacuna intenção-comportamento, Teoria da ação racional (TRA), Teoria do comportamento planeado (TPB)

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List of Abbreviations

TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
Gen Z	Generation Z
IV	Independent Variable
DV	Dependent Variable

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In recent years, the fashion industry has faced growing criticism regarding its environmental and social impacts, particularly in relation to fast fashion and its influence on consumer behavior (Joy et al., 2012; Niinimäki, 2010). This business model relies on fast production, low costs, and shifting trends, driving short-term and volume-driven purchasing. Furthermore, it is associated with textile waste, intensive resource use, and concerns over labor exploitation in global supply chains (Bick et al., 2018; McNeill & Moore, 2015). The fashion industry produces an estimated 80 to 150 million garments annually, raising concerns about overproduction and environmental impact (Tonti, 2024). The production of a single pair of jeans can require up to 10,000 litres of water, illustrating the industry's environmental impact. Furthermore, it relies heavily on low-cost labor in developing countries, where inadequate regulatory frameworks and limited enforcement contribute to ongoing sustainability challenges (Niinimäki et al., 2020).

In response, second-hand fashion has emerged as an attractive sustainable alternative that is linked to principles of a circular economy e.g., extending clothing lifespans and minimizing textile waste by reuse and recirculation (Machado et al., 2019; Niinimäki et al., 2020). To address behavioral concerns, fast-fashion brands like H&M Conscious and Zara Join Life promote ethical sub-labels and initiatives such as recycling and repair (Gould, 2017). Although brands aim to align with sustainability goals, critics argue these efforts rarely reduce actual consumption (Remy et al., 2016; Stringer et al., 2020). According to Gould (2017), initiatives to promote the sustainability of fast fashion can inadvertently encourage more purchases, sustaining the cycle of production and waste. This gap questions whether corporate sustainability promotes real change or merely legitimizes consumption through a green image. Digital platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Vinted, Depop, and Vestiaire Collective have transformed how consumers engage with second-hand fashion (Future Market Insights, 2024; Cross-Border Commerce Europe, 2021). They not only facilitate the resale of used clothing, but they also cultivate online communities that normalize and celebrate thrifted clothing (Page & Hur, 2023; Vladimirova et al., 2024). For Generation Z (Gen Z), second-hand fashion has moved beyond its initial association of ethical consumption to become a means of self-expression and individuality (Branca et al., 2023; *Vogue Business*, 2021). Although seen as sustainable, second-hand fashion on social media may mirror fast fashion consumption (Page & Hur, 2023; Vladimirova et al., 2024). Influencer marketing, algorithms, and trend aesthetics

can drive impulsive and frequent buying. This may weaken the sustainability impact of second-hand fashion (Parguel et al., 2017; Vladimirova et al., 2024).

1.2 Problem Statement and Research Questions

While second-hand fashion is often framed as sustainable, its growing presence raises questions about the consumption it encourages, as digital platforms increasingly shape its perception and use. Aspects of social media and second-hand fashion have been examined in previous studies, but research that connects the topics is limited. Specifically, there is a lack of empirical research on how social media shapes the link between Gen Z motivations and second-hand fashion behavior. Previous research has identified several motivational factors like affordability, sustainability, and uniqueness in second-hand fashion consumption (Ek Styvén & Mariani, 2020; Ferraro et al., 2016; Guiot & Roux, 2010). Nevertheless, these studies are based on larger consumer groups and offer limited understanding of how such motivations apply to Gen Z. It also remains unclear how social media content influences them. Though common in consumer research, mixed methods are rarely used to study Gen Z's second-hand fashion consumption in digital contexts. Existing studies examined either consumer motivations or platform dynamics, which limits the ability to capture the complex interplay between psychological drivers and digital media. This thesis addresses this gap by employing a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design that integrates qualitative insights with empirical testing, thereby enhancing both depth and generalizability (Creswell & Clark, 2017). To address this gap, the study examines Gen Z's motivations for buying second-hand and how social media may influence related behaviors. Therefore, the following research questions and objectives are proposed:

Research Question 1: How do different consumer motivations influence Gen Z's second-hand fashion purchase behavior in terms of overconsumption and sustainability?

Research Objective: To examine how specific Gen Z consumer motivations relate to second-hand fashion outcomes, with a focus on differentiating between sustainable purchasing behavior and overconsumption.

Research Question 2: To what extent does social media content moderate the relationship between Gen Z consumer motivations and second-hand fashion purchase behavior?

Research Objective: To examine whether social media content examines the relationship between Gen Z's consumer motivations and their second-hand fashion purchasing behavior, specifically with regard to sustainability and overconsumption.

1.3 Relevance

Understanding the behavioral drivers of conscious consumption is crucial as sustainability gains prominence in the fashion industry (McNeill & Moore, 2015; Niinimäki et al., 2020). This is especially relevant given the intention-behavior gap in sustainable consumption, underscoring the need to examine its psychological, social, and contextual drivers (Johnstone & Tan, 2015; McNeill & Moore, 2015). This persistent gap between intention and action remains a central concern in sustainable fashion research (Carrington et al., 2014). Building on this, the study explores how Gen Z motivations influence second hand fashion behavior and how social media content shapes these patterns. Gen Z is a central consumer group in this dissertation, offering critical insights into contemporary fashion behavior. As digital natives, their habits are shaped by regular engagement with social media, which strongly influences their fashion impulses and shopping behavior (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021; Turner, 2015). They also play a leading role the resale fashion movement, contributing significantly to the rise of second-hand fashion (ThredUp, 2025; BCG, 2023). These patterns raise the question of whether their engagement reflects a genuine shift toward sustainability or reproduces fast fashion dynamics in a new way.

This research examines how digital platforms shape sustainable fashion by both promoting ethical consumption through collaborative models (Becker-Leifhold & Iran, 2018) and encouraging fast fashion dynamics via platform design and marketing features that drive trend-responsiveness and rapid consumption (Turunen & Gossen, 2024). From a theoretical perspective, it contributes to existing research on consumer behavior, digital media, and second-hand fashion. Drawing on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study examines how Gen Z motivations influence second-hand fashion choices in digital settings (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Building on prior TRA and TPB research in green consumption (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008; Yadav & Pathak, 2016), the analysis applies these models to Gen Z second-hand fashion behavior, focusing on how social media content influences whether motivations translate into sustainable choices or overconsumption. The findings offer practical insights into how social media content can shape ethical consumption, either supporting mindful decision-making or by promoting patterns of excessive buying. These insights can help marketers, resale platforms, and sustainability advocates shape their communication strategies to support more conscious consumption. Messaging that emphasizes authenticity, quality, and longevity may counter the trend-driven pressures shaping second-hand fashion online (Becker-Leifhold & Iran, 2018).

1.4 Dissertation Outline

This thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature on second-hand fashion, consumer motivations, and the role of social media in shaping consumption patterns. Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology, detailing the sequential mixed-methods approach. Chapter 4 presents the empirical findings from both the qualitative and quantitative phases. Chapter 5 discusses the main results in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the thesis by outlining theoretical contributions, managerial implications, and limitations, and proposes directions for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundations of Consumer Behavior in Second-Hand Fashion

The TRA (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) and the TPB (Ajzen, 1991) are foundational frameworks in consumer behavior research, particularly when analyzing ethical and sustainability-related decisions. Both theories emphasize the central role of behavioral intentions in shaping action (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). The TRA indicates that intentions develop from an individual's attitude towards a behavior and the perceived social expectations (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). The TPB extends this framework by incorporating perceived behavioral control, which refers to a person's assessment of how easy or difficult it is to engage in a specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This addition allows the TPB to account for situations where individuals may intend to act but are limited by structural or psychological constraints (Ajzen, 1991; White et al., 2019).

These frameworks are widely used in sustainable consumption research, including second-hand fashion, to explore how personal motivations interact with external constraints (Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2016). The TRA helps understanding how consumers attitudes and perceived social norms influence their purchasing intentions. Consumers' interest in sustainable fashion is shaped by perceived environmental benefits and social group norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Leclercq-Machado et al., 2022). This is specifically relevant for younger consumers, who value social conformity and identity expression in fashion choices (Badaoui et al., 2018). Subsequently, the TPB explains why positive sustainability attitudes may not lead to action when barriers like scarcity, hygiene, or stigma arise (Turunen, 2024). In contrast, the convenience of digital resale platforms can foster attitudes toward second-hand shopping and encourage sustainable purchases (Ek Styvén & Mariani, 2020). These dynamics

illustrate the relevance of the TPB in exploring the complexities of second-hand fashion behavior.

While the TRA and TPB help explain consumer intentions, researchers noted their limitations in predicting behavior in ethically complex areas like sustainable fashion. Both theories focus primarily on cognitive processes like intentions and attitudes, while neglecting observable behavioral outcomes (Carrington et al., 2010; McNeill & Moore, 2015; White et al., 2019). This limitation is especially apparent in the context of sustainable consumption. Consumers express strong ethical values, yet their actions do not reflect those values due to situational factors and conflicting routines (Carrington et al., 2014; Hanss et al., 2016; Peattie, 2010). As Sorrentino (2020) notes, the focus on self-reported intentions over actual behaviors complicates the discrepancy and challenges the empirical credibility of intention-based models. Additionally, Frambach et al. (2007) argue that post-purchase behavior, influenced by social and contextual factors, is a unique phase in the consumer decision-making process. This phase is, however, often overlooked by intention-based models such as the TRA and TPB. Supporting this argument, White et al. (2019) highlight the need for behaviorally grounded frameworks in sustainability research. Bamberg & Möser (2007) furthermore stress the relevance of situational and post-intentional influences on pro-environmental behaviors. Consequently, understanding sustainable fashion behavior requires moving beyond attitudinal frameworks and instead focusing on structural, contextual, and emotional factors that shape actual consumer behavior.

2.2 Fashion, Sustainability, and the Contradictions of Consumer Motivation

2.2.1 The Conflict Between Ethics and Excess in Fashion

Although intention-based frameworks offer valuable insights into consumer decision-making, they remain insufficient in contexts defined by structural and cultural contradictions. The concept of fast fashion highlights a prominent contradiction in the fashion industry, altering traditional consumer behaviors (Bick et al., 2018; Joy et al., 2012). Fast fashion's rapid production, low pricing, and shifting trends encourage frequent shopping and emotional gratification through low-cost, new clothes (Anguelov, 2015; Heuer & Becker-Leifhold, 2018). These dynamics have altered fashion into a consumption system where psychological involvement is limited and a throw-away culture encouraged (Gabrielli et al., 2013; Remy et al., 2016). Due to increasing environmental awareness and ethical concerns, second-hand fashion has become prominent as a sustainable alternative to fast fashion (Lundblad & Davies, 2016; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Recent research shows that second-hand fashion increasingly

mirrors fast fashion overconsumption, driven by low prices, accessibility, and the thrill of unique pieces (Gabrielli et al., 2013; McNeill & Moore, 2015). This dilemma, where ethical values coexist with high consumption, reveals a core paradox in sustainable fashion. For many Gen Z consumers, fashion is a key to identity, individuality, and social recognition. Although ethical and environmental motives are common, they are often compromised by price, trendiness, or aesthetic appeal (Gupta et al., 2019; Lundblad & Davies, 2016; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Researchers note that social and cultural pressure to follow trends often conflicts with young consumers' sustainable intentions (Beard, 2008; Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2015). Despite the awareness of sustainability, consumers may feel pressured to keep up with trends, as algorithm-driven resale platforms can promote frequent, excessive buying (Remy et al., 2016). Thus, overconsumption and sustainability should not be seen as mutually exclusive, as both can coexist within the behavior of a single consumer.

2.2.2 From Intention to Behavior in Sustainable and Overconsumption Practices

Despite growing ethical intentions among young consumers, their behavior often mirrors fast fashion trends, highlighting a persistent gap between intention and action (Carrington et al., 2014; Peattie, 2010). Studies show that convenience and price often overshadow sustainability goals in consumer purchasing decisions (Bray et al., 2011; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Second-hand fashion reflects a tension between being a responsible choice and a source of emotional gratification (Beard, 2008; Guiot & Roux, 2010; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Digital resale platforms intensify this tension by using algorithms, gamified browsing, and social features that mirror fast fashion and encourage impulse buying (Kim & Johnson, 2016; Rodrigues et al., 2021; Sundström et al., 2019). As Beard (2008) and Remy et al. (2016) suggest, second-hand shopping can serve as a means of self-expression and trend alignment, particularly among younger consumers. These insights challenge the notion that sustainability or value alone drives second-hand purchases. Instead, they point to a multifaceted behavioral landscape in which second-hand fashion is influenced by a mix of motivations, including identity expression, trend appeal, and affordability (Cervellon et al., 2012; Guiot & Roux, 2010; McNeill & Venter, 2019). These inconsistencies prompt a deeper reflection on what truly drives second-hand fashion consumption. Recent studies suggest that sustainability-driven purchases may reflect emotional or social motives rather than a genuine intent to reduce overall consumption(Gordon et al., 2011; White et al., 2019). The next chapter explores motivations behind second-hand fashion, showing how factors like uniqueness, affordability, and moral approval can both support and undermine sustainable behavior.

2.2.3 Motivational Factors of Consumer Behavior in Second-Hand Fashion

Second-hand fashion is often associated with sustainability, yet consumer motivations are more complex and also shaped by hedonic, social, and contextual drivers. Building on the intention-behavior gap, this chapter examines uniqueness, affordability, sustainability, trendiness, and social or moral approval motivations. Each is considered in relation to its influence on overconsumption or sustainable purchasing behavior among Gen Z consumers.

The desire to express individuality and to stand out from mainstream fashion style motivates young consumers to seek out second-hand fashion styles (Cervellon et al., 2012; Guiot & Roux, 2010). However, this motivation is ambivalent, as it can prompt impulsive buying frequent purchases, thereby leading to overconsumption (Clark & Goldsmith, 2005; Lundblad & Davies, 2016). For Gen Z consumers, unique fashion choices are often directly tied to their identity and how they wish to be perceived by others (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Joy et al., 2012). As McNeill & Venter (2019) points out, they used second-hand platforms to express their individuality and try to escape the fashion mass-market homogeneity. Yet the drive to stand out can lead into a pattern of frequent buying, especially on digital platforms that focus on trends and self-presentation. According to Clark & Goldsmith (2005), individuals with a high need for uniqueness are more likely to engage in frequent consumption. Similarly, Lundblad & Davies (2016) argue that this behavior could enhance materialistic desires by encouraging excessive hunting for unique pieces. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1a: *Uniqueness motivation is positively associated with overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.*

In contrast to uniqueness, affordability is often viewed as a more pragmatic driving force of second-hand fashion. It is linked to positive environmental impacts, as it encourages a great range of consumers to recycle clothing (Farrant et al., 2010; Hur, 2020). Nevertheless, in the context of second-hand fashion, affordability can lead to overconsumption. Following Niinimäki (2010) and McNeill & Moore (2015), lower prices encourage more purchases by lowering the psychological cost of consumption. Gen Z consumers oftentimes have a limited budget, which makes the principle of getting “more for less” even more appealing and weaken simultaneously the need or sustainability aspects (Hur, 2020; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Gabrielli et al. (2013) argues that affordable second-hand clothing can promote a fast fashion mentality, prioritizing quantity over quality. As a result, affordability can encourage unsustainable consumption habits, regardless of their ethical framing. This leads to the next hypothesis:

H1b: *Affordability motivation is positively associated with overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.*

Unlike motivations driven by acquisition, sustainability embodies a more intentional and value-oriented approach to consumption. The goal is to intentionally minimize the environmental impact through garment reuse and supporting circular fashion systems (Hur, 2020; Papasolomou et al., 2023). Consumers focused on sustainability tend to buy less frequently and pay more attention to quality of the materials and the product's life cycle (White et al., 2019). A study by Koay et al. (2022) suggests that Gen Z's engagement with second-hand fashion is influenced by environmental impacts and ethical concerns. Other studies reveal that motivations for sustainability can be overshadowed by more urgent influences, particularly emotional or aesthetic appeals (McNeill & Moore, 2015; Niinimäki, 2010). Nevertheless, sustainability motivation can promote more sustainable purchasing patterns, especially when supported by knowledge and perceived control (Carrington et al., 2014; Ek Styvén & Mariani, 2020; White et al., 2019). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1c: *Sustainability motivation is positively associated with sustainable purchasing behavior in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.*

Trendiness has emerged as a highly influential motivational factor in second-hand fashion, especially by the image-focused environment of social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok (Beard, 2008b; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Siregar et al., 2023). Second-hand fashion is now seen as fashionable and socially desirable, not only functional or ethical (Beard, 2008; Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2015). The focus on style and trends on social media contributes to a pace of second-hand fashion that mirrors fast fashion dynamics (Remy et al., 2016). McNeill & Moore (2015) argue that trend-driven consumption emphasizes the need for new clothing, potentially undermining sustainability intentions. Gen Z' sensitivity for visual appeal and the need for social recognition positions trendiness as a powerful driver of frequent buying, often at the expense of environmental concerns (Gordon et al., 2011). Based on these dynamics, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1d: *Trendiness motivation is positively associated with overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.*

Finally, social or moral approval reflects a motivation to act sustainably not only out of personal beliefs, but moreover to gain recognition from others (Gordon et al., 2011; Johnstone & Tan, 2015). Gen Z consumers, often referred to as digital natives, might choose second-hand fashion to signal ethical awareness and align with socially accepted norms, rather than for the

reason of environmental concern (Clark & Goldsmith, 2005; White et al., 2019). Zollo (2024) highlights that in public settings, aligning with sustainability values through consumption can serve as way to reflect one's moral identity. This argument is supported by Johnstone & Tan (2015), who argue that ethical consumption is often influenced by how individuals wish to be seen by others. In addition, Andorfer & Liebe (2013) highlight that social status and the desire for moral identity can influence ethical consumption, suggesting consumers want to align with perceived social expectations. According to Saracevic & Schlegelmilch (2021), the motivation for sustainable purchasing behavior arises from a desire to conform to social norms rather than by intrinsic ethical values. As a result, consumers motivated by social or moral approval may buy more to sustain a desirable moral image. This leads to the subsequent hypothesis:

H1e: *Social or moral approval motivation is positively associated with overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.*

These discussed motivations illustrate the gap between intention and actual behavior in second-hand fashion. While consumers express sutainable values, their actual choices are often shaped by conflicting motivations that may lead to overconsumption. To get a better understanding, the next chapter explores how social media shapes the link between these motivations and Gen Z's second-hand fashion behavior.

2.3 Social Media as a Moderating Force in Second-Hand Fashion Behavior

Social media significantly shapes the perception and consumption of second-hand fashion in the digital marketplace. These platforms have shifted from basic communication to curated environments where algorithms influence user perceptions and consumer behavior (Kapoor et al., 2018). The integration of user-generated content with commercial messaging complicates the differentiation between personal expression and advertising. This leads to an environment where users are influenced by subtle cues like aesthetics, emotional appeal, and social approval (Appel et al., 2020; Belk, 1988). In this context, social media emerges as a dynamic moderator, reshaping how intrinsic motivations are translated into actual purchasing behavior, particularly in the domain of fashion. This is the case especially among Gen Z consumers, who are digital natives and have a strong emotional connection to social media (K. K. P. Johnson et al., 2016; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Zahid et al., 2023).

First of all, social media influences second-hand fashion behavior by reinforcing trend-driven behavior, which can intensify consumers' motivation to stay up to date and buy more. By portraying second-hand fashion as stylish and socially accepted, consumers are encouraged to adopt trend-driven styles. Simultaneously, it provides a platform for expressing eco-friendly

values, reflecting the tension between fashion-conscious identity (McNeill & Moore, 2015) and value-driven engagement on social media (Kim & Johnson, 2016). Social media reflects the fast-paced nature of fashion trends by promoting second-hand clothing as a way of being stylish. Thereby, it mirrors the urgency and appeal of fast fashion while presenting an eco-friendly alternative (Ferraro et al., 2016; Mohammadian et al., 2024). However, this kind of portrayal can encourage trend-driven motivations, especially when influencer content creates emotional connections and social media marketing emphasizes immediacy. Together, these dynamics can lead to more impulsive and frequent purchasing decisions as consumers try to keep up with current trends (Budree et al., 2021; Ki et al., 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2a: *The portrayal of second-hand fashion as trendy on social media strengthens the relationship between trendiness motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior.*

In contrast, portrayals emphasizing sustainability represent a different way of moderating. Social media often presents second-hand fashion as the more ethical choice through e.g., content highlighting zero-waste living, upcycling, or climate-conscious messaging. This type of content taps into consumers' moral motivations and perceptions of ethical consumptions (Chatzidakis et al., 2016; McNeill & Moore, 2015). These portrayals are reinforced by social signals like likes, shares, and comments, which can trigger moral awareness and perceived norms (Brady et al., 2017; White et al., 2019). Beyond peer feedback, the perceived authenticity of influencers plays a key role in how sustainability messaging is received by users. When influencers genuinely reflect the environmental values they promote, their messages are more likely seen as credible and emotionally convincing, increasing their impact and reach (Brady et al., 2017; Lee & Eastin, 2021; Munaro et al., 2024).

H2b: *The portrayal of second-hand fashion as sustainable on social media strengthens the relationship between sustainability motivation and sustainable purchasing behavior.*

Beyond these portrayals, active engagement with sustainability-focused content adds another layer of influence. By liking, commenting, or sharing sustainability content, users affirm shared values and strengthen their personal commitment to acting on them (Herrada-Lores et al., 2025; Regadera et al., 2021). This kind of interaction may reinforce the internalization of sustainability goals and enhances the likelihood that motivation leads to action. Repeated exposure to sustainability content on social media can lead to sustainable consumption habits, specifically when it is reinforced by peer validation (Yanyan et al., 2023). Together, these

dynamics show that engagement can strongly shape how sustainability motivation can translate into actual behavior.

H2c: *Engagement with sustainability-focused content on social media strengthens the relationship between sustainability motivation and sustainable behavior.*

On social media, affordability is often framed as a practical and sustainable reason to choose second-hand fashion. Influencers extend this narrative by showcasing low-cost thrift hauls, framing second-hand fashion as both affordable and fashionable (Page & Hur, 2023). This portrayal can strengthen affordability-driven motivations and encourage more frequent, price-conscious purchases (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Page & Hur, 2023). While this positioning is appealing for low-budget consumers like Gen Z, it may also trivialize excessive purchasing by presenting it as a rational financial decision. As a result, the satisfaction of getting second-hand fashion at low prices can overshadow concerns about its environmental impact (Joy et al., 2012).

H2d: *The portrayal of second-hand fashion as low-cost on social media strengthens the relationship between affordability motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior.*

Second-hand fashion is often portrayed on social media as a way to express personal style, with a strong focus on individuality, and unique pieces (Boardman et al., 2022; Ferraro et al., 2016; Han & Sweet, 2021). Self-expression is especially visible on platforms like Instagram, where users showcase unique or creatively styled secondhand outfits (Han & Sweet, 2021; Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020). According to McQuarrie et al. (2013), influencers often see themselves as trendsetters, positioning second-hand fashion as individual and authentic. Sharing second-hand fashion content on social media is shaped by the desire to be unique, and receiving likes or comments can reinforce this through emotional rewards and social validation (Arif et al., 2024; Stsiampkouskaya et al., 2021). However, when second-hand fashion is framed as a way to stand out, it may strengthen uniqueness-driven motivations and lead to more frequent purchases, potentially contributing to overconsumption.

H2e: *The portrayal of second-hand fashion as a means of self-expression on social media strengthens the relationship between uniqueness motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior.*

Following this, Table 1 outlines the study's research questions and hypotheses:

Table 1: Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question	Hypothesis
1) How do different consumer motivations influence Gen Z's second-hand fashion purchase behavior in terms of overconsumption and sustainability?	1a) Uniqueness motivation is positively associated with overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.
	1b) Affordability motivation is positively associated with overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.
	1c) Sustainability motivation is positively associated with sustainable purchasing behavior in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.
	1d) Trendiness motivation is positively associated with overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.
	1e) Social or moral approval motivation is positively associated with overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers.
2) To what extent does social media content moderate the relationship between Gen Z consumer motivations and second-hand fashion purchase behavior?	2a) The portrayal of second-hand fashion as trendy on social media strengthens the relationship between trendiness motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior.
	2b) The portrayal of second-hand fashion as sustainable on social media strengthens the relationship between sustainability motivation and sustainable purchasing. behavior.
	2c) Engagement with sustainability-focused content on social media strengthens the relationship between sustainability motivation and sustainable behavior.
	2d) The portrayal of second-hand fashion as low-cost on social media strengthens the relationship between affordability motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior.
	2e) The portrayal of second-hand fashion as a means of self-expression on social media strengthens the relationship between uniqueness motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Model Definition

A mixed-methods design is adopted, integrating exploratory qualitative research with descriptive quantitative analysis. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods provided a deeper understanding of the research problem, in line with the principles of mixed-methods research (Creswell & Clark, 2017; R. B. Johnson et al., 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). This approach allows for a nuanced understanding of Gen Z consumer motivations and behaviors. Furthermore, it supports the identification of broader purchasing behavior patterns related to overconsumption and sustainability. These analytical strengths are supported by mixed-methods research principles (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Greene et al., 1989) and align

with recent findings on ethical and trend-driven influences in sustainable fashion (Johnstone & Tan, 2015; McNeill & Moore, 2015). This study applied a sequential explanatory design. Qualitative insights guided the development of the quantitative survey. The findings from both phases were integrated to enable a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Table 2 provides a concise summary of the study's core design features, including its applied focus, primary data basis, and dual epistemological orientation.

Table 2: Criteria of the Research Design

Criteria of the Research Design	Selected Variants
Scientific Approach	Mixed-Methods Study
Insigths Objective	Applied Scientific Study
Object	Original Study
Data Basis	Primary Analysis
Epistemological Interest	Explanatory and Exploratory Study
Number of Test Objectives	Group and Individual Study

Beyond its structural function, the mixed-methods approach addresses the epistemological and practical complexity of the topic by combining qualitative and quantitative data. Studies using only a quantitative approach risk missing the emotional and ethical depth of sustainable consumption, while qualitative only approaches lack statistical validation (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Greene et al., 1989; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Consequently, mixed methods approaches are increasingly used in consumer behavior research, as they address both the rational and emotional dimensions of consumer decision-making (Babin et al., 1994; Harrison & Reilly, 2011). Thereby, researchers can understand what consumers do and also why they do it, resulting in deeper theoretical insight and findings with greater practical relevance (Harrison & Reilly, 2011).

The qualitative phase consisted of focus groups and expert interviews, established methods for exploring subjective perspectives and constructing empirically grounded theoretical models (Flick et al., 2004; Meuser & Nagel, 2009; Morgan et al., 1998). Focus groups with Gen Z consumers were conducted to encourage peer discussion and to understand collective perspectives on second-hand fashion consumption. Furthermore, expert interviews with professionals from second-hand fashion businesses provided industry level insights to support the development of a contextually grounded conceptual model (Meuser & Nagel, 2009; Morgan et al., 1998). These insights informed the design of the quantitative survey and helped to define the main constructs for testing the hypotheses.

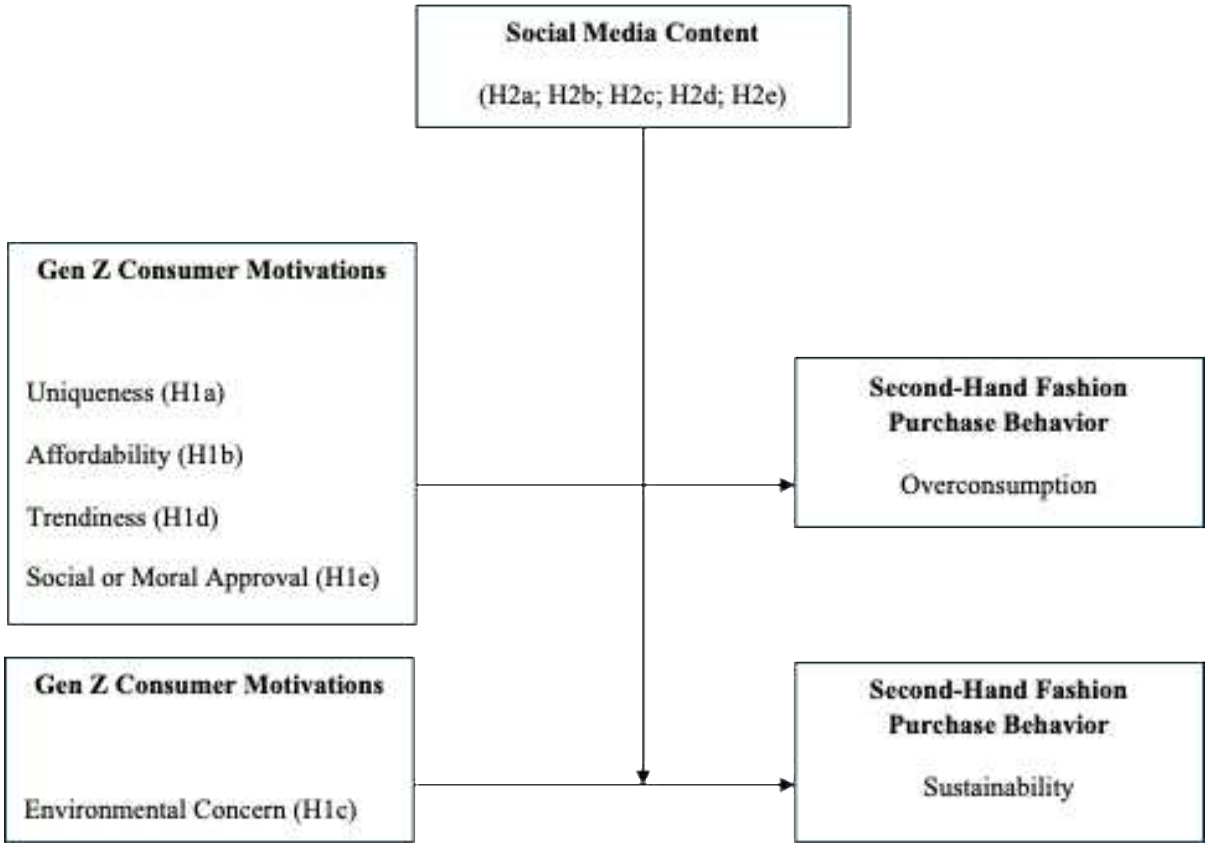
The quantitative phase was conducted using a structured online survey designed to empirically test the study's hypotheses. The survey included Likert-scale and multiple choice questions (Bryman, 2016; DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021) to measure Gen Z consumer motivations, second-hand fashion behavior, and perceptions of social media content. Findings from both studies were integrated through narrative interpretation. This approach allowed for comparisons between qualitative and quantitative results, strengthening the study's conclusions and contributing to the validation of the conceptual model (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

The proposed conceptual framework was developed based on existing literature and further supported by qualitative insights from focus groups and expert interviews (Meuser & Nagel, 2009; Morgan et al., 1998). The independent variables consist of uniqueness, affordability, environmental concern, trendiness, and social or moral approval motivation. Prior research has shown that fashion choices are often driven by both functional and symbolic motivations. The five motivational factors in this study build on these findings and were further supported by insights from qualitative data (Babin et al., 1994; Dittmar, 1992; Tian et al., 2001).

The dependent variable, second-hand fashion consumption behavior, is measured through two distinct, yet interrelated constructs, namely sustainability and overconsumption. Focusing on these dimensions allows for the examination of both the positive and problematic aspects of second-hand fashion behavior, as highlighted in prior studies (Armstrong et al., 2015; Johnstone & Tan, 2015). The decision to focus on sustainability and overconsumption is supported by research highlighting the contradictory nature of second-hand fashion, where consumers often balance sustainability intentions with trend-driven or impulsive purchasing behavior (Connell, 2010; Joy et al., 2012). This tension is particularly salient among Gen Z consumers, who frequently rationalize their fashion choices through sustainability claims while still engaging in trend-oriented or impulsive purchasing behavior (Harris et al., 2016; Johnstone & Tan, 2015). For example, research shows that many young consumers describe their second-hand purchases as sustainable because the items are reused, even though their overall buying behavior may still reflect trend-driven or excessive consumption (Bly et al., 2015; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Including both constructs as dependent variables allows for a more nuanced understanding of how second-hand fashion can represent both a form of ethical consumption and a way to justify excessive purchasing (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014; Bly et al., 2015). Emotional factors like guilt and moral self-licensing may lead consumers to view frequent purchases as acceptable, particularly when framed as sustainable due to reuse or resale (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014; McNeill & Moore, 2015).

Social media content is defined as the moderating variable, capturing its potential influence on the relationship between consumer motivations and purchasing behavior. Instead of measuring general exposure, the focus is on how participants perceive and engage with second-hand fashion content, particularly how it is portrayed and how much it influences their purchasing decisions. This approach is supported by previous research showing that social media shapes consumer attitudes by emphasizing values such as trendiness, self-expression, affordability, and sustainability, particularly among Gen Z (Appel et al., 2020; Djafarova & Bowes, 2021; McNeill & Venter, 2019). Recent studies show that Gen Z increasingly turns to social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram for fashion inspiration, sustainable lifestyle messages, and identity expression. Social media content, especially when created by influencers, is often seen as both aspirational and relatable. This makes it a powerful influence on how young consumers form attitudes toward fashion and make purchasing decisions (A Lin et al., 2023; Joshi et al., 2025). Rather than measuring general exposure, the present study focuses specifically on how second-hand fashion is portrayed on social media and how participants engage with such content. This targeted approach reflects the idea that it is not mere exposure but the perceived framing and the depth of interaction that shape how consumers interpret and respond to fashion messaging (Appel et al., 2020; Djafarova & Bowes, 2021; McNeill & Venter, 2019). Following, Figure 1 presents the structure of the proposed conceptual model:

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework



3.2 Data Collection Techniques and Sample Definition

The qualitative data collection included two focus group discussions with Gen Z second-hand fashion consumers and four expert interviews with professionals from the second-hand fashion industry. Focus group participants were aged between 19-27 and selected through purpose sampling (Patton, 2002) based on their regular second-hand fashion purchases and active use of social media. They were recruited through social and personal networks to ensure relevant experience. Participants were selected to reflect different motivational factors to ensure diverse perspectives during group discussions (Morgan et al., 1998). Focus groups were chosen because they create a dynamic environment in which participants can respond to and build on each other's ideas. This setting enables the emergence of shared motivations, social norms, and collective insights, which are especially valuable for understanding the group-oriented dynamics of Gen Z consumer culture (Krueger, 2014; Morgan et al., 1998). Both focus groups were conducted online and lasted between 90-120 minutes. A semi-structured discussion guide (Appendix A) ensured consistency across different topics while leaving room for open-ended discussions (Kallio et al., 2016). Both sessions were divided into thematic areas, namely shopping preferences, motivations for second-hand fashion, and the role of social media in purchasing behavior. To encourage engagement and reflection, a digital whiteboard was used

for taking notes, supported by interactive tools like sticky notes to gather spontaneous ideas (Archibald et al., 2019). Thematic blocks were designed to support the inductive emergence of motivational factors related to second-hand fashion (Thomas, 2006). An overview is provided in Table 3:

Table 3: Focus Groups Overview

Focus Group	Number of Participants	Age	Recruitment	Selection Criteria	Method	Thematic Blocks
1	5 (3 male, 2 female)	19-27	Social and personal networks	Second-hand fashion buyers, social media users	Online, 90-120 min	1. Shopping preferences 2. Motivations for second-hand fashion 3. Influence of social media (platforms, influencers, content types, emotional reactions)
2	8 (5 male, 3 female)	21-27	Social and personal networks	Second-hand fashion buyers, social media users	Online, 90-120 min	1. Shopping preferences 2. Motivations for second-hand fashion 3. Influence of social media (platforms, influencers, content types, emotional reactions)

Professionals who had at least three years of experience in the second-hand fashion business were considered for the expert interviews (Meuser & Nagel, 2009). The use of expert interviews was essential for gaining industry-level insights that could contextualize the consumer perspectives identified in the focus groups. Experts provide a strategic view on market developments, operational challenges, and evolving trends, helping to validate and expand upon consumer-driven themes (Bogner et al., 2009; Meuser & Nagel, 2009). Their input was critical in assessing whether Gen Z consumption motivations align with broader sustainability discourses and retail strategies. Two interviews were held in person in Lisbon, and the other two took place online. A semi-structured interview guide (Kallio et al., 2016) was used to explore Gen Z motivations, social media's role in second-hand fashion, impulsive consumption, and sustainability perceptions (Appendix B). This flexible structure encouraged open discussion, supporting the emergence of new themes while minimizing interviewer bias (Bogner et al., 2009; Patton, 2002). An overview is provided in Table 4:

Table 4: Expert Interviews Overview

Interview	Interviewee Role	Location	Interview Format	Duration	Thematic Areas
1	Marketing Manager, Humana Portugal	Portugal	Online	30-60 min	1. Gen Z motivations 2. Social media influence 3. Impulse buying 4. Sustainability vs. overconsumption
2	Former Content Marketing Manager, Vinokilo	Germany	Online	30-60 min	1. Gen Z motivations 2. Social media influence 3. Impulse buying 4. Sustainability vs. overconsumption
3	Owner, Malala Vintage	Portugal	In-person	30-60 min	1. Gen Z motivations 2. Social media influence 3. Impulse buying 4. Sustainability vs. overconsumption
4	Owner, Pink Vintage Heart	Portugal	In-person	30-60 min	1. Gen Z motivations 2. Social media influence 3. Impulse buying 4. Sustainability vs. overconsumption

Integrating consumer and expert perspectives enabled methodological triangulation, enhancing both the credibility and thematic depth of the qualitative findings (Denzin, 2012; Flick, 2018). Insights directly informed the structure and content of the questionnaire. In line with established guidelines for scale development (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021), the survey included four sections, covering screening questions, general and second-hand fashion shopping behavior, the role of social media, and demographics. Screening questions on birth year and second-hand shopping experience to ensure participant eligibility. Following, general and second-hand shopping behavior were addressed, including purchase frequency, preferred shopping channels, and the number of second-hand fashion items acquired in the past six months. These items were included to provide a descriptive overview of participants' shopping habits and contextualize the quantitative findings within actual second-hand fashion behavior. The next block measured five motivational factors, identified in the literature and supported by qualitative research, including social or moral approval, uniqueness, affordability, trendiness, and environmental concern. Items for each motivational factor were only shown to participants who had previously selected that motivation as a primary reason for their second-hand fashion purchases. This section reflected the key independent variables from the research model and allowed for testing how different motivations influenced second-hand fashion consumption. It also included items used to assess the study's dependent variable, second-hand fashion consumption behavior, based on participants' attitudes and self-reported fashion habits. All items were measured using five-point Likert scales ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' to ensure consistency across the questionnaire. Lastly, the role of social media was examined, focusing on portrayal, engagement, and perceived influence. Participants

indicated how second-hand fashion is typically portrayed on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, and Vinted; for example as sustainable, affordable, or expressive. Further, they reflected on how they engage with such content and to what extent influencers, peers, and advertisement influence their purchasing decisions. Therefore, Table 5 summarizes the measured variables, listing the questionnaire items, their literature sources, and previously reported Cronbach's Alpha values for comparable scales.

Table 5: Questionnaire's Measurement Items

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Item	Source
-	-	[Q1] Were you born before 1997? [Q2] Did you buy a second-hand fashion item in the past two years?	-
General Shopping Behavior	-	[Q3] How often do you shop for clothing in general? [Q4] How often do you shop for clothing online? [Q5] How often do you shop for clothing in-store?	-
Second-Hand Fashion Shopping Behavior	-	[Q6] How often do you shop for second-hand fashion? [Q7] How many second-hand fashion items have you purchased in the past six months? [Q8] What is your main reason to buy second-hand fashion?	-
Social or Moral Approval	0.90	[Q9] I feel good when others recognize my conscious consumption. [Q10] I want to be seen as someone who makes ethical choices. [Q11] I share my second-hand finds on social media to promote sustainability. [Q12] Buying second-hand makes me feel morally superior to fast-fashion shoppers. [Q13] I enjoy the social identity that comes with sustainable fashion. [Q14] I feel pressure to conform to socially approved consumption patterns.	Adapted by (Chatzidakis et al., 2016) & Qualitative Research
Unique Pieces	0.96	[Q15] I like to express my personal style. [Q16] I enjoy wearing things that no one else has. [Q17] I want to stand out from mainstream fashion trends. [Q18] Vintage fashion appeals to me aesthetically. [Q19] I find joy in the treasure hunt experience. [Q20] Unique items feel more meaningful or special to me.	Adapted by (Tian et al., 2001) & Qualitative Research
Affordibility	.70-.88	[Q21] I can get high-quality items for a lower price. [Q22] It helps me manage my personal budget. [Q23] I prefer not to spend too much on clothing. [Q24] It allows me to buy from brands I couldn't afford [Q25] I like finding good deals or bargains. [Q26] I shop second-hand to reduce unnecessary spending.	Adapted by (Guiot & Roux, 2010) & Qualitative Research
Trendiness	0.83	[Q27] Second-hand fashion is popular among my friends/peers. [Q28] I follow influencers or celebrities who promote second-hand fashion. [Q29] I like being part of a socially conscious fashion [Q30] I feel more socially accepted when I wear second-hand. [Q31] I see second-hand fashion as modern and stylish. [Q32] Buying second-hand fits with my current lifestyle image.	Adapted by (Ferraro et al., 2016) & Qualitative Research
Environmental Concern	0.93	[Q33] I want to reduce clothing waste and landfill. [Q34] I try to avoid supporting fast fashion brands. [Q35] Buying second-hand aligns with my sustainable lifestyle. [Q36] I believe in reusing and recycling whenever possible. [Q37] I care about the environmental impact of clothing production. [Q38] I feel better about my purchases when they're more sustainable.	Adapted by (Hanss et al., 2016) & Qualitative Research

Overconsumption	0.93	[Q39] I sometimes purchase fashion items impulsively. [Q40] I often buy more clothing than I actually need. [Q41] Buying second-hand makes it easier for me to justify buying more. [Q42] I buy fashion items because they feel scarce or limited in availability.	Adapted by (Sundström et al., 2019) & Qualitative Research
Sustainable Purchase Behavior	.86	[Q43] I buy second-hand fashion because I care about reducing waste. [Q44] I actively avoid supporting fast-fashion brands. [Q45] I try to extend the life of my clothing as much as possible.	Adapted by (Koay et al., 2022) & Qualitative Research
-	-	[Q46] What platforms do you use when it comes to second-hand fashion?	-
Portrayal of Second-Hand Fashion on Social Media	0.82	[Q47] A way to belong to a specific community. [Q48] A trendy and fashionable lifestyle. [Q49] A way to express personal creativity. [Q50] A sustainable and ethical choice. [Q51] A low-cost shopping alternative.	Adapted by (Page & Hur, 2023) & Qualitative Research
Behavioral Social Media Engagement	0.92	[Q52] I engage more with second-hand fashion content that focuses on personal style or outfits. [Q53] I engage more with second-hand fashion content that highlights environmental impact. [Q54] I engage with second-hand fashion content regardless of whether it focuses on style or sustainability. [Q55] My engagement depends on the tone and authenticity of the content rather than the topic.	Adapted by (Ki et al., 2020) & Qualitative Research
Social Media Influence	-	[Q56] I'm influenced by influencers that post about their outfits / share their fashion content. [Q57] I'm influenced by my friends / family that post about their outfits/share their fashion content. [Q58] I'm influenced by ads from fashion companies.	-
-	-	[Q59] Gender [Q60] Employment Status [Q61] Education [Q62] Income	-

Data were collected through an online Qualtrics survey (Appendix C) targeting Gen Z consumers aged 18-27, using convenience sampling (Etikan et al., 2016). Participants were recruited over a two-week period using Prolific and social and personal networks. To ensure sample relevance, participants were screened before starting with the actual survey questions. Insights from the qualitative method shaped the survey design, ensuring conceptual alignment with the sequential explanatory mixed-methods framework (Creswell & Clark, 2017). A pilot study with five people was conducted to assess item clarity and improve the survey structure prior to launch (Presser et al., 2004). All data were collected anonymously and in line with ethical research standards (The British Psychological Society 2021). Building on the exploratory depth of the qualitative phase, the quantitative survey allowed for the systematic testing of the proposed theoretical relationships across a larger sample. This step was crucial to validate patterns observed in focus groups and interviews, assess the generalizability of

motivational and behavioral drivers, and detect potential moderating effects of social media content (Bryman, 2016; Creswell & Clark, 2017).

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data was analyzed manually using Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach, including familiarization, pattern recognition, theme development, and final interpretation. The analysis combined inductive and deductive reasoning (Thomas, 2006), allowing for both the emergence of new topics and the exploration of theoretically relevant concepts. Key themes include motivations for second-hand fashion, the role of social media, impulsive-buying, and the gap between sustainability intentions and behavior (Appendix D & E).

Affordability was framed as a pragmatically motivation by consumers and experts. Participants mentioned it as a key factor in their decision-making, with one noting: "*I would buy second-hand […] mostly for practicality and money-reasons*." Others mentioned flea markets and peer-to-peer platforms as especially appealing for their low prices, with one noting "*I was at a flea market and everything was two euros […] I thought, sure, why not?*" Similarly, a HUMANA expert pointed out the tension within affordability, noting that "*We have days where everything is at one euro […] it gives people the opportunity to buy clothes they need, but it also invites others to buy clothes they don't need.*" This contrast shows that while affordability is seen as a benefit, it also tends to justify impulsive purchases that often go beyond the actual need.

Individual style and the hunt for *unique pieces* emerged as another primary motivational factor. One Gen Z consumer pointed out "*I definitely need individuality. I shop for it because I want clothes where I don't feel like everybody else is wearing it.*" Others described second-hand fashion as "*fun*," "*inspiring*," and a way to discover "*cool, unique pieces that no one else has*." Experts reinforced this perspective. One expert remarked, "*People feel proud when they have something nobody else has*," emphasizing that second-hand clothing might be chosen for their individuality rather than for sustainable reasons. For many consumers, second-hand shopping feels personal, as a way to express identity and explore their unique style. Yet like affordability, the search for unique pieces might lead to frequent purchasing.

Participants mentioned *trendiness* as a key factor and seeing second-hand fashion as way to be stylish and keep up with current trends. "*Second-hand fashion is stylish and trendy nowadays*," as one participant put it, while another confessed "*I feel pressured to look good and go second-hand shopping all the time*." Experts agreed on this point, with one noting, "*Trend is number one. If the item is trendy, they'll get it. Sustainability comes after*." A Vinokilo expert observed,

"*People come because second-hand fashion is cool. That's the motor – not sustainability*." These insights show how trendiness often took precedence, driving consumption more through style than ethical values.

Environmental Concern was frequently mentioned, but appeared more as a secondary motivation, with participants emphasizing it more when reflecting on their decisions. One stated: "*I put down sustainability as a motivation because when I do buy something second-hand, I have the feeling afterwards like, 'Ah, nice, it's sustainable.' But it's not like I do it because of sustainability*." Another reflected, "*Sustainability is always in the back of the mind – makes shopping much more like a feel-good experience*." This gap between intentions and behavior was supported by experts. One mentioned, "*Our posts about sustainability don't get much interaction... people usually seek fashion and promotion content*." Across the data, environmental concern appeared more as a symbolic gesture than a key driver of behavior and was often used to justify purchases motivated by other factors.

Many participants were highly aware of how their choices were perceived by others, highlighting *social or moral approval* motivation. One consumer shared, "*If I buy second-hand, I feel better about myself and my shopping decision*," while another acknowledged, "*I feel ashamed sometimes if somebody asks me 'Where's this from?' and I have to say 'H&M.'*" Such comments reveal that second-hand fashion expresses a desire to appear responsible, thoughtful, and socially aware. Experts highlighted a social divide in how second-hand fashion is perceived. It was noted that "*Rich people can wear second-hand and it's cool, but if poor people do it, it's not cool because they don't have a choice*.", emphasizing that how second-hand fashion is perceived depends on who people are and why they buy it.

Participants noted a discrepancy between their actual *purchase behavior* and their view of sustainability. While some felt proud when choosing second-hand, others admitted buying more than they actually needed. One noted, "*It used to be shameful to go second-hand shopping. Now it's trendy – but I buy too much.*" Similar trends were noted by experts. The Pink Vintage Heart expert said: "*Every season I need new clothes, even if they are second-hand*," emphasizing that second-hand clothing can also become a regular and compulsive consumption pattern. Likewise, the Malala Vintage expert criticised concepts like Vinokilo, saying, "*[Kilo sales] really promote fast fashion mentality... people buy stuff they don't need because it's cheap*." These results imply that second-hand fashion is usually considered as a sustainable choice. Nevertheless, it can still lead to overconsumption when factors like price and trendiness outweigh a mindful decision-making.

Social Media Content was frequently mentioned by consumers and experts, amplifying motivations like trendiness and uniqueness, while shaping consumption choices. Participants referred to Pinterest, TikTok, and Instagram as sources of pressure and inspiration simultaneously. One Gen Z consumer pointed out, "*Social media gives me FOMO – like I have to buy or participate in something, or I'm missing out*." Others mentioned being influenced by their friends rather than influencers: "*If I post an outfit and my friend sees it, I can influence her*." This concept was supported by experts who pointed out that styling content reaches far more likes and shares than educational content on sustainability. As an expert framed it, "*Educating about second-hand is boring... they want to watch cool kids thrifting and making outfits*." Thereby, social media content might increase trend-driven motivations, while decreasing the sustainable aspects of second-hand fashion.

4.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

4.2.1 Data Cleaning and Sample Characterization

Structured data cleaning was performed to ensure dataset validity and reliability prior to the statistical analysis. 295 responses were collected in the online survey. In the first screening phase, 73 people were excluded: 28 had not bought second-hand fashion over the past two years and 45 did not fall into the Gen Z age range. Two people did not answer the survey at all, seven did not answer the social media related questions and demographics, and one instance did not show any demographic data. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 212 valid responses. As a final step, a common approach in social sciences, outlier detection was done using the z-score method (Field, 2024; Osborne & Overbay, 2004). Standardized z-scores were computed for essential components including sustainability perception, affordability, and uniqueness of second-hand fashion. Three cases with $|z| > 3.0$ were identified as outliers and excluded (Field, 2024).

The final sample of 209 valid responses provided the foundation for all subsequent analyses. Of these, 41.6% identified as male, and 55% as female. A smaller percentage of participants indicated working part-time (13.4%), while the majority were either full-time employees (39.2%) or students (42.6%). With 40.2% having a bachelor's degree and 23.9% having a master's, the educational profile was noticeably high. 20.6% of the respondents reported earning less than €500 a month, and 34.4% earning between €1,000 and €2,000. Table 6 provides an overview of the demographic characteristics.

Table 6: Demographics

Demographic Items	N	%
Gender		
Male	87	41.6%
Female	115	55.0%
Non-binary / third gender	6	2.9%
Prefer not to say	1	0.5%
Education		
High-school	67	32.1%
Apprenticeship	3	1.4%
Bachelor's degree	84	40.2%
Master's degress	50	23.9%
Doctoral degree (PhD)	3	1.4%
Prefer not to say	2	1.0%
Employment Status		
Student	89	42.6%
Employed full-time	82	39.2%
Employed part-time	22	10.5%
Unemployed	12	5.7%
Prefer not to say	4	1.9%
Income		
Less than €500	43	20.6%
€500 - €1,000	49	23.4%
€1,001 - €2,000	72	34.4%
€2,001 - €3,000	23	11.0%
€3,001 - €4,000	4	1.9%
More than €4,000	1	0.5%
Prefer not to say	17	8.1%

Participants' purchasing behaviors indicated that fashion consumption was more occasional rather than frequent. Only 7.6% of respondents stated they bought fashion items at least once a week, compared to 36.8% who bought clothing less than once a month. The frequency of second-hand fashion purchases was similar, with 45.5% purchasing second-hand items every three to six months. On average, participants bough 2.28 second-hand items within the past six months. Vinted was mentioned as the most prominent platform (77%), followed by Instagram (36.4%) and Pinterest (28.2%), see Appendix F. The primary motivation for buying second-hand clothing was affordability (51.7%). This aligns with the sample's demographic, which mostly consists of young adults with modest income levels. Table 7 presents a summary of fashion and second-hand fashion shopping frequency, shopping channel preference, second-hand platform usage, and main purchase motivation.

Table 7: Fashion and Second-Hand Fashion Shopping Behavior

Shopping Behavior	N	%
General (Frequency)		
More than once a week	3	1.4%
Once a week	13	6.2%
2-3 times a month	57	27.3%
Once a month	59	28.2%
Less than once a month	77	36.8%
Online (Frequency)		
More than once a week	4	1.9%
Once a week	13	6.2%
2-3 times a month	39	18.7%
Once a month	52	24.9%
Less than once a month	101	48.3%
In-store (Frequency)		
Once a week	8	3.8%
2-3 times a month	33	15.8%
Once a month	57	27.3%
Less than once a month	111	53.1%
Main Motivation for Second-Hand Fashion		
For social or moral approval	6	2.9%
To find unique pieces	69	33.0%
To save money	108	51.7%
Because it's trendy and popular	6	2.9%
To reduce my environmental impact	20	9.6%

4.2.2 Reliability and Internal Consistency

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the reliability and internal consistency of the constructs used in this study, including independent, dependent, and moderating variables. Reliable measurement ensures that constructs accurately represent the underlying theoretical concepts and support the validity of empirical results (Hair Jr et al., 2010). To assess internal consistency, Cronbach's Alpha was used as the primary diagnostic measure. Values above 0.60 are considered acceptable for exploratory research (Taber, 2018), with higher values indicating stronger internal consistency. Additionally, corrected item-total correlations were examined to determine the extent to which individual items contribute to their respective scales. According to (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021), values above 0.40 indicate good item discrimination, while values above 0.30 are considered acceptable for exploratory research. Where multicollinearity or low reliability was identified, factor analysis and item evaluations were performed to improve measurement accuracy. Table 8 presents the internal consistency results for all measured constructs, including both independent and dependent variables.

Table 8: Constructs Internal Consistency

IV: Social or Moral Approval - Sub-Scale 1 (Social Influence & Conformity)			**0.864**
... I share my second-hand finds on social media to promote sustainability.	0.830	0.760	
... Buying second-hand makes me feel morally superior to fast fashion shoppers.	0.681	0.864	
... I feel pressure to conform to socially approved consumption patterns.	0.768	0.805	
IV: Social or Moral Approval - Sub-Scale 2 (Moral Self-Image)			**0.878**
... I feel good when others recognize my conscious consumption.	0.822	-	
... I want to be seen as someone who makes ethical choices.	0.822	-	
IV: Uniqueness			**0.625**
... I like to express my personal style.	0.407	0.569	
... I enjoy wearing things that no one else has.	0.392	0.566	
... I want to stand out from mainstream fashion trends.	0.420	0.554	
... Second-hand fashion appeals to me aesthetically.	0.287	0.607	
... I find joy in the treasure hunt experience.	0.285	0.618	
... Unique items feel more meaningful or special to me.	0.403	0.571	
IV: Affordability			**0.657**
... I can get high-quality items for a lower price.	0.514	0.573	
... It helps me manage my personal budget.	0.500	0.572	
... I prefer not to spend too much on clothing.	0.342	0.631	
... It allows me to buy from brands I couldn't afford otherwise.	0.189	0.693	
... I like finding good deals or bargains.	0.376	0.619	
... I shop second-hand to reduce unnecessary spending.	0.452	0.591	
IV: Trendiness - Subscale 1 (External Social Motivation)			**0.922**
... Second-hand fashion is popular among my friends/peers.	0.892	0.885	
... I follow influencers/celebrities who promote second-hand fashion.	0.921	0.864	
... I like being part of a socially conscious fashion movement.	0.811	0.928	
... I feel more socially accepted when I wear second-hand.	0.766	0.92	
IV: Trendiness - Subscale 2 (Personal Style & Lifestyle Alignment)			**0.585**
... I see second-hand fashion as modern and stylish.	0.420	-	
... Buying second-hand fits with my current lifestyle image.	0.420	-	
IV: Environmental Concern			**0.814**
... I want to reduce clothing waste and landfill.	0.657	0.778	
... I try to avoid supporting fast fashion brands.	0.604	0.793	
... Buying second-hand aligns with my sustainable lifestyle.	0.600	0.780	
... I believe in reusing and recycling whenever possible.	0.496	0.801	
... I care about the environmental impact of clothing production.	0.740	0.745	
... I feel better about my purchases when they're more sustainable.	0.470	0.807	

DV: Overconsumption			**0.718**
... I sometimes purchase fashion items impulsively.	0.501	0.659	
... I often buy more clothing than I actually need.	0.624	0.578	
... Buying second-hand makes it easier for me to justify buying more.	0.532	0.640	
... I buy fashion items because they feel scarce or limited in availability.	0.374	0.726	
DV: Sustainability			**0.589**
... I buy second-hand fashion because I care about reducing waste.	0.530	0.338	
... I actively avoid supporting fast fashion brands.	0.458	0.416	
... I try to extend the the life of my clothing as much as possible.	0.278	0.658	
Moderator: Social Media Content (Portrayal)			**0.605**
... "A way to belong to a specific community."	0.355	0.546	
... "A trendy and fashionable lifestyle."	0.407	0.518	
... "A way to express personal creativity."	0.456	0.494	
... "A sustainable and ethical choice."	0.369	0.538	
... "A low-cost shopping alternative."	0.211	0.621	
Moderator: Social Media Content (Engagement)			**0.499**
... I engage more with second-hand fashion content that focuses on personal style or outfits.	0.298	0.428	
... I engage more with second-hand fashion content that highlights environmental impact.	0.345	0.382	
... I engage with second-hand fashion content regardless of whether it focuses on style or sustainability.	0.322	0.406	
... My engagement depends on the tone and authenticity of the content rather than the topic.	0.216	0.496	

The reliability analysis of the independent variables revealed a mixed pattern of internal consistencies. The constructs *social or moral approval* and *trendiness motivation* exhibited multicollinearity, requiring the formation of subscales through factor analysis. The sub-scale *social influence and conformity* yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of $\alpha = 0.864$, and *moral self-image* reported $\alpha = 0.878$. Similarly, *external social motivation* within the trendiness construct reached $\alpha = 0.922$, while the sub-scale *personal style and lifestyle alignment* fell below the commonly acceptable threshold ($\alpha = 0.585$), but was retained due to its theoretical relevance. *Uniqueness motivation* and *affordability motivation* yielded Cronbach's alpha values of 0.625 and 0.657. Although some items showed low corrected item-total correlations, they were retained to preserve the theoretical scope of the constructs. The construct *environmental concern* resulted in an alpha of 0.814, with no indication for item removal.

Regarding the dependent variables, the scale for *overconsumption* produced an aplha of 0.718, supporting its suitability for further analysis. Although one item measuring scarcity-driven purchasing behavior had a lower item-total correlation, it was retained to fully capture different facets of overconsumption. In contrast, the construct *sustainability* initially yielded an alpha of 0.598. One item '*I try to extend the life of my clothing as much as possible*' contributed minimally to the overall scale and appeared conceptually distinct from the remaining items. Its

exclusion is therefore recommended, which increases the internal consistency to α = 0.658 and strengthens the construct's emphasis on sustainable purchasing decisions.

Reliability was also examined for the two moderator constructs addressing social media content. The variable *social media content (portrayal)* yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of α = 0.605. This scale meets the accept standards for exploratory research (Taber, 2018), justifying the retention of all items based on their theoretical contribution. The construct *social media content (engagement)* yielded an α = 0.499. While this falls below the conventional threshold of 0.70, previous research acknowledges that lower reliability values can be acceptable in exploratory studies or early-stage scale development (Hair Jr et al., 2010; Taber, 2018). Given the theoretical importance of this construct in the present study, the scale was retained for further analysis.

4.2.3 Linear Regression

A simple linear regression was conducted to test H1a, with *uniqueness motivation* as the independent variable and *overconsumption behavior* as the dependent variable. The analysis was based on a filtered sub-sample (N = 69) consisting of participants who identified uniqueness as their primary motivation (Appendix G). The analysis revealed a statistically significant at the 1%-level model, F(1, 67) = 7.461, p = 0.008, indicating that the motivation to purchase unique pieces significantly explains variations in overconsumption behavior. The standardized coefficient confirmed a positive and significant relationship between the desire for unique fashion items and overconsumption (β = 0.317, t = 2.732, p = 0.008). As a result, H1a: *Uniqueness motivation positively predicts overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers*, is accepted.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,317[a]	0.100	0.087	0.79526	0.100	7.461	1	67	0.008

a. Predictors: (Constant), Unique_Pieces
b. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.005	0.722		1.392	0.168		
	Unique_Pieces	0.503	0.184	0.317	2.732	0.008	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Another simple linear regression was conducted to test H1b, with *affordability motivation* as the independent variable and *overconsumption behavior* as the dependent variable. The analysis was based on a filtered sub-sample (N = 111) consisting of participants who identified affordability as their primary motivation (Appendix H). The analysis revealed a non-significant

model, $F(1, 109) = 1.726$, $p = 0.192$, indicating that affordability motivation does not significantly explain variations in overconsumption behavior. The standardized coefficient confirmed that the predictor affordability showed no statistically significant effect on overconsumption behavior ($\beta = 0.125$, $t = 1.314$, $p = 0.192$). As a result, H1b: *Affordability motivation positively predicts overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers*, is rejected.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,125[a]	0.016	0.007	0.97819	0.016	1.726	1	109	0.192

a. Predictors: (Constant), Affordability

b. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.848	0.633		2.919	0.004		
	Affordability	0.208	0.158	0.125	1.314	0.192	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

A further simple linear regression was conducted to test H1c, with *environmental concern* as the independent variable and *sustainability behavior* as the dependent variable. The analysis was based on a filtered sub-sample (N = 20) consisting of participants who identified environmental concern as their primary motivation (Appendix I). The analysis revealed a highly significant model, $F(1, 18) = 25.929$, $p < 0.001$, indicating that environmental concern significantly explains variations in sustainable purchasing behavior. The standardized coefficient confirmed a strong and highly significant positive effect of environmental concern on sustainability behavior ($\beta = 0.768$, $t = 5.092$, $p < 0.001$). Thereby, H1c: *Environmental concern motivation positively predicts sustainable purchasing behavior in second-hand fashion among Gen Z consumers*, is accepted.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,768[a]	0.590	0.567	0.40531	0.590	25.929	1	18	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Environmental_Concern

b. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-0.338	0.886		-0.381	0.708		
	Environmental_Concern	1.026	0.201	0.768	5.092	0.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Two simple linear regressions were conducted to test H1d, with the sub-scales *external social motivation* and *personal style and lifestyle alignment* serving as independent variables, and *overconsumption behavior* as the dependent variable. Both analyses were based on a filtered

sub-sample (N = 6) including participants who selected trendiness as their primary motivation (Appendix J). For the sub-scale *external social motivation*, the model failed to reach statistical significance, $F(1, 4) = 3.720$, $p = 0.126$, and the predictor variable did not significantly affect overconsumption behavior ($\beta = 0.694$, $t = 1.929$, $p = 0.126$). Similarly, the regression model for *personal style and lifestyle alignment* was non-significant, $F(1, 4) = 0.220$, $p = 0.664$, with a non-significant regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.228$, $t = 0.469$, $p = 0.664$). Therefore, H1d: *Trendiness motivation positively predicts overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers*, is rejected.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,694[a]	0.482	0.352	0.72064	0.482	3.720	1	4	0.126

a. Predictors: (Constant), Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation

b. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	0.509	1.171		0.435	0.686		
	Trendiness_ExternalSocial Motivation	0.760	0.394	0.694	1.929	0.126	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,228[a]	0.052	-0.185	0.97474	0.052	0.220	1	4	0.664

a. Predictors: (Constant), Trendiness_PersonalStyleandLifestyleAlignment

b. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.325	2.948		0.450	0.676		
	Trendiness_PersonalStyleandLifestyleAlignment	0.350	0.746	0.228	0.469	0.664	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Two simple linear regressions were conducted to test H1e, with the sub-scales *social influence and conformity* and *moral self-image* serving as independent variables, and *overconsumption behavior* as the dependent variable. Both analyses were based on a filtered sub-sample (N = 6) consisting of participants who selected social and moral approval as their primary motivation for second-hand fashion consumption (Appendix K). For the sub-scale *social influence and conformity*, the model did not reach statistical significance, $F(1, 4) = 1.677$, $p = 0.265$, and the predictor variable was non-significant ($\beta = 0.544$, $t = 1.295$, $p = 0.265$). Similarly, the model for *moral self-image* did not demonstrate predictive validity, $F(1, 4) = 0.166$, $p = 0.705$, and the regression coefficient was also non-significant ($\beta = 0.200$, $t = 0.407$, $p = 0.705$). Thus, H1e: *Social and moral approval motivation positively predicts overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior among Gen Z consumers*, is rejected.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,544[a]	0.295	0.119	1.06130	0.295	1.677	1	4	0.265

a. Predictors: (Constant), SocialMoralApproval_SocialInfluenceandConformity

b. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.669	0.988		1.690	0.166		
	SocialMoralApproval_SocialInfluenceandConformity	0.493	0.381	0.544	1.295	0.265	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,200[a]	0.040	-0.200	1.23894	0.040	0.166	1	4	0.705

a. Predictors: (Constant), SocialMoralApproval_MoralSelfImage

b. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.272	1.435		1.584	0.188		
	SocialMoralApproval_MoralSelfImage	0.193	0.474	0.200	0.407	0.705	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

In summary, the linear regression analyses provide partial support for Research Question 1. H1a and H1c were supported, with uniqueness motivation significantly predicting overconsumption behavior and environmental concern emerging as a strong predictor of sustainable purchasing behavior. H1b, H1d, and H1e were not supported. However, both H1d and H1e were tested using two sub-scales each, and all corresponding analyses were based on very small sub-samples (N = 6), which limits the statistical power and generalizability of these null findings. Therefore, the rejection of these hypotheses should be interpreted with caution.

4.2.4 Moderation Analysis

Separate linear regressions tested whether social media portrayals and engagement styles influence Gen Z's second-hand fashion behavior. The moderation was tested using individual portrayals and engagement cues derived from the respective scales. For each model, motivational factors served as independent variables, while behavioral outcomes functioned as dependent variables, with interaction terms added to assess moderation effects.

The first model investigated whether *trendiness portrayal* on social media moderates the relationship between *external social motivation* and *overconsumption behavior*, a linear regression with interaction terms was conducted (Appendix L). Only the sub-scale *external social motivation* was used, as it reflects an externally driven perception of fashion that aligns conceptually with portrayals of a trendy lifestyle on social media. *External social motivation*

showed a positive effect (β = .889, p = .045), while *trendiness portrayal* had a negative but non-significant effect (β = -.703, p = .086). The interaction effect was also non-significant (β = .012, p = .959). Consequently, H2a: *The portrayal of second-hand fashion as trendy on social media strengthens the relationship between trendiness motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior*, is rejected.

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics: R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,964[a]	0.929	0.882	0.30704	0.929	19.764	2	3	0.019
2	,964[b]	0.930	0.824	0.37573	0.000	0.003	1	2	0.959

a. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Trendiness_Centered, Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation_Centered

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Trendiness_Centered, Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation_Centered, Interaction_H2a

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients: B	Unstandardized Coefficients: Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients: Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics: Tolerance	Collinearity Statistics: VIF
1	(Constant)	2.862	0.131		21.832	0.000		
	Trendiness_ExternalSocial Motivation_Centered	0.974	0.175	0.889	5.567	0.011	0.922	1.085
	SM_Portrayal_Trendiness_ Centered	-0.635	0.145	-0.697	-4.363	0.022	0.922	1.085
2	(Constant)	2.860	0.163		17.508	0.003		
	Trendiness_ExternalSocial Motivation_Centered	0.973	0.214	0.889	4.546	0.045	0.921	1.086
	SM_Portrayal_Trendiness_ Centered	-0.640	0.201	-0.703	-3.186	0.086	0.724	1.382
	Interaction_H2a	0.017	0.296	0.012	0.058	0.959	0.765	1.307

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

The second model assessed whether *sustainability portrayal* on social media moderates the relationship between *environmental concern* and *sustainable purchasing behavior*, a linear regression with interaction terms was conducted (Appendix M). *Environmental concern* exerted a strong positive effect (β = .579, p = .004), while *sustainability portrayal* showed no significant direct effect (β = .070, p = .657). The interaction effect reached marginal significance (β = .358, p = .063). While this suggests a trend toward a moderating effect, the result does not meet the conventional threshold for statistical significance. Thus, H2b: *The portrayal of second-hand fashion as sustainable on social media strengthens the relationship between sustainability motivation and sustainable purchasing behavior*, is rejected.

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics: R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,769[a]	0.592	0.544	0.41612	0.592	12.339	2	17	0.000
2	,821[b]	0.674	0.613	0.38363	0.082	4.001	1	16	0.063

a. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered, Interaction_H2b

c. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.167	0.111		37.692	0.000		
	Environmental_Concern_Centered	1.030	0.207	0.772	4.967	0.000	0.994	1.006
	SM_Portrayal_Sustainability_Centered	-0.035	0.127	-0.043	-0.278	0.784	0.994	1.006
2	(Constant)	4.109	0.106		38.827	0.000		
	Environmental_Concern_Centered	0.773	0.230	0.579	3.355	0.004	0.685	1.460
	SM_Portrayal_Sustainability_Centered	0.057	0.126	0.070	0.453	0.657	0.860	1.162
	Interaction_H2b	0.549	0.275	0.358	2.000	0.063	0.637	1.571

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

The third model examined whether *sustainability engagement* on social media moderates the relationship between *environmental concern* and *sustainable purchasing behavior*, a linear regression with interaction terms was conducted (Appendix N). *Environmental concern* again showed a strong positive effect on *sustainable purchasing behavior* ($\beta = .842$, $p < .001$), while *sustainability engagement* had no significant direct effect ($\beta = .033$, $p = .838$). The interaction effect was also not significant ($\beta = -.202$, $p = .252$). Therefore, H2c: *Engagement with sustainability-focused content on social media strengthens the relationship between sustainability motivation and sustainable behavior*, is rejected.

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,768[a]	0.590	0.542	0.41705	0.590	12.246	2	17	0.001
2	,790[b]	0.624	0.553	0.41204	0.033	1.415	1	16	0.252

a. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Engagement_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Engagement_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered, Interaction_H2c

c. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.152	0.103		40.455	0.000		
	Environmental_Concern_Centered	1.027	0.209	0.769	4.921	0.000	0.987	1.013
	SM_Engagement_Sustainability_Centered	-0.004	0.100	-0.006	-0.038	0.970	0.987	1.013
2	(Constant)	4.154	0.101		40.961	0.000		
	Environmental_Concern_Centered	1.125	0.222	0.842	5.067	0.000	0.851	1.175
	SM_Engagement_Sustainability_Centered	0.021	0.101	0.033	0.208	0.838	0.945	1.058
	Interaction_H2c	-0.270	0.227	-0.202	-1.190	0.252	0.815	1.226

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

The fourth model tested whether *low-cost portrayal* on social media moderates the relationship between *affordability motivation* and *overconsumption behavior* (Appendix O). *Affordability motivation* did not significantly predict *overconsumption behavior* ($\beta = .041$, $p = .688$), while *low-cost portrayal* showed a small but significant positive effect ($\beta = .215$, $p = .038$). The interaction effect was not significant ($\beta = -.002$, $p = .987$). Consequently, H2d: *The portrayal of second-hand fashion as low-cost on social media strengthens the relationship between affordability motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior*, is rejected.

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,235[a]	0.055	0.038	0.96282	0.055	3.145	2	108	0.047
2	,235[b]	0.055	0.029	0.96731	0.000	0.000	1	107	0.987

a. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_LowCost_Centered, Affordability_Centered

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_LowCost_Centered, Affordability_Centered, Interaction_H2d

c. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.624	0.094		27.938	0.000		
	Affordability_Centered	0.069	0.169	0.041	0.408	0.684	0.850	1.177
	SM_Portrayal_LowCost_Centered	0.216	0.102	0.215	2.123	0.036	0.850	1.177
2	(Constant)	2.625	0.099		26.453	0.000		
	Affordability_Centered	0.069	0.170	0.041	0.403	0.688	0.843	1.187
	SM_Portrayal_LowCost_Centered	0.215	0.103	0.215	2.096	0.038	0.837	1.194
	Interaction_H2d	-0.002	0.126	-0.002	-0.016	0.987	0.963	1.038

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

The final model assessed whether *self-expression portrayal* on social media moderates the relationship between *unique pieces motivation* and *overconsumption behavior*. Although not directly measured, self-expression was conceptually aligned with the *unique pieces motivation* through personal creativity (Appendix P). *Unique pieces motivation* showed a significant positive effect on *overconsumption behavior* (β = .309, p = .018), whereas *self-expression portrayal* did not significantly predict overconsumption (β = -.127, p = .285). The interaction effect was also not significant (β = .055, p = .667). Consequently, H2e: *The portrayal of second-hand fashion as a means of self-expression on social media strengthens the relationship between uniqueness motivation and overconsumption in second-hand fashion behavior*, is rejected.

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,339[a]	0.115	0.088	0.79471	0.115	4.282	2	66	0.018
2	,343[b]	0.117	0.077	0.79966	0.003	0.186	1	65	0.667

a. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_SelfExpression_Centered, Unique_Pieces_Centered

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_SelfExpression_Centered, Unique_Pieces_Centered, Interaction_H2e

c. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.991	0.100		29.900	0.000		
	Unique_Pieces_Centered	0.526	0.185	0.331	2.838	0.006	0.986	1.014
	SM_Portrayal_SelfExpression_Centered	-0.125	0.119	-0.122	-1.045	0.300	0.986	1.014
2	(Constant)	2.987	0.101		29.572	0.000		
	Unique_Pieces_Centered	0.492	0.203	0.309	2.421	0.018	0.832	1.202
	SM_Portrayal_SelfExpression_Centered	-0.130	0.121	-0.127	-1.078	0.285	0.975	1.026
	Interaction_H2e	0.100	0.232	0.055	0.432	0.667	0.827	1.210

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

To sum up, all moderation hypotheses were rejected, as none of the tested interaction effects reached statistical significance. Given that only two of the five direct hypotheses were supported, the lack of significant moderation effects is not unexpected and may indicate that

the underlying relationships are more nuanced than initially expected. This outcome served as the foundation for conducting additional exploratory analyses, which are presented in the next chapter.

4.2.5 Additional Analysis

Due to non-significant moderation effects, the analysis shifted to examining whether social media content directly influences overconsumption and sustainable purchasing. Linear regression models were applied, with social media portrayals, engagement, and influence included as independent variables. Recent studies show that social media shapes Gen Z's decisions around sustainable consumption (Page & Hur, 2023; Schmitz & Feijó, 2023; Siregar et al., 2023; Vladimirova et al., 2024). It was examined whether portrayals, engagement, and influence on social media have a direct effect on purchasing behavior.

The results revealed several statistically significant relationships. Portraying second-hand fashion as *trendy and fashionable* was significantly associated with *overconsumption* (β = .211, p = .002), whereas portraying it as a *sustainable and ethical choice* was positively linked to *sustainable purchasing behavior* (β = .424, p < .001), underscoring the persuasive impact of value-based narratives.

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.056	0.238		8.620	0.000		
	Social Media Portrayal 2: "A trendy and fashionable lifestyle."	0.202	0.064	0.211	3.133	0.002	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.091	0.212		9.843	0.000		
	Social Media Portrayal 4: "A sustainable and ethical choice."	0.355	0.052	0.424	6.781	0.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

In contrast, portraying second-hand fashion as a *low-cost alternative* (β = .021, p = .764) or as a form of *self-expression* (β = .126, p = .066) showed no significant associations with *overconsumption*. These results indicate that portrayals emphasizing trendiness or sustainability have a greater impact on consumer behavior than those centered on affordability or uniqueness.

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.707	0.240		11.261	0.000		
	Social Media Portrayal 5: "A low-cost shopping alternative."	0.019	0.062	0.021	0.301	0.764	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.304	0.264		8.730	0.000		
	Social Media Portrayal 3: "A way to express personal creativity."	0.125	0.068	0.126	1.847	0.066	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Social media engagement patterns further reinforced these findings. Users who frequently interacted with *personal style-related* content were more likely to report higher levels of *overconsumption* ($\beta = .322$, $p < .001$), while engagement with *sustainability-oriented* content was significantly associated with *sustainable purchasing* behavior ($\beta = .395$, $p < .001$).

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.767	0.214		8.268	0.000		
	Social Media Engagement 1: "I engage more with second-hand fashion content that focuses on personal style or outfits."	0.300	0.061	0.322	4.930	0.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.615	0.150		17.470	0.000		
	Social Media Engagement 2: "I engage more with second-hand fashion content that highlights environmental impact."	0.309	0.050	0.395	6.231	0.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

This suggests that the content users choose to engage with, rather than what they come across by chance, plays a meaningful role in shaping their purchasing behavior. Lastly, the analysis explored the influence of content sources as an additional predictor of consumption behavior. Being influenced by fashion influencers ($\beta = .377$, $p < .001$) and exposure to fashion advertisements ($\beta = .380$, $p < .001$) both significantly predicted overconsumption. The influence of family and friends also showed a significant positive association ($\beta = .220$, $p = .001$).

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.040	0.138		14.763	0.000		
	Social Media Influence 1: "I'm influenced by influencers that post about their outfits / share their fashion content."	0.269	0.045	0.377	5.904	0.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.007	0.142		14.111	0.000		
	Social Media Influence 3: "I'm influenced by ads from fashion companies."	0.310	0.052	0.380	5.961	0.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.261	0.170		13.328	0.000		
	Social Media Influence 2: "I'm influenced by my friends / family that post about their outfits / share their fashion content."	0.173	0.053	0.220	3.275	0.001	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Although the analysis focused on direct effects, it does not invalidate the theoretical relevance of the moderation model. Instead, the findings suggest that the impact of social media content may vary by context or perception. This consideration complements earlier reflections.

5. Main Findings and Discussion

This chapter discusses how consumer motivations and social media content influence both overconsumption and sustainable behavior in second-hand fashion among Gen Z. Particular emphasis is placed on contradictory results and rejected hypotheses, offering a nuanced view of the psychological, social, and digital dynamics shaping Gen Z's consumption decisions. The findings draw on the TRA (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), TPB (Ajzen, 1991), and the intention-behavior gap (Carrington et al., 2014), which assume a linear path from attitudes to behavior. However, this study shows that emotional drivers, social media dynamics, and post-rationalization often prevent intentions from translating into actual behavior. While several focus group participants expressed strong sustainability values, their reflections also pointed to the influence of self-expression, trend appeal, and platform dynamics on their fashion choices. The motivation to express individuality through fashion, captured as uniqueness motivation, emerged as the most consistent and impactful driver across both empirical strands. Many participants described secondhand shopping as a way to construct a personal identity and distance themselves from mainstream fashion, supporting findings by Guiot & Roux (2010)

and Lundblad & Davies (2016). The data showed that this motivation significantly predicted overconsumption and revealed a contradiction as second-hand fashion is seen as sustainable, yet the desire for uniqueness drives frequent purchases similar to fast fashion. This behavior reflects what McNeill & Moore (2015) call symbolic consumption; ethical on the surface, yet driven by self-expression needs. As one participant put it, *"I shop for it because I want clothes where I don't feel like everybody else is wearing it."* The overlap between ethical appearance and visual distinctiveness suggests that consumption becomes a tool for identity performance rather than for minimizing environmental harm.

Although affordability was frequently mentioned in focus groups and almost half of the sample selected it as their main motivation to purchase second-hand fashion, it did not emerge as a statistically significant predictor of purchasing behavior. This contradicts earlier studies that identify affordability as a key motivation of sustainable consumption among younger consumers (Hur, 2020; Jägel et al., 2012). A likely explanation is the shift in second-hand markets, where platforms and stores present resale fashion as a lifestyle product, and low prices no longer automatically signal affordability, but rather reflect aesthetic value or trend appeal (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Moreover, price was often framed as justification rather than intention. Participants often responded spontaneously to low prices, as one example shows: *"I was at a flea market and everything was two euros […] I thought, sure, why not?"* This kind of reaction points to emotionally driven choices rather than deliberate planning. These patterns suggest that affordability may operate as a situational trigger rather than a stable motivational factor, weakening its predictive validity and reinforcing the gap between intentions and actual behavior (Peattie, 2010).

In contrast, sustainability motivation showed a statistically significant and positive relationship with sustainable purchasing behavior, confirming its relevance for many Gen Z consumers. However, the qualitative findings suggest that this effect may be more complex than it appears at first glance. Participants often referenced sustainability retrospectively, with one noting, *"I put down sustainability as a motivation […] but it's not like I do it because of sustainability."* Experts expressed a similar view, observing that sustainability is often treated as a secondary benefit or 'feel-good' justification rather than a decisive factor in purchasing. This aligns with Carrington et al. (2014), who argue that sustainability is often used retrospectively to justify decisions driven by aesthetics, price, or the desire to stand out. While participants claimed to value sustainability, it rarely appeared as the initial driver of behavior, aligning with White et al.'s (2019) critique that pro-environmental attitudes do not consistently translate into ethical

action. Thus, although statistically supported, this motivation may be overstated in practice, and its role shaped more by identity management than consistent ethical commitment.

The role of trendiness revealed a pronounced contradiction. Participants frequently described second-hand fashion as *"something you see everywhere on Instagram"* and emphasized the social pressure to follow the trend. Yet in the quantitative analysis, trendiness did not emerge as a significant predictor of overconsumption. This finding should be interpreted with caution, as the regression model for trendiness was based on a small smaple (N = 6), limiting statistical power and generalizability (Field, 2024). Still, the lack of significance may reflect the complexity of trendiness as a motive. For some, it supports more thoughtful and selective shopping, while for others, it leads to impulsive and excessive consumption. Experts also noted this tension, observing that Gen Z often navigates between aesthetic aspiration and ethical self-image, with trendiness operating more as a stylistic language than a real motivation. As Kim & Johnson (2016) argue, trends are often shaped by external influences, especially social media, and typically lead to reactive rather than intentional behavior. One participant shared, *"I feel pressured to look good and go second-hand shopping all the time,"* illustrating how trendiness can create emotional pressure rooted in visual content and social comparison, rather than conscious decision-making.

Social and moral approval also showed inconsistencies across the data. While participants often described second-hand shopping as something that made them *"feel better"* or more socially accepted, this motivation did not significantly predict behavior. However, the regression model was based on a small sample (N = 6), so this finding should be interpreted with caution (Field, 2024). Nevertheless, qualitative insights suggest that such approval functions more as a retrospective narrative than as a purchase driver. This reflects what White et al. (2019) describe as the narrative function of ethical consumption, where sustainability serves as a way to justify choices already made. Furthermore, Johnstone & Tan (2015) argue that consumers often use ethical choices to express a socially desirable identity, even when those choices are not rooted in strong personal belief. Social approval seems to offer moral reassurance, helping individuals feel better about their choices afterward. As one participant put it, *"I feel ashamed sometimes if somebody asks me where my clothes are from and I have to say H&M,"* pointing to the importance of social perception even when sustainability was not the primary motivation. These findings reflect the symbolic and often performative nature of moral identity in fashion consumption (Johnstone & Tan, 2015), reinforcing the tension between expressed values and actual behavior.

After examining the role of individual motivations, attention now turns to how specific social media portrayal or engagement may influence the strength of the relationship between motivations and actual consumption behavior. As a result, none of the tested moderation hypotheses were supported in the quantitative analysis. The lack of significance may be partly attributed to statistical limitations, as the models for trendiness and social or moral approval were based on a small sample (N = 6), which substantially limits the ability to detect reliable interaction effects (Field, 2024). Furthermore, with only two out of five motivational hypotheses supported, the underlying relationships appear too weak to support consistent interaction effects. They are unlikely to appear when the underlying main effects lack strength or consistency, as interaction terms build upon the variance explained by the main effects themselves (Aiken et al., 1991). The challenge was further shaped by issues of measurement. While the portrayal scale reached a Cronbach's alpha of 0.605, the engagement scale yielded a lower reliability coefficient of 0.499. However, given the exploratory nature of the study, this value is still considered acceptable in early-stage research, particularly when the construct captures a developing or multidimensional concept (Field, 2024; Taber, 2018; Zijlmans et al., 2019).

Beyond these methodological factors, the consistent rejection of moderation effects may indicate a deeper conceptual misalignment. Rather than modifying the link between motivation and behavior, social media seems to exert a more direct influence on consumption itself. Exploratory regression analyses revealed that portraying second-hand fashion as trendy or self-expressive significantly predicted overconsumption, while sustainability-focused portrayals were associated with sustainable purchasing. These findings were strongly supported by the qualitative data. Participants often described social media as a space where emotionally driven content prompts quick reactions, often before there is time for conscious reflection. One admitted, "I buy more second-hand just because I keep seeing stuff online," while an expert observed, "kilo sales promote overbuying, even though they're framed as sustainable". These findings are better understood through the lens of symbolic consumption, where behavior is shaped less by internal values and more by how individuals wish to be seen in digital spaces (Belk, 1988; Zollo, 2024). On social media, sustainability is often used to present a certain image rather than to express deeply held values. Ethical content becomes part of how individuals want to be seen, not necessarily a reflection of what motivates their actions. The same pattern applies to uniqueness and trend-based motivations, where individual identity expression is enacted visually through content selection rather than guided by consistent

internalized values. Zollo (2024) further highlights how sustainability often functions as a social identity signal rather than a genuine driver of consumption decisions.

These findings challenge foundational assumptions of the TRA and TPB, both of which prioritize stable attitudes and deliberate decision-making (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In digital fashion environments, consumer behavior is often shaped by content that is emotionally immediate, visually oriented, and socially comparative, as shown in studies on aesthetic appeal, emotional engagement, and identity signaling through social platforms (Appel et al., 2020; Kim & Johnson, 2016; Zollo, 2024). The exploratory regression results indicated that engagement with trend-based and personal style content was positively associated with overconsumption, whereas engagement with sustainability-focused content showed a positive association with ethical purchasing behavior. This supports the uses and gratifications perspective (Ruggiero, 2000), which sees users as active participants who choose content that aligns with their aspirations and identity. It also aligns with symbolic consumption theory (Belk, 1988), where consumption becomes a way to express oneself and gain validation by pthers. In this context, social media does not simply influence motivations. It reshapes them. Instead of shaping existing motivations, platform content often triggers behavior directly, operating outside the scope of traditional intention-based models (Ruggiero, 2000; White et al., 2019).

Overall, the findings suggest that Gen Z's sustainable consumption is shaped less by consistent internal motivations and more by emotional responses, social dynamics, and digital environments. Although individual motivations play a role, they are often overshadowed by visual appeal, identity signalling, and the fast pace of social media. These patterns expose the limits of traditional behavior models and point to the need for frameworks that reflect how social media environments shape fashion consumption.

6. Conclusion and Future Research

6.1 Conclusion

This study examined the ethical and behavioral impact of social media on second-hand fashion consumption among Gen Z, with a focus on the contradictions between sustainability and overconsumption. It examined how consumer motivations like affordability, uniqueness, trendiness, environmental concern, and social or moral approval shape these behaviors. Furthermore, the research assessed whether social media content moderates the relationship between these motivations and second-hand fashion purchasing behavior. A sequential exploratory mixed-methods design was applied, beginning with qualitative focus groups and

expert interviews, followed by a quantitative survey. Participants portrayed second-hand fashion as a meaningful choice linked to sustainability, individuality, and affordability. They also highlighted how social media fosters desires for novelty, recognition, and conformity, often leading to overconsumption. Experts confirmed this contradiction, noting that second-hand fashion increasingly reflects fast fashion dynamics, as algorithms and influencer culture turn it into a performative, trend-driven practice.

The qualitative findings guided the interpretation of the quantitative data. The quantitative analysis party supported the hypotheses, with sustainability motivation predicting eco-friendly buying, while other motives showed no link to overconsumption. Only uniqueness was associated with overconsumption, indicating that the search for individuality can drive excessive purchasing. While none of the hypothesized moderating effects of social media content reached statistical significance, additional regression results showed revealed a direct influence. Specifically, content portraying second hand fashion as sustainable was linked to more conscious purchasing, while trend-focused content encouraged overconsumption. Engagement with personal style content was associated with increased consumption, while sustainability-focused content supported more conscious choices. All social influences showed significant associations with overconsumption.

In summary, while social media did not act as a moderator, it clearly plays a direct and substantial role in shaping both sustainable and excessive consumption among Gen Z. The findings challenge the view of Gen Z as inherently sustainability-oriented, stressing the role of internal motives and digital platforms. While secondhand fashion is seen as ethical and individualistic, platform dynamics can reproduce fast fashion-like patterns of frequent, image-driven consumption. Ultimately, this study calls for a more nuanced understanding of sustainability that considers both consumer motivations and the digital and social influences shaping second-hand fashion behavior.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

This study offers important theoretical contributions by challenging and extending foundational behavioral models such as the TRA (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) and the TPB (Ajzen, 1991). While both frameworks assume that attitudes predict behavioral intentions and that intentions precede behavior, this study shows that these assumptions can be challenged in digital consumption contexts. Emotional, aesthetic, and symbolic triggers often interfere with or redirect the influence of internal motivations, particularly in social media environments. This suggests that consumer motivations are not stable but shaped dynamically through self-

presentation in digital spaces and influenced by visual culture, platform norms, and algorithmic exposure (Appel et al., 2020; Belk, 1988; Kim & Johnson, 2016). Motivations like sustainability and uniqueness are shaped by social expectations and the emotional dynamics of digital spaces (Johnstone & Tan, 2015; Zollo, 2024). These findings challenge the assumptions of intention-based models and reinforce arguments by Carrington et al. (2014) and Sorrentino (2020) for adopting frameworks that account for the performative and sociotechnical dimensions of ethical and excessive fashion consumption.

The absence of moderation effects suggests that platform content may directly shape which motivations most influence consumer behavior, rather than simply amplifying them (Kim & Johnson, 2016; Zahid et al., 2023). This finding contradicts the assumption that social media simply reinforces internal drivers, and instead supports a view in which motivations are dynamically reshaped by visual aesthetics, emotional immediacy, and algorithmic exposure (Appel et al., 2020; Zollo, 2024). Particularly in highly visual digital settings, motivations such as sustainability risk becoming symbolic markers of identity rather than stable behavioral determinants (McNeill & Moore, 2015; White et al., 2019). This sequential mixed-methods study shows that consumer motivations are shaped by social context, digital environments, and identity expression, rather than being fixed traits. It challenges traditional models and calls for more flexible frameworks that reflect the performative and platform-driven nature of Gen Z's secondhand fashion consumption.

6.3 Managerial Implications

By examining Gen Z's fashion consumption in digital contexts, the findings provide relevant implications for *fashion retailers*, *digital resale platforms*, *social media companies*, and *policy-makers* interested in supporting more conscious and sustainable consumer practices. A main contribution is the revealing of a societal paradox in which second-hand fashion, although perceived as a sustainable alternative, can replicate the patterns of excessive consumption associated with fast fashion when shaped by the fast-paced, image-driven logic of social media. This paradox challenges *retailers* and *resale platforms* to refrain from marketing focused on trends and instead emphasize product longevity, styling versatility, and minimalist aesthetics, appealing to Gen Z's desire for uniqueness without encouraging excessive consumption. *Social media platforms* and *influencers*, whose algorithms often reinforce aesthetic pressure and fast-changing fashion ideals, need to be mindful of the messages they promote and consider supporting slow fashion, re-wear initiatives, and more authenticity-driven content. For *policymakers* and *educators*, the findings highlight the importance of fostering media literacy

that help young consumers recognize and reflect on algorithmic influences that encourage excessive consumption. Creating meaningful change in secondhand fashion consumption requires environments where sustainable behavior is socially valued, emotionally reinforced, and structurally supported.

6.4 Limitations and Future Research

Given its exploratory nature, this study faces several limitations. First, the quantitative design required participants to select only one primary motivation for second-hand fashion consumption, which oversimplified the often overlapping and situational nature of Gen Z's behavioral drivers (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Although this approach enabled group comparisons, it led to imbalanced sample sizes and reduced the ability to detect subtle effects. A more substantial limitation arose in the moderation analysis, which did not yield significant results. This may be attributed to conceptual and empirical weaknesses in how social media content was measured. The scale lacked proper prior validation and offered only a limited representation of how such content is portrayed and engaged with across platforms. To address this, an additional multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the direct effects of social media content, including its portrayal, engagement, and influence, on both purchasing behaviors. This was intended to compensate for the limited explanatory power of the moderation model. Furthermore, some of the motivational and behavioral scales demonstrated sub-optimal internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values falling below the threshold of .70 (Taber, 2018). Although problematic items were removed and sub-scales were constructed to reduce multicollinearity, these adjustments may have affected construct validity. Additionally, the qualitative focus group discussions may have encouraged socially desirable responses, and the data only consisted of consumers and experts, excluding academic perspectives that could have enriched the theoretical depth. The lack of country-of-origin data further restricted the ability to explore regional and cultural variation, thereby limiting the external validity of the findings. The characteristics of Gen Z participants, including limited financial means, frequent social media use, and more flexible time, may have introduced structural bias in how their fashion behaviors and motivations were expressed.

Future research should build on these limitations by adopting more flexible and context-sensitive methodologies. Multi-dimensional motivational scales that allow for overlapping and weighted responses would offer a more accurate reflection of Gen Z's complex motivations, particularly in domains such as trendiness, affordability, and social or moral approval. Moreover, stronger measures for social media engagement and content portrayal should be

developed to improve conceptual clarity. Qualitative research would benefit from a more diverse and regionally varied sample, as well as the inclusion of academic experts to strengthen theoretical depth. Longitudinal and ethnographic methods, such as digital diaries, could offer deeper insights into how social media shapes fashion choices over time. Future applications of the TPB and TRA should consider integrating concepts like symbolic sustainability and mindful consumption to capture Gen Z's complex and conflicting behaviors.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Focus Group Discussion Guide

Warm-up Question

- What comes to mind when hearing "second-hand fashion"?
    - Second-hand for fun, hard to plan, impulsive buying
    - Effort required for second-hand shopping
    - Better quality but more pricey than fast fashion
    - Associations: crazy patterns, interesting smell
    - Moodboard or aesthetic inspiration
    - Left behind / stories behind the items

Section 1: Motivations for Second-Hand Fashion (20–25 min)

Examples to stimulate participants:

- Sustainability (environmental concerns, ethical reasons)
- Economic affordability (budget-friendly, better deals)
- Individuality and uniqueness (style differentiation)
- Influence from friends, family, social circles
- Influence from trends seen on social media

Detailed back-up questions:

- Can you recall a specific moment when you decided to buy second-hand? What triggered this decision?
- If budget weren't an issue, would you still buy second-hand fashion? Why or why not?
- Do environmental considerations matter significantly when you're choosing clothing?
- Have you ever chosen second-hand because you wanted a unique style no one else had?

Section 2: Decision-Making Process in Buying Second-Hand Fashion (10–15 min)

Detailed back-up questions:

- When shopping second-hand, do you have specific criteria/steps that you always follow?
    - (e.g., quality check, price comparison, brand, reviews, social media validation)
- Do you do more research or preparation for second-hand purchases compared to new fashion?
- Do you ever hesitate or reconsider your decision during the purchasing process? What causes this hesitation?
- Is your decision-making process different online compared to physical stores? How?

Section 3: Influence of Social Media on Second-Hand Fashion (20–25 min)

a) Initial Individual Reflection

- Platforms: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat
- Influencers and Content Creators – Possible reasons:
    - Authenticity
    - Style inspiration
    - Sustainability values
    - Affordability
    - Trends
    - Peer pressure
- Type of Content:
    - Sustainability-focused (environmental benefits)
    - Affordability-focused (low-price deals)
    - Trend/style-focused (latest trends, unique style, aesthetic)
- Emotional Responses:
    - Feeling inspired to make sustainable choices

b) Moderator Questions

1. **Social Media as an Information Source**
    - Could you describe how you typically use social media when seeking information about second-hand fashion?
    - What type of information related to second-hand fashion do you usually encounter?
2. **Sustainability, Affordability, Trendiness**
    - How would you characterize the way social media typically presents second-hand fashion?
    - Do you notice social media content primarily highlighting sustainability aspects, price advantages, or fashion trends?
    - What kind of content do you find engaging/persuasive?
3. **Social Media and Purchase Decisions**
    - Could you describe a situation where social media content influenced your purchase decision?
    - Can you recall an instance where social media content led you to consider purchasing a second-hand item you hadn't initially planned?
    - Does the second-hand content you encounter on social media affect your buying habits differently compared to other information sources?
4. **Emotional Response and Consumption Patterns**
    - Do you experience particular emotional pressures after engaging with second-hand fashion content on social media? Reflect on that.
    - How do you think the way second-hand fashion is shown on social media affects your personal consumption patterns?

Section 4: Sustainability and Consumption Patterns

- Transition from fast fashion to second-hand fashion

Appendix B: Expert Interview Guide

Introduction Questions (Warm-up)

1. Could you briefly introduce yourself and your second-hand fashion store?
2. How long have you been working in second-hand fashion?
3. Have you noticed changes in how Gen Z consumers (people born roughly between 1997–2012) approach second-hand fashion in recent years? If yes, what changes have you seen?

Part 1: Gen Z's Motivations for Second-Hand Shopping

4. Why do Gen Z customers choose to buy second-hand clothes at your store?
5. Which reason do you think motivates Gen Z customers the most? Could you share examples or stories?
6. Do you notice if Gen Z consumers care more about sustainability or the price? Can you give a specific example from your experience?

Part 2: How Social Media Influences Gen Z

7. Have you noticed social media platforms like Instagram or TikTok influencing your Gen Z customers' buying behavior? How exactly?
8. Can you share examples or stories of Gen Z customers being directly influenced by social media trends or influencers when buying from your store?
9. In your experience, has social media made second-hand fashion more popular among Gen Z consumers? Why or why not?

Part 3: Social Media & Gen Z's Shopping Behavior

10. Have you seen Gen Z customers making impulsive purchases because of social media? Could you describe a specific situation?
11. Do Gen Z customers mention certain influencers or social media trends when shopping? Could you give some examples?
12. From your observation, does social media push Gen Z customers to buy more second-hand clothes than they really need? Could you explain why you think so?

Part 4: Sustainability & Overconsumption Among Gen Z

13. Do your Gen Z customers typically see second-hand fashion shopping as automatically sustainable? Could you explain or give examples?
14. Have you noticed Gen Z consumers sometimes buying second-hand clothes excessively, similar to fast fashion? Why do you think this happens?
15. Do Gen Z consumers sometimes use second-hand shopping as a way to shop "guilt-free"? Could you provide examples or experiences you've had?

Appendix C: Qualtrics Survey

Start of Block: Introduction

Dear Participant, Thank you for participating in this survey, which is part of my Master's thesis at the Católica Lisbon School of Business and Economics. The goal of my study is to explore the influence of social media on shopping behaviours, with a particular focus on sustainable consumption and second-hand fashion choices. The survey will take **no more than 7 minutes** to complete, and your participation is completely voluntarily. It is anonymous, and the data collected will be kept strictly confidential and for academic purposes only. You have the right to decline participation or withdraw at any time during the survey. Please answer each question as honestly and accurately as possible. Your genuine responses are essential for ensuring the validity and reliability of this research. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact me at s-fdoring@ucp.pt. By proceeding to the next page, you are agreeing to voluntarily participating in this survey. Thank you for your time and contributing your valuable insights!

Start of Block: Screening Questions

This study focuses on **Gen Z consumers** who have **experience buying second-hand fashion**. These questions help ensure that participants meet these criteria.

Q1 Were you born **before 1997**?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q2 Did you buy a second-hand fashion item in **the past two years**?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Start of Block: General Shopping Behavior

Q3 How often do you shop for clothing **in general**?

- More than once a week (1)
- Once a week (2)
- 2-3 times a month (3)
- Once a month (4)
- Less than once a month (5)

Q4 How often do you shop for clothing **online**?

- ○ More than once a week (1)
- ○ Once a week (2)
- ○ 2-3 times a month (3)
- ○ Once a month (4)
- ○ Less than once a month (5)

Q5 How often do you shop for clothing **in-store**?

- ○ More than once a week (1)
- ○ Once a week (2)
- ○ 2-3 times a month (3)
- ○ Once a month (4)
- ○ Less than once a month (5)

Start of Block: Second-Hand Fashion

Second-hand fashion refers to previously owned clothing that is purchased through thrift stores, vintage boutiques, online resale platforms (e.g., Vinted, Depop, Vestiaire Collective), flea markets, or clothing swaps. This form of shopping is often linked to sustainability, affordability, unique style, and ethical consumption. In this section, you'll answer questions about your motivations, shopping habits, and attitudes toward second-hand fashion.

Q6 How **often** do you shop for second-hand fashion?

- More than once a week (1)
- Once a week (2)
- 2-3 times a month (3)
- Once a month (4)
- Once every three to six months (5)
- Less than once every six months (6)

Q7 How many second-hand fashion items have you purchased **in the past six months**?

- None (1)
- 1-5 items (2)
- 6-10 items (3)
- 11-20 items (4)
- More than 20 items (5)

Q8 What is your **main reason** for buying second-hand fashion? (*Choose one*)

- For social / moral approval (1)
- To find unique pieces (2)
- To save money (3)
- Because it's trendy and popular (4)
- To reduce my environmental impact (5)

Q9 How does **social / moral approval** influence your second-hand fashion purchases?

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I feel good when others recognize my conscious consumption. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I want to be seen as someone who makes ethical choices. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I share my second-hand finds on social media to promote sustainability. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Buying second-hand makes me feel morally superior to fast fashion shoppers. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy the social identity that comes with sustainable fashion. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel pressure to conform to socially approved consumption patterns. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Q11 What aspects of **affordability** make second-hand fashion appealing to you?

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I can get high-quality items for a lower price. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
It helps me manage my personal budget. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer not to spend too much on clothing. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
It allows me to buy from brands I couldn't afford otherwise. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I like finding good deals or bargains. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I shop second-hand to reduce unnecessary spending. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Q10 Why do you look for **unique pieces** when buying second-hand fashion?

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I like to express my personal style. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy wearing things that no one else has. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I want to stand out from mainstream fashion trends. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Second-hand fashion appeals to me aesthetically. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I find joy in the treasure hunt experience. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Unique items feel more meaningful or special to me. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Q11 What aspects of **affordability** make second-hand fashion appealing to you?

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I can get high-quality items for a lower price. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
It helps me manage my personal budget. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer not to spend too much on clothing. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
It allows me to buy from brands I couldn't afford otherwise. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I like finding good deals or bargains. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I shop second-hand to reduce unnecessary spending. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Q12 What role does **trendiness** play in your decision to buy second-hand fashion?

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
Second-hand fashion is popular among my friends / peers. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I follow influencers / celebrities who promote second-hand fashion. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I like being part of a socially conscious fashion movement. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel more socially accepted when I wear second-hand. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I see second-hand fashion as modern and stylish. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Buying second-hand fits with my current lifestyle image. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Q13 In what ways does **environmental concern** influence your second-hand fashion purchases?

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I want to reduce clothing waste and landfill. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I try to avoid supporting fast fashion brands. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Buying second-hand aligns with my sustainable lifestyle. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
I believe in reusing and recycling whenever possible. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I care about the environmental impact of clothing production. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel better about my purchases when they're more sustainable. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Q14 Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your **second-hand fashion purchase behavior**. (*Scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*)

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I sometimes purchase fashion items impulsively. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I often buy more clothing than I actually need. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Buying second-hand makes it easier for me to justify buying more. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
I buy fashion items because they feel scarce or limited in availability. (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Q15 Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your **second-hand fashion purchase behavior**. (*Scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*)

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I buy second-hand fashion because I care about reducing waste. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I actively avoid supporting fast fashion brands. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I try to extend the life of my clothing as much as possible. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

Start of Block: Social Media

This section explores how social media influences perceptions and behaviors related to second-hand fashion. Even if you don't actively use social media yourself, you might still encounter or notice second-hand fashion content through friends, family, or advertisements. Please answer based on **your personal experience** *OR* **general impressions** you've gathered from your social circle and surroundings.

Q16 What **platforms** do you use when it comes to second-hand fashion?

- ☐ Pinterest (1)
- ☐ TikTok (2)
- ☐ Instagram (3)
- ☐ Vinted (4)
- ☐ Facebook (5)
- ☐ Other(s): (6) _____

Q17 Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding **how second-hand fashion is typically portrayed on social media**. (*Scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*) "*When I see second-hand fashion on social media, it is mostly presented as...*"

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
A way to belong to a specific community. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
A trendy and fashionable lifestyle. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
A way to express personal creativity. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
A sustainable and ethical choice. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
A low-cost shopping alternative. (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Q18 Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding **your engagement with second-hand fashion content on social media**. (*Scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*)

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I engage more with second-hand fashion content that focuses on personal style or outfits. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I engage more with second-hand fashion content that highlights environmental impact. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I engage with second-hand fashion content regardless of whether it focuses on style or sustainability. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
My engagement depends on the tone and authenticity of the content rather than the topic. (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Q19 Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding **how social media influences your second-hand fashion purchases**. (*Scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*)

	Strongly Disagree (1) (1)	(2) (2)	(3) (3)	(4) (4)	Strongly Agree (5) (5)
I'm influenced by influencers that post about their outfits / share their fashion content. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I'm influenced by my friends / family that post about their outfits / share their fashion content. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I'm influenced by ads from fashion companies. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

Start of Block: Demographics

Q20 What is your gender?

- ○ Male (1)
- ○ Female (2)
- ○ Non-binary / third gender (3)
- ○ Prefer not to say (4)

Q21 What is your current employment status?

- ○ Student (1)
- ○ Employed full-time (2)
- ○ Employed part-time (3)
- ○ Unemployed (4)
- ○ Prefer not to say (5)

Q22 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ○ High school (1)
- ○ Apprenticeship (2)
- ○ Bachelor's degree (3)
- ○ Master's degree (4)
- ○ Doctoral degree (PhD) (5)
- ○ Prefer not to say (6)

Q23 What is your monthly disposable income? (after taxes)

- ○ Less than €500 (1)
- ○ €500 - €1,000 (2)
- ○ €1,001 - €2,000 (3)
- ○ €2,001 - €3,000 (4)
- ○ €3,001 - €4,000 (5)
- ○ More than €4,000 (6)
- ○ Prefer not to say (7)

Start of Block: Ending

You have just completed a survey exploring the **influence of social media on sustainable consumption and second-hand fashion choices among Gen Z consumers**. Your responses provide valuable insights into shopping behaviors and motivations, helping to understand how social media shapes attitudes towards sustainability and fashion trends. Your input is crucial for this research, and I truly appreciate your time and effort. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the study, feel free to contact me at s-fdoring@ucp.pt. Thank you once again for your valuable contribution!

Appendix D: Focus Groups Data Analysis

	Focus Group 1	Focus Group 2	Clusters / Patterns
General Shopping Preferences			
Online shopping, in-store shopping, or both?	**Online**: "I personally shop mainly online because of *convenience* and because I often don't find what I'm looking for when I go in person." "I have the bad habit of buying many things in different sizes and then sending it back."	**Online**: "I mostly use online shopping because it's *easy* and *more convenient*." "I do more online shopping, mostly because the city I live in just doesn't have that many clothing stores." "For me it's hell on earth to go shopping physically…I try to avoid it at any cost."	**Convenience vs. Experience** - Online shopping dominates due to convenience (ease of use, variety, quick availability). - In-store shopping occurs more as a social experience or leisure activity rather than for necessity.
	In-Store Shopping: "It's *convenient* but also it can be like a *social activity*, going shopping with others together. I like the *inspiration*."	**In-Store Shopping**: "For me, it's also like the vibe to go vintage shopping *with friends*, because most of the time I have a *great time*." "If I have the option…I always try to buy it in-store just to be sure the clothes actually fit."	**Perceived Limitations of Second-Hand Shopping** - Second-hand shopping is considered less convenient due to difficulty planning specific purchases, limited availability, and sizing issues. - Identified as requiring more effort, patience, and fashion sense.
Factors influencing decision to purchase new clothes vs. second-hand fashion?	**Second-Hand Shopping as Social Activity**: "It's convenient but also can be a social activity, going shopping with others together." "I really love the shopping experience of vintage second-hand. It's just very enjoyable."		**Social Shopping Dynamics** - In-store second-hand shopping is a social activity often done with friends, especially when traveling or visiting new cities, rather than routinely in their hometowns.
	Travel Aspect: "I mostly go shopping in second-hand stores with friends, mostly when I'm on vacation."	**Travel Aspect**: "When I'm traveling I probably go more in stores and go vintage shopping; it's something you do when you go to a new city." "When I'm in a different city, I feel more laid-back, and I have more time to spend shopping."	

Defintion of Second-Hand Clothing			
Associations with term "second-hand fashion"?	**Vintage & Uniqueness** "Vintage is really the main association. It's about finding cool, unique items." **Affordable / Cheap** "I immediately think of something cheap and affordable." **Sustainability & Feel-Good Factor** "I feel good about buying second-hand because of sustainability." **Fashionable / Trendy** "It's definitely becoming trendy, fashionable nowadays." **Negative Stigma / Skeptical** "It used to have a bad image, like clothes nobody wanted."	**Affordable / Cheap** "Second-hand is usually cheaper compared to buying new." **Sustainability as Secondary** "I associate second-hand fashion with sustainability, but it's not my main driver." **Vintage & Uniqueness** "It's closely correlated to vintage shopping; people always mix these terms up." **Fashionable / Trendy** "It's currently very trendy and popular." **Specific Sensory Experience** "I associate it also with the typical smell of second-hand stores."	
What items are second-hand for you?	**Vintage Pieces (Jackets, Shirts)** "Mostly jackets, shirts, and sweaters; vintage pieces specifically." **Fashionable & Unique Items** "Something special that you wouldn't find easily elsewhere." **Quality Items (Denim, Leather)** "Second-hand for me are denim jackets and high-quality leather." **Accessories** "Sometimes accessories like bags or belts." **Avoidance of Basic Items** "Not the basics; usually items that stand out, not just simple white T-shirts."	**Unique Statement Pieces** "I'm shopping second-hand mainly for unique items like jackets and sweaters." **Quality-Oriented (Leather Jackets)** "Leather jackets because second-hand items often have better quality." **Vintage Clothing** "For me second-hand is mostly vintage, special shirts and sweaters." **Not Basics** "Finding basic pieces second-hand is actually hard, I usually buy those new." **Specific Known Brands** "Specific brands or high-quality brands like Carhartt pants."	
What places go shopping for second-hand clothing?	**Physical Stores (Vintage / Thrift Stores)** "Mostly vintage stores physically in big cities." **Flea Markets** "Love flea markets, because prices are really good." **Online (Vinted, Depop)** "Mainly online through platforms like Vinted or Depop." **Abroad / Travel Experiences** "Mainly shopping second-hand while traveling or visiting new cities." **Rarely Hometown** "Not really in my hometown, because the selection isn't great."	**Physical Vintage Stores** "Primarily vintage stores when traveling or meeting friends." **Online Platforms (Vinted)** "Vinted is definitely the main online platform I use for second-hand." **Flea Markets** "Flea markets are great for second-hand items, very affordable." **Social Experience (with Friends)** "Shopping in-store is more of a social thing, mostly with friends." **Big Cities / Travel Destinations** "I shop second-hand when I visit bigger cities, not often at home."	

Motivations for Second-Hand Clothing			
Motivations for shopping second-hand clothing?	**Sustainability as Rationalization** "I think mainly it's fashion and individuality, but the sustainability part is always in the back of my mind—makes shopping much more like a feel-good experience." "Sustainability is always in the back of the mind—makes shopping much more like a feel-good experience."	**Sustainability as Rationalization** "I put down sustainability as a motivation because when I do buy something secondhand, I have the feeling afterwards like, 'Ah, nice, it's sustainable.' But it's not like I do it because of sustainability." "After that documentary [on fast fashion], you're conscious for a few months, but it comes back, and then I'm just buying it again." "I feel prouder to say, 'I shopped it second-hand,' and I feel ashamed to say it's from H&M."	**Sustainability as Rationalization** - Sustainability mentioned frequently, but often as a secondary or "feel-good" rationalization after purchase rather than a primary motivation. - Indicates possible social desirability bias; participants want to appear sustainable even if it's not their core motivation.
	Price and Affordability "I would buy second-hand…for practicality reasons and money reasons." "In Berlin, second-hand was often much more pricey than fast fashion."	**Price and Affordability** "It's usually cheaper than if I buy something new, especially when it's like a well-known brand or more expensive brand." "I was at a flea market, everything was two euros… I thought, sure, why not?" "I would buy the cheaper one, not the secondhand one, if it's the same quality and half the price." "Since second-hand usually costs less, you think you saved money and can spend a bit more."	**Price and Affordability** (strongly identified factor, but nuanced) - Flea markets and thrift stores represent true affordability. - Vintage or curated second-hand stores are perceived as pricey, sometimes conflicting with affordability motivations.
	Uniqueness, Individuality, and Fashionability "I definitely need individuality. I shop for it because I want clothes where I don't feel like everybody else is wearing it." "I like to have some unique pieces or the sense of individualism." "For me, second-hand is more of a 'for fun' thing. I go there for cool and fun pieces."	**Uniqueness, Individuality, and Fashionability** "You can find unique pieces [second-hand] you won't find in fast fashion." "The most important thing for me is the uniqueness, the quality, and the style."	**Uniqueness, Individuality, and Fashionability** - A significant factor consistently appearing as a primary motivation, participants seek unique, vintage, or "cool" items unavailable in fast fashion. - Strong association between second-hand and personal style expression. - "Trendiness" and uniqueness often dominate sustainability in actual motivation for younger shoppers.
	Quality and Durability "The quality of second-hand clothing is better, because older clothes were of better quality and lasted longer."	**Quality and Durability** "Quality is important; older garments have much better quality and durability than fast-fashion items."	**Quality and Durability** - Identified positively, participants believe older clothes have better quality compared to new fast-fashion items.

Influence of Social Media on Second-Hand Clothing			
Platforms	"Pinterest: you look for style ideas or something. I think I've never seen something on there which can be bought in bigger fast fashion stores."	"I mostly use Pinterest for inspiration and Instagram…I follow some creators who are into second-hand fashion."	- Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, Vinted - Pinterest and Instagram predominantly used for fashion inspiration, whereas Vinted is practical for buying/selling.
Influencers and Content Creators	"Nowadays everyone can influence everyone. If I post an outfit, which I really like, and my friend sees it on Instagram, I can influence her… I'm an influencer myself, even though I wouldn't consider myself as one." "I think there's always this drive for conformity that we have, not just on social media, but also in real life." "I often feel overwhelmed by the pressure to look good, look cool, and go second-hand shopping all the time."	"I don't follow specific influencers, but subconsciously, I'm influenced by the people around me." "Mostly influenced by friends who started buying second-hand."	- Influence primarily indirect or subconscious rather than direct. - Friends, peer groups, and relatable individuals (not necessarily traditional influencers) heavily influence shopping choices. - An interesting perspective emerged: - "Everyone can be an influencer" – participants noted they're influenced indirectly by their friends' social media posts rather than professional influencers alone.
Type of Content	"I feel like 90% of advertising is coolness rather than sustainability, even though we say it's about sustainability."	"Second-hand clothing is trendy; everyone is doing it. It's more about being trendy now rather than sustainability."	- Participants identified two major content clusters: -> **Inspirational/Trend-Focused Content**: Style inspiration, "coolness," "uniqueness." -> **Educational Content**: Sustainability-focused infographics, documentaries; however, participants indicated this rarely directly influences immediate purchasing decisions. - Perceived Authenticity Issues: -> Participants are skeptical about actual sustainability promoted on social media, suspecting greenwashing. -> Strong perception that second-hand promotion on social media is driven more by trendiness and coolness rather than genuine sustainability.
Emotional Response	"I often feel overwhelmed by the pressure to look good, look cool, and go secondhand shopping all the time." "I feel envy when I see someone has found their perfect style or clothing on social media." "Social media sometimes gives me FOMO—like I have to buy or participate in something, or I'm missing out." "Social media creates negative feelings because I feel I need specific things just because everyone else has them."	"I feel ashamed sometimes if somebody asks me 'Where's this from?' and I have to say 'H&M' or something." "Sometimes I'm slightly jealous, thinking 'Oh, that's a really cool piece, I wish I had it.'" "If I buy second-hand, I feel better about myself and my shopping decision."	- **Envy, Pressure, and FOMO**: Frequently mentioned negative emotions due to exposure to idealized lifestyles. - **"Feel-Good" Factor**: Positive emotional response from sustainable choices, even if it's not their main motivation. - **Guilt and Shame**: Strong emotions related to fast-fashion shopping, especially when perceived negatively by their social circle.
Additional Comments / Patterns			
	"Rich people can wear second-hand and it's cool, but if poor people do it, it's not cool because they don't have a choice."	"It used to be shameful to go second-hand shopping. Now it's trendy."	**Perceived Social-Class Implications of Second-Hand Shopping** - Participants debated the societal implications, noting a shift from second-hand shopping as a necessity for lower socioeconomic groups toward being trendy and fashionable, often reserved for individuals with more disposable income.
	"I'm really not trusting the promise of sustainability in second-hand fashion. I'm a big believer in greenwashing."	"Second-hand fashion becoming expensive and trendy feels like greenwashing, as real sustainability isn't necessarily the focus."	**"Greenwashing" and Skepticism** - Participants frequently mentioned skepticism toward corporate involvement in second-hand and sustainable fashion markets.

Appendix E: Expert Interviews Data Analysis

	HUMANA	Vinokilo	Malala Vintage	Pink Vintage Heart	All
Motivational Factors for Purchasing Second-Hand Fashion					
Trendiness & Uniqueness	Gen Z's search for individuality through second-hand clothes, especially vintage items, as a way to express uniqueness. *"Gen Z embraces individuality, and therefore thrifting is something that they enjoy because of it"*	The motivation of uniqueness and pride associated with owning clothes no one else has. *"People want to be unique... people feel proud when they have something nobody else has"*	Gen Z prefers "sexy," trend-focused clothing, often influenced by Y2K fashion rather than genuinely vintage items. *"They want sexy stuff... things that don't really look too vintage... looking for a quick fix fashion"*	Trendiness as the most important factor for Gen Z shoppers, followed closely by price. *"Trend is number one. If the item is trendy, they'll get it"*	All interviewees agree that the primary motivation, particularly for Gen Z, is the desire for unique, individualistic clothing that differentiates them from others.
Price Sensitivity	Highlighted affordability as an important factor driving second-hand purchases. Indicated the dual nature of low pricing - both facilitating accessibility and possibly encouraging overconsumption. *"We have days where everything is at €1, for example. And I think this gives people with little means the opportunity and the chance to buy clothes they need..."* *"...but also invites people with more means to buy clothes that they don't need."* *"Some people come because of sustainability, but others just want accessible clothes with good prices."*	Some customers struggle with the idea that second-hand fashion can have a higher price, despite quality justifications. *"There are like two kinds of people. Some support the idea that vintage has a price because of the work behind it... but others complain: for this price, I can buy two jackets at Zara."* *"At Vinokilo, the clothes are not really cheap. They are medium-priced. And sometimes people hesitate because of that - even if it's sustainable or unique."*	Concern about the expectation of low pricing among Gen Z, noting that they frequently choose lower-priced items, or quickly lose interest if prices seem high. *"Mostly I think [Gen Z] want cheap stuff"*	Explicitly emphasized price sensitivity, noting its importance alongside trends. Elaborated on consumers' willingness to stretch budgets due to perceived scarcity and uniqueness. *"If it's the perfect thing, you'll get it, even if priced slightly higher"*	Price is universally noted as significant, though it is secondary to trendiness. Affordable prices attract young consumers and impulse buyers.
Sustainability as Secondary	Sustainability is important but acknowledges that fashion trends and accessibility often overshadow it. *"We have to balance between sustainability and trending. Our public usually seeks the fashion videos, the new collection pieces."*	The uniqueness of a piece significantly outweighs sustainability as a decisive factor when purchasing. *"People are willing to pay more because it's unique, not because of sustainability."*	Sustainability comes after trendiness and affordability in purchasing decisions. *"Mostly I think they do want cheap stuff."* *"I think they definitely still shop in Zara and H&M... [second-hand] might just be another place that they shop."*	Sustainability comes after trendiness and affordability in purchasing decisions. *"It's about getting rid of the idea that secondhand is dirty... and now it's just cool, it's trendy."* *"Sustainability is there - but the big focus is on styling and trendiness."* *"It's like, oh, I'm doing something good for the environment because I bought a scarf second-hand... but I also bought five pieces just because they were cute."*	Interviewees unanimously agree sustainability is present but not the main purchase driver. It's more of a feel-good additional aspect.
Impact of Social Media on Second-Hand Fashion					
Social Media as an Influencer of Trendiness	Humana's younger audience is influenced by social media - and that fashion-focused content performs much better than educational or sustainability-related posts. Sees social media primarily as a trend amplifier and uses it that way intentionally - to attract Gen Z with visuals of stylish thrifted pieces, even if that occasionally promotes overconsumption.	Gen Z engagement increased significantly through TikTok, emphasizing trendy and authentic content like styling and fashion challenges. *"Nowadays, social media is focused on fashion and trends, not sustainability."*	Clear dominance of fashion-oriented content. Reflected critically on how social media consumption habits shape the kind of content vintage shops feel forced to create. *"It needs to be interesting enough for people to want to look at it... If they have to choose between an ocean filled with clothes or a styling video - they'll choose the styling every time."*	Social media as a major driver of second-hand fashion trends, specifically through styling content, making second-hand fashion appear high-end and modern. *"Social media has a huge push. It's about styling and tapping into trends, making secondhand fashion appear high-end."*	Social media significantly promotes the trendiness and fashionability of second-hand fashion rather than emphasizing sustainability.
Limited Effectiveness of Sustainability Content	Lower engagement with their sustainability-focused content compared to fashion-oriented posts. *"Our posts about sustainability don't have as much interaction... people usually seek promotion and fashion content."*	Vinokilo did create sustainability-focused content, it didn't usually perform as well as fashion-related posts. Constanza sees sustainability as an important underlying value - but in terms of reach and engagement, fashion and trendiness dominate. Sustainability gets attention only when framed dramatically or visually. *"We used sustainability to communicate... but at the end, the most important thing is that in an event you have trendy clothes."* *"There was a video comparing what you see online - polished fashion - versus what you don't see - the clothing desert in Chile. That one went viral."* But she clarified: *"That's the exception. The rest - about our values or sustainability impact - didn't really perform."*	Strongly emphasized that educational content about sustainability performs poorly on social media compared to trendy styling or outfit posts. *"Educating about second hand is boring... they want to watch cool kids thrifting and making outfits."*	Emphasizing that styling and visual appeal are what people engage with online. She uses social media strategically to position vintage fashion as stylish - not to educate about sustainability, which she says is important but not what people respond to. *"The big focus is on the trendiness... showing how to wear it, styling it, making it modern and cool."* *"If you look on TikTok or Instagram... it's all these secondhand sellers styling Y2K. They're not talking about sustainability."*	Interviewees perceive sustainability-focused content as less engaging.
Negative Perceptions and Misconceptions					
Stigma and Quality Concerns	Stigma is reducing, especially among younger consumers, driven by social media and growing awareness. *"Older generations still hold a stigma on secondhand clothes... but Gen Z is making a change with this."*	Emphasized that fashion and aesthetics are the main hooks for Gen Z. Fashion drives behavior far more than values. *"People feel proud when they're asked, 'Where is your top from?' and they say, 'It's vintage.'"*	*"There are people that hate it, there are people that embrace it and think it's a garment with a story and value it."*	Fading stigma, emphasizing trendiness as a key factor reducing negative perceptions. *"Now it's just cool, it's trendy... social media is getting rid of that stigma - but doing it through fashion, not education."*	Older generations still carry a stigma regarding second-hand clothes as being "dirty" or "used," but Gen Z is actively overcoming this barrier.
Second-hand as a Gateway to Overconsumption	Recognized impulsive buying but positioned it as inevitable, given current consumption patterns. *"Yes, we are influencing people to buy more maybe than they need - but our goal is to change where they buy, not necessarily stop them from buying."* *"Let's be honest - people are going to keep buying. We want to give them a more sustainable option."*	Acknowledged impulsive buying, even comparing second-hand shopping behavior to fast fashion consumption patterns, admitting some buyers purchase far more than they need. *"Vintage lovers don't feel guilty to buy more secondhand, but sometimes they buy more than they need."*	Criticized kilo sales specifically for promoting a fast fashion mindset through over-purchasing cheap items. *"[Kilo sales] really promote fast fashion mentality... people buy stuff they don't need because it's cheap."*	Recognized impulsive buying but positioned it as inevitable, given current consumption patterns. *"I still buy more, even though I have enough clothes. Every season I need new clothes, even if they are secondhand."*	Multiple interviewees noted second-hand shopping might encourage impulsive buying due to low prices and perceived rarity or scarcity.

Appendix F: Frequency Social Media Platforms for Second-Hand Fashion

What platforms do you use when it comes to second-hand fashion? - Selected Choice Pinterest

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Pinterest	59	27.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	153	72.2		
Total		212	100.0		

What platforms do you use when it comes to second-hand fashion? - Selected Choice TikTok

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	TikTok	49	23.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	163	76.9		
Total		212	100.0		

What platforms do you use when it comes to second-hand fashion? - Selected Choice Instagram

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Instagram	77	36.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	135	63.7		
Total		212	100.0		

What platforms do you use when it comes to second-hand fashion? - Selected Choice Vinted

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Vinted	163	76.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	49	23.1		
Total		212	100.0		

What platforms do you use when it comes to second-hand fashion? - Selected Choice Facebook

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	24	11.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	188	88.7		
Total		212	100.0		

What platforms do you use when it comes to second-hand fashion? - Selected Choice Other(s):

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Other(s):	25	11.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	187	88.2		
Total		212	100.0		

Appendix G: Linear Regression Uniqueness Motivation

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.719	1	4.719	7.461	,008[b]
	Residual	42.373	67	0.632		
	Total	47.092	68			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), Unique_Pieces

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions (Constant)	Variance Proportions Unique_Pieces
1	1	1.991	1.000	0.00	0.00
	2	0.009	15.017	1.00	1.00

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.4313	3.5218	2.9601	0.26343	69
Residual	-2.35404	1.31208	0.00000	0.78939	69
Std. Predicted Value	-2.008	2.132	0.000	1.000	69
Std. Residual	-2.960	1.650	0.000	0.993	69

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Appendix H: Linear Regression Affordability Motivation

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.652	1	1.652	1.726	,192[b]
	Residual	104.298	109	0.957		
	Total	105.950	110			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), Affordability

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions (Constant)	Variance Proportions Affordability
1	1	1.989	1.000	0.01	0.01
	2	0.011	13.560	0.99	0.99

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.2975	2.8854	2.6704	0.12254	111
Residual	-1.78166	2.56420	0.00000	0.97374	111
Std. Predicted Value	-3.044	1.755	0.000	1.000	111
Std. Residual	-1.821	2.621	0.000	0.995	111

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Appendix I: Linear Regression Environmental Concern Motivation

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.260	1	4.260	25.929	<,001[b]
	Residual	2.957	18	0.164		
	Total	7.217	19			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), Environmental_Concern

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions (Constant)	Variance Proportions Environmental_Concern
1	1	1.995	1.000	0.00	0.00
	2	0.005	19.499	1.00	1.00

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	3.4234	4.7911	4.1500	0.47349	20
Residual	-0.78250	0.90989	0.00000	0.39450	20
Std. Predicted Value	-1.534	1.354	0.000	1.000	20
Std. Residual	-1.931	2.245	0.000	0.973	20

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Appendix J: Linear Regression Trendiness Motivation

Sub-Scale 1: External Social Motivation

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.932	1	1.932	3.720	,126[b]
	Residual	2.077	4	0.519		
	Total	4.009	5			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions (Constant)	Variance Proportions Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation
1	1	1.968	1.000	0.02	0.02
	2	0.032	7.830	0.98	0.98

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	1.8393	3.3596	2.6944	0.62161	6
Residual	-1.03946	0.77051	0.00000	0.64456	6
Std. Predicted Value	-1.376	1.070	0.000	1.000	6
Std. Residual	-1.442	1.069	0.000	0.894	6

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Sub-Scale 2: Personal Style & Lifestyle Alignment

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	0.209	1	0.209	0.220	,664[b]
	Residual	3.800	4	0.950		
	Total	4.009	5			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), Trendiness_PersonalStyleandLifestyleAlignment

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

				Variance Proportions	
Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	(Constant)	Trendiness_PersonalStyleandLifestyleAlignment
1	1	1.991	1.000	0.00	0.00
	2	0.009	14.748	1.00	1.00

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.5488	3.0732	2.6944	0.20435	6
Residual	-0.79878	1.20122	0.00000	0.87183	6
Std. Predicted Value	-0.713	1.853	0.000	1.000	6
Std. Residual	-0.819	1.232	0.000	0.894	6

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Appendix K: Linear Regression Social or Moral Approval Motivation

Sub-Scale 1: Social Influence & Conformity

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.889	1	1.889	1.677	,265[b]
	Residual	4.505	4	1.126		
	Total	6.395	5			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), SocialMoralApproval_SocialInfluenceandConformity

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

				Variance Proportions	
Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	(Constant)	SocialMoralApproval_SocialInfluenceandConformity
1	1	1.899	1.000	0.05	0.05
	2	0.101	4.330	0.95	0.95

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.1623	3.8052	2.8194	0.61470	6
Residual	-1.56944	0.86151	0.00000	0.94925	6
Std. Predicted Value	-1.069	1.604	0.000	1.000	6
Std. Residual	-1.479	0.812	0.000	0.894	6

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Sub-Scale 2: Moral Self Image

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	0.255	1	0.255	0.166	,705[b]
	Residual	6.140	4	1.535		
	Total	6.395	5			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), SocialMoralApproval_MoralSelfImage

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions (Constant)	Variance Proportions SocialMoralApproval_MoralSelfImage
1	1	1.936	1.000	0.03	0.03
	2	0.064	5.492	0.97	0.97

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.4654	3.1413	2.8194	0.22573	6
Residual	-1.50508	1.81504	0.00000	1.10814	6
Std. Predicted Value	-1.568	1.426	0.000	1.000	6
Std. Residual	-1.215	1.465	0.000	0.894	6

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Appendix L: Moderation Analysis Social Media Content (Trendiness Portrayal)

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.726	2	1.863	19.764	,019[b]
	Residual	0.283	3	0.094		
	Total	4.009	5			
2	Regression	3.727	3	1.242	8.800	,104[c]
	Residual	0.282	2	0.141		
	Total	4.009	5			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Trendiness_Centered, Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation_Centered

c. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Trendiness_Centered, Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation_Centered, Interaction_H2a

Excluded Variables[a]

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	VIF	Minimum Tolerance
1	Interaction_H2a	,012[b]	0.058	0.959	0.041	0.765	1.307	0.724

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Trendiness_Centered, Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation_Centered

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions (Constant)	Trendiness_ExternalSocialMotivation_Centered	SM_Portrayal_Trendiness_Centered	Interaction_H2a
1	1	1.389	1.000	0.17	0.16	0.31	
	2	1.000	1.179	0.44	0.48	0.00	
	3	0.611	1.508	0.39	0.36	0.69	
2	1	1.837	1.000	0.08	0.05	0.14	0.13
	2	1.011	1.348	0.28	0.60	0.01	0.01
	3	0.696	1.625	0.63	0.29	0.07	0.21
	4	0.457	2.004	0.00	0.07	0.79	0.65

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	1.7264	3.8268	2.6944	0.86336	6
Residual	-0.31918	0.27358	0.00000	0.23763	6
Std. Predicted Value	-1.121	1.312	0.000	1.000	6
Std. Residual	-0.849	0.728	0.000	0.632	6

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Appendix M: Moderation Analysis Social Media Content (Sustainability Portrayal)

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.273	2	2.137	12.339	<,001[b]
	Residual	2.944	17	0.173		
	Total	7.217	19			
2	Regression	4.862	3	1.621	11.012	<,001[c]
	Residual	2.355	16	0.147		
	Total	7.217	19			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered

c. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered, Interaction_H2b

Excluded Variables[a]

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	VIF	Minimum Tolerance
1	Interaction_H2b	,358[b]	2.000	0.063	0.447	0.637	1.571	0.637

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions (Constant)	Environmental_Concern_Centered	SM_Portrayal_Sustainability_Centered	Interaction_H2b
1	1	1.543	1.000	0.23	0.00	0.23	
	2	1.000	1.242	0.01	0.98	0.00	
	3	0.457	1.836	0.76	0.01	0.77	
2	1	1.573	1.000	0.12	0.05	0.15	0.09
	2	1.497	1.025	0.09	0.17	0.05	0.13
	3	0.626	1.585	0.30	0.35	0.17	0.22
	4	0.303	2.278	0.50	0.43	0.62	0.57

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	3.2066	5.0209	4.1500	0.50585	20
Residual	-0.68345	0.51465	0.00000	0.35205	20
Std. Predicted Value	-1.865	1.722	0.000	1.000	20
Std. Residual	-1.782	1.342	0.000	0.918	20

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Appendix N: Moderation Analysis Social Media Content (Sustainability Engagement)

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.260	2	2.130	12.246	<,001[b]
	Residual	2.957	17	0.174		
	Total	7.217	19			
2	Regression	4.500	3	1.500	8.835	,001[c]
	Residual	2.716	16	0.170		
	Total	7.217	19			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Engagement_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered

c. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Engagement_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered, Interaction_H2c

Excluded Variables[a]

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics: Tolerance	VIF	Minimum Tolerance
1	Interaction_H2c	-,202[b]	-1.190	0.252	-0.285	0.815	1.226	0.815

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), SM_Engagement_Sustainability_Centered, Environmental_Concern_Centered

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions: (Constant)	Environmental_Concern_Centered	SM_Engagement_Sustainability_Centered	Interaction_H2c
1	1	1.428	1.000	0.27	0.02	0.29	
	2	1.000	1.195	0.05	0.93	0.00	
	3	0.572	1.580	0.68	0.05	0.71	
2	1	1.647	1.000	0.10	0.09	0.16	0.14
	2	1.193	1.175	0.23	0.26	0.09	0.11
	3	0.612	1.640	0.27	0.56	0.09	0.43
	4	0.548	1.735	0.40	0.09	0.66	0.32

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	3.3955	4.9780	4.1500	0.48667	20
Residual	-0.74707	0.72557	0.00000	0.37812	20
Std. Predicted Value	-1.550	1.701	0.000	1.000	20
Std. Residual	-1.813	1.761	0.000	0.918	20

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Appendix O: Moderation Analysis Social Media Content (Low-Cost Portrayal)

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.832	2	2.916	3.145	,047[b]
	Residual	100.118	108	0.927		
	Total	105.950	110			
2	Regression	5.832	3	1.944	2.078	,108[c]
	Residual	100.118	107	0.936		
	Total	105.950	110			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_LowCost_Centered, Affordability_Centered

c. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_LowCost_Centered, Affordability_Centered, Interaction_H2d

Excluded Variables[a]

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics: Tolerance	Collinearity Statistics: VIF	Collinearity Statistics: Minimum Tolerance
1	Interaction_H2d	-,002[b]	-0.016	0.987	-0.002	0.963	1.038	0.837

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_LowCost_Centered, Affordability_Centered

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions: (Constant)	Affordability_Centered	SM_Portrayal_LowCost_Centered	Interaction_H2d
1	1	1.435	1.000	0.08	0.22	0.28	
	2	1.000	1.198	0.72	0.21	0.00	
	3	0.565	1.593	0.20	0.57	0.72	
2	1	1.450	1.000	0.02	0.25	0.26	0.04
	2	1.311	1.051	0.34	0.01	0.02	0.30
	3	0.701	1.438	0.24	0.42	0.06	0.50
	4	0.538	1.642	0.40	0.32	0.66	0.16

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	1.9240	2.9623	2.6704	0.23025	111
Residual	-1.90735	2.18057	0.00000	0.95403	111
Std. Predicted Value	-3.242	1.268	0.000	1.000	111
Std. Residual	-1.972	2.254	0.000	0.986	111

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Appendix P: Moderation Analysis Social Media Content (Self-Expression Portrayal)

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.408	2	2.704	4.282	,018[b]
	Residual	41.684	66	0.632		
	Total	47.092	68			
2	Regression	5.527	3	1.842	2.881	,042[c]
	Residual	41.564	65	0.639		
	Total	47.092	68			

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_SelfExpression_Centered, Unique_Pieces_Centered

c. Predictors: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_SelfExpression_Centered, Unique_Pieces_Centered, Interaction_H2e

Excluded Variables[a]

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics: Partial Correlation	Tolerance	VIF	Minimum Tolerance
1	Interaction_H2e	,055[b]	0.432	0.667	0.053	0.827	1.210	0.827

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), SM_Portrayal_SelfExpression_Centered, Unique_Pieces_Centered

Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions: (Constant)	Unique_Pieces_Centered	SM_Portrayal_SelfExpression_Centered	Interaction_H2e
1	1	1.311	1.000	0.30	0.05	0.34	
	2	1.000	1.145	0.12	0.85	0.00	
	3	0.689	1.380	0.58	0.10	0.66	
2	1	1.557	1.000	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.19
	2	1.158	1.160	0.33	0.18	0.17	0.08
	3	0.703	1.488	0.52	0.00	0.69	0.07
	4	0.582	1.636	0.08	0.67	0.01	0.67

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.1807	3.5133	2.9601	0.28511	69
Residual	-2.41156	1.33924	0.00000	0.78182	69
Std. Predicted Value	-2.734	1.940	0.000	1.000	69
Std. Residual	-3.016	1.675	0.000	0.978	69

a. Dependent Variable: Overconsumption