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## CONTEMPORARY MANAGEMENT OF GENERATION Z'S IMPULSIVE FAST FASHION CONSUMPTION: A RESISTANCE TO SLOW DENIM FASHION

Generation Z's (Gen Z) resistance to slow fashion reflects a significant barrier to adopting sustainable fashion (Slow fashion), which is a concern for brands operating in the Fashion industry. Despite the growing awareness of environmental issues, the purchasing of slow fashion remains low among Gen Z. Aiming to fulfill Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12 proposed by the United Nations, this study investigated the resistance factors to purchasing slow fashion apparel. Key variables from the Stimulus-Organism-Response model, Cognitive Dissonance Theory, and Status Quo Bias Model were adopted. A quantitative research approach and a non-probability convenience sampling were utilised, while data were collected from 184 respondents using an online self-administered survey. The latest SPSS package was used to analyse the data. The empirical findings suggest that beliefs, inertia, loss aversion, psychological commitment, and attitude influence Gen Z's resistance to slow fashion. Strategic management recommendations, limitations, delimitations, and future research avenues are provided.

**Keywords:** fast fashion, Generation Z, impulsive buying behaviour, resistance factors, slow fashion.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry has undergone significant changes since the 1990s and is now characterised by several trends (Liu, 2022). The current fashion retail landscape is in a continuous race to introduce and sell the latest fashion trends to meet consumer demands (Liu, 2022). While fast fashion retailers, in their pursuit of accessibility, produce garments quickly and at a minimal cost to ensure affordability (Mäkelä, 2022), with little to no investment in the creation of slow fashion clothing since it is thought to be expensive to

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maintain. Thus, fast fashion is defined as a fashion production and retail business model that is characterised by quick production cycles, frequent style changes, and mass production of low-cost clothing that is frequently of poor quality and has planned obsolescence to deliver the newest trends to customers as soon as possible at the lowest possible cost (Gouveia, Chabata, 2023). Whereas slow fashion is defined as a strategy for designing, producing, consuming quality-based fashion, and living better, by promoting awareness of the effects of clothing on communities, and the environment (Jung, Jin, 2014). Fast fashion produces garments twenty-five times faster than sustainable supply chains, which reduces the lifetime of garments and endorses impulsive purchasing intentions (Li, Zhou, Zhao, Guan, Yang, 2024). Such fashion production approach has led to an urgent unsustainable problem due to fast fashion's alarming environmental impacts.

Consequently, the consumption of fast fashion negatively impacts the environment, necessitating urgent action to align with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly by addressing responsible production and consumption. This study specifically focuses on SDG 12, which aims to promote sustainable practices in fashion brands' production as well as Gen Z fashion consumption (Thakker, Sun, 2023). The prevailing linear model of production and consumption strains natural resources, underscoring the need for a shift towards a more circular economy (Valenga, Stefani, Carvalho, Chiusoli, 2023). The process of circular economic practices, coupled with sustainable consumption, and green production, are vital to achieving SDG 12 (Valenga et al., 2023). Accordingly, this study aims to better understand why Gen Z consumers resist slow denim fashion as a feasible solution to promote sustainable production and consumption.

Research indicates a link between fast fashion and impulsive buying behaviours (Sembawa, 2019; Webber, Rich, 2023). Lin (2022) notes that consumers view shopping as entertainment, especially when prices are low and new items are frequently released. Fast fashion caters to this preference by providing inexpensive items quickly, faster sales, revenue generation, profitability, further fuelling impulsive purchases and the tendency to buy large quantities at once (Lin, 2022; Yasin, Julita, Hidayat, 2023). As a result, contemporary manager's marketing strategies often involve limited-time specials to encourage quick decisions and maximise sales (Lin, 2022; Sembawa, 2019). Consequently, encouraging the consumption of fast fashion because it becomes effortlessly available and more affordable.

Gen Z are individuals born between 1995 and 2010, who have experienced rapid technological advancements during their formative years (Rojas, 2020; van Lierop, 2023). According to Yasin et al. (2023), impulse buying is prevalent among female Gen Z shoppers, often driven by emotional factors such as the 'fear of missing out' (FOMO). Additionally, Gen Z often feel social pressure to avoid repeating outfits, influencing their shopping habits (Webber, Rich, 2023). Impulsive purchases, driven by a 'need' to experience the thrill of buying, constitute a significant portion of expenses in fashion retail, more so than any other sector, due to the quick evolution of trends (Webber, Rich, 2023). As a result, fast fashion relies on trends, as many garments are discarded after only a brief period, with most items being worn only seven to ten times on average (Igini, 2023). This behaviour suggests a resistance to slow fashion among Gen Z consumers to fully acknowledge the environmental consequences of their fast fashion purchases, despite the ongoing negative environmental impact caused by fast fashion production.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Given the prevalence of Gen Z's impulsive fast fashion consumption, this study examined the resistance elements to be taken into account due to the resistance to slow fashion, particularly, denim jean fashion purchases. Understanding the resistance factors could enable contemporary management strategies that may address them to promote sustainable consumption behaviours within the fashion industry and further contribute towards the achievement of SDG 12. Therefore, the main research objective guiding this study is:

To empirically investigate the factors that influence the resistance to slow denim jean fashion consumption.

The secondary objectives for this study were:

1. To determine if the beliefs and actions of Gen Z towards slow denim fashion would influence their attitude toward resisting the purchase of slow denim fashion.
2. To determine if inertia, loss aversion and psychological commitment of Gen Z of slow denim fashion would influence their attitude toward resisting the purchase of slow denim fashion.
3. To determine whether Gen Z's attitude towards slow denim jean purchases impacts their resistance toward slow fashion denim jeans.
4. To propose and recommend contemporary management strategies that slow fashion retailers can implement to mitigate the resistance of slow fashion denim jean purchases.

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The goal of the literature review is to define and clarify problems, to inform the reader about a subject by summarizing, evaluating extant studies, identifying inconsistencies, gaps, contradictions, and relationships in the literature and to suggest future steps and approaches to solve the issues identified.

### 3.1. Fast fashion and slow fashion consumption

Globally, fast fashion has revolutionised the clothing industry by offering vast amounts of affordable clothing to consumers (Fraguito, 2023). Due to its low cost, fast fashion encourages consumers to discard clothes more quickly, sometimes even without wearing them (de Oliveira, Miranda, de Paula Dias, 2022). Mulhern (2022) reports that fast fashion clothing sales have doubled from 100 to 200 billion units per year. In 2022, the market was valued at \$106 billion and is forecast to reach \$185 billion by 2027, driven by high consumer demand (Illuminem, 2024). In contrast, the slow fashion market was valued at only \$3.3 billion in 2023 and is expected to grow by only 9.5% between 2024 and 2032 (Global Market Insights, 2024). Although consumers are gradually adopting slow fashion, the shift is evidently occurring at a slower pace than anticipated. As a result, contemporary managers must devise practical strategies to address the unfavorable current trends in the fashion sector, since some would argue that these trends are experiencing resistance to slow fashion purchases.

### 3.2. Resistance to slow fashion purchasing by gen Z

Despite being environmentally aware, Gen Z faces several barriers to purchasing slow fashion. Halim, Hariyanto, Yudianto, Setiasih, Anggraini, Parindra, and Yuniarti (2023) identified five main factors deterring Gen Z from choosing slow fashion, firstly, price

sensitivity is the most prominent factor, since Gen Z comprises students and young adults with limited income, weak purchasing power and making slow fashion apparel unaffordable. Although brand image holds some importance, Gen Z generally favour retailers offering lower prices and discounts (Halim et al., 2023; Liu, Hei, 2021). Another barrier is their tendency for impulsive buying, which is often driven by limited self-control and emotional desires (Halim et al., 2023). Fast fashion brands capitalise on this by implementing marketing tactics that entice Gen Z with limited-time promotions, an approach less common among slow fashion brands (Halim et al., 2023). Additionally, mental budgeting, although potentially beneficial for managing spending, leads Gen Z to prioritise short-term savings, often resulting in the purchase of more affordable fast fashion items.

Another major factor in Gen Z's resistance to slow fashion is perceived value. Although several Gen Z customers value the immediate satisfaction that fast fashion provides above the long-term advantages of slow fashion's ethical production and quality, the availability of lower-priced, fast fashion apparel makes sustainable alternatives less attractive. Cultural influences and social media also shape Gen Z's choices. Social media and peer influence strongly impact their purchasing decisions (Gouveia, Chabata, 2023), and fast fashion brands leverage on this by collaborating with influencers that enhance their appeal to Gen Z. More importantly, Ray and Nayak (2023) note that Gen Z consumers are increasingly skeptical of greenwashing, leading them to question a garment's sustainability and the justification of its price. Retailers often claim to uphold sustainability best practices by incorporating recycled materials, but may fail to disclose the actual percentage of recycled content in their garments, raising doubts regarding genuine sustainability claims.

### 3.3. Theoretical framework

This study was guided by three theoretical models that are explained further in detail in the next sub-sections.

#### 3.3.1. Stimulus-Organism-Response model (S-O-R)

Mehrabian and Russell's 1974 development of the S-O-R model offers a profound understanding of consumer behaviour (Mishra, Shukla, Sharma, 2022; Vidyanata, 2022; Bigne, Chatzipanagiotou, Ruiz, 2020). The S-O-R model suggests that external stimuli trigger emotional reactions, resulting in consumers' behavioural responses (Mishra et al., 2022). When people encounter external stimuli, their internal emotional state changes, leading to changes in behaviour (Mishra et al., 2022). Figure 1 provides an exemplary visual representation of the S-O-R model.



Figure 1. Stimulus Organism Response (S-O-R) Model

Source: (Ligaraba, de Villiers, 2023).

The S-O-R model was applied in this study to illustrate the relationship between the stimuli associated with fast fashion consumption resistance factors from the cognitive dissonance and status quo bias theories (See Figures 2 and 3). The 'organism' represents the consumer's attitude, reflecting their emotional and cognitive responses to the 'stimuli'. The 'response' focuses on Gen Z consumers' resistance to purchasing slow-fashion denim jeans. The S-O-R model is particularly relevant in this study, as it provides a comprehensive understanding of how external stimuli influence consumers' emotional states and attitudes. Potentially leading to resistance to slow-fashion denim jeans, revealing the emotional and psychological barriers that hinder a shift towards more sustainable slow fashion choices.

The S-O-R model has its limitations, as noted by Sivasothy, Yeo, and Tan (2024), who questioned its reliability in healthcare due to potential overgeneralisation when variables are too broad. Critics also highlight the model's emphasis on stimuli while neglecting the cognitive aspects of consumer behaviour, as cognition is not solely triggered by external factors (Hochreiter, Benedetto, Loesch, 2023). Additionally, the model requires thorough consideration of perception, which influences response behaviour (Grijs, 2024). As a result, this study incorporated other theoretical frameworks, such as the Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT) and Status Quo Bias (SQB), to overcome the stipulated shortcomings of the S-O-R model.

### 3.3.2. Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Leon Festinger developed the Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT) in 1957 (McLeod, 2023). Cognitive dissonance refers to any situation involving conflicting beliefs, actions, or behaviours. Tueanrat and Alamanos (2023) are of the view that dissonance occurs when there is inconsistency within cognitive elements, such as conflicting knowledge, opinions, beliefs, or behaviours, causing mental discomfort and motivating individuals to take action to reduce or eliminate it.

Cognitive elements can be relevant and consonant, relevant but dissonant, or irrelevant. Dissonance arises from logical inconsistencies, cultural differences, or contradictions between opinions and general stances (Tueanrat, Alamanos, 2023). Managers ought to consider other cognitions before reaching managerial decisions (Tueanrat, Alamanos, 2023) that may have a direct or indirect impact on consumers. CDT can be applied when consumers face dissonance in their behavioural patterns (Villines, 2024). Although cognitive dissonance is an internal experience that cannot be observed, it motivates individuals to resolve experienced discomfort (Cherry, 2022).

Several studies have applied CDT to behaviours like smoking, meat consumption, household chores, and fast fashion purchases (Pericas, Gonzalez, Bennisar, De Pedro, Aguilo, Bauza, 2009; Tian, Hilton, Becker 2016; McLeod, 2023; Cherry, 2022). For instance, smokers may experience conflict knowing their habit is harmful to health, but still find it relaxing. Cognitive dissonance arises as they grapple with these conflicting beliefs (Villines, 2024). To resolve this, individuals may therefore alter their beliefs or actions (Pericas et al., 2009). Causes of cognitive dissonance include social pressures, addiction, decision-making dilemmas, and negative past experiences (Tian et al., 2023).

In context to this study, focusing on consumers who have not purchased slow-fashion denim jeans, we examined two CDT variables namely: belief and action. Belief refers to contradicting actions, where individuals hold a belief but act opposite to it (Villines, 2024). The study aimed to understand Gen Z's beliefs about slow denim fashion to gain

insights into their choice for the impulsive purchase of fast fashion. Though CDT has some shortcomings as indicated by Colthirst-Reid (2022) who pointed out that it lacks a standard definition of dissonance, often described as psychological discomfort, other studies tend to focus on variables rather than the experience of dissonance. There is also criticism regarding the assumption that belief inconsistency directly leads to dissonance (Colthirst-Reid, 2022). This study addresses some of these limitations by incorporating the Status Quo Bias model and the S-O-R model, proposing that attitudes related to beliefs and actions drive resistance to slow-fashion denim jeans. Figure 2 presents the original CDT.

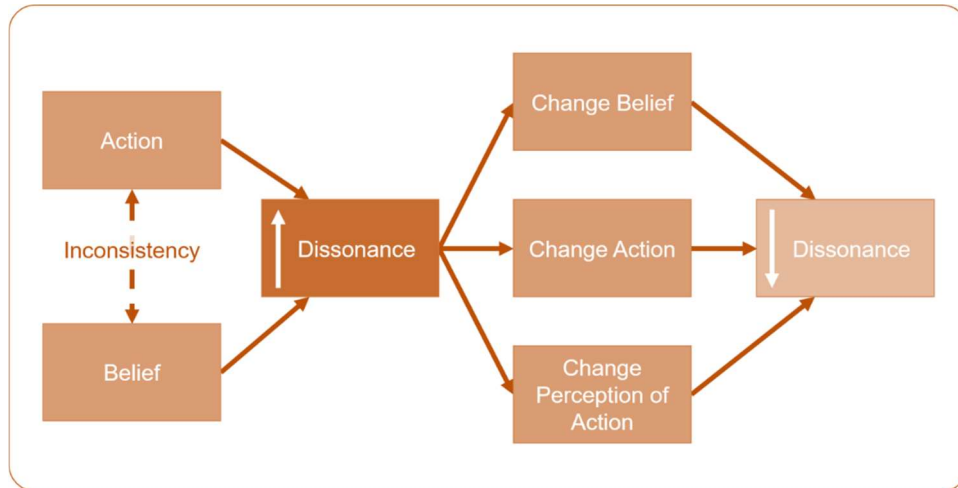


Figure 2. Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Source: (Marczewski, 2017).

### 3.3.3. Status Quo Bias Model

The Status Quo Bias Model (SQBM) was developed by William Samuelson and Richard Zeckhauser in 1988 (Samuelson, Zeckhauser, 1988). SQBM offers a framework for understanding why individuals often favour maintaining their current situation rather than embracing change or new experiences, even when change could lead to potential benefits rather than the current status quo (Cheng, 2023). According to Cheng (2023), the SQBM influences decision-making by predicting that individuals, accustomed to their current state, are reluctant to deviate from their established norms. Inertia, loss aversion, and sunk cost are closely linked concepts within the SQBM (Godefroid, Plattfaut, Niehaves, 2023).

Inertia, a significant factor in consumer decision-making, refers to the resistance that any physical object encounters (Butto, 2021). This resistance can diminish the desire to purchase alternatives, as noted by Butto (2021). Gen Z inertia can manifest as a reluctance to discard fast fashion habits, despite increasing awareness of the negative social and environmental impacts associated with fast fashion, preferring instead to continue with familiar consumption patterns. Whereas loss aversion, a concept introduced by Kahneman

and Tversky (1979), suggests that individuals perceive losses as more significant than equivalent gains (Godefroid et al., 2023). As a result, people often forgo potential benefits due to their fear of loss, even when the possible gain outweighs the perceived loss (Godefroid et al., 2023).

Sunk costs refer to any time, effort, or money already invested in a particular course of action (Godefroid et al., 2023). Individuals often justify their behaviours by not wanting to waste their previous investments, thus preferring to remain in the status quo (Godefroid et al., 2023). For Gen Z, while they may be comfortable purchasing fast fashion impulsively, the SQBM suggests that they would immensely benefit from purchasing slow denim apparel, yet they tend to persist with fast fashion due to psychological barriers.

Three variables were therefore adopted from the SQBM, as they are crucial to understanding the context of this study. The SQBM serves as the underpinning theory, as it suggests that individuals are more inclined to maintain their current state (purchasing fast fashion) than to try new products, such as slow denim jeans. Therefore, more variables were incorporated from the SQBM than from S-O-R and CDT, as shown in Figure 3.

#### 3.3.4. Conceptual model of the study

This study is underpinned by the integration of the S-O-R model, SQBM and CDT to address the main research question. The S-O-R model underpins the three-tier conceptual model in Figure 3, in which the external stimuli consists of variables derived from both the SQBM and CDT, while the commonly used organism variable, "attitude", is incorporated to capture consumers' organism reaction derived from stimuli. The outcome or response is the resistance to slow denim fashion as the dependent variable. The SQBM represents the core of this study, focusing on realising the resistance factors regarding resistance to slow denim fashion purchases that require contemporary management considerations within the fashion industry.

As presented in Figure 3, the hypotheses of this study are formulated as follows:

H1: Consumer beliefs positively and significantly influence attitudes toward the resistance of slow denim jean purchases

H2: Consumer action positively and significantly influences attitude towards the resistance of slow denim jean purchases

H3: Inertia positively and significantly influences attitude toward the resistance of slow denim jean purchases

H4: Loss aversion positively and significantly influences attitude towards the resistance of slow denim jean purchases

H5: Psychological commitment positively and significantly influences attitude toward the resistance of slow denim jean purchases

H6: Consumer attitude towards slow denim jean purchases positively and significantly influences the resistance to slow denim jean purchases

## Cognitive Dissonance Model

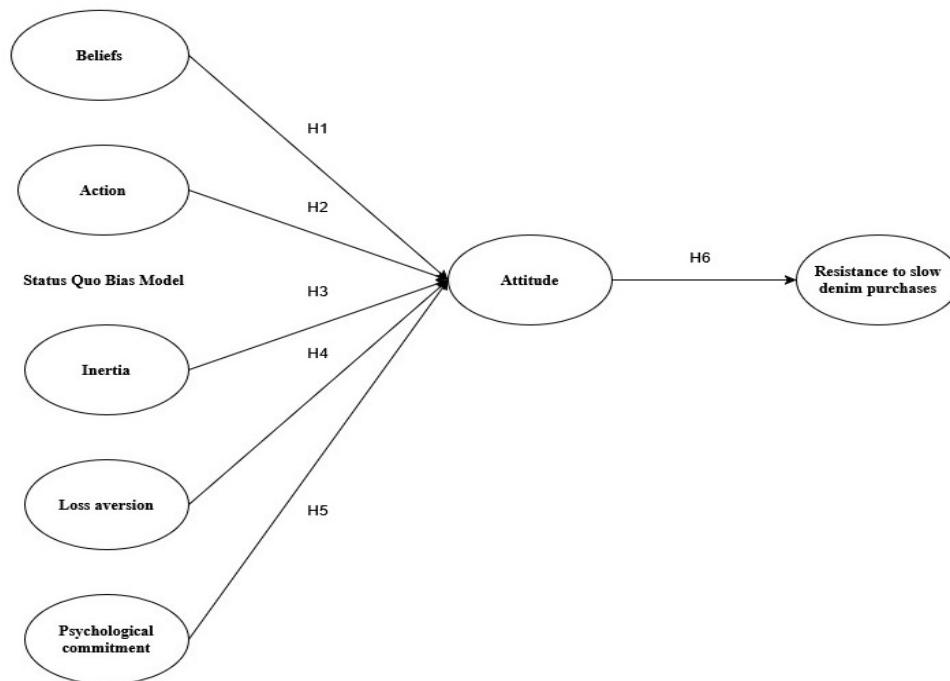


Figure 3. Study Conceptual Model

Source: (Author's compilation, 2025).

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research approach and a descriptive research design aligned with this study. The population included young consumers aged 18 to 29 (Gen Z) who purchase or purchased fast fashion instead of slow denim jeans. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 29 years as supported by Rojas (2020), who defined people belonging to Gen Z as those born between 1995 and 2010. Due to ethical reasons, this study only included responses from those aged 18 to 29 years. Data was collected using an online survey through Survey Monkey. The online link from where respondents could access the questionnaire was conveniently distributed to all the prospective respondents through the researcher's social media platforms. A total of 184 fully completed questionnaires were obtained after six weeks of data collection, with an 82% response rate. The sample size of 184 was suitable for quantitative data analysis using the latest Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

#### 5. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

##### 5.1. Demographic results

Demographic results indicated that 76%, were within the 22-25 age group, 14% were between 18-21 years old, and 10% were in the 26-29 range – all falling within the Gen Z

age group. Among all the participants, 88% were female, and just 12% were male. No respondents identified as non-binary, third-gender, or any other gender identity. A total of 52 had completed a bachelor's degree, 48 had achieved a master's degree, indicating a higher educational achievement among respondents. Additionally, 26 respondents declared having a high school diploma or its equivalent. The remaining (58) participants attended some college but did not earn a degree. Lastly, 43% of the respondents enjoy a regular income, and the same percentage depend on sources like pocket money, scholarships, or loans, influencing their perspective on this research. Only 10% of the participants are self-employed, and 4% are either unemployed or working part-time.

### 5.2. Reliability and validity

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was implemented to determine the validity to indicate how strongly each item is related to the factor. The EFA results ranged from 0.64 to 0.79, which was higher than the recommended threshold of 0.3 stipulated by Child (2006). To ensure construct validity was accomplished, the researcher's adopted and adapted statements used in the online survey from the extant literature. Whereas Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficient was calculated to determine reliability. The Cronbach alpha values were 0.84 for beliefs, 0.97 for action, 0.90 for inertia, 0.79 for loss aversion, and 0.84 for psychological commitment. The attitude construct had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.88. According to Malhotra (2010), a Cronbach's alpha of less than 0.50 is unacceptable, those between 0.50 and 0.69 are adequate, and values above 0.70 are deemed acceptable. Since all the constructs exceeded 0.70, they were retained and considered reliable.

### 5.3. Regression analysis

Using SPSS, regression analysis was conducted to test the conceptual model and address the proposed hypothesis presented earlier. The results are represented in Table 1.

Table 1. Regression results

Relationship	Hypothesis	Beta Coefficient	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Std. Coefficient	Decision
B → ATT	H <sub>1</sub>	-0.234	0.121	-2.351	0.001	-0.228	Supported
AC → ATT	H <sub>2</sub>	0.397	0.095	0.267	0.602	0.387	Not supported
IN → ATT	H <sub>3</sub>	0.159	0.126	1.471	0.024	0.216	Supported
LA → ATT	H <sub>4</sub>	-0.061	0.094	-0.497	0.030	0.398	Supported
PC → ATT	H <sub>5</sub>	-0.328	0.118	-2.134	0.000	-0.328	Supported
ATT → RE	H <sub>6</sub>	0.187	0.101	-0.674	0.001	0.164	Supported

Source: Author's compilation (2025).

## 6. DISCUSSION OF EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Respondents' personal beliefs do not align with the adoption of slow denim fashion, contributing to a resistant attitude (Beta= -0.234,  $t = -2.351$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). We therefore accept the hypotheses, H<sub>1</sub>, that consumer beliefs positively and significantly influence attitude toward the resistance of slow denim jean purchases. As a result, respondents from social or religious groups may collectively resist purchasing slow denim fashion, reinforcing an overall resistant attitude among Gen Z. This finding aligns with studies by Macready, Hiekeb, Klimczuk-Kochańskac, Szumiałc, Vrankend and Grunerte (2020) and Cheung and

To (2021), who suggest that beliefs do not always lead to sustainable purchasing, particularly when there is a disconnect between the motivation to buy sustainably and actual consumer demand. However, other studies, such as that of Majeed, Aslam, Murtaza, Attila, and Molnár (2021), indicated that beliefs about sustainability can mediate the relationship between product pricing and purchase intentions. Similarly, Mai et al. (2021) emphasised that beliefs play a role in positively shaping consumer behaviour, especially regarding health and environmental concerns.

Respondents reported that actions did not directly influence their resistance to slow denim jeans; increased engagement with slow fashion could potentially enhance their purchase intentions (Beta= 0.397,  $t= 0.267$ ,  $p=0.602$ ); thus, H2 was not supported. While some studies, such as Edge and Hermann (2021) as well as Ortega-Egea and García-de-Frutos (2019), found support for the idea that consumer actions influence sustainable purchasing – particularly with awareness of product origins and the impact on the supply chain – this study did not find similar results. Rakib, Chang, Jones, and Jung (2022) further highlighted that consumer actions can be powerful drivers of behaviour, particularly in sustainable consumption. Macready et al. (2020) as well as Rakib, Chang and Jones (2022), argued that actions and motivations for sustainable purchasing may not always align.

Results indicate that respondents showed a preference for fast fashion, resulting in resistance to slow-fashion denim. Inertia creates a barrier to switching to slow-fashion denim, despite the potential environmental and economic benefits (Beta= 0.159,  $t= 1.471$ ,  $p=0.024$ ). We therefore accept the hypotheses, H3, that inertia positively and significantly influences attitude toward the resistance of slow denim jean purchases. The data showed strong alignment with previous studies, including those of Henderson, Steinhoff, Harmeling, and Palmatier (2021), who found that inertia significantly impacts purchasing behaviour, particularly in established habits. Similarly, Seth, Talwar, Bhatia, Saxena, and Dhir (2020) revealed that inertia is a key factor in resistance to changes in purchasing patterns.

Additionally, the concept of loss aversion is strong among Gen Z; they prefer avoiding potential losses over acquiring the perceived gains of slow denim fashion. This aversion contributes to their resistance, as the potential for loss psychologically outweighs any potential gain as the results of this study stipulate (Beta= -0.061,  $t= -0.497$ ,  $p=0.030$ ). Hence, H4 was supported. These empirical findings align with studies by Zhou, Yuen and Ye (2022) and Xu, Meng, Chen, and Zhao (2023), who indicated that loss aversion affects consumer decision-making, especially when financial trade-offs are perceived. The variation in responses further supports research by Gächter, Johnson and Herrmann (2022), who noted that factors like education and age could influence the degree of loss aversion in consumer behaviour. For Gen Z, who are relatively young and often budget-conscious, cost perceptions vary widely depending on individual financial priorities. However, it's important to note that Ortiz, Zindel and Da Silva (2023) found no effect of loss aversion on cheating behaviour, indicating the need to further explore the proposed relationship within specific and diverse contexts.

Psychological commitment, considered as emotional attachment, trust, and reliability associated with fast fashion brands, further entrenches Gen Z resistance. These emotional commitments go beyond inertia, as they reflect a deliberate preference for fast-fashion denim due to a deeper connection. Shifting consumers towards slow fashion will require significant motivational factors that challenge current attachments (Beta= -0.328,  $t= -2.134$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), therefore, H5 was supported. Our findings are consistent with those of Roberts-Lombard, Nemadzhilili, Coelho, and Mangope (2022), as well as Amoroso and

Ackaradejruangsri (2024), who concluded that psychological commitment significantly influences loyalty and purchase intentions. Furthermore, Cahaya, Mursitama, Hamsal and Tjhin (2023) found that psychological commitment affects consumer behaviour and leads to overall trust and commitment, particularly in e-loyalty contexts. However, in this study, the results suggest that Gen Z's psychological commitment to slow denim may vary, possibly due to competing interests and the availability of fast fashion options.

Positive attitudes can increase purchases, while negative attitudes enhance resistance (Beta= -0.187,  $t = -0.674$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). We therefore accept the hypotheses, H6, that consumer attitude towards slow denim jean purchases positively and significantly influences the resistance to slow denim jean purchases. Mustaphi (2024) and Anshu, Gaur and Singh (2022), highlighted that consumer attitudes do impact behaviours, especially concerning purchase intentions. Furthermore, Burgese and Cha (2024) found that resistance influences consumer behaviour regarding autonomous vehicles due to perceived complexity and risks. The result for H6, as supported in this study, proposes that other factors, such as habit or cost, may influence slower fashion purchasing decisions than negative Gen Z attitudes.

## 7. DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

As with any other study, the problem of scarce resources limits the study's scope. This study was carried out in South Africa, an emerging economy, underscored by both financial and non-financial resource restrictions. Respondents were only those who fell within the Gen Z age bracket (18 to 29 years) as supported by Rojas (2020). The respondents had to be consumers of fast denim fashion and had not purchased slow denim fashion. Moreover, there were several limitations, such as this study only focused on a sample from an emerging economy (South Africa), and future studies can be conducted in other types of economies, preferably the developed world with a diverse cultural background. Since data was collected using self-reported means, the responses may be impacted by bias or false reporting. To increase accuracy, validity, and representativeness, future research should employ controlled sampling techniques, apply triangulated survey data with behavioral measures or interviews. The sample size would not allow the generalisation of the results; hence, future researchers could increase the sample size and adopt probability sampling techniques to make the results more generalisable for managerial decision-making. Future studies could attempt to use a mixed research approach to capture in-depth nuances of resistance to slow fashion consumer behaviour.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

Critical recommendations that, if implemented by contemporary managers effectively, could lead to a positive shift in Gen Z consumers' attitudes and increase their purchase intentions for slow-fashion denim jeans could include emphasising key aspects of the slow fashion business model—such as sustainability, quality, transparency, ethical production, and a reduced environmental footprint to evoke positive beliefs. Moreover, contemporary business models should be aligned with UN SDG 12 to reshape consumers' perceptions. Such an approach highlights the value and necessity of slow-fashion denim, positioning it as a conscious and responsible choice. Regarding preferred action towards slow fashion purchases, managers should instill the promotion of sustainable choices by involving consumers in recycling initiatives and encouraging active participation in environmental stewardship. Slow denim brand managers should leverage digital marketing strategies and

collaborate with social media influencers to counteract consumer inertia, where individuals tend to stick with familiar fast-fashion choices. This approach can boost a brand's sustainable visibility and resonate with Gen Z consumer's future sustainable decision making.

Slow fashion brands can address loss aversion by positioning slow denim as a smart, low-risk, high-reward investment. By emphasising slow-fashion denim's long-term benefits and durability, contemporary management can reassure Gen Z consumers that their purchase will yield lasting value. To build a positive psychological commitment for slow denim, brands can create a community-focused experience that connects Gen Z consumers to the brand's sustainable mission. Engaging consumers through authentic storytelling, brand ambassadors (for example, from Levi's, Diesel, Wrangler), and partnerships with influencers who resonate with the slow fashion ethos can foster a shared purpose. Contemporary managers can devise educational campaigns, whether delivered through social media or in-store experiences, that can significantly shift Gen Z consumer attitudes by raising awareness of slow fashion's environmental benefits and quality, since they are digital natives. The campaigns can address common misconceptions about slow fashion, such as being less stylish, susceptible to greenwashing, or excessively costly.

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**Declaration of AI:** The authors declare that they have used AI or AI-assisted tools during the preparation of this manuscript. The following sections were augmented by AI or AI-assisted tools: (*all the sections were reviewed using AI especially for language check and correction, editing and formatting, but retaining the originality by the authors*). The authors confirm that the use of AI or AI-assisted tools complies with the ethical standards of their institution(s) and the journal Modern Management Review. The authors acknowledge that while AI or AI-assisted tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript, the responsibility for the final content and the conclusions drawn in this manuscript rests entirely with the authors. The authors have reviewed and edited the output and take full responsibility for the content of this publication.

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