
Factors Influencing Generation Z's Decision to Purchase Second-Hand Clothing on Instagram: An Economic Perspective

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Abstract:

This study examines Generation Z's behavior in purchasing second-hand clothing on Instagram, focusing on socio-environmental awareness, preconception, frugality, brand awareness, social prestige, need for uniqueness, scarcity, and perceived competition. Using a quantitative method with 312 respondents aged 17-27, the findings reveal that socio-environmental awareness, social prestige, scarcity, and perceived competition positively influence purchase intention, while brand awareness and preconception have negative effects. Need for uniqueness and frugality are not significant factors. Purchase intention positively affects purchase behavior. The study suggests that sellers should emphasize environmental aspects and scarcity to attract Generation Z consumers.

Keywords: Purchase intention, purchase behavior, second-hand clothing, Generation Z

1. Introduction

In recent years, particularly since the onset of COVID-19, thrift culture has experienced significant growth (Fitria et al., 2022). Its rise in popularity has been bolstered by pop culture, notably when the iconic "Friends" series became available on streaming platforms in 2019. This show not only evoked nostalgia but also attracted a new audience from Generation Z, who may not have seen it before. "Friends" notably influenced the fashion world by reviving 90's styles, thereby shaping Gen Z's fashion preferences (Hall & Chester, 2021).

Using data from Google Trends, Litbang Kompas reported a growing interest among Indonesians in thrifting during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically from April to June 2020 (Krisdamarjati, 2023). During this period, there

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was a notable increase in searches for "thrift," "thrifting," and "baju bekas" (second-hand clothing), indicating a rising interest in imported second-hand apparel. Although the search trends fluctuated as the pandemic progressed, the sustained high interest in second-hand clothing remained evident.

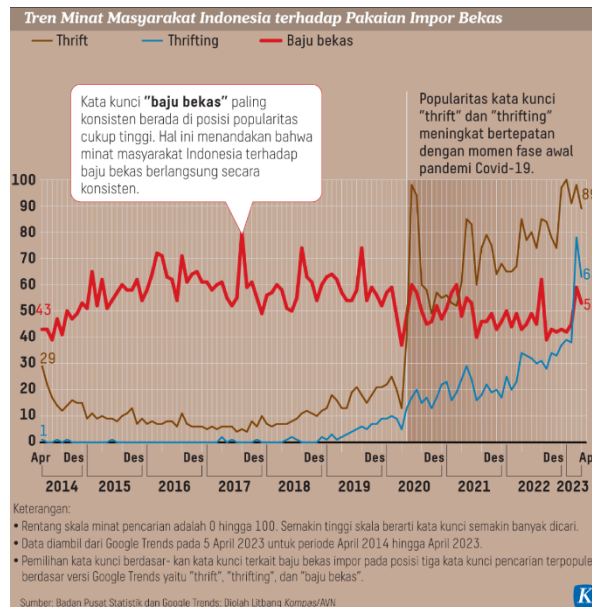


Figure 1. Trends in Indonesians' Interest in Imported Second-hand Clothing

Numerous studies have explored the intentions and behaviors related to purchasing second-hand clothing, providing valuable insights into consumer motivations and barriers (Kim & Kim, 2022; Taylor et al., 2023; B. Wang et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2020). However, the practice of buying and selling second-hand items has expanded beyond physical stores to include online platforms such as e-commerce sites and social media. The products sold online are often priced higher than those found offline because sellers curate, repair, clean, and photograph the items before listing them. Despite these higher prices, the volume of second-hand clothing transactions on social media remains substantial. This has prompted me to investigate the purchase intentions and behaviors specifically on Instagram, one of the most popular social media platforms in Indonesia.

Research by Ögel found that frugality is the most significant factor in the decision to purchase second-hand clothing. People facing economic challenges and those aiming to control their spending often opt for second-hand fashion (Kim & Kim, 2022). Therefore, although Gen Zs are projected to have the largest purchasing power in the

future, many of them are just beginning their careers and face economic constraints, so they are likely to choose second-hand clothing as their fashion preference (Kim et al., 2021).

Nonetheless, the interest in second-hand clothing is driven by more than just economic factors; it has become a trend and a key part of young people's lifestyle. Generation Z and millennials are known for their self-awareness, often choosing fashion that reflects their self-image and identity (Moloney, 2020). This is where the need for uniqueness—an individual's desire to be different from others—comes into play. People acquire and utilize products to express their self-identity and stand out from others (Tian et al., 2001). Nowadays, when purchasing fashion items, self-expression is often considered more important than value for money (Finneman, Spagnuolo, & Rahilly cited in Moloney, 2020). Buying second-hand clothing, especially vintage and retro items, makes them look unique and stylish, which helps them gain popularity and social status (Amaral & Spers, 2022).

However, second-hand clothing is often available in very limited quantities, even only one item per piece. Scarcity, defined as product availability limited by time and quantity (Zhang et al., 2020), significantly influences consumer preferences. Consumers are more likely to choose scarce items if these items enhance their sense of uniqueness (Zhang et al., 2020). In the context of selling used clothes on Instagram, scarcity due to limited quantities is particularly notable. Because each piece is usually unique, consumers often compete to purchase the desired items. This aligns with Aggarwal et al. (2011) findings that limited-quantity scarcity is more effective in driving purchase intention than limited-time scarcity, as it induces consumer competition. Sellers on Instagram often encourage followers to activate notifications for new posts, fostering a competitive atmosphere among consumers eager to acquire new items. Moreover, research by Zhang et al. (2021) during the COVID-19 outbreak on medical protective products found that scarcity increases the urgency to purchase, as the limited availability of second-hand clothing can trigger consumers' competitive instincts and impulsive buying tendencies, thus enhancing impulsive buying behavior.

Vintage clothing enthusiasts often engage in thrifting to find unique vintage items. This practice is linked to "consumer pastness," where consumers view products as part of the past through their physical characteristics, evoking nostalgia (Schibik et al., 2022). Although Generation Z did not live during the original popularity of vintage products, their perception of pastness can be shaped by various media they consume (Knowles cited in Schibik et al., 2022).

Generation Z is notably concerned about social and environmental issues, influencing their product choices. They tend to favor companies that are socially responsible (Uche, 2018) and are becoming increasingly aware of the negative impacts of fast fashion, which not only harms the environment but also often exploits workers (Palomo-Domínguez et al., 2023). Therefore, young people seek more ethical fashion alternatives (Mazanec & Harantová, 2024; Palomo-Domínguez et al., 2023). Despite this, Generation Z still harbors concerns about second-hand clothing due to its unclear origins, fearing it may carry negative energy or contamination (Banister et al., 2005). These concerns about hygiene and associations with poverty deter them from buying second-hand clothing (B. Wang et al., 2022). The relationship between preconceptions and purchase intentions needs further study, especially in the context of Instagram, where second-hand shops are perceived as cleaner than offline stores (Amarnath, 2020). Moreover, although online thrift stores provide consumers the opportunity to find their favorite brands at affordable prices (Amaral & Spers, 2022), consumers tend to prefer buying their favorite brands from official stores rather than thrift stores because the likelihood of finding specific brands at thrift stores is low, and product quality is uncertain (Amaral & Spers, 2022; Kim & Kim, 2022). Consequently, higher brand awareness is expected to decrease the likelihood of purchasing second-hand clothing.

With the end of the COVID-19 pandemic (Sehat Negeriku, 2023), consumer behavior is expected to change, potentially differing from previous research findings. For example, economic factors that significantly influenced second-hand clothing purchase intentions during the pandemic (Kim et al., 2021) may no longer play the same role. On the other hand, the textile industry has proven to pose significant environmental problems worldwide. The production processes contribute to about 20% of global clean water pollution (European Parliament, 2024). In Indonesia, textile waste from 33 million tons of annual clothing production generates nearly one million tons of waste, polluting the environment (Defitri, 2022). Second-hand clothing is seen as a more environmentally friendly option as it extends product life cycles without additional production pollution. Although not everyone is interested in second-hand clothing, previous studies indicate a dedicated market for it (Kim & Kim, 2022; Taylor et al., 2023; B. Wang et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2020), making it a worthy subject of research. Furthermore, there is a lack of research in Indonesia examining the impact of scarcity on second-hand clothing purchase intentions, despite its significant influence on purchasing behavior (Singh et al., 2023). Moreover, though some studies have used the SOR framework in second-hand clothing, it remains less explored compared to other fields. This research enhances our understanding of sustainable

consumption, particularly in second-hand clothing, using the SOR model. It offers a fresh perspective compared to the commonly used Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

Using quantitative method, this research aims to investigate factors influencing early Generation Z's (17-27 year olds) second-hand clothing purchase intention. This study utilizes the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory, which explains that consumer behavior is influenced by a stimulus (S) that affects their internal state (O). This change in the internal state then shapes the consumer's buying motivations, ultimately impacting their purchase decisions (R) (Xu et al., 2020). Traditionally, the SOR model considers stimuli as external factors from the environment. However, recent studies have shown that stimuli can also originate internally, influencing the organism (Laos-Espinoza et al., 2024; Pilgrimienè et al., 2020). Using SOR framework, this study tries to extend the research by Amaral & Spers (2022) by examining how socio-environmental awareness, preconception, need for uniqueness, brand awareness, social prestige, frugality, and scarcity (S) influence second-hand clothing purchase intention (O), which in turn affect purchase behavior (R). Perceived competition is also added on the organism to investigate its role on the relationship between scarcity and purchase intention. The focus is on Generation Z individuals aged 17-27, as they are projected to have the largest purchasing power in the future (Šramková & Sirotiaková, 2021).

2. Theoretical Background

Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR)

One theory that has been used a lot in investigating consumer purchase behavior is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) that highlights the relationship between belief, attitudes, behavioral intention, dan behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to TPB, behavior is shaped by intention, so in the context of second-hand clothing purchase behavior, individuals undertake the purchase due to their intention and ability to purchase (Tornikoski & Maalaoui, 2019). TPB has explained consumer behavior in various contexts, for example the context of luxury fashion products (Phau et al., 2015; Schade et al., 2016), impulse buying behavior (Singh et al., 2023), and sustainable consumption (Rodrigues et al., 2023), including the product that is the focus of this research, namely used clothing (Silva et al., 2020). Different from previous studies, this research offers an analysis of used clothing purchasing behavior by applying the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model.

The stimulus-organism-response (SOR) paradigm was introduced by Mehrabian and Russel in 1974 to explained the influence of environmental factors towards an

individual's internal state and behavior (Young, 2016). Stimuli is stimulation coming from individuals's environmental, such as store and product condition, brand logo, marketing messages in media, etc. These stimuli are then received and processed in the organism or internal state of the individual like feelings, thoughts, and perceptions (Zhai et al., 2020). Eventually, the process reaches a response in the form of behavior (Jacoby, 2002).

In the traditional SOR model, stimuli are external factors that influence an individual's internal state (organism). However, research has shown that internal factors can also serve as stimuli (Laos-Espinoza et al., 2024; Pilgrimienè et al., 2020). For example, Pilgrimienè et al. (2020) highlight that sustainable consumption is driven by both external factors and internal ones like environmental attitudes and perceived responsibility. Laos-Espinoza et al. (2024) identified world-care (concern for social and environmental issues) and self-care (personal benefits) as key stimuli in their study on organic coffee purchasing in Spain.

This study applies the SOR model to examine socio-environmental awareness, preconception, need for uniqueness, brand awareness, social prestige, frugality, and scarcity as stimuli. These factors influence perceived competition and purchase intention (organism), which in turn affect second-hand clothing purchase behavior (response). Scarcity makes products seem more valuable and desirable, leading to competition among consumers (Chen et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2021).

Social Ethics and Environmental Awareness

Social ethics refers to behavioral guidelines within social groups that determine what is considered right or wrong, varying by each group's background and culture (Vasquez-Parraga & Kara, 2019). On the other hand, environmental awareness stems from environmental psychology, which has developed since the 1960s. This field examines the relationship between environmental degradation, human attitudes, and pro-environmental behaviors, such as waste reduction and using eco-friendly fuels (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). While early models suggested that environmental awareness and knowledge lead to pro-environmental behavior, later findings indicate that this is not always the case due to factors like experience, culture, timing, and data measurement methods (Rajecki cited in Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002).

Generation Z is highly concerned with social and environmental issues. Internet and social media exposure increase their awareness and knowledge of global issues, prompting them to engage in activities that promote environmental causes

(Dwidienawati et al., 2021), including shopping at thrift shops as a better alternative to purchasing fashion items (Mazanec & Harantová, 2024).

Preconception

Preconceptions are often shaped by prejudices, which are negative attitudes towards individuals or groups perceived as having characteristics that contradict personal beliefs. These beliefs frequently relate to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, appearance, or style (Amaral & Spers, 2022; Gunderman, 2012). Prejudiced feelings can also extend to objects (Amaral & Spers, 2022), such as second-hand clothing. Second-hand clothes are often stigmatized due to their association with poverty, and concerns about their legality and hygiene further contribute to negative perceptions (B. Wang et al., 2022). Potential buyers typically lack information about the previous owners, including whether they were deceased, diseased, or had experienced misfortune, leading to fears that the clothing might carry negative influences from its former owners (Banister et al., 2005). Thus, the higher the consumers' preconception towards second-hand clothing, the lower the likelihood they will purchase it.

Need for Uniqueness

Individuals frequently experience a desire to distinguish themselves from others, known as counterconformity motivation. This drive emerges when individuals perceive a threat to their identity due to perceived similarity with others (Snyder & Fromkin, 1977). People often use material possessions, such as clothing and jewelry, to express their uniqueness. This pursuit of differentiation through the acquisition and use of consumer goods is termed the need for uniqueness, which aims to enhance personal and social identity (Tian et al., 2001).

Uniqueness has long been valued by consumers, who often avoid mainstream fashion trends in favor of personalized, handcrafted, vintage, and antique items. This tendency is particularly pronounced among Generation Z, who are known for valuing self-expression and individuality. Consequently, they may be drawn to unusual items found in thrift stores (Eroğlu & Köse, 2020).

Brand Awareness

Brand attachment, a component of the brand relationship as described by Khamitov et al. (2019), explains how the emotional bond between a brand and its consumers forms and subsequently becomes the foundation of loyalty (Fournier & Yao, 1997 as cited in Schmitt, 2012; (Amaral & Spers, 2022). Brand loyalty is defined as the sustained

preference for a brand over time, demonstrated through repeated purchases (Amaral & Spers, 2022). Brands possess the capacity to influence individual identities and serve as tools for self-expression (Khamitov et al., 2019). This phenomenon is particularly pronounced with luxury brands, where consumers often seek acceptance within their communities by embracing specific brands (Cho et al., 2022).

In the digital era, consumers have the opportunity to purchase their favorite brands from online thrift shops. Nevertheless, Amaral & Spers (2022) found that greater brand attachment correlates with a decreased likelihood of purchasing that brand's products from thrift shops, which indicates that consumers with high brand awareness prefer acquiring their favorite brands' products from official stores rather than thrift shops. Furthermore, there is an inherent uncertainty about the availability of specific brands in thrift shops. Consequently, I propose that brand awareness is inversely related to the intention to purchase second-hand clothing.

Social Prestige

Fashion has long served as a marker of social status (Simmel, 1957). In stratified societies, elites adopt distinctive clothing or fashion symbols to distinguish themselves. These styles, deemed prestigious by lower social classes, are often emulated by them in an attempt to associate with the upper class. This imitation prompts a cyclical pattern, where elites continuously develop new symbols to maintain their exclusive status (Blumer, 2024).

While some individuals express concerns about the perceived contamination of second-hand clothing, others view purchasing such items, particularly vintage and retro pieces, as a fashionable and trendy endeavor that can enhance their social prestige (Amaral & Spers, 2022). The pursuit of social prestige through second-hand clothing is not solely driven by a desire for popularity based on fashion sense; it also reflects a commitment to social and environmental causes. By choosing second-hand clothing, individuals seek validation from their peers as socially and environmentally conscious individuals.

Frugality

In a research conducted by Lastovicka et al. (1999), being frugal means two things: (1) being disciplined in spending and avoiding impulsive buying and (2) having a lot of ways to utilize and reuse owned possessions. As a result, frugality is defined as "consumer's unidimensional lifestyle, marked by at what extent consumers limit themselves in getting and using their economic resources wisely in order to reach a

long-term objective” (Lastovicka et al., 1999). Frugal consumers spend their money wisely and avoid unnecessary spending. They tend to make careful considerations in order to maximize their money and resource spending (Lang & Zhang, 2024). Frugal lifestyle is often associated with sustainable behavior, where frugal consumers believe that they shouldn’t buy new items when the old ones are still in good condition and usable. In that case, frugal consumers support the act of repurposing products, including wearing second-hand clothes (Rodrigues et al., 2023).

Scarcity and Perceived Competition

Perception of product scarcity leads consumers to view the product as unique and valuable, thereby creating an urgent drive to purchase it (Wu et al., 2012). According to the scarcity-expensiveness-desirability (SED) model introduced by Lynn (1992), when a product is difficult to find or obtain (scarcity), it is perceived as highly valuable (expensiveness), making it more desirable to consumers (Chen et al., 2021).

Scarcity is typically divided into limited-time scarcity (LTS) and limited-quantity scarcity (LQS) (Aggarwal et al., 2011). LTS indicates that a product or special offer is only available for a certain period. This strategy is often applied to limited edition products, including those sold during special occasions such as Christmas, Eid, Mother's Day, and others. An example of an LTS message would be: "Product available only during Ramadan!"

Marketers and businesses use LQS to convey to consumers that a product is available in limited quantities (Aggarwal et al., 2011), thereby increasing the product's perceived value. When shopping at places like thrift stores, consumers have the opportunity to find rare and vintage items not available in conventional stores. However, consumers understand that the stock of each product usually will not exceed one item, compelling them to act quickly if they wish to make a purchase. Sellers typically remind their followers to enable notifications on Instagram so they can be alerted when new products are posted. This creates a "first come, first served" concept, fostering a sense of competitiveness among consumers to get the products (Chen et al., 2021), known as perceived consumer competition (Aggarwal et al., 2011; Singh et al., 2023). Aggarwal et al. (2011) define perceived competition as "competition among consumers for the desired economic and psychological rewards." Therefore, it is hypothesized that scarcity, perceived competition, and the intention to purchase second-hand clothing are interrelated.

Based on the explanations presented, hypotheses can be concluded as below:

H1. Socio-environmental awareness is positively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram.

H2. Preconception is negatively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram.

H3. Need for uniqueness is positively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram.

H4. Brand awareness is negatively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram.

H5. Social prestige is positively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram.

H6. Frugality is positively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram.

H7a. Scarcity is positively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram.

H7b. Scarcity is positively related to Generation Z's perceived competition.

H8. Perceived competition is positively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram.

H9. Second-hand clothing purchase intention is positively related to Generation Z's second-hand clothing purchase behavior on Instagram.

The Conceptual Framework

This study examines factors influencing generation Z's decision to purchase second-hand clothing on Instagram. The conceptual framework is presented in Figure 2.

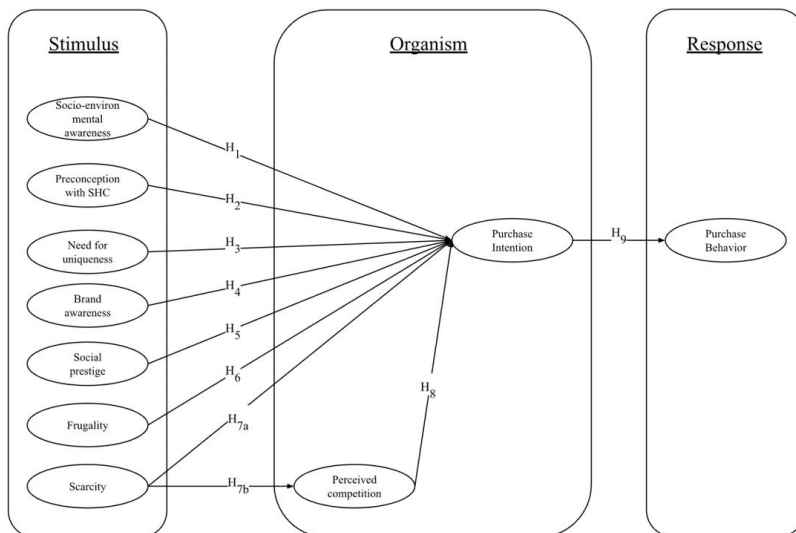


Figure 2. The Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

This study uses a causal research approach with quantitative methods to explore cause-and-effect relationships (Malhotra, 2020). Data is collected through a questionnaire with 7-point likert scale (1=very disagree and 7=very agree), distributed via Google Forms to ensure easy completion and efficient data collection, then shared on Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp, the most popular social media platforms in Indonesia (GoodStats, 2022). On Instagram, direct messages are also sent to followers of thrift shop accounts like @thriftpoppin_, @thrifture, and others. Target respondents are Generation Z males and females aged 17-27 who actively buy second-hand clothing from Instagram thrift shops. The sample is chosen using simple random sampling, ensuring equal chances for all population members (Malhotra, 2020). Snowball sampling is also used, leveraging communities of second-hand clothing enthusiasts. After distributing the questionnaire online, 320 respondents were obtained. However, 8 respondents were excluded from the study for not meeting the screening criteria, resulting in a final sample of 312 respondents.

Because this study involves multiple variables with significant differences between them, it is necessary to use multivariate techniques. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to analyze the data for its ability to examine various types of research questions and the relationships between latent constructs and their indicators, as well as between other constructs (Malhotra, 2020; Zikmund & Babin, 2010). The reference article by Amaral & Spers (2022) utilized the Partial Least Square (PLS) method, and this study follows the same approach.

4. Empirical Findings/Result

Hypothesis Testing

After testing the whole model fit, I conducted a hypothesis testing. Measuring the construct's significance and whether it positively or negatively relates to the other construct was done by measuring P values. If the P value is below 0.05 and the t statistic is greater than the table (1.96), then both constructs are declared significant.

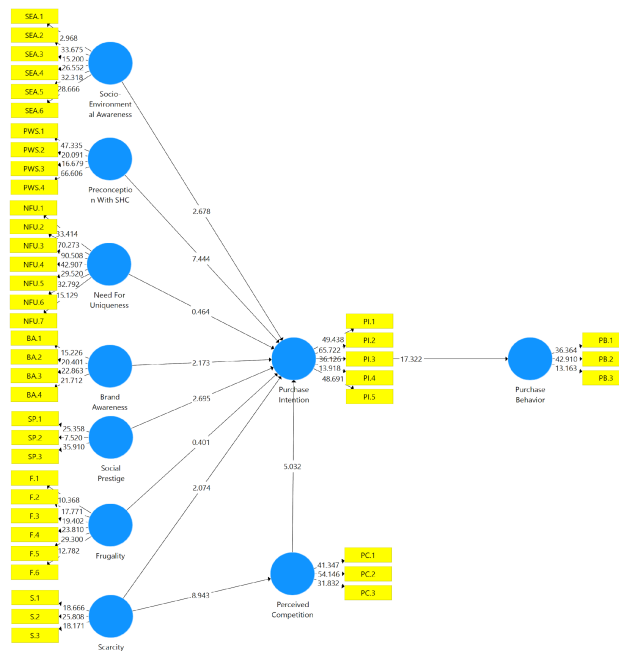


Figure 3. Model Outcomes

Table 6. Path Coefficient and Hypothesis Testing

	<i>Original Sample (O)</i>	<i>T (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>Statistics P Values</i>	<i>Description</i>
Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	-0,115	2,173	0,030	Accepted
Frugality → Purchase Intention	-0,023	0,401	0,689	Rejected
Need For Uniqueness → Purchase Intention	-0,024	0,464	0,643	Rejected
Perceived Competition → Purchase Intention	0,308	5,032	0,000	Accepted
Preconception With SHC → Purchase Intention	-0,424	7,444	0,000	Accepted
Purchase Intention → Purchase Behavior	0,743	17,322	0,000	Accepted
Scarcity → Perceived Competition	0,522	8,943	0,000	Accepted
Scarcity → Purchase Intention	0,137	2,074	0,039	Accepted

	<i>Original Sample (O)</i>	<i>T (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>Statistics P Values</i>	<i>Description</i>
Social Prestige -> Purchase Intention	0,138	2,695	0,007	Accepted
Socio-Environmental Awareness -> Purchase Intention	0,142	2,678	0,008	Accepted

After evaluating the model fit, I moved on to hypothesis testing. The significance and influence of constructs were determined using P values. If the P value is below 0.05 and the t-statistic is above 1.96, the constructs are considered significant.

The hypothesis testing results showed that out of 10 hypotheses, 8 were accepted and 2 were rejected. In PLS-SEM, the t-statistic and P values are key to assessing the significance of relationships between variables. A t-statistic above 1.96 and a P value below 0.05 indicate a significant influence, leading to hypothesis acceptance (Hair et al., 2021).

The original sample estimate indicates whether relationships between variables are positive or negative. The testing revealed that four variables—brand awareness, frugality, need for uniqueness, and preconception—had a negative relationship with purchase intention. However, frugality had a t-statistic of 0.401 (less than 1.96) and a P value of 0.689 (greater than 0.05), making its influence insignificant and leading to the hypothesis being rejected. Similarly, the need for uniqueness had a t-statistic of 0.464 (less than 1.96) and a P value of 0.643 (greater than 0.05), also resulting in no significant influence and the hypothesis being rejected.

However, the other hypotheses were accepted and found to have significant effects. According to Table 6, socio-environmental awareness (H1) positively influences second-hand clothing purchase intention, while preconception (H2) and brand awareness (H4) negatively impact second-hand clothing purchase intention. Additionally, social prestige (H5) and scarcity (H7a) also positively influence second-hand clothing purchase intention.

The study revealed that scarcity is a positive factor influencing perceived competition (H7b), and perceived competition, in turn, positively affects second-hand clothing purchase intention (H8). Therefore, perceived competition acts as a mediator in the relationship between scarcity and second-hand clothing purchase intention. Lastly, as expected, second-hand clothing purchase intention on Instagram has a positive influence on second-hand clothing purchase behavior on Instagram (H9).

5. Discussion

This study reveals that socio-environmental awareness positively influences second-hand clothing purchase intention, aligning with (Amaral & Spers, 2022) findings that following the COVID-19 outbreak, there has been an increase in consumers' environmental awareness. As of now, even as the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided, the public still holds concerns about the future state of the environment, prompting them to begin adopting more environmentally friendly lifestyles (Rodrigues et al., 2023), including consuming second-hand clothing (Amaral & Spers, 2022; Rodrigues et al., 2023; H. Wang et al., 2023). Generation Z's environmental concern leads them to have pro-environmental beliefs that strongly influence their sustainable attitudes and intentions towards participating in online fashion resale (Palomo-Domínguez et al., 2023). Moreover, they tend to prefer environmentally friendly products or products that have minimal negative impact on the environment, that they are even willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products (Gomes et al., 2023).

Preconception was found to have a negative influence on the second-hand clothing purchase intention of Generation Z. This implies that the higher the negative prejudices of Generation Z consumers towards second-hand clothing, the lower their intention to purchase second-hand clothing, and vice versa. These findings align with Wang et al. (2022), who stated that consumer concerns about the cleanliness of second-hand clothing, its legal sources, and the association of second-hand clothing with poverty negatively impact the frequency of second-hand clothing purchases. In Indonesia, negative stigma towards second-hand clothing may arise due to its association with poverty, although this stigma has lessened due to the spread of awareness about sustainable consumption through social media assistance (Oscario, 2023).

Unexpectedly, the need for uniqueness had a negative and insignificant effect on purchase intention. This contrasts with previous studies that found that second-hand clothing has the ability to demonstrate the uniqueness and character of consumers (Amaral & Spers, 2022; Cho et al., 2022; B. Wang et al., 2022), making the need for uniqueness one of the strongest factors in second-hand clothing purchases (Amaral & Spers, 2022; Rodrigues et al., 2023)). These differing results may be due to variations in individuals' desires to be unique or their preference not to stand out and be unique because they prioritize solidarity and integration with those around them (Rodrigues et al., 2023). This could be associated with the fact that social prestige acts as a factor that positively influences second-hand clothing purchase intention.

Fashionable clothing has long been used as a means to display prestige and status to others (Simmel, 1957). When second-hand clothing is perceived as a trendy and fashionable activity, consumers are motivated to purchase it to gain social prestige (Amaral & Spers, 2022). Furthermore, engaging in second-hand clothing purchases, which is closely related to sustainable consumption (H. Wang et al., 2023), encourages Generation Z consumers to adopt it to gain recognition as individuals who care about the environment (Amaral & Spers, 2022). It is assumed that these findings are related to the rejected hypothesis H3. Instead of purchasing second-hand clothing to appear unique and different, Generation Z consumers do so to gain social recognition and become part of a group. Amaral & Spers (2022) study conducted in Brazil also found that both before the COVID-19 pandemic (2019) and during the pandemic (2020), consumers demonstrated their contribution to environmental preservation and prevention of environmental degradation within their friendship circles, and it turns out, my study conducted after the COVID-19 pandemic (2024) still shows similar results.

Although Indonesian Generation Z has shown interest in branded clothing (Andhini & Andanawarih, 2022), they do not seek out products from their favorite brands in second-hand clothing stores on Instagram. This is evidenced by research findings indicating that brand awareness negatively influences second-hand clothing purchase intention, consistent with previous studies by (Amaral & Spers, 2022) which also found similar results, suggesting that individuals who are attached to a brand prefer to purchase products from official stores, compounded by the difficulty in finding specific brands in second-hand clothing stores. Therefore, the stronger the brand attachment, the less likely an individual is to consume second-hand clothing.

Previous research has highlighted that the consumption of second-hand clothing as a sustainable behavior is influenced by frugal lifestyles (Rodrigues et al., 2023; B. Wang et al., 2022; Zaman et al., 2019) and the relatively cheaper prices of second-hand clothing compared to new ones make economic factors often cited as highly influential in purchasing second-hand clothing (Kim & Kim, 2022; Rodrigues et al., 2023). However, this study found that frugality does not significantly influence second-hand clothing purchase intention. On the other hand, other studies have found that Generation Z is willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products due to their concern for the environment (Gomes et al., 2023). Therefore, I assume that Indonesian Generation Z consumers do not buy second-hand clothing to save money, but rather because of their concern for the environment, as evidenced by the variable socio-environmental awareness having a more significant influence on purchase intention compared to frugality on purchase intention.

Consistent with the hypothesis, scarcity, perceived competition, and second-hand clothing intention have a positive relationship, which aligns with previous studies, indicating that when a product is considered rare, its value increases and consumers desire it more (Aggarwal et al., 2011; Schibik et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2020). Additionally, Hamilton & Shaheen Hosany (2023) found that product scarcity can increase consumer enthusiasm to obtain the product. However, because second-hand clothing is very limited in stock, consumers feel anxious if other consumers show interest in the same product, and it generates a competitive feeling towards other consumers (Aggarwal et al., 2011; Schibik et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2020). Park & Li (2023) research found that when a product offers unique features and is perceived to have limitations in availability or purchase time, and is highly sought after by others, consumers often feel a strong urge to compete with others to obtain it. Moreover, limited-quantity scarcity can also lead to aggressive behavior in consumers, even towards violence (Kristofferson et al., 2017). Although sellers do not mention a purchase deadline, the very limited stock of second-hand clothing makes consumers feel rushed for fear that the product they desire will be bought by other consumers. Therefore, consumers strive to purchase the desired product as quickly as possible, and it can be concluded that perceived competition mediates the relationship between scarcity and second-hand clothing purchase intention.

5. Conclusion

This study investigates the factors influencing the decision to purchase second-hand clothing on Instagram thrift shops among Indonesian Generation Z consumers aged 17-27 years. Scarcity has the greatest influence on second-hand clothing purchase intention. In this context, perceived competition serves as a mediating variable in the relationship between scarcity and second-hand clothing purchase intention. Social prestige also positively influences purchase intention, aligning with the desire for social recognition and contributions to environmental conservation. Socio-environmental awareness significantly impacts purchase intention, reflecting Generation Z's commitment to sustainable behaviors. In contrast, brand awareness and preconception negatively affect purchase intention, indicating that strong brand attachment and negative prejudices towards second-hand clothing reduce the likelihood of purchasing from Instagram thrift shops. Interestingly, the need for uniqueness does not significantly influence purchase intention, suggesting that Generation Z prefers to blend in rather than stand out. Additionally, frugality does not significantly impact purchase intention, likely because socio-environmental awareness outweighs frugality in driving purchasing decisions. These findings

underscore the importance of scarcity, social prestige, and socio-environmental awareness in shaping the second-hand clothing market among Generation Z on Instagram, while highlighting the lesser roles of brand attachment, preconceptions, uniqueness, and frugality.

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