

# Attitudes and Social Influence in Sustainable Fashion: Rethinking the Role of Corporate Initiatives among College Students in Taiwan

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## Abstract

The growing demand for sustainability in the fashion industry has encouraged corporations to invest significantly in Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. Yet, it remains unclear whether these efforts truly influence consumer behavior. This study explores how corporate, psychological, and social factors shape sustainable fashion consumption among college students in Taiwan. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Value-Belief-Norm Theory, and Social Influence Theory, the research examines five key predictors: Attitudes Toward Sustainability, Social Norms, Environmental Knowledge, Perceived Economic Constraints, and Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. Empirical data were gathered from 250 university students and subjected to examination utilizing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. Research indicates that an individual's personal beliefs and cultural expectations significantly influence their likelihood of purchasing environmentally-conscious clothing. In contrast, environmental knowledge, economic constraints, and Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives have no significant impact. Individual beliefs and societal norms appear to have a more significant influence on environmentally conscious purchasing decisions than data-driven or financial considerations. The minimal impact of corporate ethical programs reveals that simply implementing sustainability strategies from the top down is unlikely to transform consumer choices without genuine community involvement and widespread social approval. Overall, this study contributes to the literature on sustainability and consumer behavior by emphasizing a consumer-centered approach. It highlights that moral conviction and peer influence are more effective in promoting sustainable fashion consumption than corporate messaging. Practical insights are also provided for marketers and policymakers to encourage genuine behavioral transformation toward sustainability in the fashion sector.

**Keywords:** Attitudes Toward Sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility, Social Norms, Sustainable Fashion Consumption.

## 1. Introduction

Global clothing and apparel manufacturing systematically contributes to widespread ecological damage and unsustainable consumption of natural resources. It is responsible for around 10% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. If no action is taken, the use of resources in this industry is expected to rise considerably by 2030 because of the growth of fast fashion



(de Aguiar Hugo et al., 2021; Ray & Nayak, 2023). The need for sustainable fashion practices is underscored by the adverse environmental impacts of traditional manufacturing, including substantial water waste and pollution. The industry is estimated to contribute to 20% of global water pollution (Daukantienė, 2023; Tandon et al., 2023).

Recent research increasingly links sustainable fashion consumption to well-established psychological frameworks, particularly the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) and the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory (Stern, 2000). Behavior is elucidated by the TPB using three factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Together, these elements influence decisions on sustainable purchases. Research has shown that these concepts are strong indicators of how likely consumers are to embrace sustainable fashion, highlighting the importance of perceived control in shaping attitudes towards ethical consumption (Nicolau et al., 2025). Research findings validate the growing influence of environmental consciousness and social norms in guiding consumer choices within the sustainable clothing marketplace (Taylor et al., 2023; Vlastelica et al., 2023).

Complementarily, the VBN theory emphasizes the moral and value-based foundations of sustainable behavior, suggesting that individual values and environmental beliefs translate into personal norms that motivate pro-environmental action. Empirical studies have demonstrated that environmental awareness and beliefs about the consequences strengthen these personal norms, leading to greater engagement in sustainable consumption (Gomes et al., 2022; C. Liu et al., 2023). Integrative studies further indicate that combining the cognitive rationality of TPB with the moral orientation of VBN provides a more holistic framework for understanding sustainability behavior, uniting ethical values, social influence, and personal responsibility (Carfora et al., 2021; Kautish et al., 2020). This theoretical convergence offers a robust foundation for the present study. It extends prior empirical evidence on the psychological and social antecedents of sustainability-oriented intentions (Aryoko et al., 2025) by applying these mechanisms to the context of sustainable fashion consumption.

Several factors influence adoption or resistance towards sustainable fashion consumption. Positive attitudes towards sustainability are consistently related to greater willingness to purchase environmentally friendly clothing (Hassan et al., 2022; Lin & Chen, 2022). Group dynamics and the persuasive power of digital networks significantly impact the behavioral patterns and consumption choices of younger demographics, who are increasingly molded by online social ecosystems and prominent digital personalities (Ahn et al., 2020; Chi et al., 2023; L. Liu et al., 2024). Furthermore, environmental knowledge increases consumer engagement in ethical fashion, as awareness of environmental impacts strengthens sustainable choices (Indrajaya et al., 2024; Kim & Lee, 2023). Conversely, economic concerns, particularly perceptions about high prices, remain a major barrier to sustainable purchasing (Wilts et al., 2021; Zhang & Dong, 2020). At the corporate level, initiatives such as eco-friendly labeling and transparent sustainability reporting can build trust and positively shape consumer behavior (Chan et al., 2024; Louis & Lombart, 2024).

Although academic interest in sustainable fashion is growing, several research gaps persist. The existing body of literature documents divergent findings regarding the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices and prevailing economic constraints. Furthermore, empirical inquiries investigating the psychological pathways of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the moral pathways embedded within the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) framework in shaping sustainable consumption behaviors among Asian consumers remain notably limited. Although empirical research on sustainable fashion in Taiwan is still limited, the Taiwanese context has specific characteristics that make it relevant to study. Taiwan's textile industry is known for its innovation in developing environmentally friendly

materials. For example, companies like UKL process agricultural waste, including pineapple leaves, into sustainable textile fibers. The Taiwanese government also promotes the circular economy through circular procurement policies in the textile sector that emphasize the use of mono-materials to facilitate the recycling process (Taipei Times, 2025). In addition, the Taipei Innovative Textile Application Show (TITAS) consistently showcases sustainable textile innovations from local producers and brands (EcoTextile News, 2025). With the combination of government policies and industrial innovation capabilities, Taiwan becomes a strategic research context for studying the development of sustainable fashion.

This study examines the determinants of sustainable fashion consumption behavior by integrating cognitive, moral, and social factors from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory. This research investigates the influence of attitudes towards sustainability, social norms, environmental knowledge, economic constraints, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives on sustainable fashion consumption behavior. The main research question explores the extent to which psychological, social, and corporate factors influence sustainable fashion consumption behavior among Taiwanese consumers.

Taiwan is an appropriate and significant research context due to increasing public awareness of environmental sustainability issues and the growing group of consumers who care about environmentally friendly products. Taiwan's fashion market shows an increase in demand for sustainable products driven by government policies supporting green industries and public education regarding environmental issues. Moreover, Taiwan's strong textile and garment industry base provides a unique opportunity to observe how sustainability values are implemented from the production process to consumption. These contextual characteristics make Taiwan an ideal location to study the interaction between moral values, social influences, and sustainable fashion consumption behavior. This research enriches the literature on sustainability by applying the integration of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory to consumer behavior, as well as providing a theoretically robust and regionally specific explanation of sustainable fashion consumption.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Sustainable Fashion Consumption Behavior

Sustainable fashion consumption is gaining more and more interest in academic circles as people become more aware of the environment and consumer preferences evolve. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory (Stern, 2000) offer effective tools for examining the influences of psychology, society, and ethics on sustainable behavior. Recent studies confirm that these theories effectively explain consumer decisions within the sustainable fashion domain. Busalim et al. (2022), conducted a thorough analysis of existing literature and discovered that attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and moral values are key factors that influence sustainable clothing consumption. They highlighted the importance of both cognitive factors and social norms in shaping consumer behavior. Supporting this, Brandão & Costa (2021) demonstrated that favorable attitudes, social influence, and perceived behavioral control significantly predict purchase intentions while recognizing that economic and psychological barriers often inhibit actual adoption. Similarly, Kaur et al. (2023) found that moral justification and situational constraints jointly determine consumers' sustainable purchasing behavior, underscoring the importance of integrating personal ethics with perceived capability. Collectively, these studies affirm that merging the TPB and VBN perspectives yields a comprehensive framework for

understanding sustainable fashion consumption, where attitudes, social influences, and moral obligations interact to predict pro-environmental purchasing behavior.

## 2.2. Attitudes Towards Sustainability

Consumer attitudes toward sustainability are among the strongest predictors of sustainable fashion behavior (Munawaroh et al., 2024). Lin & Chen (2022) demonstrate that environmental consciousness enhances consumers' perceived value of sustainable apparel, which directly increases their intention to purchase eco-friendly clothing. Those who value environmental responsibility are more inclined to choose sustainable products when making purchases. Similarly, Hassan et al. (2022) find that increased knowledge about environmental issues and growing awareness of the downsides of fast fashion are leading consumers to be more open to embracing sustainable clothing options. Extending this perspective, Şener et al. (2023) show that positive attitudes toward recycled and eco-friendly fashion strengthen both awareness and purchase intentions by improving perceived value and emotional attachment to sustainable products. Collectively, these studies confirm that positive sustainability attitudes serve as a psychological driver that bridges environmental concern and actual consumption behavior, supporting the main idea of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), having positive attitudes towards sustainability boosts the chances of participating in environmentally conscious shopping. Moreover, from a Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) perspective, Gomes et al. (2022) demonstrate that pro-environmental attitudes are often grounded in deeper moral values and beliefs about the consequences of consumption, which cultivate personal norms that motivate sustainable purchasing. Collectively, these studies confirm that positive sustainability attitudes serve as a psychological and moral driver linking environmental concern to responsible consumption behavior, reinforcing both the TPB and VBN foundations of sustainable fashion consumption.

## 2.3. Social Norms

Social norms indicate the societal expectations to participate in certain actions, embodying both rules of conduct (what is considered acceptable) and patterns of behavior (what is commonly practiced by others) (Ajzen, 1991; Cialdini et al., 1990). In terms of eco-friendly clothing trends, Ahn et al. (2020) demonstrate that influential social norms have a significant impact on influencing environmentally conscious consumer behavior. People are more likely to purchase environmentally friendly clothing when they feel that sustainable actions are widely accepted and encouraged by their peers. Expanding this view, Chi et al. (2023) reveal that social influence also drives collaborative consumption models such as apparel renting by fostering a sense of belonging and collective participation in sustainability. This suggests that peer endorsement and community validation can transform sustainable choices into socially desirable practices. Similarly, L. Liu et al. (2024) find that adherence to social expectations and perceived responsibility toward the environment significantly enhance consumers' likelihood of purchasing green apparel. Together, these studies highlight that sustainable fashion consumption is not solely an individual decision but a socially constructed behavior reinforced by peer influence, social approval, and collective responsibility core mechanisms emphasized in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) framework.

## 2.4. Environmental Knowledge

The comprehension of ecological issues and personal consumption's environmental impacts in an individual is referred to as environmental knowledge, which is a key factor influencing sustainable behavior. Kim & Lee (2023) found that heightened environmental knowledge enhances consumers' perceptions of eco-friendly products and strengthens their

willingness to purchase sustainable alternatives. Although their research focused on food products, the same mechanism applies to fashion, where informed consumers tend to associate sustainability with product quality and ethical responsibility. Similarly, Indrajaya et al. (2024) demonstrated that greater understanding of environmental issues can impact consumers' intentions to make eco-friendly purchases by influencing their attitudes. This means that individuals with more knowledge about environmental topics are more likely to have positive attitudes towards environmental protection, leading to more environmentally conscious buying decisions. Supporting this, Yuan et al. (2025) revealed that environmental knowledge, coupled with trust, helps bridge the gap between sustainability intention and behavior by reinforcing moral commitment and willingness to pay for eco-friendly options. From a Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) perspective, Gomes et al. (2022) further emphasize that knowledge contributes to forming environmental values and beliefs about consequences, which activate personal norms that motivate sustainable consumption. Collectively, these studies confirm that environmental knowledge not only informs consumers but also cultivates moral responsibility, aligning with both cognitive (TPB) and normative (VBN) explanations of sustainable fashion behavior.

## 2.5. Perceived Economic Constraints

Perceived financial limitations are often seen as a major obstacle to adopting sustainable fashion practices. In the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model, these constraints are linked to perceived behavioral control, which assesses how much individuals are held back by economic restrictions when trying to make environmentally-friendly choices. Rana & Banerjee (2024) emphasize that consumers often prioritize short-term financial needs over long-term sustainability goals, limiting their ability to purchase eco-friendly apparel even when intentions are positive. Similarly, Zhang & Dong (2020) found that unfavorable price perceptions and restricted budgets significantly reduce consumers' willingness to buy green products, as sustainable options are frequently perceived as costlier than conventional ones. Extending this insight, Wilts et al. (2021) revealed that even among environmentally aware consumers, perceived economic uncertainty discourages the adoption of second-hand or circular fashion alternatives. Collectively, these studies illustrate that economic barriers not only limit consumers' behavioral control but also create a tension between moral responsibility and financial practicality, highlighting the necessity for easily accessible and cost-effective methods to encourage the adoption of sustainable fashion consumption.

## 2.6. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR initiatives have a significant impact on building consumer trust and influencing their buying decisions. Eco-labels, sustainability reports, and ethical sourcing disclosures serve as credibility signals, encouraging pro-environmental behavior (Testa et al., 2015). Studies show that clear, transparent CSR communication enhances brand reputation and increases consumer confidence in sustainable products (Rahman et al., 2021). Study by Wang et al. (2019) highlights the effectiveness of third-party certifications, such as Fair Trade and GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard), in driving sustainable fashion choices. Similarly, Kang & Hustvedt (2014) found that when brands actively disclose sustainability efforts, consumers perceive them as more trustworthy and are more likely to support them. These results are consistent with the principles of VBN theory, which highlight the importance of moral duty in making ethical purchasing decisions.

## 2.7. Integrative Theoretical Perspective

The integration of TPB and VBN in this study is not merely descriptive, but forms a framework that explains how cognitive, social, and moral processes work sequentially in influencing sustainable fashion consumption behavior. In the proposed model, TPB components (attitude, social norms, and perceived control) serve as initial determinants that shape consumers' rational evaluation of sustainable fashion practices. Positive attitudes and social influence encourage the formation of behavioral intentions, while perceptions of economic constraints can weaken this process.

VBN then functions to complement TPB by demonstrating how environmental values and beliefs trigger the emergence of personal norms, namely a sense of moral responsibility to act sustainably. In this integrative model, personal norms not only stand as direct predictors of behavior, but also reinforce the influence of TPB components. For instance, consumers with strong moral norms will be more responsive to positive attitudes as well as social norms in deciding to purchase sustainable fashion products.

Perceptions of corporate CSR initiatives such as eco-labels and sustainability reporting are positioned as external factors that can activate both TPB and VBN pathways. CSR enhances positive attitudes (TPB pathway) while simultaneously affirming the dimension of consumers' moral responsibility (VBN pathway). Thus, this model explicitly demonstrates that sustainable fashion consumption behavior is the result of interactions among cognitive evaluation, social pressure, and moral commitment formed through the integration of both theories.

Based on that premises, the hypotheses of this research are as follows:

**H1:** Positive Attitudes Toward Sustainability positively influence Sustainable Fashion Consumption Behavior.

**H2:** Social Norms and Peer Influence have a significant impact on Sustainable Fashion Consumption Behavior.

**H3:** Environmental Knowledge positively influences Sustainable Fashion Consumption Behavior.

**H4:** Perceived Economic Constraints negatively affect Sustainable Fashion Consumption Behavior.

**H5:** Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives (e.g., Eco-labels, Sustainability Reporting) positively influence Sustainable Fashion Consumption Behavior.

## 3. Methods

### 3.1. Research Design

This research project utilizes a quantitative methodology to investigate how different variables impact sustainable spending habits within the realm of fast fashion. Using an explanatory approach, the study seeks to uncover and examine the factors that shape the eco-friendly consumption practices of college students in Taiwan. By employing a survey method, the study seeks to gather primary data on attitudes, subjective norms, environmental knowledge, and economic constraints, which are hypothesized to influence sustainable fashion consumption.

### 3.2. Sample Selection

This research focuses on college students studying in Taiwan. In this study, a total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to students currently pursuing their studies in Taiwan using the stratified random sampling technique. From that number, 250 questionnaires were returned and declared valid for analysis, resulting in a response rate of 62.5% for this study.

By utilizing this sampling strategy, the sample is designed to accurately reflect the wide range of student demographics from various areas and fields of study in Taiwan. Inclusion criteria for participants include:

- 1) Current enrollment in a university and (or) college in Taiwan.
- 2) Age between 18 and 40 years.
- 3) Experience with fast fashion consumption, either online or offline.

### 3.3. Data Collection

Information was gathered using a formal questionnaire that was distributed both online and in person. The questionnaire was made available through various online platforms like Google Forms, and participants were given a link to complete the survey. The in-person surveys were conducted on university campuses. The survey consists of closed-ended questions, ensuring that the responses are quantifiable for statistical analysis. The questionnaire was split up into the subsequent categories:

- 1) Demographic Information: Age, gender, university, major, and income level.
- 2) Attitudes towards Sustainability: Questions on students' general environmental attitudes and views on sustainable fashion consumption.
- 3) Social Norms: Questions exploring peer influence and social expectations related to fast fashion and sustainability.
- 4) Environmental Knowledge: Items measuring the respondents' awareness of the environmental impacts of fast fashion, such as resource depletion, pollution, and waste.
- 5) Economic Constraints: Questions regarding students' perceived financial limitations in purchasing sustainable fashion items.
- 6) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives: Items measuring the respondents' awareness of and attitudes towards CSR initiatives in the fashion industry, such as eco-labeling and sustainable practices.

A Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to measure respondents' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

### 3.4. Validity and Reliability

In order to verify the questionnaire's accuracy, a trial run was carried out with 30 participants who met the specified criteria. Suggestions from the trial were implemented to enhance the questionnaire's clarity and pertinence. Cronbach's alpha was utilized to evaluate the questionnaire's reliability by assessing the internal consistency of the items on the scale.

Specifically, several items were revised based on feedback from participants. Minor editorial changes were made to clarify statements related to CSR and simplify questions about economic constraints that were considered ambiguous by some respondents. The order of questions about attitudes and social norms was also changed to improve flow and response consistency. These improvements ensure that the final questionnaire is contextually clear and psychometrically reliable.

### 3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

The data were processed through Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS version 4.0. This method was chosen due to its appropriateness in evaluating complex, prediction-oriented theoretical models, as well as its robustness when dealing with non-normal data distributions and modest sample sizes. The analysis unfolded in two primary phases:

- 1) Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model) conducted to assess construct validity and reliability by reviewing indicator loading values, composite reliability (CR), average

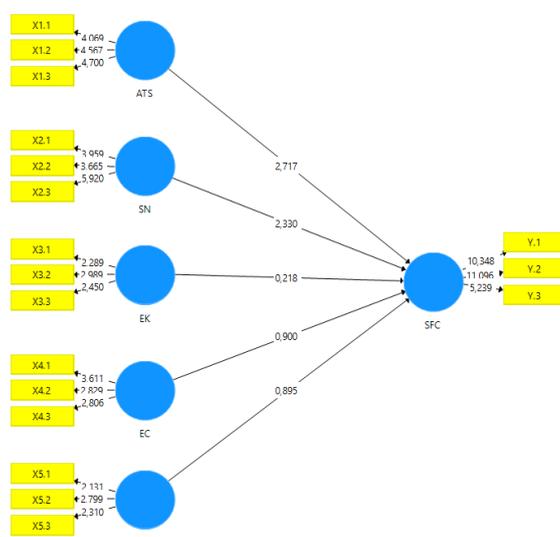
variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratio.

- Evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model) to analyze inter-variable relationships through assessments of path coefficient estimates, coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), effect size ( $f^2$ ), and predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ). Statistical significance was determined via a bootstrapping method employing 5,000 resamples.

The outcomes of the PLS-SEM estimation were further applied to empirically assess the hypotheses informed by the theoretical synthesis of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) model in analyzing sustainable fashion consumption dynamics.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Research Results



**Figure 1. Outer Model**  
Source: SMARTPLS test result, 2025

Figure 1 shows the outer model that illustrates the relationship between latent variables and their indicators, where all indicators on the ATS, SN, EK, EC, CSR, and SFC constructs have adequate loading values so they are able to reflect their respective constructs. The structural model in the figure also displays the path coefficients from each exogenous variable to SFC, with ATS (2.717) and SN (2.330) showing the strongest influence on Sustainable Fashion Consumption. Meanwhile, the paths from EK (0.218), EC (0.900), and CSR (0.895) appear weaker, indicating that these three variables do not make a significant contribution in explaining sustainable fashion consumption behavior. Overall, Figure 1 shows the main influence structure in the model and confirms that psychological and social factors dominate in influencing SFC compared to knowledge, economic, or corporate initiative factors.

#### 4.1.1. Convergent Validity Test

The convergent validity test confirms that the measurement model meets the acceptable threshold. The majority of indicator loadings are above 0.70, varying from 0.725 to 0.944, showing that each indicator effectively represents its associated latent construct. In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs are higher than 0.50, ranging from 0.558 (ATS) to 0.702 (EK), indicating that each construct accounts for more than 50%

of the variability in its specific indicators. Thus, the constructs Attitudes Toward Sustainability (ATS), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Economic Constraints (EC), Environmental Knowledge (EK), Social Norms (SN), and Sustainable Fashion Consumption (SFC) demonstrate strong convergent validity.

**4.1.2. Discriminant Validity Test**

The discriminant validity test results indicate that each construct is empirically distinct from the others. Each construct meets the Fornell-Larcker criterion with AVE values exceeding 0.50, indicating that the constructs have a stronger correlation with their indicators than with other constructs. This finding confirms that the measurement model exhibits strong discriminant validity, ensuring that ATS, CSR, EC, EK, SN, and SFC measure separate conceptual domains without significant overlap.

**4.1.3. Composite Reliability Test**

The results of Composite Reliability (CR) indicate that all constructs surpass the suggested minimum of 0.70, with CR values ranging from 0.791 for ATS to 0.875 for EK. This indicates that all constructs possess high internal consistency. Although Cronbach’s Alpha for ATS (0.610) is slightly below the ideal threshold, its rho\_A (0.613) and CR (0.791) values remain acceptable, suggesting moderate reliability. Therefore, the constructs are considered reliable and stable for further hypothesis testing.

**4.1.4. Collinearity Test**

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all measurement indicators are below the threshold of 5.0, ranging from 1.186 to 2.344, indicating no multicollinearity issues. This means that each indicator contributes uniquely to explaining its corresponding construct without inflating the standard errors. Therefore, the predictors within the measurement model are not highly correlated, and the model is free from collinearity bias.

**4.1.5. Structural Model (Inner Model)**

**Table 1. R-Square Test Result**

	<b>R-Square</b>	<b>R Square Adjusted</b>
SFC	0.150	0.105

Source: SMARTPLS inner model test result, 2025

According to the R Square test in Table 1, the model accounts for 15.0% of the variation in Sustainable Fashion Consumption (SFC), with an Adjusted R Square of 0.105. These values indicate that the predictors which are Attitudes Toward Sustainability (ATS), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Economic Constraints (EC), Environmental Knowledge (EK), and Social Norms (SN) collectively exert a small to moderate influence on sustainable fashion consumption. Although the explanatory power of the model is modest, the result still demonstrates that these variables meaningfully contribute to explaining consumer behavioral tendencies toward sustainable fashion choices.

**4.1.6. Q-Square**

As shown in Table 2, the Q<sup>2</sup> test was conducted to evaluate the predictive relevance of the structural model for endogenous constructs. The results of the inner model analysis using SmartPLS indicate the extent to which the model is able to predict the Sustainable Fashion Consumption (SFC) variable.

**Table 2. Q-Square Test Result**  
**Q<sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)**

SFC (Y)	0.051
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Source: SMARTPLS inner model test result, 2025

The Q<sup>2</sup> value for Sustainable Fashion Consumption (SFC) is 0.051, which is greater than zero, indicating that the model has small predictive relevance (Hair Jr et al., 2021). According to the typical categorization system, where Q<sup>2</sup> values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate low, moderate, and high predictive capability, this discovery indicates that the model has some but not extensive predictive power when it comes to predicting sustainable fashion consumption behavior. Overall, the model demonstrates a foundational level of predictive strength, implying potential for improvement by incorporating additional behavioral or contextual variables.

#### 4.1.7. Structural Model Evaluation

SmartPLS was used to perform path analysis with 1,000 bootstrapping resamples. It was discovered that the direct effects below were statistically significant. The complete results of the direct effect test are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Direct Effect**

Hypothesis	Path	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	ATS → SFC	0.293	2.666	0.008	Supported
H2	SN → SFC	0.249	2.313	0.021	Supported
H3	EK → SFC	0.032	0.218	0.827	Not Supported
H4	EC → SFC	0.092	0.868	0.385	Not Supported
H5	CSR → SFC	-0.135	0.884	0.377	Not Supported

Source: SMARTPLS Inner Model Test Result, 2025

The assessment of direct relationships was carried out through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples in SmartPLS for the internal model evaluation. From the results, it can be concluded that only a minority of the hypotheses are statistically significant.

- 1) H1: Attitudes Toward Sustainability (ATS) → Sustainable Fashion Consumption (SFC) shows a positive and significant relationship ( $\beta = 0.293$ ,  $t = 2.666$ ,  $p = 0.008$ ). This finding implies that consumers with stronger pro-sustainability attitudes are more likely to engage in sustainable fashion consumption practices.
- 2) H2: Social Norms (SN) → Sustainable Fashion Consumption (SFC) also demonstrates a positive and significant relationship ( $\beta = 0.249$ ,  $t = 2.313$ ,  $p = 0.021$ ). This result highlights the crucial role of peer influence and societal expectations in encouraging individuals to adopt sustainable fashion consumption behaviors.
- 3) H3: Environmental Knowledge (EK) → SFC is not significant ( $\beta = 0.032$ ,  $t = 0.218$ ,  $p = 0.827$ ). This suggests that awareness or understanding of environmental issues alone does not necessarily translate into sustainable fashion behavior, thereby reflecting the commonly observed attitude-behavior gap in sustainability research.
- 4) H4: Perceived Economic Constraints (EC) → SFC is not significant ( $\beta = 0.092$ ,  $t = 0.868$ ,  $p = 0.385$ ). The finding implies that perceived financial limitations do not meaningfully deter sustainable fashion consumption, possibly due to shifting consumer perceptions of sustainability as a lifestyle rather than a luxury.
- 5) H5: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) → SFC shows a non-significant and negative relationship ( $\beta = -0.135$ ,  $t = 0.884$ ,  $p = 0.377$ ). This suggests that corporate sustainability initiatives, such as eco-labels or sustainability reports, may not effectively

influence consumer purchase decisions which possibly due to low trust in corporate green claims or limited consumer awareness of such initiatives.

These nonsignificant results suggest that neither environmental knowledge nor perceived financial barriers nor CSR initiatives meaningfully predict sustainable fashion behavior within the current sample. This could indicate that behavioral engagement is more strongly driven by internal attitudes and external social cues than by awareness, cost perceptions, or corporate sustainability signals. Overall, the results emphasize that attitudinal and social drivers are the most influential factors shaping sustainable fashion consumption, whereas knowledge and constraint-based factors play a secondary role.

#### 4.2. Discussion

The discovery that validates Hypothesis 1, indicating a notable correlation between Attitudes Toward Sustainability (ATS) and Sustainable Fashion Consumption (SFC), closely corresponds with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991). This theory suggests that when someone has a positive attitude towards a behavior, they are more likely to engage in that behavior. Consumers in this research who have positive beliefs about sustainability show more willingness to participate in environmentally conscious consumption habits. This finding supports the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory (Stern, 2000), which emphasizes that pro-environmental behavior emerges from internalized moral values and perceived responsibility toward nature. Recent studies confirm this linkage, Lin & Chen (2022) found that environmental consciousness enhances perceived value and purchasing intention for eco-friendly apparel, while Hassan et al. (2022) and Şener et al. (2023) showed that positive environmental attitudes directly strengthen willingness to purchase recycled or ethically sourced fashion. Moreover, Gomes et al. (2022) highlight that such attitudes are rooted in deeper moral and normative beliefs, illustrating the attitudinal–moral bridge that drives sustainable consumption. Hence, cultivating positive environmental attitudes remains essential for fostering sustainability-driven behavior in the fashion industry.

The acceptance of Hypothesis 2, linking Social Norms (SN) and peer influence to SFC, strongly supports both the TPB and Social Influence Theory. These frameworks suggest that individuals conform to perceived social expectations and collective behavioral norms when engaging in pro-environmental actions. Social norms play a major role in driving sustainable fashion decisions, demonstrating that consumers are greatly impacted by the behavior, acceptance, and online groups of their peers. Ahn et al. (2020) showed that injunctive norms, specifically perceptions of what others approve of, significantly motivate individuals to purchase eco-friendly apparel. Likewise, Chi et al. (2023) illustrated that peer and societal influence drive collaborative consumption models such as apparel renting, reinforcing the social desirability of sustainability. L. Liu et al. (2024) further found that adherence to social expectations and perceived social responsibility enhances the likelihood of purchasing green apparel. The research shows that adopting sustainable fashion is not just a personal choice, but a process influenced by social connections and cultural acceptance, especially through online platforms (Park & Lin, 2020).

Conversely, Hypothesis 3, proposing a positive influence of Environmental Knowledge (EK) on SFC, was not supported. This contradicts expectations derived from the Knowledge-Attitude-Behavior model. This model assumes that higher knowledge naturally leads to sustainable action. Recent research shows that environmental literacy enhances awareness but does not always translate into consistent behavior. Kim & Lee (2023) and Yuan et al. (2025) observed that while informed consumers recognize sustainability benefits, their purchasing decisions are still moderated by trust, convenience, and emotional engagement.

Indrajaya et al. (2024) similarly found that knowledge influences green purchase intentions only indirectly through attitude formation. From a VBN perspective, Gomes et al. (2022) argue that knowledge must activate personal norms and moral obligation to result in action. The insignificant effect observed here thus reflects the persistent attitude-behavior gap, where cognitive understanding alone is insufficient without affective and contextual reinforcement.

Hypothesis 4, which anticipated a negative effect of Perceived Economic Constraints (EC) on SFC, was also not supported. This finding suggests that financial limitations are no longer the dominant deterrent to sustainable fashion purchasing. Within the TPB framework, this may indicate that perceived behavioral control is evolving as consumers increasingly view sustainability as attainable rather than exclusive. Rana & Banerjee (2024) emphasized that while immediate financial needs can constrain eco-purchases, value alignment and social identity often override such limitations. Zhang & Dong (2020) confirmed that price perception remains relevant, but its influence diminishes when consumers perceive strong ethical or emotional value in sustainable goods. Further, Wilts et al. (2021) showed that alternative consumption models such as resale and rental reduce economic barriers and support affordability. Collectively, these findings indicate a gradual shift from perceiving sustainability as a financial trade-off to viewing it as a lifestyle expression rooted in social and ethical commitment.

Finally, Hypothesis 5, which posited a positive relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) endeavors and Stakeholder Financial Commitment (SFC), was not corroborated by the data. Contrary to expectations, the analysis yielded a negative coefficient. While this coefficient did not attain statistical significance, the observed trend warrants further investigation. In addition to the explanation regarding skepticism toward greenwashing practices, there is a possibility that increased consumer awareness of CSR initiatives actually activates skeptical tendencies. The activation of such skepticism has the potential to reduce individuals' intentions to behave sustainably, thus explaining the emergence of a negative coefficient in the analysis results. This explanation provides a more substantial elaboration compared to merely stating that the finding is not significant.

This counter-intuitive outcome can be interpreted through Attribution Theory (Shaver, 2016), which posits that consumers critically evaluate corporate motives when interpreting CSR communications. In the fashion industry, CSR activities such as eco-labels or sustainability reports are often perceived as strategic image-management tools rather than genuine ethical commitments, leading to greenwashing skepticism. Empirical studies confirm this interpretation. Waris et al. (2024) and Koro & Jusufi (2023) found that CSR enhances purchase intention only when perceived as authentic and transparent, while Cuesta-Valiño et al. (2024) reported that CSR engagement promotes trust and loyalty only under credible communication conditions. Complementing these findings, Bianchi et al. (2024) observed that many consumers, in particular younger, environmentally conscious ones, view brands' CSR efforts as insufficient to address deeper sustainability issues, leading to mistrust. Similarly, Miotto & Youn (2020) and Wei & Jung (2022) identified that perceived hypocrisy between CSR claims and actual practices erodes consumer confidence and undermines brand legitimacy. Collectively, these studies suggest that CSR's effectiveness in driving sustainable consumption depends not merely on its implementation but on perceived authenticity, transparency, and moral congruence between corporate messaging and actual practice.

These non-significant findings may also reflect the specific socio-cultural context of Taiwanese college students, who are highly active in fashion trends driven by social media but may demonstrate selective skepticism toward corporate sustainability claims. Although students are generally aware of environmental issues, their fashion choices are more

influenced by peer approval and lifestyle identity than by CSR messages or affordability considerations. This context highlights the dominance of social validation and value alignment compared to informational or economic considerations in shaping sustainable consumption behavior.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that internal attitudes and social influences are the most dominant predictors in explaining sustainable fashion consumption behavior. Conversely, knowledge, economic factors, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives show weaker influence, confirming that social and psychological mechanisms play a more decisive role compared to informational or structural determinants. These findings strengthen the theoretical integration between Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory, and Social Influence Theory, by affirming that sustainable fashion behavior is primarily driven by moral beliefs, social validation, and internalized environmental values, rather than by rational cost-benefit considerations.

In addition to providing conceptual contributions through the integration of these three theoretical frameworks, this study also has significant practical implications. The results of this study highlight the importance of sustainability strategies that emphasize the formation of social norms and strengthening of moral values and consumer environmental awareness, rather than merely increasing knowledge or providing economic incentives. Thus, this study not only expands theoretical understanding of sustainable consumption behavior, but also provides practical direction for the development of sustainability initiatives in the fashion sector.

## 5. Conclusion

This study confirms that Attitudes Toward Sustainability (ATS) and Social Norms (SN) are two main factors that significantly influence Sustainable Fashion Consumption (SFC). These findings indicate that sustainable fashion consumption behavior is more driven by moral values, personal commitment to sustainability, and social pressure compared to Environmental Knowledge, Perceived Economic Constraints, or perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Thus, this study highlights that sustainability behavior change is more effective when it touches on psychological and social aspects, rather than merely providing information or considering financial capability.

Practically, the results of this study recommend that the fashion industry, policymakers, and educational institutions prioritize strategies that strengthen individual sustainability values and build positive social norms. Educational campaigns and CSR programs need to be designed to be more relevant to the identity of the younger generation, using communicative approaches that are authentic, inspirational, and community-based. In addition, enhancing CSR transparency remains important for building consumer trust, although its effectiveness may vary depending on cultural context and target audience characteristics.

This study has limitations, such as a cross-sectional design and specific sample characteristics, so generalization of findings must be done carefully. Therefore, further studies including longitudinal designs, experiments, or cross-cultural comparisons are needed to retest the relationships between variables and capture the more complex dynamics of sustainable fashion consumption behavior. Overall, this study provides an important scientific foundation regarding the role of personal values and social norms in promoting sustainable fashion consumption and opens opportunities for more effective research and interventions in the future.

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