

Generational Differences in Perceptions of Second-Hand Clothing: Motivations and Barriers Across Generation Z, Millennials, and Generation X

Anvi Dua

Heritage International Xperiential School, India

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ABSTRACT

As the fashion industry grows, so does the demand for second-hand clothes. This study investigates the perceptions of different generations toward second-hand clothing and explores the factors influencing their purchasing decisions. Using a quantitative survey, the data were collected from 83 individuals classified as Generation Z, Millennials, and Generation X, based in India. Standardized questions were included in the survey to evaluate the key determinants of customer buying behavior, such as product features, price sensitivity, status symbol, location, and emotions and experiences. The data was analyzed using graphs and statistical tests such as Levene's and independent T-tests. From the results, it was found that product features were the only factor that showed a significant generational difference, implying that while purchasing second-hand clothes, Generation Z and Millennials are highly influenced by the features of the product, as compared to Generation X. Conversely, price sensitivity, status symbol, location, and emotions and experiences impacted all the generations similarly. Moreover, while second-hand fashion has been increasing recently, some important features, like affordability, current fashion trends, and easy accessibility to e-commerce and marketplaces, attract all generations. However, the discouraging factors, including hygiene concerns, low quality, stigma, negative energy, superstition, and time-consuming processes, contributed to the slow growth of this industry. Among these barriers, hygiene concerns and a time-consuming process are highly influential, followed by low quality and stigma in all generations. These insights provide businesses and policymakers with valuable guidance to enhance marketing strategies and product offerings, ultimately promoting sustainable fashion consumption across generations.

1. Introduction

As fashion trends in the younger generations have rapidly changed in the past few years, so has the growth of second-hand apparel. Youth are engaging in shopping for second-hand clothing by adopting a new practice called “thrifting”. Thrifting refers to the action of purchasing products from thrift shops or places that sell used goods, such as clothes (R et al., 2022). Thrifting started as a means of exchange of goods, such as trading, from the barter system, and has now taken the form of a new fashion trend. According to Butler (2024), global sales of second-hand clothes increased by 18% in 2023 and are predicted to reach \$350 billion in 2028.

* Corresponding author's E-mail address: anvi040509@gmail.com

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Influenced by global trajectories, India's market is also showing similar patterns and is expected to reach \$1,060.8 million by 2028 (Vasesi, 2024). The market for second-hand apparel in India is significantly on the rise, with a market size of over 3000 million USD as of 2023 (Credence Research, 2024). This upward trend in the second-hand apparel market has been attributed to a variety of factors. Some of these factors include sustainability concerns, social media influence, affordability, availability, and changing trends, which motivate people of several age groups to opt for second-hand fashion (Priyanka Debnath, 2025).

The most common platforms for selling second-hand clothes are offline marketplaces and online mediums such as Instagram stores or websites. Among them, the popular social media thrift shops in India on platforms like Instagram are run mainly by enterprising young adults. Some popular avenues for second-hand clothing include garage sales, charities, thrift stores, and e-commerce platforms. Moreover, most of the clothes available in these thrift stores are either export-import rejects, brand fakes, or stock clearance. Predominantly, consumers prefer buying such brands on thrifted platforms as they are more affordable and guarantee authenticity. Some forms of clothes in thrift stores are highly demanded and preferred even over newer clothes. At times, the styles of these clothes can be very appealing and aesthetically pleasing. For instance, Y2k fashion is a fashion from the 2000s that has been trending recently, through the use of bold eye-catching prints like the leopard print and a mix of futuristic elements (Joyce, 2022). Among thrift stores, certain ones are renowned for their collection of vintage clothes from a specific period. These stores offer authentic pieces that accurately represent the fashion trends and styles of their respective eras. Some of the latest fashion trends include skinny jeans, vintage rock bands like AC/DC, and tracksuits (Chester, 2025). Moreover, the availability of luxury designer brands in the second-hand fashion market is increasing. Prominent brands such as Juicy Couture, Diesel, Superdry, Adidas, Converse, Coach, Calvin Klein, YSL, Tory Burch, and The North Face are now easily found in thrift stores, demonstrating a growing demand for pre-owned high-end clothing.

In addition to various factors that influence the second-hand clothing industry, age also plays an important role in shaping consumer preferences and purchasing behavior. It is evident in the literature that different generations have different perceptions of buying second-hand clothes. On one hand, Generation Z is rapidly becoming a huge revenue stream, as young consumers are highly influenced by current trends (Marquez, 2023). On the other hand, Generation X tends to prioritize in-store shopping, seek high-quality products, and represent strong brand loyalty (Shaw, 2024). Lately, among Generation Z shoppers, buying secondhand products has shifted from being a social taboo to a source of pride (Bakshi, 2023).

However, older generations like Generation X have several concerns about purchasing second-hand clothes and thrifting primarily around hygiene. Nevertheless, this perception is being changed by the substitution of words used for second-hand clothes like "used" with words like "preloved," which psychologically motivates people to thrift more (Kishore, 2024). Generation X also believes that second-hand clothes are in very bad condition, shabby looking, and just aren't the same as new clothes (Jina, 2024). This trend is observed not only in India but is generalized amongst most East Asian parents who comment about second-hand clothing, believing that people who have worn it before have carried some disease. They also believe that clothing should be handed down as a "hand me down" only to close family or friends and not unknown individuals, and may contain negative energies of previous owners if thrifted. While in some parts of India, used clothing has good worth and is not stigmatized, other parts of India still do not approve of second-hand clothing due to moral and religious sentiments or superstitious beliefs (Sunder & Sunder, 2022).

2. Literature Review

These factors and differences in generations regarding second-hand purchasing are largely evident in the literature. One such research conducted by Palmgren & Zylfijaj (2022) aimed to examine whether there has been a growth in second-hand fashion after the COVID-19 pandemic and study Gen Z's view on this. The data presented showed that 84% of respondents believe that they should buy sustainable clothes. Other causes that were identified included the factors of the pandemic and social media influence among Gen Z. Findings also showcased that the pandemic led to an increase in secondhand fashion.

A similar study focused on investigating why millennials like to reuse clothes, which are identified by both high consumption and environmental conservation or sustainability awareness (Kiehn & Antonia, 2018). This research was conducted in Swedish thrift stores, where it was found that there are various reasons for millennials to opt for second-hand clothing, including new trends in the fashion industry. However, environmental concerns were found not to be the primary motive for people to opt for second-hand clothing.

A study conducted in China by Liang and Xu (2017) aimed to gain information on Chinese consumers' behaviours towards second-hand clothing, with reference to their consumption intentions and the influence of consumers' perceived values, perceived concerns, and descriptive norms on their purchase intentions. Data for this research were collected through a survey using the snowball sampling method. The findings interpreted that the Chinese consumers did not perceive high values of second-hand clothing items, but held strong concerns about owning second-hand clothing.

A comparison research by Vrablikova et al. (2024) analyzed the main features of sustainable clothing buying behaviors within Generation X and Y from the territory of the Slovak Republic and suggested marketing activities for fashion companies. It explored the 3 pillars of Corporate social responsibility: economic, social, and environmental responsibility. In the research, it was found that while some members of Generations X and Y engage in sustainable shopping practices such as buying second-hand or swapping, the majority do not feel the impact of sustainable trends and do not participate in them. The results also showed that it is crucial to highlight the significance of Generation X and Y being more conscious of sustainable trends and having access to more sustainable opportunities. Additionally, it was indicated that the marketing communication strategies show that influencer marketing and Electronic Word of Mouth on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and more are popular.

Another study explored the hedonic shopping values (consumers who shop for pleasure and entertainment) of Generation Z in the context of online second-hand fashion shopping, focusing on how environmental concerns, ethical reverence, and cost considerations influence their behaviors (Lisa et al., 2024). This study delves into the existing research gaps by examining the complex interplay between hedonic values and environmental behaviors, especially among younger consumers in Sweden. The results showed that Gen Z showcases the ability to shop for ethical reasons rather than personal ones. Moreover, cost considerations along with personal joy also play an important role in online second-hand shopping.

A comparative research study based in Spain, undertaken by Calvo-Porrall & Viejo-Fernández (2024), aimed to understand whether there are differences in second-hand shopping by generational cohorts. It is suggested that individuals belonging to the same generation cohort, including Generation X, Z, and millennials, exhibit similar values toward shopping behaviors. However, Generation X has been identified as having less technical skills, but more disposable income, hence trying to gain enough information in purchasing decisions. Millennials may have lesser income and wealth, but highly positive attitudes due to the importance of the

shopping experience rather than product ownership. The findings showed that for all generations, the main motivation influencing the purchase of second-hand clothes is economic value. It was concluded that environmental, ethical, and hedonic factors did not influence Generation X's intention to purchase second-hand clothes online. On the other hand, Millennials showed economic and environmental motivation the most.

Specifically for India, Debnath (2023) intended to understand how consumers interpreted the use of second-hand clothing, primarily based on Generation Z's attitude toward used clothing. The research highlighted the role of cultural factors in consumer behavior. However, the findings indicate that social contexts, not cultural influences, are the primary factors in the adoption of second-hand clothing. The fear of penalization in the social setting is a major hindrance to apparel selection behavior. However, the social settings are so varied from each other; the same apparel can provide the individual with a better "image" in a different social setting.

On the contrary, Larsson and Schoultz (2023) identified the barriers that prevent consumers from purchasing pre-owned fashion. The findings were categorized as either external or internal barriers. External barriers are those independent of consumers, including quality, price, returns, availability, social connections influencing individuals, product presentation, and lack of time due to unstructured stores and limited items. Internal barriers are those relating to consumers themselves and include personal attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge. In this research, this is a lack of knowledge.

A different study conducted in Italy by Lucio Masserini et al. (2024) aimed to assess whether Generation Z is more inclined to buy sustainable or eco-friendly clothing than Generation Y. A questionnaire was used for data collection that lasted over a month, consisting of 480 respondents of Generation Z and X, assessing parameters including: (a) behaviours and attitudes towards sustainable clothing; (b) clothing purchasing and use habits; (c) sustainable behaviours and attitudes in daily life; and (d) the sociodemographic characteristics of respondents. It was indicated in the results that on one hand where Gen Z were more likely to buy second-hand clothes, Gen Y, on the other, tended to purchase organic clothes made with eco-sustainable material.

Therefore, several factors are influencing the usage of second-hand clothing. The most influential factor is affordability. According to Us (2024), \$146 a month can be saved, or \$1,760 a year, by buying secondhand goods. Moreover, people also highly encourage the reuse of clothes and apparel due to cultural beliefs around minimal waste and full utilization of resources (Aggarwal, 2021). Other factors include quality, peer influence, income, and product features.

However, several gaps can be identified in the existing literature. Most of the studies only focused on Generation Z and millennials to some extent as their target audience and did not compare various generations. Therefore, the literature did not consider older generations. In addition to this, there was less evidence in prior studies in the context of India. Hence, there is a lack of studies in this region. Along with this, most of the research emphasized price and sustainability as major factors. This indicates a need for the study to consider other possible factors as well.

Given the increasing trends of second-hand purchasing of clothes in regions like India, there exists a need for a comprehensive study in this field. In the literature, it was found that age or generation also impacts buying behavior, indicating a requirement for a comparative study between the generations. Therefore, by acknowledging the literature gaps and incorporating a variety of factors, this study has been conducted. This study aims to understand the complex

interplay of factors and perceptions of the different generations, specifically Generation Z, millennials, and Generation X, towards second-hand fashion.

3. Materials and Methodology

3.1. Research Aim and Objectives

This research aims to investigate the factors that affect the purchasing of second-hand clothes for millennials, Generation Z, and Generation X, as well as the perception of these generations towards the concept of second-hand fashion. To evaluate this, the following objectives were considered.

- To analyze the difference in perception of Generation X and Millennials, and Generation Z towards the factors influencing the purchase of second-hand clothes
- To assess the experience of buying and using second-hand clothes in different generations
- To explore the factors that discourage fast fashion in different generations

3.2. Research Hypotheses

For the analysis of the aim and objectives, several hypotheses were tested based on the factors influencing the perception of generations toward buying second-hand clothes. The hypotheses are stated below:

- Hypothesis 1: PF₁ - PF₂: There is a significant difference between the perception of two age groups based on Product Features (PF) while buying second-hand clothes.
- Hypothesis 2: PS₁ - PS₂: There is a significant difference between the perception of two age groups based on price sensitivity (PS) when buying second-hand clothes.
- Hypothesis 3: SS₁ - SS₂: There is a significant difference between the perception of two age groups based on Status Symbol (SS) while buying second-hand clothes.
- Hypothesis 4: LO₁ - LO₂: There is a significant difference between the perception of two age groups based on Location (LO) while buying second-hand clothes.
- Hypothesis 5: EE₁ - EE₂: There is a significant difference between the perception of two age groups based on Emotions and Experiences (EE) while buying second-hand clothes.

Herein, 1 represents the age group including Generation Z and Millennials (12-43 years), while 2 represents the age group of Generation X (44-60 years).

3.3. Research Tools and Scales

The research used a survey based on a questionnaire. It consisted of 4 sections in total, the first one being the demographics, followed by the perceptions about thrifting, the reasons behind not opting for thrifting, and the experiences of thrifting. The demographics included age, gender, education, and income. The questions used the 5-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree, scored as 1-5, to rate how much respondents resonated with given statements. To measure the consumer perception towards second-hand clothing, 5 parameters such as Product Features (PF, 0.781), Price Sensitivity (PS, 0.796), Status Symbol (SS, 0.840), Location (LO, 0.844), Emotions and Experiences (EE, 0.792) (Manocha & Dharwal, 2023) were included from the study in the survey. Each of these parameters is measured using different statements with a Cronbach's alpha score lying between 0.78 and 0.85. Since the Cronbach alpha score is above 0.7, the scales are highly reliable. The remaining close-ended

questions were used to evaluate the experiences of the respondents of buying second-hand clothes and the factors that discourage them from buying these used clothes.

3.4. Sampling and Sample Characteristics

Convenience and targeted sampling were used while collecting the data. The targeted audience was Generation Z, Millennials, and Generation X. Generation Z is the generation born between 1997 and 2012, whereas Millennials were born between 1981 and 1996, and Generation X was born between 1965 and 1980 (Brunjes, 2025). Due to the similar characteristics and perspectives of Millennials and Generation Z towards second-hand clothing, evident in the literature, these two groups are combined. Out of the total sample size of 83, 32 lie in Generation Z, 20 are Millennials, and 31 are Generation X. Moreover, there are 57 females and 26 males. Most of the respondents have completed their master's degrees and are currently in high school. Lastly, 39 respondents are not earning, while 44 are working either as a business owner, professional, or salaried employee.

3.5. Data Collection Process

Google Forms were created and forwarded via WhatsApp and Email to collect the responses to the survey. The data was collected for a duration of one month. For data collection and analysis, two groups of millennials and Generation Z were merged to conclude the first group of ages 12-43. The second group was Generation X, from the age group of 44-60 years. Responses over the age of 60 were filtered out as the study focused on specific generations.

3.6. Ethics and Consent

Ethical guidelines were followed throughout the survey. The responses maintained consent as the participants filled out the form after reading all the instructions and information regarding the research. Participation was voluntary as all respondents volunteered to fill out the form, and confidentiality was maintained as the responses were not used anywhere apart from the research paper. Additionally, data was collected anonymously as no identity was required to fill out the survey.

3.7. Analysis Tools

To calculate the descriptive statistics and t-values, statistical tools were used, including Excel, to clean and organize the data. In addition to this, the Data tab was used to make graphs and conduct tests. The t-test was used to measure the difference between the two groups, Gen Z+Millennials, and Gen X. It was measured at a level of significance of 0.05. To analyze the variances, the Levene's test was considered and conducted at a p-level significance of 0.05. The null hypothesis for the Levene test assumes that there are equal variances between the two age groups. If the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, implying unequal variances. For the t-test, a p-value less than 0.05 indicates a significant difference between the two age groups for that variable.

4. Results and Discussion

The following section signifies and discusses the results of the statistical tests. Table 1 represents the results of Levene's test and t-test. As stated in the table, p-values for Levene's test are greater than 0.05 for all the hypotheses except hypothesis 1. Hence, according to

Levene's test, only hypothesis 1 considered the p-value with unequal variances for the t-test. For all other hypotheses, p-values with equal variances have been considered.

Table 1. Results for Levene's Test and Independent t-tests of parameters influencing consumer

Hypothesis		N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Levene's test p-value	t-statistic	T-test p-value
$PF_1 - PF_2$	PF ₁	52	12.87	2.53	0.001	1.81	0.076*
	PF ₂	31	11.53	3.44			
$PS_1 - PS_2$	PS ₁	52	17.65	4.81	0.778	0.55	0.583
	PS ₂	31	17.06	4.53			
$SS_1 - SS_2$	SS ₁	52	15.42	3.87	0.895	-0.22	0.825
	SS ₂	31	15.61	3.59			
$LO_1 - LO_2$	LO ₁	52	16.92	3.57	0.851	0.26	0.796
	LO ₂	31	16.71	3.7			
$EE_1 - EE_2$	EE ₁	52	11.96	4.04	0.842	0.88	0.379
	EE ₂	31	11.16	3.9			

perception towards second-hand clothing based on generation groups

Note: * represents $p < 0.10$

For hypothesis 1, the p-value of the t-test is 0.076, which is less than 0.1 but more than 0.05, hence, the null hypothesis is rejected at a 10% level of significance. This indicates that there is a notable difference between the two age groups in their preferences and perceptions while buying second-hand clothing on the basis of product features. The 12-43 age group has a higher impact of product features on perception towards second-hand clothing as compared to the other age group, 44-60 years. The p-values for all other hypotheses are greater than even a 10 percent level of significance, indicating no significant difference between the two groups based on product sensitivity (0.583), status symbol (0.825), location (0.796), and emotion and experiences (0.379). Therefore, the perceptions between the two age groups regarding product sensitivity, status symbol, location, and emotions and experiences toward second-hand clothes are similar.

The first hypothesis, product features, identifies the aesthetic appeal of second-hand clothes, including quality, color combinations, image, shape, and fabrics. In this criterion, the two generations display a difference in perceptions. This could be due to the fact that Generation Z and millennials find second-hand fashion's vintage and aesthetic appeal more intriguing and unique as a medium of presenting individuality and tastes (ABFRLadmin, 2024). They also perceive second-hand fashion as good quality, comfortable, and a reflection of creativity (Sani & BrandEquity, 2024). On the other hand, Generation X perceives second-hand clothes as lower quality and lacking style, hence making it unappealing (Priyanka Debnath, 2025b). This elucidates the difference in perceptions between the two generations on this criterion.

The second hypothesis, price sensitivity, explores the budget and bargaining-related factors. The results display similar trends with minor differences between the two generations. These differences can be explained by Generation Z and millennials being younger (13-44 years) and having lower disposable income than Generation X (Zhengguoqiang, n.d.). This leads to differences in spending patterns and, hence, makes the younger generations inclined towards affordable second-hand clothing options. While there is a disposable income difference between the two groups, the similarities in price sensitivity can be explained by the relative

budget allocated towards second-hand fashion clothing as well as the opportunity presented by e-commerce for all consumers to compare prices (Manocha & Dharwal, 2023).

The third hypothesis, status symbol, explores factors related to the symbolic representation of secondhand fashion as poverty, showcasing lower economic classes and branded/nonbranded clothing. This similar pattern can be attributed to the demographics of the sample. Generation X is more sensitive towards these factors due to their stable, high-earning jobs and societal norms that subconsciously restrict the purchases of second-hand clothes (Millan & Mittal, 2017). Generation Z and millennials, despite their lower age, also have similar perceptions due to a richer upbringing and exposure to societal norms (Pari Pradhan & Pari Pradhan, 2023).

The fourth hypothesis, location, explores the factors related to the places of sellers/marketplaces in terms of richer/poorer areas. The generations show similar perceptions due to the comparable importance of marketplace locations in their buying decisions. Furthermore, popular marketplaces in India, like Sarojini market in South Delhi, are associated with economically modest areas, influencing the mindset of Indian people regarding second-hand clothes (Mazumdar, 2017).

The last hypothesis, emotions and experiences, highlights feelings towards thrifting and memories. Generation Z and millennials feel positive and happy about thrifting during the entire process of finding appealing clothes or shopping (WGSN, 2024). Similarly, Generation X also has the same perceptions and experiences as they are also accepting of this new culture (Calvo-Porrall & Viejo-Fernández, 2024).

4.1. Experience of Buying Second-Hand Clothes in Different Generations

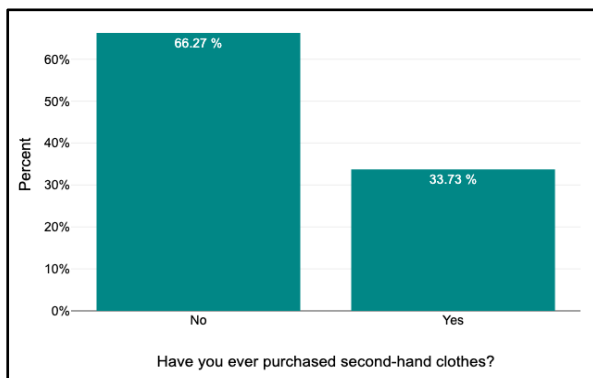


Figure 1. Percentage of respondents purchasing second-hand clothes

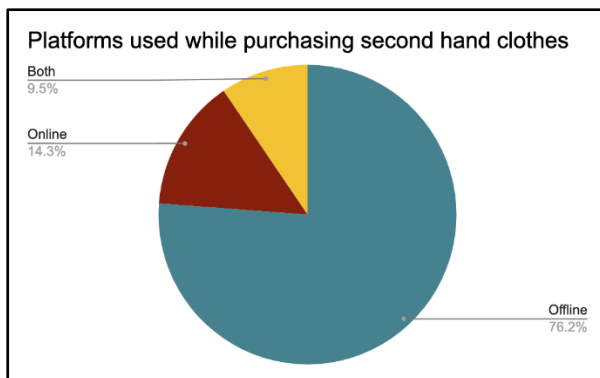
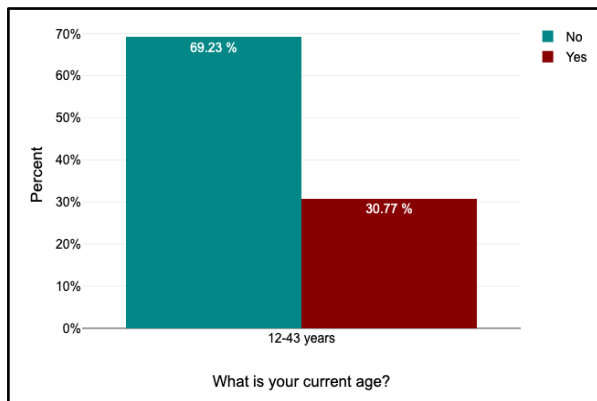


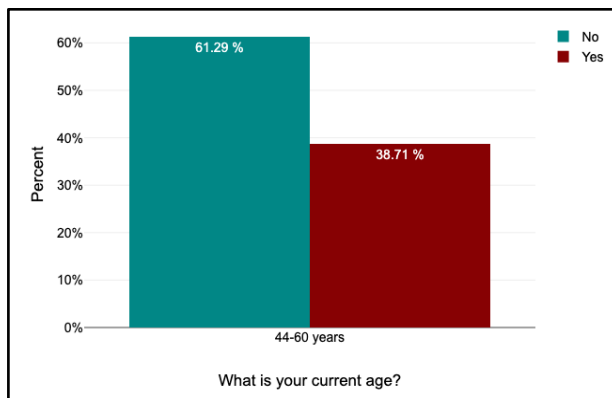
Figure 2. Percentage of respondents using platforms while purchasing second-hand clothes

Figure 1 depicts that out of the total sample, 66.27% of the respondents had not purchased second-hand clothes, while 33.73% had purchased them. Moreover, it has been depicted from

the graph in Figure 2 that most of the individuals have purchased through offline mediums, at 76.2%, followed by online at 14.3%, and both by 9.5%. People prefer offline mediums to purchase secondhand clothes, including marketplaces and flea markets, as offline markets ensure the checking of the quality and size of the clothes. By doing this, the chance of buying defective products seems to be reduced. In addition to this, offline markets allow buyers to bargain while purchasing, which cannot be the case in online stores. Consumers also experience instant gratification and excitement from receiving clothes immediately through offline shopping. However, some online platforms, including social media apps like Instagram, are beneficial for cost comparisons with other websites and efficient purchasing (Tech, 2024).



a) Generation Z and Millennial

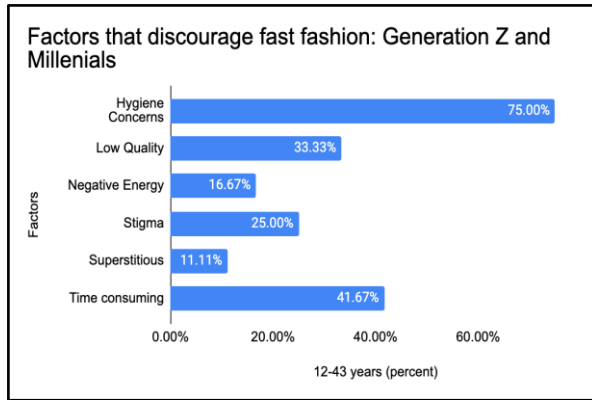


b) Generation X

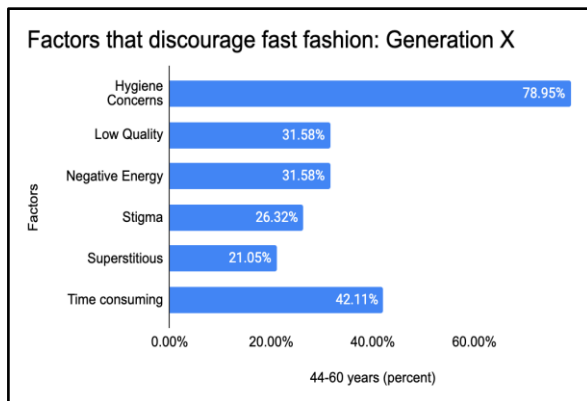
Figure 3. Percentage of generations purchasing second-hand clothes

Figure 3(a) illustrates that among Generation Z and millennial respondents, only 30.77% have bought second-hand clothing. The possible factors for the same can be the limited choice, time consumption, sizing issues, and a reduced sense of pride (Negash & Akhbar, 2024). Also, the 30.77% who do opt for second-hand clothing can be attributed to newer and more unique vintage styles and cost savings (Priyanka Debnath, 2025).

Moreover, as seen in Figure 3(b), Generation X proved to purchase more second-hand clothes than Generation Z and Millennials, at 38.71%, which can primarily be due to ethical/environmental concerns and cost, in contrast with Generation X, who focus more on style (Calvo-Porrall & Viejo-Fernández, 2024). From the literature, it has been noted that some common factors discouraging people from purchasing include hygiene concerns, low quality, and association with negative energy, stigma, or superstition.



a) Generation Z and Millennials



b) Generation X

Figure 4. Factors discouraging the buying of Second-hand clothes.

By analyzing the common factors among both age groups through graphs it can be illustrated that hygiene concern is the most discouraging factor for second-hand fashion at 75% for Generation Z and millennials and 78.95% for Generation X. This concern is due to the fact that second-hand clothes contain parasites, bacteria, and viruses present in them. As a consequence, people do not want to risk their health by wearing second-hand clothes (Rakhshanpour et al., 2021).

Moreover, second-hand clothes shopping is time-consuming as second-hand clothes require more effort and patience to find the right clothes in good condition and style, compared to buying new ones (Negash & Akhbar, 2024). While buying second-hand clothes, consumers have to consider and analyze various factors, including quality, authenticity, and current trends. This process discourages individuals from buying second-hand clothes. Therefore, both generations find time-consuming to be the second most discouraging factor at around 42%.

Low quality has been rated at 31.58% of Generation X and 33.3% of Generation Z, and Millennials. This is due to the image of second-hand clothes being “used” before, hence may suggest wear and tear while using them in the first place (Solovey, n.d.). Moreover, the durability and lifespan of secondhand clothes are often lower than that of brand-new clothes (Laitala & Grimstad Klepp, n.d.). Lastly, even though there are limitations on quality, the same cannot hold up to further repairs.

Negative energy has been rated at 32% for Generation X and 16% for Generation Z, and Millennials. While there are limited empirical studies explaining this factor, it has been reported that in India, Vastu suggests that wearing someone else’s clothes may transfer the energies, emotions, or experiences of the previous owner. Additionally, as shown in the graph,

Generation X, being of higher age and maturity, considers this while purchasing second-hand clothes more than Generation Z. Similarly, superstition associated with second-hand clothes is rated 21% for Generation X and 11% for Generation Z and Millennials. Therefore, negative energy and superstition are higher in the older generation as compared to the younger ones.

5. Conclusion

This study assessed the factors influencing the perceptions of different generations while buying second-hand clothes. The research used a survey with standardized questions exploring the perceptions and motivations against and towards second-hand purchasing. The findings indicated that among the factors: product features, price sensitivity, status symbol, location, and emotions and experiences, the two generation groups only depicted a significant difference in product features. This result can be attributed to the overall perception of Gen Z and Millennials towards second-hand clothes. The features, such as aesthetic styles and shapes, are more attractive to the younger generations than to Generation X. On the contrary, the other factors are not significantly different in the two groups. Price sensitivity showed similar results between the two groups, as the relative budget allocated towards purchasing second-hand clothes is similar for all the age groups. Moreover, e-commerce allows all age groups of consumers to compare prices, indicating lower price sensitivity in both groups. These similar perceptions of the age groups can be explained by the similar demographics of the sample. Most of the respondents earn high incomes and have richer upbringings. Hence, status symbols and location showed similarity in the generations. Additionally, the majority of the sample belongs to Delhi, wherein the marketplaces for second-hand goods are associated with poorer areas. Lastly, for emotions and experiences, the feelings associated with shopping for second-hand clothes are relatively similar, including the feeling of happiness due to instant gratification while shopping. This study also explored the factors hindering the purchase of these clothes. Among all the factors, hygiene concerns and time-consuming processes are the most discouraging factors, followed by low quality and stigma. This can be justified by the risk of disease associated with wearing pre-owned clothes. The effort to purchase second-hand clothes as compared to new ones is also higher in identifying better quality second-hand clothes. Notably, Generation X is highly superstitious and believes that second-hand clothes contain negative energy, resulting in their not preferring these clothes.

As traditionally perceived and commonly stereotyped, younger generations like Generation Z and millennials may not be the only age groups that are interested in secondhand clothes and are invested in this new trend. The findings from this paper convey the same idea, that all the generations show similarities between these trends in the current demographics. Businesses can use these results by creating target marketing strategies for different generations, focusing on the aesthetics and features of the product, primarily for younger generations. Some marketing strategies can be inclusive in nature, which can attract customers from all age groups.

Marketers can also raise more awareness about the positive environmental footprint generated by opting for second-hand clothes to overshadow potential shame consumers may feel if opting for second-hand clothing. Moreover, retailers should implement sanitation measures to ensure hygiene practices to enhance the purchase experience of the buyers. Sellers can attach visible labels like “professionally cleaned” or “hygiene guaranteed” to the clothes to ensure credibility. This would assure consumers that there is less risk of contamination as well as lesser mental bias against the cleanliness of “used” clothes, hence increasing the likelihood of them giving second-hand clothes a purchase. Lastly, physical marketplaces can streamline the shopping experience by taking advantage of e-commerce and technology by launching online websites

and adding efficient filters to reduce the time consumed while purchasing secondhand clothes. These websites will provide the consumers with a better experience of secondhand clothing, which in turn promotes eco-conscious shopping. These better experiences could lead to an overall positive image associated with second-hand clothes, encouraging a wider adoption of the same.

However, there are a few limitations of the research. Firstly, the sample size was small, with a pool of 83 respondents, which could lead to generalizations made based on limited data. Additionally, the use of convenience sampling has resulted in a restricted dataset. Moreover, the study was particularly based on the perceptions of Indian consumers and hence, cannot be applied to any other geography. These limitations can be accounted for by conducting further research.

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