

The Rise of Character and Entertainment-Licensed Fashion: Understand the Key Factors Influencing Gen Z's Purchase Intentions

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“No portion of the work referred to in this dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this institution or any other university or other institution of learning.”

“In the writing of this dissertation I have received assistance from my supervisor Liang Lu and Affan Hameed.”

“I, Wanqi Sun, certify that this is an original piece of work. I have acknowledged all sources and citations. No section of this MSc project has been plagiarised.”

“I would like to thank my supervisor, Liang Lu for her guidance throughout this dissertation. I would also like to thank Affan Hameed for his guidance and advice throughout this dissertation.”

Abstract

Research Context

In the evolving landscape of fashion and consumer culture, character and entertainment-licensed fashion products have emerged as a significant medium through which Generation Z consumers express identity, subcultural affiliation, and social engagement. Despite the growing commercial impact of character and entertainment licensing strategy, academic research on the psychological and cultural motivations behind Gen Z's purchasing behaviour in this niche remains limited.

Purpose

This study aims to investigate the key affective and cognitive factors influencing Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions toward C&EL fashion products, and to develop a conceptual model that captures these motivational drivers.

Design/methodology/approach

Guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the ABC model of attitude, this research employs a deductive, quantitative methodology. A self-administered online questionnaire was distributed to Gen Z respondents, with 202 valid responses analysed using descriptive and multiple regression techniques. Five independent variables were assessed: Post-Subcultural Affiliation, Emotional Resonance, Social Sharing Value, Perceived Novelty, and Collection Value.

Findings

The results show that Post-Subcultural Affiliation is the strongest positive predictor of purchase intention, followed by Social Sharing Value and a combined Cognition Factor (Perceived Novelty and Collection Value). Emotional Resonance, unexpectedly, demonstrated a significant negative effect. These findings suggest that while Gen Z values identity signalling and digital engagement, emotional attachment alone does not always translate into purchase behaviour.

Originality and Value

This study contributes to the limited academic literature on licensed fashion consumption by offering a theory-informed and empirically tested model tailored to the Gen Z context. It also provides actionable insights for brand managers and IP holders seeking to develop more culturally resonant, identity-driven licensing strategies in an increasingly saturated market.

Keywords

Generation Z, licensed fashion, purchase intention, symbolic consumption, post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, social sharing, novelty perception

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The fashion industry has evolved dramatically over the past few decades, transitioning from geographically restricted brick-and-mortar retail models to a globally integrated and diversified ecosystem. Traditionally, fashion brands maintained localised reach and seasonal releases, with consumer access often dictated by physical proximity (Idacavage, 2018). However, the emergence of global e-commerce platforms, mobile-first interfaces, and transnational logistics has reshaped the competitive landscape, allowing fashion brands to engage broader audiences across cultures and time zones (Munoz, Holsapple and Sasidharan, 2023). Simultaneously, the values of fashion consumers have shifted. Where past generations followed high-end fashion dictated by top-tier designers, contemporary consumers, particularly Generation Z, use fashion as a medium for self-expression, identity construction, and cultural alignment (Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan, 2021; Amatulli et al., 2023; McKinsey & Company, 2023). The pursuit of individuality and authenticity increasingly shapes how consumers interact with brands, and personal storytelling through clothing has become a core feature of consumption (Kondamuri, 2024).

In response to these market shifts, character and entertainment licensing has emerged as a dominant marketing strategy that merges popular culture with fashion aesthetics. It refers to legal agreements in which brands acquire rights to use characters or intellectual properties (IPs) from media such as film, television, or gaming to design collaborative fashion products (Bloomenthal, 2024; WIPO, no date; Green, 2010). The global licensing industry has shown steady growth in recent years, with total licensed merchandise and services reaching \$356.5 billion in 2023, marking a 4.6% year-on-year increase (Licensing International, 2024). Within this expansive market, character and entertainment licensing remains the largest and most influential segment, accounting for 41.4% of total global licensing revenue, and this proportion has steadily increased over time (Figure 1.1, Licensing International, 2024). This trend underscores the rising cultural and commercial power of IP-driven collaborations. Brands are increasingly leveraging the emotional value and cultural resonance of characters from film, television, games, and streaming platforms.

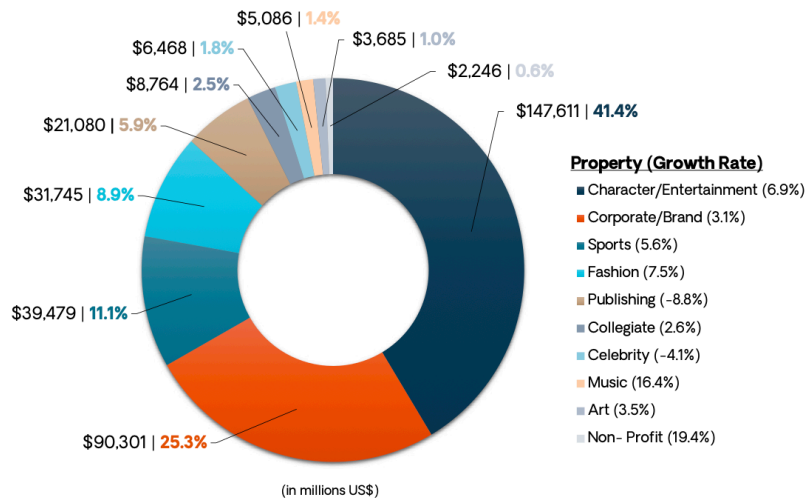


Figure 1.1 - Global Sales Revenue From Licensed Merchandise & Services by Property Type.
Source: Licensing International (2024)

Among all licensed product categories, the fashion segment, which comprises apparel (14.2%), accessories (10.7%), and footwear (3.5%), represents the largest merchandise category, contributing 28.4% to global licensing revenue (Figure 1.2). Character and entertainment-licensed fashion products facilitate the integration of intellectual property (IP) imagery with wearable design, spanning graphic tees, themed hoodies, character-inspired sneakers, and jewellery. Whether driven by nostalgia, fandom, or identity reinforcement, these products act as cultural touchpoints between media and self-expression, resonating particularly strongly with Generation Z consumers (Habo Studio, no date; Masse, 2024).

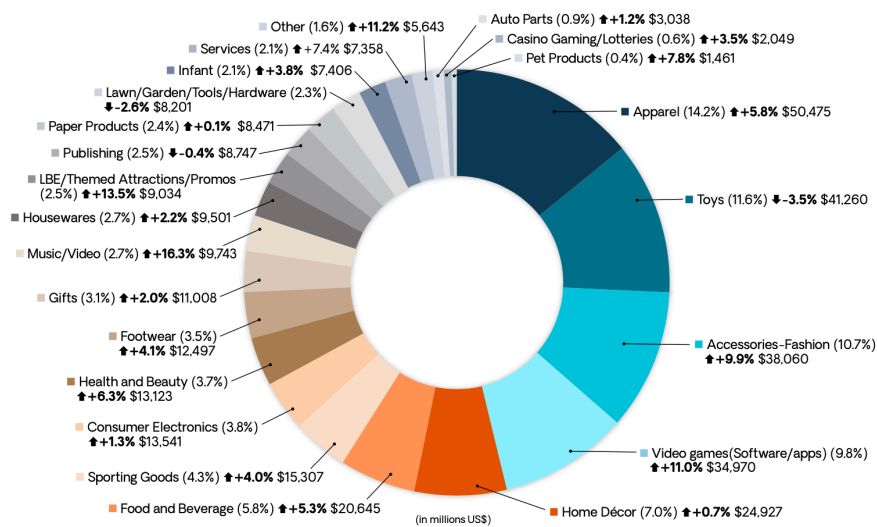


Figure 1.2 - Global Sales Revenue From Licensed Merchandise and Services by Product Category, 2023 vs. 2022.
Source: Licensing International (2024)

Numerous brand collaborations illustrate the power of this strategy. UNIQLO's ongoing partnership with Sanrio, featuring characters like My Melody and Kuromi, has consistently achieved commercial and cultural success (Appendix 7.4 and 7.5). Consumers praise these products for merging UNIQLO's minimalist design with the unique personalities of Sanrio's characters, enabling wearers to signal both fandom and fashion taste (Appendix 7.4). Likewise, Disney's 100th anniversary campaigns sparked widespread enthusiasm by engaging brands across almost all fashion segments, from fast fashion brands like Primark, H&M (Primark, no date; Appendix 7.6; H&M, no date); luxury brands such as Gucci, Tommy Hilfiger (Gucci, no date; Tommy Hilfiger, no date); sportswear brands like Lululemon (Lululemon, no date) to jewellery and accessory brands such as Swarovski and Pandora (Swarovski, no date; Pandora, no date). These collaborations resonated emotionally with consumers who grew up with Disney content, creating waves of nostalgia-driven purchasing (Appendix 7.6). Louis Vuitton's groundbreaking collaboration with League of Legends bridged luxury and gaming, drawing attention from global esports audiences (Riot Games, 2019; Louis Vuitton, 2019; Phelps, 2019; Hu, 2020). Meanwhile, Adidas' Pokémon sneaker line demonstrated how character licensing can generate massive success in sportswear, with designs that resonated with fans and sneaker-heads alike (Adidas, no date; Kahn, 2019; Ople, 2020). Netflix also entered the licensing arena with fashion capsules based on *Stranger Things*, partnering with brands like H&M and Levi's to create iconic pop-culture-inspired collections (H&M, no date; Levi's, no date). Some brand collaboration pages cited in this study do not display a publication or last updated date. In line with Harvard referencing conventions, these are cited as (no date) in the text and include the date of access in the reference list.

However, not all character-licensed collaborations have achieved similar success. In 2025, Dr. Martens partnered with Bratz to capture Y2K nostalgia (Dr. Martens, 2025). Despite the apparent alignment of Bratz's "passion for fashion" and Dr. Martens' bold style, the collection failed to resonate with either fanbase. Consumers and fans on platforms like Reddit and Threads noted that the designs lacked the exaggerated glamour that defines Bratz aesthetics, appearing more like ordinary shoes with superficial Bratz branding (xhellfox, 2025). They felt the essence of the IP was lost, rendering the collection commercially underwhelming (galaxystars1, 2025). Similarly, in 2023, Loewe's collaboration with *Howl's Moving Castle* received backlash despite the brand's successful history with Studio Ghibli (Loewe, no date). Consumers criticised the collection for its lack of imaginative integration, accusing the brand of merely printing character images on high-priced products without capturing the film's whimsical spirit (widelenskelp, 2023). Many also found the pricing tone-deaf for a family-friendly IP (Fashion Law Journal, 2025). These misalignments illustrate how character and entertainment licensing, despite its potential, is far from risk-free.

Viewed holistically, these examples reflect both the immense opportunity and the strategic complexity inherent in character and entertainment licensing. While the right alignment between character and entertainment IP and fashion brand can create resonant, profitable collaborations, poor execution or superficial integration may lead to consumer disappointment and brand dilution.

1.2 Rationale

As highlighted in the preceding section, character and entertainment licensing has emerged as a highly popular strategy in the fashion industry, offering the potential to emotionally engage consumers, expand market reach, and generate cultural visibility. However, as illustrated by contrasting cases—from UNIQLO x Sanrio's commercial success to Loewe x Howl's Moving Castle's mixed reception—such collaborations do not always produce consistent results. The same licensing framework can yield drastically different consumer responses. As licensing agreements offer access to highly recognisable character and entertainment IPs, they do not inherently guarantee the actual purchase behaviour. This reveals a key strategic challenge: what determines the consumer purchase intention towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products?

In today's hyper-competitive market, where emotional engagement and brand authenticity are paramount, fashion brands must move beyond superficial branding to create meaningful and resonant consumer experiences. Despite the widespread adoption of character licensing, academic research on this topic remains relatively limited. Existing studies have primarily focused on the legal structure of licensing (Sharma, 2022), the premium pricing of licensed products (Hong, 2019), co-branding strategies and brand alliances (Xiao and Lee, 2014; Peng et al., 2025), or consumer responses to specific licensed characters (Choi and Kim, 2018; Lee and Lee, 2015; Liu, 2023). However, studies that focus on individual characters tend to offer limited generalisability, as their findings may not extend beyond the specific IP or cultural context examined. Moreover, relatively few studies have investigated the psychological and sociocultural mechanisms such as social media engagement, identity expression, and perceived product value that shape Generation Z consumers' decision-making in this context.

Understanding the key drivers behind Gen Z's purchasing behaviour not only addresses a significant gap in current academic literature but also offers actionable insights for the strategic development of character and entertainment licensing within the fashion industry. Given the substantial influence this consumer segment exerts over

both sales performance and brand perception, the present study seeks to examine the psychological and cultural factors that shape Gen Z's purchase intentions toward character and entertainment-licensed fashion products. Unlike previous studies that often centred on a single intellectual property (IP), this research focuses on fashion items associated with characters or entertainment properties that consumers personally like or identify with. This broader framing ensures that the findings are not confined to one franchise or brand, thereby enhancing their relevance and generalisability across diverse licensing scenarios. Ultimately, the study aims to establish robust theoretical foundations and develop data-driven analytical models to support the sustainable growth of this market segment. The results will also assist both fashion brands and IP holders in making more informed strategic decisions and fostering mutually beneficial, long-term collaborations.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

1.3.1 Aim

This research aims to investigate the key psychological, cognitive, and cultural factors that influence Generation Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products. While this licensing strategy has become increasingly prominent in brand collaborations, the underlying consumer attitudes, identity motivations, and value perceptions remain under-explored in academic literature.

1.3.2 Objectives

To achieve the above aim, this research will:

1. Review existing literature on character and entertainment-licensed fashion products and Generation Z's consumer psychology, identifying key affective and cognitive factors influencing purchase intention.
2. Develop a conceptual framework outlining the hypothesised relationships between these key factors and Gen Z's purchase intentions.
3. Collect and analyse quantitative data from Gen Z consumers to test the proposed model and evaluate the significance of each factor.

4. Generate strategic recommendations for fashion brands and IP holders on designing emotionally resonant, cognitively engaging, and culturally aligned licensing collaborations.

By accomplishing these objectives, the study aims to bridge a significant research gap within the fashion and licensing literature, while offering actionable insights to inform branding, marketing, and IP partnership strategies in today's competitive retail landscape.

1.4 Overview of Research Design

This study adopts a deductive, positivist, mono-method quantitative design to examine the attitudinal drivers of Generation Z's purchase intentions toward character and entertainment-licensed fashion products. Anchored in a positivist epistemological stance, it employs a structured online questionnaire to ensure objectivity and replicability. The survey integrated a 7-point Likert scale to capture differences in participants' attitudes across key variables. This study adopted a personalised IP selection mechanism: respondents were first asked to choose a favourite character or entertainment property, which was then dynamically embedded into the survey items using piped text. This design increased contextual relevance and strengthened construct validity by ensuring that participants engaged with personally meaningful stimuli. A cross-sectional, non-probability sampling strategy was used, combining purposive, volunteer, and convenience approaches to reach Gen Z consumers (aged 18–26) via online and offline platforms. Data were analysed in SPSS (v30) using Cronbach's alpha (all constructs >0.70) and multiple regression. Validity was reinforced through pilot testing, visual priming, and face/content validation. The research complied with the University of the Arts London's Code of Practice on Research Ethics. Informed consent and participant anonymity were ensured through clearly stated instructions and privacy-focused survey design.

1.5 Overview of Relevant Theoretical Concepts and Frameworks

This study is guided by two theoretical models. First, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) provides the foundational framework for understanding how consumer purchase intention is formed. According to TPB, behavioural intention is primarily influenced by individual attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Among these, attitude has been consistently identified as the most

significant predictor in consumer decision-making. To further unpack the composition of consumer attitudes, this research incorporates the Affect–Behaviour–Cognition (ABC) model of attitude (Rosenberg and Hovland, 1960). The ABC model conceptualises attitude as a multidimensional construct comprising affective, behavioural, and cognitive components. In consumer behaviour research, affective and cognitive elements are particularly influential in shaping attitudes toward symbolic and identity-related products such as fashion. Building on this dual-theoretical foundation, the study identifies five independent variables: post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, and social sharing value are derived from the affective dimension, while perceived novelty and collection value stem from the cognitive dimension. Together, these constructs offer a comprehensive framework for analysing how Gen Z consumers form purchase intention towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.

By integrating TPB and the ABC model, this study constructs a theory-driven framework that combines rational evaluation with emotional expression. This integration ensures that the empirical design is firmly grounded in psychological theory and consumer behaviour research.

1.6 Overview of Structure

The structure of this study systematically explores the psychological and cultural drivers of Generation Z's purchase intentions toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. It begins with an introduction outlining the research background, aims, and its relevance in today's branded fashion and fandom landscape. This is followed by a literature review that critically engages with theories on symbolic consumption, post-subcultural identity, emotional marketing, and purchase intention, culminating in a conceptual model grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the ABC attitude model. Key constructs are defined and hypotheses are formulated to address gaps in existing literature. The methodology chapter explains the quantitative research design, justifies the deductive approach, and details the sampling, instrument development, and data collection. Reliability and validity procedures are also addressed. The results chapter presents descriptive and inferential statistics, including multiple regression, to evaluate each variable's influence. A discussion follows, interpreting findings in relation to previous studies. Practical recommendations are offered for brand and IP managers. Finally, the study concludes by summarising key insights, acknowledging limitations, and suggesting directions for future research in licensed fashion consumption.

1.7 Intended Theoretical and Managerial Contributions

This study aims to contribute theoretically by advancing the understanding of the psychological and cultural motivations underlying Generation Z's purchase intentions toward character and entertainment-licensed fashion products. By integrating perspectives from consumer psychology, fandom studies, symbolic consumption, the Theory of Planned Behaviour, and the ABC model of attitude, it proposes a novel conceptual framework that explores the interplay between affective and cognitive drivers. Given the limited academic attention to licensed fashion consumption, this model seeks to address a notable gap in the literature.

At the managerial level, the study intends to offer actionable insights for brand managers, IP holders, and fashion marketers. It provides guidance on how to frame licensing collaborations in ways that align with Gen Z's hybrid identity orientations and digital engagement behaviours. These contributions are expected to inform more strategically positioned licensing initiatives that enhance purchase intention and reinforce long-term brand relevance in an increasingly competitive fashion market.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Literature Review

In today's consumer marketing landscape, character and entertainment licensing has become a prominent strategy for attracting attention and enhancing brand visibility (Licensing International, 2024; Yu, Kwong and Bannasilp, 2023; Hong, 2019). However, despite its ability to generate high exposure and consumer interest, it does not inherently guarantee actual purchase behaviour (Liu, 2023). This gap highlights a critical need to understand the underlying factors that drive consumer purchase intentions.

This literature review critically evaluates academic research on character and entertainment licensing within the fashion sector, with a particular focus on its impact on Generation Z's purchase intentions. It begins by exploring the distinctive appeal of licensed fashion products, then identifies and analyses relevant theoretical models that explain Gen Z's purchasing behaviour in this context. Building on these foundations, the review investigates key attitudinal factors that may shape Gen Z's purchase intentions. Finally, it synthesises these theoretical frameworks and proposed independent variables into a conceptual model that forms the basis for empirical investigation. Given the limited academic focus on character and entertainment licensing in fashion, the review also draws on adjacent research domains, including the fan economy, parasocial relationships, and limited-edition consumer culture.

2.1 Attributes of Character and Entertainment-Licensed Fashion Products

According to Kotler's (1967) marketing strategy framework and Ansoff's (1957) Matrix, character and entertainment licensing can be positioned as a growth strategy achieved through product development. Its core objective is to expand business operations by introducing new product categories, reaching broader market segments, and enhancing consumer engagement.

Character and entertainment-licensed fashion products (C&EL fashion products) exhibit three defining dimensions: emotional, cultural, and commercial (Figure 2.1). Most notably, C&EL fashion products are characterised by their strong cultural embeddedness. Popular characters or entertainment properties often carry symbolic meaning within fan communities and youth subcultures. By incorporating these characters into fashion items, brands are able to tap into rich ecosystems of shared values and collective identities. For younger consumers such as Generation Z, this becomes a powerful tool for cultural expression and social signalling, enabling them to communicate identity, aesthetic preferences, and subcultural affiliations (Lei et al.,

2024). Moreover, C&EL fashion products could evoke consumers' emotional resonance. Unlike conventional co-branding or celebrity endorsements, character licensing leverages the nostalgia, personal identification, and parasocial relationships that consumers develop with fictional characters (Liu, 2023; Reuters, 2025). From a commercial perspective, C&EL fashion products exhibit three key advantages. First, C&EL fashion products have a distinctive appearance: licensed characters bring unique aesthetic and personality elements that help these products stand out in a competitive market (Maguire, 2019). Second, they benefit from a strong fan effect: highly engaged fan communities often act as organic brand ambassadors, promoting products via social media and peer networks (Balboa, 2019; Lema Publishing, 2022). Third, C&EL fashion products have high market recognition. The licensed characters help attracting customers' attention through instant recognition, which increased audience acceptance and enhancing the product perceived value of C&EL fashion products.(Flow Haven 2021; Cheung, 2024).

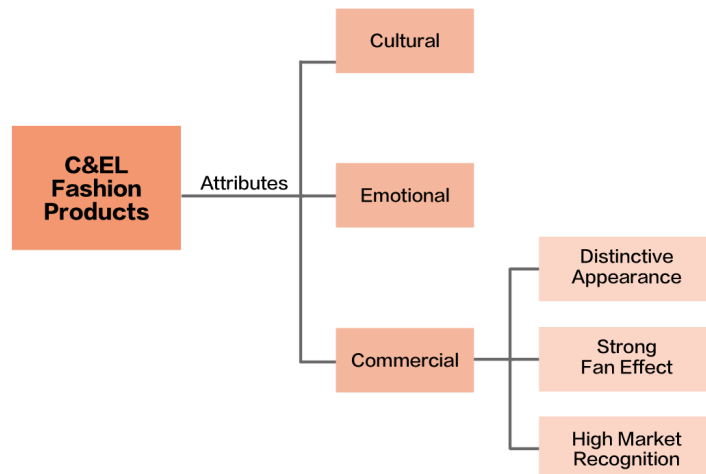


Figure 2.1 - Attributes of Character and Entertainment-Licensed Fashion Products

Source: Created by the author (2025)

In summary, character and entertainment licensing functions as a hybrid strategy that integrates emotional impact, cultural relevance, and commercial viability. By leveraging these multifaceted qualities, brands can foster deeper consumer engagement and drive sustainable market growth.

2.2 Generation Z Consumers

Generation Z, also known as Post-Millennials, Zoomers, or iGen-ers (Katz et al., 2021; Britannica, 2025; Ita, 2025), refers to individuals born between 1997 and 2012, shortly after the World Wide Web became publicly accessible in 1995 (Adecco, 2015). As the first generation to grow up fully immersed in the digital age, Gen Z has benefited from constant connectivity and unrestricted access to information (Katz et al., 2021). Representing approximately 25% of the global population, they have made a profound impact on contemporary culture and the global economy.

According to Schneider and Lee (2022), fashion is the most frequently consumed entertainment category among Gen Z people. Many scholars argue that the Generation Z consumers have some particular behaviors or shopping habits that are different from those of the previous generational consumers (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021). For today's Gen Z consumers, fashion is no longer merely functional; it has become a powerful medium for self-expression and a means of shaping and communicating individual identity (McKinsey & Company, 2023). This perspective is shaped by the growing influence of social media, streaming platforms, and the broader digital culture. According to Deloitte (2024), 97% of Gen Z consumers use social media for shopping inspiration. Having grown up with constant access to online content, Gen Zers are heavily influenced by fandom culture, the demand for personalised experiences, and the aesthetics of social media-driven consumerism (McKinsey & Company, 2023; Priporas et al., 2017). As a result, their purchasing decisions are often emotionally and culturally motivated. Research indicates that Gen Z is more inclined to purchase products that align with their personal interests and social identities—making fashion collaborations that incorporate characters, pop culture, and entertainment licenses especially appealing (Delgado et al., 2023).

2.3 Theoretical Approach

2.3.1 the Theory of Planned Behaviour

The prognostication of consumer behaviour bears a direct correlation with product sales and corporate decision-making processes (Jeong and Jin, 2020). And the estimation of consumer purchase intention is seen as a crucial predictor of consumer behaviour (Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, 2018). Therefore the study of purchase intention is always a critical area of inquiry within the sphere of consumption behaviour.

Zhou et al. think that the consumer purchase intention is established in the complexities of consumer psychology, presenting as the subjective possibility of consumers undertaking a specific purchasing action (2023). The business school of Monash University defined purchase intentions as "the probability that a consumer will purchase a particular product due to the interaction of his or her demand for it, attitude towards it and perceptions of it and of the company that manufactures it" (no date). Both of these definition is developed from Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour model (1991, Figure 2.2) The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) model is works as an explanation model of the relationship between behaviour and intention and how it was formed. The TPB model serves as the fundamental theory of attitude-behaviour relationships within the realm of social psychology. The central factor in the TPB model is the individual's intention to perform a given behaviour, which is influenced by three main factors: attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005). The TPB model propounds that the positivity of an individual's attitude towards a specific behaviour is directly proportional to the strength of their behavioural intention; a more positive subjective norm towards a behaviour correlates with a heightened intensity of behavioural intentions. When both attitude and subjective norms are positively inclined and the perceived behavioural control is robust, the stronger the person's intention to perform the relevant behaviour should be (Ajzen and Cote, 2011).

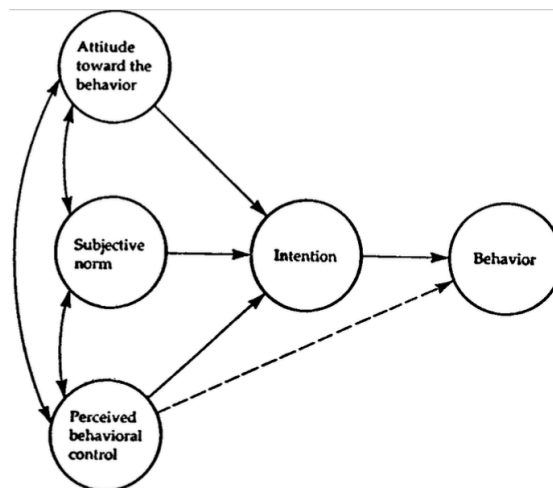


Figure 2.2 - the Theory of Planned Behaviour Model
Source: Ajzen (1991)

Through the analysis and application of the TPB model, Zong, Liu and Gao (2023) found that changes in consumers' attitudes serve as the primary driver of shifts in consumer behaviour. Kimmel (2013) defined attitude is defined as the tendency to react favourably or unfavourably to various objects, people, or situations. Researchers in consumer behaviour have consistently emphasised the pivotal role of attitudes in

shaping and influencing consumer actions (Zhou et al., 2013; Hsu and Lin, 2016; Li et al., 2021). Subjective norm is primarily shaped by the expectations and behaviours of others (Ajzen and Sheikh, 2013), and it is commonly understood as the perceived social pressure to engage in or refrain from a particular action (Kaur and Bhardwaj, 2021). However, subjective norms tend to focus on interpersonal influences from significant individuals, such as parents, rather than broader social groups (Chatzisarantis et al., 2009). Meta-analytic findings suggest that the impact of subjective norms on purchase intentions is generally limited (Armitage and Conner, 2001) and often non-significant, especially within the fashion industry (Lau et al., 2022). Therefore, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing consumer purchase intentions for the C&EL fashion products, this study will primarily examine consumer attitudes towards such products (Figure 2.3, Author, 2025).

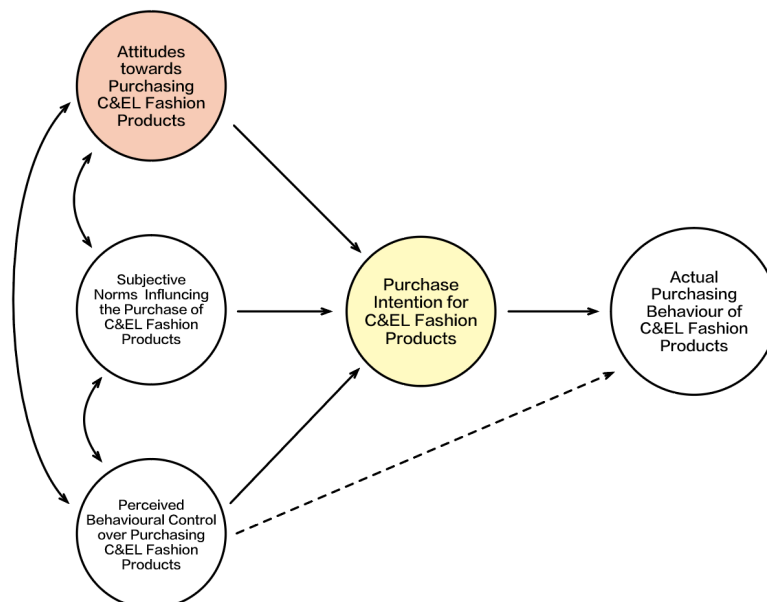


Figure 2.3 - the Theory of Planned Behaviour Model Applied on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour Towards C&EL Fashion Products
Source: Based on Ajzen (1991), modified and created by the author (2025)

2.3.2 the ABC Theory

According to the Consistency Principle, a person's attitudes are not formed in isolation; rather, they are influenced by other related attitudes that he or she already holds to varying degrees (Festinger, 1957). In other words, people have a fundamental tendency to align their attitudes to ensure consistency among their emotions, beliefs, and behaviours as much as possible. Festinger's principle of attitude consistency (1957) is regarded as one of the foundational theories in attitude research. His theory

not only established the basis for the relationship between attitude and behaviour but also profoundly influenced later developments in social psychology, consumer behaviour studies, and marketing strategies (Yahya and Sukmayadi, 2020; Bolia, Jha and Jha, 2016). Based on the consistency principle, in 1960, Rosenberg and Hovland proposed the ABC model of Attitudes which suggested that attitudes consist of three interconnected components (Figure 2.4). By applying the ABC model in fashion industry, many researchers found that the affect and cognition based attitudes served as the key dimensions in shaping consumers' intention, such as online shopping experience (Mathew, 2016), sustainable and ethical fashion (Zhang et al., 2020; Ta, Aarikka-Stenroos and Litovuo, 2022), luxury fashion (Lee, Hur and Watkins, 2018), fast fashion (Cook and Yurchisin, 2017), co-branding (Ho et al., 2019) and social media communication (Mukherjee and Banerjee, 2017; Kim, Chung and Fiore, 2023).

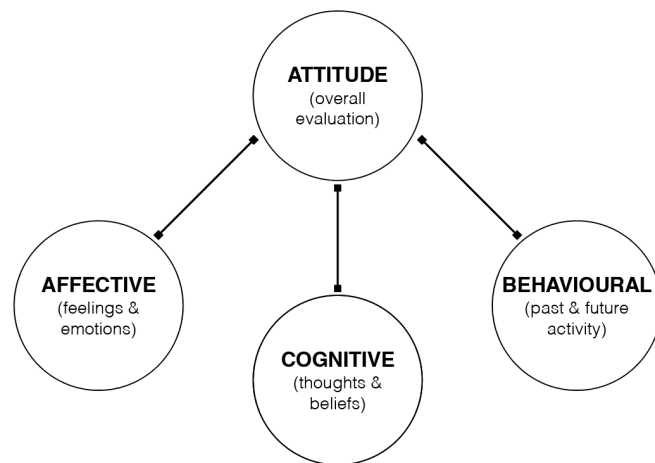


Figure 2.4 - the ABC Model of Attitude

Source: Rosenberg and Hovland (1960); BC Campus (2024)

In the context of the ABC model of attitudes, this study maps affective and cognitive components onto the distinctive C&EL fashion products. As outlined earlier, C&EL products exhibit three defining dimensions: emotional, cultural, and commercial. These dimensions provide a theoretical foundation for understanding how affect- and cognition-based attitudes shape purchase intentions.

Affect-based attitudes refer to consumers' emotional responses, including feelings, moods, and symbolic associations tied to the product (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; van Harreveld, Nohlen and Schneider, 2015). For C&EL fashion products, these affective reactions are particularly salient due to their strong cultural embeddedness and ability to evoke emotional resonance. These products often serve as vehicles for post-subcultural affiliation, allowing Generation Z consumers to express group belonging, aesthetic sensibility, and identity within fandom communities (Lei et al., 2024).

Additionally, the emotional resonance arises from consumers' parasocial bonds and nostalgic attachments to characters (Liu, 2023), while the social sharing value of these products enhances their desirability in social settings and peer-driven platforms. Cognition-based attitudes, on the other hand, relate to the rational evaluation and belief systems consumers hold about a product (Veresova and Mala, 2016; Alam, Hassan and Ogawa, 2023). In the case of C&EL fashion, two key cognitive factors emerge: perceived novelty and collection value. The former reflects how consumers recognize the uniqueness and innovation of character-infused fashion, while the latter captures their belief in the product's potential long-term worth, driven by rarity, character popularity, or brand collaboration (Flow Haven, 2021; Cheung, 2024).

Thus, affect in this context includes post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, and social sharing value, while cognition comprises perceived novelty and collection value. These two dimensions jointly influence consumers' behavioural intentions, aligning with the ABC model's framework and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005), and ultimately guide actual purchase behaviour. The following sections examine each of these five psychological factors in detail to understand how they shape Gen Z consumers' attitudes toward C&EL fashion products.

2.4 Affect-Based Attitude: Post-Subcultural Affiliation

The construct of Post-Subcultural Affiliation refers to a fluid, flexible affiliation to one or multiple post-subcultures, as well as individualised forms of identity expression through relevant subcultural styles in contemporary society (Bennett, 2011). Unlike traditional subcultures, which were often tied to rigid social structures or class-based resistance (Hebdige, 1979), post-subcultural theory recognises the fragmentation, reflexivity, and consumer-driven nature of modern identity construction (Bennett, 1999; Muggleton, 2000). Rather than participating in fixed or oppositional cultural groups, individuals today engage with subcultures as lifestyle choices or temporary affiliations, shaped by personal interests, media consumption, and social networks (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). Such patterns reflect what Giddens (1987) refers to as reflexive individualism, wherein youth increasingly construct identities through self-selected aesthetic affiliations, rather than inherited social categories. Moreover, the rise of social media and digital platforms has further enhanced the flexibility and accessibility of subcultural participation, allowing individuals to affiliate with niche cultural communities across geographic boundaries and social strata (Hodkinson, 2015; Vannini and Williams, 2009).

This evolution is captured in several conceptual frameworks that have redefined how cultural communities are understood in contemporary society. The concept of *neo-tribes*, proposed by Maffesoli (1996), argues that modern subcultural affiliations resemble fluid, temporary social groupings rather than rigid, long-term memberships. These "tribes" are characterised by shared aesthetic preferences or emotional energies, with individuals freely moving in and out of multiple cultural groups. For example, a person might engage with the skateboarding subculture one week and immerse themselves in an electronic music community the next. Such affiliations are less about resistance or ideological loyalty, and more about spontaneous expressions of lifestyle and taste. This has been further explored in youth culture studies that position neo-tribalism as a framework for understanding consumer-driven identities (Bennett, 1999). Similarly, the club culture, as explored by Redhead (1997), highlights how youth cultures such as rave and electronic dance scenes have blurred traditional social boundaries. Club-goers are united less by class, ethnicity, or economic status, and more by a shared passion for music, nightlife, and experiential immersion (Thornton, 1995). Expanding on this idea, Bennett's (1999) theory of *lifestyle cultures* views subcultures as voluntary, stylised lifestyle choices, rather than markers of group-based ideological commitment. For instance, individuals might adopt stylistic elements from punk or goth fashion without subscribing to their historical countercultural ideologies. This perspective aligns with the growing scholarly emphasis on stylistic bricolage in youth identity construction (Hodkinson, 2002). It also accommodates the selective, mix-and-match nature of cultural participation, allowing youth to construct hybrid identities across various style codes. These frameworks together affirm the post-subcultural view that youth identities are not fixed, oppositional, or socially determined. Rather, they are self-curated, expressive, and frequently mediated through consumer culture and digital interaction (Blackman, 2005). The digital environment nowadays is also crucial in sustaining such post-subcultural affiliations, enabling broader fandom engagement and instant interaction (Galbraith and Karlin, 2012). A pertinent example is seen in anime fandoms (Otaku culture), where global fans affiliate with Japanese animation subcultures through cosplay, merchandise, or online communities, without constraints of geography, language, or socio-economic status (Ito, Okabe and Tsuji, 2012; Sandua, 2023). Such affiliations are not lifelong commitments but fluid modes of self-expression, closely aligned with the core concept of post-subcultural affiliation.

This theoretical shift is particularly relevant to Generation Z, a demographic known for its personalised, expressive, and digital-first identity construction. Research by Goorin and Baumgarten (2023) shows that over 80% of Gen Z prefer to define themselves through individual traits, hobbies, and interest-based communities, rather than through traditional categories such as race, nationality, or gender. Schneider and Lee (2022) further found that 82% of Gen Z view fashion as a critical element in expressing identity

—not as a signal of status, but as a medium to convey subcultural alignment and personal narratives. This emphasis on self-expression also drives their preference for customised experiences and personalised products. In fact, 58% of Gen Z consumers are willing to pay a premium for personalised items (Francis and Hoefel, 2018).

Within this context, C&EL fashion products serve as highly effective platforms for post-subcultural expression. The visual symbols and narratives embedded in such products, ranging from Iron Man's Marvel fandom to anime icons like Naruto or Luffy, allow consumers to publicly affiliate with specific interest communities. As Becker (1997) observed in his study of jazz musicians, subcultural insiders often use stylistic markers to distinguish themselves from outsiders; similarly, Gen Z consumers may use licensed fashion to signal cultural alignment within niche or fandom-based subcultures. The ability to selectively adopt, remix, and display these cultural affiliations aligns with the idea that identity in late modernity is no longer fixed, but reflexively curated and performed (Knowles and Sweetman, 2004). These theoretical insights suggest that C&EL fashion may appeal to Gen Z consumers not simply for aesthetic or entertainment reasons, but because it provides a means of performing post-subcultural identities in everyday life. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Post-subcultural affiliation has a positive and significant effect on Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products

2.5 Affect-Based Attitude: Emotional Resonance

Mühlhoff describes resonance as a form of social interaction that evolves through the dynamic interplay and mutual shaping of involved participants (2014). In marketing contexts, emotional resonance has emerged as a powerful tool due to its capacity to influence perception and decision-making by aligning with the emotional states of target audiences (Rigby and Lee, 2024). Miller (2015) defines resonance as "an experience of belonging, intimacy, affinity, togetherness, and mutual understanding." When consumers engage with narratives through books, comics, films, and television, they often develop profound emotional bonds with characters, shaped by the emotional trajectories of these stories (Keen, 2024; Rühlemann, 2022). Characters featured on licensed products can evoke these emotional connections, allowing consumers to express their affection and identity through material forms. Remarkably, as early as ancient China, an idiom already emerged to capture this phenomenon of emotional transference — "爱屋及乌" (ài wū jí wū), literally meaning "to love someone so much

that one even cherishes the crow on their roof." Originating from *Shangshu* (Editorial Committee and Compilation Committee of Cihai, 1999) and commonly translated into English as "Love me, love my dog," the phrase reflects how emotional attachment toward a figure can extend to anything associated with them. In the context of contemporary consumer culture, it similarly explains how emotional resonance with fictional characters can drive affection and demand for related merchandise. As illustrated in the case study of UNIQLO x Sanrio (see Appendix 7.4), many consumers reported that they purchased fashion items primarily because they featured beloved characters. Essentially, character-based licensing activates emotional resonance, which in turn translates into stronger purchase intentions.

Many researchers have argued that emotional ties to characters possess substantial marketing potential. For instance, Mitchell suggests that one of the primary motivations behind consumers' purchases of C&EL fashion products is their perceived emotional connection with the characters, often seeing reflections of themselves in them (2024). This aligns with Sirgy's (1982) self-concept theory, which posits that consumers are more likely to engage with products that reinforce their identity. Hong (2019) partially supported this by showing that consumers' perceived self-congruity and identification with licensed characters significantly enhanced their perceived consumer value of C&EL fashion products. In turn, perceived value acted as a mediator, increasing consumers' willingness to pay a premium. In an experimental setting, Hong found that 86.3% of participants were willing to pay more—sometimes nearly double—for a character-themed T-shirt compared to a plain one.

Building on this, Hong also explored the role of character familiarity, uncovering a significant negative effect on perceived consumer value. She speculated that excessive familiarity may reduce novelty or perceived rarity, thereby diluting emotional excitement and perceived worth. However, contrasting findings were reported by Choi and Kim (2018), who found that familiarity had no direct impact on consumer purchasing behaviour. This discrepancy may stem from methodological differences: Hong's study measured value perception in a controlled, task-based environment, while Choi and Kim employed a real-world behavioural survey. It is also plausible that familiarity influences early-stage perceptions (e.g., value) without necessarily affecting final behavioural outcomes such as purchase intention. These contrasting findings underscore the need for a more nuanced understanding of how emotional attachment, exposure, and perceived scarcity intersect within the licensed fashion product landscape—particularly for Gen Z consumers who are both emotionally engaged and novelty-sensitive.

Apart from character-based resonance, emotional connection can also be evoked by temporal associations such as nostalgia. The concept of “newstalgia” has gained traction among Gen Z consumers, who seek contemporary reinterpretations of nostalgic media as a way to reconnect with perceived simpler times (Licensing International, 2024). Solomon (2019) argues that sensory cues from the environment can trigger vivid internal memories. The Oxford English Dictionary (2025) defines nostalgia as “an acute longing for familiar surroundings”, which is often associated with warmth and emotional comfort (Hepper et al., 2012; Team MindPeers, 2023). Researchers suggested that such longing may result in an urgency to reconnect with the past, thereby motivating purchases that symbolise or reproduce those emotions (Chrostowska, 2010; Weingarten and Wei, 2023). Studies by Sedikides et al. (2014) and Ju et al. (2016) also demonstrate that nostalgia-based marketing can positively influence consumer purchase intentions. In this context, C&EL fashion products embedded with nostalgic elements serve as emotional transporters, bringing consumers back to treasured moments in their personal histories. In some instances, this resonance may outweigh other rational factors such as price or functionality (Team MindPeers, 2023).

Based on the theoretical framework discussed above, the following hypothesis is proposed to examine the influence of emotional resonance on Gen Z consumers’ purchase intentions:

H2: Emotional resonance has a positive and significant effect on Gen Z consumers’ purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.

2.6 Affect-Based Attitude: Social Sharing Value

Social Sharing Value refers to the personal value, social recognition, and societal influence that consumers gain when sharing information, experiences, or content on social platforms or within communities (Simon and Tossan, 2018; Qian et al., 2022), which is in line with the multi-dimensional theory of media satisfaction (Rubin, 2008). This includes activities such as asking a question and receiving a response, publishing a blog post and getting comments or likes, or receiving emotional support through encouragement messages (Oh, Ozkaya and LaRose, 2014).

Young consumers deem the maintenance of friendship networks significant, like fostering social support among each other (Décieux, Heinen and Willems, 2019). Hence, social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram are exerting crucial roles as virtual communication networks (Fernandes and Castro, 2020). Gen Z like to share

experiences, communicate, write and read online reviews or blog posts (Pauliene and Sedneva, 2019). Compared to Millennials and Gen X, Gen Z consumers are more prone to make purchases via mobile apps, social media, and bloggers (Williams and Page, 2011). Their daily activities have been profoundly impacted by digital technologies and are highly influenced by social media and social media comments (Caraka et al., 2022; CivicScience, 2016). Through extensive social interactions, Gen Z are highly involved in sharing their consumption experience and emotions regarding their preferred products and favourite brands (Lau et al., 2022). Their purchasing decisions are frequently influenced by trends, uniqueness, and the potential for social engagement. Gen Z are seeking products that not only demonstrate their fashion preferences but also enable them to stand out in their social circles or keep up with the latest trend (Francombe, 2024).

Social shared value in C&EL fashion products refers to the potential value embedded in the product itself due to brand and character awareness, product uniqueness, relevant social media trends, and fan community engagement. As the increasing popular trend of Anime/Manga and video games, C&EL fashion products, by their very nature, offer a distinct visual appeal and cultural significance that make them particularly attractive for social sharing (BrandTrends, 2024). This kind of products often features well-loved characters from movies, TV shows, and video games, provide an immediate sense of recognition and relatability, making them highly shareable (Bryant, 2014; Haryanto, Komariah and Danial, 2021). The uniqueness of these products, combined with their connection to popular entertainment franchises, increases their desirability and likelihood of being showcased online (Haryanto et al., 2021). Influencers and everyday consumers alike contribute to the promotion of these products by posting reviews, unboxing videos, and styling tips, further amplifying their reach and reinforcing their popularity and potential purchase intentions (Dinh and Lee, 2024; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). This social sharing value, in turn, attracts greater consumer interest and encourages further purchases, creating a cycle of demand driven by social influence.

The social sharing value of C&EL fashion products also fulfils Gen Z's inherent desire for social connection. For this generation, social interaction extends beyond face-to-face conversations to include online discussions, shared interests, and digital communities (Décieux et al., 2019). C&EL fashion items, inspired by beloved characters and franchises, serve as common ground for individuals to bond over shared passions. By wearing and discussing these products, Gen Z consumers create a sense of belonging and camaraderie within their peer groups (Appendix 7.4). Whether through fan communities, comment sections, or hashtag trends, C&EL fashion product provide Gen Z an opportunity of social engagement, strengthen their social

relationship with friends or within virtual community. Therefore, the authors put forward the following hypothesis:

H3: Social sharing value has a positive and significant impact on Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.

2.7 Cognition-Based Attitude: Perceived Novelty

In the field of cognitive psychology, novelty serves as a precursor of attention, emotion, memory, and behaviour (Skavronskaya, Moyle and Scott, 2020). Litman and Jimerson (2004) and Sung et al. (2016) proposed that curiosity is an inherent trait that predisposes humans to search for new and captivating stimuli. Acquiring new information is inherently rewarding as it resolves feelings of uncertainty and fulfils the desire for novelty (Litman 2005; Litman 2010). The subjective perception of product novelty is highly analogous to the novelty assessment process explored in psychology (Sung et al., 2016). According to the Novelty Categorisation Theory (Förster, Marguc and Gillebaart, 2010), a stimulus or an event is considered novel if it does not align with one's existing mental categories. Thus, novelty is a subjective interpretation that a stimulus conflicts with an expectation, is something not previously encountered, or lacks familiarity. From the psychological perspective, novelty is simply the consumer's perception or interpretation that a product is new, irrespective of its features. Although the majority of the existing literature has regarded novelty as an objective attribute of a product (Rubera and Kirca, 2012; Garcia and Calantone, 2002), Moreau, Lehmann and Markman defined perceived novelty as an attribute that depends on the consumer's perception and interpretation, more precisely, "the degree to which the product is perceived as being different from an existing product" (2001).

This new approach enables market researchers to conduct more explicit observations of the significant benefits (Alexander, Lynch and Wang, 2008), or alterations in consumption patterns (Olshavsky and Spreng, 1996) offered by the concept of "novelty". The findings of Berlyne's study on novelty, complexity and hedonic value suggest that both pleasantness and interestingness will rise along with novelty (1970). On this foundation, through further investigations, researchers discovered that only stimuli that were subjectively regarded as novel by consumers could arouse interest (Silvia, 2005; Turner and Silvia, 2006). Hence, to stimulate consumer interest, the novelty has to be designed to capture visual attention (Wolfe and Horowitz, 2004). Nevertheless, Consumers also demonstrate a paradoxical inclination to prefer both familiarity and novelty (Moorman et al., 2004). For example, consumers tend to pursue both consistency (i.e., familiar options) and variety (i.e., novel options) (McAlister and

Pessemier, 1982; Van Trijp, Hoyer and Inman, 1996). The research of Sung, Vanman and Hartley indicated that interest acts as an affective motivation underlying people's tendency to favour novelty (2019). They found that a product perceived or claimed to be new elicited consumers' interest which, in turn, enhanced their purchase intention and product evaluation, even when the novel product was objectively the same as its comparison.

C&EL fashion products usually integrate two or more separate brands or cultural elements to generate distinctive and innovative products in order to meet the novelty-seeking demands of Gen Z consumers (Park and Park, 2007). As a generation brought up in the digital era, they have little interest in traditional and outmoded things, and the licensing products typically present novel designs and elements that can draw their attention (Cordero, 2023). The renewal and creative content of C&EL fashion products arise from the continuous renewal of cultural life and the emergence of new popular characters (IOWA University Libraries, 2009). Thus, characters and entertainment licensed products can constantly offer consumers a sense of "novelty". Therefore, the authors put forward the following hypothesis:

H4: Perceived novelty has a positive and significant impact on Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.

2.8 Cognition-Based Attitude: Collection Value

The concept of collection value refers to the perceived worth consumers assign to an item based on its uniqueness, scarcity, emotional attachment, or potential for future value (Belk, 1995; Chen, 2009; Phan and Hoai, 2025). Unlike traditional product value, which is often tied to functionality or price, collection value is driven by symbolic significance and long-term emotional or social satisfaction. According to Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry (1989), the act of collecting involves "investing objects with sacred meaning," often as a way of constructing identity and personal narratives. Pearce (1994) and Slater (2001) further indicated that collecting, as a culturally and psychologically embedded consumer practice, is shaped by desires for control, memory preservation, and symbolic association.

In marketing contexts, especially within pop culture, fashion, and entertainment domains, the collection value inherent in character and entertainment licensed products plays a crucial role in shaping Generation Z consumers' purchase intentions (Lei et al., 2024). This demographic, noted for its strong drive toward self-expression and identity curation, often perceives licensed merchandise as meaningful collectibles that hold

both personal and social value. Collecting allows individuals to construct a unique and symbolic assemblage of items that reflect their passions, thereby fulfilling a psychological need for control, completeness, and meaning (Cao, Brucks and Reimann, 2024; Lee, Brennan and Wyllie, 2022). Beyond internal satisfaction, scarcity and exclusivity significantly enhance the appeal of such items. Limited-edition releases create a sense of urgency and competitiveness that heightens their perceived value and spurs immediate consumption (Jang et al., 2015). Media franchises like Pokémon, Disney Princesses, or Marvel superheroes frequently collaborate with fashion brands to release limited-edition products targeted at collectors and superfans (Lee et al., 2022). Research also shows that a “collection mindset” can reduce consumers’ price sensitivity—purchasing becomes less about cost and more about completing a symbolic set (Ho and Wyer, 2024). The social dimension of collecting is equally influential. Generation Z frequently shares their collections on social media, using them to signal group belonging and cultural affiliation. This visibility fosters social validation and intensifies peer influence, increasing product desirability. For instance, the Linabell phenomenon at Shanghai Disneyland, in which fans repeatedly return solely for Linabell-licensed merchandise, illustrates how character licensed products transcend their functional value and become affective anchors imbued with strong collection value (Reuters, 2025).

Given the strong role of psychological fulfilment, social connectivity, and perceived exclusivity, it is essential to understand how collectible value drives purchase decisions among Gen Z consumers in the character and entertainment licensing context. This study therefore proposes the following hypothesis:

H5: Collection value has a positive and significant impact on Gen Z consumers’ purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.

2.9 Hypotheses List

Based on the theoretical framework and literature reviewed in previous sections, five key psychological factors—post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, social sharing value, perceived novelty, and collection value—have been identified as potential antecedents of Gen Z consumers’ purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products. Five hypotheses have been developed across Sections 2.4 to 2.8. The following list presents these hypotheses in a consolidated format to provide a clear overview of the proposed relationships to be tested in subsequent empirical analysis (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 - Hypotheses List

H1: Post-subcultural affiliation has a positive and significant effect on Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products
H2: Emotional resonance has a positive and significant effect on Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.
H3: Social sharing value has a positive and significant impact on Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.
H4: Perceived novelty has a positive and significant impact on Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.
H5: Collection value has a positive and significant impact on Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products.

Source: Created by the author (2025)

2.6 Proposed Conceptual Model

Based on the literature reviewed and the hypotheses developed in Sections 2.4 to 2.9, the following conceptual model illustrates the proposed relationships between psychological factors and Gen Z consumers' purchasing intentions towards character and entertainment-licensed fashion products. As shown in Figure 2.5, the model categorises the five influencing variables into two psychological domains: affect-based factors (including post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, and social sharing value) and cognition-based factors (including perceived novelty and collection value, as conceptually derived from the ABC model of attitudes; Rosenberg and Hovland, 1960). Each factor is hypothesised to have a positive and significant effect on purchasing intention, as summarised in hypotheses H1 through H5.

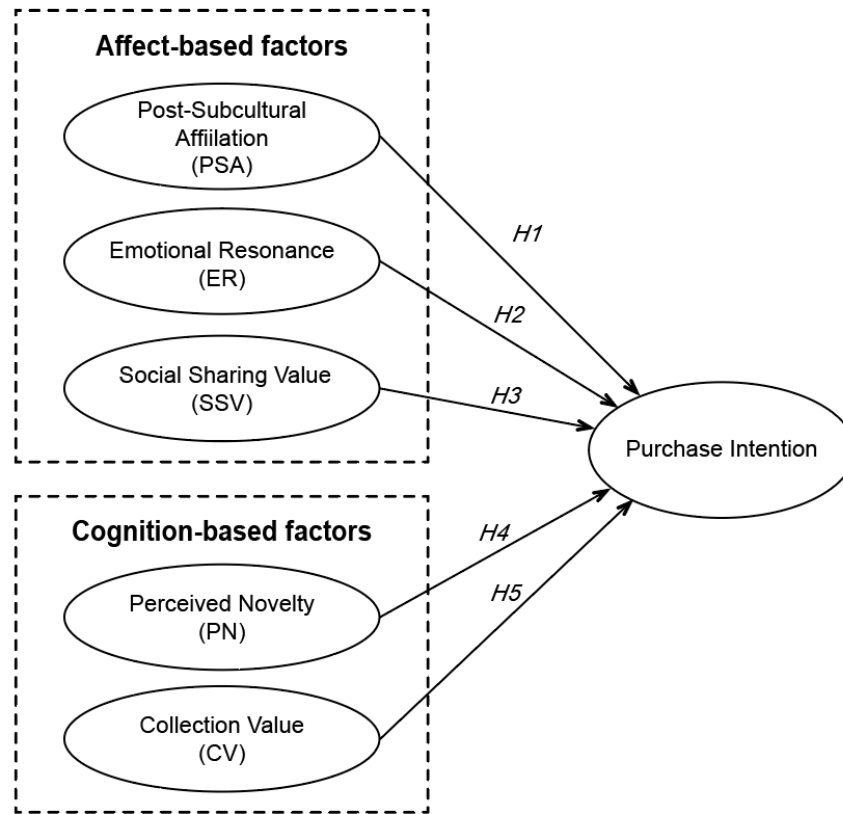


Figure 2.5 - Proposed Conceptual Model of Factors Influencing Gen Z Consumers' Purchase Intentions Towards C&EL Fashion Products
Source: Created by the author (2025)

Chapter Three

RESEARCH DESIGN

3. Research Design

Building on the literature review in Chapter 2, this chapter presents the research design and methodology used to examine key factors influencing Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards C&EL fashion products. Five independent variables are investigated: post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, social sharing value, perceived novelty, and collection value. The study adopts a theoretical foundation informed by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and the ABC model of attitudes (Rosenberg and Hovland, 1960). This chapter supports research objective (3) outlined in Chapter 1 by providing an empirical validation of the proposed conceptual model. An overview of the methodological framework is presented in Figure 3.1, adapted from Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill's (2023) research onion model.

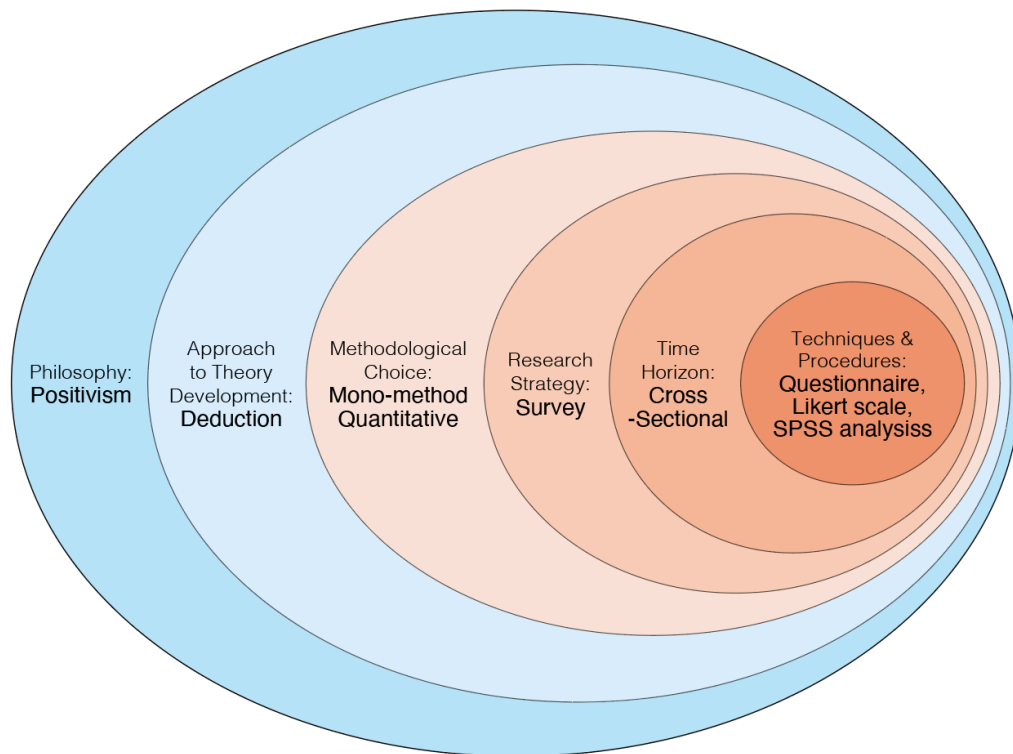


Figure 3.1 - Methodological Framework of the Present Study, Adapted From Saunders et al.'s (2023) Research Onion Model

Source: Adapted from Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2023)

3.1 Research Design

3.1.1 Research Purpose and Design Type

This study adopts an explanatory research design, as it aims to investigate the relationship between consumer attitudes towards character and entertainment licensed fashion products and their purchase intention. According to Saunders et al. (2023), explanatory research is appropriate when the goal is to examine causal or correlational relationships between predefined variables, particularly in studies guided by theoretical models.

3.1.2 Epistemological Position

In academic research, epistemology refers to the nature and validation of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2023). This study adopts a positivist epistemological stance, which assumes that valid knowledge arises from objective observation and quantifiable data. Positivism focuses on identifying generalisable patterns and causal relationships through structured tools such as surveys (Dorokhova et al., 2024; Möller and Halinen, 2022). This study seeks to test statistically significant relationships between consumer attitudes towards C&EL fashion products and purchase intention, which aligns with the positivist emphasis on hypothesis testing and statistical analysis (Saunders et al., 2023). From an axiological perspective, the study also reflects positivism's value-neutral stance. The researcher remains detached from the data to ensure objectivity and empirical rigour (Lim, 2023). Finally, the study aligns with the functionalist paradigm (Burrell and Morgan, 1982), which supports structured, outcome-oriented inquiry. Given its aim to generate actionable insights for brand managers, this philosophical position provides a coherent foundation.

3.1.3 Research Approach and Design

This study adopts a deductive research approach, consistent with positivist philosophy, as it seeks to test a conceptual model derived from the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and the ABC model of attitudes (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Deduction emphasises hypothesis testing, structured design, and the operationalisation of theory into measurable variables (Bell, Harley and Bryman, 2022). A mono-method quantitative strategy was employed, using a structured questionnaire to collect data from Gen Z consumers (Saunders et al., 2023). The survey used a 7-point Likert scale to assess five independent variables—post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, social sharing value, perceived novelty, and collection value—and one dependent

variable, purchase intention (Creswell and Creswell, 2022). The 7-point scale was chosen for its greater sensitivity and variance compared to the 5-point alternative, enhancing response accuracy in attitude research (Finstad, 2010). Given the time constraints of the study, a cross-sectional time horizon was selected to capture consumer behaviour at a single point in time (Hendijani and Saeidi Saei, 2024; Saunders et al., 2019). The collected data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 30.0.0.0) to examine the hypothesised relationships between variables.

3.2 Research Methods

3.2.1 Questionnaire Design

To examine the antecedents of Gen Z consumers' purchase intentions towards C&EL fashion products, a structured, self-administered questionnaire was designed and distributed via Qualtrics. It measured five independent variables—post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, social sharing value, perceived novelty, and collection value—and one dependent variable, purchase intention. Items were grouped by construct and assessed using a consistent 7-point Likert scale from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (7), a widely accepted format for capturing attitudinal and psychological variables (Likert, 1932; Brace, 2013). The inclusion of a neutral midpoint also reduces response bias and enhances comparability (Friedman and Amoo, 1999).

3.2.1.1 Personalised Character and Entertainment Selection Mechanism

This study incorporated a personalised character selection mechanism at the start of the questionnaire to enhance contextual relevance and emotional engagement. Participants selected a favourite character or entertainment IP from a curated list of 19 popular franchises, spanning classics like Pokémon, Harry Potter, and One Piece, as well as newer phenomena such as Genshin Impact, Squid Game, and Demon Slayer. Each option included an iconic image to heighten recognition and emotional salience. Participants could also input their own preferred IP, ensuring inclusivity and broad identification. This design aligns with research showing that self-relevant stimuli enhance attention, memory, and emotional intensity in attitude surveys (Schlegel et al., 2011; Van der Crujisen et al., 2019).

To ensure alignment between responses and the chosen IP, Qualtrics' piped text function dynamically inserted the selected name into each item. For example, rather than “Wearing licensed fashion products makes me feel emotionally immersed,”

participants would see “Wearing Genshin Impact-licensed fashion products...”. The IP name and image were also reinserted before each construct section to serve as visual and cognitive anchors, reducing conceptual drift in longer surveys (Krosnick, 1991) and enhancing engagement via identity-based associations. This visual priming approach improves ecological validity and immersion (Cetnarski et al., 2014), while ensuring within-subject standardisation by anchoring all responses in a personally salient concept, thus increasing measurement precision and clarity.

3.2.1.2 Measurement Items

Measurement items were adapted from previously validated scales and refined to reflect the specific context of character and entertainment-licensed (C&EL) fashion products. Each construct was operationalised based on established theoretical definitions and psychometric research to ensure conceptual clarity and validity.

Post-subcultural affiliation was measured using five items drawn from Lamerichs (2011), Muggleton (2000), and Escurignan (2025), capturing fan identity, subcultural belonging, and situational engagement. Emotional resonance comprised four items adapted from Holbrook and Schindler (2003), Vrtana and Krizanova (2023), and Karnjanapoomi (2022), measuring nostalgic affect, memory activation, and emotional bonding with characters. Social sharing value was assessed through four items based on Dessart (2017), Voorveld (2019), Ashley and Tuten (2015), and Perez-Vega et al. (2018), reflecting peer interaction, content exposure, and perceived social media appeal. Perceived novelty included four items adapted from Frassetto, Ieva and Mollá-Descals (2024), Radford and Bloch (2011), Franke and Schreier (2008), and Dahl, White and Solomon (2009), addressing product uniqueness, surprise, and creativity. Collection value was measured with four items from Hagtvedt and Patrick (2008), Keinan and Kivetz (2011), Spaid and Matthes (2021), and Cavender and Hume (2018), covering symbolic collectibility, emotional fulfilment, and perceived future worth. Purchase intention was captured using three items adapted from Ajzen (1991), Escurignan (2025), Hasan, Zahid and Qayyum (2024), and Rajamma and Neeley (2008), addressing conditional, time-bound, and preference-based intentions.

A complete summary of constructs, measurement dimension, items, SPSS codes, and sources is provided in Table 3.1 to ensure replicability and transparency.

Data Requirement Table

All measurement items were dynamically personalised via Qualtrics piped text. The placeholder «Character/IP» was automatically replaced with each respondent's selected entertainment property.						
Variable	Computed Variable Code	SPSS Code	Measurement Dimension	Items Description	Adapted From	Coding Instructions
Post-Subculture Affiliation	PSA	PSA_01	Fandom Identity	I think purchasing or wearing «Character/IP»-licensed fashion products represents my fandom identity for «Character/IP».	Lamerichs, N. (2011)	1-7: Strongly Disagree - Strongly Agree
		PSA_02	Post-Subcultural Belonging	I feel a sense of belonging to the post-subculture that «Character/IP»-licensed fashion products represent.	Lamerichs, N. (2011); Muggleton, D. (2000)	
		PSA_03	Contextual Inclination	In specific cultural settings (e.g., anime/film conventions, theme parks), I am more inclined to purchase or wear «Character/IP»-licensed fashion products.	Escurigñan, J. (2025).	
		PSA_04	Perceived Immersion	Engaging with «Character/IP»-licensed fashion products makes me feel emotionally immersed in the character's world.	Lamerichs, N. (2011)	
		PSA_05	Shared Group Perception	When I see others wearing «Character/IP»-licensed fashion products, I feel like we are part of the same post-subcultural group.	Escurigñan, J. (2025).	
Emotional Resonance	ER	ER_01	Direct Emotional Resonance	Seeing «character/IP»-licensed fashion products evokes a deep emotional resonance in me.	Vrtana and Krizanova (2023)	1-7: Strongly Disagree - Strongly Agree
		ER_02	Nostalgia	When I see «character/IP»-licensed fashion products, I feel nostalgic.	Holbrook and Schindler (2003).	
		ER_03	Memory Activation	Seeing «character/IP»-licensed fashion products triggers personal memories.	Holbrook and Schindler (2003).	
		ER_04	Perceived Connection	Wearing «character/IP»-licensed fashion products makes me feel emotionally connected.	Karnjanapoomi (2022)	
Social Sharing Value	SSV	SSV_01	Social Discussion	I often discuss «character/IP»-licensed fashion products with others on social media or in person (e.g., in forums, fan groups, through Twitter hashtags, or casual conversations).	Dessart (2017)	1-7: Strongly Disagree - Strongly Agree
		SSV_02	Exposure to Content	I often see content or marketing campaigns related to «character/IP»-licensed fashion products on social media.	Voorveld (2019)	

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Table 3.1 - Data Requirement Table (Continued)

Perceived Novelty	PN	SSV_03	Engagement Interest	Content related to «character/IP»-licensed fashion products on social media captures my interest and makes me want to engage (e.g., like, comment, or share).	Ashley and Tuten (2015)	1-7: Strongly Disagree - Strongly Agree
		SSV_04	Attractiveness in Social Networks	I think content related to «character/IP»-licensed fashion products is attention-grabbing on social media.	Perez-Vega et al. (2018)	
		PN_01	Perceived Novelty	I think «character/IP»-licensed fashion product is novel.	Frasquet, Ieva and Molla-Descals (2024)	
		PN_02	Design Uniqueness	I think «character/IP»-licensed fashion product has a unique design that differentiates it from others in the market.	Radford and Bloch (2011); Franke and Schreier (2008)	
Collection Value	CV	PN_03	Sense of Surprise	«character/IP»-licensed fashion products give me the sense of surprise.	Dahl, White and Solomon (2009)	1-7: Strongly Disagree - Strongly Agree
		PN_04	Creative Elements	I think «character/IP»-licensed fashion products bring creative elements to fashion design.	Hagtvedt and Patrick (2008)	
		CV_01	Perceived Collectibility	I consider «character/IP»-licensed fashion products as valuable collectibles.	Hagtvedt and Patrick (2008)	
		CV_02	Sense of Achievement	Collecting «character/IP»-licensed fashion products gives me a sense of achievement.	Keinan and Kivetz (2011)	
Purchase Intention	PI	CV_03	Sense of Fulfillment	Owning «character/IP»-licensed fashion products gives me a sense of fulfillment.	Spaid and Matthes (2021)	1-7: Strongly Disagree - Strongly Agree
		CV_04	Perceived Investment Value	I think the price of «character/IP»-licensed fashion products are likely to appreciate over time.	Cavender and Hume (2018)	
		PI_01	Conditional Intention	If «character/IP»-licensed fashion products are available, accessible, and affordable to me, I am likely to buy them.	Ajzen (1991); Escurignan (2025)	
		PI_02	Time-Bound intention	I intend to purchase «character/IP»-licensed fashion products in the next six months.	Hasan, Zahid and Qayyum (2024)	
		PI_03	Preference-Based Intention	Within the same fashion product category, I prefer to buy «character/IP»-licensed products rather than non-licensed ones.	Rajamma and Neeley (2008)	

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

3.2.2 *Piloting*

Pilot testing is a key stage in questionnaire design, helping to identify ambiguities and improve clarity before full data collection (Fink, 2016; Bell and Waters, 2018). In line with Fink's (2016) recommendation, the initial version of the survey was piloted with 15 participants, all of whom completed the questionnaire. Nine provided useful feedback on both strengths and areas needing improvement.

One key issue was the limited scope of selectable options when asking respondents to identify their favourite character or entertainment. Several participants noted that none of the 16 pre-listed choices suited their preferences. In response, four new options across two additional IP categories were introduced, along with a personalised input field that allowed respondents to type in their own answer. This adjustment not only expanded the selection range but also improved the questionnaire's inclusivity and contextual relevance—thereby enhancing its overall validity (Saunders et al., 2019). Another concern was that the initial descriptions of the influencing factors were overly lengthy and academic in tone, which negatively affected readability and user experience. To address this, the explanations were shortened, technical terminology simplified, and academic citations removed—making them clearer and more accessible to general respondents. Full details of the changes are presented in Appendix 7.7.

Following revisions, a second pilot confirmed the improved version was clearer and quicker to complete (approx. 4–5 minutes). All pilot responses were excluded from the final dataset, and participants were not invited to retake the survey, ensuring data integrity (Oppenheim, 1992; Bell and Waters, 2018). The final questionnaire is included in Appendix 7.8.

3.2.3 *Sampling Strategy*

This study used a non-probability sampling strategy through a self-administered online questionnaire on Qualtrics. While non-probability sampling limits generalisability, it is commonly employed in social research where a full sampling frame is unavailable (Saunders et al., 2019). Given the absence of a definable list of Gen Z consumers engaging with entertainment IPs, and the study's resource constraints, probability sampling was not feasible (Creswell and Creswell, 2022). This study adopted a mixed sampling approach combining purposive, volunteer, and convenience techniques. Purposive outreach targeted relevant fan communities across platforms such as Facebook, Reddit, Weibo, and WeChat (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019), while volunteer sampling occurred via public survey links (Saunders et al., 2019). Offline,

participants were also recruited through convenience sampling in libraries and fashion brand stores (Berenson et al., 2012). Screening questions were used to identify Gen Z respondents (aged 18–27), based on Williams et al.'s (2010) generational cohort definitions. Gender imbalances were addressed mid-collection by tailoring survey promotion to appeal to underrepresented groups (Bryman and Bell, 2011). These strategies ensured relevance, engagement, and ecological validity while recognising the limits of non-random sampling (Andres, 2012). To support participant recruitment, digital posters of both English and Chinese version were designed and disseminated through social media platforms and fan communities (Appendix 7.13).

3.2.4 *Data Analysis*

To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, this study conduct data cleaning, reliability testing and validity test (Creswell and Creswell, 2022; Bell et al., 2019). The analysis process involved two stages. First, descriptive statistics were conducted to summarise the key characteristics of the sample, including measures such as means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions. This provided an overview of respondents' demographic information and their attitudes towards character and entertainment licensed fashion products. Second, multiple linear regression analysis was performed to test the hypothesised relationships between the five independent variables—post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, social sharing value, perceived novelty, and collectible value—and the dependent variable, purchase intention. This statistical method was selected due to its suitability for assessing the strength and direction of influence of multiple predictors on a single outcome variable (Creswell and Creswell, 2022).

3.2.5 *Reliability*

Reliability refers to the consistency of research findings and the extent to which a measurement yields similar results under consistent conditions (Andres, 2012). To minimise threats such as researcher bias and participant error, a self-administered online questionnaire was used, reducing misinterpretation and social desirability bias (Saunders et al., 2023). Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which evaluates whether items measuring the same construct produce similar scores (Fink, 2016). Alpha values between 0.70 and 0.95 are considered acceptable, with higher values potentially indicating redundancy (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). In this study, all six multi-item constructs—Post-subcultural Affiliation, Emotional Resonance, Social Sharing Value, Perceived Novelty, Collection Value, and Purchase Intention—

produced alpha values above 0.70, confirming acceptable reliability. Analysis was conducted in SPSS v30.0, with detailed results shown in Appendix 7.12. As all scales met reliability standards, construct scores were calculated as item means for subsequent regression analysis (Field, 2009), supporting the stability and robustness of the measurements (Saunders et al., 2023).

3.2.6 *Validity*

Validity refers to the appropriateness of the measures, the accuracy of results, and the generalisability of findings (Saunders et al., 2019). In this study, multiple forms of validity were addressed. Content validity was ensured by adapting items from previously validated scales and confirming their theoretical alignment with each construct. Construct validity was supported by grounding all six constructs in existing literature and making only minor contextual adjustments (Creswell and Creswell, 2022). Face validity was improved through a pilot test with Gen Z participants, with minor revisions made based on feedback (Saunders et al., 2012). Visual elements such as character images were included to aid comprehension. To enhance ecological validity, participants selected a preferred IP, which was piped into each item to ensure relevance. External validity was addressed through Gen Z-focused sampling that reflected the target demographic (Gill and Johnson, 2010).

3.3 **Research Ethics**

This study adhered to the University of the Arts London Code of Practice on Research Ethics (UAL, 2017), with particular attention to informed consent, anonymity, and participant welfare. At the start of the survey, participants were informed of the study's purpose and eligibility criteria (18+). They were notified that withdrawal was possible at any time prior to submission by closing the browser, and that incomplete responses would not be recorded. Before proceeding, participants signed an electronic consent form confirming informed and voluntary participation. No personally identifiable information was collected, and demographic questions were designed with inclusivity in mind, offering "prefer not to say" and open "other" options.

The researcher's contact email was provided at both the beginning and end of the questionnaire for queries (see Appendix 7.5), supporting transparency and accessibility in line with ethical standards (Saunders et al., 2019). These procedures ensured full compliance with UAL's (2017) ethical guidelines and protected participant rights throughout the study.

Chapter Four

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1 General Survey Results

4.1.1 Data Recoding

To enable parametric analyses, all Likert-scale items were recoded numerically in SPSS (1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree; see Table 4.1). While Likert items are ordinal by design, many scholars argue that composite Likert scales can be treated as interval-level when properly constructed (Boone and Boone, 2012; Harpe, 2015), especially when using five or more categories and when data approximate normality. Parametric tests are also robust to minor violations of interval assumptions in larger samples (Norman and Streiner, 2014). This study therefore used parametric methods after verifying assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance. A 7-point scale was chosen for its increased sensitivity and reliability in attitude research (Preston and Colman, 2000), and all analyses adopted a 95% confidence level for statistical inference.

Table 4.1 Recoded Scales

Label	Value
Strongly Agree	7
Agree	6
Somewhat Agree	5
Neutral	4
Somewhat Disagree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.1.2 Sample Size

Ensuring sufficient sample size is essential for producing valid and generalisable results in multiple regression. Green (1991) suggests $50 + 8k$ participants (where k is the number of predictors) to test model fit, and $104 + k$ to assess individual predictors—requiring at least 90 and 109 participants, respectively, for this study's five predictors. Supporting this, Cohen (1992) noted that detecting a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$) with 80% power at $\alpha = 0.05$ typically requires 92–107 participants. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) offer similar benchmarks, recommending $N > 50 + 8m$ for model testing and $N >$

100 + m for predictor-level inference under standard assumptions. Accordingly, a minimum of 109 responses was required for this study. A total of 231 responses were collected, of which 29 were excluded for falling outside the Gen Z age range (18–27). The final valid sample of 202 participants exceeds all recommended thresholds and is deemed sufficient for multiple regression analysis.

4.1.3 Demographics

As shown in Figure 4.1, the gender distribution of all valid response was relatively balanced: 51% female (n = 103), 48% male (n = 96), and 1% (n = 3) undisclosed. Although slightly more females participated, this aligns with patterns in fashion-related research where females often show higher engagement (Apetrei et al., 2024).

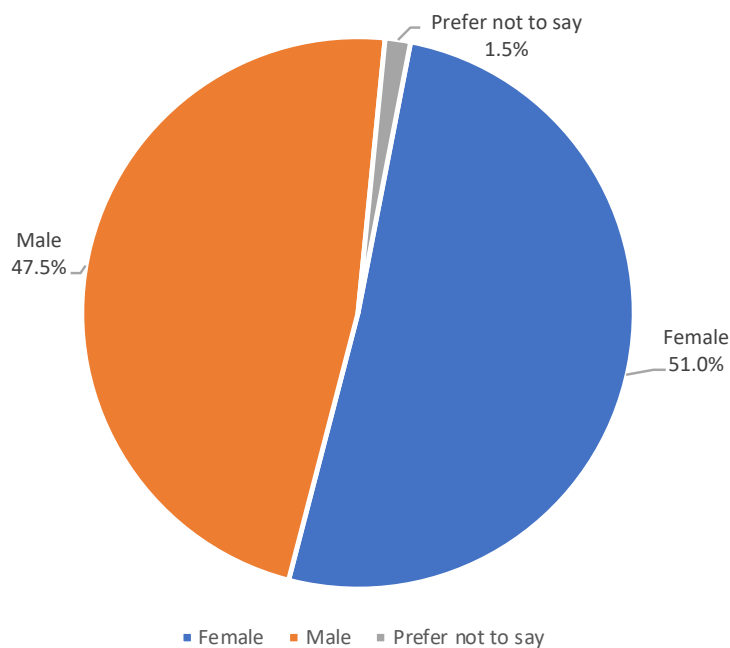


Figure 4.1 - Percentage Distribution of Gender

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Respondents were also asked about their past purchasing frequency of C&EL fashion products, such as anime-themed apparel and cosplay accessories. As illustrated in Figure 4.2, only 6% had never purchased such items, while 94% had engaged with them to some extent. Notably, 51% of respondents selected “sometimes” or more, indicating a substantial base of regular buyers. This confirms a high level of familiarity with character-themed fashion and affirms the sample’s relevance to the study’s objectives.

Frequency of Past C&EL fashion Products Purchase

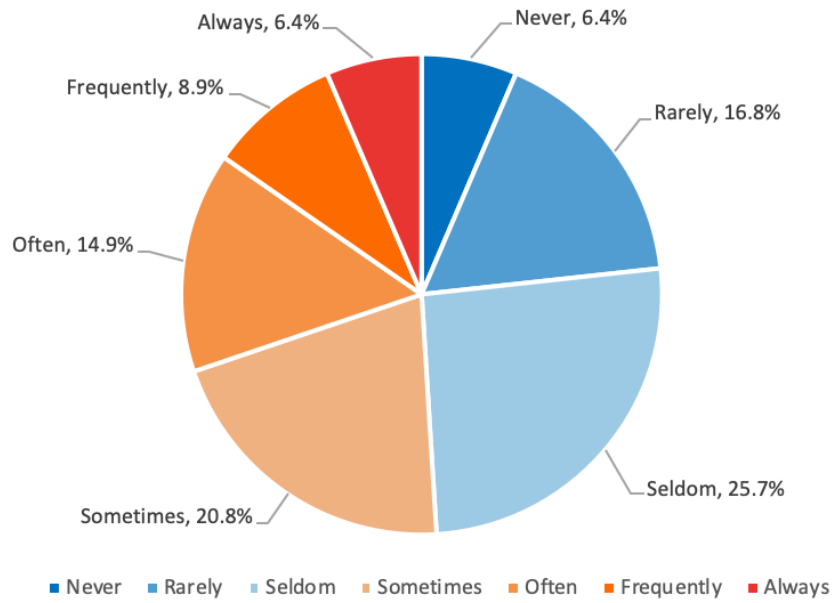


Figure 4.2 - Percentage Distribution of Past C&EL Fashion Products Purchase Frequency
 Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics for Post-Subculture Affiliation

Table 4.2 - Descriptive Statistics for Post-Subculture Affiliation

C&EL fashion products = Character and entertainment licensed fashion products

Code	Measurement Dimension	Item Description	Valid(N)	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. D
PSA_01	Fandom Identity	Perception that purchasing or wearing C&EL fashion products represents one's fandom identity.	202	5.10	6	6	1.64
PSA_02	Post-Subcultural Belonging	Feeling of belonging to the post-subculture that C&EL fashion products represented.	202	4.49	5	5	1.68
PSA_03	Contextual Inclination	Inclination to purchase or wear C&EL fashion products in specific cultural settings.	202	5.09	5.5	6	1.74
PSA_04	Perceived Immersion	Perceived immersion in the character's world through engagement with C&EL fashion products.	202	4.62	5	6	1.70
PSA_05	Shared Group Perception	Perception of belonging to a shared post-subcultural group upon seeing others wearing C&EL fashion products.	202	5.12	6	6	1.64
PSA_Combined			1010	4.89	5	6	1.70

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The first independent variable measured in this study was post-subcultural affiliation (PSA), assessed through five 7-point Likert scale items. The mean scores of all five

items exceeded the neutral midpoint (4), indicating that most respondents viewed C&EL fashion products as meaningful tools for expressing post-subcultural affiliation (Table 4.2). PSA_01 (M = 5.10, Median = 6, Mode = 6, SD = 1.64) and PSA_05 (M = 5.12, Median = 6, Mode = 6, SD = 1.64) revealed strong agreement that purchasing or wearing C&EL fashion products represents fandom identity and helps identify others within the same post-subcultural group. PSA_03 (M = 5.09, Median = 5.5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.74) suggests Gen Z consumers are more likely to wear or purchase C&EL fashion in relevant cultural contexts. This aligns with Escurignan’s point that situational relevance enhances willingness to engage with entertainment-related products (2025). In contrast, PSA_02 and PSA_04 showed lower means within the construct. PSA_02, which is measuring the post-subcultural belonging (M = 4.49, Median = 5, Mode = 5, SD = 1.68), suggests that while Gen Z may recognise shared group identity through C&EL fashion products, they are less inclined to label themselves as such. This supports Muggleton’s view that youth often resist group identification due to its association with conformity (2000). PSA_04, on perceived immersion (M = 4.62, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.70), indicates that although Gen Z can feel immersed in the character’s world through C&EL fashion, immersion is not a dominant influencer within the post-subcultural affiliation.

The percentage distribution of overall post-subcultural affiliation responses is shown in Figure 4.3. The most frequently selected category was “Agree” (26.73%, N = 270 out of 1010). A cumulative analysis revealed that 65.35% (N = 660 out of 1010) selected “Somewhat Agree” or higher, suggesting that Gen Z generally perceive C&EL fashion products as representative of their post-subcultural affiliation.

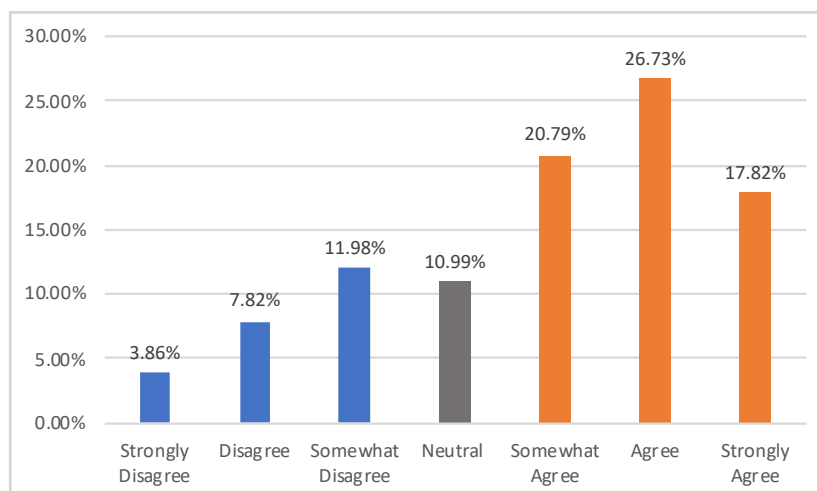


Figure 4.3 - Percentage Distribution of Overall Post-Subcultural Affiliation Responses

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics for Emotional Resonance

Table 4.3 - Descriptive Statistics for Emotional Resonance

C&EL fashion products = Character and entertainment licensed fashion products

Code	Measurement Dimension	Item Description	Valid(N)	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. D
ER_01	Direct Emotional Resonance	Experiencing a sense of emotional resonance when seeing C&EL fashion products.	202	4.92	5	6	1.61
ER_02	Nostalgia	Feeling nostalgic when encountering C&EL fashion products.	202	4.99	5	6	1.64
ER_03	Memory Activation	Activation of related personal memories triggered by C&EL fashion products.	202	5.11	6	6	1.62
ER_04	Perceived Connection	Perceived emotional connectedness when wearing C&EL fashion products.	202	4.76	5	6	1.74
ER_Combined			808	4.95	5	6	1.63

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The second independent variable examined in the questionnaire is Emotional Resonance (ER). It was measured through four 7-point Likert scale items designed to capture different dimensions of emotional resonance potentially evoked by C&EL fashion products among Gen Z consumers. Mean scores of all four items are above the neutral midpoint of 4, indicating that Gen Z generally agree that C&EL fashion products could evoke their emotional resonance (Table 4.3). Item ER_01 measured direct emotional resonance (M = 4.92, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.61), suggesting that most Gen Z respondents agreed C&EL fashion products can elicit emotional resonance, though the intensity may be moderate. ER_02 (nostalgia) and ER_03 (memory activation) were designed to capture nostalgic feelings and yielded the highest and second-highest means, respectively (ER_03: M = 5.11, Median = 6, Mode = 6, SD = 1.62; ER_02: M = 4.99, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.64). This indicates that C&EL fashion products can effectively evoke nostalgia feelings and trigger personal memories. This finding aligns with Sedikides et al. (2014), who argued that nostalgia-based marketing enhances emotional engagement. ER_04, which assesses the emotional connection with characters when Gen Z wearing C&EL fashion products, had a slightly lower mean (M = 4.76, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.74). While still positive, it suggests that forming emotional bonds with characters may not be Gen Z's primary motivation. Overall emotional resonance had a mean of 4.95, a median of 5, and a mode of 6, with a standard deviation of 1.63, reflecting consistent agreement across the construct.

As shown in Figure 4.4, 66.96% of the total Likert responses (N = 541 out of 808) were rated "Somewhat Agree" or above, with "Agree" being the most frequently selected response (27.6%, N = 223). This suggests that C&EL fashion products can effectively evoke emotional resonance among Gen Z when associated with a liked character or entertainment IP.

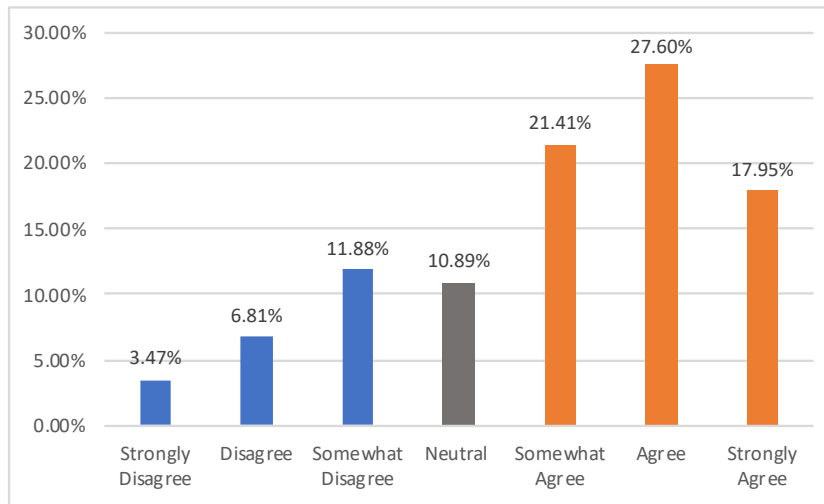


Figure 4.4 - Percentage Distribution of Overall Emotional Resonance Responses

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.2.3 Descriptive Statistics for Social Sharing Value

Table 4.4 - Descriptive Statistics for Social Sharing Value

C&EL fashion products = Character and entertainment licensed fashion products

Code	Measurement Dimension	Item Description	Valid(N)	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. D
SSV_01	Social Discussion	Tendency to discuss C&EL fashion products with others on social media or in person.	202	3.70	3.5	2	1.82
SSV_02	Exposure to Content	Frequent exposure to content or marketing campaigns related to C&EL fashion products on social media.	202	4.38	5	5,6	1.65
SSV_03	Engagement Interest	Content related to C&EL fashion products on social media can capture interest and stimulate engagement.	202	4.82	5	6	1.63
SSV_04	Attractiveness in Social Networks	Perception that content related to C&EL fashion products is attention-grabbing on social media.	202	5.03	5	6	1.63
SSV_Combined			202	4.49	5	6	1.76

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The third independent variable, Social Sharing Value (SSV), was assessed using four 7-point Likert items evaluating how social media interactions and visibility shape Gen Z's engagement with C&EL fashion products (Table 4.4). SSV_01, which measured the tendency to discuss C&EL fashion products with others (M = 3.70, Median = 3.5, Mode = 2, SD = 1.82), recorded the lowest score among all items and fell below the neutral midpoint (4). This suggests that Gen Z consumers are generally reluctant to engage in direct conversations about C&EL fashion products, whether online or offline. It also reflects the limited capacity of such products to prompt interpersonal sharing or recommendations. SSV_02 (Exposure to content: M = 4.38, Median = 5, Mode = 5/6,

SD = 1.65) suggests that while C&EL fashion products receive some online visibility, their exposure is only slightly higher than general content. SSV_03 (Engagement interest: M = 4.82, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.63) and SSV_04 (Attractiveness in social networks: M = 5.03, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.63) assessed the hypothetical engagement behaviours. The results for SSV_03 suggest that while Gen Z may avoid direct discussions about C&EL fashion products, they are generally receptive to indirect engagement, such as liking or commenting. This supports Djafarova and Bowes' (2021) point that Gen Z tend to interact with content on social media. Among all four SSV items, SSV_04 achieved the highest mean score (M = 5.03), highlighting strong attractiveness of online content related to C&EL fashion products towards Gen Z.

The overall social sharing value responses (M = 4.49, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.76) indicate moderate agreement on average. However, the most frequent response (Mode = 6) suggests that some respondents expressed stronger endorsement. As shown in Figure 4.5, 55.08% of responses were rated "Somewhat Agree" or higher, suggesting that the social sharing value of C&EL fashion products is generally recognised by Gen Z.

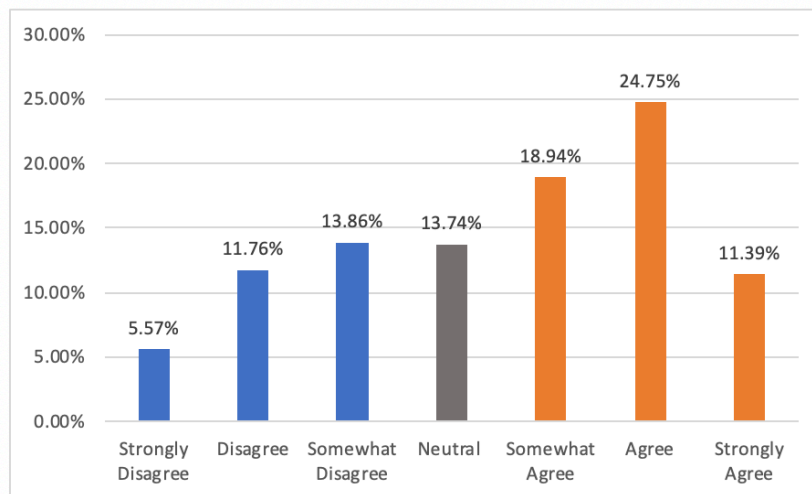


Figure 4.5 - Percentage Distribution of Overall Social Sharing Value Responses

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.2.4 Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Novelty

Table 4.5 - Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Novelty

C&EL fashion products = Character and entertainment licensed fashion products

Code	Measurement Dimension	Item Description	Valid(N)	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. D
PN_01	Perceived Novelty	Perception that C&EL fashion product is novel.	202	4.75	5	6	1.64
PN_02	Design Uniqueness	Perception that C&EL fashion product has a unique design.	202	4.40	5	6	1.73
PN_03	Sense of Surprise	C&EL fashion products could elicit a sense of surprise	202	4.69	5	6	1.68
PN_04	Creative Elements	Perception that C&EL fashion products bring creative elements to fashion design.	202	4.28	4	6	1.71
PN_Combined			202	4.53	5	6	1.70

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The fourth independent variable examined was Perceived Novelty (PN), measured using four 7-point Likert scale items assessing how Gen Z consumers perceive the novelty of C&EL fashion products. PN_01, which assessed whether respondents considered C&EL fashion products to be novel (M = 4.75, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.64), received the highest mean score among the four items. This suggests that Gen Z consumers can generally perceive the newness of C&EL fashion products at a direct and intuitive level. PN_02, which focused on the uniqueness of design (M = 4.40, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.73), while still slightly positive, scored lower than PN_01. This suggests that the design of C&EL fashion products is regarded as moderately unique by Gen Z consumers, though not distinctly so. PN_03, which measured the sense of surprise elicited by C&EL fashion products (M = 4.69, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.68), reflects the ability of these fashion items to break consumer expectations and stand out in the market. PN_04, addressing the perceived creative contribution of C&EL products to fashion design (M = 4.28, Median = 4, Mode = 6, SD = 1.71), recorded the lowest mean within the perceived novelty construct, suggesting that Gen Z consumers hold mixed opinions on the actual level of innovation provided by these products.

The overall perceived novelty score (M = 4.53, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.70) suggests a generally positive perception of novelty. As shown in Figure 4.7, 54.2% of responses were rated "Somewhat Agree" or above, indicating that just over half of Gen Z respondents viewed C&EL fashion products as somewhat novel.

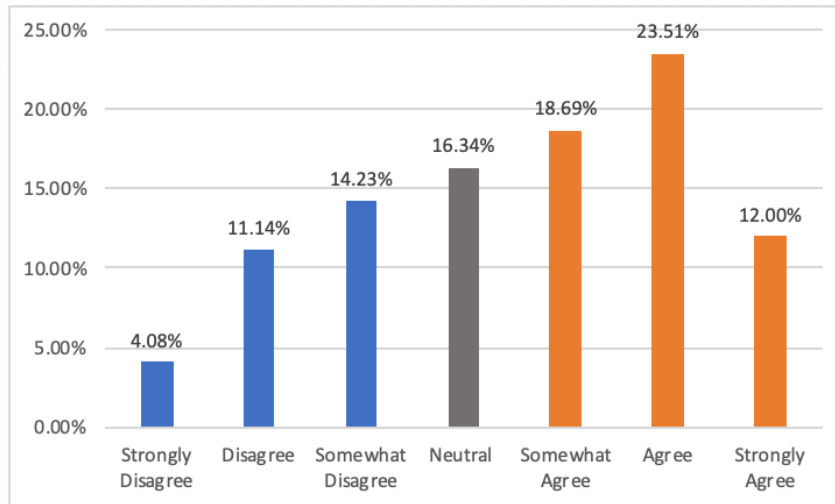


Figure 4.6 - Percentage Distribution of Overall Perceived Novelty Responses

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.2.5 Descriptive Statistics for Collection Value

Table 4.6 Descriptive Statistics for Collection Value

C&EL fashion products = Character and entertainment licensed fashion products

Code	Measurement Dimension	Item Description	Valid(N)	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. D
CV_01	Perceived Collectibility	Perception that fashion products are valuable collectibles.	202	4.56	5	5	1.81
CV_02	Sense of Achievement	Collecting C&EL fashion products evokes a sense of achievement.	202	4.39	5	6	1.74
CV_03	Sense of Fulfilment	Ownership of C&EL fashion products brings a sense of fulfilment.	202	4.57	5	6	1.75
CV_04	Perceived Investment Value	Perception that the price of C&EL fashion products could appreciate over time.	202	3.93	4	4	1.79
CV_Combined			202	4.36	5	6	1.79

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The fifth and final independent variable, Collection Value (CV), explores the extent to which Gen Z consumers associate C&EL fashion products with the concept of collectibility, emotional achievement, and long-term value. It was measured using four 7-point Likert scale items. CV_01, which measured the perceived collectibility of C&EL fashion products (M = 4.56, Median = 5, Mode = 5, SD = 1.81), suggests that Gen Z perceive these products as collectibles to a moderate extent, possibly due to limited-edition releases or character-based scarcity (Jang et al., 2015). CV_02 (M = 4.39, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.74) and CV_03 (M = 4.57, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.75), which measured the sense of achievement and fulfilment associated with purchasing C&EL fashion products, suggest that most Gen Z consumers can derive

emotional rewards from these purchases to varying degrees (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008). By contrast, responses to CV_04 clustered around the neutral midpoint (M = 3.93, Median = 4, Mode = 4, SD = 1.79), indicating that most Gen Z consumers do not associate C&EL fashion products with financial appreciation or future resale potential. This is likely because the investment or secondary market considerations are not the primary motivations behind Gen Z's purchase of these items. When interpreted alongside CV_01, the results suggest that Gen Z tends to perceive these products as personally meaningful collectibles rather than tradable assets.

The combined CV score (M = 4.36, Median = 5, Mode = 6, SD = 1.79) reflects an overall positive perception of collection value. As illustrated in Figure 4.8, 50.37% of responses fell into the "Somewhat Agree" category or higher (Figure 4.7). While symbolic and emotional collection-related values are modestly recognised, investment potential appears to be a weak motivator. Taken together, these results indicate that the collection value of C&EL fashion products is not strongly recognised by Gen Z consumers.

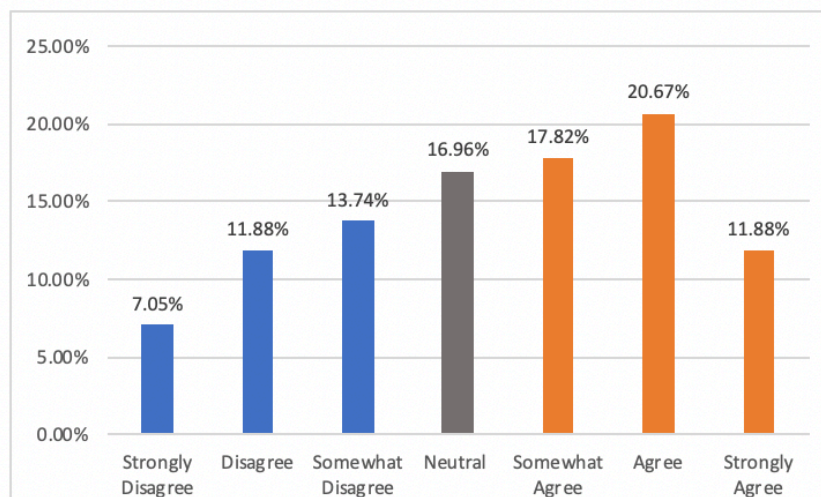


Figure 4.7 - Percentage Distribution of Overall Collection Value Responses

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.2.6 Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention

Table 4.7 - Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention

C&EL fashion products = Character and entertainment licensed fashion products

Code	Measurement Dimension	Item Description	Valid(N)	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. D
PI_01	Conditional Intention	Likelihood of purchasing C&EL fashion products if they are available, accessible, and affordable.	202	5.80	6	6	1.20
PI_02	Time-Bound intention	Intention to purchase C&EL fashion products within the next six months.	202	4.47	5	4,5	1.59
PI_03	Preference-Based Intention	Preference for C&EL products over non-licensed ones within the same fashion product category.	202	5.48	6	6	1.46
PI_Combined			202	5.25	6	6	1.53

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The dependent variable measured in this study is Purchase Intention (PI), which captures Gen Z consumers' likelihood of buying character and entertainment licensed (C&EL) fashion products. It was evaluated through three 7-point Likert scale items reflecting conditional, time-bound, and preference-based intentions. The overall responses indicate a strongly positive purchasing attitude, with consistently high scores across all items. PI_01, which assessed the likelihood of purchasing C&EL fashion products under favourable conditions—such as availability, accessibility, and affordability—received the highest mean score (M = 5.80, Median = 6, Mode = 6, SD = 1.20). This suggests that if purchase barriers are low, most Gen Z consumers would actively choose to buy such products. PI_02, measuring short-term intention (within the next six months), yielded a moderately positive score (M = 4.47, Median = 5, Mode = 4/5, SD = 1.59). When considered alongside the high score of PI_01, it can be inferred that Gen Z's ability to purchase C&EL fashion products is noticeably influenced by factors such as personal budget, product availability, and release timing. PI_03, which reflects a preference for C&EL fashion products over non-licensed alternatives within the same category, also recorded a strong score (M = 5.48, Median = 6, Mode = 6, SD = 1.46). This confirms that character and entertainment licensing could significantly enhance product appeal for this generation.

The combined PI score (M = 5.25, Median = 6, Mode = 6, SD = 1.53) reveals that C&EL fashion products are generally well-received by Gen Z consumers, with purchase intention levels remaining consistently high. As shown in Figure 4.9, 71.62% of all responses fall within the "Somewhat Agree" category or higher—comprising 31.85% selecting "Agree," 22.28% choosing "Strongly Agree," and 17.49% opting for "Somewhat Agree." These figures affirm that C&EL fashion products possess a

compelling appeal that can translate into actionable purchase behaviours among Gen Z consumers.

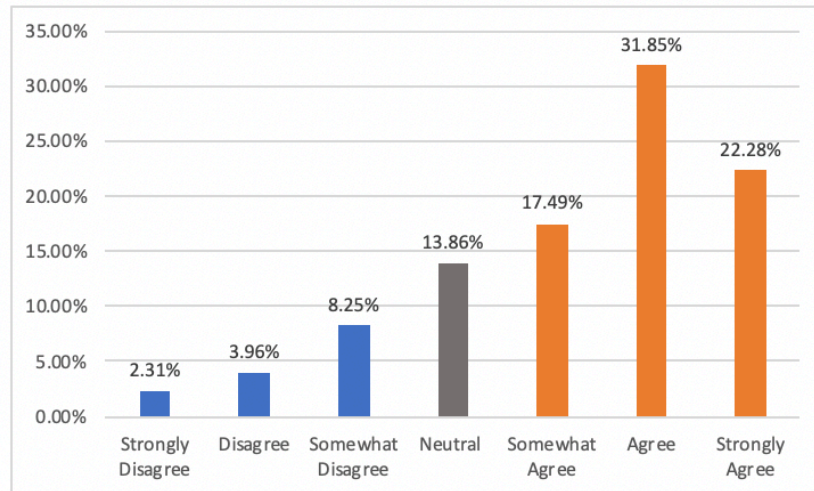


Figure 4.8 - Percentage Distribution of Overall Purchase Intention Responses

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.3 Inferential Statistics

Before conducting the multiple regression analysis, several statistical assumptions were tested to ensure the validity of the model. A normality check was conducted using skewness and kurtosis values (Appendix 7.9). The results indicated that all variables fell within the acceptable range (-1 to +1), suggesting that the data approximated a normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). Therefore, parametric statistical analyses were deemed appropriate for the subsequent regression procedures. Additional diagnostic tests for multicollinearity, linearity, and independence of errors are presented alongside the regression output in later sections.

4.3.1 Initial Regression Model for Purchase Intention

Table 4.9 – Model Summary, ANOVA, and Coefficient Output of Initial Multiple Linear Regression

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.557 ^a	.311	.293	.99113		

a. Predictors: (Constant), CV, PSA, ER, SSV, PN

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	86.810	5	17.362	17.674	<.001 ^b
	Residual	192.537	196	.982		
	Total	279.347	201			

a. Dependent Variable: PI
b. Predictors: (Constant), CV, PSA, ER, SSV, PN

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.767	.327		8.449	<.001
	PSA	.345	.061	.408	5.707	<.001
	ER	-.137	.063	-.163	-2.191	.030
	SSV	.141	.070	.162	2.028	.044
	PN	.090	.068	.112	1.325	.187
	CV	.099	.070	.128	1.417	.158

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether post-subcultural affiliation (PSA), emotional resonance (ER), social sharing value (SSV), perceived novelty (PN), and collection value (CV) could significantly predict Generation Z consumers' purchase intentions (PI) toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. The model was statistically significant, $F(5, 196) = 17.674$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 4.9), with an R^2 of .311 and an adjusted R^2 of .293, indicating that the five predictors together explained 29.3% of the variance in purchase intention.

Among the predictors, post-subcultural affiliation ($\beta = .408$, $p < .001$) emerged as the strongest and most significant positive influence, suggesting that stronger post-subcultural identification increases purchase intention. Social sharing value ($\beta = .162$, $p = .044$) also had a significant positive effect, implying that social sharing enhances purchase motivation. In contrast, emotional resonance ($\beta = -.163$, $p = .030$) showed a significant negative effect, indicating that strong emotional attachment may reduce the likelihood of purchase. Perceived novelty ($\beta = .112$, $p = .187$) and collection value ($\beta = .128$, $p = .158$) exhibited positive but statistically non-significant effects ($p > .05$), suggesting that although they contribute to consumer interest, they are less influential than post-subcultural affiliation and social sharing value in predicting actual purchase

intention. Based on these results, post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, and social sharing value were identified as significant predictors, whereas perceived novelty and collection value did not demonstrate significant predictive power at the initial model stage.

4.3.2 Multicollinearity Diagnostics and Model Adjustment

Table 4.10 - Variance Inflation Factor and Collinearity Diagnostics Output of Initial Regression Model

		Coefficients ^a					Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	2.767	.327		8.449	<.001		
	PSA	.345	.061	.408	5.707	<.001	.688	1.453
	SSV	.141	.070	.162	2.028	.044	.554	1.806
	ER	-.137	.063	-.163	-2.191	.030	.638	1.567
	PN	.090	.068	.112	1.325	.187	.496	2.015
	CV	.099	.070	.128	1.417	.158	.434	2.304

a. Dependent Variable: PI

		Collinearity Diagnostics ^a							
Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions					
				(Constant)	PSA	SSV	ER	PN	CV
1	1	5.773	1.000	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
	2	.080	8.518	.06	.20	.02	.04	.18	.10
	3	.048	11.007	.19	.01	.22	.25	.03	.28
	4	.043	11.563	.21	.29	.22	.20	.11	.07
	5	.031	13.710	.10	.22	.53	.47	.12	.10
	6	.026	14.815	.43	.28	.01	.04	.56	.46

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

To assess multicollinearity among the independent variables, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance statistics were examined. All VIF values were below the threshold of 5 (Myers and Milton, 1991), and all Tolerance values exceeded 0.1 (minimum = 0.434), indicating no serious multicollinearity (Table 4.10). However, signs of localised multicollinearity were found between Perceived Novelty (PN) and Collection Value (CV). When the Condition Index exceeded 10, both PN and CV showed high variance proportions (above 50% and 40%, respectively), suggesting conceptual overlap. This was further confirmed when removing either PN or CV from the model significantly increased the other's predictive significance, indicating a suppressor effect caused by mutual inclusion.

Pintrich (2003) argued that variables sharing similar theoretical underpinnings and motivational functions can be meaningfully integrated into higher-order constructs to enhance conceptual clarity within structural models. Similarly, Bollen (1989) emphasised that combining theoretically related variables into a composite construct improves model interpretability, reduces multicollinearity, and simplifies analytical

complexity. In line with these perspectives, the present study tested the empirical suitability of combining Perceived Novelty (PN) and Collection Value (CV) into a single construct. A Pearson Bivariate Correlation analysis confirmed a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between PN and CV ($r = .655$, $p < .001$), suggesting conceptual coherence between the two dimensions (Table 4.11). To further assess internal consistency, a Cronbach's alpha test was performed on all eight measurement items (four for PN and four for CV). The resulting alpha value of .910 indicates excellent reliability (Table 4.12), providing strong empirical support for the integration. Based on both theoretical rationale and robust empirical evidence, the two variables were merged into a higher-order composite variable termed Cognition_Factor, calculated by averaging the mean scores of PN and CV. A normality test of the composite construct yielded skewness and kurtosis values within the acceptable range (-1 to +1), confirming that the data distribution is appropriate for parametric analysis (Appendix 7.10).

Table 4.11 - Pearson Bivariate Correlation Analysis of Perceived Novelty (PN) and Collection Value (CV)

Correlations			
		PN	CV
PN	Pearson Correlation	1	.655**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	202	202
CV	Pearson Correlation	.655**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	202	202

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Table 4.12 - Cronbach's Alpha Test of Total Eight Measurement Items of PN and CV

→ Reliability_Cognition_factor

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	202	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	202	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.910	8

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.3.2 Final Regression Model for Purchase Intention

4.3.2.1 Model Summary Results

Table 4.13 - Model Summary and ANOVA Output of Final Regression Model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.557 ^a	.311	.297	.98862	1.842

a. Predictors: (Constant), Coginition_factor, PSA, ER, SSV

b. Dependent Variable: PI

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	86.804	4	21.701	22.204	<.001 ^b
	Residual	192.543	197	.977		
	Total	279.347	201			

a. Dependent Variable: PI

b. Predictors: (Constant), Coginition_factor, PSA, ER, SSV

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

After revising the variables and refining the model structure, a final multiple regression analysis was conducted to investigate the key predictors of purchase intention among Gen Z consumers in the context of character and entertainment licensed fashion products. The four independent variables included Cognition Factor (a composite of Perceived Novelty and Collection Value), Post-Subcultural Affiliation, Emotional Resonance, and Social Sharing Value. The model explained 31.1% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = .311$), with an adjusted R^2 of .293, reflecting moderate explanatory power and improved generalisability compared to the initial regression model (Table 4.13). The model was statistically significant ($F(4, 197) = 22.204$, $p < .001$), indicating that the set of predictors reliably accounts for variation in Gen Z's purchasing behaviour. Additionally, the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.842) showed no evidence of problematic autocorrelation, further supporting the robustness of the model.

4.3.2.2 Model Parameters for Final Regression Model

Table 4.14 - Coefficients Output of Final Regression Model

		Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.761	.319		8.660	<.001		
	PSA	.346	.059	.409	5.861	<.001	.718	1.392
	ER	-.137	.062	-.162	-2.200	.029	.644	1.552
	SSV	.141	.069	.161	2.032	.043	.556	1.799
	Cognition_factor	.189	.072	.217	2.616	.010	.508	1.968

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The final regression model showed that all four independent variables — post-subcultural affiliation, social sharing value, emotional resonance, and cognition_factor — significantly predicted Gen Z's purchase intention toward C&EL fashion products. All Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.392 to 1.968, well below the threshold of 5, confirming that each predictor's contribution was statistically reliable. Each variable's role is discussed below (Table 4.14).

Post-subcultural Affiliation emerged as the strongest positive predictor of purchase intention ($\beta = .409$, $t = 5.861$, $p < .001$). This finding suggests that the post -subcultural affiliation represented by C&EL fashion products could serve as a symbolic marker of identity expression, increasing alignment between Gen Z consumers' personal image and the licensed products. Simply put, if Gen Z consumers perceive a particular C&EL fashion product could represent their subcultural group identity, their purchase intention will significantly increase. Interestingly, Emotional Resonance demonstrated a significant negative relationship with purchase intention ($\beta = -.162$, $t = -2.200$, $p = .029$). This counterintuitive result suggests that strong emotional attachment alone does not necessarily translate into purchase behaviour, and may even reduces the willingness to buy. For example, emotionally resonant characters might be appreciated but not actively consumed in fashion form. Social Sharing Value was also found to significantly and positively predict purchase intention ($\beta = .161$, $t = 2.032$, $p = .043$). This implies that products perceived as “shareable” or likely to be positively received on social platforms (e.g., Instagram, Xiaohongshu) enhance Gen Z's likelihood of purchasing. The result aligns with the social-media-driven consumption logic where visibility and peer approval amplify value perception. The Cognition_Factor, constructed by averaging Perceived Novelty and Collection Value, also significantly predicted purchase intention ($\beta = .217$, $t = 2.616$, $p = .010$). This supports the idea that Gen Z consumers are drawn to licensed fashion that is both novel (unique or refreshing) and collectible (perceived as valuable or limited-edition). The combination of aesthetic appreciation and exclusivity provides strong cognitive motivation to buy.

4.3.2.3 The Final Regression Equation

The final regression equation was derived as follows:

$$\text{Purchase Intention} = 2.761 + 0.346 \cdot \text{Post-Subcultural Affiliation} - 0.137 \cdot \text{Emotional Resonance} + 0.141 \cdot \text{Social Sharing Value} + 0.189 \cdot \text{Cognition_factor}$$

The regression coefficient for Post-Subcultural Affiliation (PSA) was the strongest among all predictors. A one-unit increase in PSA leads to a 0.346 increase in Purchase Intention ($B = .346$), confirming that stronger identification with fandom communities significantly enhances Gen Z's intent to purchase C&EL fashion products. Cognition factor, which combines perceived novelty and collection value, also significantly predicted purchase intention. A one-unit increase in the cognition factor results in a 0.189 increase in Purchase Intention ($B = .189$), suggesting that cognitive evaluations of C&EL fashion products meaningfully influence purchase motivations. For Social sharing value (SSV), a one-unit increase was associated with a 0.141 increase in Purchase Intention ($B = .141$). This finding demonstrates that perceived social visibility and engagement potential on digital platforms moderately enhance Gen Z consumers' likelihood of purchase. In contrast, Emotional resonance (ER) showed a negative effect. A one-unit increase in Emotional Resonance was linked to a 0.137 decrease in Purchase Intention ($B = - .137$). Although this result was statistically significant, it suggests that emotional resonance may not always facilitate purchase decisions—in some cases, it may reflect a deeper emotional attachment not directly tied to transactional behaviour.

4.4 Summary of Hypotheses Testing Results

Table 4.15 - Summary of Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypothesis	Result	Remark
H1 Post-subcultural affiliation will positively influence Gen Z's purchase intention.	Supported	Strongest predictor in the model.
H2 Emotional resonance will positively influence Gen Z's purchase intention.	Rejected	Negative effect observed; contrary to hypothesis.
H3 Social sharing value will positively influence Gen Z's purchase intention.	Supported	Moderate but significant effect.
H4 Perceived novelty will positively influence Gen Z's purchase intention.	Partially Supported	Merged into Cognition Factor: Cognition Factor significantly positively influences purchase intention.

H5	Collection value will positively influence Gen Z's purchase intention.	Partially Supported	Merged into Cognition Factor: Cognition Factor significantly positively influences purchase intention.
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Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.5 Final Conceptual Model

The conceptual model was refitted based on empirical results by combining Perceived Novelty and Collection Value into a single composite variable, Cognition Factor, due to their theoretical alignment and strong correlation. This streamlined the original five-factor model into four predictors: Post-subcultural Affiliation, Emotional Resonance, Social Sharing Value, and Cognition Factor. The revised model offers greater theoretical coherence and empirical relevance in explaining Gen Z's C&EL fashion purchase behaviour (Figure 4.9).

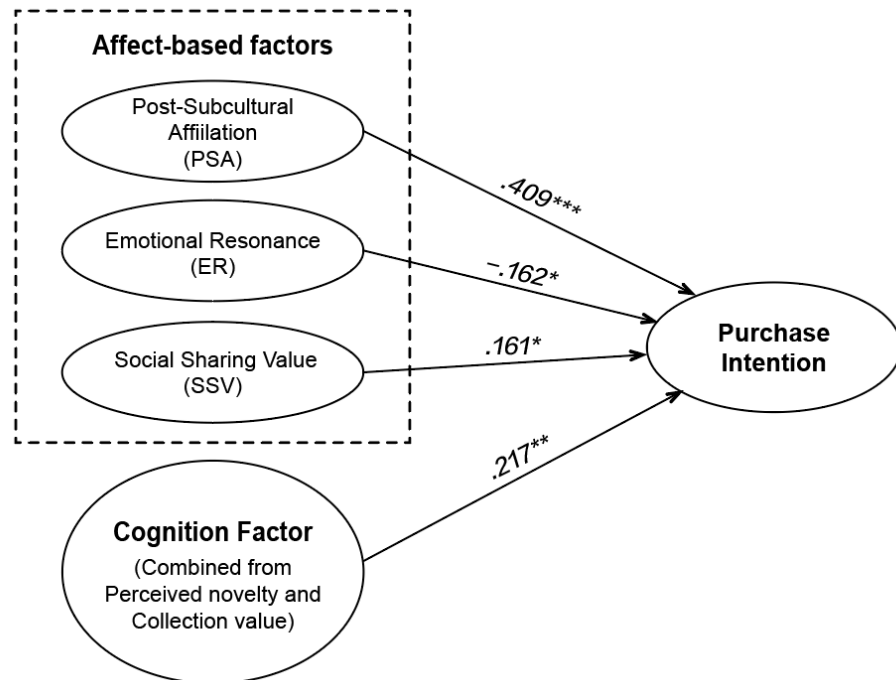


Figure 4.9 - Refitted Conceptual Model
Source: Created by the author, (2025).

4.6 Gauss-Markov Assumptions for Final Multiple Regression Model

To validate the final multiple regression model, the Gauss-Markov assumptions were systematically tested to determine whether the coefficients qualify as Best Linear Unbiased Estimators (BLUE). All supporting diagnostic outputs are presented in Appendix 7.11.

First, the assumption that residuals have a mean of zero was satisfied, with the standardized residuals showing an approximate mean of .0000. The assumption of normality was confirmed through a non-significant Shapiro-Wilk test ($p = .084 > .05$), and visual inspection of the Normal P-P and Q-Q plots indicated approximate linearity. Homoscedasticity was also supported, as the scatterplot of standardized residuals against predicted values showed a random distribution without funnel-shaped patterns. The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.758, within the acceptable range (1.5–2.5), suggesting no autocorrelation in the residuals. Finally, all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were well below 5, and Tolerance values exceeded 0.1, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern.

Given that all Gauss-Markov assumptions were satisfied, the regression model's coefficients can be considered Best Linear Unbiased Estimators (BLUE). This outcome indicates that the model is both statistically robust and generalisable. Consequently, the findings are not limited to the sample but can be reasonably extended to the broader Generation Z population, enhancing the external validity and practical implications of the research.

Chapter Five
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5. Discussion and Conclusions

5.1 Overview of the Findings

This study aimed to quantitatively examine the key motivational factors influencing Generation Z consumers' purchase intentions toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. The findings revealed that post-subcultural affiliation, social sharing value, and the cognition factor, which associated with perceived novelty and collection value, each have a significant positive influence on Gen Z's purchase intentions. In contrast, emotional resonance was found to have a significant negative effect. The following sections provide a detailed discussion of these four factors and their implications.

5.1.1 Findings for Post-Subcultural Affiliation

Descriptive analysis showed generally favourable attitudes toward post-subcultural affiliation (PSA), with all five items scoring above the midpoint. The strongest endorsement is relating to the use of character and entertainment-licensed fashion products to express fandom identity and recognise others within the same of similar post-subcultural groups. This suggests that Gen Z consumers widely perceive such products as symbolic markers for self-expression within interest-based communities. Meanwhile, items addressing immersion and self-labelling received comparatively lower agreement, indicating that Gen Z have a more selective, surface-level engagement with subcultural identity. This is consistent with Muggleton's (2000) argument that youth today resist fixed group categorisations.

Regression analysis further validated the central role of post-subcultural affiliation in shaping Gen Z's purchase decisions. It emerged as the strongest predictor of purchase intention across all variables, exhibiting a large and statistically significant effect ($\beta = .409$, $t = 5.861$, $p < .001$). This demonstrates that consumers who identify with post-subcultural or character-based affiliations are significantly more likely to buy character and entertainment licensed fashion products. The strength of this relationship highlights post-subcultural affiliation's role not only as a background attitudinal factor, but as a primary motivational driver in the context of licensed fashion consumption. These findings align with wider theoretical literature positioning youth identity as reflexive, symbolic, and increasingly consumer-driven (Bennett, 1999; Cova et al., 2012). From the traditional fixed, ideology-based subculture to the flexible, interest and lifestyle-based post-subculture, this trend also indicates that style becomes a medium for cultural signalling (Bennett, 2011). Character and entertainment-licensed fashion

products, by embedding recognisable imagery from popular IP, provide Gen Z consumers with a visual shorthand for cultural participation (Arsel and Thompson, 2011). Such products act not merely as garments, but as vehicles for identity performance—especially relevant within today’s image-oriented, digitally mediated youth culture.

In summary, post-subcultural affiliation plays a critical role in both shaping purchase intentions and enabling symbolic belonging. The ability of C&EL fashion products to facilitate visible affiliation with subcultural groups reinforces their appeal to Gen Z consumers. These findings underscore the importance of cultural expressiveness as a marketing strategy within the licensed fashion industry.

5.1.2 Findings for Emotional Resonance

Contrary to the proposed hypothesis, emotional resonance demonstrated a significant negative relationship with purchase intention ($\beta = -.162$, $t = -2.200$, $p = .029$). While prior literature generally anticipated a positive effect—drawing on theories of emotional congruity and identity reinforcement (Sirgy, 1982; Mitchell, 2004; Hong, 2019), the empirical results suggest that strong emotional bonds with characters may, in some cases, suppress rather than stimulate transactional intent.

Descriptive analysis initially revealed generally favourable attitudes toward emotional resonance, with all item means exceeding the neutral midpoint, and 66.96% of responses falling into the “Somewhat Agree” or higher categories. Nostalgia-related items (ER_02 and ER_03) received the strongest endorsement, indicating that Gen Z consumers frequently associate character and entertainment-licensed fashion products with emotionally significant memories. However, such affective attachments do not appear to consistently convert into purchasing behaviour. One possible explanation is a “nostalgia detachment” effect, where characters are appreciated emotionally but not actively consumed in fashion form (Chrostowska, 2010; Ju et al., 2016). For instance, emotionally cherished characters, such as Pikachu, Harry Potter, or Winnie the Pooh, are tied to early childhood media experiences, as all participants were Gen Z adults aged 18–27, they may perceive clothing associated with these characters as inappropriate or juvenile in certain social settings. Thereby it may reduce their willingness to wear or purchase such items. Another possibility is that the strong emotional familiarity with a character may diminish perceived novelty and exclusivity—two critical consumption drivers for Gen Z (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008). This interpretation aligns with Hong’s (2019) findings, which indicated that heightened familiarity with a character can reduce the perceived value of co-branded products.

Moreover, the emotional activation evoked by C&EL fashion does not prompt product acquisition but instead leads consumers to revisit the original media content as a means of emotional gratification. In this sense, emotional fulfilment is achieved through nostalgic immersion, not material consumption (Zavestoski, 2002).

In summary, while emotional resonance plays a meaningful role in shaping affective responses, it does not necessarily act as a facilitator of purchase intention in the context of character and entertainment-licensing fashion. Instead, emotional fulfilment may act as a psychological substitute for product acquisition. For marketers, this suggests the importance of pairing emotional storytelling with elements of novelty, scarcity, and social currency to convert emotional engagement into purchase behaviour among Gen Z consumers.

5.1.3 Findings for Social Sharing Value

The hypothesis proposed that Social sharing value (SSV) would positively and significantly influence Gen Z's purchase intentions towards C&EL fashion products. This expectation was grounded in prior literature highlighting the role of digital engagement, peer influence, and content visibility in Gen Z's consumption behaviour (Simon and Tossan, 2018; Fernandes and Castro, 2020).

Descriptive analysis indicated generally favourable attitudes toward the social sharing value of C&EL fashion products. While direct peer discussion scored lowest ($M = 3.70$), dimensions such as social visibility ($M = 4.38$) and content engagement ($M = 5.03$) were notably higher, suggesting that Gen Z prefers passive interactions (e.g., likes, views) over active sharing, which consistent with Djafarova and Bowes' (2021) findings on content-driven engagement. Regression analysis confirmed that social sharing value has a statistically significant positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta = .161$, $t = 2.032$, $p = .043$). Though the effect size is modest, the result substantiates that "shareability" functions as symbolic utility. Products perceived as visually appealing and socially resonant are more likely to be purchased due to their perceived potential for peer recognition and trend alignment (Berger and Milkman, 2012). This finding aligns with the Consumer Online Brand-Related Activities (COBRAs) framework, which posits that consumers derive value from brand engagement across various social participation levels, including passive viewing and content interaction (Muntinga, Moorman and Smit, 2011).

In conclusion, while Gen Z consumers may not overtly discuss or recommend C&EL fashion products, their engagement patterns suggest that visibility, content-based

appeal, and social signaling contribute meaningfully to purchase decisions. C&EL products that resonate within social ecosystems are more likely to gain traction among youth audiences, underlining the importance of shareability in fashion marketing strategies targeting Gen Z.

5.1.4 Findings for Cognition Factor (Composite Variable)

This section addresses the fourth and fifth hypotheses, which initially examined Perceived novelty (PN) and Collection value (CV) as separate cognition-based drivers of purchase intention. However, given their shared theoretical foundation—both representing rational, value-oriented evaluations of C&EL fashion products—and their strong empirical correlation ($r = .655$, $p < .001$; Cronbach's $\alpha = .791$), the two constructs were merged into a higher-order variable termed the Cognition Factor. This adjustment aligns with the conceptual logic proposed by Pintrich (2003) and Bollen (1989), who suggest aggregating theoretically consistent variables to enhance model parsimony and reduce multicollinearity.

Descriptive analysis of the original perceived novelty and collection value items indicated that respondents generally valued both novelty and collectability. Items related to product novelty, perceived unexpectedness, perceived collectability and the emotional satisfaction of ownership scored highly, suggesting that Gen Z consumers associate C&EL fashion products with distinctive and value-rich items. This is consistent with previous research highlighting novelty-seeking and collection motivations among younger consumers (Sung et al., 2019; Ho and Wyer, 2024). Regression results showed that the Cognition Factor significantly predicted purchase intention ($\beta = .217$, $t = 2.584$, $p = .010$), supporting the merged hypothesis. This indicates that rational appraisals—such as perceived distinctiveness, product scarcity, or symbolic relevance—can meaningfully influence Gen Z's purchase decisions. While the effect size is smaller than that of post-subcultural affiliation ($\beta = .409$), it nonetheless confirms that cognitive evaluations, when properly framed within cultural and product contexts, hold persuasive power. This finding is further reinforced by studies in fashion and consumer psychology. Sung et al. (2019) found that novelty-induced interest can directly impact product evaluation, while Belk et al. (1989) and Lei et al. (2024) demonstrated that perceived collectability fosters attachment and long-term engagement.

In summary, the combined Cognition Factor highlights that Gen Z's consumption of C&EL fashion products is not driven solely by trends or peer dynamics, but also by thoughtful assessments of novelty, scarcity, and emotional satisfaction embedded in

collectible value. This suggests that marketing strategies should underscore not only visual design and social appeal, but also the unique narrative and collectible essence of licensed products.

5.2 Managerial Recommendations

This study provides actionable insights into Gen Z consumers' purchasing motivations within the character and entertainment-licensed fashion market. From a managerial perspective, both fashion brands and intellectual property (IP) holders stand to gain substantial value by strategically leveraging emotional, cultural, and cognitive factors in product development and communication. While character licensing has historically relied on nostalgia and visual appeal, the findings here suggest that a deeper alignment with post-subcultural affiliation, digital social practices, and cognitive value perception is key to influencing today's youth consumers.

Character and entertainment-licensed fashion products are no longer just collectibles or trend items—they are identity signals. To ensure relevance and sustained market success, brands must move beyond surface-level collaboration and instead focus on creating meaningful, culturally resonant partnerships that reflect Gen Z's hybrid identities and lifestyle affiliations. Products should not simply "feature" characters but embed them within narratives of fandom, belonging, and stylistic expression. For instance, collections tied to post-subcultural aesthetics such as streetwear, anime fandom, or gaming communities can transform licensed items into tools for self-expression and group recognition.

It is imperative that IP holders collaborate with fashion brands that understand these symbolic nuances. This study reveals that post-subcultural affiliation is the strongest predictor of purchase intention, highlighting the need for licensing strategies that embrace symbolic style, aesthetic autonomy, and a sense of tribal belonging. Brands must move away from rigid character presentation and embrace remixable, genre-blending styles that mirror Gen Z's mix-and-match identity construction. This could involve designing fashion capsules that integrate user-generated artwork, co-branding with digital creators or micro-influencers from fandom spaces, or launching pop-up activations at fan conventions.

Furthermore, the results related to Emotional Resonance highlight a paradox: while emotional connection remains a key appeal of licensed products, it alone does not drive purchase. Consumers may feel attached to a character, but this attachment does not always convert into consumption behaviour. Therefore, brands need to be highly

strategic when selecting IP partners. Character or entertainment IPs that clearly represent post-subcultural groups without excessively evoking nostalgic feelings are best suited to the fashion product category. In marketing campaigns, emphasis should be placed on the character itself as a symbolic marker of the IP, rather than on the character's backstory. Brands also need to control the nostalgic framing during promotion, avoiding potential emotional saturation or nostalgia detachment which could reduce consumers' purchase intention.

In parallel, social sharing value plays an important but subtle role. Gen Z prefers indirect, content-based engagement over overt brand advocacy. Therefore, product strategies must prioritise aesthetic shareability by focusing on designs that are visually compelling on platforms like TikTok or Instagram, even if consumers do not verbally recommend them. Brands should invest in styling content, micro-influencer seeding, and consumer-generated imagery that make these products desirable within digital community.

Lastly, the Cognition factor, combining novelty and collection value, indicates that Gen Z consumers value products that feel exclusive, innovative, and purposeful. Licensing collaborations must therefore be framed not only as "fun" or "cool," but also as special—limited, collectible, or artistically curated. Creating perceived scarcity through time-limited or quantity-limited releases, combined with original design elements and symbolically meaningful collectibility, will be critical in enhancing consumers' willingness to pay.

To summarise, for licensing to remain commercially effective in the Gen Z fashion market, it must evolve into a multidimensional strategy that integrates post-subcultural alignment, visual attractiveness, online shareability and meaningful collectibility. Brands and IP holders must co-create lifestyle artefacts rather than promotional merchandise. Through strategic insight into Gen Z's cultural logic, the character and entertainment-licensed fashion can continue to thrive—not as trend merchandise, but as a medium of identity, story, and community.

5.3 Originality and Contribution to Theory

This study represents one of the first empirical investigations to systematically explore Generation Z's purchase intentions toward character and entertainment licensed (C&EL) fashion products. While previous literature has tended to isolate fandom behaviour or co-branding effects, little has been done to understand how licensed products themselves function as symbolic tools for identity construction, particularly

within the fashion domain. This research fills that gap by proposing a new conceptual model grounded in both affect-based and cognition-based attitudinal theories.

A key theoretical contribution is the integration of post-subcultural affiliation into consumer behaviour modelling. By demonstrating that symbolic alignment with subcultural or fandom communities is the strongest predictor of purchase intention, this study expands the theoretical boundaries of identity-based consumption. In addition, the construction of a Cognition Factor, formed by merging perceived novelty and collection value, advances existing modelling practice by offering a parsimonious yet theoretically coherent approach—supported by established precedents (Bollen, 1989; Pintrich, 2003). The final regression model not only yields statistically significant results but also satisfies all key Gauss-Markov assumptions, enhancing its validity and generalisability. In doing so, this study contributes a reliable empirical framework that can inform future research and strategy in licensing, branding, and youth culture studies.

5.4 Limitations and Areas for Further Research

The findings of this study should be interpreted with several limitations in mind, particularly the sampling strategy. Due to practical constraints, a non-probability convenience sampling method was employed, which may have introduced bias given its reliance on social media distribution. However, the final sample was sufficiently large and demographically relevant, partially mitigating concerns over representativeness. Future studies could adopt probability-based approaches to enhance generalisability. A second limitation involves the limited academic literature specifically on character and entertainment-licensed fashion. Much of the theoretical grounding draws from adjacent fields such as co-branding and youth identity. While this study helps to address that gap, further research is needed to deepen understanding in this emerging area. Lastly, the study's cross-sectional design restricts insights into how purchase intentions evolve over time. Longitudinal or experimental studies could provide more dynamic perspectives on the role of emotional, social, and cognitive factors. Together, these limitations suggest promising directions for future research into licensed fashion consumption among Gen Z.

5.5 Final Conclusion

To conclude, this study investigated the psychological and cultural drivers of Generation Z's purchase intentions toward character and entertainment-licensed fashion products. Through a combination of theoretical grounding and empirical analysis, it highlights the importance of identity-driven collaborations in resonating with Gen Z consumers within a saturated and expressive market.

Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the ABC attitude model, a conceptual framework was developed to explore five key motivational factors: Post-Subcultural Affiliation, Emotional Resonance, Social Sharing Value, Perceived Novelty, and Collection Value. Survey data were analysed using multiple regression, revealing that Post-Subcultural Affiliation was the most significant predictor of purchase intention, followed by Social Sharing Value and a combined Cognition Factor (novelty and collectibility). Interestingly, Emotional Resonance had a negative effect, indicating that emotional attachment, especially nostalgic, may not always translate into buying behaviour.

The findings suggest that Gen Z approaches C&EL fashion as a tool for identity construction and social participation, rather than for aesthetic or entertainment purposes alone. This has key implications for brand strategy, underscoring the need for culturally aligned, flexible, and collaborative licensing approaches. Overall, this study contributes to the limited academic work on C&EL fashion by situating it within broader frameworks of fan culture and symbolic consumption, offering a deeper understanding of Gen Z's hybrid, meaning-driven purchasing logic.

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APPENDIX

7. Appendix

Note: Given the extensive number of illustrative images included in this appendix, all figures and tables are numbered by subsection (e.g., Figure 7.5.2 refers to the second figure in Appendix 7.5). This approach improves clarity and navigability for readers.

Appendix 7.1 Individual Learning Agreement

Table 7.1.1 - Individual Learning Agreement

Student Name	Wanqi Sun
Title of Project	The Rise of Character and Entertainment Licensed Fashion: Understanding Its Key Drivers of Gen Z's Purchase Intentions
Name/s of collaborators if applicable	N/A
Supervisor	Liang Lu
Aim of the project:	This research aims to explore the psychological and cultural mechanisms through which character and entertainment licensing influences Generation Z consumers' purchase intentions within the fashion industry. While this licensing strategy has become increasingly prominent in brand collaborations, particularly among youth-focused fashion brands, the underlying attitudinal factors driving consumer behaviour—especially in the case of Gen Z—remain under-explored in academic literature.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To conduct a comprehensive literature review on the attributes of character and entertainment licensed fashion products and Generation Z's purchasing psychology. The review will critically evaluate the potential key factors in shaping Gen Z purchase intentions towards character and entertainment licensed fashion products. 2. To develop a conceptual model, outlining how potential key factors of character and entertainment licensed fashion products could influence purchase intentions of Gen Z consumers. 3. To collect and analyse empirical data using quantitative research methods, focusing on Gen Z consumers' responses to character and entertainment licensed fashion products. The analysis will test the hypothesised relationships proposed in the conceptual framework.



	4. To identify managerial implications and provide strategic recommendations for fashion brands and IP holders. This will include insights on how to design more resonant, emotionally engaging, and culturally aligned licensing collaborations targeted at Generation Z.					
Agreed outcomes	A dissertation of 16,000 words engaging with secondary and primary evidence. Analysis supported with academic and trade publications.					
Formats	Pages					
Research away from College	N/A					
Agreed contact points/ Tutorial dates	17 th January 2025	6 th February 2025	6 th March 2025	19 th March 2025	16 th April 2025	1 st May 2025
Project Timeline	A timeline is attached below					
Ethics Form Attached	Yes		Risk Assessment Attached		No	
Learning Outcomes	How you will evidence attainment of the outcome					
1. Effective self-directed research (primary and secondary) at an advanced level using appropriate methodologies (process);	This research project explores the key affect-based and cognition-based drivers behind Generation Z's purchase intentions toward character and entertainment licensed (C&EL) fashion products. It examines how emotional and cognitive factors shape consumer behaviour within this rapidly growing niche, offering insights critical for brands leveraging IP-driven strategies. While previous studies have focused on celebrity endorsements, general fashion consumption, or licensing, few have investigated the intersection of youth subcultures, nostalgia, fandom, and collection motivation in relation to C&EL fashion. Where relevant research exists, it is often outdated or fails to reflect Gen Z's digital-first, identity-fluid lifestyle—					

	<p>characterised by deep engagement with anime, gaming, and online fandom communities.</p> <p>A quantitative approach was employed using an online questionnaire distributed to Gen Z individuals (aged 18–27). The survey measured variables including emotional resonance, post-subcultural affiliation, and collection value, based on a thorough review of recent literature in consumer psychology, youth culture, and brand licensing. This self-directed study integrates primary research with advanced secondary analysis, producing new theoretical and practical insights in an underexplored area of fashion consumer behaviour.</p>
<p>2. Identification and definition of issues and demonstrate use of analytical and evaluative skills throughout the project (enquiry);</p>	<p>The research identifies a significant gap in understanding the motivational drivers behind Gen Z's engagement with character and entertainment licensed (C&EL) fashion products, an area largely underexplored in current academic discourse. The issue was defined through initial market observations, where C&EL fashion collaborations have become mainstream, yet little is known about the underlying affective and cognitive influences guiding purchase intention.</p> <p>The key issues were categorised into two domains based on psychological theory: affect-based factors (post-subcultural affiliation, emotional resonance, and social sharing value) and cognition-based factors (perceived novelty and collection value). These constructs were defined and refined through a critical review of academic literature, allowing the project to build upon but also question existing consumer behaviour models.</p> <p>Throughout the study, analytical and evaluative thinking was applied rigorously. Academic sources were compared in terms of reliability, methodological</p>

	<p>robustness, and relevance. Primary data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, with interpretations based not just on statistical outcomes but their theoretical implications. This structured, evaluative approach ensures the project not only identifies a contemporary marketing challenge but also interrogates it through a well-defined academic and methodological lens.</p>
<p>3. A good knowledge of contextual issues and application of appropriate theoretical concepts leading to suitable management solutions to a specific issue or problem (knowledge);</p>	<p>Primary data was collected through an online questionnaire and analysed using parametric statistical techniques, assuming normality based on preliminary screening. The constructs were derived from a thorough literature review, identifying key affect-based and cognition-based factors that influence Gen Z's purchase intentions towards C&EL fashion products. These included emotional resonance, post-subcultural affiliation, social sharing value, perceived novelty, and collection value.</p> <p>A conceptual model was developed based on these factors and tested using multiple linear regression analysis to determine their individual and collective impact on purchase intention. Hypotheses were formed based on existing theoretical frameworks such as post-subcultural theory and consumer value theory, and tested against the collected data.</p> <p>Statistical significance and strength of associations between variables were used to either support or challenge previous research findings. The results provided evidence to inform potential marketing strategies for fashion brands operating within the character and entertainment licensed space.</p>
<p>4. A thorough understanding of</p>	<p>This study takes the position that existing research often isolates fandom culture or fashion branding but</p>

<p>the relationships and tensions that may occur between management decisions and creative decisions (enquiry, knowledge);</p>	<p>rarely explores their intersection in the context of licensed fashion products. It addresses this gap by treating character and entertainment licensed (C&EL) fashion not only as commercial goods but as cultural symbols used by Gen Z to express identity, connect socially, and participate in digital communities.</p> <p>Unlike traditional assumptions that emotional engagement always enhances sales, this study found that emotional resonance may not directly increase purchase intention, suggesting a tension between affective appeal and actual consumer behaviour. This challenges marketers to rethink how emotionally charged content translates into sales.</p> <p>Theory is applied to practice through a conceptual model based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the ABC model of attitudes. These frameworks inform the selection of variables such as post-subcultural affiliation and collection value. The model is tested using quantitative methods, providing data-driven insights for fashion brands and IP holders on how to design culturally aligned, socially engaging licensing strategies tailored to Gen Z consumers.</p>
<p>5. Analysis and utilisation of research data to synthesise a clear argument (knowledge, realisation);</p>	<p>Completion of the project required specialist knowledge in consumer psychology, symbolic consumption, and brand licensing, particularly as they relate to Generation Z. Conceptual grounding in the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the ABC Model of Attitudes was essential for designing the research framework. Proficiency in data analysis techniques—including multiple regression, reliability testing (Cronbach’s α), and multicollinearity diagnostics (VIF)—was necessary to ensure methodological robustness.</p> <p>While formal collaboration with external experts was not involved, theoretical and methodological decisions were</p>

	<p>supported through engagement with peer-reviewed academic literature, case studies, and industry reports. Academic rigour was maintained through regular supervisory feedback and by aligning the work with the expected standards of a Master of Science programme, including critical analysis, theoretical contribution, and empirical validity.</p>
<p>6. The synthesis of appropriate knowledge and skill to propose satisfactory resolutions of management issues in clear conclusions or recommendations (communication);</p>	<p>This research is highly relevant to both industry and academia. From an industry perspective, the study offers actionable insights for fashion brands and IP holders on how character and entertainment licensed (C&EL) fashion products can be tailored to better engage Gen Z consumers. In particular, the findings confirmed the significance of post-subcultural affiliation, social sharing value, and the cognition-based composite variable in predicting purchase intention. These results offer strategic guidance for marketing and design teams aiming to enhance cultural alignment and symbolic resonance in licensed collaborations.</p> <p>Academically, the project addresses a notable gap by empirically investigating licensed fashion consumption as a distinct phenomenon, rather than as an extension of co-branding or fandom literature. While emotional resonance was originally hypothesised to have a positive effect, its negative association invites further theoretical reflection and highlights the complexity of affect-based consumer responses. Collectively, the findings contribute to a more refined understanding of the cognitive–affective dynamics underlying symbolic fashion consumption in digital youth markets.</p>
<p>7. Evidence of an ability to be self-directed and act</p>	<p>A detailed project timeline with key milestones has been established to ensure timely and structured progress. Draft chapters will be submitted ahead of</p>

<p>autonomously (process).</p>	<p>each supervisory meeting to facilitate constructive feedback and allow for critical revisions. Tutorials were consistently attended and utilised as reflective checkpoints to support both content development and academic alignment. Time has been reserved in the final phase of the project to refine arguments, formatting, and referencing in accordance with university guidelines and MSc-level expectations. To reflect on personal and academic development throughout the research process, a digital learning log will be maintained, which will document key decisions, theoretical adjustments, feedback actions, and progress against the timeline.</p>
<p>Signed Tutor..... </p>	<p>Date...6 May 2025.....</p>
<p>Signed Student..... </p>	<p>Date.....6th May 2025.....</p>

Students should submit any written work for review by their supervisor **three working days** prior to a tutorial, in order to give the supervisor sufficient time to consider your work and respond to any issues. Students should **normally** expect a response to an email by your supervisor within five working days. It is your responsibility to find out when your supervisor will be on leave or out of the country.

Progress	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025
1st Individual Tutorial with Supervisor 17th January 2025					
Refine Research Aim and Objectives					
Write the Introduction Chapter					
2nd Individual Tutorial with Supervisor 6th February 2025					
Write the Literature Review					
3rd Individual Tutorial with Supervisor 6th March 2025					
Design the Questionnaire					
4th Individual Tutorial with Supervisor 19th March 2025					
Write the Research Design Chapter					
Pilot Test					
Distribute the Questionnaire					
Data Collection					
5th Individual Tutorial with Supervisor 16th April 2025					
Write the Findings and Analysis Chapter					
Write the Discussion and Conclusions Chapter					
6th Individual Tutorial with Supervisor 1st May 2025					
Finalise Chapter One					
Design the Visual Output					
Complete Individual Learning Agreement					
Submit the MSc Project					

Figure 7.1.1 - Individual Learning Timeline
Source: Created by the Author, (2025).

Appendix 7.2 Research Ethics Approval Form

Table 7.2.1 - Research Ethics Approval Form



Educational Ethics Approval Form

IMPORTANT: UAL staff, please refer to the Educational Ethics Code of Practice and associated flowchart which indicates if the use of this form is required.

Declaration to be completed by the student:	Please tick:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have read the Educational Ethics Code of Practice 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have accessed the Ethics of Making https://ethics.arts.ac.uk website and applied the learning to my work 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have reviewed the ethics resources on Academic Support Online to help me consider the ethical parameters of the Code of Practice 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have discussed my work with my unit leader 	Yes
Please use these resources to inform your answers to questions 1 to 7 in the boxes below.	

Applicant name:	Wanqi Sun
Course Title:	MSC Fashion Management
Unit Title:	Final Major Project

If you are a tutor applying on behalf of a student or student group, please give your name here:	
Tutor name:	

1. The code of practice sets out four key areas for ethical consideration. Which one or more of these ethical principles does this application for ethical consideration relate to?	
a. An ethics of care is supported by the Educational Ethics subcommittee as a positive ethic that is the University's responsibility to foster in relation to students, educational content, educational process including material resources, and in students' relations with anyone who participates or interacts with their work.	Yes
b. The principle of social justice obliges the student to identify the risks and benefits of participation in creative or investigative practice. Any risks to persons participating should be weighed against any potential benefits – to the participants or the student, and also the wider benefits to society of the knowledge gained. As with the principle of respect for persons, there is a need to promote equality and racial justice and protect vulnerable groups.	Yes

<p>c. Respect for persons recognises the capacity and rights of all individuals to make their own choices and decisions. It refers to the autonomy and rights to self-determination of all human beings, acknowledges their equality, dignity, freedom and rights. An important component of this principle is the need to provide special protection to vulnerable persons, both students and in student activity involving others.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>d. Beneficence is the principle of acting for the good and wellbeing of others. It requires students to serve the interests of others. In so doing, students comply with the principle of neither doing, nor permitting, any foreseeable harm as a consequence of creative or investigative practice. This is the principle of non-maleficence, it is the principle of doing no harm.</p> <p>The specific duties of promoting equality and good relations are assumed under these principles, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

2. Please provide a 100-word summary of the ethical issues that relate to the work/enquiry that is planned. Please relate it directly to one or more areas of the code and resources above.

The study uses an anonymous, non-traceable online questionnaire to ensure participant confidentiality. No personal data is collected, and gender options include male, female, prefer not to say, and other to reflect inclusivity. Participation is entirely voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any point without consequence. Informed consent is obtained prior to starting the survey. The research involves no foreseeable risk or sensitive content. Data will be used strictly for academic purposes, stored securely, and handled in accordance with UAL ethical guidelines. These measures reflect core principles of respect, beneficence, autonomy, and responsible data management.

Does your work or enquiry require you to work with participants, or reuse personal data that has been obtained elsewhere? If people are participating directly, please ensure they fill in the participant information and consent template (Ask your Course Leader to provide these). If not, go to Questions 6 to 9.

3. Who will the participants be? Please tick the boxes as appropriate.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Students at the University
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff at the University
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: Gen Z consumers aged between 18–26, recruited via online platforms such as Instagram, WeChat group, university discussion groups, and fandom-based communities related to films, television, and games. Participants may or may not be affiliated with the University of the Arts London.

4. What will participants be asked to do and/or how will their personal information be used? Explain in terms appropriate to a layperson.

Participants will be asked to voluntarily complete an anonymous online questionnaire about their attitudes toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. The survey includes demographic questions (e.g., age, gender), and attitudinal items using a 7-point Likert scale. No personal identifying information will be collected or stored. Responses will be used solely for academic research purposes and presented in aggregate form in the final MSc report.

5. What potential risks to the interests of participants do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks?

A participant's interests include their physical and psychological well-being, their commercial interests e.g. IP; and their rights of privacy and reputation. Please note that compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR is a legal obligation.

No significant risks to participants are anticipated, as the study involves a voluntary and anonymous online survey focusing on consumer attitudes rather than sensitive or personal issues. However, to ensure full ethical compliance:

Anonymity: No personally identifiable information (PII) will be collected; the survey does not ask for names, contact details, or tracking data.

Informed Consent: Participants will be provided with a clear and accessible information sheet outlining the purpose of the research, their rights, and how their responses will be used.

Voluntary Participation: Respondents can withdraw from the survey at any point before submission without consequence.

Data Protection: All responses will be stored securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. Data will only be used for academic analysis within the scope of this research project and will not be shared externally.

Psychological Safety: The questionnaire has been designed to avoid distressing or sensitive topics. Questions relate solely to consumer behaviour, preferences, and perceptions regarding licensed fashion products.

These measures are in place to safeguard the privacy, autonomy, and well-being of all participants.


6. Does your project involve children or minors (anyone under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults (e.g. a person with a learning disability)?


No.

7. What potential risks do you foresee to yourself and what steps will you take to minimise those risks? E.g. does your work raise issues of personal safety, impact on vulnerabilities for you (or anyone with whom you are collaborating), especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises?

The research is conducted entirely online through digital survey tools, posing minimal risk to the researcher. No physical fieldwork or in-person interviews are required. The survey is distributed through personal networks and digital platforms, ensuring safe and familiar engagement environments. To minimise digital fatigue or technical disruption, platforms used are secure and user-friendly. Ethical guidance from the university will be followed throughout.

<p>8. Are there other areas of ethical concern? How do you plan to manage these ethical considerations?</p> <p>No significant additional ethical concerns have been identified. The questionnaire is fully anonymised, participation is voluntary, and no sensitive or controversial topics are covered. The study avoids deception and ensures informed consent. If participants withdraw, their data will not be retained. Ethical considerations will continue to be monitored throughout the research process, and any unexpected issues will be raised with the supervisor promptly.</p>
--

<p>9. I confirm my responsibility to deliver the project in accordance with the Code of Practice on Educational Ethics of the University of the Arts London (the University)</p> <p>If I am using personal data: I will only store it on UAL-managed systems and will use the Participant Information and Consent Template to collect personal data. I will ensure I follow the data protection principles at all times.</p>	
Print name of applicant:	Wanqi Sun
Signature of applicant:	
Date:	06 May, 2025

<p>10. I support this project and have reviewed it with the applicant.</p>	
Print name of Tutor:	Liang Lu
Signature of Tutor:	
Date:	6 May 2025

Please submit this form and the relevant attachments to your Unit Leader/Course Leader/Programme Director.

Appendix 7.3 - Statement of Consent for Survey

English (United Kingdom) ▾

What Drives Us to Buy Character-Licensed Fashion? — — A Study on Consumer Attitudes and Purchase Intentions towards Character & Entertainment Licensed Fashion Products

This survey is available in two language versions (English/Chinese). You can switch via the language option in the top right corner.

Hello, my name is Wanqi Sun, and I am conducting research for my Master's degree at the London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London. This survey is part of my research on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions toward character- and entertainment-licensed fashion products.

Survey details:

- **6 sections, 30 questions**
- Takes **approximately 5 minutes**
- **For participants aged 18+**

Your responses are **anonymous** and will be used solely for my dissertation. You can exit the survey at any time, and your answers will not be saved.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at w.sun0720183@arts.ac.uk.

Thank you for your participation!

ELECTRONIC CONSENT

Please select your choice below:

Clicking "**Agree**" means you:

- Have read the information above
- Voluntarily agree to participate
- Confirm you are aged 18 or above

If you do not wish to participate, please click "Disagree" to exit.

Agree

Disagree

>>

Figure 7.3.1 - Statement of Consent for Survey (English Version)

Source: Created by the Author (2025)

我们购买角色授权时尚产品的原因是什么？

—— 关于消费者对角色及娱乐联名授权的时尚产品的态度和购买意愿的研究

本调查问卷提供两种语言版本（英文/中文），您可以在右上角的语言选项中切换。


您好，我目前正在伦敦艺术大学伦敦时装学院攻读硕士学位。本调查是我对于消费者对角色及娱乐联名授权的时尚产品的态度和购买意愿的研究项目的一部分。

调查详情：

共 6 个部分，30 道问题

约 5 分钟 完成

适用于 18 岁及以上的受访者

 您的回答将保持匿名，仅用于我的论文研究。您可以随时退出调查，届时您的答案将不会被保存。如有任何问题，请随时联系我：w.sun0720183@arts.ac.uk

非常感谢您的参与！

电子同意书

请在下方选择您的选项：

点击“同意”即表示您：

已阅读上述信息

自愿同意参与本研究

确认您 已年满 18 岁

如您不愿参与，请点击“不同意”退出调查。

同意

不同意

>>

Figure 7.3.2 - Statement of Consent for Survey (Chinese Version)

Source: Created by the Author (2025)

Appendix 7.4: Case Study One: Sanrio X UNIQLO

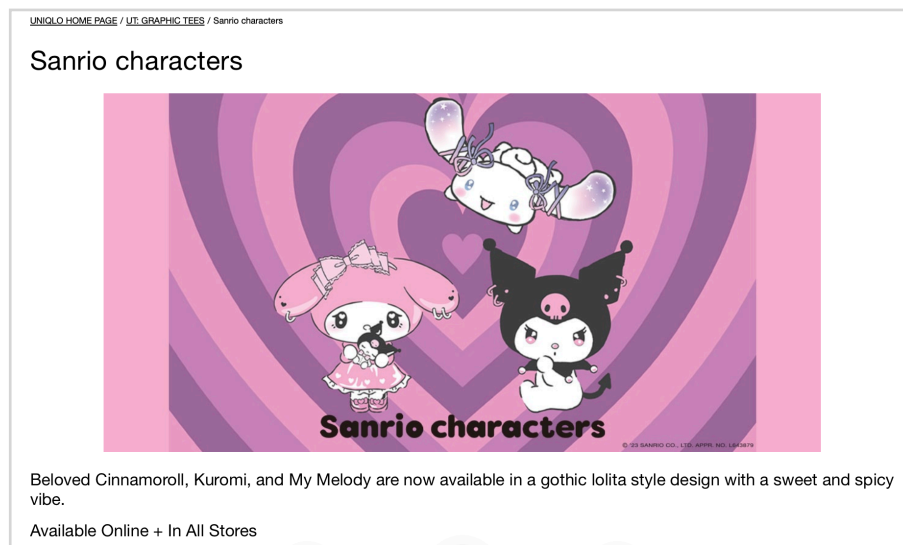


Figure 7.4.1: Uniqlo X Sanrio Collaborative Characters

Source: UNIQLO, no date a

7.4.1 UNIQLO and Sanrio Licensing Background



Figure 7.4.2 - Popular Characters of Sanrio

Source: Sanrio.EU (no date)

UNIQLO is a fast fashion brand owned by the Japanese Fast Retailing group. The first UNIQLO store was opened in June 1984. Adhering to the concept of "simple, practical and high quality", UNIQLO is committed to providing consumers with comfortable, durable and fashionable clothes. After 40 years of development, UNIQLO has become one of the largest fashion retailers in the world (UNIQLO, no date). Sanrio is a Japanese-born brand known for designing, manufacturing and selling a wide range of lovely, high-quality goods. Since its founding in 1960, Sanrio has consistently adhering to the mission of "making life more warm and pleasant" by providing a diverse range of cute products and wonderful life experiences to consumers worldwide (Sanrio, no

date). Sanrio is the home of numerous beloved cartoon characters, including Hello Kitty, Cinnamoroll, My Melody, Pompompurin and Kuromi (Sanrio.eu, no date) (Figure 7.4.2). These characters enjoy high popularity and a large fan base in the world. The UNIQLO x Sanrio 2023 collaboration involved 3 main Sanrio characters: My Melody, Kuromi and Cinnamoroll (UNIQLO, no date a) (Figure 7.4.1). The collaboration of UNIQLO and Sanrio aims to combine the strengths of both brands and attract more consumers, especially young and female consumers.

7.4.2 Product Types and Design Features of the Licensing Series

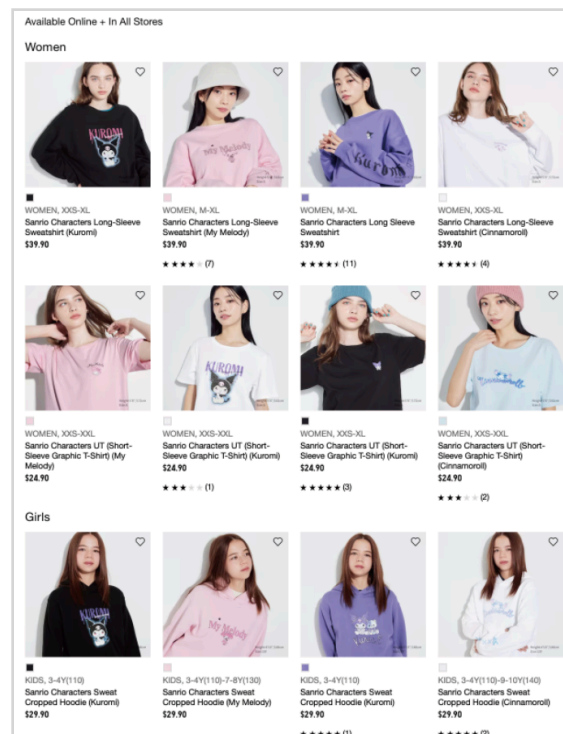


Figure 7.4.3 - Product Range of UNIQLO X Sanrio Collection
Source: UNIQLO, no date a

UNIQLO offers a wide range of licensed Sanrio products, including T-shirts, hoodies, and sweatshirts for adults, as well as T-shirts and hoodies for children (Figure 7.4.3). These designs are based on the classic imagery and personalities of characters such as My Melody, Kuromi, and Cinnamoroll, blended with UNIQLO's minimalist aesthetic to create distinctive styles. For instance, garments featuring My Melody tend to convey a cuter appeal, while those showcasing Kuromi evoke a more edgy and bold aesthetic (Figures 7.4.4 and 7.4.5). Additionally, character imagery is variably placed: some garments feature prominent character prints at the front center, while others minimize the design and position it subtly on the chest to suit diverse consumer tastes (Figures 7.4.5 and 7.4.6). This design strategy is also reflected in the in-store collaboration displays observed during the store audit (Appendix 7.5).

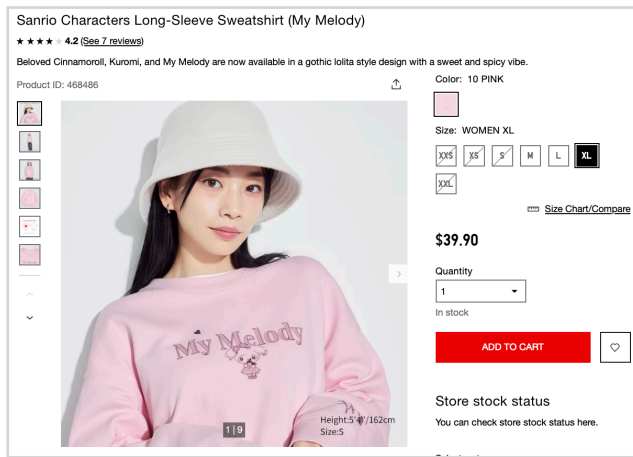


Figure 7.4.4: Sanrio Characters Long-Sleeve Sweatshirt (my Melody)
Source: UNIQLO, no date b

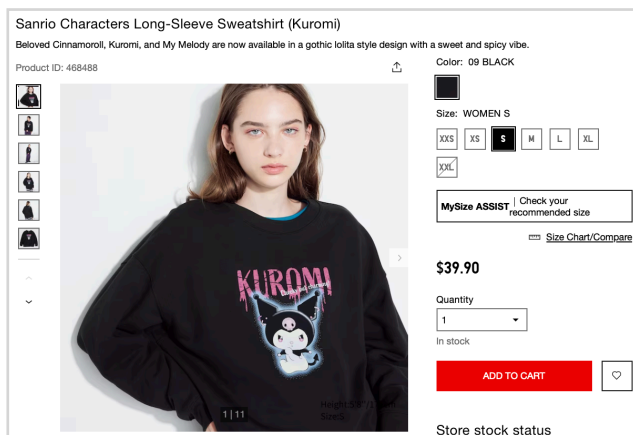


Figure 7.4.5 - Sanrio Characters Long-Sleeve Sweatshirt (Kuromi)
Source: UNIQLO, no date c

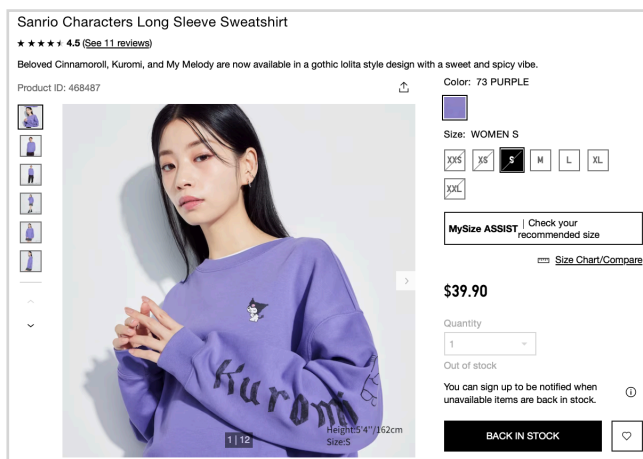


Figure 7.4.6 - Sanrio Characters Long Sleeve Sweatshirt
Source: UNIQLO, no date d

7.4.3 Marketing Strategies

UNIQLO's collaboration with Sanrio employs a multifaceted marketing strategy to enhance consumer engagement and visibility. Primarily, UNIQLO utilises its official social media platforms to release timely updates and curated styling content related to the joint collection, aiming to attract attention and shape consumer preferences (UNIQLO, 2023). Furthermore, the campaign incorporates influencer marketing by inviting celebrities and internet personalities to try on and recommend selected items, thereby amplifying product exposure and encouraging purchase intent (UNIQLO & UNIQLO.UT, 2023; punpromotion, 2023). Additionally, the collection is often launched in limited quantities, leveraging scarcity as a strategic tool to generate urgency and stimulate consumer enthusiasm.

7.4.4 Consumer Feedback

Consumer feedback was highly positive, with many praising the collection's ability to merge character fandom with everyday fashion, allowing wearers to express personal and cultural identity (Figure 7.4.7). Moreover, the collection's strong social appeal contributed to its commercial success. Consumers frequently shared their purchases on social media and exchanged items as gifts, enhancing the products' visibility and desirability (Figures 7.4.8 and Figure 7.4.9). Additionally, its limited-edition nature created a sense of exclusivity, fostering urgency among consumers and driving demand for future collaborations (Figure 7.4.10).

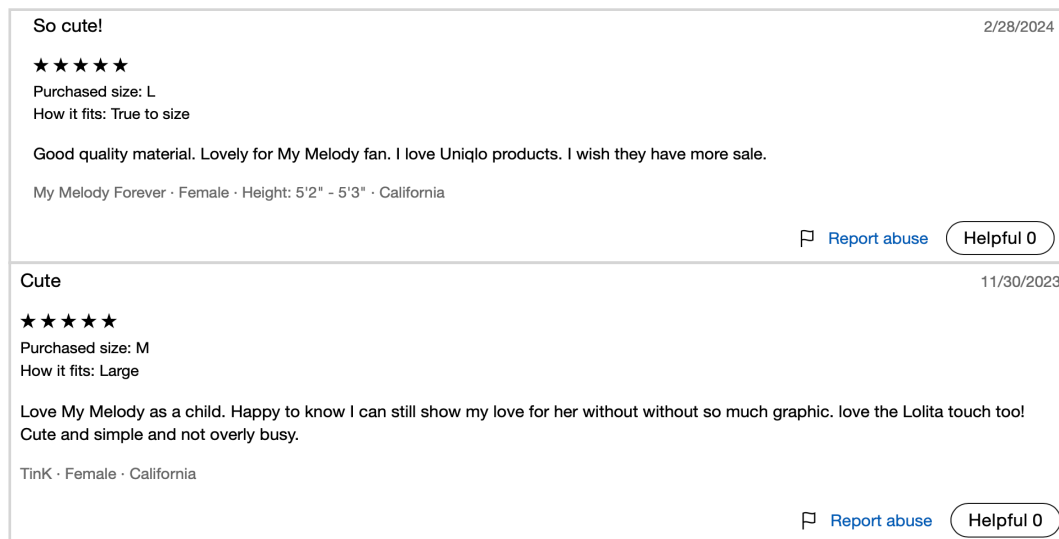


Figure 7.4.7 - Customer Reviews for Sanrio Characters Long-Sleeve Sweatshirt (my Melody)

Sources: TinK, 2023; My Melody Forever, 2024

Got many compliments 3/20/2022

★★★★★

Purchased size: L
How it fits: Large

I bought this for my daughter who loves Sanrio characters. She said she got many compliments when she wore it in her school. The shirt is sturdy and well shaped after several washing and drying. She wanted to wear it oversized so we got size L. Her size is 5'5, 130 lbs. If she wears it as fitted, it should be size M but size L is not too big for her.

Cinnamoroll · Female · 15 to 19 years · Height: 5'4" - 5'5" · Weight: 130lb - 139lb

[Report abuse](#) Helpful 0

Figure 7.4.8 - Customer Review for Sanrio Characters UT (Short-Sleeve Graphic T- Shirt)

Source: Cinnamoroll, 2022

Cute color 3/18/2024

★★★★★

Purchased size: S
How it fits: True to size

Got this as a gift for my cousin. The pastel sky blue is such a cute and hopeful color. Appreciate the design with wings on the back too. The size is a bit bigger as the usual baggy style.

Sanmi · Female · 15 to 19 years · Height: 5'0" - 5'1" · Weight: 110lb - 119lb · California

[Report abuse](#) Helpful 0

Beautiful shirt 12/4/2023

★★★★★

Purchased size: S
How it fits: True to size

I love the shirt for my niece, it fit great and lovely design

AJ2919 · Female · 10 to 14 years · Height: 4'8" - 4'9" · Weight: 100lb - 109lb · Shoe size: US4 · New York

[Report abuse](#) Helpful 1

Figure 7.4.9 - Customer Reviews for Sanrio Characters UT (Short-Sleeve Graphic T-Shirt)(Cinnamoroll)

Sources: AJ2919, 2023; Sanmi, 2024

Super Cute! 2/23/2022

★★★★★

Purchased size: L
How it fits: True to size

This shirt is a super cute addition to my wardrobe! It arrived just a few days after I ordered it and fits as expected, plus it's super soft! I'd love seeing more characters in this collection down the line, but for now I'm very happy with Cinnamoroll!

loveoftheimpossible · Male · 25 to 34 years · Height: 5'8" - 5'9" · Weight: 140lb - 149lb

[Report abuse](#) Helpful 1

Figure 7.4.10 - Customer Review for Sanrio Characters UT (Short-Sleeve Graphic T- Shirt)

Source: loveoftheimpossible, 2022

Appendix 7.5 UNIQLO X Sanrio Store Audit

7.5.1 Chosen Store

UNIQLO (Capitaland Mall store) (Figure 7.5.1)



Figure 7.5.1 - Storefront Display in UNIQLO Capitaland Mall Store
Source: Author's own, 2024

7.5.2 Location

L4-01, 4th Floor, Capitaland Mall, 1 Xizhimen Wai Street, Beijing, China.



Figure 7.5.2 - Location of UNIQLO Capitaland Mall Store, Beijing (Screenshot From Apple Maps)

Source: Apple Maps, 2024

7.5.3 Reasons for Choosing Capitaland Mall

Located in the central district of Beijing, Capitaland Mall is a prominent commercial complex characterized by high foot traffic, particularly among young urban commuters (Figure 7.5.2). Its strategic proximity to Xizhimen Metro Station contributes significantly to its accessibility and consumer flow. Within the mall, the UNIQLO store features the UNIQLO x Sanrio collaborative collection, further integrating branded fashion into the everyday shopping experiences of a youthful demographic (Figure 7.5.1).

7.5.4 Visual Merchandising

The UNIQLO x Sanrio collaborative collection is prominently displayed at the store entrance, occupying the most visually strategic position within the retail layout (Figure 7.5.3). A variety of items, including T-shirts, long-sleeved sweatshirts, and hoodies, are systematically folded and arranged on central counters. Positioned behind the display is a branded promotional poster highlighting the Sanrio collaboration (Figure 7.5.4). Adjacent to the poster stands a female mannequin styled with a long-sleeved Kuromi-themed sweatshirt layered under UNIQLO's signature lightweight down jacket, effectively showcasing coordinated styling options to customers (Figure 7.5.3).



Figure 7.5.3 - the UNIQLO X Sanrio in-Store Visual Merchandising
Source: Author's own, 2024



Figure 7.5.4 - the UNIQLO X Sanrio Poster
Source: Author's own, 2024

UNIQLO integrates its core apparel lines with the Sanrio collaborative products to create cohesive styling opportunities and enhance cross-selling potential. In the women's clothing section, for instance, a mannequin was styled in a complete outfit comprising the Kuromi T-shirt, a blue long-sleeved shirt, a grey dress, and black boots (Figure 7.5.5). The blue shirt and grey skirt featured in the display were also available for purchase nearby, effectively linking the collaboration items with UNIQLO's staple wardrobe offerings.



Figure 7.5.5 - White Kuromi T-Shirts and the Presenting Mannequin
Source: Author's own, 2024

The kids collection of the UNIQLO x Sanrio collaboration series in a separate children's collaborative series area (Figure 7.5.6).



Figure 7.5.6 - Children's Sanrio Licensed Collection
Source: Author's own, 2024

In the children's section, the Cinnamoroll T-shirt from the Sanrio collaboration series was styled with a khaki denim skirt as part of the visual display (Figure 7.5.7). The skirt belongs to UNIQLO's core product line rather than the licensed series. This kind of skirts (available in khaki and white) were displayed next to the collaborative products, thereby encouraging bundled purchasing of licensed and regular products (Figures 7.5.8 and 7.5.9).



Figure 7.5.7 - Children's Sanrio Series Promotion
Source: Author's own, 2024



Figure 7.5.8 - Combined Outfit of Cinnamoroll T-Shirt and Khaki Denim Skirt

Source: Author's Own, 2024



Figure 7.5.9 - The Khaki Denim Skirt

Source: Author's Own, 2024

7.5.5 In-Store Promotional Materials

In addition to the UNIQLO and Sanrio promotional posters placed near the collaborative product display (Figure 7.5.10), UNIQLO enhances in-store visibility through supplementary promotional materials attached directly to the product labels (Figure 7.5.11). These include a collaboration poster card (Figure 7.5.12), as well as an informational card introducing the UNIQLO x Sanrio licensed series (Figure 7.5.13). These unique label and cards help UNIQLO reinforcing the licensing identity and enhancing consumer engagement at the point of sale.



Figure 7.5.10 - UNIQLO X Sanrio Posters
Source: Author's Own, 2024



Figure 7.5.11 - Unique Licensed Labels
Source: Author's Own, 2024



Figure 7.5.12 - the Introduction Card of Uniqlo X Sanrio Licensed Series
Source: Author's Own, 2024



Figure 7.5.13 - Sanrio Poster Label Card
Source: Author's own, 2024

7.5.6 Pricing Strategy

The pricing of the UNIQLO x Sanrio collaborative apparel remains largely consistent with that of UNIQLO's core product line, indicating a strategy aimed at maintaining affordability while leveraging licensed branding. As shown in Figures 7.5.14 and 7.5.15, the in-store price of the black Kuromi sweatshirt from the collaboration is 199 RMB, which is identical to the price of a standard black round-neck sweatshirt from UNIQLO's regular collection. This pricing parity suggests that UNIQLO positions the collaborative items as accessible rather than premium, likely to appeal to price-sensitive consumers.



Figure 7.5.14 - In-Store Price of the Black Kuromi Sweatshirt
Source: Author's own, 2024

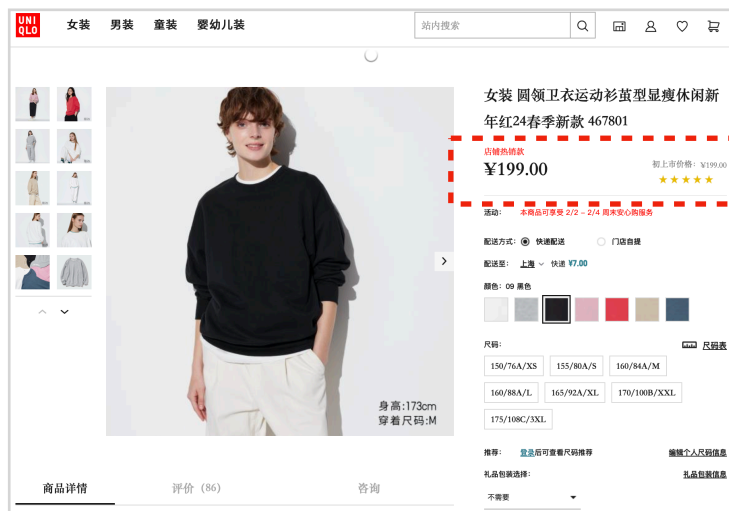


Figure 7.5.15 - Online Price of UNIQLO Round-Neck Black Sweatshirt
Source: UNIQLO, no date e

In the Chinese market, the same product may be listed at different prices across various e-commerce platforms—such as Taobao, JD.com, and Tmall—due to platform-specific discount policies and promotional strategies. To ensure consistency and objectivity in the analysis, the online pricing data for the UNIQLO x Sanrio collaborative apparel in this study is sourced exclusively from UNIQLO's official website. As shown in Figure 7.23, the black Kuromi sweatshirt was discounted from its original launch price of 199 RMB to 129 RMB. This promotion is labeled as a time-limited offer, although no specific start or end date is indicated on the product page.

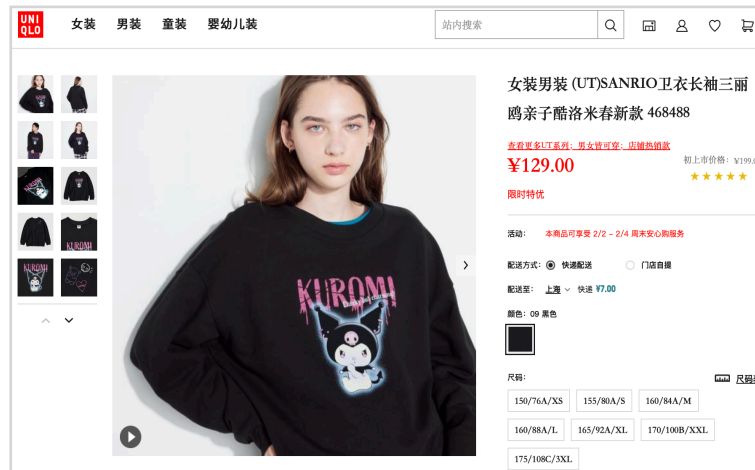


Figure 7.5.16- Online Price for the Black Kuromi Sweatshirt
Source: UNIQLO, no date f

7.5.7 Customers

The primary consumer demographic for the UNIQLO x Sanrio collaboration appears to be young women in their early twenties. In the children's section, young mothers shopping with their children were also observed. Most shoppers demonstrated clear familiarity with the featured Sanrio characters and were able to identify them with ease. Consumer behaviour typically involved selecting one or two items from the collection and proceeding to the fitting rooms, suggesting a targeted and deliberate purchase approach rather than impulsive buying.

Appendix 7.6: Case Study Two: Disney X Primark



Figure 7.6.1 - Primark's Disney Collection in-Store
Source: My Magical WDW Shopper, 2023

In celebration of The Walt Disney Company's 100th anniversary in 2023, Primark launched a series of collaborative collections with Disney during the latter half of the year, aiming to leverage the "100 Years of Disney" campaign to strengthen brand visibility and consumer engagement. Initially introduced as part of the centennial celebration, the collaboration evolved into an ongoing product line, reflecting the sustained commercial and cultural appeal of Disney's intellectual property. The collection was made available across both online platforms and physical retail stores (Figure 1.15), and included a broad range of items encompassing menswear, womenswear, childrenswear, babywear, footwear, accessories, and homeware. Each product featured visual motifs inspired by Disney's iconic characters and narrative universe (Martin, 2024).

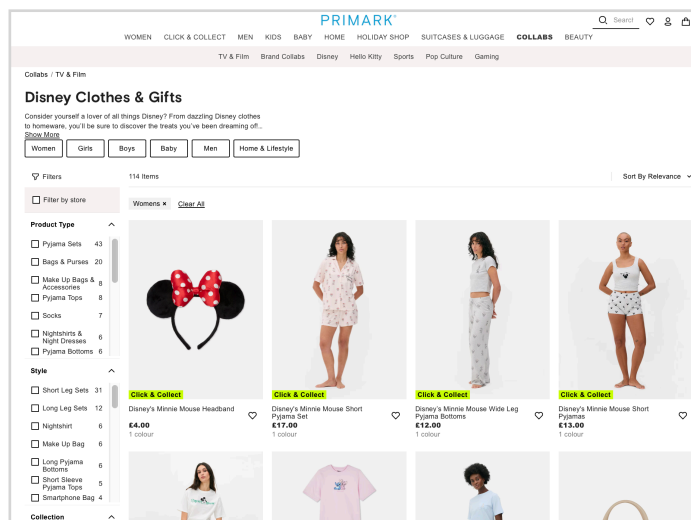


Figure 7.6.2 - Primark's Disney Collection Online
Source: Primark, no date

Primark's Disney-licensed apparel line combined classic design elements with distinctive and innovative character-themed patterns. The collection received positive reception from a variety of fashion bloggers and content creators, who praised the quality of the fabrics and the intricacy of the printed designs (My Magical WDW Shopper, 2023; Érica de Chruz, 2024; Life With Liz, 2024; A Girl and a Castle, 2024). For instance, a blogger reviewing purchases from Primark's Tottenham Court Road location commented on a Disney-themed oversized T-shirt, noting, "We got this massive oversized T-shirt, which I really love the pattern on—Disney Day Out!" (Figure 1.16). Similarly, content creator Matthew, documenting his experience at Primark in Sawgrass Mills Mall, expressed enthusiasm for the Disney 100 Collection: "Awesome! Featuring all my favorite characters, and I love these! They are really soft" (My Magical WDW Shopper, 2023) (Figure 1.17). These first-hand consumer responses offer valuable insight into how the collection was perceived in terms of product appeal and emotional resonance.



Figure 7.6.3 - "Disney Day Out"
Oversized T-Shirt
Source: a Girl and a Castle, 2024



Figure 7.6.4 - Disney Sweatshirts
Source: my Magical WDW Shopper,
2023

Primark retained its standard pricing strategy for the Disney-licensed products, maintaining affordability in alignment with its broader target audience within the character and entertainment licensing market. This approach leverages emotional resonance with familiar intellectual properties as a central commercial tactic. For example, a plain white T-shirt may appear unremarkable in isolation; however, when embellished with imagery of a beloved character, it acquires enhanced symbolic and emotional value, thereby increasing its perceived value among consumers (Hong, 2019).

Appendix 7.7 Revisions Following Questionnaire Piloting

Table 7.7.1 - Piloting Revisions Table

Pre-piloting	After Piloting
Add four additional character/entertainment options and one personalised input field to increase relevance and inclusivity.	
Here are 16 different characters or entertainment options. Please choose the ONE you like the most.	Here are 19 different characters or entertainment options. Please choose the ONE you like the most. (If you don't like any of the options below, you can enter your own favorite character or entertainment in the last input field.)
Shorten the introduction paragraph and remove academic citations. Replace academic tone and terminology with more accessible language to enhance readability. Include practical real-life examples where appropriate to aid respondent understanding.	
This section is about Post-Subcultural Affiliation (PSA). The construct of Post-Subcultural Affiliation refers to a fluid, flexible affiliation to one or multiple post-subcultures, as well as individualised forms of identity expression through relevant subcultural styles in contemporary society (Bennett, 2011). The theories about post-subculture recognise the fragmentation, reflexivity, and consumer-driven nature of modern identity construction (Bennett, 1999; Muggleton, 2000).	This section focuses on the Post-Subcultural Affiliation (PSA) as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. Post-subculture is a fluid and adaptable subculture. People could engage with multiple subcultures through shared interests, digital interactions, and engagement with fandom communities.
This section is about Emotional Resonance (ER). Emotional resonance can be described as a deep emotional connection with others or a spiritual phenomenon involving the recognition, understanding, and empathetic response to the emotions of others (Vyas, 2023). In marketing contexts, emotional resonance could influence consumers' perception and decision-making by aligning with the emotional states of target audiences (Heath, 2007). When consumers engage with narratives through books, comics, films, and television, they often develop profound emotional bonds with characters, shaped by the emotional trajectories of these stories (Keen, 2024; Rühlemann, 2022).	This section focuses on the Emotional Resonance (ER) as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. Emotional resonance refers to the deep emotional connection people feel toward a character or entertainment. It happens when a character's story, personality, or experiences create strong feelings to you, such as joy, excitement, or nostalgia.
This section is about Social Sharing Value(SSV). Social Sharing Value refers to the personal value, social recognition, and societal influence that consumers gain when sharing information, experiences, or content on social platforms or within communities (Simon and Tossan, 2018; Qian et al., 2022), which is in line with the multi-dimensional theory of media satisfaction (Rubin, 2009). This includes activities such as asking a question and receiving a response, publishing a blog post and getting comments or likes, or receiving emotional support through encouragement messages (Oh, Ozkaya and LaRose, 2014).	This section focuses on the Social Sharing Value(SSV) as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. Social sharing value refers to how much you enjoy sharing and discussing the licensed fashion products of your favourite character or entertainment. This can include talking about it with friends, posting about it, and engaging with related content on social media or within fan communities.

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Table 7.7.1 - Piloting Revisions Table (Continued)

<p>This section is about Perceived Novelty (PN). Perceived novelty refers to a consumer’s subjective sense that a product is new, unexpected, or unfamiliar, based on how it diverges from existing mental categories (Förster et al., 2010; Moreau et al., 2001).</p>	<p>This section focuses on the Perceived Novelty (PN) as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. Perceived novelty refers to how consumers perceive a product as new or different compared to similar ones in the market.</p>
<p>This section is about Collection Value(CV). The concept of collection value refers to the perceived worth consumers assign to an item based on its uniqueness, scarcity, emotional attachment, or potential for future value ((Belk, 1995; Chen, 2009; Phan and Hoai, 2025).</p>	<p>This section focuses on the Collection Value(CV) as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. Collection value refers to how much a product is worth keeping over time, either for personal enjoyment or as a valuable collectible.</p>
<p>Reinsert the name and image of the respondent’s selected option before each section to serve as visual and cognitive anchors, thereby reducing conceptual drift.</p>	
<p><u>To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</u></p>	<p>Your selected character / entertainment is : \$ { q : // Q I D 8 / C h o i c e G r o u p / SelectedChoicesTextEntry}</p> <p><u>To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</u></p>
<p>Add clear temporal framing, conditional qualifiers, and comparative wording to the description items in order to measure different dimensions of consumer purchase intention and reduce ambiguity.</p>	
<p>I am likely to buy «character/IP»-licensed fashion products.</p> <p>I intend to purchase «character/IP»-licensed fashion products in the future.</p> <p>Within the same fashion product category, I prefer to buy «character/IP»-licensed products.</p>	<p>If «character/IP»-licensed fashion products are available, accessible, and affordable to me, I am likely to buy them.</p> <p>I intend to purchase «character/IP»-licensed fashion products in the next six months.</p> <p>Within the same fashion product category, I prefer to buy «character/IP»-licensed products rather than non-licensed ones.</p>

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Appendix 7.8 Final Questionnaire

The original questionnaire was delivered in both English and Mandarin Chinese to ensure comprehension among all respondents. Only the English version is presented below for consistency with the language of the dissertation. The Chinese version is available upon request.

For certain characters (Pikachu, Monkey D. Luffy, Iron Man), conditional display logic was used to align item phrasing with the canonical name of the parent franchise (Pokémon, One Piece, Marvel). These adjustments were made to ensure semantic accuracy and enhance immersion without altering the substantive content of the questions.

The following sample questionnaire displays piped-text functionality using “Harry Potter” as the selected entertainment IP. A neutral visual asset was used to represent the Harry Potter universe in order to respect diverse interpretations of the franchise. In the actual survey, each respondent chose their favourite character or franchise from a curated list, and that selection was dynamically inserted into all relevant items using Qualtrics piped text.

What Drives Us to Buy Character-Licensed Fashion? — — A Study on Consumer Attitudes and Purchase Intentions towards Character & Entertainment Licensed Fashion Products

This survey is available in two language versions (English/Chinese). You can switch via the language option in the top right corner.

Hello, my name is Wanqi Sun, and I am conducting research for my Master's degree at the London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London. This survey is part of my research on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions toward character- and entertainment-licensed fashion products.

Survey details:

- **6 sections, 30 questions**
- Takes **approximately 5 minutes**
- **For participants aged 18+**

Your responses are **anonymous** and will be used solely for my dissertation. You can exit the survey at any time, and your answers will not be saved.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at w.sun0720183@arts.ac.uk.

Thank you for your participation!

ELECTRONIC CONSENT

Please select your choice below:

Clicking "**Agree**" means you:

- Have read the information above
- Voluntarily agree to participate
- Confirm you are aged 18 or above

If you do not wish to participate, please click "Disagree" to exit.

Agree

Disagree

>>

Figure 7.8.1 - Example of Final Questionnaire With Selected Option "Harry Potter"

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Please specify your age

18-27

28-43

44-59

Above 60

Please specify your gender

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

Other

How often have you purchased character or entertainment-licensed fashion products in the past? (e.g., Pokémon T-shirts, Marvel hoodies, Harry Potter-themed accessories, Disney character handbags)

Always

Frequently

Often

Sometimes

Seldom

Rarely

Never

Here are 19 different characters or entertainment options. Please choose the ONE you like the most. (If you don't like any of the options below, you can enter your own favorite character or entertainment in the last input field.)

Pikachu



Demon Slayer



Monkey D. Luffy



Detective Conan (Case Closed)



Winnie the Pooh



SpongeBob SquarePants



Harry Potter



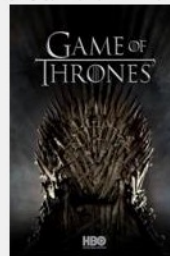
Iron Man



SHERLOCK



The Game of Thrones



Squid Game



The Big Bang Theory



Genshin Impact



League of Legends



Minecraft



Apex Legends



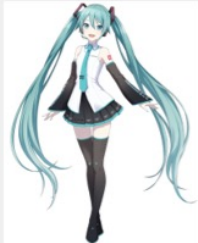
Hello Kitty



Mickey Mouse



Hatsune Miku



If you don't like any of the characters or entertainment options above, you can enter your own favorite character or entertainment here:





To what extent do you like Harry Potter ?

Love

Really Like

Somewhat Like

Neutral

Somewhat Dislike

Really Dislike

Hate



This section focuses on the **Post-Subcultural Affiliation (PSA)** as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. **Post-subculture** is a fluid and adaptable subculture. People could engage with multiple subcultures through shared interests, digital interactions, and engagement with fandom communities.

Your selected character / entertainment is :



Harry Potter

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

I think purchasing or wearing Harry Potter-licensed fashion products represents my fandom identity for Harry Potter.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

I feel a sense of belonging to the post-subculture that Harry Potter-licensed fashion products represent.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

In activities or environments related to Harry Potter (such as anime and movie conventions or theme parks), I am more willing to wear fashion products licensed by Harry Potter.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Engaging with Harry Potter-licensed fashion products makes me feel emotionally immersed in the Harry Potter's world.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

When I see others wearing Harry Potter-licensed fashion products, I feel like we are part of the same post-subcultural group.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

This section focuses on the **Emotional Resonance (ER)** as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. **Emotional resonance** refers to the deep emotional connection people feel toward a character or entertainment. It happens when a character's story, personality, or experiences create strong feelings to you, such as joy, excitement, or nostalgia.



Your selected character / entertainment is : Harry Potter

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

Seeing Harry Potter-licensed fashion products evokes a deep emotional resonance with Harry Potter in me.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

When I see Harry Potter-licensed fashion products, I feel nostalgic.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Seeing Harry Potter-licensed fashion products triggers my memories related to Harry Potter.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Wearing Harry Potter-licensed fashion products makes me feel emotionally connected to Harry Potter.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

<<

>>

This section focuses on the **Social Sharing Value(SSV)** as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. **Social sharing value** refers to how much you enjoy sharing and discussing the licensed fashion products of your favourite character or entertainment. This can include talking about it with friends, posting about it, and engaging with related content on social media or within fan communities.



Your selected character / entertainment is : Harry Potter

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

I often discuss Harry Potter-licensed fashion products with others on social media or in person (e.g., in forums, fan groups, through Twitter hashtags, or casual conversations).

Strongly Agree
Agree
Somewhat Agree
Neutral
Somewhat Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

I often see content or marketing campaigns related to Harry Potter-licensed fashion products on social media.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Somewhat Agree
Neutral
Somewhat Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

Content related to Harry Potter-licensed fashion products on social media captures my interest and makes me want to engage (e.g., like, comment, or share).

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

I think content related to Harry Potter-licensed fashion products is attention-grabbing on social media.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree



This section focuses on the **Perceived Novelty (PN)** as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. **Perceived novelty** refers to how consumers perceive a product as new or different compared to similar ones in the market.



Your selected character / entertainment is : Harry Potter

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

I think Harry Potter-licensed fashion product is novel.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

I think Harry Potter-licensed fashion product has a unique design that differentiates it from others in the market.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Harry Potter-licensed fashion products give me the sense of surprise.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

I think Harry Potter-licensed fashion products bring creative elements to fashion design.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

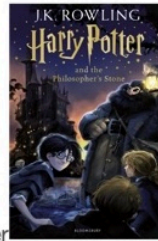
Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree



This section focuses on the **Collection Value(CV)** as an influencing factor in your attitude toward character and entertainment licensed fashion products. **Collection value** refers to how much a product is worth keeping over time, either for personal enjoyment or as a valuable collectible.



Your selected character / entertainment is : Harry Potter

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

I consider Harry Potter-licensed fashion products as valuable collectibles.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Collecting Harry Potter-licensed fashion products gives me a sense of achievement.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Owning Harry Potter-licensed fashion products gives me a sense of fulfilment.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

I think the price of Harry Potter-licensed fashion products is going to appreciate over time.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree



This section aims to understand your **Purchase Intention(PI)** for the licensed fashion products of the character or entertainment you selected.



Your selected character / entertainment is : Harry Potter

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

If Harry Potter-licensed fashion products are available, accessible, and affordable to me, I am likely to buy them.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

I intend to purchase Harry Potter-licensed fashion products in the next six months.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Within the same fashion product category, I prefer to buy Harry Potter-licensed products rather than non-licensed ones.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Appendix 7.9 Descriptive Analysis of Variables in the Initial Regression Model

Table 7.9.1 - Descriptive Analysis of Variables in the Initial Regression Model

Descriptives

		Statistic	Std. Error	
PSA	Mean	4.8851	.09794	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	4.6920	
		Upper Bound	5.0783	
	5% Trimmed Mean	4.9520		
	Median	5.2000		
	Variance	1.938		
	Std. Deviation	1.39204		
	Minimum	1.00		
	Maximum	7.00		
	Range	6.00		
	Interquartile Range	2.00		
	Skewness	-.670	.171	
	Kurtosis	-.070	.341	
ER	Mean	4.9455	.09840	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	4.7515	
		Upper Bound	5.1396	
	5% Trimmed Mean	5.0155		
	Median	5.2500		
	Variance	1.956		
	Std. Deviation	1.39856		
	Minimum	1.00		
	Maximum	7.00		
	Range	6.00		
	Interquartile Range	2.00		
	Skewness	-.675	.171	
	Kurtosis	-.092	.341	
SSV	Mean	4.4851	.09495	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	4.2979	
		Upper Bound	4.6724	
	5% Trimmed Mean	4.4902		
	Median	4.5000		
	Variance	1.821		
	Std. Deviation	1.34955		
	Minimum	1.00		
	Maximum	7.00		
	Range	6.00		
	Interquartile Range	2.00		
	Skewness	-.131	.171	
	Kurtosis	-.680	.341	

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

PN	Mean		4.5297	.10283
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	4.3269	
		Upper Bound	4.7325	
	5% Trimmed Mean		4.5495	
	Median		4.5000	
	Variance		2.136	
	Std. Deviation		1.46148	
	Minimum		1.00	
	Maximum		7.00	
	Range		6.00	
	Interquartile Range		2.25	
	Skewness		-.166	.171
	Kurtosis		-.754	.341
	CV	Mean		4.3614
95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Lower Bound	4.1507	
		Upper Bound	4.5721	
5% Trimmed Mean			4.3875	
Median			4.5000	
Variance			2.307	
Std. Deviation			1.51874	
Minimum			1.00	
Maximum			7.00	
Range			6.00	
Interquartile Range			2.50	
Skewness			-.285	.171
Kurtosis			-.727	.341
PI		Mean		5.2492
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	5.0856	
		Upper Bound	5.4127	
	5% Trimmed Mean		5.3117	
	Median		5.3333	
	Variance		1.390	
	Std. Deviation		1.17889	
	Minimum		1.00	
	Maximum		7.00	
	Range		6.00	
	Interquartile Range		1.33	
	Skewness		-.831	.171
	Kurtosis		.766	.341

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
PSA	.095	202	<.001	.955	202	<.001
ER	.119	202	<.001	.951	202	<.001
SSV	.076	202	.007	.978	202	.003
PN	.072	202	.013	.975	202	.001
CV	.087	202	<.001	.968	202	<.001
PI	.124	202	<.001	.946	202	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Appendix 7.10 - Normality Check of Cognition_Factor (Composite Variable)

Table 7.10.1 - Normality Check of Cognition_Factor

Descriptives

		Statistic	Std. Error	
Cognition_factor	Mean	4.4455	.09536	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	4.2575	
		Upper Bound	4.6336	
	5% Trimmed Mean	4.4658		
	Median	4.5000		
	Variance	1.837		
	Std. Deviation	1.35537		
	Minimum	1.00		
	Maximum	7.00		
	Range	6.00		
	Interquartile Range	1.78		
	Skewness	-.272	.171	
	Kurtosis	-.424	.341	

Tests of Normality

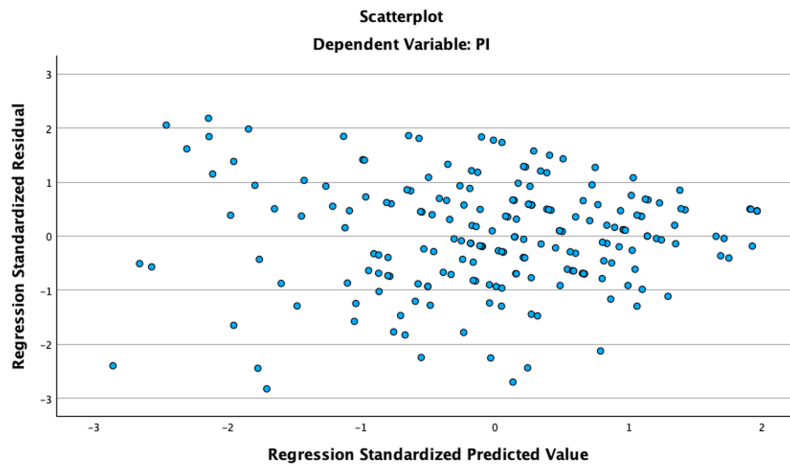
	Kolmogorov–Smirnov ^a			Shapiro–Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Cognition_factor	.075	202	.008	.982	202	.012

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Appendix 7.11 Diagnostic Tests for Gauss-Markov Assumptions

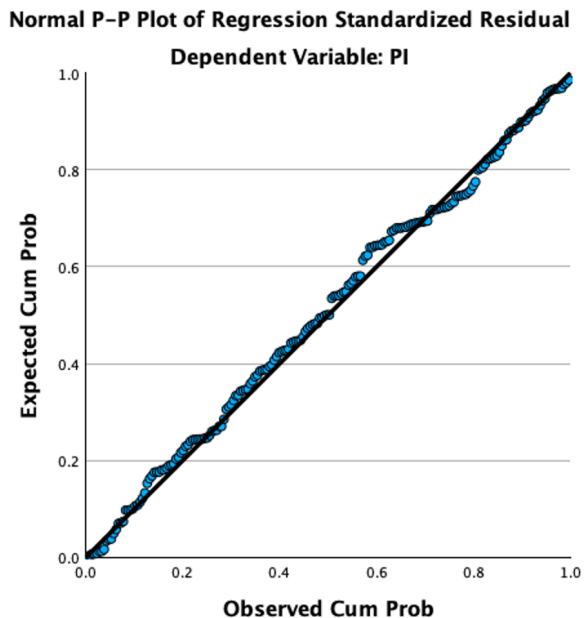
Table 7.11.1 - Scatterplot of Standardized Residuals Against Standardized Predicted Values



Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The residuals appear randomly scattered without a discernible pattern, suggesting that the assumption of homoscedasticity is met.

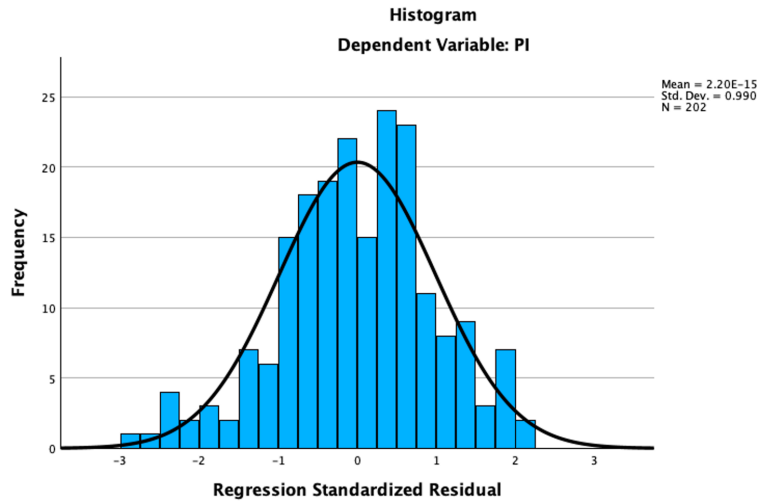
Table 7.11.2 - Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals



Source: Created by the author, (2025).

The plot shows that the standardized residuals closely follow the diagonal line, suggesting that the residuals are approximately normally distributed. This supports the assumption of normality for the error terms.

Table 7.11.3 - Histogram of Regression Standardized Residuals



Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Histogram showing that the distribution of the standardized residuals approximates a normal distribution, supporting the normality assumption of the regression model.

Table 7.11.4 - Descriptive Statistics and Tests of Normality

Case Processing Summary

	Valid		Cases Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Standardized Residual	202	100.0%	0	0.0%	202	100.0%

Descriptives

		Statistic	Std. Error	
Standardized Residual	Mean	.0000000	.06965614	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	-.1373505	
		Upper Bound	.1373505	
	5% Trimmed Mean	.0226207		
	Median	.0017839		
	Variance	.980		
	Std. Deviation	.9899975		
	Minimum	-2.82626		
	Maximum	2.18407		
	Range	5.01033		
	Interquartile Range	1.29021		
	Skewness	-.312	.171	
	Kurtosis	.105	.341	

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Standardized Residual	.057	202	.200*	.988	202	.084

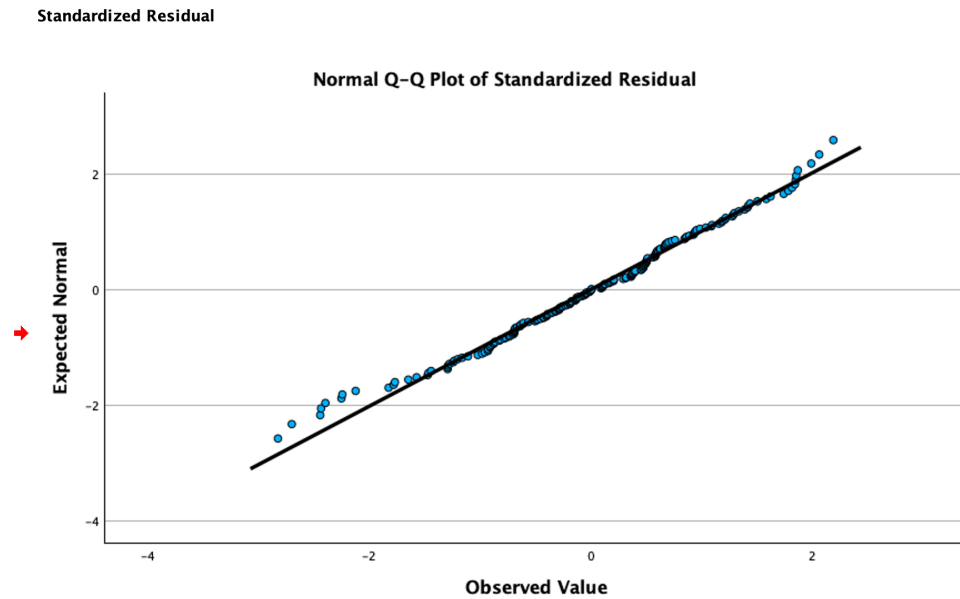
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Descriptive statistics and normality tests for standardized residuals, showing that residuals are approximately normally distributed (Shapiro-Wilk p = .084 > .05).

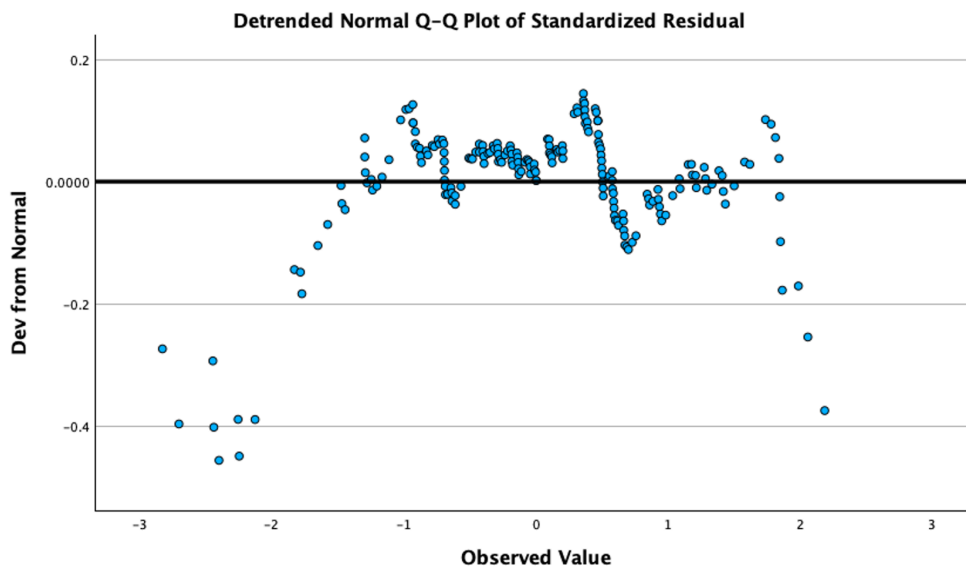
Table 7.11.5 - Normal Q-Q Plot of Standardized Residuals



Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Normal Q-Q plot indicating that standardized residuals closely follow the reference line, supporting the assumption of normality.

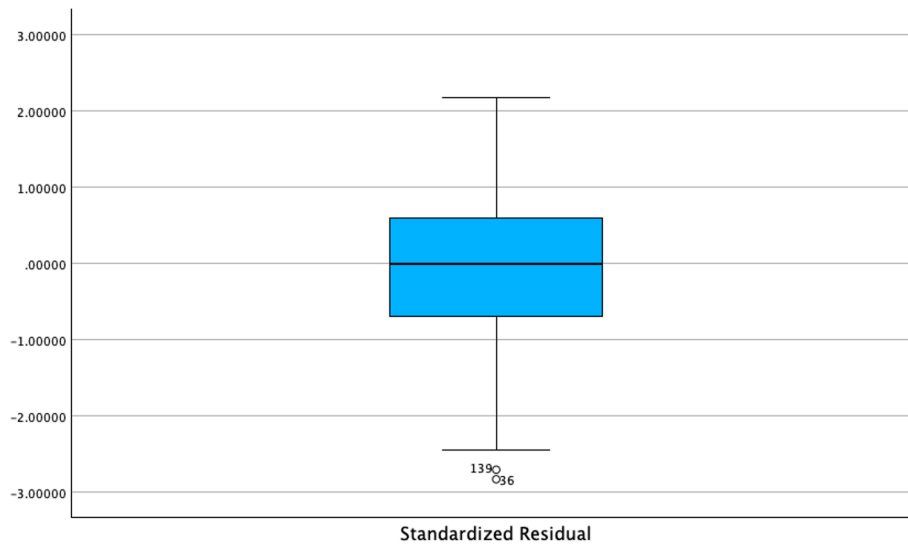
Table 7.11.6 - Detrended Normal Q-Q Plot of Standardized Residuals



Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Detrended Q-Q plot showing minor deviations but no major systematic departures from normality.

Table 7.11.7 - Boxplot of Standardized Residuals



Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Boxplot illustrating the distribution of standardized residuals with minimal extreme outliers.

Table 7.11.8 - Model Summary Showing Durbin-Watson Statistic

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.557 ^a	.311	.297	.98862	1.842

a. Predictors: (Constant), Coginition_factor, PSA, ER, SSV

b. Dependent Variable: PI

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	3.3712	6.5377	5.2492	.65716	202
Residual	-2.79411	2.15922	.00000	.97874	202
Std. Predicted Value	-2.858	1.961	.000	1.000	202
Std. Residual	-2.826	2.184	.000	.990	202

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Model summary table including the Durbin–Watson statistic to test for autocorrelation in residuals.

Appendix 7.12 - Cronbach's Alpha Values for Five Independent Constructs and One Dependent Construct

Table 7.12.1 - Cronbach's Alpha Values for Post-Subcultural Affiliation (PSA)

→ Reliability_ER

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	202	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	202	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.867	4

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Table 7.12.2 - Cronbach's Alpha Values for Emotional Resonance (ER)

→ Reliability_PSA

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	202	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	202	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.887	5

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Table 7.12.3 - Cronbach's Alpha Values for Social Sharing Value (SSV)

➔ **Reliability_SSV**

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	202	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	202	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.815	4

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Table 7.12.4 - Cronbach's Alpha Values for Perceived Novelty (PN)

➔ **Reliability_PN**

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	202	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	202	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.887	4

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Table 7.12.5 - Cronbach's Alpha Values for Collection Value (CV)

→ **Reliability_CV**

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	202	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	202	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.880	4

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Table 7.12.6 - Cronbach's Alpha Values for Purchase Intention (PI)

→ **Reliability_PI**

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	202	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	202	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.769	3

Source: Created by the author, (2025).

Appendix 7.13 – Participant Recruitment Poster

This poster was designed and circulated via social media (e.g., WeChat, Instagram) to recruit participants and promote survey visibility.

Who is YOUR Favourite?

Show us Your Favourite Character !
And Your Attitudes on
Character & Entertainment Licensed Fashion !

What Drives Us to Buy Character-Licensed Fashion?
— A Study on Consumer Attitudes and Purchase Intentions towards Character & Entertainment Licensed Fashion Products

Thank you very much for your time and participation! If you think this survey is fun, please share it with your friends! I really really appreciate it!

Figure 7.13.1 - Survey Poster (English Version)

Source: Created by the author, 2025.

Source of visual elements: All character images used in the survey poster (Figure 7.13.1) were sourced from publicly available promotional materials and official websites of respective IP owners, including *Harry Potter*, *Detective Conan*, *Hello Kitty*, *League of Legends*, *Iron Man*, *SpongeBob*, *Genshin Impact*, and others. These visuals are used strictly for academic, non-commercial research purposes.



非常感谢您的时间和参与！
 如果您觉得这份调查有趣，请分享给您的朋友吧！我真的真的非常感激！

Figure 7.13.2 - Survey Poster (Chinese Version)

Source: Created by the author, 2025.

Source of visual elements: All character images used in the survey poster (Figure 7.13.1) were sourced from publicly available promotional materials and official websites of respective IP owners, including *Harry Potter*, *Detective Conan*, *Hello Kitty*, *League of Legends*, *Iron Man*, *SpongeBob*, *Genshin Impact*, and others. These visuals are used strictly for academic, non-commercial research purposes.