Generation Z's purchasing intentions in the fashion market

La intención de compra en la generación Z en el mercado de moda

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Abstract

This quantitative study explores how Generation Z's attitudes and subjective norms toward the fashion market exert influence on purchase intention. It analyzes emotional intelligence, perceived quality, and gender as independent variables of attitudes and emotional intelligence of subjective norms. Findings show that the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) explains the purchase intention in the fashion market by generation Z. Results revealed that gender does not influence the development of attitudes generated by the perception of quality and emotional intelligence. On the other hand, emotional intelligence does not influence subjective norms. This research will help companies in the fashion market generate specific market strategies to increase the purchase intention of generation Z.

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Resumen

Este estudio cuantitativo explora como las actitudes y las normas subjetivas hacia el mercado de la moda por parte de la generación Z influyen en la intención de compra. Se analiza la inteligencia emocional, la percepción de calidad y el género como variables independientes de las actitudes y la inteligencia emocional de las normas subjetivas. Los hallazgos mostraron que la Teoría de Acción Razonada (TRA) explica la intención de compra en el mercado de la moda por parte de la generación Z. Los hallazgos revelaron que el género no influye en el desarrollo de actitudes, las cuales son generadas por la percepción de calidad y la inteligencia emocional. Por su parte, las normas subjetivas no son inducidas por la inteligencia emocional. Esta investigación contribuirá las empresas del mercado de la moda a generar estrategias de mercado específicas para impulsar la intención de compra por parte de la generación Z.

Código JEL: M3, M300, M310
Palabras clave: mercadotecnia; investigación del consumidor; sentimiento del consumidor; moda

Introduction

The textile sector is valued at 3 trillion dollars and employs over 300 million workers, generating 2% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) worldwide. This sector is composed of two branches. The first branch, "the textile industry," focuses on developing, producing, and distributing raw materials, mainly natural fibers such as cotton, linen, and silks, and synthetic fibers such as polyester, rayon, and nylon. The second branch, "the garment industry," is composed of three sectors: the "fashion market" (clothing, shoes, backpacks, etc.), the home apparel market (tablecloths, sheets, towels), and the industrial garment market (uniforms, gloves, shoes, etc.) (Mirandona et al., 2007).

In the United States of America (USA), the textile sector has a contribution of 406 billion dollars, equivalent to 4% of annual GDP, employing 1.9 million workers (Fashion United, 2016). China generates 255 billion dollars only in exports and employs 10 million workers. Both are the most important countries for the textile sector, above major powers such as Bangladesh, Vietnam, and India (Fashion United, 2013). Meanwhile, the textile sector in Latin America represents one of the most important economic sectors. In Colombia, the sector represents 8.1% of GDP; in Argentina, it constitutes 5.4% of national employment with a GDP per capita of approximately 1 813 dollars; and in the case of Mexico, this sector is responsible for 3.5% of GDP and generates more than half a million jobs (INEGI, 2020).

The importance of the textile sector in the GDP of most countries, the decrease of the sector in the last decade, and the dominance of the sector by the United States and China added to the great contribution of the fashion market to the textile sector, has generated an increase in competitiveness in the fashion market as it is a pillar in most Latin American economies and consequently greater competition among the companies in the market. This situation has led companies to invest large amounts of money to achieve consumer preference. Leading companies in the market, such as Inditex, invested more than

9.4 billion euros in the last 6 years and have allocated 10% of their budget to improve consumer experiences (Modaes Latinoamérica, 2019).

One of the main theories in the literature to determine the elements referring to attitudes and intentions is the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), proposed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1977), who indicate that the individual's behavior will be influenced by attitudes (A) and Subjective Norms (SN). Although the TRA refers to attitudes such as the individual's beliefs about whether a certain behavior will be positive or negative for them, when relating attitudes to purchase behavior, beliefs allude to aspects such as consumption satisfaction, consumer expectations, and consumption experiences, so the development of purchase attitudes will depend directly on the perception of quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

On the other hand, TRA is categorized within the behavior modification theories as it is based on cognitive, behaviorist, and psychoanalytic postulates. Consequently, the particular elements of the individual, such as personal skills and social behavior, are essential to determine the individual's intentions (Brackett et al., 2006). Hence, individuals' beliefs about whether the behavior they will engage in will be accepted or rejected by their social environment are critical, with this being the definition of subjective norms proposed in the TRA. Subjective norms, the individual's capabilities focused on self-awareness and impulse control, are decisive in regulating the influence of the social environment on behavior (Goleman, 1995) and purchasing intentions.

Therefore, identifying the variables that generate attitudes and subjective norms that stimulate consumer behavior toward a brand or its products is essential for organizations in the fashion market (Bernabéu et al., 2013). Because of this, marketing specialists have focused on developing more specialized market research, which delves into the consumer's social context and internal influences to determine the elements that influence consumer purchasing intentions and preferences (Seetharaman et al., 2017). These new market research types consider the consumer's personal elements, such as education, knowledge, and skills (Escuela Superior de Diseño de Barcelona, 2019).

It is worth mentioning that a new generation is born every 20 to 25 years, distinguished by having different characteristics from its predecessor generation (Strauss & Howe, 1992). These generational differences will be represented in the generation's expectations regarding work, family, and social aspects, giving rise to a similar behavior for individuals of the same generation, which will differ from the behavior of other generations. Consequently, attitudes, intentions, and buying behavior for the fashion market will differ for each generation. Young people born between 1996 and 2007 are known as Generation Z (Gen Z) Oblinger, (2003). This generation is distinguished by being born in the information age and in the era with the biggest boom in consumption (Rossi et al., 2018); therefore, knowing which variables influence the behavior and purchasing intention of Gen Z is essential for the success of the fashion market.

When considering the fashion market share in the textile sector and the importance of Gen Z as consumers, the need arises to determine the factors that influence the purchasing intentions of Gen Z from the TRA approach in the fashion market.

Theoretical framework

Theory of generations

Generations are defined by a series of related historical events that establish a generational distinction in any given group of people (Parry & Urwin, 2011). Strauss and Howe (1992) determine that generations follow a four-phase process consisting of childhood, youth, middle age, and old age, so each generation has a gap of approximately 20 to 25 years. Likewise, they state that each generation possesses individual characteristics that govern approaches and decisions, creating joint values determined by historical events, trends, and technological developments.

Oblinger (2003) classifies the generations into five categories: the Mature generation, composed of those born before 1946; the Baby Boomers, composed of those born between 1947 and 1964; Generation Xers, also known as Generation X, composed of those born between 1965 and 1980; Generation Y, also known as Millenials, composed of those born between 1981 and 1995; and Generation Z composed of those born between 1996 and 2007. It is noteworthy that several authors present different classifications of the generations with slight modifications in the names of the generations and age range (Table 1).

Table 1
Classification of generations by author

Silent Generation	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennial	Generation Z	Authors
1925-1945	1943-1960	1961-1981	1982-2000		Howe and Strauss (2000)
1922-1943 Veterans	1943-1960	1960-1980 Gen Xer	1980-1999 Nexters		Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak (2000)
1900-1945 Traditionalist	1946-1964	1965-1980 Generation Xers	1981-2000 Generation Next		Lancaster and Stillman (2002)
1925-1942	1946-1960	1965-1977	1978-2000		Martin and Tulgan (2006)
<1946 Matures	1947-1964	1965-1980 Generation Xers	1981-1995 Gen-Y, NetGen	1996-2007	Oblinger (2003)

Source: Taken from Vargas-Rodríguez et al. (2020)

Generations and consumption

The individual characteristics of each generation, such as their needs and preferences, help to guide decisions on content and formats to improve the communication of messages in the marketing area (Sandeen, 2008). Several particular characteristics can be found in each generation, such as their consumption habits, capabilities, and worldview. For brands, both Gen Z and millennials are voracious consumers, but Gen Z is also considered the main trendsetter in the global world (Dobre et al., 2021).

Members of this generation are looking for experiences; consequently, personalization is a key factor. Growing up in an economy full of challenges and social problems, they see work as a driver of their capabilities without considering it a security in their future as previous generations did. Specifically, Gen Z's affinity for technology generates a market niche that has been little explored; however, it is estimated that it is a segment that will gain economic strength in the coming years. One of the particularities of Gen Z is to adapt social networks to their daily lives. They are highly engaged on the Internet, sharing experiences and recommendations, and even becoming brand ambassadors publicly (Athwal et al., 2019; Dobre et al., 2021; Kneidinger, 2014).

The above has made Gen Z the first global generation interconnected since childhood. Therefore, the adoption of a trend by Gen Z members will be replicated worldwide by a large part of the generation due to their interconnectedness (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). As this is a unique characteristic of Gen Z, understanding what elements stimulate Gen Z attitudes and intentions in the fashion market is critical.

Theory of reasoned behavior

The development of TRA is based on research conducted by Ajzen and other collaborators, such as Fishbein, who worked on psychosocial studies during the 1970s and 1980s, focusing on aspects such as attitudes, intentions, and behavior. One of their first investigations was in 1970, when Ajzen and Fishbein (1970) analyzed attitudes and social norms as predictors of behavior, resulting in a relationship between these variables and forming the foundations of TRA (Figure 1).
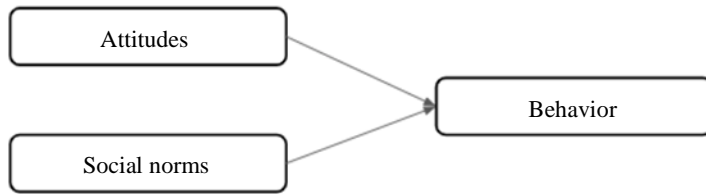
Figure 1. Study by Ajzen & Fishbein (1970)
Source. created by the authors based on Ajzen and Fishbein (1970)

Ajzen continued with behavioral studies by publishing in 1977 a bibliographical review in the Psychological Bulletin of various practical investigations on aspects of behavioral prediction, where he examined in detail the influence of attitudes on the behavior of individuals in the psychosocial literature. With this review, he concluded the existence of a close relationship between attitudes and individual behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977) (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Study by Ajzen & Fishbein (1977)
Source. created by the authors based on Ajzen and Fishbein (1977)

These studies gave rise to Ajzen and Fishbein's (1977) theory of reasoned action, which considers attitudes toward behavior and subjective norms as factors that stimulate the individual's intention (Figure 3).
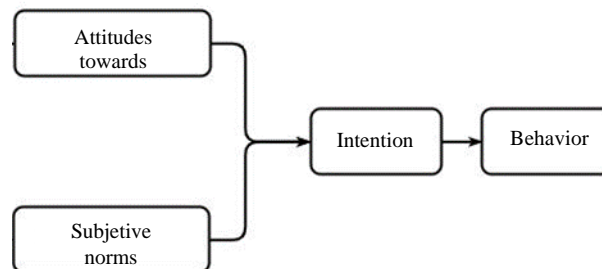
Figure 3. Theory of Reasoned Action Model
Source. created by the authors based on Ajzen and Fishbein (1980)

The TRA states that an individual's intentions to perform a behavior will be composed of subjective norms and attitudes. Subjective norms are the individual's beliefs about whether the environment considers the behavior they wish to carry out as favorable or unfavorable; attitudes are the individual's internal beliefs about an object, person, or institution. These variables will serve as information for the individual when making the behavioral intention decision. The behavioral intention will be developed based on what the individual believes will be a positive behavior. As such, any behavior that generates tangible or intangible benefits for the individual can be considered positive. Therefore, even though attitudes and subjective norms may be positive, if the individual considers the effect of that behavior to be negative or unfavorable, an intention for that behavior will not be developed (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Under the postulates of TRA, the consumer's purchasing intention will be influenced by the consumer's attitudes and subjective norms toward the product/service or sector/market. Therefore, a more positive attitude toward the product/service or sector/market will generate a higher purchasing intention. Likewise, favorable or positive subjective norms toward the product/service or sector/market will generate greater purchasing intentions on the part of the consumer. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1. Generation Z individuals with positive or favorable subjective norms toward the fashion market have a higher purchasing intention than individuals with negative or unfavorable subjective norms toward the fashion market.

Hypothesis 2. Generation Z individuals with more positive or favorable attitudes toward the fashion market have a higher purchasing intention than individuals with negative or unfavorable attitudes toward the fashion market.

Emotional intelligence, attitudes, and subjective norms

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to regulate and differentiate feelings of oneself and others to use the information to make decisions. Specifically, emotional intelligence develops in a four-stage process. The first stage, ability to perceive and express emotions, is the individual's ability to understand their own emotions and to be able to label them verbally in order to transmit them to a third party. The second stage, emotional facilitation, refers to the individual's capacity to generate emotions that favor cognitive capacity. The third stage, emotional understanding, considers the individual's capacity to understand the correlation between their feelings and thoughts in the different mood changes. The fourth stage, emotional regulation, is the ability to control negative or positive emotions (Salover & Mayer, 1989).

In TRA, the variables attitudes and subjective norms are established according to the individual's beliefs. Beliefs are the relationship of value, attribute, or concept that an individual has subjectively toward an object, situation, institution, or person. These beliefs are classified into three types: descriptive beliefs, inferential beliefs, and informative beliefs (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1991) (Figure 5).
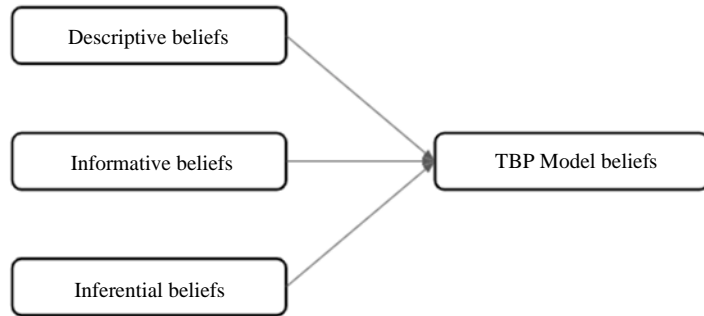

Figure 5. Beliefs of the TRA model
Source: created by the author based on Ajzen (1991)

Descriptive beliefs refer to those developed by the individual through the individual's observation of the object or subject. This observation can be developed through a direct interaction of the individual with the object, person, or institution in question. It can also be generated through indirect observation, the most practical way of composing a belief and the closest to reality. Informative beliefs, as their name implies, are beliefs generated by the individual based on the information received about that object or subject in an informative manner, omitting the interaction with the object directly (Ajzen, 1991).

Inferential beliefs can develop as a function of the mental association that the individual has with the object. Therefore, the experiences of the subject and their form of association are fundamental in the development of these beliefs. Inferential beliefs are the most complex of the beliefs, being the least close to reality, since they can be developed using two processes that depend on the individual's logical capacity or on their mental association with the object, person, or institution. It is necessary to mention that beliefs are dynamic according to diverse factors, such as the experiences of the individual or the stages of life. Beliefs generated toward people or objects are the ones most easily modified, and those concerning institutions are the ones that vary the least (Ajzen, 1991).

The fashion market is characterized by adjusting to the trend adoption cycle that follows the model of the innovation adoption curve proposed by Rogers (2003). Combined with the rise of globalization, the development of the supply chain, and the growth of fiber movements, this has generated

fast fashion (Bick et al., 2018), leading the fashion market to change its product offerings several times during the year.

Consequently, the consumer buying process in the fashion market is not a traditional buying process. It is characterized by the need to evaluate new product offerings from the market before deciding on each buying process due to trend cycles. Therefore, subjective attitudes and norms in the fashion market will initially develop based on informative beliefs. It is worth mentioning that the purchasing process is recurrent for consumers, who spend 4.5% of their monthly income. Consequently, subjective attitudes and norms toward the fashion market will also develop through descriptive beliefs, structured through direct interaction and previous experiences.

This situation has stimulated the use of marketing to raise awareness and encourage consumers to purchase products in the fashion market. This marketing has focused on understanding the emotions of consumers to be able to influence decision-making and consumer perception (Rodriguez & Cortazar, 2016) since knowing the emotions of the consumer and how they regulate them (emotional intelligence) can encourage the consumer to value a market, brand, or product positively or negatively (Vredeveld, 2018).

Authors such as Silva et al. (2017), Jiang et al. (2014), and Köster and Mojet (2015) affirm that extrinsic aspects provoke emotional responses in consumers modifying their attitudes. Emotional intelligence is the ability of individuals to control their emotions adequately to generate positive attitudes and correct decision making (Brackett & Salovey, 2006). According to this theory, people with greater control of their emotions will be less sensitive to marketing stimuli before and during the purchase process, allowing them to discern, discriminate, and select the emotional elements that stimulate the development of positive attitudes and correct decisions toward the fashion market. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3. Generation Z individuals with higher Emotional Intelligence (EI) have more positive or favorable attitudes toward the fashion market than individuals with lower Emotional Intelligence (EI).

Subjective norms in the fashion market are understood as the social pressure on the consumer when considering the opinions of others on how they should behave (Horng et al., 2013). These opinions of individuals, groups, or organizations through marketing will stimulate the informative beliefs of the consumer in the fashion market. Notably, the social pressure generated by the opinions of individuals, groups, or organizations will depend on the susceptibility of each consumer (Pha et al., 2015).

In turn, susceptibility will be generated according to informational and normative aspects. Informational aspects will influence, to a greater extent, consumers who are less skeptical about the information received from organizations. In contrast, normative aspects refer to the individual's need to

meet the expectations of the environment about their self-image and their interest in meeting expectations and impressing other people (Phau et al., 2015).

Therefore, consumers with higher emotional intelligence will be more skeptical about the information received from organizations in the fashion market and will therefore be less susceptible to the informational aspects and social pressure exerted by the organizations. Similarly, consumers with higher emotional intelligence will better control their emotional regulation; therefore, they will be less susceptible to normative aspects as they can control their emotions and not feel pressured to meet expectations or impress others. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4. Generation Z individuals with higher Emotional Intelligence (EI) are less sensitive to Subjective Norms (SN) toward the fashion market than individuals with lower Emotional Intelligence (EI).

Quality perception and attitudes

As mentioned above, an individual's attitudes will be composed of descriptive and informative beliefs. Under this approach, descriptive beliefs that stimulate attitudes toward the fashion market on the part of the individual will be generated based on previous buying processes. Consequently, satisfying the consumer's needs during the buying process in the fashion market is essential to elicit positive attitudes on the part of the consumer. If consumers consider that the previous services or products were adequate, they will develop positive descriptive beliefs toward the services or products and, consequently, favorable attitudes toward them.

Satisfying needs and expectations from the consumer's perspective about services or products can be defined as the concept of quality (Yang & Lee, 2019). Consequently, identifying how the consumer perceives the quality of the product or service is critical to the success of organizations. Quality perception is the difference between product or service expectations and the perception of service performance from the consumer's point of view (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

For Parasuraman et al. (1985), the differences between the consumer's expectations and the actual perception of quality when receiving the product or service are established in 5 differences called 'GAPs.' The first GAP considers the consumer's expectations of the company. The second GAP is found in how the company conveys that it understands the consumer's expectations—it can be interpreted as the consumers perceiving that the company listens to their needs for quality in the service. The third GAP refers to the modification or implementation of the service according to the consumer's expectations, which is understood as whether the consumers perceive that their expectations about the company have been adequately fulfilled. The fourth GAP refers to the discrepancy between information presented by the

company on the value of the product or service and the actual value offered by the company. The last of the GAPs refers to the culmination of all the previous ones since this is where the perception of quality is established. At this point, the quality of the service is considered in terms of the consumer's perception and contrasted with the consumer's expectations in relation to the expected quality. Under this approach, consumers with higher satisfaction in their expectations of the fashion market product will develop more favorable descriptive beliefs about the market, consequently developing positive or favorable attitudes toward the fashion market. Based on the above, hypothesis five is proposed.

Hypothesis 5. Generation Z individuals with a positive or favorable quality perception toward the fashion market have a more favorable attitude toward the fashion market than those with a negative or less favorable quality perception toward the fashion market.

Gender in purchasing attitudes

As mentioned above, purchasing intention, satisfaction, and consumer loyalty, among others, are biased by emotional factors and social pressures. Concerning social aspects, elements such as ethnocentrism (Luque et al., 2000) and stereotypes (Velandia-Morales, 2011) must also be considered.

These stereotypes influence the behavior and attitudes of each gender (Correll et al., 2007). Going against these behaviors and attitudes would be going against social norms, which can be labeled as unseemly and, therefore, socially punished (Rudman & Glick, 1999).

Gender marketing has established a female stereotype that has pigeonholed women over men regarding consumption (Esci News, 2009). Therefore, advertising in the beauty market (cosmetics, clothing, makeup, etc.) and in the household products market has focused mostly on the female audience, leaving aside men, who have been pigeonholed in other areas (Royo et al., 2007).

Because of this stereotyping, women have a greater tendency to buy beauty market products such as clothing, makeup, and cosmetics, among others, than men. As a result, their behavior and attitudes are more favorable with respect to their gender. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 6. Women have more positive attitudes toward the fashion market than men.
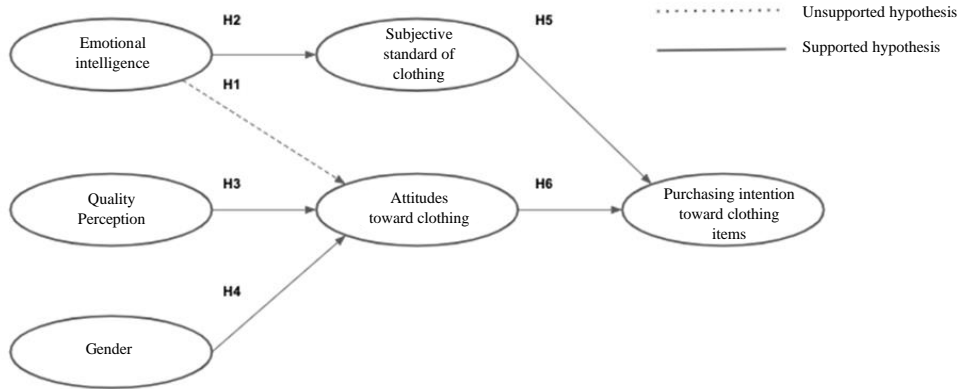
Figure 6. Integrated theoretical model
Source: created by the authors

Research Methodology

Type of research and subject of study

The research methodology was quantitative and cross-sectional in reference to the collection of information that was carried out through online questionnaires. Finally, the objective of the research is considered correlational-causal (Fernandez & Hernandez, 2014).

Subject of study

In Mexico, there are 8 socioeconomic levels according to the Mexican Association of Market and Opinion Intelligence Agencies (AMAI) (Spanish: Asociación Mexicana de Agencias de Inteligencia de Mercado y Opinión). These socioeconomic levels evaluate aspects such as educational level of the head of household, number of complete bathrooms, number of cars in the household, and internet connection, among others (AMAI, 2018). Socioeconomic levels are classified by average monthly household income: A/B being upper income, C+, C, and C- upper middle income, D+ and D- middle income, and E low income.

The determination of the study subjects of this research was assisted by the ICC/ESOMAR International Code for the Practice of Marketing, Opinion and Social Research, and Data Analysis, mainly

from Article 2 clauses a[1] and b[2]. Due to the form of data collection for this study, the age ranges were established between 18 and 21 years.

The study subjects were inhabitants of the Valley of Mexico (Mexico City and State of Mexico), with age ranges between 18 and 21 years, regardless of gender, belonging to socioeconomic levels C+, C, C- and D+, who during the last two years have purchased any product of the fashion industry.

According to the 2010 census conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) (Spanish: Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía), approximately 24 million people live in the metropolitan area, of which 2 million meet the age range. It is worth mentioning that 51% are women and 49% are men (INEGI, 2013).

In the Valley of Mexico, the population with selected socioeconomic levels represents 61% (AMAI, 2018a). Cross-referencing the data, the target population represents 1.2 million people between 18 and 21 years old.

Finally, to identify the intensity of fashion consumption, data from Kantar Worldpanel were used, where it is established that 72% of the population in Mexico has bought clothes at least once a year (Kantar, 2018). By crossing the data again, a target population of 864 000 study subjects is obtained.

Measurement parameters

A data collection instrument with 28 items (Appendix 1) was developed to collect the information. It measures the following constructs: subjective norms, attitudes, purchasing intention toward clothing, emotional intelligence, perception of quality, age, and gender.

The construct measures were adopted from an existing 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The first construct quality perception was quantified with a 10-item scale (Parasuraman et al., 1985), with items such as: Should the physical facilities of a clothing store be visually appealing? In a clothing store, should the employees provide prompt customer service? In a clothing store, should the employees always be willing to help you?

The second construct, emotional intelligence, was determined with a 6-item scale (Boyatzis et al., 2000) with items such as: When I am sad, do I think about the pleasures of life? Do I care about being in a good mood? When I get angry, do I try to change my mood?

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[1]Researchers must obtain the consent of a parent or responsible adult when collecting data from children or any person who has been assigned a legal guardian.
[2]Researchers should take special care when considering involving children and adolescents in research. The questions asked should take into account their age and maturity level.

Finally, the constructs subjective norms, attitudes, and purchasing intention toward clothing were measured with 10 items (Ceballos et al., 2017), such as: Is shopping for clothes enjoyable? Are my family members supportive of my clothing purchases? Am I willing to take advantage to buy clothes when I visit the mall?

It should be noted that respondents were asked about demographics during the initial instructions: What is your age? If the answer was between 18 and 21, the survey allowed them to continue filling out the form.

Data collection and processing

The correct sample size for the study was determined using the sample size formula for a finite population (Triola, 2004), with a confidence level of 95%, an error of 6%, a p (probability of success) of 0.5, and a population of 864 000 participants, resulting in a sample of n = 267. The study data were collected through a Qualtrics online survey. The questionnaire link was emailed to various parts of the valley of Mexico during the first quarter of 2020.

336 questionnaires were obtained, of which 318 were properly completed. Responses from non-residents of the Valley of Mexico and those not belonging to socioeconomic levels C+, C, C-, and D+ were excluded from the study. This gives a total of 282 surveys, confirming the study's validity. Regarding gender, the percentage of women was slightly higher (58.36%) than men (41.64%). In addition, 24.51% reported belonging to the C+ socioeconomic level, 32.76% indicated the C level, 19.20% reported being part of the C- level, and 23.53% to the D+ level.

To determine the reliability of the data collected, Cronbach's alpha (Domínguez-Lara & Merino-Soto, 2015) was used (Equation 1), where α is the Cronbach's alpha symbol, K is the number of items, ΣS^2_i represents the sum of the variances of each item, and S^2_T represents the total variance. This analysis was applied for each of the study constructs.

$$\alpha = \frac{K}{K-1}\left[1 - \frac{\sum S_i^2}{S_T^2}\right]$$

(1)

A multiple linear regression was used to obtain an R^2 value and Pearson's correlation r (Equation 2) to test or reject the hypotheses. r is the symbol for Pearson's linear correlation, S_{xy} is the covariance between X e Y, S_x is the standard deviation of X, and S_Y that of Y.) (Santabárbara, 2019). Particularly for H4, a one-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to determine which of the elements of the independent variable (men or women) have a greater impact on the dependent variable.

$$r = \frac{S_{xy}}{S_x \cdot S_y}$$

(2)

To avoid errors in the regression estimators, multicollinearity was performed for the variables emotional intelligence, quality perception, and gender. Multicollinearity was calculated using Kendal's Tau (Equation 3), where Tb is Kendal's Tau symbol, P is the number of concordant pairs, Q is the number of discordant pairs, X_0 is the number of those related only in variable X, and Y_0 is the number of those related in variable Y) (Laurencelle, 2009) (Laurencelle, 2009).

$$T_b = \frac{P - Q}{\sqrt{(P + Q + X_0)(P + Q + Y_0)}}$$

(3)

The acceptance parameters for the reliability of the instrument are $\alpha > 0.7$. Hypothesis validation was determined by multiple linear regression $R^2 > 0.6$, with Pearson's correlation $r < 0.6$ as supporting statistic. Additionally, H4 was supported by ANOVA -$p < 0.005$. Finally, multicollinearity was confirmed with $t > 0.7$ (Santabárbara, 2019).

Results and discussion

Results

A total of 282 completed forms were obtained with the requested information. Before presenting the results of the hypothesis tests, the validity of the results of the 282 evaluation questionnaires collected for the research was determined. The constructs quality perception (QP), emotional intelligence (EI), attitudes toward the fashion market (ATG), subjective norms (SN), and purchasing intention in the fashion market were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The validity analysis resulted in 0.932 for QP, 0.935 for EI, 0.918 for ATG, 0.929 for SN, and 0.930 for IPG, suggesting that all items retrieved for the study are valid (Table 2).

Table 2
Validation of the evaluation instrument: Cronbach's alpha results

Construct	Corrected total correlation of items	Squared multiple correlation	Cronbach's alpha if the item has been deleted
Quality perception (QP)	0.828	0.707	0.932
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	0.809	0.712	0.935
Attitudes toward the fashion market (ATG)	0.901	0.826	0.918
Subjective Norms (SN)	0.846	0.791	0.929
Purchasing intention in the fashion market	0.838	0.782	0.930

Source: created by the authors

Multicollinearity was also evaluated. Therefore, the associations between the independent variables (EI, QP, and gender) were estimated. Based on the results on the gender variable in relation to EI (t= 0.107) and QP (t= 0.124), it was determined that there is no collinearity with gender. In contrast, EI and QP presented a t = 0.754, establishing a medium collinearity (Table 3). This does not affect the multiple regression analyses.

Table 3
Multicollinearity analysis

	Emotional Intelligence	Quality perception	Gender
Emotional Intelligence	1		
Quality perception	0.754	1	
Gender	0.107	0.124	1

Source: created by the authors

The multiple regression results for H1 indicated that attitudes toward the fashion market contribute to purchasing intentions in the fashion market (R^2=0.614, Pearson correlation coefficient=0.783), thus validating H1. Subjective norms contribute to purchasing intention in the fashion market (R2= 0.757, Pearson correlation coefficient=0.870), which supports H2; therefore, it can be said that for Gen Z, subjective norms directly influence purchasing intentions in the fashion market. The results revealed that subjective attitudes and norms toward the fashion market influence purchasing intentions in the fashion market (Table 4).

Table 4
Testing of hypotheses H1 and H2: Results of multiple regression analysis

H	Independent Variable	Mean	R	R2	Pearson's correlation	No Stand. beta (ß)	Confirmation of Hypothesis
H1	Attitude toward the fashion market	2.244	0.783	0.614	0.783	0.722	Accepted
H2	Subjective norms toward the fashion market	2.417	0.870	0.757	0.870	0.839	Accepted

Note: The dependent variable for H1 and H2 is purchasing intentions in the fashion market.
Source: created by the authors

The multiple regression results for H3 showed that emotional intelligence positively influenced attitudes toward the fashion market (R2=0.698, Pearson correlation coefficient =0 .836). Therefore, H3 is validated, and it is concluded that emotional intelligence in Gen Z influences the development of their attitudes toward the fashion market. Likewise, the results indicated that subjective norms are not influenced by emotional intelligence (R2 = 0.470, Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.685); therefore, H4 is not valid, and it is concluded that emotional intelligence does not affect subjective norms toward the fashion market. (Table 5).

Table 5
Hypothesis testing H3 and H4: Results of the linear regression analysis

H	Dependent Variable	Mean	R	R2	Pearson's correlation	No Stand. beta (ß)	Confirmation of Hypothesis
H3	Attitude toward the fashion market	2.244	0.836	0.698	0.836	0.883	Accepted
H4	Subjective norms toward the fashion market	2.417	0.685	0.470	0.685	0.691	Rejected

Note: The independent variable for H3 and H4 is emotional intelligence.
Source: created by the authors

In contrast, H5 postulated that the perception of quality positively impacts attitudes toward the fashion market. The linear regression results indicated an R^2 of 0.677 and a Pearson correlation of 0.728. Therefore, H5 is validated, and it can be determined that Gen Z's perception of quality influences their attitude toward the fashion market (Table 6). However, H6 was rejected because gender does not directly influence attitudes toward the fashion market. Therefore, it cannot be determined that women have a more positive attitude toward the fashion market than men due to the results of R^2=0.006, Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.079, and ANOVA (p=0.107) (Table 7).

Table 6
Hypothesis testing H5: Results of the linear regression analysis

H	Independent Variable	Mean	R	R2	Pearson's correlation	No Stand. beta (ß)	Confirmation of Hypothesis
H5	Quality perception	2.1908	0.823	0.677	0.823	0.912	Accepted

Note: The dependent variable for H5 is attitudes toward the fashion market.
Source: created by the authors

Table 7
Hypothesis testing H6: Results of multiple regression and ANOVA analysis

H	Independent Variable	R	R2	Pearson's correlation	Value - F	P-value	Confirmation of Hypothesis
H6	Gender	0.079	0.006	0.079	2.612	0.107	Rejected

Note: The dependent variable for H6 is attitudes toward the fashion market.
Source: created by the authors

Discussion and conclusions

Regarding H1 and H2, the findings revealed that subjective norms toward the fashion market (SN) (H2) and attitudes toward the fashion market (H1) increase purchasing intention—based on the multiple regression coefficients of the tests in H1 and H2 (Table 4). Gen Z's fashion market purchasing intention was more influenced by subjective norms (ß = 0.839) than by attitudes (ß = 0.722). These results are explained in terms of what Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) postulated, confirming that individuals' beliefs about the acceptable or positive behavior expected of them by the environment (subjective norms) toward the fashion market will influence purchasing intention. Similarly, the positive beliefs (attitudes) that the individual has about the fashion market, a brand, or products will stimulate the purchasing intention. The results of H1 and H2 are consistent with TRA's robust model and multiple research findings (e.g., Ceballos et al., 2017) that analyzed purchasing intentions in the Colombian market, confirming that attitudinal and normative components are predictors of Colombian consumer purchasing intentions.

The results related to H3 validated that emotional intelligence affects attitudes toward the fashion market (ß = 0.883). Therefore, it is concluded that Gen Z individuals with higher emotional intelligence will have positive attitudes toward the fashion market. These results are consistent when it is considered that the fashion industry has focused on increasing communication channels with the consumer. These channels have focused primarily on engaging the consumer through sensory marketing, which aims to develop positive informational beliefs (attitudes) by stimulating consumers' emotions (Nadanyiova et al., 2018).

H4 highlighted that emotional intelligence does not influence subjective norms toward the fashion market (ß = 0.685). Therefore, it is established that Gen Z individuals with a higher degree of emotional intelligence are not less sensitive to subjective norms toward the fashion market. This is in

contrast to the emotional intelligence postulates of Saolver and Mayer (1989), who indicate that individuals with higher emotional intelligence will be able to control their emotions, favoring cognitive abilities, and to what is indicated by Phau et al. (2015), who state that social pressure will be directly proportional to the susceptibility of each individual. Consequently, individuals with higher emotional intelligence should be less affected by extrinsic aspects such as the opinions of individuals, groups, or organizations about what is expected of their image and behavior in the fashion market.

Gen Z is considered the first global generation interconnected by social networks and has constant interaction in networks among members of the generation. Therefore, its specific characteristics make Gen Z a unique generation since they communicate regardless of language barriers, culture, etc., establishing a generational solidarity that is not replicated in any other generation due to their constant communication (Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

The relationship in the fashion market with the qualities of Gen Z (interconnectedness and solidarity) allows the adoption of a trend by members of the generation to be replicated by all or most of Gen Z around the world (Martin et al., 2022). In this approach of interconnectedness and solidarity of Gen Z, the discrepancy in individual susceptibility, corresponding to social pressure, can be justified, concluding that individual susceptibility does not apply in Gen Z as in other generations. Therefore, regardless of the degree of the individual's emotional intelligence, the normative aspects will influence all Gen Z individuals similarly. Hence, the results of H4 indicate that emotional intelligence does not influence subjective norms toward the fashion market.

The results of H5 indicated that the perception of quality influences attitudes toward the fashion market (ß = 0.912). Therefore, it is concluded that Gen Z individuals with a higher perception of the fashion market will have a more favorable attitude toward this market. These results can be explained by the fact that the fashion industry currently focuses on improving consumer experiences, and in addition, the strategies of the industry have been modified, consequently increasing the variety of brands that offer products and reducing the cost. Similarly, these results are consistent with those of Pérez et al. (2015), who state that low consumer satisfaction generates negative attitudes toward the brand.

The results of H6 suggest that gender does not influence attitudes toward the fashion market. Therefore, it is established that Gen Z females do not have more positive attitudes toward the fashion market than Gen Z males. One justification for this is that Gen Z is similarly influenced by social aspects for consumption in the fashion market. This type of social pressure at this age is similar for both women and men. Thus, gender does not impact attitudes toward garments.

The decreasing trend in the fashion market has intensified the competitiveness in the industry within the fashion market. Due to the impacts on the market, many manufacturing companies and marketers in the fashion market are looking for strategies to maintain the demand for their products by a

demanding clientele such as Gen Z youth. Hence, this study is important, as it examined Gen Z's attitudes and clothing purchasing intentions.

Among the most important findings is that a higher degree of emotional intelligence does not influence subjective norms toward the fashion market—when considering the characteristics of Gen Z. Nevertheless, emotional intelligence does impact purchasing attitudes toward the fashion market. Similarly, the perception of quality toward the fashion market directly impacts attitudes. Concerning the TRA model, it is necessary to emphasize that both subjective norms and attitudes impact purchasing intention, and the analyses also indicated that gender does not influence attitudes.

This paper contributes to the current literature by focusing on Gen Z's attitudes and purchasing intentions in the fashion market. This is relevant, as previous studies have focused on other types of sectors when discussing the theory of reasoned action (TRA). It also provides empirical evidence of emotional intelligence as a factor generating positive attitudes toward the fashion market and gives rise to new areas of research focused on the normative components of social pressure on Gen Z's purchasing intentions by demonstrating that individual susceptibility factors of emotional intelligence do not influence the development of informational beliefs (subjective norms). This research aims to guide the fashion market regarding the elements that stimulate Gen Z's purchasing intentions, thus enabling the generation of strategies more suitable for this market segment. In turn, the results offer information on a scarcely explored approach to Gen Z's purchasing intentions in the fashion market.

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Annex

Table A1
Items of the data collection instrument

Constructs
Quality perception
Item 1. The physical facilities of a clothing store should be visually appealing.
Item 2. Clothing store employees should have a neat appearance.
Item 3. Excellent clothing stores complete the service within the time promised
Item 4. Excellent clothing stores insist on error-free recordkeeping
Item 5. In a clothing store, employees must provide fast service to their customers.
Item 6. In a clothing store, employees should always be willing to help customers.
Item 7. Clothing store customers feel secure in their transactions with the organization.
Item 8. In an excellent clothing store, employees have sufficient knowledge to answer customers' questions.
Item 9. Excellent clothing stores have their customers' best interests at heart.
Item 10. Clothing store employees must understand the specific needs of their customers.
Emotional Intelligence (EI)
Item 1. When I am sad, I think about the pleasures of life.
Item 2. I try to have positive thoughts, even if I feel bad.
Item 3. If I think about things too much, complicating them, I try to calm down.
Item 4. I care about being in a good mood.
Item 5. I have a lot of energy when I feel happy.
Item 6. When I get angry, I try to change my mood.
Attitudes toward garments (ATG)
Item 1. When I go to the mall, I find it attractive to go shopping for clothes.
Item 2. Shopping for clothes is pleasant.
Item 3. I love shopping for clothes when I go to the mall.
Subjective Norms (SN)
Item 1. My family members support my clothing purchases.
Item 2. My friends support me when I shop for clothes
Item 3. Most of the people who are important to me agree when I buy clothes.
Intention to purchase garments (IPG)
Item 1. I intend to buy clothes soon.
Item 2. I am willing to take advantage by shopping for clothes when I go to the mall.
Item 3. I would definitely buy clothes if I wanted new clothes.