Abstract: - The ongoing debate on “fast fashion” and environmental impact has created a great divide amongst fashion industry players as well as consumers. The two sides of the narrative posit the upsides to retail manufacturing and consumer accessibility, whereas the other offers responsible consumption with long-term impact. Where fast fashion is defined as clothing manufactured at a rapid production cycle—from design to retail—for the purpose of creating or leveraging trends. This innovation in the supply chain has enabled clothing companies to introduce capsule collections over a two-week period. The United Nations Environment Programme (2019) published an article citing the fashion industry as responsible for two to eight percent of global carbon emissions, and with implications expanding to a social context. With cognizance of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goal (UN SDG) 12, the conversation leads to a study on sustainable consumption and production patterns. One such company now participating in this conversation is UNIQLO. Considered among global players in the fast fashion sector, the company has decided to consciously depart from this approach towards a more sustainable model. This study focused on an investigation of the customer engagement and the corporate sustainability reputation of UNIQLO consumers as mediated by customer satisfaction. The main concepts include two independent variables of customer engagement, the dependent variable of purchase intention, and the mediator of customer satisfaction. The researchers intend to take a quantitative approach via survey questionnaire, adapting items from measurements scales in previous studies. A total of 449 responses will be obtained from students from Metro Manila, Philippines. The data obtained will undergo statistical tests, including Cronbach’s alpha, Pearson’s correlation, simple linear regression, multiple linear regression, and mediation analysis. The results highlighted, firstly, that the variables of customer engagement, corporate sustainability reputation, and customer satisfaction significantly correlate and impact purchase intention. Secondly, it indicated that customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation can substantially influence purchase intention. And, thirdly, the observation on customer satisfaction partially mediating the relationship between customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation on purchase intention. As we accelerate towards the United Nation’s call to action on the SDGs come 2030, this study may bear significance to fashion industry practitioners, consumers, the Academe, on legislation, and the UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion towards shifting the narrative on the fashion sector.

Keywords: Customer Engagement, Corporate Sustainability Reputation, Customer Satisfaction, Purchase Intention.

I. INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry has long since evolved from its humble beginnings. Among its most recent innovations within the industry is the emergence of “fast fashion”. Stanton (2022) describes this new wave of garment creation that has a faster pace of production, promotion and selling to keep up with the dynamism of fashion trends. While the definition of the concept may change, some elements of fast fashion that remain involve the creation of garments using cheaper materials (e.g. synthetic fabrics), cheaper labor (e.g. “sweatshops”) and rapid production. Needless to say, these practices have disrupted the fashion industry over decades, especially with how popular it has become with clothing corporations which seek to maximize the opportunity of producing lower quality clothes for regular prices thus, earning a higher profit margin.

For example, Bain (2016) cites findings that discovered that, in the span of years 2013-2016, fashion consumers were only interested in purchasing womenswear clothing if the pieces were 76% discounted its original price. Thus, Bain emphasizes how this industry-wide movement of cheap, quick fashion pieces have made it difficult for high-quality or “slow fashion” clothing lines to attract customers who are still willing to wait the longer production times and pay in full.

In terms of effects on the environment, fast fashion brands have gained a reputation for their negative influences on the environment, communities, and overall global resources. The increased production and consumption speed involved in fast fashion trends have contributed to over-consumption (Clunies-Ross, 2021; Stanton, 2022). According to the Geneva Environment Network (2021), there is an urgent call for fast fashion brands to shift to “green” management practices that don’t involve the depletion of natural resources (e.g. water pollution), unethical labor practices, and excessive waste production (e.g. mass-producing low-quality materials that are more likely to end up in garbage after a shorter amount of time). In fact, several studies have noted the
difference in the consumer demand for sustainable products whether on a general scale (David Lee et al., 2016; Şener et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021) or as catalyzed by the Covid-19 pandemic (Vătămănescu et al., 2021).

According to Neumann et al. (2021) and Bhaduri and Ha-Brookshire (2011), findings suggest that shoppers are more willing to purchase from “fast fashion” clothing lines if the companies are considered trustworthy and transparent enough in environmental advocates. If the consumer believes a firm can fulfill its social responsibility, then they also feel more empowered to contribute to corporate advocates and eco-friendly solutions through their purchases.

To combat the proliferation of fast fashion’s more unethical and harmful effects, management practitioners must find methods that empower customers to place value in ethically sourced and sustainably made products. From a brand management perspective, firms in the fast fashion industry must also be able to guarantee their customers the promise of sustainability efforts in exchange for clothing purchases from these individuals. Among clothing companies that aim for greener solutions are brands such as UNIQLO, which are finding alternative ways to become more sustainable while satisfying their consumers’ needs.

Advocating a “path to sustainability” for more than 20 years, the UNIQLO company has been chosen as the main focus of this study due to their sustainability-focused advocacies and programs (RE.UNIQLO: A New Life for UNIQLO Clothing, n.d.). First, the company produces wearable clothes through their circular sustainability programs titled “Re.UNIQLO” that aims to take in donated and old UNIQLO clothes into garment pieces available for refugees and beneficiaries to wear. As of August 2021, their website reports around 46 million items donated to refugees across 79 countries and regions. This is in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Hymann (2022) also noted how this repair and recycle program contributed to the 2020 positive acknowledgement of UNIQLO’s corporate social responsibility and environmental conservation efforts. In line with this, UNIQLO makes sure that their customers can play a role in this conservation by providing an option for customers to donate their old clothes through donation bins available at any of their physical store locations.

Their recycle programs extend beyond clothes because the website of UNIQLO also boasts programs wherein old or unused clothes are turned into fuel, specifically energy in the form of calorie dense solid fuel. Like fossil fuels, after these unwearable clothes are transformed, they may be used for industrial purposes (e.g. solid fuel for boilers).

In terms of sustainability initiatives in the Philippines, UNIQLO Philippines (“UNIQLO PH” for short) recently aimed to provide tangible supplies and monetary support to the Filipino communities (PHILIPPINES SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES | UNIQLO PH, n.d.). As of writing, the company has donated 64 thousand dry shirts, 350 thousand medical masks, 200 thousand medical gowns to aid front liners in combating and keeping protecting against the COVID-19 virus. Moreover, UNIQLO PH has shelled out one million US dollars for relief and infrastructure rebuilding operations, as well as ten million Philippine pesos to aide food and medical gear concerns among the Filipinos negatively affected by the pandemic or calamities.

Despite these sustainability efforts, studies such as Neumann, Martinez, and Martinez (2021) have pointed out that consumers are often unaware of the sustainability efforts of their clothing brands, specifically those brands considered as “fast fashion” such as Zara and H&M. In line with this, managers and business owners need to establish socially responsible reputations alongside accomplishing traditional corporate objectives such as meeting break even and maximizing shareholder wealth (e.g. encouraging purchases) as well as keeping their customers interested in their brand (e.g. boosting customer satisfaction and interaction). Hence, the researchers sought to explore the effects that customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation have on UNIQLO purchase intention.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In this paper, the researchers explored how the factors of customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation affected purchase intention among UNIQLO consumers from students in Metro Manila. Hence, for this research undertaking, the main problem that was addressed was: “What is the mediating effect of Customer Satisfaction on the relationship between Corporate Sustainability and Customer Engagement to the Purchase Intention of Metro Manila students for the brand UNIQLO?”

1.2 Objectives of the Study
The objective of this study was to explore customer satisfaction as a possible mediator between UNIQLO’s customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation on the purchase intention of Metro Manila students.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The researchers believe that the following stakeholders have benefitted from the findings of this study in respective ways:

- **UNIQLO**
  The study has made important contributions in understanding the relationships between customer engagement, corporate sustainability reputation, customer satisfaction, and purchase intention. The proposed study may directly benefit UNIQLO in terms of building knowledge about their customers’ thoughts and desires when purchasing clothing products. Additionally, sustainability has become an important factor in the fashion industry and thus, UNIQLO may gain insights and perspectives regarding consumer perceptions towards sustainable clothing, which may further open opportunities for the company.

- **Business Owners and Companies of Online Clothing Lines**
  The study focused on determining possible relationships between the selected variables and their respective influences on the performance of a business. Hence, the researchers believe that business owners and management practitioners in the fashion industry have benefitted from the findings of this study by developing a better understanding of their customers’ purchase intentions. As highlighted by the above discussion, sustainability within the fashion industry is an urgent practice that needs to be adopted by fashion brands and clothing lines, regardless of whether one is a “fast fashion” company. Including sustainable practices into management systems should not be seen as a hindrance but as an opportunity that will entail benefits. The proposed study has enriched the field of literature dedicated to the topic of management in association to sustainable clothing.

- **Consumers**
  Since the chosen topic of the study is related to consumer behavior, consumers themselves can benefit from the findings of the researchers as they may be able to grasp a better understanding of their role in the fashion industry and the factors that affect their shopping experience. The study may be able to give them a sense of mindfulness through discussing the subtle and overt ways that a firm influences them to buy garments. Through this study, customers may impart a heightened sense of consciousness in their purchasing decisions and consumer role in fashion markets.

- **Philippine government**
  The study could also benefit the Philippine government and legislators as it can assist the government in developing policies and support systems for businesses and consumers by providing empirical evidence about the impact corporate sustainability programs enabled by policy. Policymakers may use these findings to create resource allocation strategies, aid programs, and support the Filipino entrepreneur to help create a more robust ecosystem aligned with national development objectives leading to overall growth on the social, environmental, and economic aspects.

- **UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion**
  The current study provides insight on behavior towards the fashion industry within the context of Filipino consumers and sustainable practices with an understanding of opportunities to explore collaboration strategies with industry practitioners enabling business strategies across regions.

- **The Academe**
  Not only has the completion of this study further enriched the Academe’s library collection of thesis and dissertations, but it may also contribute to more studies regarding the different factors relevant to its student body (in this case, shopping behavior and sustainable consumer practices). Moreover, the proposed study was demonstrative evidence of the competence and research abilities of its students, faculty and staff, research advisers, etc.

- **Future Researchers**
  The current study was one of business management research. It aimed to tackle a research gap focused on the relationship between customer engagement and corporate sustainability to purchase intention as mediated by customer satisfaction. The findings and managerial implications may be of use to anyone who wishes to resume academic efforts in the further exploration of the chosen variables. Since all hypotheses were discovered to be
significant and positive, then future researchers will be able to benefit from this proposal’s since it was an attempt of replicating business research done abroad and then translated to Philippine circumstances. Furthermore, the managerial implications and suggestions that have emerged from this study can be used to aid local businesses.

1.4 Scope and Limitation
First, the scope or parameters of what were studied in this research endeavor are:
● The industry that was explored is the fashion or clothing industry.
● The clothing line or brand in focus was the UNIQLO company due to its visible sustainability efforts and positive recognitions of being a socially responsible company (Hymann, 2022).
● The study focused on UNIQLO’s corporate sustainability reputation wherein this paper will seek to understand the purchase intentions and customer satisfaction of Metro Manila Students who interact with the brand. With this, the variables of this study were limited to customer engagement, corporate sustainability, customer satisfaction, and purchase intention.
● The sample population consisted of 449 respondents who (1) have purchased UNIQLO clothing at least once and (2) are students in Metro Manila.
● The main instrument was a self-administered questionnaire asking participants about their perceptions of UNIQLO’s sustainability initiatives as well as their satisfaction and desire to buy clothing products. Survey items were adapted from scales of measurement established in previous studies (Dangelico et al., 2022; Jaiswal & Singh, 2020; Park et al., 2014; Vivek et al., 2014).
● Possible demographic information such as gender, age, and monthly allowance that may influence the purchasing intentions and behaviors were considered for descriptive statistics, but not taken in as independent variables.
● Concepts and variables were studied according to its operational definition.
● Pure quantitative methods were used for collecting and analyzing data.
On the other hand, limitations of the study included factors and occurrences such as:
● Given that there are several clothing brands globally, this research focused only on the brand UNIQLO.
● Respondents were limited to individuals who have purchased products from UNIQLO at least once. The proposed study did not include customers who have had indirect experiences with the brand (e.g. aware of the brand but has never bought from it). This is based on Dangelico et al’s (2022) framework wherein the authors suggested to narrow population sample into either customer with indirect experiences or direct experiences so that the effects of sub-variable consumer familiarity on purchase intention may be better analyzed.

II. PROCEDURE FOR PAPER SUBMISSION

2.1 Fashion Industry
“Fast fashion” has grown closely associated, and in some cases, synonymous, with the concept of unsustainability (Joy et al., 2015; Neumann et al., 2021). However, a Statista survey involving 8,600 respondents from five countries revealed how consumers remain unconvinced of corporate social responsibility efforts from clothing brands (Smith, 2022c). Further, nearly half reported that they don’t trust clothing brands making claims of sustainability efforts—9% more than the respondents who do.

This consumer perception is reflected In a survey from Milieu. With a respondent base of 1,000 shoppers in Southeast Asia, it revealed that 63% cited they doubt the quality of products marketed as sustainable (Desiderio, 2022). This includes individuals who do more research before purchasing “sustainable” clothing pieces, of which 83% were Filipinos (Tan, 2022). Needless to say, fashion has gained a dubious reputation in terms of sustainability.

Despite this, fast fashion is projected to grow in the next five years equating to 42.2 billion US dollars (Smith, 2022a). It appears that the emergence of ethical issues surrounding fast fashion clothing lines have not deterred customer interest and purchase intention, including 39% consumers who cite that sustainability is a factor they consider when buying apparel and footwear (Smith, 2022b). In line with this, a few studies show how consumer purchase intentions in the fashion industry are more driven by factors like customer satisfaction (Wang et al., 2019), social media presentation (Heweii & Youngsook, 2022), and perceived product value (Dangelico et al., 2022) rather than their perception of a firm’s corporate social responsibility.

In recent years consumers and corporations are realizing that sustainability in the clothing industry is a collaborative effort that has transcended into a fashion movement. According to a Vogue article by Chan (2019), examples of sustainability initiatives are opening donation bins for old clothes (UNIQLO), recycling used material or clothing to produce new garments (“Levi’s Secondhand” program from Levi’s and “Madewell
Archive” program from Madewell), or launching sustainable clothing lines (Zara and H&M). Chan also enumerates how companies such as Bershka and Pull&Bear (both under the fast fashion brand Inditex that also owns Zara) have committed to working towards a greener system in the future years. In this case, Bershka and Pull&Bear aim to have future garment pieces exclusively made with recycled and organic cotton, which will be ethically sourced and produced by a non-profit source called Better Cotton Initiative. With this, it can be seen how sustainable fashion is proliferating at a pace that may counter the disruption of fast fashion and its negative effects. This gives room for the emergence of “slow” fashion companies and sustainable clothing lines, which is a trend that has become worldwide and thus, localized. For instance, the study of Şener et al. (2019) noted the difference in how consumers from different countries perceive “slow” fashion based on Jung and Jin’s (2014) dimensions of fashion. A specific example of this is a portion of Americans preferring “slow” fashion due to the assumption that the smaller production volume will give more unique garment designs (which aligns with the value that their individualistic culture places on “standing out”). Other examples of the localization of sustainability in fashion are the developments in the Philippine garment industry.

2.2 Purchase Intention
Purchase intention is understood as a measurement of the buyer’s tendency to buy a product or service (Peterson, 2021), or the consumer’s attitude towards a specific purchasing behavior and how much a consumer is willing to pay (Zhang et al., 2020). An alternate definition is presented by Sharma, Dwivedi, Arya and Siddiqui (2021, as cited in Hewei & Younsook, 2022) as the willingness to buy a product involves the comparison of other products within the same price range and the consideration of income. Given the following, it may be inferred that purchase intentions are subjective and reliant on the customer’s own criteria for products or services. The concept of purchase intentions becomes more nuanced when it is examined with respect to “green” consumer behavior— which is, consumer attitudes that are more directed towards availing green products and services as compared to products, in general (Aagerup & Nilsson, 2016). Ruangkanjanases et al. (2020, as cited in Zhuang et al., 2021) emphasizes that customers who displayed more positive outlooks towards green products were more likely to have desires in purchasing them.

2.3 Customer Engagement
According to previous research, the definition of customer engagement may differ due to the concept having a basis in both fields of social sciences and marketing. The social sciences considers customer engagement to be more of an individual’s state influenced by psychological factors (Brodie et al., 2011, as cited in Kumar et al., 2017) suggesting that an aspect of customer engagement has something to do with what the individual feels toward the organization for a sustained period, which may be more relevant to how the mediating variable of customer satisfaction will be defined later.

On the other hand, the marketing perspective is more involved with the connection between the consumer and the organization where customer engagement as a business strategy of “developing relationships with customers at a deeper level, leading to customer loyalty as an outcome” (Bowden, 2009b) implying that customer engagement methods may include customer loyalty as one of its end goals. Aside from building customer loyalty, a customer may reap from engaging with their favored corporations a sense of empowerment, trust, and commitment toward fellow consumers (Brodie et al., 2013). Jaakkola and Alexander (2014) offer a new perspective with a definition of customer engagement as something that concerns itself with consumer input, stating that customer engagement may be seen as the consumer’s willing contribution of their skills or time to the growth of a business they favor. Unlike the previous definitions that have focused on repeated or consistent behavior, the definition of Jaakkola and Alexander will consider anyone who has contributed resources to the organization, whether as a single transaction or more, to be an “engaged” customer.

2.4 Corporate Sustainability Reputation
The definitions that have been developed for corporate sustainability are numerous and varied across different studies. The researchers refer to a literature review and concept analysis conducted by Veh et al. (2019) that the literature centered on corporate sustainability reputation from the years 2016 and below appear to vary in terms of theory, conceptualization, and soundness of idea. Not only has it been difficult to monitor and synthesize the number of these publications, but pinpointing the theoretical underlying of corporate sustainability reputation is an arduous task because it is dependent on the evaluations of different stakeholders, who may have varying criteria of judgment and may be prone to bias from the environmental standards of the time (e.g. sustainability being more relevant and prioritized in the recent years). Lange et al. (2010) agrees with this, noting how the reputation of organizations becomes more complicated to describe and operationalize when it is applied in a management field because no business is identical to another in terms of performance and circumstances.
Given the inconsistent definitions of corporate reputation, this current study will be describing corporate sustainability reputation as the consumer’s general assessment of a company to be positive or negative (Su et al., 2016; Wolter et al., 2021) based on their accomplishments in the economic, social, and environmental areas (Jančiauskaitė et al., 2019; Meuer et al., 2019).

2.5 Customer Satisfaction
The significant impact of customer satisfaction on companies lie in the evaluation of the customers’ overall experience, positively or negatively, which may shift demand contributing to either an increase or decrease in profit (Fan et al., 2021; Moon et al., 2021). However, customers who were previously satisfied but not loyal may avail or buy from competing businesses if the competitor products become more convenient or valuable in their perspective (Staffaroni, 2021). In this way, measuring loyalty may be another way of measuring customer satisfaction because loyal individuals can be found within a satisfied customer base. In addition, business owners may utilize the measurement of customer loyalty as a predictor of their possible number of customer referrals (Bernazzani, 2022). As businesses shift from offline (brick-and-mortar) to online platforms must now also consider and understand factors that affect customer satisfaction such as website usability (Nguyen et al., 2021), method of payment including online credit (Sanyal & Hisam, 2019), user interface (Jaiswal & Singh, 2020), and online data privacy (Pandey & Chawla, 2018).

2.6 Synthesis
Through the literature review, the researchers were able to find significant information about the variables that were the focus of this study: purchase intention, customer engagement, corporate sustainability reputation, and customer satisfaction. Moreover, the researchers were able to collect factors or drivers that either influence or are influenced by the variables of customer engagement, corporate sustainability reputation, customer satisfaction, and purchase intention.

2.7 Research Gap
The literature review demonstrated the empirical evidence which showcase the significant and direct connections between the variables of customer engagement, corporate sustainability reputation, customer satisfaction, and purchase intention. While there is a substantial amount of academic focus on these variables separately and the linkages associated with them, the researchers have not found studies that encompass all the chosen variables of this proposal. This indicates a research gap in the theories linking the variables of corporate sustainability reputation and customer engagement to purchase intention, especially with customer satisfaction acting as a mediating factor. The current study also sought to further enrich the field of literature by contributing empirical evidence relevant to corporate sustainability reputation given the lack of organization and coherence in the definitions of corporate sustainability reputation.

While there has been a significant increase of studies exploring sustainability within fashion, there is also a research gap in studies that aim to describe the comparison of sustainable fashion across cultures and on specific groups of people across long periods of time. Thus, there is a methodological gap due to this topic being underexplored through cross-cultural and longitudinal studies. The deeper research about sustainable clothing in the Filipino fashion industry and the roles of consumers holds several research gaps that this current paper wishes to explore especially after finding limited information about it. Hence, this study targeted these academic loopholes and enriched the literature dedicated to Filipino perceptions of clothing brands like UNIQLO.

III. Frameworks

3.1 Theoretical Framework
Based on the underpinnings of four separate studies that measure the variables of customer engagement, corporate sustainability reputation, purchase intention, and customer satisfaction, the theoretical model of the current study is presented below.

3.1.1 Theoretical Framework for Customer Engagement
The study of Vivek et al. (2014) was utilized due to its Customer Engagement Scale (CUE) which divides customer engagement into smaller concepts of Conscious Attention, Enthused Participation, and Social Connection. All three variables were used in the proposed research on UNIQLO clothing because they have been found to be significant in measuring influences on purchase intention. Recommendations of Vivek et al.’s study include (1) adapting the CUE scale across different contexts, (2) replicating the study without using convenience sampling, and (3) conducting further research into customer-to-customer engagement interactions. Hence, for this framework, all its sub-variables (conscious attention, enthused participation, social connection) were used in the current research due to Vivek et al.’s significant findings and reliability in measuring the customer engagement construct.

3.1.2 Theoretical Framework for Corporate Sustainability Reputation

The study of Park et al. (2014) defined the antecedents of corporate sustainability reputation by investigating the relationship between a firm’s corporate reputation and its corporate social responsibility activities. In the study, the factors of corporate reputation were Philanthropic responsibilities, Economic Responsibilities, Legal Responsibilities, and Ethical Responsibilities wherein economic responsibilities is mediated by Expertise Trust and Philanthropic Responsibilities is mediated by Social Benevolence Trust. The remaining independent variables examined were mediated by Integrity Trust. In terms of limitations, Park et al’s study used a population of educated Korean customers who may have higher standards for corporate social responsibility. Moreover, recommendations include conducting a similar study using different contexts and respondents with more individualistic cultures (e.g. America, certain population groups in Europe).
3.1.3 Theoretical Framework for Purchase Intention

The study by Dangelico et al. (2022) show that purchase intention can be operationalized using concepts such as: Perceived Value, Environmental Concern, and Consumer Familiarity with the product, including both direct and indirect experiences. Dangelico et al. suggested future researchers to test for scale validity using different cultures in case socio-demographic variables hold an effect on purchase intention. They also recommend replicating the study but narrowing the population to customers with either only direct experiences or indirect experiences with clothing brands. Hence, the current study has limited the population sample to Metro Manila Students who have purchased clothing from UNIQLO at least once.

3.1.4 Theoretical Framework for Customer Satisfaction

The findings of Jaiswal and Singh (2020) suggested that the determinant variables that predict the overall satisfaction of customers when using digital shopping platforms are: Website Usability, Economic Value, Customization, Security, Post-Purchase Experience, Customer Service, and Customer Awareness. Jaiswal and
Singh advised to conduct further research outside the Varanasi population in India. Future studies may also consider e-commerce platforms because Jaiswal and Singh’s study centered around online shoppers who buy directly from the websites of businesses.

### 3.2 Operational Framework

**Figure 5  Operational Framework of the Study**

Given the information above, the researchers have conceptualized an operational framework that includes what the proposed study aimed to explore. As seen in Figure 15, a visual representation of (1) the factors/determinants by which the chosen variables were measured, (2) the relationships that were explored for positive and/or significant effects, and (3) the incorporation of the research hypotheses into this research.

### 3.3 Hypothesis Testing

For this study, the researchers established eight (8) pairs of hypotheses, which are listed below:

**Ho1:** There is no significant and positive relationship between the independent variables (customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation) and purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

**Ha1:** There is a significant and positive relationship between customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation and purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

**Ho2:** Customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between the customer engagement and purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

**Ha2:** Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between the customer engagement and purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

**Ho3:** Customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between corporate sustainability reputation and the purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

**Ha3:** Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between corporate sustainability reputation and the purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

### 3.4 Operational Definition of Terms

**Conscious Attention** - This dimension of customer engagement was defined as the active desire, mindsets, and actions that a customer may employ to initiate or maintain interaction with the UNIQLO online store or similar e-commerce platform(s) which bridges them to UNIQLO fashion apparel products (Vivek et al., 2014).

**Consumer Familiarity** - This antecedent of purchase intention was comprised of the total amount of exposure that a customer has with the UNIQLO brand, specifically recognizing UNIQLO and purchasing its products (Dangelico et al., 2022).

**Corporate Sustainability Reputation** - For this specific study, the independent variable of corporate sustainability reputation was described as the consumer perception and attitudes toward a UNIQLO’s
sustainability-focused initiatives or programs, seeing that these individuals have purchased clothing from the brand at least once (Walsh & Dodds, 2022).

**Customer Engagement** - This was considered as the independent variable of the study and thus, was regarded as the consistent interaction, regardless of whether this consummated in an actual purchase, that a customer may exhibit towards the official webpages or online stores of UNIQLO (Vivek et al., 2014). This included activities like communicating, buying from, and sharing their overall shopping experiences with the company or with other customers (Sharma & Singh, 2021) whether these actions are transactional or non-transactional in nature (Kumar et al., 2010).

**Customer Satisfaction** - This was defined as the accumulation of the positive or negative experience/s of UNIQLO customers when buying clothes from UNIQLO including their subjective evaluations on how the product was delivered. For example, if requests for refund were accommodated, and if any additional benefits were provided (Jaiswal & Singh, 2020).

**Customization** - This element of customer satisfaction was defined as UNIQLO providing avenues for shoppers to personalize their online shopping experience including an opt-in for tracking consumer preferences and then displaying the website or recommending a selection of products according to those preferences. This also referred to when UNIQLO customers are given options to (1) find clothing or accessory products that are related to their previous transactions or searches, (2) publish product reviews or shopping experiences, and (3) adjust online store interface (Jaiswal & Singh, 2020).

**Economic Responsibility** - This dimension of corporate sustainability reputation pertained to the process by which UNIQLO garners profit and allocates corporate funds such as improving company products and services as well as maximizing the corporate wealth for the benefit of all stakeholders and investors (Park et al., 2014).

**Economic Value** - This element of customer satisfaction was defined as how customers perceive the competitive and affordable pricing of UNIQLO clothing including any discounts, promotions, and rewards for customer loyalty that is made available to them (Jaiswal & Singh, 2020).

**Enthused Participation** - This dimension of customer engagement is demonstrated by customers when they deliberately allot time and energy to accommodate the act of discussing the UNIQLO brand, buying clothes from, and generally supporting the growth of the UNIQLO company (Vivek et al., 2014). This encompasses the extra steps that customers to interact with UNIQLO products and services that may no longer for the sole purpose of buying clothing items as needed.

**Environmental Concern** - This antecedent of purchase intention refers to the level of awareness and social consciousness that the respondents have with regards to problems in the environment and issues in the fashion industry including their involvement as a consumer (Dangelico et al., 2022).

**Ethical Responsibility** - This dimension of corporate sustainability reputation refers to the success of UNIQLO in upholding ethically responsible standards such as providing transparency and maintaining equality in the treatment of all internal and external stakeholders (Park et al., 2014).

**Legal Responsibility** - This dimension of corporate sustainability reputation can be seen in UNIQLO’s compliance with technical requirements, legal protocol, and industry standards (Park et al., 2014).

**Perceived Value** - This antecedent of purchase intention pertains to the importance, positive perceptions, and additional possible benefits that customers may identify in clothing made from sustainable materials and ethical manufacturing procedures (Dangelico et al., 2022).

**Philanthropic Responsibility** - This dimension of corporate sustainability reputation refers to the initiative that UNIQLO implements for the purpose of sustainable development such as upholding ethical production processes and giving back to the community through charity donations and partnerships with local businesses (Park et al., 2014).

**Post-purchase Experience** - This element of customer satisfaction may go beyond the actual purchasing transaction because this concept refers to the methods in which a firm is able to (1) ask the customer for feedback on how to improve business operations, (2) maintain effectiveness in the transportation of their goods to the customer, and (3) heeding customer reviews for purpose of product development (Jaiswal & Singh, 2020).
For companies that offer advantages for customers enlisted in loyalty programs, then their post-purchase experience is also comprised by the fulfillment of these promised benefits.

**Purchase Intention** - This dependent variable will be defined as the readiness or desire of a customer to purchase clothing (Peterson et al., 2021) which may depend on the financial resources (Zhang et al., 2020) and comparative benefits (Dangelico et al., 2022) that they see in the specific clothing items.

**Social Connection** - This dimension of customer engagement emerges when individuals are able and willing to interact with UNIQLO’s brand, products, or platforms while there are other consumers or individuals present (Vivek et al., 2014).

**Sustainability** - The definition of sustainability in this research proposal will lean into its associations with corporate social responsibility and community development, specifically how UNIQLO and other clothing brands are able to maximize the wealth of shareholders, conduct production cycles with minimized waste, and offer products made from durable, ethically sourced materials (Doane & Macgillivray, 2001).

### IV. METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Method of Data Analysis

To interpret the data obtained from the survey, descriptive statistics was conducted to allow the researchers to organize the data into a more presentable and concise form that is easy to understand. Descriptive statistics were able to effectively summarize data such as the sample mean and standard deviation of the questionnaire items from all the participants involved.

To measure the association between variables, the correlational coefficient ($r$) was analyzed by the researchers. According to the Boston University of Public Health (2021) the correlation coefficient was used to determine the associations of each point by measuring their closeness in a scatter plot.

Linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictability between the relationship of a single independent variable and a single dependent variable (IBM, n.d.). This was used to determine the influence of each independent variable (customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation) and the mediating variable (customer satisfaction) to the dependent variable (purchase intention).

Multiple linear regression analysis was also conducted to determine the relationships of multiple independent variables to the dependent variable (Hansen, 2020). This type of analysis was used to determine the impact of both customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation to purchase intention. The formula shown below will be used:

$$ Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 $$

Where:
- $Y =$ dependent variable
- $\beta_0 =$ value of $Y$ when the values of all independent variables are zero
- $\beta_1 =$ estimated regression coefficient for customer engagement
- $X_1 =$ customer engagement
- $\beta_2 =$ estimated regression coefficient for corporate sustainability reputation
- $X_2 =$ corporate sustainability reputation

Mediated regression analysis was conducted by the researchers to test the mediating effect of a variable in the study (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This was used to determine if customer satisfaction has an influence in affecting customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation’s effect on purchase intention.

#### 4.2 Research Design

The research study was purely quantitative because the researchers gathered survey responses to analyze the sustainability-related perceptions of customers who have purchased UNIQLO products. In addition, the research design of study was causal explanatory and descriptive because it investigated an understudied link between the chosen variables and analyzed the results to explain the influence of the independent variables (customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation) and mediator (customer satisfaction) on the dependent variable. The researchers aimed to identify and describe any significant relationships about the purchase intentions of Metro Manila Students who are customers of UNIQLO. Moreover, there was also a descriptive portion because the researchers analyzed the demographic information of the survey respondents including central tendency measures, means, and standard deviation values of these control variables.
4.3 Sampling Plan

The study used quantitative methods of data collection (e.g. self-administered questionnaire) and data analysis. Snowball sampling was utilized in gathering enough survey participants who fit the desired respondent profile. The focus of the study were undergraduate students, aged 18 years old and above, studying at Metro Manila. Only individuals who have purchased clothing from the UNIQLO brand were selected.

The reasons for choosing this profile of respondents are based on the findings of Dangelico et al.’s (2022) where consumer socio-demographic characteristics were shown to have a significant relationship with purchase intention. To be specific, shoppers who identified as women and from the younger generations were significantly more open to purchasing sustainable clothing, as compared to men and older generation consumers. Hence, the population of Metro Manila Students who are also UNIQLO customers were chosen as the respondents in hopes of replicating Dangelico et al’s findings regarding purchase intention towards sustainable clothing.

V. DATA COLLECTION

5.1 Description of Data Collection Protocol
The survey was distributed to undergraduate students in Metro Manila during January until February 2023. A total of 451 survey responses were gathered. Data cleaning was performed, and it resulted in 2 survey responses being invalid, resulting in a total of 449 valid survey responses that would be used for the analysis.

5.2 Results and Discussion

5.2.1 Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Sub-variables</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Allowance</td>
<td>Less than P10,000</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>P11,000 – P30,000</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P31,000 – P50,000</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P51,000 – P80,000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P81,000 – P100,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P110,000 – P150,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over P150,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred Method</td>
<td>E-commerce Platform</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Official UNIQLO Website</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Stores</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Stores and E-commerce Platform</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Stores, E-commerce Platform, and UNIQLO Mobile Application</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Stores and Official UNIQLO website</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Stores, Official UNIQLO website, and Ecommerce Platform</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Stores, Official UNIQLO website, Ecommerce Platform, and UNIQLO Mobile Application</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.2 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis - Customer Engagement and Corporate Sustainability Reputation to Purchase Intention.

5.2.2.1 Multiple Linear Regression Output.

**Ho1:** There is no significant and positive relationship between the independent variables (customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation) and purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

To test the predictability of purchase intention from both customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The result of this test highlights a p value of <0.001 indicating a significant correlation and impact between the independent and dependent variables. This allows the null hypothesis to be rejected by the researchers. An adjusted R² value of 0.292 highlights that 29.2% of purchase intention is explained by both customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation. An R value of 0.543 highlights a moderate correlation between both independent variables to the dependent variables as shown in tables 5.2 below. Lastly in table 5.3, an estimate value of 0.148 for customer engagement and 0.222 for corporate sustainability reputation indicates that for every unit increase on customer engagement would result in a 0.148 increase in purchase intention, while every unit increase for corporate sustainability reputation would result in a 0.222 increase for purchase intention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Adjusted R²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CE &amp; CSUR-PI</td>
<td>0.543</td>
<td>0.295</td>
<td>0.292</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: CE & CSUR to PI Model Fit Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>2.968</td>
<td>0.1142</td>
<td>25.98</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.0248</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSUR</td>
<td>0.222</td>
<td>0.0344</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: CE & CSUR to PI Model Coefficient Results**

\[ Y = 2.968 + 0.148 X_1 + 0.222X_2 \]

**Equation 1: CE & CSUR to PI Multiple Linear Regression Equation**

Where:
- \( Y \) = dependent variable (purchase intention)
- \( \beta_0 \) = value of Y when the values of all independent variables are zero
- \( \beta_1 \) = estimated regression coefficient for customer engagement
- \( X_1 \) = independent variable #1 (customer engagement)
- \( \beta_2 \) = estimated regression coefficient for corporate sustainability reputation
- \( X_2 \) = independent variable #2 (corporate sustainability reputation)

5.2.3 Mediated Regression Analysis.

Mediated regression analysis was conducted by the researchers to determine the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on the relationship between the independent variables to the dependent variables.

5.2.3.1 Customer Satisfaction on Customer Engagement to Purchase Intention.

**Ho2:** Customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between the customer engagement and purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

Based on the results of the mediation analysis below on table 5.4, a significant total effect was observed between customer engagement and purchase intention, \( \beta=0.2415, \ SE=0.0222, \ p=<0.001 \). Path estimates
indicate that there is a significant indirect effect between customer engagement and customer satisfaction, $\beta=0.262$, SE= 0.0281, p=<0.001, and between customer satisfaction and purchase intention, $\beta=0.328$, SE= 0.0386, p=<0.001 as seen in table 5.5. These results indicate that customer satisfaction is a significant mediator between customer engagement and purchase intention, $\beta=0.0859$, 95 CI (0.0599-0.114). The mediator can account for 35.6% of the variance. Thus, the researchers can reject the null hypothesis. For the direct effect, the results indicate that customer engagement still has a significant effect on purchase intention, $\beta=0.1556$, 95 CI (0.1144-0.203) even with a mediating variable present. Customer engagement accounts for 64.4% of the variance in purchase intention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Mediation Estimates of CS on CE-PI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: Path Estimates of CS on CE-PI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE – CS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS – PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE – PI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.4 Customer Satisfaction on Corporate Sustainability Reputation to Purchase Intention.
Ho3: Customer satisfaction doesn’t mediate the relationship between corporate sustainability reputation and the purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.

It can be observed that a significant total effect is present between corporate sustainability reputation to purchase intention, $\beta=0.343$, SE= 0.0307, p=<0.001, based on the results of the mediation analysis in table 5.6 below. Path analysis in table 5.7 indicates that a significant indirect effect can be observed between corporate sustainability reputation and customer satisfaction, $\beta=0.413$, SE= 0.0445, p=<0.001, and between customer satisfaction and purchase intention, $\beta=0.314$, SE= 0.0443, p=<0.001. Thus, customer satisfaction is demonstrated to be a significant mediator between corporate sustainability reputation and purchase intention; allowing the researchers to reject the null hypothesis. The mediator can be accounted for 37.8% of the variance in purchase intention. Furthermore, the results also highlight that corporate sustainability reputation has a significant direct effect on purchase intention, $\beta=0.230$, 95 CI (0.1408-0.281), even within the presence of customer satisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: Mediation Estimates of CS on CStR-PI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7: Path Estimates of CS on CStR-PI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSUR - CS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS – PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSUR - PI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 82: Hypotheses Testing Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Statistical Data</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ho1</strong>: There is no significant and positive relationship between the independent variables (customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation) and purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001, R = 0.543, Adjusted R^2 = 0.292</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ho2</strong>: Customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between the customer engagement and purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.</td>
<td>p = &lt;0.001, β = 0.0859, SE = 0.1556</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ho3</strong>: Customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between corporate sustainability reputation and the purchase intention of Metro Manila Students regarding UNIQLO clothing.</td>
<td>p = &lt;0.001, β = 0.130, SE = 0.0218</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.3 Findings

In this study, the researchers would like to address the main research question: “What is the mediating effect of Customer Satisfaction on the relationship between Corporate Sustainability Reputation and Customer Engagement to the Purchase Intention of students in Metro Manila for the brand UNIQLO?”

Given the results of the study, both independent variables (customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation) have a significant and positive effect on purchase intention. This supports the first hypothesis. The findings are like the study of Yoong and Lian (2019) where they had stated the positive effects of customer engagement to purchase intention. The same study advises that companies should maximize the use of platforms, such as social media, to allow customers to engage and feel engaged by companies. Furthermore, Barhemmati and Ahmad (2015) also stated in their study that customers who are engaged to a brand and their social media websites have higher intentions to avail themselves of the products of the respective brand. In terms of corporate sustainability reputation, the study of García-Madariaga and Rodríguez-Rivera (2017) stated that customers consider all available information when purchasing from a brand, this includes the reputation of a brand in terms of sustainable activities. In addition, Jung and Seock (2016) stated the importance of high corporate reputation on customers as obtaining a positive reputation among customers will lead to a higher intention of availing a company’s products or services. This finding implies that UNIQLO customers are more likely to purchase products from the brand when they are influenced by both the level of engagement with UNIQLO and their perception of the corporate sustainability reputation of the brand.

Regarding the variable of customer satisfaction as a mediator, mediation analyses have resulted in stating that customer satisfaction is a significant mediator (p < 0.001) to the relationships of customer engagement to purchase intention and corporate sustainability reputation to purchase intention. This finding supports the fourth and fifth hypotheses of the paper. However, customer satisfaction only partially mediates the relationship given the significant direct effect that customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation have on purchase intention. This implies that UNIQLO customers gain satisfaction with being engaged with the brand and knowing that their brand is reputable in their sustainability efforts, leading to a higher intention to purchase UNIQLO products.
5.3.1 Results
5.3.1 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis.
Next, the statistical test of multiple linear regression was used to determine the significance of the combined effect of customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation on purchase intention. A p value of 0.001 indicates that there is a significant correlation and impact between customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation to purchase intention. The adjusted $R^2$ value indicates that 29.2% of purchase intention may be explained by both independent variables, suggesting that customer engagement and corporate sustainability are significant predictors for purchase intention. The $r$ value of 0.543 highlights that there is a moderate correlation between the variables of the test. Lastly, the analysis resulted in an estimate value of 0.148 and 0.222 for customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation, respectively. This highlights that every unit increase for customer engagement would result in a 0.148 increase in purchase intention, while every unit increase for corporate sustainability reputation would result in an increase of 0.222 in purchase intention. The findings highlight that Metro Manila Students’ purchase intention towards UNIQLO products positively influenced how much they are engaged with the brand along with their perceived corporate sustainability reputation of the brand.

5.3.2 Mediation Analysis.
Moving on, mediated regression analysis was conducted to examine customer satisfaction’s mediating effect on the relationship of the independent variables (customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation) on the dependent variable of purchase intention. The first mediation analysis tested the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on customer engagement and purchase intention. A significant total effect was observed between customer engagement and purchase intention. Furthermore, the path estimates indicated that a significant indirect effect is present between customer engagement and customer satisfaction, and between customer satisfaction and purchase intention. Thus, highlighting that customer satisfaction is a significant mediator between customer engagement and purchase intention; accounting for 35.6% of the variance in purchase intention. Furthermore, even with customer satisfaction present, the direct effect of customer engagement indicates that the variable is still a significant predictor of purchase intention; accounting for 64.4% of the variance in purchase intention.

For the second mediation analysis, the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on corporate sustainability reputation and purchase intention was tested. Similarly, a significant total effect was observed between corporate sustainability reputation to purchase intention. Path analysis highlights that there is a significant effect between corporate sustainability reputation and customer satisfaction, and between customer satisfaction and purchase intention. Thus, indicating that customer satisfaction is a significant mediator between corporate sustainability reputation and purchase intention; accounting for 37.8% of the variance in purchase intention. In addition, the significant direct effect highlights that corporate sustainability reputation is a significant predictor of purchase intention even with the mediating variable present; accounting for 63.2% of the variance in purchase intention. The two mediation analyses conducted highlight that customer satisfaction is a significant mediator to both the relationships of customer engagement to purchase intention and corporate sustainability reputation to purchase intention.

After all the statistical data and results were gathered, a hypothesis testing was conducted which resulted in all the six null hypotheses being rejected after an investigation of information from descriptive statistics, assumption tests, and inferential statistics. These results were also used to address the main and sub-research questions of this study, which are elaborated in the following portion.

VI. CONCLUSION/OBSERVATION
6.1 Conclusion
To reiterate, the study conducted was purely quantitative with a self-administered questionnaire as the main research instrument for data gathering. The questionnaire itself consisted of 37 survey items adapted from the scales of previous studies that were also used as theoretical frameworks (Dangelico et al., 2022; Jaiswal & Singh, 2020; Park et al., 2014; Vivek et al., 2014). During the period of January-February 2023, a total number of 449 valid and complete survey responses were gathered from undergraduate students. The methods of data analysis included only quantitative analyses such as descriptive statistics, multiple linear regression analysis, and mediated regression analysis.

In terms of results, the statistical tests of the current study resulted in the rejection of all three null hypotheses due to the findings emerging as significant. To be specific, the main variables of customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation have a significant positive impact on purchase intention. The information
from the current study aligns with previous findings wherein there is a positive relationship between customer engagement and purchase intention (Abdelnour & Khan, 2020; Barhemmati & Ahmad, 2015; Prentice et al., 2019; Toor et al., 2017; Yoong & Lian, 2019). In addition, the R2 value indicates that 22.9% of purchase intention is explained by customer engagement.

On the other hand, other significant findings are corporate sustainability reputation leading to an increase level of purchase intention among customers, which was also showcased in previous studies (Business Wire, 2021; Gregorio, 2015; Jung & Seock, 2016; Majer et al., 2022; Tarabieh, 2021; Wang et al., 2019).

With this, both customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation may be considered significant predictors of purchase intention, with the latter being a stronger predictor than the former. Furthermore, the multiple linear regression analysis was able to prove that when the effects of customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation are combined, then purchase intention is still directly and significantly affected. Since the relationship is positive, the current findings imply a proportional increase in a customer’s engagement or positive perceptions towards a brand will give way for the same customer to consider purchasing company products and services.

In addition, customer satisfaction has also been highlighted to have a significant and positive impact on purchase intention despite being a weaker predictor when compared to customer engagement and corporate sustainability. Since customer satisfaction was also being explored as mediating variable, the findings of the study also conclude that customer satisfaction partially mediates the relationships of customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation to purchase intention. Additionally, the mediated regression analysis revealed how customer satisfaction relieved to be a significant mediator between customer engagement and purchase intention (accounting for 35.6% of variance in purchase intention), as well as between corporate sustainability reputation and purchase intention (accounting for 37.8% of purchase intention). However, since the mediation is partial in nature then there are implications on how other variables aside from customer satisfaction may be more appropriate and accurate in mediating the relationships of the independent variables to purchase intention.

Findings also discovered how the combined effects of customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation can significantly and directly influence purchase intentions of customers (Ha1). It may even be possible that despite the notion of fast fashion brands being unsustainable (Clunies-Ross, 2021; Stanton, 2022), clothing companies will be able to predict purchase intention through these individuals’ level of engagement with company accounts and perception of firm CSR actions.

Findings also indicate that the customers of UNIQLO generally have high levels of environmental knowledge, based on the empirical evidence that this is significantly related to purchase intention and positive evaluations of corporate reputation (L. Chen, 2013; P. Wang et al., 2014; Zhuang et al., 2021). Furthermore, the implications align with previous findings on how a customer’s environmental concern can significantly increase willingness to buy products even from fast fashion brands like UNIQLO (Zhuang et al., 2021). This becomes especially relevant because the mean scores of the survey items measuring environmental concern reported how consumers were concerned with the environment and willing to reduce clothing consumption if it meant the preservation of natural environments. Hence, companies may want to consider addressing their customers’ sustainability concerns by using a portion of profit to improve communities or by bridging customers to CSR programs so that they may directly participate in these efforts. In this way, several companies have already begun to incentivize green purchases (Bazaraa et al., 2022; He & Chen, 2021).

Customer satisfaction has been highlighted to have a partial mediating effect on the relationship between customer engagement and purchase intention (Ha2). Even with the presence of a mediator, customer engagement still has a significant direct effect on purchase intention. This implies that, despite customer satisfaction being able to partly explain the relationship between the two variables, customer engagement still has a bigger influence in increasing purchase intention. This implies that brand managers should focus on business strategies that boost customer engagement in place of methods that increase customer satisfaction levels.

Furthermore, the results also imply that customers have an increased level of purchase intention from the satisfaction they gain from being engaged by companies or brands. This aligns with the findings of Xie et al. (2014) and Farook and Abeysekara (2016) which demonstrate that firms responding to customers reviews can gain more satisfied customers who are likely to engage with the brand again. Through this interaction, it is also implied that the customers’ satisfaction positively affects their intention to avail themselves of a brand’s product or services.
Partial mediation also implies that there are other variables that can fully mediate the relationship between customer engagement and purchase intention which may better explain how the two variables interact with each other. For example, it may be possible for purchase intention to be driven more by factors like product reviews from friends (Abdelnour & Khan, 2020) and perceived quality (Bilal & Ali, 2014).

The current study highlights that customer satisfaction also has a partial mediating effect between the relationship of corporate sustainability reputation and purchase intention (Ha3). This implies that companies who have a reputation for their sustainability efforts result in customers experiencing more satisfaction with products or services which results in a higher level of purchase intention. These implications align with previous findings such as CSR programs being able to significantly affect customer loyalty especially when customers are satisfied with the company’s products and services (Ahn et al., 2021; Islam et al., 2021; Muflih, 2021). The managers and business leaders of green companies may decide to focus on satisfaction-boosting rewards such as discounts and promotions to further increase purchase intention (Paruthi & Kaur, 2017). Furthermore,Dash et al. (2021) stated in their study that a reputable brand image leads to customers to have a better perception on the quality of products a brand provides as well as having an increase amount of satisfaction. This implies that a company’s reputation would lead to customers perceiving the company’s image positively, resulting in a higher level of customer satisfaction and purchase intention. Findings also indicated that customer satisfaction and green trust plays a significant role in how customers perceive sustainability-focused initiatives which ultimately impact their decision to support the same brand.

The partial mediation of customer satisfaction between the two variables also implies that there are other variables that can fully explain the relationship between corporate sustainability reputation and purchase intention through full mediation. Ahmad et al. (2023) demonstrated how the variable of consumer green psychology can mediate the positive connection between a firm’s CSR efforts and a customer’s purchase intention.

6.2 Recommendations

With the fashion industry being progressive in terms of purchasing, this study may help understand the variables that impact the company’s growth through consumer purchase. As mentioned in the earlier chapter regarding UNIQLO, the company has been present since the year 1949 as one of the top retail companies in the industry. They are known for their simplistic design and affordable products made with quality. Amidst that knowledge, the current study sought to understand the customer satisfaction as a mediator between the impact of UNIQLO customer engagement and corporate sustainability reputation on the purchase intention with the research locale of Metro Manila Students as the number of respondents. The findings of this study highlighted that consumers exhibit the most engagement when they are interested in learning more about a brand. Companies can create take advantage of social media or create their own website to highlight what they want to share to their consumers. In addition, the company’s social media account or business website can also serve as a way for customers to discuss with a community and to give their feedback on the brand. It is recommended that customers to be given a way to interact with each other to discuss the brand itself. Companies should open a section for discussion on their company website or allow customers to discuss in the comments section of a respective social media website. It is also recommended for companies to respond to the feedback of their customers as this builds up more customer engagement. Companies can address their customers’ feedback where the company can acknowledge, or may incentivize through discounts or vouchers, and give thanks for a positive review. For negative reviews, the company may also issue an apology and provide a solution.

It is recommended that the general fashion industry manufactures more sustainable products as there is a shift in the consumer’s attitude towards the health of the environment. Consumers are becoming more conscious about a company’s impact on the environment and would be more inclined to support those who are perceived to be an advocate to a sustainable environment. Hence, it is recommended that companies offer more clothing products that are made from sustainable materials and observe a more environmentally friendly way of manufacturing their products. Companies can increase the number of sustainable products on display within their physical or online stores or dedicate an entire section for it. In terms of environmentally friendly manufacturing, companies can opt to use more sustainable raw materials such as fruit fibers or recycled fabric instead of synthetic materials which causes harm to the environment. In addition, companies can financially support environmental NGO’s such as World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) or create a partnership with WWF to gain support and learn how to practice more sustainable methods in doing business while supporting each other’s environmental advocacies. Furthermore, it is also recommended that the companies who are already taking these steps to market their sustainable efforts. From a brand management perspective, they must be able to guarantee their customers the promise of sustainability efforts in exchange for clothing purchases from these individuals. Fashion companies can produce labels that indicate a specific product is made from sustainable materials or use

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social media to promote their advocacy campaigns. This will help the companies to build their corporate sustainability reputation among their customers and increase their purchase intention.

In terms of customer satisfaction, fashion companies should focus on providing quality economic value for their products and excellent customer services and post-purchase experience. The study highlighted that customers have high satisfaction in regard to sales and promotions. If able, a company can provide periodical sales that would not only help attract customers but also increase the customer’s satisfaction when purchasing. Furthermore, customers highlighted the importance of a company that delivers excellent service. It is recommended that companies should provide measures that would ensure that the product will be delivered to the customers in good quality including the implementation of additional staff training about the proper handling of materials to minimize damage. In addition, companies should also train their employees to better give an accurate, timely and friendly response to their customers’ needs whether it is online or in-store. Lastly, the post-purchase experience is also taken into consideration by the customers, specifically a company’s return and exchange programs and loyalty programs. Companies can provide a more than adequate return and exchange policy, such as providing 30 days to return a product and allowing free-pick up of a product to be returned from a customer’s own home when they bought the product online. Loyalty programs can also make a customer satisfied not just with the product they have purchased but also the rewards they may earn from it. Companies can make use of simple reward points that can be used for store credit or in exchange for products once accumulated to a certain degree.

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&text=Partners%3A,UN%2DHabitat


