



# Towards The Intangible Cultural Heritage Marketing: Factors Affecting Consumption Intention Of Ramie-Fabric Products

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

In the context of sustainable consumption and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), this study provides a nuanced exploration of consumer intentions towards ramie fabric products, a symbol of traditional Chinese craftsmanship. This study aims to elucidate the complex factors that influence consumer engagement with ramie fabric, highlighting its environmental and cultural importance. Adopting a rigorous quantitative approach, this study analyzes 638 valid responses from an initial distribution of 800 questionnaires. A multi-faceted analysis approach is utilized, encompassing descriptive statistics, Exploratory Factor Analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) coupled with path analysis. Key findings reveal that functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, conditional value, social identity, and attitude significantly sway consumer intentions. Crucially, this study reveals the mediating role of attitude and social identity, illustrating how these constructs bridge the gap between the intrinsic values associated with ramie fabric and the ultimate consumption intentions. Theoretically, this study enriches the discourse on ICH and sustainable consumer behavior, offering nuanced insights into the consumer dynamics surrounding ramie fabric products. Practically, it underscores the imperative of embedding cultural and environmental considerations in marketing strategies to enhance consumer engagement. Furthermore, by advocating for a synergistic approach among consumers, cultural inheritors, and the marketplace, this study delineates actionable pathways for leveraging ramie fabric's unique allure in championing sustainability and cultural heritage conservation.

**Keywords:** Sustainable consumption, Intangible cultural heritage (ICH), Consumer intentions, Ramie fabric products, Social identity, Structural equation model

## 1. Introduction

The exploration of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is fundamental to preserving the rich tapestry of human culture, acting as a vital channel for transmitting traditions, knowledge, and skills through generations. As highlighted by Cominelli and Greffe (2012), ICH not only anchors individuals to their identity and cultural lineage but also fosters an appreciation for the diversity and creativity inherent in global cultures, as emphasized by Jokilehto (2006). The significance of ICH extends beyond mere cultural enrichment, embodying profound historical, cultural, social, and economic dimensions that are integral to the mosaic of human diversity, as articulated by Blake (2008). Within the Chinese context, the burgeoning cultural industries have become a cornerstone of economic development, propelled by an upward trajectory in per capita GDP and a burgeoning demand for cultural consumption. According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2023), there has been a consistent annual growth in the economic contribution of China's cultural and allied industries, signaling a robust integration of culture into the broader economic framework. This trend underscores the critical

role of ICH in not only stimulating economic growth but also in reinforcing social cohesion and cultural legacy. The symbiosis between ICH and the realms of handicrafts and daily necessities has proven to be a catalyst for economic and social revitalization within local communities, engendering a sense of pride and a drive towards cultural industry development. The Ramie Weaving Technique, emblematic of traditional Chinese textile craftsmanship, serves as a poignant example of ICH's capacity to resonate with contemporary consumers who value tradition (Yang, 2021), thereby imbuing it with significant historical and commercial value. Nonetheless, the sustainability of such cultural practices faces challenges, including the decline in Ramie cultivation and the limited marketing of Ramie fabric products, which threaten the continuity and visibility of this cultural heritage (Yeh et al., 2021).

The scholarly discourse on intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has extensively explored its intrinsic value, emphasizing its profound relevance to culture, history, art, science, beliefs, and its significant contributions to human civilization (Dang et al., 2021). Research has delved into safeguarding and transmission, highlighting the role of community participation, policy, legal frameworks, technological, and educational means in promoting ICH's sustainable development (Su et al., 2019). Moreover, the marketization of ICH, including brand marketing strategies, cultural tourism, and destination management, has been scrutinized to enhance its commercial value and visibility (Kim et al., 2021). The importance of international cooperation in strengthening cultural exchanges and safeguarding ICH has also been underscored (Lazaro Ortiz & Jimenez de Madariaga, 2022). Despite these advancements, a notable research gap exists in understanding consumer intentions towards ICH products, particularly ramie fabric products. Current studies primarily focus on traditional goods and services, with limited exploration of ICH-related products' unique historical, cultural, and social significance (Qiu et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2022). This gap highlights the need for in-depth investigation into the factors influencing consumer intentions and behaviors towards ramie fabric products, integrating considerations of consumption values and social identity to develop effective marketing and product promotion strategies.

Aiming to bridge this gap, this study endeavors to elucidate the multifaceted factors influencing consumer intentions towards ramie fabric products, construct a comprehensive model detailing these factors' interrelations, and stimulate engagement among key stakeholders in fostering the sustainable evolution of intangible cultural heritage.

This study is structured to systematically explore the intricate dynamics influencing consumer intentions towards ramie fabric products within the context of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). Initially, it delves into the theoretical underpinnings that frame the research, followed by a detailed methodology section outlining the approach for data collection and analysis. Subsequent sections present the findings, offering a nuanced understanding of the factors at play. The discussion integrates these insights with existing literature, highlighting theoretical and practical implications. Finally, the study concludes by summarizing key contributions, acknowledging limitations, and suggesting avenues for future research, thereby providing a comprehensive overview of the investigation's scope and significance.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Theoretical approach

The Value-Attitude-Behavior (VAB) model, conceptualized by Homer and Kahle in 1988, delineates a hierarchical framework where individual values shape attitudes, subsequently influencing behaviors. Initially applied to natural food purchasing behaviors, the model demonstrated that while values significantly affect attitudes towards such foods, their direct impact on purchasing behaviors is mediated through attitudes, highlighting the latter's pivotal role in bridging values and behaviors (Homer & Kahle, 1988). This cognitive hierarchy suggests that values indirectly influence behaviors via attitudes, establishing a causal sequence from abstract values to concrete behaviors. Further empirical investigations across diverse contexts, including environmental preservation (Vaske & Donnelly, 1999), organic food selection (Shin et al., 2017), green clothing purchases (Nguyen et al., 2019), and online collaborative consumption (Abutaleb et al., 2020), have affirmed the VAB model's applicability and utility in understanding consumer behavior dynamics.

The theory of consumer value (TCV), articulated by Sheth et al. (1991), delineates the perceived intrinsic benefits or satisfactions that consumers attribute to a product or service, based on its specific attributes or characteristics. This theory categorizes consumer values into five main types: functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional values, which collectively influence consumer purchasing decisions, including product and brand choices. Subsequent researches (Biswas & Roy, 2015; Lin & Huang, 2012) have applied this theory across various contexts, notably in understanding consumer preferences for green products, ethical consumption of organic foods, and the dynamics of online travel agency usage, as well as in the marketing of intangible cultural heritage tourism and cultural tourism.

Social identity theory (SIT), developed by Turner and Oakes (1986), elucidates the process by which individuals affiliate themselves with specific groups, enhancing their self-esteem through this identification. SIT posits that an individual's sense of belonging to a group, termed social identity, intensifies with active participation within the group, reinforcing their identification as group members (Turner & Oakes, 1986). This theory has been instrumental in various studies (de-Miguel-Molina et al., 2021; Yan & Chiou, 2021) exploring the nexus between social identity and consumer behavior, particularly in the context of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) preservation, sustainable consumer practices, and the promotion of ethical consumption.

## 2.2 Hypothesis development

The theory of consumer value posits that consumers' expectations of value from a product or service significantly shape their attitudes towards consumption. This theory suggests that positive consumer attitudes are fostered when the perceived value of a product or service is high, whereas negative perceptions or experiences can lead to adverse attitudes (Yu & Lee, 2019). In exploring the application of this theory, Ali et al. (2019) delved into the propensity of individuals in Pakistan to embrace green IT products, leveraging the theoretical foundations of consumer value. Similarly, Furukawa et al. (2019) assessed consumer satisfaction and brand promise by evaluating the functional, emotional, social, and epistemic attributes of running shoes, exploring the relationship between various consumer values and attitudes. Qasim et al. (2019) utilized a comprehensive framework that integrates consumer values theory with the self-identity approach to scrutinize the link between specific consumer values (functional, social, conditional, epistemic, and emotional), environmental self-identity, and behavioral intentions towards organic food consumption. Furthermore, Bhutto et al. (2022) applied an integrated model that combines consumer values theory with ethical self-identity to examine factors influencing Generation Z's preference for eco-friendly automobiles, aiming to uncover the determinants of acceptance and use of sustainable vehicles among this demographic. Collectively, these studies underscore the multifaceted impact of consumer values on attitudes, suggesting that practicality, environmental sustainability, emotional resonance, and social significance of products, such as those associated with the intangible cultural heritage of ramie fabric, are pivotal in shaping consumer attitudes. This investigation thus seeks to elucidate the influence of these dimensions on consumer attitudes towards ramie fabric products. Thus, the following hypothesis are available:

*H1: Functional value positively influences consumer attitudes toward ramie fabric products.*

*H2: Social values positively influence consumer attitudes toward ramie fabric products. H3: Emotional value positively influences consumer attitudes toward ramie fabric products.*

*H4: Epistemic value positively influences consumer attitudes toward Ramie fabric products.*

*H5: Conditional value positively influences consumer attitudes toward Ramie fabric products.*

The theory of consumer value posits that individuals derive multifaceted value from their consumption experiences, categorized into functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional dimensions. These dimensions collectively shape individuals' attitudes, preferences, and intentions related to consumption. Concurrently, social identity theory elucidates how individuals cultivate a sense of self-identification and belonging through their affiliations with specific groups, endeavoring to maintain a positive social identity. Integrating these theories illuminates the potential for consumer values to enrich social identity. Brewer and Roccas (2015) explored the nexus between personal values and social identity, suggesting that personal values significantly influence individuals' affiliation with certain social groups, thereby molding their social identity and consumption intentions. Eckhardt and Bardhi (2020) synthesized literature on social status and consumption, contributing to the conceptual amalgamation of these domains. Chen and Lin (2019) investigated how social values, including the social benefits and relationships tied to a product or service, affect social identity formation, revealing a propensity for individuals to align with groups sharing similar consumption values and intentions. McGowan et al. (2017) examined the interplay between social identity, values, and intentions, underscoring social identity's pivotal role in shaping consumers' valuation of products or services. Jiang et al. (2022) delved into the impact of consumer values and social identity on sustainable consumption intentions within the online education sector, highlighting the significant influence of both constructs on sustainable consumer behavior. These studies collectively underscore the intricate relationship between social identity, personal values, sustainability, and cultural heritage, positing consumer values as a conduit linking individuals to their cultural and collective identities. By synthesizing consumer value theory and social identity theory, this research aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of consumer decision-making processes, providing valuable insights for developing effective marketing strategies for products like ramie fabric, rooted in cultural heritage. Thus, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

*H6: Functional value positively affects the social identity of Ramie fabric products. H7: Social values positively influence the social identity of Ramie fabric products. H8: Emotional value positively influences the social identity of Ramie fabric products. H9: Epistemic value positively affects the social identity of Ramie fabric products.*

*H10: Conditional value positively affects the social identity of Ramie fabric products.*

Empirical research consistently demonstrates the significant role of consumer attitudes in influencing purchase intentions across various sectors, including eco-friendly and luxury products (Pop et al., 2020; Sevtap et al., 2019; Zaremohzzabieh et al., 2021). This relationship underscores the necessity of fostering positive attitudes towards ramie fabric products, known for their artisanal quality, cultural significance, and environmental sustainability, to enhance consumer purchase intentions. Developing marketing strategies that positively shape consumer attitudes towards ramie fabric products is crucial for increasing their market adoption and use. The following, thus, hypothesis is available:

*H11: Consumer attitudes toward ramie fabric products positively influence consumption intentions.*

Social identity theory suggests that individuals' alignment with specific social groups shapes their self-concept and consumption behaviors. Research indicates that group affiliations significantly impact sustainable consumption choices (Sha, 2022), purchase intentions (Prentice et al., 2019), and engagement in luxury fashion sharing among Indian millennials (Jain & Mishra, 2020). Furthermore, social identity has been shown to enhance purchase intentions on social media and drive sustainable consumption behaviors (Q. Wang et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2019). These findings underscore the role of social identity in fostering consumption intentions, particularly for products like ramie fabric, which embody environmental and cultural values. Consumers' identification with these values can bolster their sense of belonging and, consequently, their willingness to purchase ramie fabric products, highlighting the potential of social identity to influence positive consumption intentions (Jain & Mishra, 2020; Prentice et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2019). Therefore, this study proposes:

*H12: The social identity of ramie fabric products positively influences consumer intention.*

The value-attitude-behavior model posits a significant linkage between attitudes, underlying values, and behaviors within the context of consumption. It delineates how consumption attitudes—individuals' assessments and perceptions of specific objects—interact with the perceived value derived from product or service utilization, encompassing dimensions such as functional, social, emotional, and epistemic values. This interaction suggests that consumers' attitudes and values serve as pivotal mediators, shaping their intentions and subsequent behaviors. For instance, Chakraborty and Paul (2023) demonstrated that consumer attitudes mediate the relationship between consumption values and healthcare app purchase intentions. Similarly, Wang et al. (2022) identified a mediating role of consumer attitudes in green car purchasing decisions among Chinese millennials, while Qiu et al. (2019) highlighted attitudes' mediation between value perceptions and visit intentions to intangible cultural heritage sites. Further, Tanrikulu (2021) underscored the mediating influence of attitudes in the application of consumer value theory to behavior research. Research by Sheng et al. (2019) and Kautish et al. (2021) further corroborates the mediating function of attitudes in linking cultural values to green purchase intentions and values to luxury fashion consumption, respectively. In the realm of ramie fabric products, positive evaluations of value are anticipated to cultivate favorable consumption attitudes, acting as a conduit between consumers' values and their purchase intentions. These attitudes encapsulate the overall assessment and favorability towards ramie fabric products, potentially catalyzing the intention to purchase. Thus, this study posits that positive consumer attitudes towards ramie fabric products, spurred by value evaluations, may significantly influence purchase intentions, encouraging actions towards support and acquisition of such products. Therefore, this study proposes:

*H13: Consumption attitudes toward ramie fabric products mediate the relationship between functional value and consumption intentions.*

*H14: Consumption attitudes toward ramie fabric products mediate the relationship between social value and willingness to consume.*

*H15: Consumption attitudes toward ramie fabric products mediate the relationship between emotional value and consumption intention.*

*H16: Consumption attitudes toward ramie fabric products mediate the relationship between epistemic value and willingness to consume.*

*H17: Consumption attitudes toward ramie fabric products mediate the relationship between conditional value and consumption intention.*

Social identity theory suggests that individuals strive to maintain a positive social identity by aligning with the norms and values of their social groups. In the realm of consumption, this alignment often manifests through associations with groups that endorse specific products or consumption behaviors. Research consistently highlights social identity's mediating role between consumption values and intentions, illustrating its influence on purchase decisions. For instance, Xiao et al. (2019) revealed social identity's mediation in sustainable purchase intentions within cross-border e-commerce, influenced by contextual online shopping signals. Similarly, Kautish et al. (2021) identified social identity as a mediator between values, brand awareness, and

luxury fashion consumption intentions. Further, studies by Zhao et al. (2019) and Jiang et al. (2022) underscored social identity's mediation in environmentally sustainable clothing purchases and sustainable behaviors in online education, respectively. Varshneya et al. (2017) and Ali et al. (2018) extended this understanding to organic clothing purchases in collectivist societies and green IT product adoption in Pakistan, respectively, reinforcing social identity's mediating effect. These findings collectively affirm social identity's pivotal role in bridging consumer values and intentions, suggesting that consumers' affiliation with the values embodied by ramie fabric products—such as functionality, environmental sustainability, and cultural heritage—may enhance their identification with relevant social groups. This identification, in turn, strengthens the link between perceived product value and consumption inclination. Consumers who recognize and identify with the significance and social identity of ramie fabric products are likely to foster a positive social identity, thereby increasing their purchase intentions. Thus, the following hypothesis are proposed:

- H18: The social identity of ramie fabric products mediates between functional value and consumption intention.*  
*H19: The social identity of ramie fabric products mediates between social value and consumption intention.*  
*H20: The social identity of ramie fabric products mediates between emotional value and consumption intention.*  
*H21: The social identity of ramie fabric products mediates between epistemic value and consumption intention.*  
*H22: The social identity of ramie products mediates between conditional value and consumption intention.*

### 3. Methodology

Employing a quantitative methodology, this study strategically selects participants through purposive and quota sampling techniques. The target demographic consists of individuals with prior experience in using or purchasing Ramie fabric products, hailing from five distinct regions within China: Zhejiang, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Shanghai, and Beijing. Data collection was conducted via an online questionnaire, with a total of 800 questionnaires distributed. Of these, 740 were retrieved, and 638 were deemed valid for analysis. The study leverages advanced statistical tools, specifically SPSS and AMOS, to conduct a comprehensive data analysis. This includes employing descriptive statistics for an initial overview of the data, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to explore and confirm the relationships among variables, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) alongside path analysis to rigorously test the proposed model of consumer behavior towards Ramie fabric products.

The study implements a series of systematically organized online questionnaires, focusing on functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional aspects, each meticulously formulated to accurately assess essential variables utilizing a 5-point Likert scale:

This study adopts scales from the theory of consumption value to assess the functional value of ramie fabric products, focusing on aspects such as usability, durability, comfort, and performance. Drawing on methodologies from prior research (Aravindan et al., 2023; Furukawa et al., 2019; Lin & Huang, 2012), the functional value is evaluated through a questionnaire, ranging from very low to very high. Key areas of inquiry include the environmental friendliness of materials, product quality, user comfort, usability, and price reasonableness.

The significance of social value in ramie fabric products significantly influences consumer purchase intentions. Utilizing the theory of consumer value, research has delved into consumer attitudes towards sustainability and green products, emphasizing social value's role (Aravindan et al., 2023; Furukawa et al., 2019; Lin & Huang, 2012). To assess ramie fabric products' social value, adapted scales from these studies gauge aspects like societal recognition, peer influence, expression of personality, and image enhancement.

Research conducted by Furukawa et al. (2019) and Aravindan et al. (2023) have underscored the critical influence of emotional value on consumer preferences and brand loyalty, especially in the context of environmentally friendly products and brand dynamics. This study employs modified scales derived from these investigations to evaluate the emotional value associated with ramie fabric products. It specifically targets dimensions such as consumer satisfaction, the depth of emotional connection, and the sense of moral fulfillment.

Epistemic value, defined as consumers' appreciation for product knowledge, reliability, and innovation, significantly influences purchasing decisions and intentions. Research indicates its pivotal role in green product selection, electronic word-of-mouth influence, and brand loyalty (Aravindan et al., 2023; Furukawa et al., 2019; Lin & Huang, 2012). It affects ethical consumption behaviors, notably in organic food choices (Kushwah et al., 2019), by shaping perceptions of product ethicality and environmental impact. To measure epistemic value in ramie fabric products, this study adapts established scales focusing on environmental knowledge, production processes, and the unique attributes of ramie.

Conditional factors significantly affect consumer purchase decisions, with conditional value playing a crucial role in determining consumption intentions. Studies by Aravindan et al. (2023), Kushwah et al. (2019), and Lin and Huang (2012) highlight the importance of conditional attributes such as environmental friendliness and sustainability in influencing choices, particularly for green and organic products. To evaluate the conditional value of ramie fabric products, this research will measure consumer perceptions, focusing on the products' environmental benefits and cultural significance.

Sustainable consumption attitudes and the appeal of eco-friendly innovations significantly influence consumer intentions, with studies by Cao et al. (2021) and Ma and Chang (2022) underscoring the impact of novelty in ramie fabric products on consumer attitudes. Functional attributes—quality, durability, comfort, and purpose fitness—are key to evaluating consumer attitudes towards these products. Utilizing a methodology inspired by Furukawa et al. (2019), this study quantitatively assesses attitudes towards ramie fabric products, focusing on consumer satisfaction, expectations, and the value of sustainable and culturally significant consumption.

Social identity, defined as an individual's sense of belonging to a social group and the value they attribute to this membership, plays a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes and intentions towards products, including ramie fabric items. Highlighting its influence on sustainable consumption and luxury goods purchasing, studies by Jiang et al. (2022), Salem and Salem (2018), Salem and Salem (2018), and Persaud and Schillo (2017) underscore social identity's impact on consumer behavior. To evaluate social identity's effect on ramie fabric product consumption, this study utilizes adapted scales focusing on sustainability, cultural identity, and social responsibility, reflecting the importance of intangible cultural heritage and societal image in consumer decision-making.

Consumer intentions, reflecting the willingness to purchase, endorse, or engage with sustainable products, are crucial for understanding attitudes towards ramie fabric products. Studies by Aravindan et al. (2023) and Ma and Chang (2022) highlight the significant role of consumer intentions in mediating the relationship between electronic word-of-mouth, consumer values, and purchasing decisions, particularly in the context of e-commerce and eco-friendly innovations. This study measures consumer intentions, focusing on the propensity to buy ramie fabric products, preference over synthetic textiles, commitment to sustainability, and likelihood of recommending these products, thereby offering insights into consumer behavior towards sustainable consumption.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1 Descriptive analysis

Table 1 presents essential demographic information of respondents who have participated in a survey regarding their purchase history and demographic characteristics related to Ramie Fabric products. The data unequivocally show that all participants (100%,  $n=638$ ) have purchased Ramie Fabric products, indicating a targeted sample of consumers familiar with these products.

Demographically, the age distribution of respondents leans significantly towards the middle-aged groups, with the majority falling within the 31-40 years (54.5%) and 41-50 years (41.1%) brackets, suggesting that Ramie Fabric products are particularly popular among these age groups. The representation of younger (19-30 years) and older (51 years and above) age groups is minimal, indicating less engagement with these products.

Gender distribution among respondents shows a higher female participation (63.3%) compared to male (36.7%), highlighting a potential gender preference or greater interest in Ramie Fabric products among women.

Occupationally, the sample is diverse, with the largest segments being company employees (30.3%), professionals such as teachers, doctors, and lawyers (20.2%), and government workers (20.5%). Freelancers and others constitute smaller portions of the sample, indicating that Ramie Fabric products appeal across various occupational backgrounds.

Income levels of respondents vary, with a significant portion earning between RMB 8001-10000 (34%) and RMB 10001 and above (33.2%), suggesting that middle to high-income earners are the primary consumers of Ramie Fabric products.

Educationally, the majority hold a bachelor's degree (45.8%), followed by master's degree holders (27.6%) and those with college education or less (26.6%), indicating that Ramie Fabric products are most popular among individuals with higher educational backgrounds.

**Table 1** Essential information

		Frequency	Percent
Have you purchased RamieFabric products	Yes	638	100.0
	No	0	0.0
Age	Under 18 years of age	0	0.0
	19-30 years old	19	3.0
	31-40 years old	348	54.5
	41-50 years old	262	41.1
	51 years old and above	9	1.4
Gender	Male	234	36.7
	Female	404	63.3
Occupation	company employee	193	30.3
	professional (e.g. teacher/doctor /lawyer, etc.)	129	20.2
	career/civil servant/government worker	131	20.5
	Freelancer (e.g. writer/artist/ photographer/tour guide, etc.)	87	13.6
	other	98	15.4
Monthly income level	RMB 3000 and below	5	.8
	RMB 3001-5000	78	12.2
	RMB 5001-8000	126	19.7
	RMB 8001-10000	217	34.0
	RMB 10001 and above	212	33.2
Highest level of education or ongoing education	college or less	170	26.6
	bachelor's degree	292	45.8
	master's degree	176	27.6

#### 4.2 Reliability and validity analysis

Table 2 presents the reliability statistics of a survey instrument, indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.936 across 38 items. This high Cronbach's Alpha value suggests excellent internal consistency among the survey items, indicating that the instrument is highly reliable in measuring the constructs it intends to assess. A Cronbach's Alpha value above .9 is generally considered excellent, reflecting that the items are well-correlated and provide consistent results across different respondents.

Table 3 reports the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, essential indicators for the adequacy of factor analysis. The KMO measure of 0.949 exceeds the recommended threshold of .6, indicating that the sample size is adequate for the factor analysis and that the data patterns are suitable for this statistical technique. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows an approximate Chi-Square value of 10782.075 with 703 degrees of freedom and a significance level of .000, strongly rejecting the null hypothesis that the variables are uncorrelated in the population. This result further validates the appropriateness of conducting factor analysis on the dataset, as it confirms the presence of relationships among the variables.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.936	38

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.949
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	10782.075
	df	703
	Sig.	.000

4.3 Structural equation model

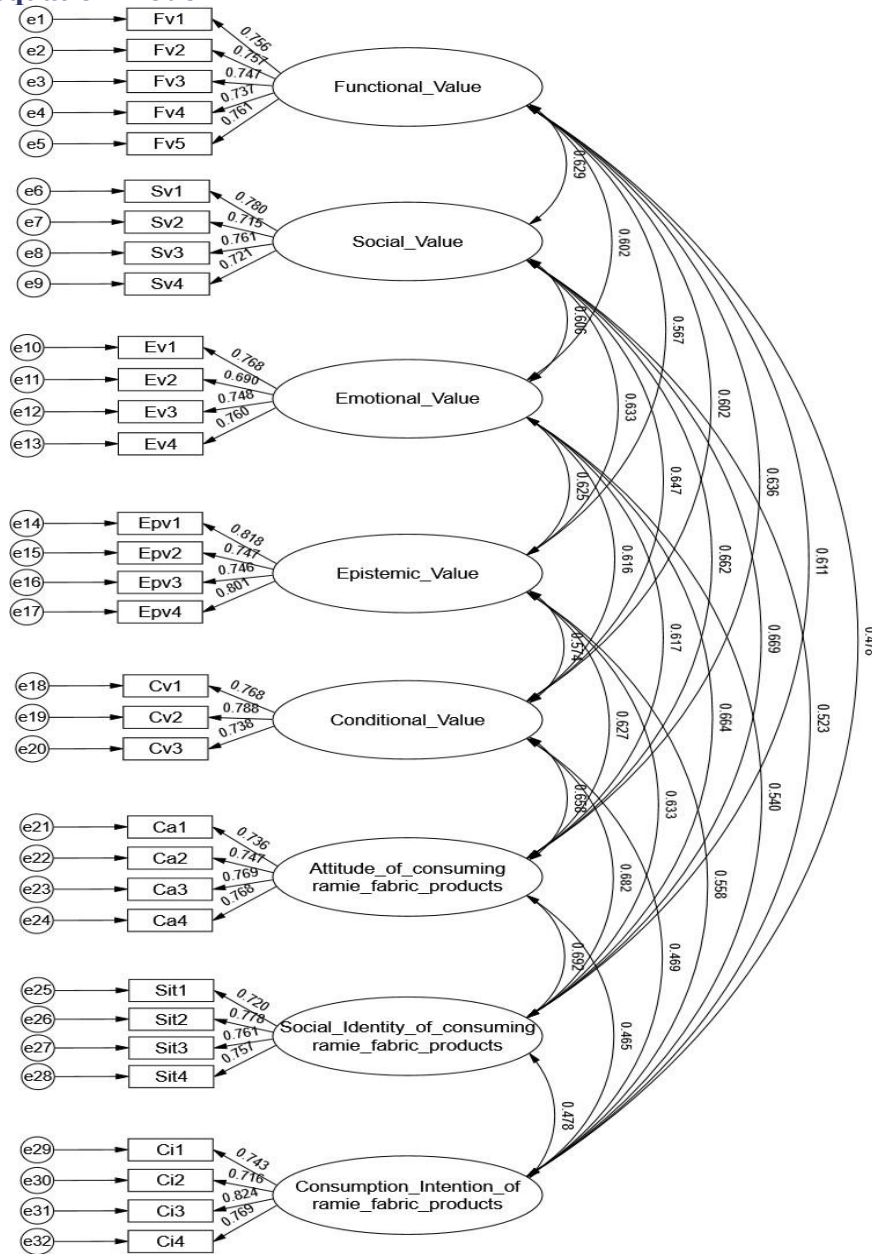


Figure 1. CFA for the structural model.

Table 4 delineates the convergence validity of a study examining various latent variables related to the consumption of ramie fabric products, including Functional Value, Social Value, Emotional Value, Epistemic Value, Conditional Value, Attitude towards consuming ramie fabric products, Social Identity associated with consuming ramie fabric products, and Consumption Intention of ramie fabric products. Convergence validity is assessed through observation indicators, factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Factor loadings, which range from 0.690 to 0.824 across different observation indicators, demonstrate the degree to which each indicator correlates with its corresponding latent variable. These loadings are sufficiently high, indicating strong relationships between indicators and their latent variables. CR values, ranging from 0.809 to 0.867, exceed the recommended threshold of 0.7, suggesting that the constructs exhibit high internal consistency. AVE values, which measure the average variance explained by the latent variables in their indicators, range from 0.551 to 0.607, surpassing the acceptable benchmark of 0.5. This indicates that a majority of the variance in the observation indicators is accounted for by the latent variables, affirming the constructs' convergence validity.

Overall, the table presents evidence of strong convergence validity across the constructs measured in the study, indicating that the latent variables are well- represented by their respective observation indicators. This robust statistical validation underscores the reliability of the constructs in capturing the nuances of consumer behavior towards ramie fabric products, including their functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional values,





Intention of ramie fabric products	0.47	0.5	0.54	0.55	0.46	0.465	0.478	0.764
	8	23	0	8	9			

Note: The diagonal is the square root of the corresponding dimension AVE

Table 6. presents the model fit metrics for a structural equation model, comparing the obtained results against established reference standards for model adequacy. The chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio ( $\chi^2/df$ ) of 1.505 falls well below the threshold of 3, suggesting a good fit between the model and the observed data. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value of 0.028 is significantly lower than the acceptable limit of 0.08, indicating a close fit of the model with the data. The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) values are 0.939 and 0.927, respectively, both exceeding the recommended value of 0.9 and 0.85, which denotes a satisfactory fit. The Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) all surpass the criterion of 0.9 with values of 0.938, 0.976, and 0.978, respectively, further confirming the model's robustness and the appropriateness of its structure in capturing the constructs of interest.

**Table 6.** Model fit metrics

Fit index	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI
Reference standards	<3	<0.08	>0.9	>0.85	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Result	1.505	0.028	0.939	0.927	0.938	0.976	0.978

Table 7. presents the results of a structural equation model path test, examining the relationships between various constructs related to consumer behavior towards ramie fabric products. The hypotheses tested include the influence of functional value (Fv), social value (Sv), emotional value (Ev), epistemic value (Epv), and conditional value (Cv) on the attitude of consuming ramie fabric products (Ca), as well as their impact on social identity (Sit) and ultimately on consumption intention (Ci). The table reports path estimates, standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ), standard errors (S.E.), critical ratios (C.R.), and p-values (P), with significant paths highlighted. All proposed hypotheses (H1-H12) are supported, indicating significant relationships between the values (Fv, Sv, Ev, Epv, Cv) and both consumer attitude (Ca) and social identity (Sit), which in turn significantly influence consumption intention (Ci). Notably, the strongest direct effect on consumption intention is from consumer attitude (Ca→Ci), followed by social identity's influence (Sit→Ci). This suggests that both how consumers feel about ramie fabric products and their identification with the social groups associated with these products play crucial roles in their decision to purchase. The results underscore the importance of multifaceted value perceptions in shaping consumer attitudes and social identity, which are pivotal in driving consumption intentions. The significance levels (\*\*\*) , indicating  $p < 0.001$ , affirm the robustness of these relationships within the model.

**Table 7.** Path test and hypothesis verify

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate	$\beta$	S.E.	C.R.	P	Results
H1	Fv→Ca	0.165	0.173	0.049	3.377	***	Supported
H2	Sv→Ca	0.256	0.272	0.041	6.228	***	Supported
H3	Ev→Ca	0.116	0.127	0.050	2.299	0.022	Supported
H4	Epv→Ca	0.154	0.172	0.046	3.329	***	Supported
H5	Cv→Ca	0.208	0.210	0.055	3.763	***	Supported
H6	Fv→Sit	0.091	0.101	0.046	1.968	0.049	Supported
H7	Sv→Sit	0.189	0.213	0.052	3.642	***	Supported
H8	Ev→Sit	0.192	0.223	0.048	4.011	***	Supported
H9	Epv→Sit	0.139	0.165	0.044	3.160	0.002	Supported
H10	Cv→Sit	0.243	0.261	0.053	4.560	***	Supported
H11	Ca→Ci	0.332	0.350	0.052	6.356	***	Supported
H12	Sit→Ci	0.256	0.255	0.041	6.228	***	Supported

Note: Fv: Functional value; Sv: Social value; Ev: Emotional value; Epv: Epistemic value; Cv: Conditional value; Ca: Attitude of consuming ramie fabric products; Sit: Social Identity of consuming ramie fabric products; Ci: Consumption Intention of ramie fabric products.

\*\*\*:  $p < 0.001$

The findings indicate that the paths from functional value (Fv), social value (Sv), epistemic value (Epv), and conditional value (Cv) through consumer attitude (Ca) to consumption intention (Ci) are supported (H13, H14, H16, H17), suggesting that these values influence consumption intention significantly when mediated by consumer attitude. However, the emotional value (Ev) through consumer attitude (Ca) path to consumption intention (Ci) is rejected (H15), indicating that emotional value does not significantly influence consumption intention through consumer attitude in this context. Regarding the mediation through social identity (Sit), the

paths from social value (Sv), epistemic value (Epv), and conditional value (Cv) to consumption intention (Ci) are supported (H19, H20, H22), showing that these values significantly influence consumption intention when mediated by social identity. However, the functional value (Fv) through social identity (Sit) path is rejected (H18), suggesting that functional value does not significantly influence consumption intention through social identity.

Emotional value (Ev) through social identity (Sit) to consumption intention (Ci) is supported (H20), indicating a significant influence when mediated by social identity.

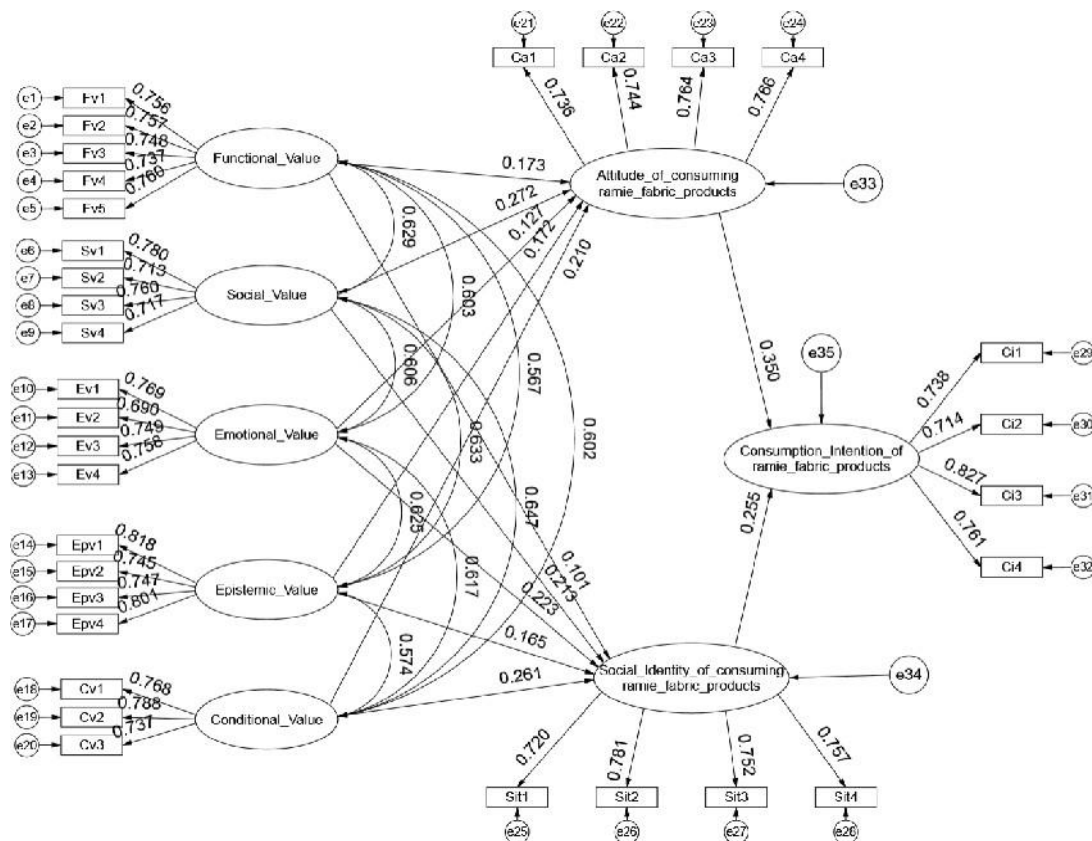
These results highlight the complex interplay between different types of consumer values, attitudes, social identity, and their combined effect on the intention to consume ramie fabric products, underscoring the importance of both attitude and social identity as mediators in the consumer decision-making process.

**Table 8.** Mediation effect bootstrap test

Hypothesis	Mediation path	Effectsize	SE	Bias-Corrected		Results
				95%CI		
H13	Fv→Ca→Ci	0.055	0.030	0.006	0.128	Supported
H14	Sv→Ca→Ci	0.085	0.018	0.056	0.128	Supported
H15	Ev→Ca→Ci	0.038	0.027	-0.004	0.100	Rejected
H16	Epv→Ca→Ci	0.051	0.031	0.007	0.134	Supported
H17	Cv→Ca→Ci	0.069	0.035	0.014	0.154	Supported
H18	Fv→Sit→Ci	0.023	0.019	-0.006	0.069	Rejected
H19	Sv→Sit→Ci	0.048	0.027	0.007	0.114	Supported
H20	Ev→Sit→Ci	0.049	0.024	0.014	0.117	Supported
H21	Epv→Sit→Ci	0.036	0.022	0.004	0.094	Supported
H22	Cv→Sit→Ci	0.062	0.025	0.022	0.122	Supported

Note: Fv: Functional value; Sv: Social value; Ev: Emotional value; Epv: Epistemic value; Cv: Conditional value; Ca: Attitude of consuming ramie fabric products; Sit: Social Identity of consuming ramie fabric products; Ci: Consumption Intention of ramie fabric products.

Figure 2 uncovers the structural equation model diagram and explains the relationship among functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, conditional value, attitude of consuming ramie fabric products, social identity of consuming ramie fabric products, and consumption intention of ramie fabric products. By this way, this model identifies the mediation roles of attitude of consuming ramie fabric products and social identity of consuming ramie fabric products.



**Figure 2.** Structural equation model diagram  
**5. Discussion and conclusion**

The analysis of the Structural Equation Model framework, as delineated in the provided tables, reveals significant insights into the direct and indirect effects influencing consumer intentions towards ramie fabric products. Direct effects, as evidenced by the hypotheses H1 through H12, unequivocally demonstrate that functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional values (Fv, Sv, Ev, Epv, Cv) significantly impact consumers' attitudes (Ca) and social identity (Sit) related to ramie fabric products, which in turn, substantially influence their consumption intentions (Ci). Particularly, the attitude of consuming ramie fabric products (Ca) and social identity (Sit) emerge as potent predictors of consumption intention (Ci), underscoring the paramount importance of consumers' perceptions and their identification with the social groups associated with these products in driving their purchase decisions.

The mediation effect bootstrap test further elucidates the indirect effects, with hypotheses H13, H14, H16, H17, H19, H20, H21, and H22 being supported, indicating that consumer attitudes and social identity mediate the relationship between the values (Fv, Sv, Epv, Cv) and consumption intentions. Notably, emotional value (Ev) did not exhibit a significant mediating effect through consumer attitudes towards consumption intention (H15) nor through social identity (H18), suggesting that while emotional aspects are crucial, they may not always function as a bridge between value perceptions and purchasing behavior in this context. These findings collectively highlight the complex interplay of direct and indirect influences on consumer behavior, emphasizing the critical role of both intrinsic values and the mediating roles of attitudes and social identity in shaping consumption intentions towards sustainable products like ramie fabric.

### 5.1 Theoretical implications

The integration of this study's findings with the Value-Attitude-Behavior (VAB) model, the Theory of Consumer Value, and Social Identity Theory (SIT) significantly advances our understanding of consumer behavior towards sustainable products, such as ramie fabric. This research corroborates and extends existing models by emphasizing the complex interplay between consumer values, attitudes, and the pivotal role of social identity in shaping sustainable consumption intentions.

Consistent with the Value-Attitude-Behavior model's propositions (Homer & Kahle, 1988), our findings demonstrate that consumer values directly influence attitudes, which in turn, affect behaviors towards sustainable products (Xu et al., 2022). This study aligns with recent research by Kalaiselvi and Dhinakaran (2021), which also highlighted the direct impact of values on consumer attitudes towards eco-friendly products. Moreover, by illustrating the mediating role of social identity, this study extends the Theory of Consumer Value (X. Wang et al., 2021) into the realm of sustainable consumption, aligning with findings by Tanpoco et al. (2023) that underscore the significance of social identity in eco-conscious consumer behavior. This extension is particularly relevant in light of research by Schulte et al. (2020), which emphasized the growing importance of social identity in digital consumer environments. However, our research diverges from the expected strong mediating role of emotional value found in studies such as those by, suggesting a more nuanced relationship between emotional value and sustainable consumption intentions. This discrepancy invites further exploration, as suggested by recent studies (Joshi et al., 2021), into how emotional value influences consumer behavior across different sustainable product categories.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the evolving discourse on sustainable consumer behavior by integrating digital influences and social identity considerations into traditional models. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, as recommended by recent studies (Han, 2021), to further refine our understanding of consumer behavior in the sustainability context.

### 5.2 Practical implications

This investigation into consumer behavior towards sustainable products, with a specific focus on ramie fabric, yields critical insights with broad managerial implications for stakeholders across the marketing, policy-making, and sustainability advocacy domains. By integrating the Value-Attitude-Behavior (VAB) model, the Theory of Consumer Value, and Social Identity Theory (SIT), the study elucidates the complex interplay of consumer values, attitudes, social identity, and behaviors in the context of sustainable consumption. These findings offer a strategic blueprint for stakeholders aiming to foster and capitalize on sustainable consumer practices.

For marketers and brand managers, the affirmation of the VAB model within the sustainable product sphere emphasizes the necessity of product and communication strategies that resonate with consumer values. The research suggests that marketing efforts should highlight the multifaceted value propositions of sustainable products, such as the functional durability, social contribution to cultural heritage, and emotional satisfaction associated with ramie fabric. Moreover, cultivating a sense of community or belonging around sustainable products can amplify consumer purchasing intentions, underscoring the significance of social identity in marketing narratives. Policymakers and sustainability advocates are presented with evidence on the pivotal role of social identity in encouraging sustainable purchasing behaviors. Initiatives aimed at strengthening

community identities around sustainability, through public awareness campaigns or sustainability programs, can leverage social identity dynamics to promote eco-friendly consumption. This approach suggests a collaborative pathway for policymakers and sustainability advocates to engage with communities and brands in fostering a culture of sustainability.

Product developers and designers are encouraged to integrate consumer value dimensions into the design and development of sustainable products. For ramie fabric, this entails ensuring environmental sustainability while also meeting high standards of quality, performance, and cultural resonance. This holistic approach to product development can enhance the appeal of sustainable products, meeting the nuanced expectations of eco-conscious consumers. Retailers, as the frontline influencers of consumer perceptions, are tasked with strategically curating product assortments to include appealing sustainable options like ramie fabric. Effective communication of the unique benefits of these products, through trained sales staff or immersive in-store experiences, can positively shape consumer attitudes and intentions. Retailers play a critical role in bridging the gap between sustainable products and consumers, making them instrumental in the promotion of sustainable consumption.

In synthesizing these managerial implications, it becomes evident that a concerted effort across various stakeholders is essential in promoting sustainable consumer behaviors. The strategic integration of consumer values into product offerings, marketing communications, and retail experiences, coupled with the cultivation of strong community identities around sustainability, can significantly influence consumer attitudes and behaviors towards sustainable products. This multifaceted strategy not only aligns with environmental objectives but also offers a competitive edge in the market, responding to the growing consumer demand for sustainability.

This study's contributions to the theoretical frameworks of consumer behavior towards sustainability underscore the need for ongoing research and dialogue among academics, practitioners, and policymakers. As consumer preferences and environmental challenges evolve, so too must the strategies employed to promote sustainable consumption. The insights derived from this research provide a robust foundation for future endeavors aimed at understanding and enhancing sustainable consumer practices, offering a comprehensive perspective that can inform both theory and practice in the pursuit of sustainability.

### 5.3 Conclusion

This study represents a significant contribution to the understanding of consumer behavior towards sustainable products, particularly through its exploration of ramie fabric products. By integrating the Value-Attitude-Behavior (VAB) model, the Theory of Consumer Value, and Social Identity Theory (SIT), it offers a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing sustainable consumption. The research confirms the pivotal role of consumer values in shaping attitudes and behaviors towards sustainability, while also highlighting the mediating influence of social identity on these relationships. This nuanced understanding advances theoretical frameworks and provides actionable insights for marketers, policymakers, and sustainability advocates aiming to promote eco-friendly consumer practices.

One of the study's primary contributions is its extension of the VAB model to the realm of sustainable goods, demonstrating how various value dimensions—functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional—impact consumer attitudes and intentions. Furthermore, by incorporating social identity into the Theory of Consumer Value, this research underscores the importance of group affiliations in the sustainable purchasing process. The findings suggest that fostering a strong community identity around sustainability can significantly motivate eco-conscious consumer behaviors.

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations. The research focuses predominantly on ramie fabric products, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other sustainable product categories. Additionally, the study's reliance on self-reported measures could introduce bias, as respondents may overestimate their sustainable behaviors or attitudes. The cross-sectional design also restricts the ability to infer causality between the examined variables.

For future research, several avenues are suggested. First, extending the investigation to a broader range of sustainable products and services could enhance the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies would also be valuable in understanding the evolution of consumer attitudes and behaviors towards sustainability over time. Furthermore, incorporating objective measures of sustainable consumption, such as purchase records or usage data, could provide a more accurate assessment of consumer behaviors. Finally, exploring the role of cultural and demographic factors in shaping sustainable consumption practices could offer deeper insights into the diversity of consumer behaviors in different contexts.

In conclusion, this study enriches the theoretical and practical understanding of sustainable consumer behavior, emphasizing the complex interplay between consumer values, attitudes, social identity, and behaviors. Its findings offer a foundation for developing more effective strategies to promote sustainability among consumers. By addressing its limitations and building on its contributions, future research can continue to advance our

knowledge of sustainable consumption and contribute to the development of a more sustainable society.

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