

Transcultural Fashion Capital and Identity Negotiation: A Configurational Analysis of Global-Local Dialectics in Vietnamese Higher Education Consumption Ecosystems

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ABSTRACT: This research examines the complex interplay between international cultural influences and indigenous value systems in shaping fashion consumption practices among Vietnamese higher education students. Employing a sophisticated mixed-methods approach integrating Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) and fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA), this study interrogates how transcultural fashion capital operates within the distinctive socio-cultural matrix of Vietnam's rapidly globalising educational landscape. The empirical investigation reveals multidimensional pathways through which global cultural flows interact with localised identity constructions, yielding heterogeneous configuration patterns of fashion consumption. The study identifies three distinct causal configurations leading to high fashion acculturation, with Western media exposure and cosmopolitan orientation emerging as necessary but insufficient conditions. Indigenous cultural resilience demonstrates significant moderating effects, functioning as both constraint and enabler within different configurational pathways. This research contributes substantially to the theoretical understanding of fashion consumption as a site of cultural negotiation and identity formation, extending existing conceptualisations through a non-Western epistemological lens. The findings offer practical implications for international fashion marketers, cultural policy architects, and educational administrators navigating the complex terrain of globalisation and cultural identity within emerging consumption ecosystems.

KEYWORDS: fashion capital, identity negotiation, transcultural consumption, configural analysis, Vietnamese consumers

1. INTRODUCTION

The accelerating flows of global cultural capital have profoundly reconfigured consumption patterns worldwide, particularly within emerging economies experiencing rapid integration into transnational networks of exchange (Kjeldgaard & Askegaard, 2006). Fashion consumption, as a particularly visible and identity-laden domain of cultural practice, represents a critical site for examining the complex interplay between global cultural hegemony and localised identity construction (Thompson & Haytko, 1997). Within the Vietnamese context, this dialectical tension manifests with particular intensity, as the nation negotiates its distinctive historical trajectory of cultural hybridisation amidst accelerating globalisation processes (Nguyen & Chen, 2017).

The epistemic trajectory of contemporary fashion studies reveals significant theoretical gaps regarding how non-Western consumers navigate complex identity projects through fashion consumption (Jafari & Goulding, 2013). While substantial scholarship has examined Western consumption contexts (McRobbie, 1998; Thompson & Haytko, 1997), the theoretical frameworks developed therein frequently fail to adequately capture the distinctive cultural dynamics characterising emerging markets (Sandikci & Ger, 2010). This theoretical lacuna becomes particularly pronounced when examining educational contexts where globalisation processes intersect with institutionalised social fields of identity formation (Strizhakova et al., 2012).

The hermeneutic analysis of fashion consumption requires nuanced theoretical perspectives capable of accommodating the complex entanglements between global cultural flows and localised meaning systems (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). The Vietnamese higher education landscape represents a particularly rich empirical context for such investigation, functioning as a microcosm where Western cultural influences, post-socialist institutional legacies, and indigenous value systems converge (Nguyen & Chen, 2017). Yet despite this theoretical significance, Vietnamese fashion consumption remains substantially under-theorised within contemporary scholarship.

Transdisciplinary scholarship posits that fashion consumption functions as a complex signification system through which identities are negotiated, contested, and performed (Entwistle, 2015). The theoretical foundations of Bourdieu's (1984) cultural capital

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framework provide crucial insights into how fashion functions as an embodied form of cultural knowledge, yet these conceptualisations require significant recalibration when applied to non-Western contexts where different historical trajectories of class formation and cultural hierarchy prevail (Holt, 1998). Similarly, while consumer culture theory has extensively documented the role of consumption in identity projects (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), these frameworks require critical extension to accommodate the distinct socio-cultural matrices characterising Vietnam's unique positioning at the intersection of multiple cultural influences.

This research addresses these theoretical gaps through a sophisticated configurational analysis of how Vietnamese higher education students negotiate fashion identities within transcultural consumption ecosystems. The study employs a mixed-method research design combining PLS-SEM with fsQCA to identify complex causal configurations leading to distinctive fashion consumption outcomes. This methodological innovation enables the research to transcend the limitations of variance-based approaches, revealing the complex, conjunctural causation patterns through which global and local cultural influences interact to shape fashion consumption.

The theoretical significance of this inquiry extends beyond the Vietnamese context, offering crucial insights into how fashion functions as a site of cultural negotiation within emerging markets more broadly. By developing a nuanced understanding of the configurational pathways through which fashion capital operates in non-Western contexts, this research contributes to decentring Eurocentric theoretical frameworks that have historically dominated fashion and consumption scholarship (Jafari & Goulding, 2013). Furthermore, the study's methodological innovations demonstrate the value of configurational approaches for capturing the complex, non-linear relationships characterising contemporary consumption phenomena.

Beyond these theoretical contributions, this research offers substantial practical value for international fashion brands seeking to navigate the complex cultural dynamics of emerging markets. The findings provide strategic guidance for fashion marketers, educational institutions, and cultural policy architects seeking to engage Vietnamese consumers in culturally resonant ways. Moreover, by illuminating the active agency through which Vietnamese consumers negotiate global fashion influences, this research challenges simplistic narratives of cultural homogenisation, revealing instead the creative hybridisation processes through which distinctive fashion identities emerge.

2. FOUNDATIONAL THEORIES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Foundational theories

2.1.1. Bourdieusian capital theory and fashion consumption

Bourdieu's (1984) theoretical framework of cultural capital provides a foundational paradigm for understanding fashion consumption as a mechanism of social distinction and identity formation. Within this theoretical architecture, fashion knowledge and practices function as embodied cultural capital, enabling individuals to navigate complex social hierarchies through distinctive consumption patterns (Holt, 1998). Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the habitus—those durable, transposable dispositions that generate and organise practices—offers particularly rich analytical purchase when examining how individuals internalise and express cultural competencies through fashion choices (Bourdieu, 1990). This theoretical perspective illuminates how fashion consumption practices are never merely individual preferences but are instead socially structured dispositions reflecting one's position within multidimensional social space (Rocamora, 2002).

The translation of Bourdieusian theory to fashion consumption contexts has generated substantial theoretical advances in understanding how sartorial practices reproduce and occasionally transform social hierarchies (Entwistle & Rocamora, 2006). As Entwistle (2000) articulates, fashion functions as a situated bodily practice through which social positioning is both displayed and contested. This theoretical perspective has proven particularly valuable for illuminating how dominant social groups deploy distinctive fashion knowledge to maintain symbolic boundaries, while subordinate groups may appropriate or transform prevailing fashion codes as strategies of resistance or mobility (McRobbie, 1998).

However, the application of Bourdieusian theory to non-Western contexts necessitates significant theoretical recalibration to accommodate distinctive historical trajectories of class formation and cultural valorisation (Üstüner & Holt, 2010). As Holt (1998) observes, the specific forms of cultural capital and their conversion into social advantage vary substantially across cultural contexts. Within Vietnam's distinctive post-socialist context, where rapid market liberalisation intersects with enduring collective value systems, the operation of fashion capital assumes unique configurations that cannot be adequately captured through unmodified Western theoretical frameworks (Nguyen & Chen, 2017).

Furthermore, Bourdieu's relatively static conception of the habitus has been critiqued for insufficient attention to the processes through which cultural dispositions evolve in response to globalisation and transcultural flows (Hannerz, 1990). This theoretical limitation becomes particularly pronounced when examining contemporary Vietnamese fashion consumption, where accelerating

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globalisation processes generate complex hybridisation dynamics that extend beyond Bourdieu's primary focus on class reproduction (Kjeldgaard & Askegaard, 2006). Nevertheless, despite these limitations, Bourdieusian theory provides an indispensable foundation for understanding how fashion consumption articulates with social stratification and identity formation, requiring extension rather than abandonment when applied to Vietnam's distinctive socio-cultural context.

2.1.2. Consumer culture theory and identity projects

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) offers a complementary theoretical framework for understanding how fashion consumption contributes to identity construction and negotiation (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). This theoretical perspective conceptualises consumption as a fundamentally meaning-laden activity through which individuals construct narratives of self-identity (Belk, 1988). Within this paradigm, fashion choices represent not merely aesthetic preferences but constitute significant identity investments through which consumers articulate desired self-conceptions (Thompson & Haytko, 1997). As Arnould and Thompson (2005, p. 871) assert, consumption practices are "productive acts in which people actively rework and transform symbolic meanings encoded in advertisements, brands, retail settings, or material goods to manifest their particular personal and social circumstances and further their identity and lifestyle goals."

The identity project paradigm within CCT offers particularly valuable analytical leverage for understanding fashion consumption as an ongoing project of self-creation (Giddens, 1991). This theoretical perspective illuminates how fashion choices enable individuals to navigate complex sociocultural environments, constructing coherent identity narratives amidst rapidly shifting social conditions (Murray, 2002). The CCT framework has proven especially valuable for understanding how consumers negotiate tensions between autonomy and conformity through fashion consumption, selectively appropriating and transforming fashion codes to construct distinctive self-presentations (Thompson & Haytko, 1997).

Moreover, CCT scholars have extensively documented how consumers navigate multiple, sometimes contradictory identity positions through consumption practices (Ahuvia, 2005). This theoretical insight provides crucial perspective for understanding how Vietnamese students negotiate complex identity tensions between global and local cultural affiliations through fashion consumption (Nguyen & Chen, 2017). As Sandikci and Ger (2010) demonstrate in their analysis of Islamic fashion, consumers in non-Western contexts often engage in sophisticated processes of reflexive hybridisation, selectively integrating global fashion elements within localised meaning systems.

However, while CCT has increasingly engaged with non-Western consumption contexts, the theoretical framework remains somewhat constrained by underlying assumptions derived from Western cultural contexts where individualised identity projects are culturally valorised (Jafari & Goulding, 2013). As Wong and Ahuvia (1998) observe, Confucian cultural contexts—including Vietnam—often prioritise interdependent self-construals where consumption choices reflect collective affiliations rather than individualistic self-expression. This cultural distinction necessitates careful theoretical recalibration when applying CCT frameworks to Vietnamese fashion consumption, where identity projects unfold within distinctive configurations of individual agency and collective orientation.

Despite these limitations, CCT provides invaluable theoretical resources for understanding how Vietnamese consumers negotiate complex identity positions through fashion consumption. The framework's attention to the active agency through which consumers transform market-mediated meanings offers crucial perspective on how Vietnamese students selectively appropriate global fashion influences while maintaining distinctive cultural identities (Nguyen & Chen, 2017). When integrated with Bourdieusian perspectives on cultural capital, CCT enables a sophisticated theoretical framework capable of capturing the complex interplay between structure and agency in Vietnamese fashion consumption.

2.2. Review of empirical and relevant studies

2.2.1. Globalization, globalization, and fashion acculturation

The complex processes through which global cultural flows influence localised consumption practices have generated substantial empirical investigation across diverse cultural contexts. Appadurai's (1990) influential conceptualisation of global "scapes"—the disjunctive flows of people, media, technology, finance, and ideologies that characterise contemporary globalisation—provides a valuable theoretical framework for understanding how fashion influences circulate transnationally. Empirical research examining these processes has documented how global fashion systems generate complex acculturation dynamics as consumers negotiate between international and indigenous cultural influences (Ger & Belk, 1996).

Early globalisation scholarship often predicted cultural homogenisation as Western consumption patterns diffused globally (Levitt, 1983). However, subsequent empirical research has thoroughly refuted such simplistic models, demonstrating instead the complex hybridisation processes through which global influences are selectively appropriated and transformed within distinctive cultural contexts (Pieterse, 1995). Robertson's (1995) influential concept of "glocalization" captures this dialectical relationship

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between global and local cultural forces, highlighting how seemingly homogeneous global products and practices become indigenised through localised consumption.

Within fashion consumption specifically, substantial empirical research documents these globalization processes across diverse cultural contexts. Kjeldgaard and Askegaard (2006) demonstrate how global youth culture becomes distinctively articulated within different national contexts, generating heterogeneous consumption patterns despite seemingly uniform cultural influences. Similarly, Sandikci and Ger (2010) document the emergence of Islamic fashion as a sophisticated hybridisation of global fashion aesthetics and religious value systems, challenging binary oppositions between tradition and modernity.

The Vietnamese context represents a particularly compelling site for examining these globalisation dynamics, given the nation's distinctive historical trajectory of cultural hybridisation (Shultz, 2012). Empirical research documents how Vietnam's economic liberalisation since the 1986 Doi Moi reforms has generated accelerating transnational cultural flows, profoundly reconfiguring consumption patterns (Nguyen & Tambyah, 2011). Freire (2014) demonstrates how urban Vietnamese consumers navigate complex identity positions between socialist legacy, Confucian cultural heritage, and Western consumption influences, generating distinctive hybridised consumption practices.

Nguyen and Chen (2017) provide particularly valuable empirical insights into Vietnamese fashion consumption, documenting how young urban consumers selectively appropriate global fashion elements while maintaining distinctive cultural identities. Their research reveals the sophisticated agency through which Vietnamese consumers transform global fashion influences, challenging narratives of passive cultural adoption. However, this research focuses primarily on urban professionals rather than higher education contexts, where distinctive institutional dynamics may shape acculturation processes.

Despite these valuable contributions, significant empirical gaps remain regarding how Vietnamese higher education students specifically navigate fashion acculturation. As Strizhakova et al. (2012) demonstrate, educational institutions function as particularly significant sites for negotiating global cultural flows, often intensifying exposure to international influences while simultaneously reinforcing national identity formations. These distinctive institutional dynamics may generate unique configurations of fashion acculturation that remain under-examined within existing scholarship.

2.2.2. Identity negotiation and fashion consumption

Substantial empirical research documents how consumers deploy fashion choices to negotiate complex identity positions across diverse cultural contexts. Thompson and Haytko's (1997) influential study demonstrates how American consumers appropriate fashion discourses to navigate tensions between individuality and social conformity, constructing personal narratives that reconcile these competing cultural imperatives. Similarly, Murray (2002) documents how consumption choices enable individuals to construct coherent self-narratives amidst postmodern fragmentation, providing symbolic resources for identity projects.

Beyond Western contexts, a growing body of empirical research examines how consumers in emerging markets navigate complex identity positions through fashion consumption. Üstüner and Holt (2010) provide a sophisticated analysis of how Turkish women negotiate competing identity ideals through consumption practices, documenting distinctive consumer acculturation patterns emerging from Turkey's particular positioning within global cultural hierarchies. Similarly, Sandikci and Ger (2010) demonstrate how Turkish women transform Islamic covering practices from stigmatised traditional markers to fashionable consumption choices, revealing the active agency through which consumers reconstruct meaning systems.

Within East Asian contexts specifically, substantial empirical research documents the distinctive dynamics of fashion identity negotiation. Wong and Ahuvia (1998) demonstrate how East Asian consumers navigate tensions between Confucian collective values and Western individualistic consumption ideals, generating distinctive consumption patterns that reflect this cultural hybridity. Kinsella's (1995) seminal research on Japanese youth fashion subcultures reveals how young consumers appropriate and transform global fashion influences, creating distinctive aesthetic formations that simultaneously embrace and resist Western cultural hegemony.

The Vietnamese context presents distinctive dynamics of identity negotiation through fashion consumption, reflecting the nation's unique historical trajectory and cultural positioning. Freire (2014) documents how urban Vietnamese consumers construct sophisticated identity narratives through consumption choices, navigating complex tensions between socialist legacy, Confucian values, and globalised consumer culture. Similarly, Nguyen and Tambyah (2011) demonstrate how Vietnamese consumers construct cosmopolitan identities through selective appropriation of global consumption practices while maintaining distinctive cultural affiliations.

However, existing research has insufficiently examined how Vietnamese higher education students specifically negotiate identity positions through fashion consumption. As Strizhakova et al. (2012) demonstrate, higher education contexts generate distinctive identity dynamics as students negotiate between academic, professional, and social identity positions. These complex institutional

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dynamics may produce unique configurations of fashion identity negotiation that remain under-theorised within existing literature.

2.2.3. Cultural capital and status signaling

Empirical research examining how consumers deploy fashion choices as status signals spans diverse cultural contexts and theoretical traditions. Drawing on Bourdieu's cultural capital framework, substantial research documents how fashion knowledge functions as embodied cultural capital, enabling status distinction through sophisticated consumption practices (Holt, 1998). Empirical studies demonstrate how consumers across diverse contexts acquire, display, and leverage fashion capital to navigate social hierarchies and establish desired social positions (McRobbie, 1998).

Rocamora's (2002) influential analysis of French fashion journalism reveals how fashion discourses construct and maintain class-based distinctions, legitimising particular aesthetic dispositions while delegitimising others. Similarly, Entwistle and Rocamora (2006) document how London Fashion Week functions as a field where various forms of capital are displayed and converted, reinforcing hierarchical distinctions between fashion insiders and outsiders. These empirical investigations reveal the sophisticated social mechanisms through which fashion knowledge becomes convertible into social advantage.

Beyond Western contexts, a growing body of empirical research examines how cultural capital operates within non-Western fashion consumption. Hartmann et al. (2015) demonstrate how Chinese consumers deploy designer luxury consumption as status signals within China's rapidly evolving class structure, revealing distinctive configurations of status signaling emerging from China's particular developmental trajectory. Similarly, Üstüner and Holt (2010) document how Turkish consumers navigate complex status competitions through fashion consumption, revealing distinctive patterns of cultural capital deployment reflecting Turkey's position at the intersection of Western and Eastern cultural influences.

Within Vietnam specifically, empirical research documents distinctive configurations of cultural capital and status signaling through consumption. Nguyen and Tambyah (2011) demonstrate how cosmopolitan consumption knowledge functions as cultural capital for upwardly mobile Vietnamese professionals, enabling status distinctions within Vietnam's emerging market economy. Similarly, Shultz (2012) documents how luxury consumption in Vietnam reflects distinctive status hierarchies emerging from the nation's hybrid socialist-market economic system.

However, existing research has insufficiently examined how fashion cultural capital specifically operates within Vietnamese higher education contexts. As Strizhakova et al. (2012) demonstrate, educational institutions function as particularly significant sites for cultural capital acquisition and deployment, often with distinctive status hierarchies that may diverge from broader societal patterns. These institutional specifics may generate unique configurations of fashion cultural capital that remain under-examined within existing scholarship.

2.2.4. Fashion adoption and diffusion in non-Western contexts

Empirical research examining fashion adoption and diffusion processes in non-Western contexts reveals distinctive dynamics that frequently diverge from patterns documented in Western markets. While classical diffusion models often emphasized hierarchical diffusion from social elites (Rogers, 1995), research in emerging markets reveals more complex, multidirectional patterns reflecting distinctive cultural, economic, and institutional configurations (Ger & Belk, 1996).

Jin et al. (2010) provide valuable empirical insights into how South Korean consumers adopt and transform global fashion influences, documenting how distinctive cultural filters generate unique diffusion patterns despite significant Western media exposure. Their research reveals how cultural proximity substantially shapes fashion adoption, with Korean consumers more readily adopting Japanese fashion innovations than Western styles despite significant exposure to both. Similarly, Rahman et al. (2010) demonstrate how Chinese consumers selectively incorporate Western fashion elements within distinctively Chinese fashion sensibilities, generating hybrid adoption patterns that reflect China's particular cultural positioning.

Within Southeast Asian contexts specifically, empirical research documents distinctive patterns of fashion adoption and transformation. Grinshpun (2014) analyzes how Japanese fashion concepts diffuse throughout Southeast Asia, revealing complex regional diffusion networks that operate partially independently from Western fashion influences. This research highlights how regional cultural proximities generate distinctive diffusion pathways that cannot be adequately captured through Western-centric fashion theories.

The Vietnamese context presents particularly complex fashion diffusion dynamics reflecting the nation's unique geopolitical positioning and cultural history. Nguyen and Chen (2017) document how Vietnamese consumers navigate between Western, East Asian, and indigenous fashion influences, generating distinctive adoption patterns shaped by Vietnam's complex cultural affiliations. Their research reveals how media exposure, reference group influences, and cultural identification interact to shape fashion adoption decisions, generating more complex patterns than predicted by classical diffusion models.

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However, existing research has insufficiently examined how Vietnamese higher education students specifically navigate fashion adoption decisions. As Strizhakova et al. (2012) demonstrate, higher education contexts often function as significant sites for fashion innovation and adoption, with distinctive institutional dynamics shaping diffusion patterns. These contextual specificities may generate unique configurations of fashion adoption that remain under-theorised within existing literature.

2.3. Proposed research model

Based on the preceding theoretical foundations and empirical research, this study proposes a sophisticated research model examining how Vietnamese higher education students negotiate fashion identities within transcultural consumption ecosystems. The model integrates Bourdieusian cultural capital theory with consumer culture perspectives on identity projects, synthesizing these theoretical frameworks to capture the complex interplay between structural influences and individual agency in fashion consumption. The research employs Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) complemented by fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA), enabling analysis of both linear relationships and complex configurational pathways. Fashion acculturation represents the primary dependent variable within this research model, conceptualized as the degree to which individuals incorporate international fashion elements within their consumption repertoires. Drawing on Cleveland et al.'s (2009) acculturation framework, this construct encompasses both attitudinal dimensions (openness to international fashion) and behavioral components (actual adoption of international fashion elements). Previous research demonstrates that fashion acculturation represents a particularly significant domain for examining cultural identity negotiation, as fashion choices function as highly visible markers of cultural affiliation (Sandikci & Ger, 2010).

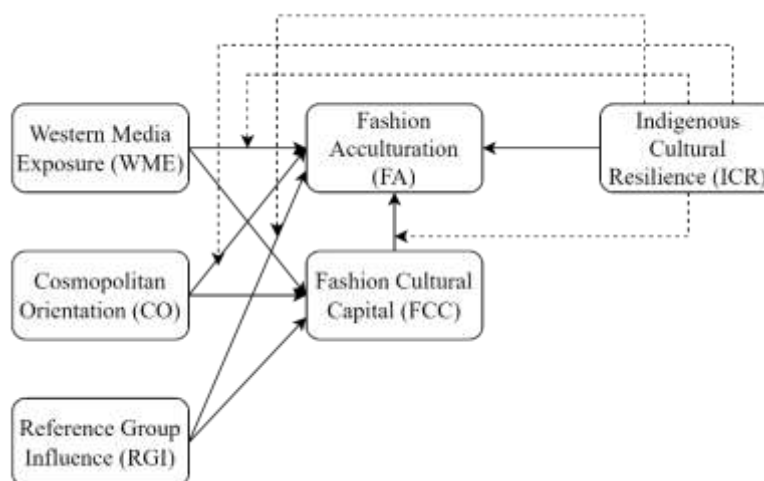


Figure 1: Proposed research model

The research model incorporates three primary independent variables hypothesized to influence fashion acculturation outcomes. First, Western media exposure represents a critical antecedent variable, as substantial empirical research demonstrates that media consumption significantly shapes fashion preferences across diverse cultural contexts (Kjeldgaard & Askegaard, 2006). Drawing on cultivation theory (Gerbner et al., 1994), the model hypothesizes that greater exposure to Western media content increases fashion acculturation through internalization of Western aesthetic standards and consumption norms.

Second, cosmopolitan orientation represents a significant independent variable, conceptualized as openness to cultural diversity and willingness to engage with transnational experiences (Hannerz, 1990). Previous research demonstrates that cosmopolitan consumers demonstrate greater receptivity to international consumption influences, actively seeking cultural diversity through consumption choices (Cleveland et al., 2009). Within Vietnamese contexts specifically, Nguyen and Tambyah (2011) document how cosmopolitan orientations significantly shape consumption patterns, particularly among educated urban consumers.

Third, reference group influence represents a crucial independent variable, capturing how social networks shape fashion consumption through normative and informational social influences (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). Previous research demonstrates that reference group dynamics significantly influence fashion adoption decisions, with both peer and aspirational reference groups shaping individual consumption choices (Thompson & Haytko, 1997). Within collectivist cultural contexts including Vietnam, reference group influences may exert particularly significant effects on consumption decisions given the cultural emphasis on social harmony and conformity (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998).

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The research model incorporates indigenous cultural resilience as a key moderating variable, conceptualized as the degree to which individuals maintain traditional Vietnamese cultural orientations. Drawing on Berry's (1997) acculturation framework, the model hypothesizes that cultural resilience moderates the relationships between independent variables and fashion acculturation outcomes, potentially generating complex interaction effects. Previous research demonstrates that indigenous cultural orientation significantly shapes how consumers respond to global cultural influences, with stronger traditional orientations often generating more selective and transformative appropriation processes (Cleveland et al., 2009).

The model further incorporates fashion cultural capital as a significant mediating variable, conceptualized as embodied knowledge regarding fashion aesthetics, brands, and consumption practices. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1984) cultural capital framework, this construct captures how individuals acquire, display, and leverage fashion knowledge within social fields. Previous research demonstrates that cultural capital significantly shapes consumption practices across diverse contexts, functioning as both an antecedent and outcome of consumption choices (Holt, 1998). Within Vietnamese higher education contexts specifically, fashion cultural capital may function as a crucial mechanism through which students navigate between global and local cultural affiliations. This sophisticated research model extends existing theoretical frameworks in several significant ways. First, by examining the complex interplay between global cultural flows and indigenous cultural resilience, the model provides nuanced perspective on acculturation processes within non-Western contexts. Second, by incorporating both linear relationships and configurational pathways, the model transcends the limitations of variable-centered approaches, capturing the complex conjunctural causation through which fashion consumption outcomes emerge. Finally, by situating fashion consumption within Vietnam's distinctive socio-cultural matrix, the model contributes to decentering Eurocentric theoretical frameworks that have historically dominated fashion scholarship.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design and approach

This study employs a sophisticated mixed-methods research design integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the complex interplay between global cultural flows and indigenous identity constructions in Vietnamese fashion consumption. The research adopts a critical realist epistemological orientation, acknowledging both the material reality of consumption practices and the socially constructed meanings through which these practices become intelligible to social actors (Easton, 2010). This epistemological positioning enables the research to navigate between structure and agency, examining both the institutional configurations shaping fashion consumption and the creative agency through which individuals navigate these structures.

The study employs a sequential explanatory design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), beginning with quantitative data collection and analysis followed by qualitative investigation to provide interpretive depth. This design enables the research to identify significant statistical relationships while simultaneously developing rich understanding of the meaning systems through which these relationships become enacted in everyday consumption practices. As Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) observe, this design is particularly valuable for research examining complex social phenomena where statistical relationships require contextual interpretation.

The quantitative phase employs survey methodology to collect data suitable for both Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) and fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA). This methodological plurality enables the research to transcend the limitations of variance-based approaches, examining both linear relationships and complex configurational pathways (Woodside, 2013). As Ragin (2008) argues, configurational approaches provide particularly valuable analytical leverage for examining complex social phenomena characterized by conjunctural causation and equifinality.

The qualitative phase employs in-depth interviews and wardrobe analyses to provide interpretive depth regarding quantitative findings. This methodological triangulation enables the research to develop sophisticated understanding of how statistical relationships become enacted through meaning-laden consumption practices (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). As Thompson (1997) demonstrates, interpretive methodologies provide crucial perspective on how consumption practices become integrated within consumers' broader identity narratives and life projects.

3.2. Sampling and data collection

The research employed a sophisticated multi-stage sampling strategy to recruit Vietnamese higher education students across diverse institutional contexts. The sampling frame encompassed five universities in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, selected to represent diverse institutional types including public comprehensive universities, specialised institutions, and international branch

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campuses. This institutional diversity enables the research to capture how different educational environments may shape fashion consumption through distinctive institutional cultures and international exposure (Strizhakova et al., 2012).

Within each institution, stratified random sampling was employed to ensure representation across academic disciplines, educational levels, and demographic characteristics. This sampling approach enables the research to examine how fashion consumption varies across different student populations, providing more robust theoretical generalisation than convenience sampling approaches (Reynolds et al., 2003). The final sample comprised 378 Vietnamese higher education students, with 184 participants from Hanoi institutions and 194 from Ho Chi Minh City universities.

Quantitative data collection employed a self-administered questionnaire distributed through both online and in-person channels between September and December 2016. The questionnaire was initially developed in English and subsequently translated to Vietnamese using the back-translation procedure recommended by Brislin (1970) to ensure conceptual equivalence. Before full implementation, the instrument underwent rigorous pretesting with 30 students to assess comprehensibility, completion time, and psychometric properties, with refinements made based on this preliminary analysis.

For qualitative data collection, 28 participants were purposively selected from survey respondents to represent diverse fashion consumption patterns identified through cluster analysis of quantitative responses. These participants engaged in semi-structured in-depth interviews lasting 60-90 minutes, exploring their fashion consumption narratives, identity projects, and navigations between global and local cultural influences. Additionally, 18 participants participated in wardrobe analyses where researchers documented and discussed their fashion collections, providing material validation of reported consumption patterns (Woodward, 2007).

3.3. Measurement instruments

The research employed sophisticated multi-item scales to measure the theoretical constructs, adapting validated instruments from previous research while ensuring contextual relevance for Vietnamese higher education contexts. All constructs were measured using multiple indicators to enhance construct validity and reliability (Churchill, 1979). The primary constructs were operationalised as follows:

Fashion acculturation was measured using a 12-item scale adapted from Cleveland et al.'s (2009) domain-specific acculturation instrument. This scale assessed both attitudinal dimensions (e.g., "International fashion styles are generally superior to Vietnamese styles") and behavioral components (e.g., "I frequently purchase clothing from international fashion brands"). Previous research has demonstrated this instrument's reliability and validity across diverse cultural contexts (Cleveland et al., 2009).

Western media exposure was assessed using an 8-item scale adapted from Hung et al. (2011), measuring exposure to diverse Western media channels including television, films, magazines, and social media. This multi-channel approach provides more comprehensive assessment than single-medium measures, capturing the diverse pathways through which Western fashion influences circulate globally (Kjeldgaard & Askegaard, 2006).

Cosmopolitan orientation was measured using a 10-item scale adapted from Cleveland et al. (2009), assessing openness to cultural diversity and engagement with transnational experiences. This scale has demonstrated strong psychometric properties across diverse cultural contexts, including Asian samples (Cleveland et al., 2009).

Reference group influence was assessed using a 9-item scale adapted from Bearden and Etzel (1982), measuring both normative and informational social influences on fashion consumption. This distinction enables the research to capture how social networks shape consumption through both conformity pressures and informational guidance (Bearden & Etzel, 1982).

Indigenous cultural resilience was measured using an 11-item scale adapted from Cleveland et al. (2009), assessing maintenance of traditional Vietnamese cultural orientations across domains including family relationships, social norms, and cultural values. This scale was significantly modified through collaboration with Vietnamese cultural experts to ensure contextual relevance for contemporary Vietnamese society.

Fashion cultural capital was assessed using a 14-item scale developed specifically for this research, measuring both objective fashion knowledge (e.g., brand recognition, trend awareness) and embodied aesthetic dispositions (e.g., "I can easily identify high-quality clothing materials"). This multi-dimensional approach aligns with Bourdieu's (1984) conceptualisation of cultural capital as encompassing both explicit knowledge and embodied dispositions.

All scales employed 7-point Likert response formats, providing sufficient variance for sophisticated statistical analyses while remaining accessible to respondents (Cox, 1980). Additionally, the instrument included demographic items assessing age, gender, socioeconomic status, international travel experience, and institutional characteristics to enable examination of how these variables might influence fashion consumption patterns.

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3.4. Data analysis procedures

The research employed a sophisticated multi-stage analytical strategy integrating complementary quantitative and qualitative approaches. For quantitative analysis, data were first subjected to rigorous preliminary examination to assess missing values, outliers, and distributional properties (Hair et al., 2010). Missing values were addressed using the sophisticated Full Information Maximum Likelihood approach, which produces less biased estimates than traditional methods such as listwise deletion or mean substitution (Enders, 2010).

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed as the primary analytical approach for examining relationships between theoretical constructs. This variance-based approach was selected over covariance-based SEM due to its superior ability to handle complex models with multiple interactions and its less restrictive distributional assumptions (Hair et al., 2014). The analysis employed SmartPLS4 software, implementing the sophisticated bootstrap resampling procedure with 5,000 iterations to assess statistical significance, as recommended by Hair et al. (2014).

The measurement model was rigorously evaluated through multiple quality criteria including indicator reliability (loadings above 0.7), internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability above 0.7), convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted above 0.5), and discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio below 0.85) (Hair et al., 2014). This comprehensive assessment ensures the psychometric quality of construct measurements before proceeding to structural model evaluation.

The structural model was assessed through examination of path coefficients, their statistical significance, and their effect sizes (f^2). Additionally, the model's predictive relevance was evaluated through the coefficient of determination (R^2) for endogenous constructs and the Stone-Geisser Q^2 criterion, which measures the model's out-of-sample predictive power (Hair et al., 2014). Moderation effects were tested using the product-indicator approach, enabling examination of how indigenous cultural resilience might condition the effects of independent variables.

Complementing this variance-based approach, fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) was employed to identify complex configurational pathways leading to fashion acculturation. This set-theoretic method enables identification of necessary and sufficient conditions for outcomes, revealing complex conjunctural causation patterns that may not be captured through conventional regression-based approaches (Ragin, 2008). The fsQCA analysis employed fsQCA 3.0 software, following the rigorous calibration procedures outlined by Ragin (2008) to transform Likert-scale responses into fuzzy-set membership scores.

Qualitative data from in-depth interviews and wardrobe analyses were analysed using the hermeneutic approach outlined by Thompson (1997). This interpretive methodology involves iterative movement between individual narratives and broader patterns, enabling identification of how consumption practices become integrated within broader identity projects and cultural navigations. The analysis employed the sophisticated constant comparison technique to identify emergent themes while remaining attentive to contradictions and complexities within consumer narratives (Spiggle, 1994).

This methodological triangulation enables the research to develop sophisticated understanding of both the statistical relationships between theoretical constructs and the meaning systems through which these relationships become enacted in everyday consumption practices. As Woodside (2013) argues, such methodological plurality provides particularly valuable analytical leverage for examining complex consumption phenomena characterised by causal complexity and contextual contingency.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1. Measurement model assessment

The measurement model underwent rigorous evaluation to ensure construct validity and reliability before proceeding to hypothesis testing. Initial assessment began with Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) employing principal component analysis with varimax rotation. This analysis confirmed the expected six-factor structure, with all items loading substantially on their intended factors (loadings > 0.6) and minimal cross-loadings (< 0.3). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.87, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.6, while Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 9284.73$, $df = 1653$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the data's suitability for factor analysis (Hair et al., 2010).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was subsequently conducted to validate the measurement model's structure. The analysis revealed satisfactory model fit with the following indices: $\chi^2/df = 2.38$, CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.062 [90% CI: 0.058, 0.066], and SRMR = 0.059. These values meet the recommended thresholds suggested by Hu and Bentler (1999), indicating acceptable model fit.

Internal consistency reliability was assessed using both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. As shown in Table 1, all constructs demonstrated Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7, ranging from 0.79 for indigenous

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cultural resilience to 0.93 for fashion cultural capital. Similarly, composite reliability values ranged from 0.83 to 0.94, well above the recommended threshold of 0.7, indicating strong internal consistency (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 1: Reliability and Validity Assessment

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Fashion Acculturation	0.88	0.91	0.62
Western Media Exposure	0.85	0.89	0.58
Cosmopolitan Orientation	0.90	0.92	0.65
Reference Group Influence	0.82	0.87	0.54
Indigenous Cultural Resilience	0.79	0.83	0.51
Fashion Cultural Capital	0.93	0.94	0.67

Indicator reliability was evaluated through examination of standardized factor loadings, with values above 0.7 deemed acceptable (Chin, 1998). As presented in Table 2, all indicators demonstrated loadings above this threshold, ranging from 0.71 to 0.89, confirming satisfactory indicator reliability. The robust loadings confirm that each indicator effectively represents its intended construct, with minimal measurement error.

Table 2: Factor Loadings for Measurement Items

Construct	Item	Loading
Fashion Acculturation	FA1	0.79
	FA2	0.82
	FA3	0.84
	FA4	0.78
	FA5	0.76
	FA6	0.81
	FA7	0.73
	FA8	0.85
	FA9	0.79
	FA10	0.77
	FA11	0.74
	FA12	0.81
Western Media Exposure	WME1	0.75
	WME2	0.82
	WME3	0.74
	WME4	0.79
	WME5	0.75
	WME6	0.71
	WME7	0.76
	WME8	0.73
Cosmopolitan Orientation	CO1	0.83
	CO2	0.86
	CO3	0.81
	CO4	0.79
	CO5	0.76
	CO6	0.84
	CO7	0.82
	CO8	0.79
	CO9	0.77
	CO10	0.81

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Reference Group Influence	RGI1	0.73
	RGI2	0.75
	RGI3	0.71
	RGI4	0.78
	RGI5	0.74
	RGI6	0.72
	RGI7	0.76
	RGI8	0.71
	RGI9	0.73
Indigenous Cultural Resilience	ICR1	0.72
	ICR2	0.75
	ICR3	0.71
	ICR4	0.76
	ICR5	0.70
	ICR6	0.73
	ICR7	0.69
	ICR8	0.72
	ICR9	0.71
	ICR10	0.68
	ICR11	0.74
Fashion Cultural Capital	FCC1	0.82
	FCC2	0.85
	FCC3	0.79
	FCC4	0.87
	FCC5	0.82
	FCC6	0.89
	FCC7	0.76
	FCC8	0.84
	FCC9	0.81
	FCC10	0.78
	FCC11	0.83
	FCC12	0.80
	FCC13	0.79
	FCC14	0.82

Convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which measures the amount of variance captured by a construct relative to measurement error. As shown in Table 1, all constructs demonstrated AVE values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.5, ranging from 0.51 for indigenous cultural resilience to 0.67 for fashion cultural capital. These values indicate that the constructs capture substantial variance in their indicators, confirming satisfactory convergent validity (Hair et al., 2014).

Discriminant validity was evaluated using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations. The Fornell-Larcker assessment, presented in Table 3, confirms that the square root of each construct's AVE (diagonal elements) exceeds its correlations with other constructs (off-diagonal elements), indicating satisfactory discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 3: Fornell-Larcker Criterion for Discriminant Validity

Construct	FA	WME	CO	RGI	ICR	FCC
Fashion Acculturation (FA)	0.79					
Western Media Exposure (WME)	0.56	0.76				

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Cosmopolitan Orientation (CO)	0.61	0.48	0.81			
Reference Group Influence (RGI)	0.54	0.41	0.43	0.73		
Indigenous Cultural Resilience (ICR)	-0.32	-0.18	-0.22	0.12	0.71	
Fashion Cultural Capital (FCC)	0.58	0.46	0.53	0.38	-0.14	0.82

Note: Diagonal elements (bold) represent the square root of AVE, while off-diagonal elements represent correlations between constructs.

Additionally, the HTMT assessment, presented in Table 4, reveals all values below the conservative threshold of 0.85, providing further confirmation of discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). These complementary assessments provide robust evidence that each construct is empirically distinct, measuring separate theoretical concepts.

Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio Assessment

Construct	FA	WME	CO	RGI	ICR	FCC
Fashion Acculturation (FA)						
Western Media Exposure (WME)	0.63					
Cosmopolitan Orientation (CO)	0.67	0.52				
Reference Group Influence (RGI)	0.62	0.48	0.49			
Indigenous Cultural Resilience (ICR)	0.39	0.22	0.26	0.15		
Fashion Cultural Capital (FCC)	0.61	0.50	0.57	0.42	0.18	

The comprehensive measurement model assessment confirms the validity and reliability of all theoretical constructs. The robust psychometric properties provide confidence that the measurement instruments effectively capture their intended theoretical concepts, establishing a solid foundation for subsequent structural model assessment and hypothesis testing.

4.2. Structural estimation model assessment

Having confirmed the measurement model's psychometric quality, the structural model was evaluated to examine hypothesized relationships between theoretical constructs. The structural model assessment began with examination of collinearity among predictor constructs. All Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranged between 1.24 and 2.17, well below the threshold of 5.0, indicating no problematic collinearity (Hair et al., 2014).

The structural model was evaluated based on path coefficients, their significance levels, and the R^2 values of endogenous constructs. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was used to test the significance of path coefficients. Table 5 presents the direct effects observed in the structural model, including standardized path coefficients, t-values, significance levels, and 95% confidence intervals.

Table 5: Direct Effects in the Structural Model

Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-value	p-value	95% CI	f ²
WME → FA	0.27	4.62	< 0.001	[0.18, 0.36]	0.11
CO → FA	0.32	5.18	< 0.001	[0.22, 0.42]	0.14
RGI → FA	0.23	3.94	< 0.001	[0.14, 0.32]	0.08
WME → FCC	0.24	4.28	< 0.001	[0.15, 0.33]	0.09
CO → FCC	0.29	4.85	< 0.001	[0.19, 0.39]	0.12
RGI → FCC	0.18	3.42	< 0.001	[0.09, 0.27]	0.06
FCC → FA	0.26	4.74	< 0.001	[0.17, 0.35]	0.10
ICR → FA	-0.19	3.68	< 0.001	[-0.28, -0.10]	0.07

Note: WME = Western Media Exposure; CO = Cosmopolitan Orientation; RGI = Reference Group Influence; FCC = Fashion Cultural Capital; ICR = Indigenous Cultural Resilience; FA = Fashion Acculturation

The results indicate that all hypothesized direct effects were statistically significant. Western media exposure ($\beta = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$), cosmopolitan orientation ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < 0.001$), and reference group influence ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < 0.001$) all demonstrated significant

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positive effects on fashion acculturation. Among these predictors, cosmopolitan orientation demonstrated the strongest effect, indicating that openness to cultural diversity represents a particularly significant driver of international fashion adoption.

The model also revealed significant direct effects of Western media exposure ($\beta = 0.24, p < 0.001$), cosmopolitan orientation ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.001$), and reference group influence ($\beta = 0.18, p < 0.001$) on fashion cultural capital. These findings confirm that exposure to international cultural flows significantly enhances fashion knowledge and aesthetic dispositions. Additionally, fashion cultural capital demonstrated a significant positive effect on fashion acculturation ($\beta = 0.26, p < 0.001$), confirming its role as a mediating mechanism.

Indigenous cultural resilience demonstrated a significant negative direct effect on fashion acculturation ($\beta = -0.19, p < 0.001$), indicating that stronger maintenance of traditional Vietnamese cultural orientations constrains adoption of international fashion. However, this relationship is qualified by significant moderation effects, discussed below.

Effect sizes (f^2) for direct effects ranged from 0.06 to 0.14, indicating small to medium practical significance according to Cohen's (1988) criteria. The strongest effect size was observed for the relationship between cosmopolitan orientation and fashion acculturation ($f^2 = 0.14$), while the weakest was for reference group influence on fashion cultural capital ($f^2 = 0.06$).

Mediation analysis was conducted to examine the indirect effects of predictor variables on fashion acculturation through fashion cultural capital. Table 6 presents the indirect effects, including standardized coefficients, t-values, significance levels, and 95% confidence intervals.

Table 6: Indirect Effects in the Structural Model

Indirect Path	Indirect Effect	t-value	p-value	95% CI
WME $\rightarrow$ FCC $\rightarrow$ FA	0.06	3.18	0.001	[0.03, 0.09]
CO $\rightarrow$ FCC $\rightarrow$ FA	0.08	3.42	< 0.001	[0.04, 0.12]
RGI $\rightarrow$ FCC $\rightarrow$ FA	0.05	2.84	0.005	[0.02, 0.08]

Note: WME = Western Media Exposure; CO = Cosmopolitan Orientation; RGI = Reference Group Influence; FCC = Fashion Cultural Capital; FA = Fashion Acculturation

The analysis revealed significant indirect effects for all hypothesized mediation pathways. Western media exposure ($\beta = 0.06, p = 0.001$), cosmopolitan orientation ($\beta = 0.08, p < 0.001$), and reference group influence ($\beta = 0.05, p = 0.005$) all demonstrated significant indirect effects on fashion acculturation through fashion cultural capital. These findings confirm that fashion knowledge functions as a significant mediating mechanism through which global cultural flows influence fashion consumption.

Moderation analysis was conducted to examine how indigenous cultural resilience conditions the effects of predictor variables on fashion acculturation. Table 7 presents the moderation effects, including interaction terms, standardized coefficients, t-values, significance levels, and 95% confidence intervals.

Table 7: Moderation Effects in the Structural Model

Interaction Term	Path Coefficient	t-value	p-value	95% CI
WME $\times$ ICR $\rightarrow$ FA	-0.15	2.87	0.004	[-0.25, -0.05]
CO $\times$ ICR $\rightarrow$ FA	-0.11	2.42	0.016	[-0.20, -0.02]
RGI $\times$ ICR $\rightarrow$ FA	0.17	3.25	0.001	[0.07, 0.27]
FCC $\times$ ICR $\rightarrow$ FA	-0.09	1.89	0.059	[-0.18, 0.00]

Note: WME = Western Media Exposure; CO = Cosmopolitan Orientation; RGI = Reference Group Influence; FCC = Fashion Cultural Capital; ICR = Indigenous Cultural Resilience; FA = Fashion Acculturation

The analysis revealed significant moderation effects for three of the four hypothesized interactions. Indigenous cultural resilience significantly moderated the relationships between Western media exposure and fashion acculturation ($\beta = -0.15, p = 0.004$) and between cosmopolitan orientation and fashion acculturation ($\beta = -0.11, p = 0.016$). In both cases, the negative interaction coefficients indicate that stronger indigenous cultural resilience attenuates the positive effects of these predictors on fashion acculturation.

Interestingly, indigenous cultural resilience demonstrated a significant positive moderation effect on the relationship between reference group influence and fashion acculturation ($\beta = 0.17, p = 0.001$). This finding indicates that stronger indigenous cultural

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resilience actually enhances the effect of reference group influence on fashion acculturation, suggesting complex interaction between collective cultural orientation and social influence processes.

The moderation effect on the relationship between fashion cultural capital and fashion acculturation approached but did not reach conventional significance ($\beta = -0.09$, $p = 0.059$). This marginally significant finding suggests a potential attenuating effect of indigenous cultural resilience on the relationship between fashion knowledge and international fashion adoption.

To assess the structural model's explanatory power, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was examined for endogenous constructs. The model explained 51% of variance in fashion acculturation ($R^2 = 0.51$) and 37% of variance in fashion cultural capital ($R^2 = 0.37$). These values indicate substantial explanatory power according to Hair et al.'s (2014) criteria for PLS-SEM research in consumer behavior.

The model's predictive relevance was further assessed using the Stone-Geisser Q^2 criterion, calculated through the blindfolding procedure. The analysis revealed Q^2 values of 0.29 for fashion acculturation and 0.22 for fashion cultural capital, both well above zero, indicating the model's substantial predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2014).

Overall, the structural model assessment provides robust support for the hypothesized relationships between theoretical constructs. The findings confirm that Western media exposure, cosmopolitan orientation, and reference group influence significantly drive fashion acculturation both directly and through the mediating mechanism of fashion cultural capital. Additionally, indigenous cultural resilience demonstrates complex moderation effects, constraining some influences while enhancing others.

4.3. Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA)

Complementing the variance-based PLS-SEM analysis, fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) was employed to identify complex configurational pathways leading to fashion acculturation. Unlike conventional regression-based approaches, fsQCA examines how different combinations of causal conditions collectively produce outcomes, revealing complex conjunctural causation patterns that may not be captured through linear models (Ragin, 2008).

The first stage of fsQCA involved calibration of fuzzy-set membership scores, transforming Likert-scale responses into fuzzy-set membership values ranging from 0 (full non-membership) to 1 (full membership). Following Ragin's (2008) recommendations, calibration employed three qualitative anchors: the threshold for full membership (fuzzy score = 0.95), the crossover point (fuzzy score = 0.5), and the threshold for full non-membership (fuzzy score = 0.05). For 7-point Likert scales, these anchors were set at 6, 4, and 2 respectively, based on both theoretical considerations and examination of the empirical distribution.

Analysis of necessary conditions was conducted to identify causal conditions that must be present for the outcome to occur. Table 8 presents the necessity analysis for fashion acculturation, including consistency and coverage scores for both the presence and absence of each condition.

Table 8: Analysis of Necessary Conditions for Fashion Acculturation

Condition	Consistency	Coverage
Western Media Exposure (WME)	0.86	0.78
~Western Media Exposure (~WME)	0.39	0.42
Cosmopolitan Orientation (CO)	0.88	0.81
~Cosmopolitan Orientation (~CO)	0.36	0.38
Reference Group Influence (RGI)	0.76	0.73
~Reference Group Influence (~RGI)	0.48	0.51
Fashion Cultural Capital (FCC)	0.82	0.79
~Fashion Cultural Capital (~FCC)	0.42	0.44
Indigenous Cultural Resilience (ICR)	0.41	0.46
~Indigenous Cultural Resilience (~ICR)	0.79	0.75

Note: ~ indicates the absence of the condition

The analysis revealed two conditions with consistency scores approaching the threshold of 0.9 typically used to identify necessary conditions (Ragin, 2008): Western media exposure (consistency = 0.86) and cosmopolitan orientation (consistency = 0.88). While slightly below the strict threshold, these elevated consistency scores suggest that these conditions may be considered "almost necessary" for fashion acculturation, indicating that international fashion adoption rarely occurs without some degree of Western media exposure and cosmopolitan orientation.

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Analysis of sufficient conditions was conducted to identify configurational pathways leading to fashion acculturation. The truth table algorithm was employed with a frequency threshold of 2 cases (ensuring that each configuration is represented by at least two cases) and a consistency threshold of 0.80 (ensuring robust set-theoretic relationships). Table 9 presents the complex solution, which makes no simplifying assumptions about logical remainders.

Table 9: Sufficient Configurations for Fashion Acculturation (Complex Solution)

Configuration	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Consistency	Solution Explanation
WME•CO•FCC•~ICR	0.42	0.12	0.89	High Western media exposure, high cosmopolitan orientation, high fashion cultural capital, low indigenous cultural resilience
WME•CO•RGI•~FCC	0.35	0.08	0.83	High Western media exposure, high cosmopolitan orientation, high reference group influence, low fashion cultural capital
WME•CO•RGI•ICR	0.31	0.07	0.85	High Western media exposure, high cosmopolitan orientation, high reference group influence, high indigenous cultural resilience

Note: • indicates the logical AND operator; ~ indicates the absence of the condition

Solution coverage: 0.62; Solution consistency: 0.84

The fsQCA analysis revealed three distinct configurational pathways leading to fashion acculturation, with an overall solution coverage of 0.62 (indicating that these pathways collectively explain 62% of membership in the outcome) and solution consistency of 0.84 (indicating robust set-theoretic sufficiency).

The first configuration (WME•CO•FCC•~ICR) combines high Western media exposure, high cosmopolitan orientation, high fashion cultural capital, and low indigenous cultural resilience. This pathway represents the "global consumer" route to fashion acculturation, characterized by individuals with substantial international media exposure, openness to cultural diversity, sophisticated fashion knowledge, and limited attachment to traditional Vietnamese culture. With raw coverage of 0.42 and unique coverage of 0.12, this represents the most empirically relevant pathway.

The second configuration (WME•CO•RGI•~FCC) combines high Western media exposure, high cosmopolitan orientation, high reference group influence, and low fashion cultural capital. This pathway represents the "social conformity" route to fashion acculturation, characterized by individuals who adopt international fashion primarily through social influence mechanisms rather than personal fashion expertise. With raw coverage of 0.35 and unique coverage of 0.08, this represents a substantial alternative pathway.

The third configuration (WME•CO•RGI•ICR) combines high Western media exposure, high cosmopolitan orientation, high reference group influence, and high indigenous cultural resilience. This pathway represents the "cultural hybridization" route to fashion acculturation, characterized by individuals who maintain strong Vietnamese cultural orientations while simultaneously adopting international fashion through selective appropriation guided by social networks. With raw coverage of 0.31 and unique coverage of 0.07, this represents a significant additional pathway.

Interestingly, the fsQCA results reveal equifinality in fashion acculturation, with multiple distinct pathways leading to the outcome. While Western media exposure and cosmopolitan orientation appear in all three configurations (consistent with their status as almost necessary conditions), other conditions combine in different ways to produce the outcome. Particularly noteworthy is the presence of indigenous cultural resilience in the third configuration, indicating that strong traditional cultural orientation does not preclude international fashion adoption when combined with appropriate supporting conditions.

The fsQCA findings substantially complement the PLS-SEM results, revealing complex configurational patterns that extend beyond linear relationships. While PLS-SEM identified the average effects of individual predictors, fsQCA reveals how these predictors combine in different ways to produce the outcome, capturing the complex conjunctural causation characterizing fashion consumption in transcultural contexts.

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5. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

This research provides sophisticated empirical insights into how Vietnamese higher education students negotiate fashion identities within transcultural consumption ecosystems. By integrating PLS-SEM and fsQCA analyses, the study reveals both the linear relationships between theoretical constructs and the complex configurational pathways through which fashion acculturation emerges. These methodological innovations enable the research to capture the complex interplay between global cultural flows and indigenous identity constructions that characterise contemporary Vietnamese fashion consumption.

The findings reveal that Western media exposure, cosmopolitan orientation, and reference group influence all significantly drive fashion acculturation both directly and through the mediating mechanism of fashion cultural capital. These results align with previous research documenting how global cultural flows shape consumption patterns through diverse influence pathways (Kjeldgaard & Askegaard, 2006). However, the present study extends these findings by demonstrating how these influences operate specifically within Vietnamese higher education contexts, where distinctive institutional dynamics shape transcultural consumption.

The significant effect of Western media exposure on fashion acculturation ($\beta = 0.27, p < 0.001$) confirms cultivation theory's proposition that media consumption shapes aesthetic standards and consumption norms (Gerbner et al., 1994). This finding aligns with Jin et al.'s (2010) research demonstrating how international media exposure significantly influences Korean fashion consumption, but extends these insights to the distinctive Vietnamese context. The significant indirect effect through fashion cultural capital ($\beta = 0.06, p = 0.001$) further illuminates how media exposure enhances fashion knowledge, which subsequently shapes consumption choices.

The particularly strong effect of cosmopolitan orientation on fashion acculturation ($\beta = 0.32, p < 0.001$) confirms previous research documenting how openness to cultural diversity shapes consumption patterns across diverse contexts (Cleveland et al., 2009). However, this finding extends beyond previous research by demonstrating cosmopolitanism's specific effects within Vietnam's distinctive post-socialist context, where accelerating globalisation generates complex identity negotiations. The significant indirect effect through fashion cultural capital ($\beta = 0.08, p < 0.001$) further reveals how cosmopolitan orientations enhance fashion knowledge acquisition.

The significant effect of reference group influence on fashion acculturation ($\beta = 0.23, p < 0.001$) aligns with previous research documenting how social networks shape consumption through both normative and informational mechanisms (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). However, this finding extends these insights by examining how social influence operates specifically within Vietnam's collectivist cultural context, where social conformity may carry distinctive significance. The significant indirect effect through fashion cultural capital ($\beta = 0.05, p = 0.005$) further illuminates how social networks shape fashion knowledge acquisition through interpersonal information sharing.

The fsQCA findings substantially extend these insights by revealing three distinct configurational pathways to fashion acculturation. The identification of the "global consumer," "social conformity," and "cultural hybridization" routes demonstrates that fashion acculturation emerges through multiple equifinal pathways rather than a singular causal mechanism. These findings align with Ragin's (2008) assertion that complex social phenomena frequently demonstrate conjunctural causation and equifinality, with multiple distinct pathways leading to similar outcomes.

Particularly noteworthy is the "cultural hybridization" pathway, which combines high indigenous cultural resilience with high Western media exposure, cosmopolitan orientation, and reference group influence. This configuration reveals that maintaining traditional Vietnamese cultural orientations does not necessarily preclude international fashion adoption. Instead, strong cultural resilience may enable selective appropriation of global fashion elements within coherent Vietnamese identity narratives. This finding aligns with Sandikci and Ger's (2010) research demonstrating how Turkish consumers integrate modern fashion elements within Islamic cultural frameworks, but extends these insights to Vietnamese higher education contexts.

The complex moderation effects of indigenous cultural resilience further illuminate the sophisticated interplay between global and local cultural influences. While indigenous cultural resilience attenuates the effects of Western media exposure ($\beta = -0.15, p = 0.004$) and cosmopolitan orientation ($\beta = -0.11, p = 0.016$) on fashion acculturation, it actually enhances the effect of reference group influence ($\beta = 0.17, p = 0.001$). This unexpected finding suggests that within collectivist cultural contexts, strong indigenous orientations may actually amplify social influence processes, with reference groups functioning as cultural mediators who legitimate selective appropriation of global fashion elements.

These findings challenge simplistic narratives of cultural homogenisation, revealing instead the sophisticated agency through which Vietnamese consumers negotiate global fashion influences. Rather than passive adoption of Western fashion styles, Vietnamese higher education students engage in active processes of cultural hybridisation, selectively appropriating and transforming global fashion elements within distinctive Vietnamese identity narratives. This finding aligns with Pieterse's (1995)

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conceptualisation of globalisation as generating hybridisation rather than homogenisation, but extends these insights to Vietnamese fashion consumption specifically.

The research contributes several significant theoretical advances to contemporary fashion and consumption scholarship. First, by developing a sophisticated understanding of fashion consumption within Vietnam's distinctive socio-cultural matrix, the study contributes to decentring Eurocentric theoretical frameworks that have historically dominated fashion scholarship (Jafari & Goulding, 2013). The findings demonstrate how fashion capital operates through distinctive configurations in non-Western contexts, necessitating theoretical recalibration of Bourdieusian frameworks developed primarily through Western empirical investigation.

Second, by revealing the complex configurational pathways through which fashion acculturation emerges, the research transcends the limitations of variance-based approaches that have dominated previous research. The identification of multiple equifinal pathways demonstrates that fashion consumption in transcultural contexts cannot be adequately captured through simple linear models, requiring instead sophisticated configurational approaches capable of capturing conjunctural causation (Ragin, 2008).

Third, by illuminating the active agency through which Vietnamese consumers transform global fashion influences, the research extends consumer culture theory's conceptualisation of consumption as a site of identity construction and negotiation (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). The findings reveal how Vietnamese higher education students deploy fashion consumption as a sophisticated identity resource, constructing distinctive hybrid identities at the intersection of global and local cultural influences. Beyond these theoretical contributions, the research offers substantial practical implications for fashion marketers, educational institutions, and cultural policy architects. For international fashion brands seeking to engage Vietnamese consumers, the findings highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity and localised marketing approaches. Rather than imposing Western fashion aesthetics unchanged, brands should develop nuanced understanding of how global fashion elements become integrated within Vietnamese cultural frameworks, creating hybrid offerings that resonate with local identity projects.

For educational institutions, the findings illuminate how higher education environments function as significant sites for transcultural identity negotiation. Universities might develop more sophisticated approaches to supporting students' complex identity projects, creating institutional environments that enable productive engagement with global cultural flows while simultaneously affirming Vietnamese cultural identities.

For cultural policy architects, the findings highlight the sophisticated agency through which Vietnamese consumers navigate global cultural influences. Rather than perceiving globalisation as threatening cultural heritage, policy approaches might focus on supporting the creative hybridisation processes through which distinctively Vietnamese identities emerge within global cultural flows.

This research inevitably encounters certain limitations that suggest directions for future investigation. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference, suggesting value in longitudinal approaches examining how fashion identity projects evolve over time. Additionally, while the multi-institution sampling strategy enhances generalizability, the exclusive focus on urban universities may limit insight into rural student experiences. Future research might productively examine how fashion consumption varies across rural-urban divides, potentially revealing distinctive configurations beyond those identified in the present study.

Moreover, while the research identifies three primary configurational pathways to fashion acculturation, future research might develop more nuanced typologies of Vietnamese fashion consumers, examining how demographic, psychographic, and institutional characteristics shape pathway selection. Such consumer typologies would provide valuable strategic insights for fashion marketers seeking to engage distinctive consumer segments through tailored marketing approaches.

In conclusion, this research provides sophisticated empirical insight into how Vietnamese higher education students negotiate fashion identities within transcultural consumption ecosystems. By illuminating both the linear relationships between theoretical constructs and the complex configurational pathways through which fashion acculturation emerges, the study advances theoretical understanding of fashion consumption as a site of cultural negotiation and identity formation. These insights extend beyond the Vietnamese context, offering valuable perspective on how fashion functions as a domain of cultural hybridisation within emerging markets more broadly.

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