

Gen Z Perspectives: The Role of Government in Advancing Sustainability in Fashion

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Why this Study?

- The fashion industry's sustainability challenges
- Importance of understanding Gen-Z consumer attitudes

Do Gen-Z consumers favor government intervention to require companies to move toward a more sustainable future?

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide consists of several interlocking rectangular frames in various colors: yellow, orange, blue, and pink. The frames are arranged in a staggered, overlapping pattern, creating a sense of depth and structure. The background of the entire slide is a solid green color.

Theoretical Framework

- Public Interest Theory
- Public Choice Theory
- Relevance in the context of government interventions and consumer behavior



Methodology

- Mixed-methods research design
- Data collection: Social media comments from Gen-Z participants
- Analytical techniques: Sentiment analysis, cluster analysis, frequency analysis, thematic analysis



Results: Sentiment Analysis

- Predominant positive sentiment toward government regulations
- Distrust in corporate self-reporting and voluntary initiatives

Results: Cluster Analysis

Regulatory Mandate



Strict government regulations and penalties will lead to accountability. Voluntary consumer and business practices are insufficient.

Focus on the role of government regulation and policy interventions to drive sustainability. Respondents demonstrate distrust of corporations.

Innovative Transformation



Industry leads to enact change through creativity and discovery, supplemented with baseline enforceable requirements.

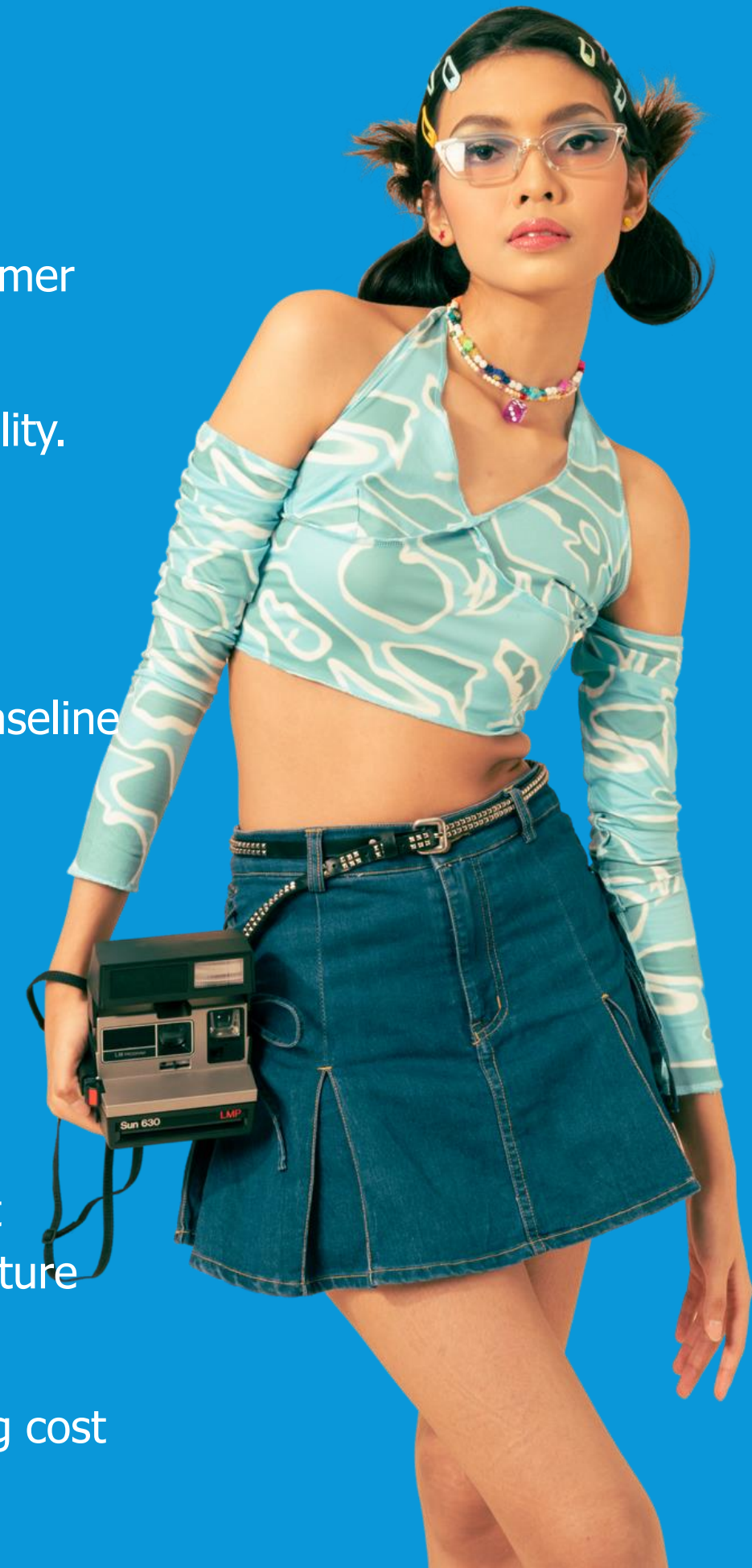
Focus on innovation-centered, collaborative industry efforts such as production improvements, new processes/materials, and consumer education, led by enforceable requirements rather than guidelines alone.

Incentivized Localization



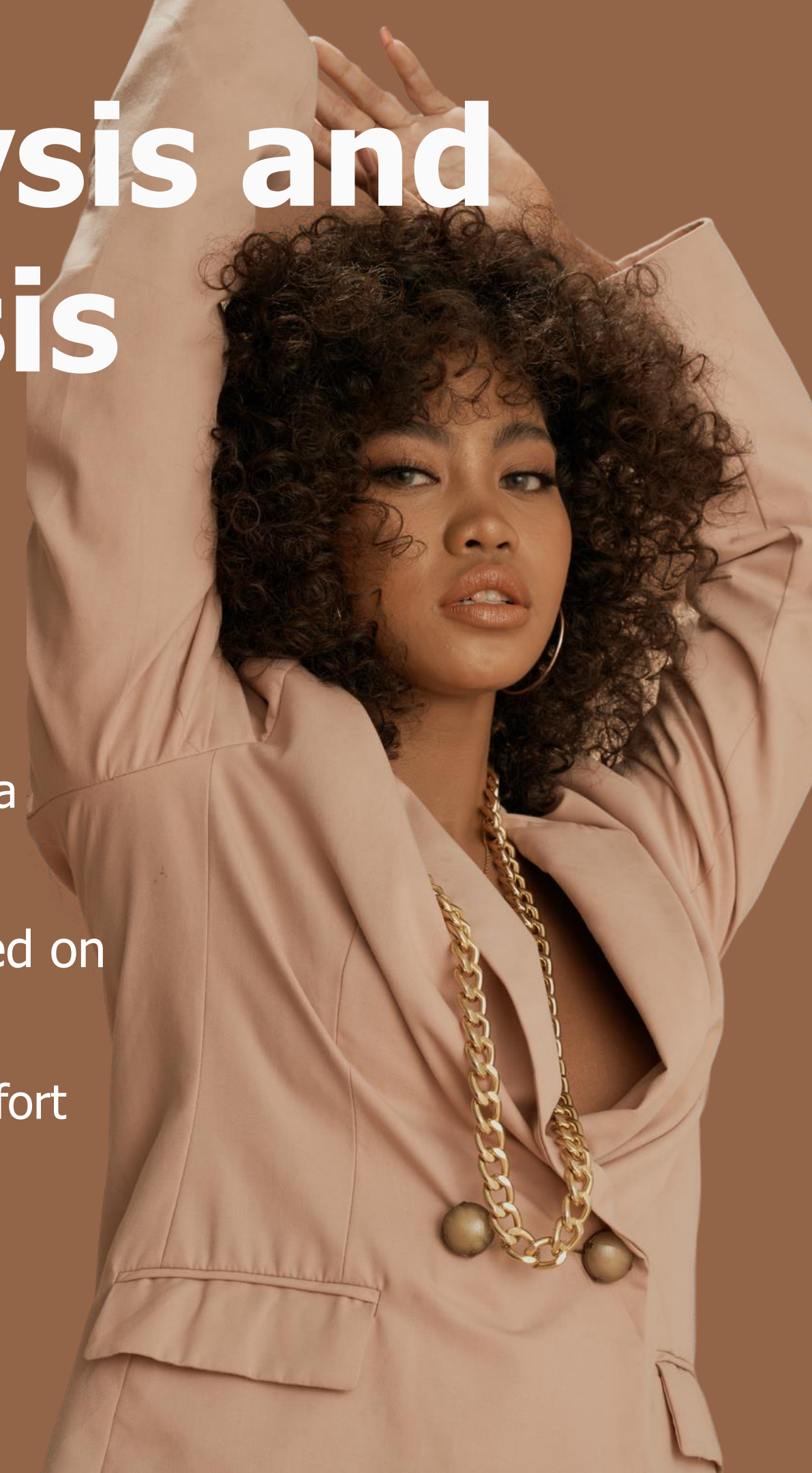
Costs and economic considerations are central. Enact financial incentives or offer profit motives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices, enabled by supportive infrastructure and policies.

Focus on making the business case to companies to adopt sustainability by highlighting cost advantages.



Results: Frequency Analysis and Thematic Analysis

1. Issues: Observations that identify a problem related to sustainability.
2. Tactics: Comments proposing solutions to sustainability problems
3. Consumer Related: Consumer-related expressions of feelings or conclusions
4. Encouragement: Remarks offering support or incentives for moving towards a sustainable future
5. Requirements: Opinions advocating for constraints or mandates imposed on companies or the industry
6. Collaborative Approach: Observations suggesting cooperation or collective effort
7. Sustainable Future: Statements articulating a desire for a sustainable future
8. Company-Industry: Indications of potential positive or negative impacts on companies or the industry





Discussion

1. Support for Robust Governmental Interventions

- Alignment with Public Interest Theory
- Desire for globally coordinated regulatory frameworks



Discussion

2. Mistrust of Large Corporations, but Concern for Small Business

- Skepticism toward large corporations
- Aligns with Public Interest Theory
- Must carefully calibrate regulatory measures



Discussion

3. Backing for Economic Incentives

- A segment advocates for financial incentives and profit-oriented motives
- Aligns with Public Choice Theory
- Implications for policymakers and industry stakeholders



Implications

- Recognize Gen-Z's emphasis on public welfare considerations
- Holistic approach: Regulations, incentives, industry-led initiatives, consumer education
- Transparency and trust-building efforts



Conclusion

- Summary of key findings
- Limitations and future research directions

Research assistance

- One undergraduate research assistant
- Responsible for data collection and data analysis, participated in writing and discussions
- Proposed and led a separate small project based on the data



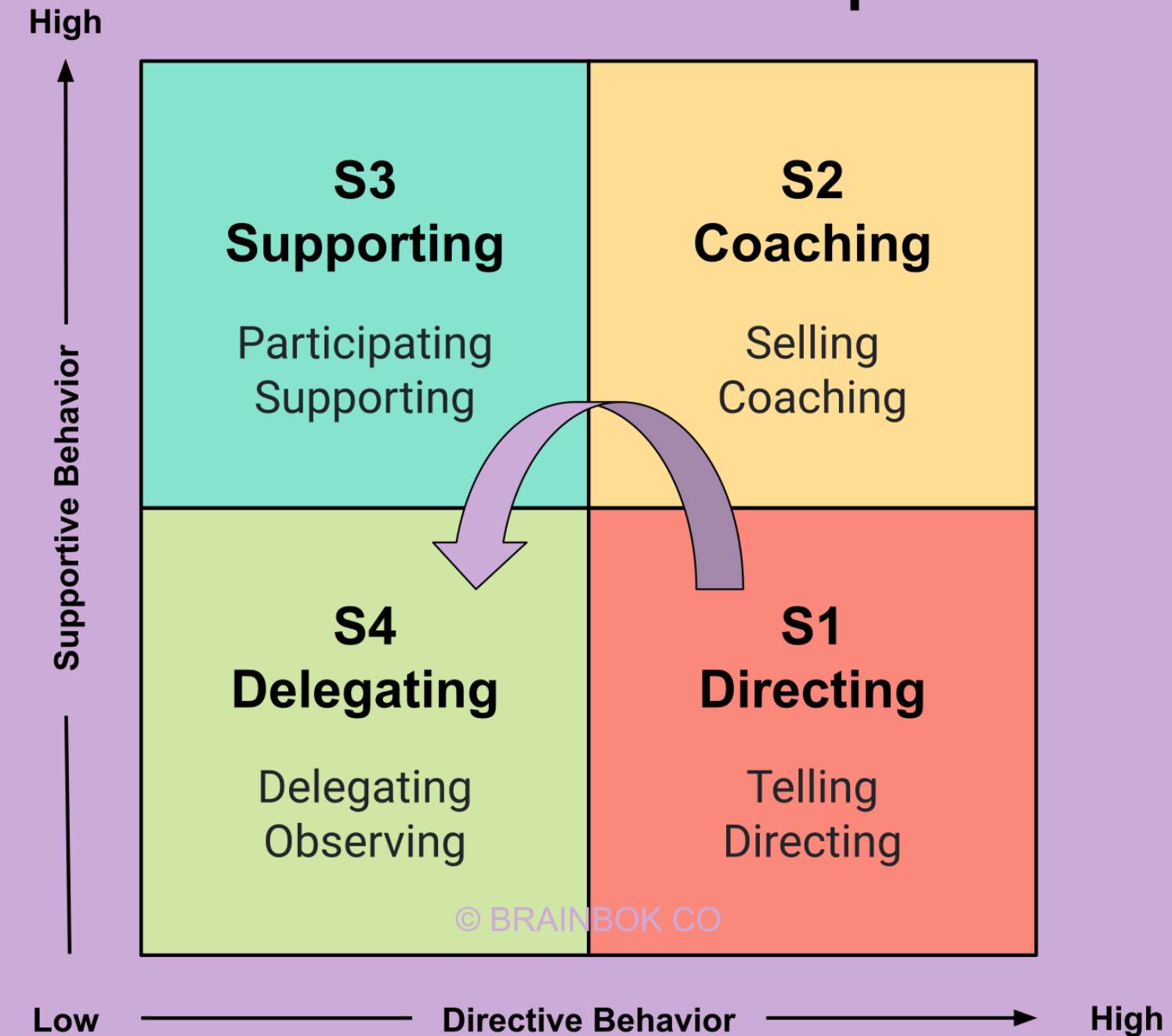
Working process

Situational leadership

- flexible leadership style that adapts the approach based on the situation, task, and people



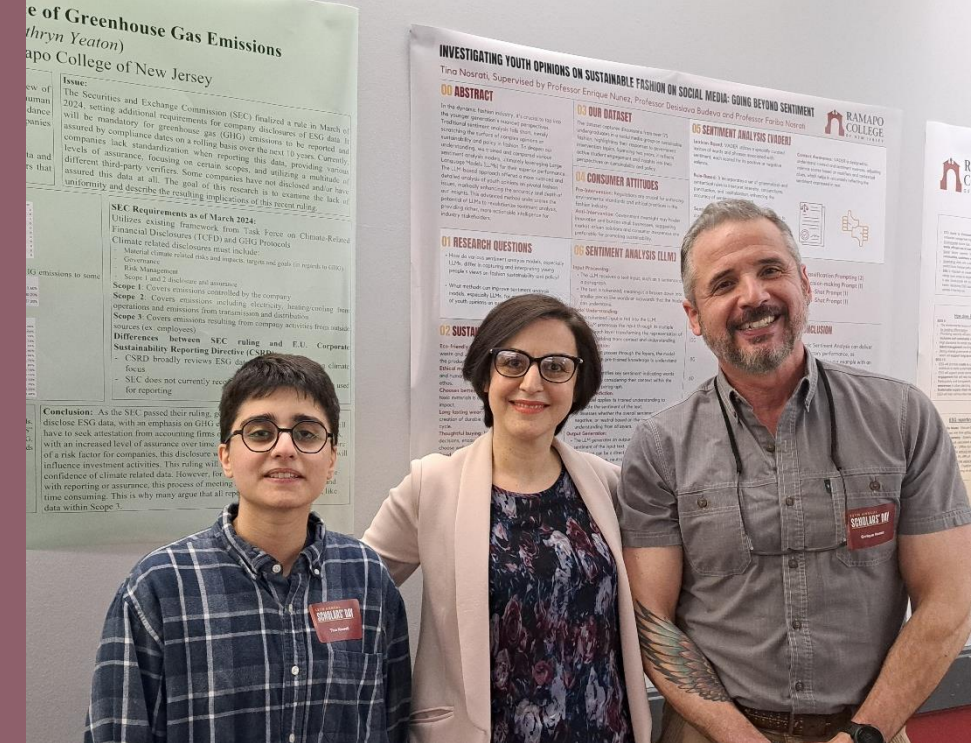
Ken Blanchard's Situational Leadership® II



D4 Self-Reliant Achiever High Competence — o — High Commitment	D3 Capable but Cautious Moderate to High Competence — o — Variable Commitment	D2 Disillusioned Learner Low to some Competence — o — Low Commitment	D1 Enthusiastic Beginner Low Competence — o — High Commitment
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Developed ← ————— → Developing

Output



Student presentation:

1. COPLAC's Northeast Regional URSCA 2024 Conference. Oct 2024 North Adams, MA.
2. Ramapo Scholar's Day 2024.
3. Society for Advancement of Management International Business (SAM 2024) Conference, March 2024 Orlando, FL.

Joint publication and presentation:

1. Fabric of Change: Insights from Gen Z College Students on Government's Role in Promoting Sustainability in Fashion. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*. (In-press).
2. Gen-Z Consumers and the Transition to a More Sustainable Future - The Role of Government Policies, Macromarketing Conference 2024, Helsinki, Finland.

Challenges

Identifying Interested Students

- ❖ Find students who value and can dedicate time to research

Perception of Research among our students

- ❖ Many view research as just an on-campus job.
- ❖ insufficient recognition of the importance of presenting at academic conferences and other scholarly venues.

Budget Limitations

- ❖ Constraints affect hiring students and supporting conference participation.

Lack of Training

- ❖ Students typically don't receive training on research value, research processes, ethics, and methods.



Mitigation Strategy

Selective Student Recruitment

- Focus on coaching students who genuinely want to learn and achieve scholarly output.

Education on Research

- Begin training student researchers on the value and processes of research.

Targeting Conferences

- Prioritize virtual and local conferences to minimize travel expenses.





Questions?