Green Consumption in Fast Fashion:

An Investigation on How Development of Marketing Strategies Effect Consumer Behaviour Towards Sustainable Fashion

By Jio Kim

x21102856

Supervisor: Lynda McElherron

MSc in International Business
National College of Ireland

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Abstract

The environmental movement is a growing issue in today's society, and the fashion industry is commonly quoted as one of the primary perpetrators of the environmental and social issues that are being addressed. Numerous businesses aim to capitalise on this growing interest by addressing the sustainability of their products. New strategies are being used to achieve this, most notably through marketing strategies. The purpose of this study is to examine how green marketing can influence customer behaviour in the fashion industry.

This study used a deductive quantitative approach to collect reliable viewpoints on the subject. Data was gathered via a Google online survey to examine the research's proposed hypothesis. The data collection process included 150 respondents of diverse ages and nationalities. 27 questions, including ones about demographics, purchasing patterns on fashion items, and understanding of sustainable fashion, were presented to the respondents.

The acquired data was then subjected to thematic analysis and presented as conclusions, revealing a statistically significant association between consumer awareness of sustainable fashion and consumer attitude toward sustainable fashion consumption. The SPSS statistical software version 28.1 was used to investigate the hypothesis in this research.

National College of Ireland

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(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

Name: Jio Kim

Student Number: x21102856

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to Study

The survival and well-being of life on earth depend on the preservation of our planet's ecosystem. Therefore, it is our duty to see to it that the environment is properly cared for. Even while the fashion business is booming, a growing number of its unfavourable environmental repercussions are coming to the surface. Ten percent of the world's carbon emissions come from the fabrication of clothing, which also depletes water supplies and pollutes streams and rivers (Bank, 2019). In addition, washing some types of clothing releases a significant amount of microplastic particles into the sea, and it is estimated that 85% of all fabrics are discarded annually (Beall, 2020). One strategy for promoting an eco-conscious consumer base is the use of green clothing. However, these eco-friendly goods have a very limited marketability (Tensie Whelan, 2019). To support the upkeep of the overall environment, consumers should be willing to choose these products as alternatives to clothing made of chemicals. In other words, the market structures and business tactics employed by the fashion sectors must be assessed. To increase consumer awareness of green clothing, there should be proactive marketing and promotion efforts. To solve this issue, financial factors should be taken into account.

The unique materials used to create the green clothing are not often used to make our everyday clothes. These distinctive materials frequently cost more than the materials used to make our clothes, which drives up the cost of these eco-friendly items. Financial consideration is a crucial factor, according to consumer behaviour of choosing (Shethna, n.d.). Customers are more likely to buy things that are reasonably priced or have other appealing qualities. Green clothing might be pricey despite their benefits. Since consumers can buy other material-based clothing at lower prices, buyers do not favour them over mass production apparels (Sampson, 2009).

Although sustainable production can be more expensive, retail prices for these products could be markedly smaller than what we are seeing today (Kearney, 2020). Instead, we observe companies increasing the price difference and widening the "green gap," with outdated pricing markups and accounting regulations which are impeding consumers'

adoption of green products. Businesses that re-evaluate the rules may be able to provide sustainable products at much more affordable prices while maintaining the same profit for all participants in the value chain (Kearney, 2020). To achieve this, though, will call for cooperation and a collective desire to contribute to a more sustainable future.

1.2 Gaps in Literature

In our fast-fashion focused environment, there is currently a gap in the research about the effect customers obtain from a company's marketing strategy towards eco-friendly items. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ascertain how marketing methods affect Gen Z, Millennium, and Gen X consumers that shop at fast-fashion retailers. Furthermore, there is a shortage of public awareness in this area. Although many individuals are aware of the severity of global warming, they are unclear of the connection between rapid fashion and sustainable clothes.

1.3 Research Justification and Rationale

The contemporary fast-paced society has caused a transformation in the fashion business that is also fast-based. As a result, the fast-fashion business is expanding at an accelerating rate than before. This has affected our environment due to this phenomena, and there is a lack of knowledge on effective marketing techniques that could persuade customers to choose green fashion over fast fashion. Thus, the purpose of this study is to better understand how customers behave when it comes to fast fashion and eco-friendly clothing, as well as to identify the best marketing tactics to encourage more people to purchase eco-friendly clothing.

1.4 Overall Aim of Study

As explained previously, the purpose of this study is to identify, understand and offer possible solutions to alter consumer attitudes regarding rapid fashion and green fashion. Comparing these two fashion industries and how they are connected to direct consumer behaviour, there is a noticeable gap between awareness and comsumption. In addition, the study intends to raise awareness of this issue to persuade consumers to take into account

eco-friendly fashion choices while making clothing purchases. These factors will be discussed in the answers to the research questions listed below.

1.5 Research Methods

A quantitative approach will be used in this study to successfully complete the dissertation. People from various age groups who have experiences purchasing clothing based on a brand's marketing strategy would make up the focus group participants. Since this issue is founded on human assumptions, notably those of Gen Z, Millennium, and Gen X groups, the researcher intends to see society through the eyes of the participants.

1.6 Overview

This research is structured up into seven chapters, each of which is briefly explained below:

- Chapter 1: This chapter provides a brief summary of fast fashion and sustainable fashion is given at the beginning of this chapter, along with gaps in the existing research that serve as reason for further investigation. Additionally, the study's objectives and research methodology are presented.

- Chapter 2: This chapter includes a review of all current and relevant literature as well as an analysis of past studies on the primary aims and topics addressed throughout this research project. The first section outlines the key concepts and terms involved in fast fashion. The second section focuses on the history and the product life cycle of fast fashion, as well as the justification for the cost of sustainable fashion items. The final section focuses on the market's present ethical standards and critiques of green washing. The final section examines marketing strategies employed in the sustainable fashion industry.

- Chapter 3: In this chapter, the study aims and objectives, as well as the research questions and hypotheses to be tested in the research methodology chapter are explained.

- Chapter 4: This chapter justifies the research methodology used in the study to address the research question, as well as an analysis of the methods and tools used to collect the data. An overview of the SPSS analytic tool employed in this study is also given.

- Chapter 5: This chapter highlights the findings that were found as a result from investigating the data that was gathered through an online questionnaire. The previously put forward hypotheses from chapter 3 will also be investigated and tested.

- Chapter 6: This chapter presents a critical analysis by the researcher based on reflections following the collection of data from the questionnaires and the inclusion of findings from the primary study with those from Chapters 2 and 3.

- Chapter 7: This section provides the conclusion to the research study and makes future recommendations for the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

As consumers, people have developed a greater awareness of their purchasing decisions and are using the power of one's voiced criticism to influence the businesses of those who produce our clothing and other wearable products. There are already dozens of slow fashion companies that are committed to ethical and environmentally friendly practices. It has been noticed that consumers who care about the environment have been buying more green goods over non-eco-friendly goods (Morris, 2022). When compared to alternatives, environmentally conscious consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable products. Numerous studies have addressed these issues in relation to numerous businesses and categories of green products, including organic foods, renewable energy, electric vehicles, eco-friendly cosmetics, and green buildings, among others. Additionally, studies are being conducted to examine consumer attitudes and behaviours regarding environmentally friendly products in the textile and apparel industries, such as clothing made from recyclable materials or eco-friendly fibres. Green clothing, often referred to as sustainable, biogenic, or eco-friendly clothing, is a category of textile that adheres to ethical, social, and environmental standards, as well as to fair trade principles, without negatively impacting the environment or labourers (The Considerate Consumer, 2022).

As public awareness of sustainability grows, so do the terminologies and classifications used to describe sustainable fashion. The chart below illustrates how sustainable fashion is categorised into seven forms: On Demand & Custom Made, Green & Clean, High Quality & Timeless Design, Fair & Ethical, Repair, Redesign & Upcycle, Rent, Loan & Swap, Second-hand & Vintage (EMA, 2018). For the sake of this study, these phrases will be classified under the title of "sustainable fashion."

Figure 1:Illustration of the seven categories that falls under the umbrella of sustainable fashion

This literature review aims to analyse a better understanding of the current situation in green clothing consumption in fast fashion within the area of the research question. Furthermore, this literature review will discuss the affect and awareness to fast fashion and green washing while analysing the factors that affect consumers' preference for green apparel. In addition, this chapter will investigate the fashion product life cycle as well as the current marketing strategies organisations are utilising to attract consumers towards green fashion.

2.2 History of Fast Fashion

Fast fashion pertains to clothing designs that are speedily transitioned from the runway to retail outlets to capitalise on current trends. Fashion Week runway looks or celebrity outfits are generally the inspiration for these collections. Fast fashion allows customers to get their hands on the hottest new styles at an affordable price (Hayes, 2022).

Purchasing clothing used to be more of an occasion than a leisure activity. Consumers would set aside money to buy new clothing for specific occasions or needs. However, this began to change in the late 1990s. People began shopping for leisure, and the purchase of fast fashion

clothing have increased year after year (Hayes, 2022). Due to this, the market for synthetic fibre clothing has grown significantly, as can be seen in the graph below, whereas the market for clothes made of natural fibres has stayed fairly consistent. Synthetics are the most common material used in the fast fashion industry, which reflects how rapidly the industry has developed over time (Le, 2020).
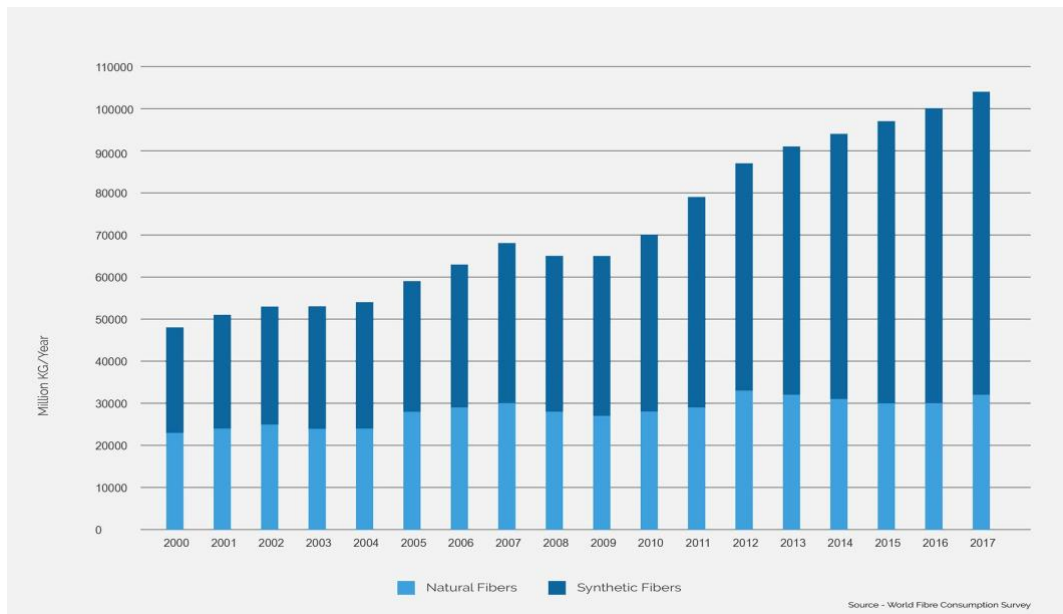
Figure 2: Graph of global synthetic fibres and natural fibres consumption from 2000 till 2017

Fast fashion gained popularity as a result of advances in manufacturing and shipping technologies that became more affordable and high speed. As well as from the increase in consumer demand for fashionable items, and rising purchasing power. The major clothing brands' tradition of releasing new collections and lines on a regular, seasonal basis is under threat from fast fashion. Fast fashion retailers are recognised for often launching new products each week to stay in style. Zara Inditex, H&M Group, and SHEIN are among the leading brands in the fast fashion market. Fast fashion is made possible by fashion retailers redesigning supply chain management (SCM) practices. The supply chain management can be described as the production flow of a particular material from raw materials to providing the final product to the consumer (IBM, 2022)

2.3 Fashion Product Life Cycle

The development, marketing, and final removal of a product from the market are all part of its life cycle. PLC (Product Life Cycle), was historically a concept that was studied as early as 1957 (MBA Skool Team, 2020). Traditionally this can be defined in four stages: introduction, growth, maturation, and decline. This was mostly utilised in marketing, which is why it was labelled as Marketing-PLC. The market demand, the usage of marketing tools, and how quickly a product completes its life cycle all rely on the products' life span. Fashion items, by their very nature, have a shorter lifespan, which means they have considerably less time to earn their keep.

According to studies, the fashion business, and particularly fast fashion, has a terrible effect on both the environment and the people who make the clothing. The procedure utilised by the textile, apparel, and fashion sectors during the manufacture of a garment is illustrated in the figure below, which was derived from the book by Gardetti et al. (Miguel Angel Gardetti A. L., 2013).
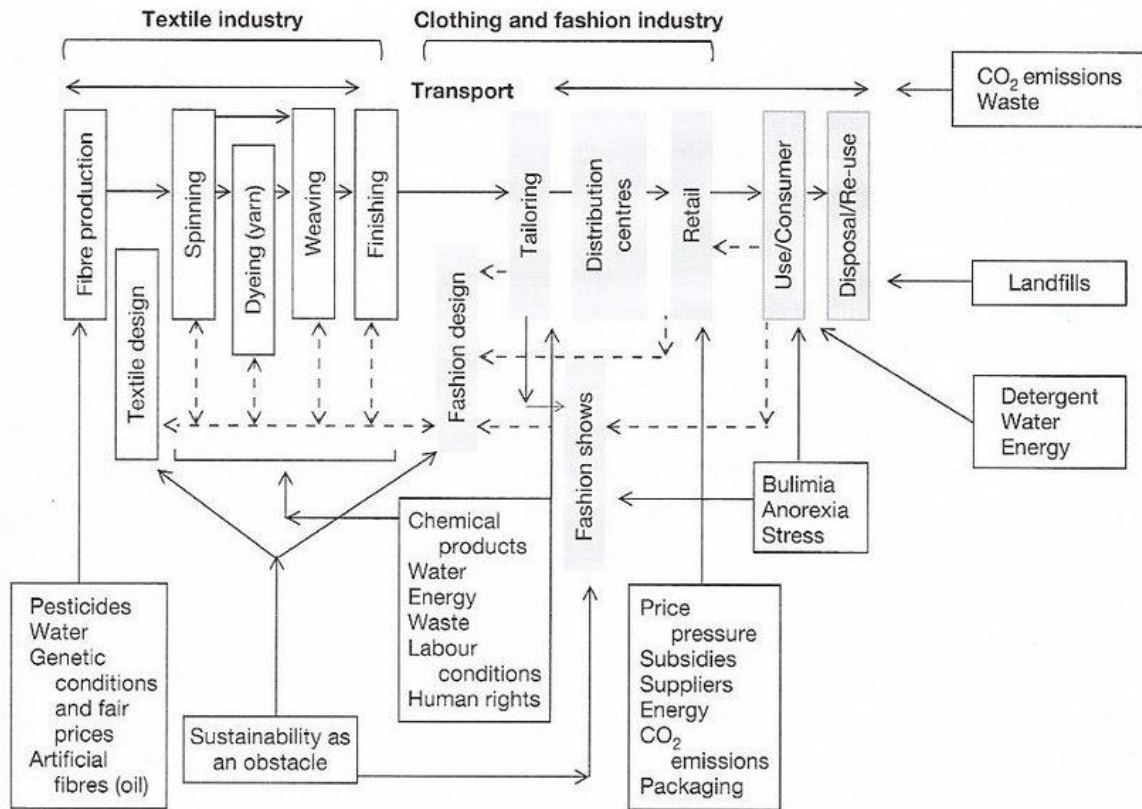
Figure 3: Schematics of the environmental and social impacts of the textile, clothing, and fashion industry

There are many problems due to fast fashion products, notably in the social and environmental spheres. The public is now questioning and criticising the process of production, manufacture, and circulation of fast fashion clothing items due to the negative consequences that it has on numerous areas such as water consumption and violation of labour rights.

10% of the world's carbon emissions are attributed to the creation of clothing, according to Business Insider. 85% of all textiles end up in landfills each year. The mass production of these materials dries up groundwater and pollutes rivers and streams. Every year, washing garments contributes 500 000 tons of microfibres to the ocean, which is the equivalent of 50 billion plastic bottles (Maiti, 2022). Additionally, manufacturers often use synthetic fibres such as polyester, nylon, and acrylic that can easily take about hundreds of years to decompose. According to a 2017 research from the International Union for Conservation of

Nature (IUCN), the laundering of synthetic textiles like polyester accounts for 35% of all microplastics (microscopic bits of non-biodegradable plastic) in the ocean.

For decades, a big share of clothing has been produced in nations where workers' rights have been restricted or violated due to cheap labour. The Rana Plaza collapse in 2013, which took the lives of 1134 garment workers in Dhaka, Bangladesh, has opened the eyes of consumers of the appalling working conditions in clothing production plants (International Labour Organization, 2018). Employees frequently work in precarious environment without proper ventilation, inhaling poisonous gases, fibre dust, or blasting sand. In textile manufacturing plants, accidents, fires, illnesses, and injuries frequently occur (International Labour Organisation, 2017). Clothing labourers are frequently ordered to work 14 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week. In order to satisfy the deadline, set by the fashion business, they would work till 2 or 3 am during peak season (Sustain Your Style, 2022). In addition to the fact that many would be fired if they refused to work extra hours, their base pay is so low that they are unable to refuse overtime. In some circumstances, overtime is not even compensated.

2.4 Product Price

Sustainable apparel is perceived as being expensive by many consumers. It is a known fact that sustainable textiles can cost anywhere between 150% to 200% more expensive than the price of fabrics used more frequently in the fast fashion industry (Kearney, 2020). Environmentally friendly materials are more expensive for producers to produce, resulting in a higher price (Oresa, 2020).

For instance, organic cotton must be planted on land that has been cleared for at least three years in order to recover the level of biodiversity that allows the crop to develop naturally, free of hazardous fertilizers (Crow, Moore, & Dodd, 1996). Although it grows slower than the one that are exposed to chemicals, because it is harvested by hand, the quality is considerably greater and more lasting, thus the price rise should be acceptable. Despite the fact that a variety of factors influence the price, four key factors contribute to the high cost of sustainable fashion.

1. Cost of materials

The cost of the raw materials must be determined before the producer can decide how much to charge for the finished product. It is usual to find that plants and animals are employed in the process of making eco-friendly materials (Miguel Angel Gardetti S. S., 2016). In comparison to the production of synthetic materials, producers of organic materials would have to pay for decreased crop yields, greater animal housing space, and longer periods of time to rear animals for their fur. To create sustainable fibres, ethical considerations must also be taken into account. Manufacturers should be mindful of sustainable wastewater disposal, pesticide usage constraints, and paying farmers and weavers a fair salary. Each and every one of these elements should be taken into account, which raises the cost of sustainable materials.

2. Labour cost

As manual labour is required for all clothing manufactures, it is inevitable that the expenditures of labour costs play a big role in the pricing of sustainable fashion items. There were many institutions exposed to treating its employees in an unethical manner as in making employees work in a poor environment and underpaying them in order to make more profit. Therefore, if the sustainable clothing industry wants to abide by the guidelines for ethical standards, it is an unavoidable phenomenon for the manufacturers' cost to also increase.

3. Niche market of Sustainable Fashion

Despite its expanding market, sustainable fashion is still a niche industry. Since 2015, the global sustainable fashion market has grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.1 percent, reaching a value of around $6,349.9 million in 2020 (The Business Research Company , 2022). The main driver of this expansion has been an increase in public awareness of the need for ethical business practices in the fashion industry as well as the importance of eco-friendly apparel for the world, particularly in the wake of the global pandemic Covid 19. However, the global fast fashion market is anticipated to rise from $91.23 billion in 2021 to $99.23 billion in 2022 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.8%, which is still significantly greater than the sustainable fashion market (The Business Research Company , 2022). When goods or service are in high demand, there is strong competition, which lowers prices when it is produced in large quantities. A majority of the sustainable brands are

producing in small quantities due to lower customer demand, which is further increasing manufacturing costs.

4. Retail Markups

Products with retail markups have pricing that are laden with brand value and labelling. The majority of clothing companies have generally sold their goods through huge retail chains like Zara, H&M Group, or SHEIN. These markups significantly increase the price gap between fast fashion and sustainable clothing. Retail businesses import merchandise from Zara, the H&M Group, or SHEIN and reprise it at a markup of two to three times the retail price index. For instance, a €10 difference in base costs results in a €30 difference in retail markups. This situation is yet another element that raises the cost of sustainable apparel in the fashion industry.

2.5 Green Washing & Ethics

More firms are making new pledges to helping to protect the environment and social rights in the fashion industry now that many companies have understood that sustainable fashion is the new trending issue and the new potential market to generate money (Magali A. Delmas, 2011). Although this phenomenon is beneficial to the environment and society as a whole, consumers must be wise to distinguish the genuine movements from the deceptive and false marketing tactics that businesses use in order to increase their profits. Businesses are paying attention in particular to the rising interest in the sustainability movement among Millennial and Gen Z consumers as well as their growing purchasing power. However, some companies are opting for "greenwashing" as opposed to actually going green.

The phrase "greenwashing" has come to consumers' notice as a result of this circumstance. Environmental activist Jay Westerveld originated the term "greenwashing" in the 1980s (Edwards, 2022) .Greenwashing is a marketing technique used by businesses to make their product appear more environmentally friendly than it actually is. This marketing strategy takes advantage of consumers' understanding to trick them into purchasing a product that purports to be environmentally friendly but actually isn't. In a study of greenwashing conducted between 2006 and 2009 by the advertising agency TerraChoice Environmental

Marketing, it was found that 2,219 products made green claims, and 98 percent of them engaged in greenwashing (Edwards, 2022).

It has been proven that companies perform better when they make customers feel good about their purchases. Genuine brands are more inclined to value transparency and update their audience on progress. Hence, it is essential for businesses to have brand transparency and accountability as well as for customers to seek out more information and educate themselves in order for consumers to avoid being deceived into purchasing a product that is portrayed to be ethical on the outside but in reality, it isn't.

2.6 Theory of Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behaviour is the study of consumers and the methods they employ to select, use (consume), and discard goods and services, as well as customers' mental, emotional, and behavioural responses (Radu, 2022). Environmentally concerned shoppers have been boosting their desire for green items, according to reports (Emmert, 2021). When compared to alternatives, buyers are willing to pay more for green products. Numerous research findings address these problems regarding a variety of organizations and types of green goods, including natural foods, green energy, electric autos, green beauty items, and green construction, to name a few. Buyer attitudes and behaviours toward green goods in the textile and clothing business, such as garments made from eco-friendly fibres or recyclable materials, and eco-fashion, are also being investigated.

Green garments, also known as sustainable, biogenic, or eco-friendly garments, are a type of textile that incorporates social, ecological, and fair-trade practices, as well as sweatshop-free working conditions, without causing harm to the environment or workers (Lee, 2012). Because it uses natural methods and fibres and emphasizes the conservation of natural resources, green clothing is becoming a fashion trend. Fabric firms who create these products try to use eco-friendly materials instead of toxic chemicals. Recycling garments also helps to reduce resource and waste usage.
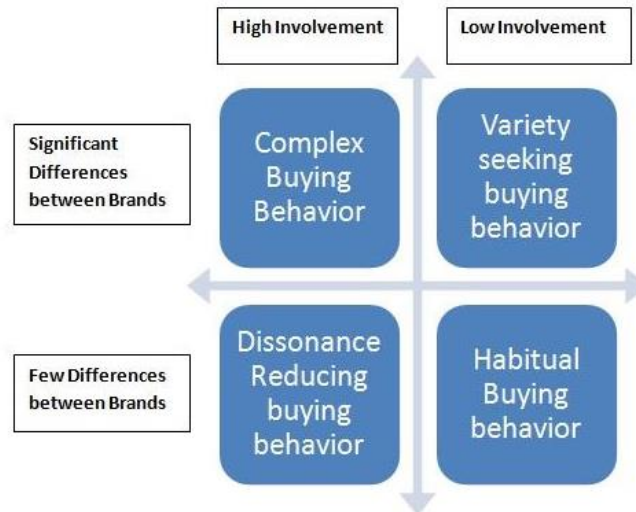
Figure 4: Diagram depicting the four categories of consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour can be classified into four categories:

1. Complex purchasing patterns

Such behaviour is displayed when consumers acquire pricey, infrequently purchased products. When customers are about to make a high-value investment, they are a key part of their own research process. Consider buying a house or a car, both of which are examples of complex purchasing behaviours.

2. Purchase habits that reduce dissonance

Even though the consumer is actively engaging in the purchasing process, it might be difficult for them to tell one brand from another. When a buyer is concerned that they may regret their choice, dissonance can occur. Think about a customer who is looking to buy jeans. Consumers will choose one based on price and convenience, but once they've made a purchase, they'll seek confirmation that they were right.

3. Continual purchasing habits

When a buyer makes habitual purchases, their interest in the product or brand category is minimal. Take supermarket shopping as an example: a customer goes to the store and buys the bread of their choice. They simply behave in a predictable manner; they don't have a strong sense of brand loyalty.

4. Variety seeking purchase habit

In this scenario, a customer purchases a different product out of a need for variety as opposed to being unsatisfied with the previous one. For example, when clients purchase different t-shirt patterns.

Consumer Behaviour in Sustainable Fashion

Fashion companies understand that in order to satisfy consumer demand for more sustainable fashion offerings, they must alter their strategy. However, the complicated link between sustainability and the fashion business market frequently outweighs firms' intentions to change due to the high financial cost of change, which some brands are unwilling to bear in order to maintain cheap costs (Chan, 2020). Businesses encounter operational and strategic challenges, while consumers have difficulty making their sustainability ambitions a reality. Despite having good intentions, just 20% of consumers actively analyse companies' sustainability practices when they shop, according to research from Zalando and views and behaviours differ on a variety of levels as shown in the chart below (Zalando, 2021).
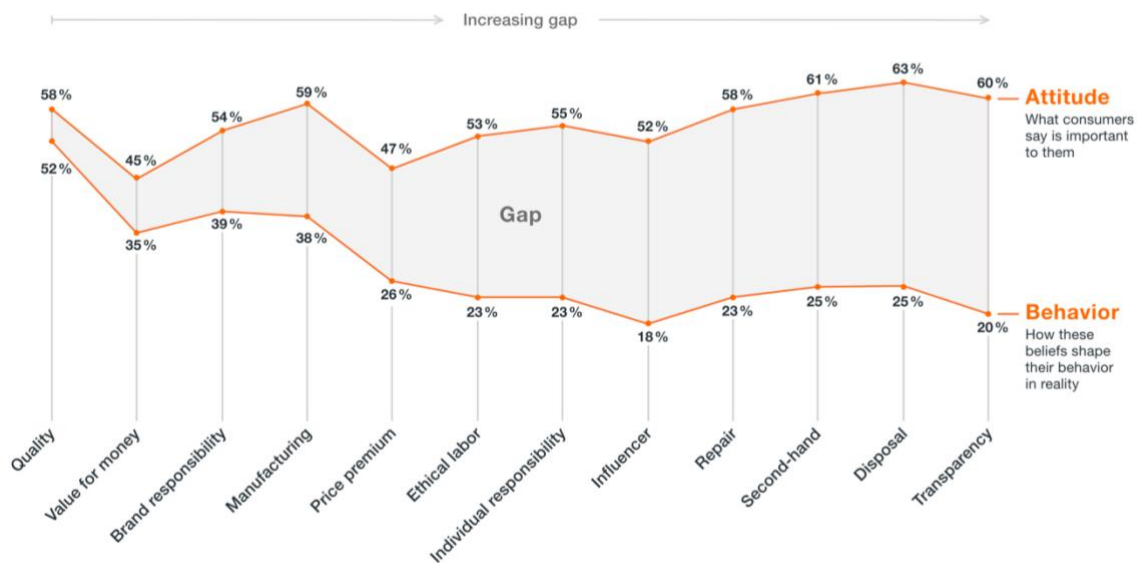
Figure 5: Graph on the attitude-behaviour gap in sustainable purchasing decisions

The phrase "complex behaviour" was first coined by Roberts (Roberts, Green consumers in the 1990s: Profile and implications for advertising, 1996), who describes the complex behaviour of consumers who, despite appearing concerned about sustainability, preferring sustainable products, and willing to invest more money to do so, do not ultimately act on this apparent willingness (Lynn Sudbury-Riley, 2015). According to the publications, this

occurrence is caused by a number of factors, including the higher prices charged for reportedly "sustainable" products, the uncertainty, false information, and lack of knowledge about these products, the perception of their quality, and the small number of businesses that actually offer these items (Roberts, Will the real socially responsible consumer please step forward?, 1996). All these factors appear to obstruct customers' ability to make purchase decisions, and the growing environmental and social concerns do not appear to be enough to close the attitude-behaviour gap.

2.7 Marketing Strategies

"Sustainable marketing is the marketing of sustainable products in a sustainable way. We're not printing hundreds of flyers and throwing them around the streets; we're educating consumers so they can make more informed decisions about which products to buy when they need them." – Nick Spensley, head of PR and marketing at UK-based sister brands Togetherband and Bottletop.

Sustainable marketing is a device that enables firms to use their credentials in preserving the environment as a unique selling point (USP) to correctly and truthfully advertise their environmentally and socially responsible products, processes, and brand values (Etman, 2017). In the near future, the case for sustainability is as strong. Short-term economic advantages are increased when green fashion is promoted using sustainable marketing. For instance, the Centre for Sustainable Business at NYU Stern found that the growth of items branded as sustainable was 5.6 times greater than that of unsustainable ones (Kronthal-Sacco, 2019). This is so that firms can profit from improved brand recognition, higher rates of employee retention and recruitment, and investment.

Sustainable marketing can be done in various ways as the following:

Defining one's target persona

The ideal customer a company wish to draw in with its marketing message is represented by your target persona. A business must target the correct market while marketing its sustainable fashion line. There are various types of sustainable audiences to target, just as the brand will appeal to a variety of demographics, professions, and generations.

Using digital storytelling

Creators all over the world are combining narrative techniques with modern, digital forms of communication. Narratives come to life through the use of multimedia technologies like podcasts, blogs, and videos. This is called digital storytelling. Fair fashion campaigner and podcaster Venetia La Manna is a good example of an online creator who promotes green fashion. Venetia criticizes environmentally harmful fashion brands on her social media channels and exposes merchants for their unethical behaviour in the fashion supply chain (Marriot, 2021).

Digital storytelling can be used by businesses to walk their customers through their sustainability story. Educate consumers on how supporting the brand will contribute to good change. According to studies, consumers who are shamed or made to feel guilty for purchasing unethical apparel may have negative consequences (La, Manna, 2021). Instead, a lot of companies place an emphasis on empowering customers, and storytelling aids in giving that empowerment a sense of overall authenticity.

When properly applied, sustainable marketing and green clothing in the fashion business will encourage responsible consumption habits and trigger a shift in consumer behaviour away from non-eco-friendly fashion and unethical and environmentally harmful business practices. Brands would be able to express the significance and value of having a sustainable business model by expertly marketing sustainable fashion brands.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter's fundamental objective was to provide a grounding in essential academic literature in order to analyse the key issues of this research study. This chapter provided an in-depth overview of the main components of the research topic, outlining the required foundations for conducting extensive research.

The literature review explored the history of the fast fashion industry as well as the transitions that the fashion industry has gone through in order to develop this new business

model. Despite its popularity, fast fashion is being criticised, and the public is questioning its credibility.

On top of this, the life cycle of a fashion product was also examined in this literature review, along with the justification for the prices for sustainable fashion products.

The literature discussed how consumers and marketers are increasingly recognising the value of sustainability marketing. Additionally, some of the negative behaviours that are arising in response to this increase in popularity were discussed, as well as the influence it may have on consumers' purchase decision. Numerous firms are "greenwashing," deceiving consumers about their true approach to sustainability, which damages the legitimacy of the "green" motion as a whole.

In closing, the literature review further discussed the future market potential for the sustainable fashion industry and provided exemplary marketing strategies that businesses could employ to promote sustainable fashion.

Chapter 3: Research Question

3.1 Research Aims and Objectives

The objective of this study is to assess how the theory of buyer behaviour for consumers' clothes purchases relates to actual consumer behaviour. Additionally, this study will address whether consumer purchases for apparels are influenced by commercial and social input variables including environmental awareness, a firm's marketing plan that includes other external factors like pricing, brand awareness, and current fashion trends.

- Research Objective 1: To identify what consumers consider most while purchasing clothing.
- Research Objective 2: To determine which marketing methods are most appealing to modern society
- Research Objective 3: To investigate customer perceptions of eco-friendly fashion
- Research Objective 4: To determine which marketing techniques can be proposed to enhance green fashion consumption

3.2 Research Questions

- What percentage of population prefers green clothing?
- What actions can be made by businesses to make green fashion more affordable to clients?
- Does raising awareness of green fashion marketing reduce people's tendency to buy fast fashion clothing?
- What marketing strategies can be carried out to influence consumers to choose eco-friendly products over non-eco-friendly products?

3.3 Research Hypothesis

H_{01}: Consumer's decision to purchase clothing is driven by habits (theory of buyer behaviour)

H_{02}: Consumer's decision to purchase clothing is driven by commercial and social factors such as the environmental awareness

H_{03}: Consumer's decision to purchase clothing is driven brand awareness

H_{04}: Consumer's decision to purchase clothing is driven by price of product

H_{05}: Consumer's decision to purchase clothing is driven by current fashion trends

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The research objectives covered in this chapter were based on the previous chapter's assessment of the gaps in the literature. This chapter will go into greater detail regarding the study questions, philosophical justifications for the research methodology, research strategies, choice of time, and a critique of the method selected. The researcher chose the approaches based on their applicability, potential drawbacks, and best-fit strategy. This chapter will also discuss the tools that were utilised, the ethical considerations, and the study limitations.

This chapter describes the strategies and methodology the researcher will utilise to collect the data for this study. According to Saunders et al. (Saunders, 2019), how one collects data links to the centre of the "Research Onion," and this study will describe the strategies which were used throughout this study. Figure 6 illustrates this process, which starts with the research philosophy, followed by approach to theory development, methodological choice and strategies, time horizon and finally to the research techniques and procedures, which are contained in the centre of the research onion.
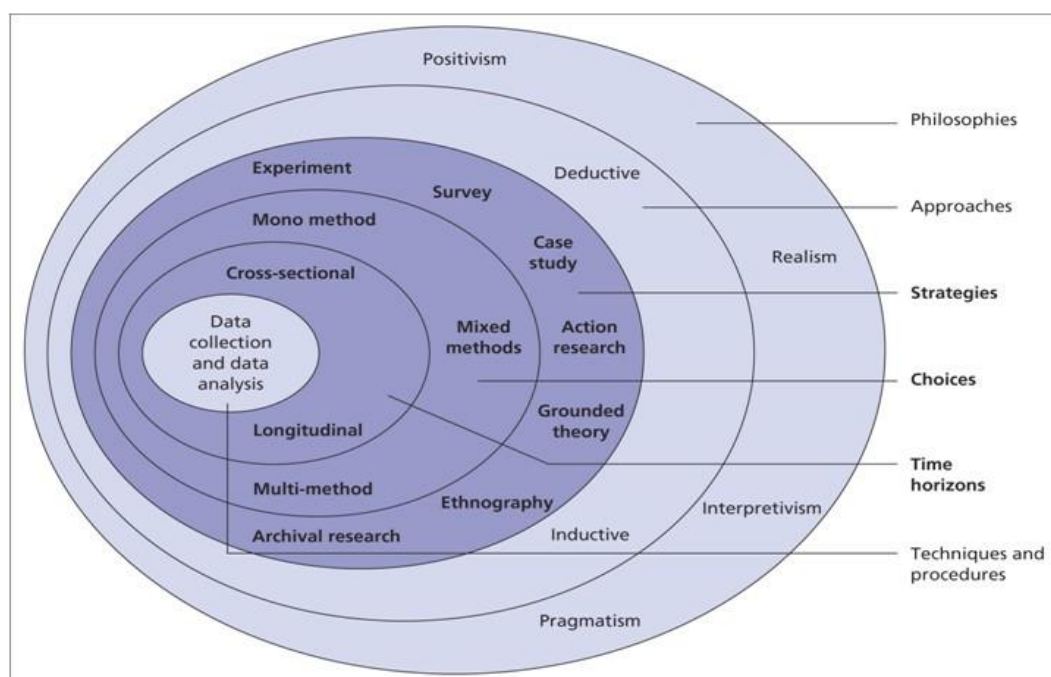
Figure 6: Diagram of the "Research Onion" (Saunders et al., 2019)

4.2 Research Philosophy

The first layer of the research onion outlined by Saunders et al. is the research philosophy (2019). Research philosophy is the basis for research, based on presumptions and beliefs about reality and the nature of knowledge (Moon, 2017). These philosophies outline many ways in which people define and view the world. The four primary themes of research philosophy that can be distinguished and covered in the writings of numerous authors are positivist research philosophy, interpretivist research philosophy, pragmatic research philosophy, and realistic research philosophy (Saunders, 2019).

Each researcher is likely to make assumptions at a certain point throughout the research process, either regarding the nature of realities encountered during the study or about human knowledge and how we may define reality and convey it to others (Phair, 2021). Ontology is the subject of the first category of assumptions, while epistemology is the subject of the second category. Ontology focuses on what constitutes reality and how one can understand existence whereas epistemology considers what constitutes valid knowledge and how can one obtain it. These presumptions affect how we understand the entire research and consequently have varying effects on the process. Ramsberg (2018) asserts that there are primarily two categories of research philosophies: positivism and interpretivism.

Positivism

This idea seeks to deliver data and statistics that are unaffected by assumptions made by people. It highlights an unbiased reality. According to the Business Research Methodology (2022), positive thinking strengthens data gained from facts obtained through observation and measurement, making it credible. Furthermore, positivism is typically linked to an objective and deductive approach (Nickerson, 2022).

Interpretivism

This approach departs from positivism, which maintains that there are no universal laws that apply to everyone and that every individual has unique circumstances and characteristics that shape how they perceive the world. According to Saunders et al., (2019) interpretivism focuses on narratives, stories, perceptions, and interpretations of experiences and facts. This approach is typically inductive.

The purpose of this study is to look into consumer preferences for eco-friendly and fast-fashion clothing. The study will be conducted objectively, with no account for the researcher's own ideas, and the data will be verifiable and quantifiable. Therefore, this study will adopt a positivist philosophical approach because it will depend on observable and quantifiable facts. The researcher's choice of positivist philosophy is supported by the assertion made by Saunders et al. (2019) that it is frequently linked to quantitative methods of analysis.

4.3 Research Approach and Method

The research methodology development process continues with the phase of theory construction to research approach (see figure 5). The two strategies, deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning, indicate how much of the research is concentrated on establishing a theory or testing assessing a hypothesis (Saunders, 2019). It is critical for the researcher to understand the various ways available and to be able to pick the one that would best suit the research project as it will influence future choices made in terms of data collecting, analysis, and evaluation (Phair, 2021).

The inductive approach is typically employed when there is no theory to test and no available or sufficient facts on a topic. Instead of starting with a hypothesis, inductive reasoning draws conclusions through learning from trials and patterns (Ahmed A. Moustafa, 2021). Therefore, this approach begins with observation and ends with a theory.

On the other hand, a deductive approach progresses from a wide level to a specific level. Researchers that use deductive reasoning start with a theory and then seek to evaluate its implications using evidence (Hyde, 2000). Hence, before evaluating the given hypothesis, the researcher gathers evidence from a range of sources.

The study's aim is to assess the impact of fashion industry marketing strategies on consumer purchase behaviour. The investigation will use a quantitative method, as was mentioned above. A theory will serve as the basis for the development, and the researcher will use research and hypothesis testing to seek to verify the theory. This study will therefore adopt a deductive methodology. The deductive method and positivist philosophy are generally linked

to the quantitative approach (Saunders, 2019). Therefore, this is consistent with the researcher's research philosophy and methodology and hence was selected as the most suitable methodology for administering this research.

4.4 Research Strategy and Design

The study question and objectives, the extension of overall knowledge, the researcher's philosophical perspective, and time and resource restrictions will all be taken into consideration while designing the research strategy (Saunders, 2019). The ideal choice for the research onion is determined by the nature of the investigation and the research objectives. There is also the pragmatic issue of viability, which involves determining the kind of data that are available and any limitations (Saunders, 2019).

The third layer of the research onion, as illustrated in figure 6, is strategies. To gather data, various tactics can be utilized; however, the researcher chose to use a survey to collect data for this study. Survey research is described as "the collecting of information from a sample of participants through their responses to questions" (Schutt C. &., 2012). Research such as this permits the employment of various techniques for recruiting participants, the collection of data, and instrumentation. The surveys for these research are usually designed in the form quantitative research (such as using numerically rated questions), qualitative research (open-ended questions that promote the participants to share their opinion on a certain matter), or both (i.e., mixed methods).

4.5 Research Choices

Saunders et al. (2019) state that the research choices provide a summary of the strategy used by the researcher to address the study's research question(s). This covers the technique of data collection, the features of the sample, and a description of how the data will be measured and analysed after they have been collected.

Due to the fact that only one data collecting method, a questionnaire, was utilised for this research, the methodological decision for this study is based on a mono method quantitative study. As this research required numerical findings and statistical tools to ascertain the

relationship between consumer behaviour in fast fashion and sustainable marketing, mono method was chosen as the best fit.

4.6 Time Horizons

The time horizon for the research project is the fifth layer of the research onion, according to Saunders et al. (2019). Phair (2021) has defined time horizon as the period of time within which the project is scheduled to be completed.

The cross-sectional horizon intends to gather and analyse value at a given period without allowing the researcher the ability to modify the variables. This method has a predetermined time frame for data collection. On the other hand, the horizon is longitudinal if the collection of data is gathered repeatedly over an extended period of time while being able to regulate the variables. This approach can be beneficial in research if, for example, the development of a system must be evaluated over time (Saunders, 2019).

Given that the data for this study was obtained at a single point in time, it is reasonable to claim that this research employs a cross-sectional time horizon. The data for this study was collected via individual surveys with 150 individuals over a two-week period, so it would be classified as cross-sectional (Saunders, 2019). The data collected from the online survey added vital information to the cross-sectional findings and hence assisted the entire research study.

4.7 Techniques and Procedures

In order to perform this study, primary data was collected from a sample size of 150 people using a google online questionnaire that included both closed-ended and open-ended questions as mentioned in section 4.4. This questionnaire's main goal is to gather demographic information about the respondents and analyse their fast fashion consumption habits and awareness of sustainability marketing to determine the relationship between these variables (Saunders, 2019). Secondary data, which was gathered through books, journal articles, and online sources, has also been employed as a source of data collecting.

4.8 Data Analysis

The purpose of this section is to concentrate on how the data will be analysed throughout the research process. The Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) version 28 was used to analyse the data that was gathered with the use of the Google online survey. To assess the questionnaire's internal reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used.

4.9 Ethical Issues

The study was carried out in accordance with the National College of Ireland's "Ethical Guidelines and Procedures for Research Involving Human Participants." All survey data was used strictly for the purposes of this study. The researcher demonstrated honesty and integrity at every stage of the research process, and all participants' privacy was respected. Furthermore, participation in the quantitative aspects of this study was fully voluntary, and individuals could withdraw the survey at any point of time.

4.10 Limitations

Any study's limits are related to potential issues that are ordinarily beyond the researcher's control and are closely related to the choice of research design, limitations on the statistical models used, restrictions on funding, or other factors (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018).

The researcher employed a qualitative method to collect data for this research. Even though the quantitative research approach enables straightforward analysis when gathering quantitative data, the type of results will determine which statistical tests are appropriate to apply. As a result, data analysis and presentation are simplified and less prone to inaccuracy and subjectivity (Schutt R. K., 1999). However, quantitative research can sometimes be misleading depending on the questions that are answered on the provided questionnaire. Since quantitative research is based on numbers, many people think it is more reliable or scientific than observational, qualitative research. However, there is a chance that both kinds of research may be defective and prejudiced. The researcher's biases and opinions are equally as likely to influence quantitative data collection methods (Schutt R. K., 1999).

Chapter 5: Research Analysis and Findings

The primary objectives of this chapter are to provide the research findings and to analyse all the data gathered during the administration of the online questionnaire. An extensive analysis of the survey-based research findings is provided in this chapter. In addition, the study will examine the idea that was previously put forth. SPSS version 26 was used to analyse the study's data.

Respondents in this study shared their personal opinions and perspectives with the researcher. As well as exploring the theory put forward in the previous chapter, this chapter will also look at each of the objectives set at the outset of this study: Which marketing strategies are most successful in getting consumers to choose green fashion over fast fashion?

5.1 Demographic Information

150 research participants from a range of age groups who had previously bought clothing based on a brand's marketing strategy were included in this study. More data about the study's participants is provided in the tables that follows.
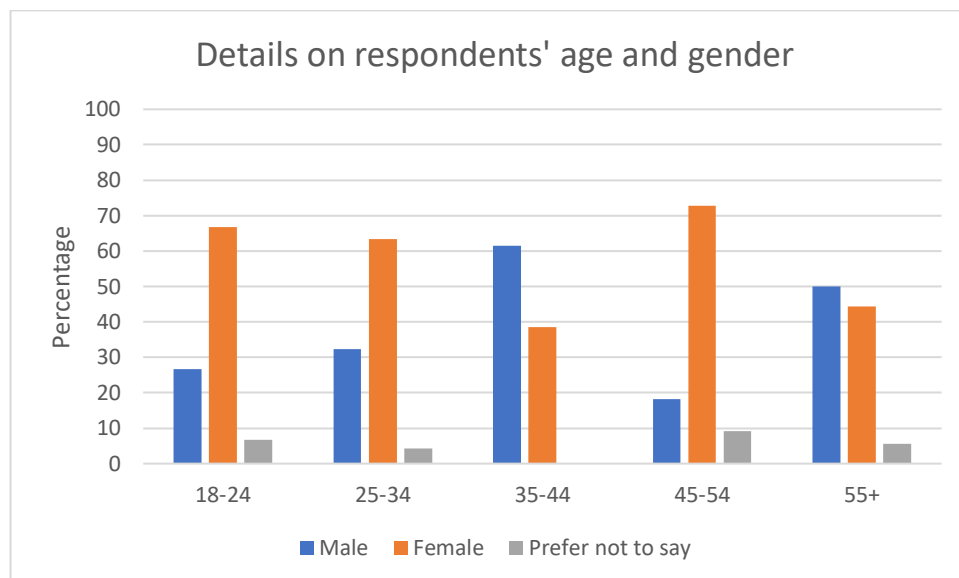
Figure 7: Demographic of the age and gender of the respondents in the survey

Out of the 150 responders, 89 were women, 54 were men, and 7 respondents have preferred not to reveal their gender. With 92 responses, the age group 25 to 34 had the highest

percentage of respondents. Of the remaining respondents, 15 were between the age of 18 to 24 years old, 13 were between the ages of 35 and 44, 11 were between the ages of 45 and 54, and 18 were over the age of 55. Figure 7 shows that the millennials age range of 24 to 34 represents the majority of the sample size. This can be seen as a limitation of the study since specific age groups are underrepresented and a more balanced representation of the population might have been of better value for the research.
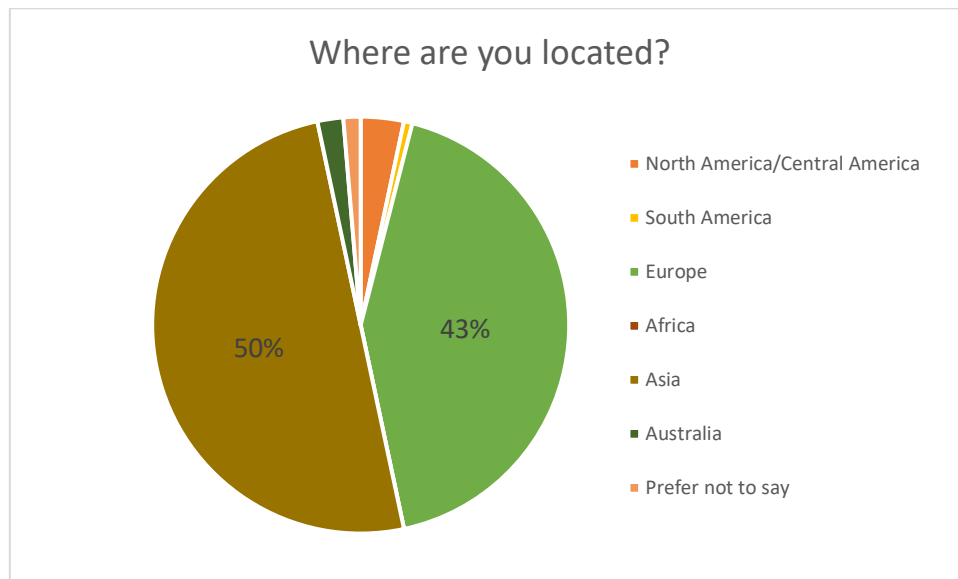
Figure 8: Demographic of the location of the respondents

As shown in the chart above, from the 150 respondents, the majority of them were from Asia and Europe, with 75 (50%) people from Asia, 64 (43%) people from Europe, 6 people from Central and South America, 3 from Australia and 2 people who preferred not to reveal their location. This demonstrates that the respondents were based internationally and represented both western and Asian economic and cultural backgrounds.
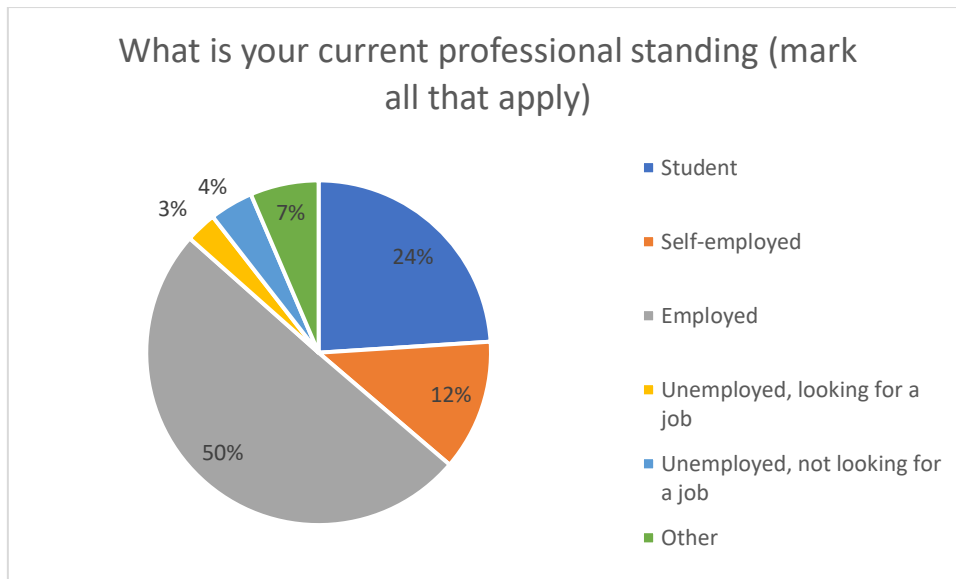
Figure 9: Depiction of the professional standing of the participants
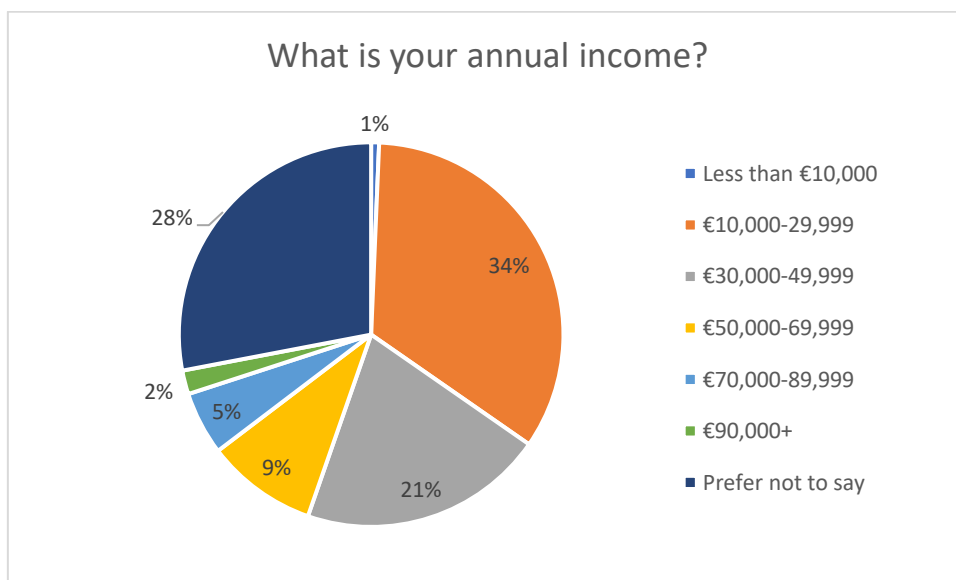
Figure 10: Breakdown of the respondents by their annual income

With 85 (50%) responses, participants under some form of employment were mostly prevalent in this survey, followed by student with 40 (24%) respondents. figure 9 shows that 20 (12%) of the respondents are self-employed, 5 (3%) are unemployed and looking for employment, 7 (4%) are unemployed but not searching for employment, and 9 (7%) are classified as "other."

Additionally, figure 10 displays the participants' statements on their yearly income. As can be seen in the above graph, 51 (34%) respondents reported having an annual income of between €10,000 and €29,999, 30 (21%) reported having an annual income of between

€30,000 and €49,999, 14 (9%) reported having an annual income between €50,000 and €69,999, and 7 (5%) reported having an annual income between €70,000 and €89,999, and 3 (2%) reported having an annual income of over €90,000.

According to the results, the majority of respondents make between €10,000 and €29,999 annually. This could be explained by the fact that the majority of respondents (93 or 62%) have jobs (see figure 9 above).

5.2 Internal Consistency

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.741	.673	10

Table 1: Cronbach's coefficient alpha results for the conducted survey

The Cronbach's coefficient alpha is a reliability indicator on a particular survey that acts to provide insights on the internal consistency of the data obtained based on the average of all possible values split into two equal sets of items (Howitt *et al.* (2020)). It can be used to calculate the internal consistency of the data obtained from the questions in a survey (Saunders *et al.,* 2019). For survey data with a Cronbach's coefficient alpha value of more than 0.7 the data can be interpreted to be internally reliable and consistent. For this piece of research, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha is more than 0.7, hence it can be concluded that the data obtained from this research is consistent and reliable for this research. It is worth to mention that the Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated based on questions (Q7, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19, See appendix 1) only without taking into account the demographic of the respondents to prevent bias and to understand the participant's perception on green clothing purchases. Hence, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated based on 10 questions and not the entire 27 questions from the survey.

5.3 Descriptive Statistics

In this section, the researcher will lay out descriptive finding in relation to the research objectives and hypothesis that were suggested above. The researcher will link the objectives and hypothesis to the findings to attempt to find valuable data for discussion in chapter 6.

5.3.1 Fashion Item Purchase Motivation & Buyer Habits

Research Objective 1: To identify the factors that consumers consider the most while purchasing their clothes

In this section, the researcher will explore the research objective to analyse the data from the survey. The hypothesis' which were discussed in chapter 3 will be examined in detail during this analysis.
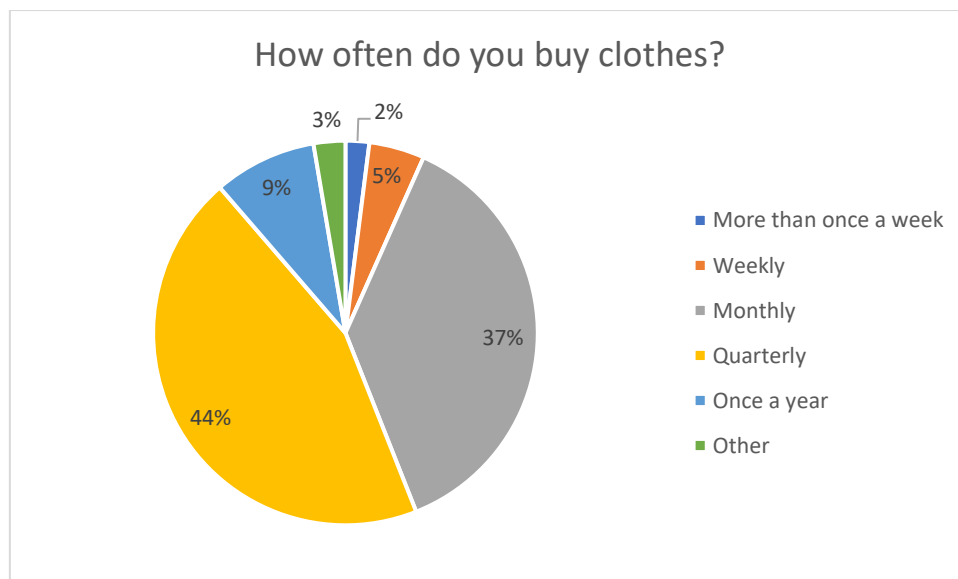
Figure 11: Graph depicting the cloths purchasing behaviour of participants

The questionnaire's opening questions aimed to discover the respondents' patterns of clothing purchase. As shown in the figure above, the majority of respondents stated that they purchase clothing on a monthly or quarterly basis. Furthermore, respondents stated that when purchasing clothing, they prioritise design, price, and quality, and the majority of respondents stated that they shop for clothing online or through social media, in addition to physical browsing alternatives.

Figure 12: Scale of respondents' purchase behaviour regularity

Moreover, when asked if the individuals buy clothes to keep up with the latest fashion trends, 58 (38%) participants responded strongly agree or agree, 54 (36%) participants gave a neutral response, 26 (18%) participants disagreed, and 12 (8%) participants strongly disagreed. This demonstrates that the majority of the group was in agreement that the respondents purchase clothing to keep up with the latest fashion trends.
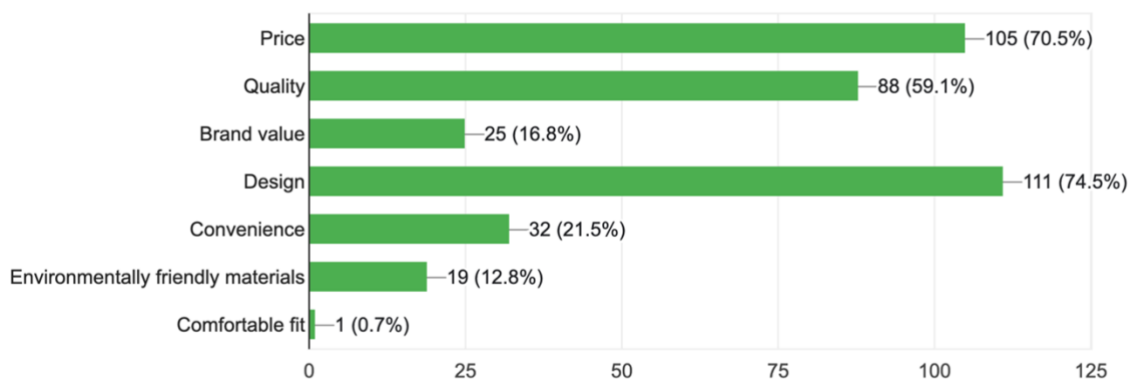
Figure 13: Drivers that affect respondents' clothing purchase decisions 1

As shown in the figure above, it can be seen that when consumers are purchasing clothing, design, price and quality are among the things they consider most. 111 respondents (74.5%) have responded that that would prioritize the design of the clothing, followed by 105

respondents (70.5%) for price, and 88 respondents (59.1%) for the quality of the clothes when purchasing them. Only 19 (12.5%) respondents responded that they would consider environmentally friendly materials at all.
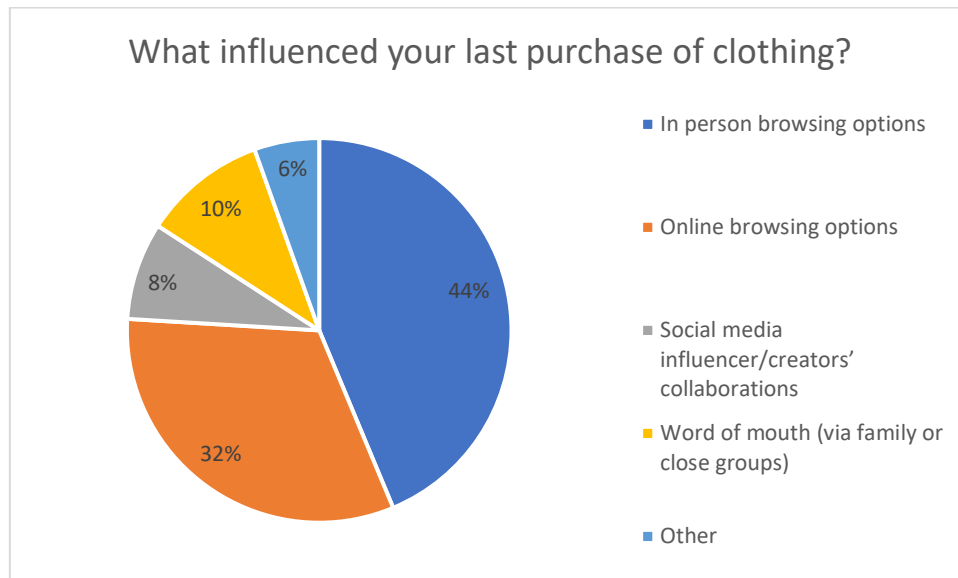
Figure 14: Drivers that affect respondents' clothing purchase decisions 2

The researcher asked the participants what influenced their last purchase of clothing the most to identify what are the main streams in the fashion market. Out of the 150 participants, 66 (44%) responded in person browsing options, 48 (32%) responded online browsing options, 15 (10%) answered word of mouth (via family or close groups), 12 (8%) as social media influencer/creators' collaborations, and 9 (6%) as others.
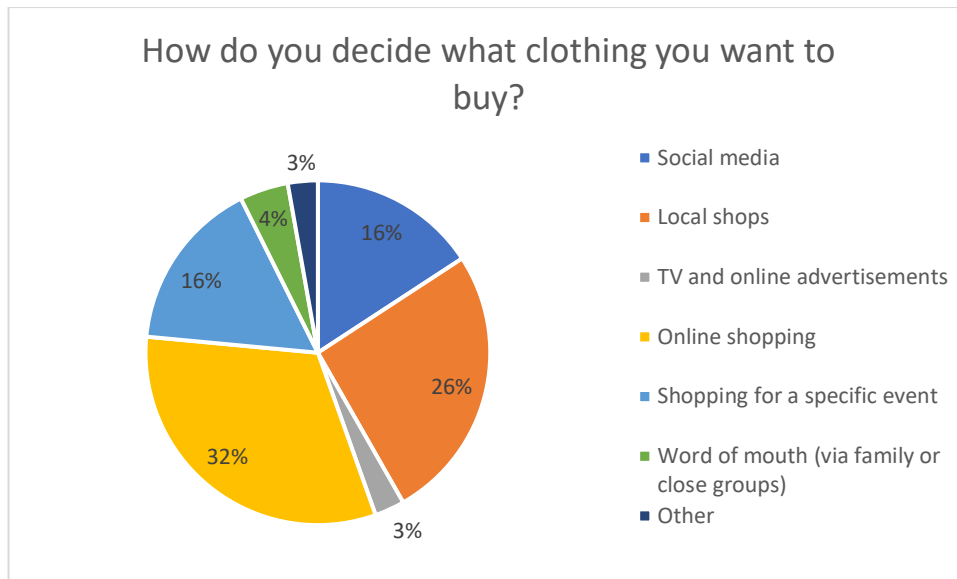
Figure 15: Drivers that affect respondents' clothing purchase decisions 3

When asked what are the multiple factors that affect their decision to buy clothing, 48 (32%) responded as online shopping, 39 (26%) as local shops, 39 (26%) as social media, 24 (16%) as shopping for a specific event, 6 (4%) as word of mouth (via family of close groups), 5 (3%) as TV and online advertisements and 5 (3%) chose others.

5.3.2 Marketing Strategies

Research Objective 2: To determine which marketing methods are most appealing to modern society

According to the graph, when asked what different kinds of advertisements they encounter most frequently in their everyday lives, 44% named social media (influencer/creators' collaborations). The next largest group were 30% respondents who opted for online pop-ups. 18% respondents responded to TV and online advertisements, 7% responded to offline advertisements, and 1% responded as other (personal emails from the retailer and email newsletter).

What kind of advertisements do you see most in your daily life?

- Online pop ups
- Social media (influencer/creators' collaborations)
- TV and online advertisement
- Offline advertisement
- Other
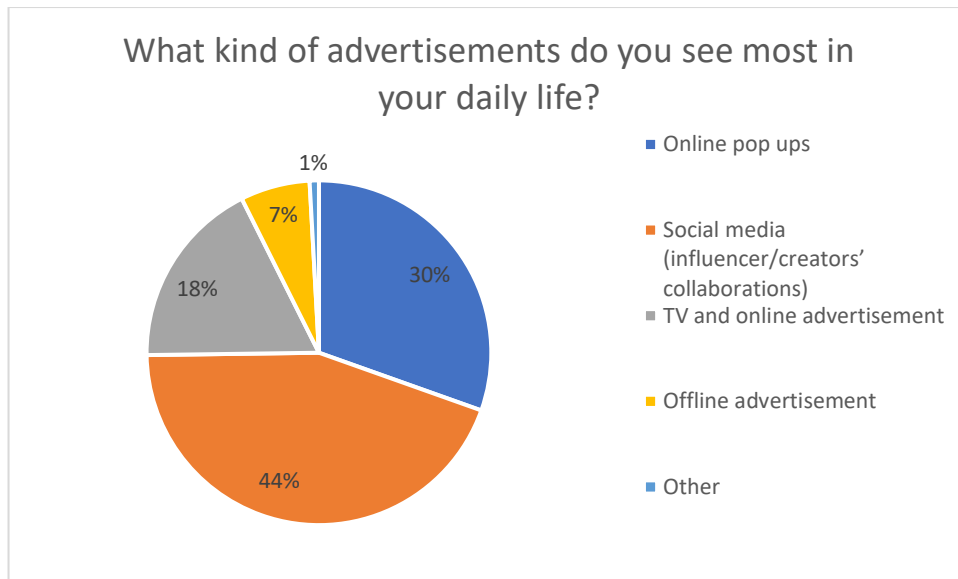
Figure 16: Detail on types of advertisements respondents' are exposed to most

As shown in the chart below, it can be seen that when asked which different types of advertisements catch their eye and attention in their daily life, the majority of respondents answered social media (influencer/creators' collaborations) with the total of 66 (44%) responses. On top of this, 45 (30%) answered as online pop ups, 27 (18%) as TV and online advertisement, 11 (7%) as offline advertisements, and 2 (1%) as others. The total of 92% respondents answered that online advertisements which includes online pop ups, social media and TV and online advertisements attract their attention the most.

Which advertisements catch your eye the most?

- Social media (influencer/creators' collaborations)
- Online pop ups
- Offline advertisement
- TV and online advertisement
- Other
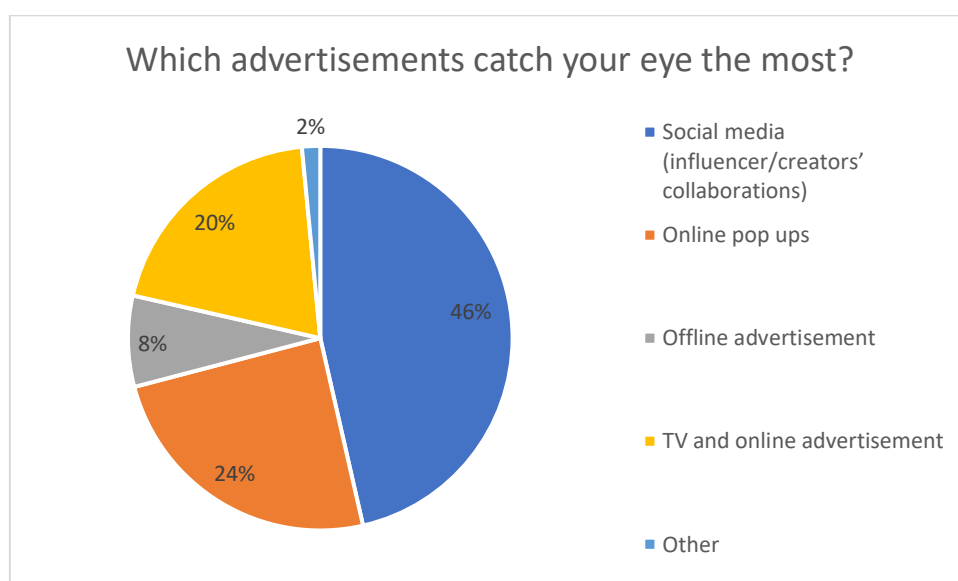
Figure 17: Detail on which advertisements draws attention to the respondents

The researcher asked the respondents their options on targeted online advertisements in order to analyse the effectiveness of targeted online advertisements. From the question 'Do you think that targeted online ads influence your shopping decisions?' 5% of the respondents answered strongly agree, 13% said agree, 47% said neutral, 22% said disagree and 13% replied strongly disagree. This is quite a polarising result where equal amount of people feel that these targeted ads either influenced their shopping decisions or strongly disagreed that it did. The majority of the respondents were neutral, hence it seems that for this sample size, targeted ads have minimal influence in their purchases.

Figure 18: Detail on effectiveness of targeted online advertisements

5.3.3 Sustainable Fashion

Research Objective 3: To investigate customer perceptions of eco-friendly fashion

The researcher asked the respondents which types of sustainable clothing they have intentionally purchased before to analyse the popularity of green fashion in the fashion industry. Eco Friendly, at its essence, refers to anything that does not negatively impact the environment. The United Nations defines sustainable living as "filling the requirements of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs" (Ramirex, n.d.) Given the option to choose multiple answers, 33 (22.3%) respondents answered that they have purchased eco-friendly clothing, 50 (33.8%) sustainable, 28 (18.9%)

recycled, 51 (34.5%) second-hand, 37 (25%) not available, and 9 (6.1%) prefer not to say as seen in the figure below.
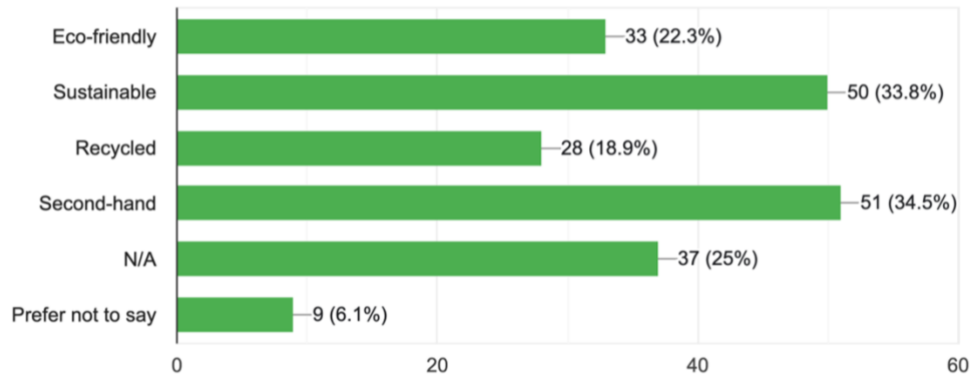
Figure 19: Breakdown on participants past purchase history

Sustainable Fashion Purchase Experience

Sustainable Fashion Experience	Percentage					
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Are you interested in eco-friendly clothing?	12.8%	38.9%	36.9	8.2%	2.7%	0.7%
Do you consider eco-friendly materials when purchasing clothing?	4%	21.5%	43%	25.5%	6%	-
Have you intentionally purchased eco-friendly clothing in the last 6 months (clothing made with eco-friendly materials)?	9.4%	22.8%	21.5%	26.2%	20.1%	-

Table 2: Detail on respondents' sustainable fashion habits

Table 2 above shows the responses of respondents in regard to the previous experiences they had with sustainable fashion. The results show that 51.7% of the respondents strongly agree or agree that they are interested in eco-friendly clothing, 25.5% strongly agree or agree that they consider eco-friendly fibres when making clothing purchases, 32.2% strongly agree or agree that they have intentionally purchased eco-friendly clothing in the last 6 months.

Satisfaction levels of Sustainable Fashion Consumption

Purpose of Satisfaction	Percentage					
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Were you happy with the eco-friendly clothing you purchased?	9.4%	31.5%	18.1%	2.7%	2%	36.2%
Were you satisfied with the purchase of eco-friendly clothing because of the price?	4.7%	20.9%	29.7%	4.1%	2.7%	37.8%
Were you satisfied with the purchase of eco-friendly clothing because of the quality?	8.2%	25.3%	21.9%	5.5%	0.7%	38.4%
Were you satisfied with the purchase of eco-friendly clothing because of the quality of the product?	9.5%	27.7%	21.6%	3.4%	0.7%	37.2%
Were you satisfied with the purchase of eco-friendly clothing because you felt pleased that you made the best decision for the environment?	14.4%	21.2%	21.9%	4.1%	1.4%	37%

Table 3: Satisfaction levels regarding sustainable fashion consumption

Table 3 above shows the responses of participants regarding their satisfaction levels per category with their green fashion consumption. The results show that 40.9% of the respondents answered that they strongly agree or agree that they were happy with their eco-friendly clothing purchase they had made. 25.6% stated that they strongly agree or agree that they were satisfied because of the price of the product. 33.5% answered that they strongly

agree or agree that there were satisfied because of the quality of the product. 37.2% answered that they strongly agree or agree that there were satisfied because of the design of the product. Finally, 35.6% answered that they strongly agree or agree that there were satisfied because they felt pleased that they made the good decision for the environment.

The researcher asked the participants what would persuade them to choose eco-friendly clothing over conventional clothing to seek for the answer to:

Research Objective 4: To determine which marketing techniques can be proposed to enhance Green Fashion consumption.
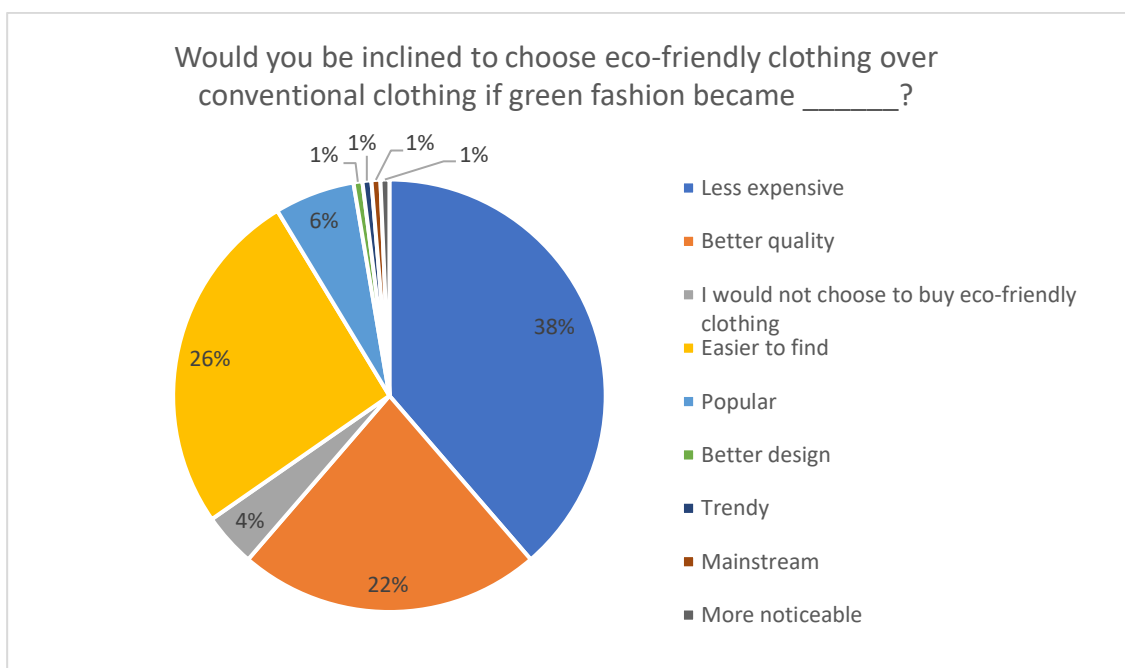
Figure 20: Detail on potential purchase drivers in sustainable fashion

As shown on figure above, 38% responded that they would be inclined to choose eco-friendly clothing over conventional clothing if sustainable fashion became less expensive. 26% responded that they would choose eco-friendly clothing if it became easier to find. 22% replied that they would choose eco-friendly clothing if it became better quality. 9% answered that they would choose eco-friendly clothing if it became more popular, trendy, mainstream and more noticeable.

The following question to the previous question was an open-ended question therefore the researcher was able to collect unique opinions on what other factors influence the

participants clothing purchase. The data consisted of answers such as sizing and fitting, budget, mood, sales and special promotions, comfort, functionality, rarity, exclusivity, experience with the brand and the overall customer service, personality, and customer reviews.

Chapter 6: Research Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this research is to examine how the development of marketing methods affects consumer behaviours toward sustainable fashion. Two variables—fast fashion and sustainable marketing—were used to achieve this. In order to assess the feasibility of the replies, 27 questions have been answered via a Google online questionnaire and ten Likert scale questions were evaluated using the SPSS reliability analysis tool.

The key findings of this study will be discussed and described in this chapter so that it can be determined whether they are consistent with the research that has been conducted. The results and limitations of the research will also be discussed in this chapter.

6.2 Discussion of Findings

- **Sustainable Fashion Marketing & Consumer behaviour**

The research findings show that both the online and offline market have a competitive standing in the fashion market. Showing the results, 53% of the participants stated that they purchased their last item of clothing in the offline in-person browsing market whereas 50.3% (including 10.7% responding social media) responded that their last purchased fashion item was from the online market. Additionally, when asked about how the participants decide where to buy their apparels, 93.1% (including 30.8% responding social media and 5.5% responding TV and online advertisement) of the participants responded that they use online platforms such as influencer/creators' social media collaborations online pop-up platforms to purchase clothing. These results suggest that although the online market is comparably bigger to the offline market, both markets show a competitive status in the market therefore, the researcher analysed both markets below.

Online Market

Shopping is made more convenient for customers thanks to smartphones and mobile apps that allow quick searches for goods and services across numerous retailers and businesses. Companies can target customers on the fly with enticing offers, promotions, and bargains with these technologies. Studies show that these conveniences have increased customers' online buying behaviour (Malhotra, 2021).

From a critical standpoint, it is clear that the majority of respondents indicated that they purchased clothing online. This is related to how convenient online shopping has become, as well as external influences such as the Covid 19 pandemic. According to the most current 2020 ARTS release, e-commerce sales rose by $244.2 billion or 43% in 2020, the first year of the pandemic, jumping from $571.2 billion in 2019 to $815.4 billion in 2020 (Brewster, 2022). On top of this, as shown in the findings in the previous chapter, the majority of respondents said they are most exposed to social media and online pop up commercials, and these are also the types of advertisements that catch their attention the most.

Offline Market

Given the responses to the questions 'What influenced your last purchase of clothing?' and 'How do you decide what clothing you want to buy?', it is inevitable to overlook the offline market in the fashion industry. From the question 'What influenced your last purchase of clothing?' In-person browsing was selected by 79 respondents (or 53%) and online browsing options and social media market by 75 respondents (or 50.3%). As shown with the statistics, the offline market showed a large portion of the respondents' previous purchase experiences. This outcome demonstrates how dominant the offline market is even in the contemporary digital era.

- **Environmental Awareness**

According to this study's findings, the majority of respondents indicated that they were interested in eco-friendly fashion and had previously purchased sustainable clothing. However, there is only a tenuous correlation between customer perception toward sustainable fashion and consumers' understanding of the environmental and social impacts of the fast fashion business, indicating that neither factor necessarily affects the other. According to the data above, there was a discrepancy between the percentage of participants who indicated an interest in eco-friendly fashion and the number of responses indicating that eco-friendly fashion purchases had been made.

6.3 Limitations

The researcher has identified and discussed a number of limitations that the study contains. The results of this survey have revealed some captivating figures on consumers' attitudes

toward sustainable fashion and the marketing practices used by enterprises to influence consumer behaviour. Nonetheless, some limitations were identified in this study.

The researcher's capability to observe participants' purchasing patterns both before and after receiving information about the research issue was severely constrained. Additionally, the sample size prevented a more thorough analysis and comprehension of consumer attitudes in various environments, particularly in terms of location diversity. In fact, the majority of respondents were based in either Europe or Asia, which does not account for a significant portion of the global total.

Moreover, the questionnaire's online administration may have prevented some in-depth observations from being included in the study. The research has limitations in acquiring substantial data because the majority of the questions were closed-ended or short open-ended. Additionally, despite the common belief that observational, qualitative research is more reliable than quantitative research, both types of study have the potential to be deceptive and subjective (McLeod, 2019). As a result, this research included vulnerabilities that made it prone to being misleading at times. Additionally, because sustainable marketing is a relatively new field, it has been difficult for the researcher to analyse pertinent theories and concepts.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

This study provides a deeper understanding of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion and marketing strategies to support it. The researcher offered some insights into the connections between the three terms, fast fashion, sustainable fashion, and green marketing, throughout the course of the study. The goal of this study was to explore how sustainability marketing strategies to promote sustainable fashion influences consumer perspectives toward sustainable fashion.

The researcher used a quantitative methodology using an online Google survey to gather data. 150 participants from different genders, age groups, educational levels, and nationalities, participated in the sample. Each participant had a unique relationship to sustainable fashion consumption, and the data gathered allowed the researcher to examine the hypothesis addressed in the research.

This study has shown that even while consumers are becoming more conscious of the negative effects that fast fashion can have on the environment and society, it is still not presently possible for everyone to stop using consuming these products. It is far more challenging for customers to change their purchase habits because the fast fashion business model has become so deeply ingrained in today's society over a significant period of time.

Therefore, it would be important to recognise and elaborate this topic so that it is more widely understood in order for sustainable marketing to have a true influence on reducing the worldwide consumption of fast fashion products. As described in the research, it has been predicted that as the market for sustainable apparel expands, prices for goods in the market would eventually alter. Therefore, in the current environment, firms promoting sustainability marketing awareness would be the leading example to encourage people to purchase sustainable fashion items.

7.2 Recommendations

Quality is essential in sustainable fashion. Contrary to quick fashion, clothing needs to be made to last season after season, wear after wear, and wash after wash. However, some customers may be turned off by the fact that sustainable clothing is frequently more expensive and, consequently, end up purchasing fast fashion rivals (Davis, 2019). Shifting people's thinking is necessary for the majority of societal changes. Customers are bombarded with daily reports about how climate change is endangering the planet and its inhabitants. When individuals start purchasing environmentally friendly apparel when they can, it will eventually result in cheaper prices, just like what has occurred with organic food. As more certified products reach the shelves of conventional retailers, average prices for organic food are decreasing. Organic food premiums were around 7.5% higher in 2018 than they were in 2014, when they were about 9% higher (Siegner, 2019).

As it gains popularity, there will be a greater demand, which will make the clothing more accessible. This may be a possibility when demand for ethical clothing rises, just as it has with the shifting trends in organic food. Systems are created to serve a certain audience. Once the audience is persuaded, they can gently alter their course, and other businesses can do the same. It is possible to observe the same phenomenon with sustainable clothing as it did with organic food when it happened spontaneously. It appears that the people actually hold the power in the direction of the current trends.

A shift in consumer preferences has an impact on the entire fashion business. This shows the importance that in order customers to be convinced to shift to green fashion, the apparel industries need to focus their marketing strategies to affect buyer behaviour. Therefore, additional research can also be done by future researchers who wish to study sustainability marketing in further level by placing a special focus on educating consumers of sustainability marketing and exploring the benefits of shifting towards sustainable wearables.

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Questionnaire

Identifying the key influences of consumers' clothing purchase behaviour

This survey is being conducted to collect data on the research topic: Customer behaviour towards clothing purchase decisions. The goal of the study is to identify the marketing tactics that influence customer behaviour to promote green fashion.

The study's data will be handled with confidentiality at all times. All participant data will be gathered, analysed, and presented in a report to the School of Business. At no point during the data analysis or in the final report will any participant's data be identified by name. The decision to take part in this study is entirely voluntary.

Approximately 5 to10 minutes should be needed to answer all the questions. Please choose the option that best answers the question and fill in the blanks with your response(s).

How often do you buy clothes?

○ More that once a week

○ Weekly

○ Monthly

○ Quarterly

○ Once a year

○ Other: _____

When buying clothing, what are the things that you consider most?

- [ ] Price
- [ ] Quality
- [ ] Brand value
- [ ] Design
- [ ] Convenience
- [ ] Environmentally friendly materials
- [ ] Other: _____

How do you decide what clothing you want to buy?

- [ ] Local shops
- [ ] Social media
- [ ] TV and online advertisements
- [ ] Word of mouth (via family or close groups)
- [ ] Online shopping
- [ ] Shopping for a specific event
- [ ] Other: _____

What influenced your last purchase of clothing?

- [ ] In person browsing options
- [ ] Online browsing options
- [ ] Social media influencer/creators' collaborations
- [ ] Word of mouth (via family or close groups)
- [ ] Other: _____

What kind of advertisements do you see most in your daily life?

☐ Social media (influencer/creators' collaborations)

☐ Online pop ups

☐ TV and online advertisement

☐ Offline advertisement

☐ Other: _____

Which advertisements catch your eye the most?

☐ Social media (influencer/creators' collaborations)

☐ Online pop ups

☐ TV and online advertisement

☐ Offline advertisement

☐ Other: _____

Do you think that targeted online ads influence your shopping decisions? (i.e., advertisements that appear in your feed as sponsored posts or stories and are particularly personalised to you based on your data)

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly disagree

Do you think that viewing clothes you want to buy due to targeted marketing has been successful? (This includes items that appear in your browse feed)

○ Yes, I would buy the clothing shown in the advertisements

○ No, the advertisements I've seen did not convince me to purchase the products that were sold

○ Sometimes they persuade me to purchase the goods, other times they don't

○ I have not really noticed

Among the following types of clothes, which have you intentionally purchased before?

☐ Eco-friendly

☐ Sustainable

☐ Recycled

☐ Second-hand

☐ N/A

☐ Prefer not to say

Which of the following brands have you purchased clothing from for yourself?

- ☐ Zara
- ☐ H&M
- ☐ Patagonia
- ☐ Shein
- ☐ Veja
- ☐ N/A
- ☐ Other: _____

Do you shop clothing to be up to date in the current fashion trends?

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Are you interested in eco-friendly clothing?

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly disagree

Do you consider eco-friendly materials when purchasing clothing?

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

Have you intentionally purchased eco-friendly clothing in the last 6 months (clothing made with environmentally friendly materials)?

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

Were you happy with the eco-friendly clothing you purchased?

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly disagree

○ N/A

Were you satisfied with the purchase of eco-friendly clothing because of its price?

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly disagree

○ N/A

Were you satisfied with the purchase of eco-friendly clothing because of its quality?

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly disagree

○ N/A

Were you satisfied with the purchase of eco-friendly clothing because of its design?

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly disagree

○ N/A

Were you satisfied with the purchase of eco-friendly clothing because you felt pleased that you made the best decision for the environment?

○ Strongly agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

○ N/A

Would you be inclined to choose eco-friendly clothing over conventional clothing if green fashion became _____? (Choose one response)

○ Popular

○ Less expensive

○ Better quality

○ Easier to find

○ I would not choose to buy eco-friendly clothing

○ Other: _____

What other factors influence your clothing purchase choices?

Your answer

What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Prefer not to say

○ Other: _____

What is your age?

○ 18-24

○ 25-34

○ 35-44

○ 45-54

○ 55+

What is your current professional standing (mark all that apply)

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Employed
- ☐ Unemployed, looking for a job
- ☐ Unemployed, not looking for a job
- ☐ Other: _____

What is your annual income?

- ○ Less than €10,000
- ○ €10,000-29,999
- ○ €30,000-49,999
- ○ €50,000-69,999
- ○ €70,000-89,999
- ○ €90,000+
- ○ Prefer not to say

Where are you located?

○ North America/Central America

○ South America

○ Europe

○ Africa

○ Asia

○ Australia

○ Prefer not to say

○ Other: _____

What is the highest level of education you have received (or you are pursuing now)

○ High school diploma or equivalent

○ Bachelor's degree

○ Master's degree

○ PhD

○ Prefer not to say

○ Other: _____

Submit   Clear form