

https://dspace.org/

Consumer awareness in Sustainable Clothing: A study of Fast Fashion in South Africa

Makwasa, Skhumbuzo Lucky

2024

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/44427

Makwasa, Skhumbuzo Lucky. (2024). Consumer awareness in Sustainable Clothing: A study of Fast Fashion in South Africa [Master's dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg].WireDSpace.

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Consumer awareness in Sustainable Clothing: A study of Fast Fashion in South Africa

Applied Research Project

submitted by

Skhumbuzo Makwasa

Student number: 0600420Y

Tel: 071 351 9415

Email: 0600420y@students.wits.ac.za

Research report presented in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Business Administration to the Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management, University of the Witwatersrand

Wits Business School

February 2024

DECLARATION

I, Skhumbuzo Makwasa, declare that this research report entitled, *'Consumer awareness in Sustainable Clothing: a study of Fast Fashion in South Africa'* is my work. All ideas and knowledge that I sourced somewhere else have been referenced. I am hereby submitting it in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. This report has never been submitted to any other university before.



Skhumbuzo Makwasa

Signed at Bryanston on February 2024

Name of candidate	**Skhumbuzo Makwasa**
Student number	**0600420Y**
Telephone numbers	**071 351 9415**
Email address	**Skhumbuzo.makwasa@gmail.com**
The first year of registration	**2020**
Date of report submission	**29 February 2024**
Name of supervisor	**Prof Thomas Anning Dorson**
Word count	**14689 words**

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine consumers' awareness and attitudes of sustainable fashion in the South African context. The attributes studied are perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, awareness of sustainable fashion, need for sustainable fashion and perceived value of sustainable fashion, and how they affect consumer attitudes towards sustainable fashion adoption intention.

The theoretical framework of diffusion of innovation, the theory of planned behaviour and the triple-trickle formed the foundation of this study. Empirical literature on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables was conducted and yielded five hypotheses.

This quantitative research adapted questions from previous literature contributions and utilised a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. Two hundred and seven (207) responses were obtained by the researcher online with the use of a harvested email database of employees of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) South Africa by means of random sampling. Online social networks such as LinkedIn were used to distribute the questionnaire.

The study confirmed four out of the five hypotheses. The study provided insights on determinants of positive attitudes and subsequent adoption intention of purchasing sustainable fashion garments. In addition, this study helped to confirm the working age group's awareness of sustainable fashion. Lastly, theoretically, the study contributes to the field of consumer behaviour by proposing an integrative model for understanding drivers and motivations for sustainable clothing product preference.

Key words: *sustainable fashion, fast fashion, adoption intention; consumer attitude, perceived value*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ..... **ii**
ABSTRACT ..... **iii**
LIST OF TABLES ..... **vii**
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION **1**
1.1 Context of and background to the study 1
1.2 The research problem statement 3
1.3 Research objectives 4
1.4 Research questions 4
1.5 Significance of the study 4
1.6 Delimitations and assumptions of the research study 5
1.7 Definition of terms 5
1.8 Assumptions 7
1.9 Chapter disposition of the research report 7
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW **8**
2.1 Introduction 8
2.2 Theoretical review 8
2.3 The need for sustainable fashion 14
2.4 Determinants of attitudes towards sustainable fashion 17
2.6 Synthesisation of literature findings 23
2.6 Conceptual research model 25
2.7 Conclusion 26
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY **28**
3.2 Research approach 29
3.3 Research design 29
3.4 Data collection methods 30
3.5 Population and sample 31
3.6 The research instrument 31
3.7 Procedure for data collection 35
3.8 Data analysis strategy and interpretation 35
3.9 Quality assurance 36
3.10 Ethical considerations when collecting research data 37
3.11 Conclusion 37

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS 38
4.1 Introduction 38
4.2 Socio-demographic profile of respondents 38
4.3 Cronbach alpha 44
4.4 Composite reliability 44
4.5 Average Variance Extracted (AVE) 46
4.6 Testing for Validity 47
4.7 Discriminant validity 48
4.8 CFA Model Fit Indices 49
4.9 Structural model 49
4.10 Discussion of hypothesis results 51
4.11 Conclusion 53
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS 54
5.1 Introduction 54
5.2 Perceived environmental sustainability knowledge positively influences the attitudes toward the adoption intention of sustainable fashion 54
5.3 The need for sustainable fashion influences the attitude towards sustainable fashion in the adoption intention of sustainable fashion 55
5.4 Awareness of sustainable fashion positively influences the attitudes towards sustainable fashion in the adoption intention of sustainable fashion 55
5.5 Perceived value of sustainable fashion positively influences the attitudes toward the adoption intention of sustainable fashion 56
5.6Attitude towards sustainable fashion positively influences the adoption intention of sustainable fashion 57
5.7 Conclusion 58
CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS 59
6.1 Introduction 59
6.2 Summary of the study 59
6.3 Limitations 61
6.4 Recommendations 61
6.5 Conclusion 63

REFERENCES **65**
APPENDICES **74**
APPENDIX 1: INVITATION LETTER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY 74
APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM 75
APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE 76

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Research Approaches and their characteristics.....29
Table 3.2: Quantitative research advantages and disadvantages 30
Table 4.1: Socio-demographic profile of Respondents.....39
Table 4.2: Measurement of Constructs' Mean, Reliability and Validity.....43
Table 4.3: Composite Reliability.....45
Table 4.4: Average Variance Extracted (AVE).....47
Table 4.5: Factor Loadings 48
Table 4.6: Inter-Correlation Matrix 49

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Rogers' Five Stage Model of the Adoption Process 9
Figure 2.2: Triple-trickle theory 11
Figure 2.3: Forms of Sustainable Fashion 14
Figure 2.4: Perceived green values for sustainable apparel 21
Figure 2.5: Conceptual Model 25
Figure 3.1: Research Onion for the Study 28
Figure 4.1: Monthly Income of Respondents 40
Figure 4.2: Financial Status of Respondents 41
Figure 4.3: Clothing Expenditure of Respondents 41

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of and background to the study

Traditionally, clothing has been utilised primarily for protection against the elements (Chen, 2021). Clothing has transcended from its utilitarian value to a crucial marker of self-expression and association. According to Dissanayake (2021), fashion is a way that individuals express themselves through widely worn, society-influenced apparel. Fashion unifies like-minded individuals who dress alike to create a sense of belonging, whether to faith, or social groups like business professionals, bikers or hipsters (Lascity, 2021). In some instances, fashion can be a status marker whereby individuals purchase and wear expensive garments to indicate their wealth and, to an extent, their exclusivity (Chen, 2021). As a result, the personal and social influence that fashion has on the individual has a psychological impact as it forms the basis of self-expression and identification and sets the premise of how individuals feel about themselves and those around them (Mishra, 2021). The emotive influence of fashion through advertising has led to a high-consumption society whereby clothing trends have shifted from seasonality to a fast-fashion movement where new trends can last as little as two months or a year (Dissanayake, 2021). This phenomenon is compounded by the rise in consumer awareness regarding fashion trends and brand messages, which drives individuals to stay informed and engaged with the latest fashion developments. Consequently, consumers ascribe to stay abreast of fashion trends to maintain their sense of belonging and social acceptance (Lascity, 2021).

The increase in demand has led to fast fashion. Fast fashion is defined as the rapid production of cost-effective, trend-worthy garments at an affordable price point to consumers (Bick, Halsey and Ekenga, 2018). According to Bick et al., (2018), 80 billion garments were acquired annually on a global scale, equating to $1.2 trillion for the global fashion industry. In addition, the global fashion industry generated an estimated 1.2 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2015, accounting for 10% of global carbon emissions (Brewer, 2019). One should question what cost the demand for fast fashion has on the environment and its constituents. Moreover, the level of consumer awareness of production is essential to influence the management of the product cycle. The fashion industry relies heavily on the cost-effective manufacturing of trend-focused seasonal clothing in a highly competitive and saturated market where manufacturers produce goods with limited, scarce resources to meet the ongoing market demands (Bick et al., 2018).

The rising usage of natural resources that are required to meet fast fashion demands at competitive rates has raised global concerns regarding social impact, industry economic development and environmental conservation (Bick et al., 2018). The issue concerned with apparel or textile sourcing is the impact that fashion retailers have on long-term economic development and human rights in the countries from which they trade (Bick et al., 2018).

In contrast, sustainable clothing is defined in this study as clothing that is created with a minimal environmental impact and considers the social impact of the garment's life cycle, including the usage of ecological production procedures, organic materials, and recycling (Boykoff, 2021). The clothing manufacturing industry contributes significantly to the rise of environmental issues due to overproduction and the overuse of raw materials that result in water and agricultural pollution, as well as an increased carbon footprint due to the use of fossil fuel-intensive global transportation methods for finished goods (Boykoff, 2021). The Foschini Group (TFG), Woolworths, and Edgars are regarded as premium retailers in the South African retail industry, whereas Legit, Mr Price, Ackerman's and Pepkor are part of the value chain. Due to high operational costs, retailers have opted to trade with manufacturers in countries like China, for instance, rather than in South Africa, where the apparel manufacturing industry is relatively small. Edcon and Pepkor, among others, established facilities in Shanghai closer to their manufacturers (Lambrechts, 2009). As a result of high imports by retailers, the South African government had an intervention on high-end imports through the implementation of stricter quotas and tariffs.

Moreover, President Cyril Ramaphosa, in the 2023 State of Nation Address, stated that the South African administration's Textile, Footwear, and Apparel cluster Master Plan aims to increase the percentage of locally produced apparel in stores from 44% to 65% by 2030. As the garment manufacturing business in South Africa accounts for around one-third of GDP, it is a crucial sector to invest in. If successful, this initiative could generate an additional 120,000 jobs, bringing the total number of employment prospects across the complete fashion supply chain to 330,000 (President Cyril Ramaphosa, 2023).

Major global clothing companies trade with manufacturers in third-world countries where social and agricultural impacts are not rigorously regulated (Boykoff, 2021). Workers are

exploited to produce a high volume of garments in poor working conditions and are compensated well below the minimum wage, resulting in a detrimental social impact (Mishra, 2021). One must question the consumer's knowledge of fast fashion and its ecological impact on the environment. Consumer behaviour is dynamic because it has an impact on clothing supply and demand based on consumer purchasing habits. The major duty of the consumer is to generate a conscious demand for clothing. This study explores the need for sustainable clothing in South Africa by examining consumer awareness of sustainable clothing.

1.2 The research problem statement

The fashion and textile industries have been highlighted as major contributors in polluting industries around the world due to the high rate of consumption by consumers and the low cost of garments referred to as fast fashion (Boykoff, 2021). The fashion industry relies heavily on the cost-effective manufacturing of trend-focused seasonal clothing in a highly competitive and saturated market (Boykoff, 2021). Consumers' purchase cycles, utilization, and discarding of fashionable clothing further negatively impact the environment due to the high demand. To meet market needs, manufacturers must produce goods using limited, and scarce resources (Boykoff, 2021). According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, 12.8 million tons of garments are disposed of in landfills annually in the US (Munir, 2020). As a result, the fashion business has been recognised as the second most polluting industry globally (Mohammed and Razé, 2023). Only approximately 13% of textiles are recycled in South Africa, with less than 1% being recycled into garments (Engineering News, 2022). In 2020, the entire global fashion industry was projected to contribute at least 4% of greenhouse gas emissions globally, which is equal to the combined yearly emissions of the United Kingdom, Germany and France. The anticipated rise in production, driven by the increasing global population and increased incomes in developing countries, is projected to quadruple the adverse environmental effects by 2030 (Whitfield and Mkhabela, 2023). There is a need toward sustainable fashion having considered the negative impact of the fast fashion industry. Sustainable fashion seeks to respect nature and all its constituents.

Sustainable fashion is concerned with the ecological means of how clothing manufacturers produce clothing and how clothing is utilised and discarded by consumers. While the value of sustainable fashion and slow fashion movement is increasing, consumer awareness still at a low level (Henninger, Alevizouand Oates, 2016). Ignorance and the lack of awareness

regarding sustainable fashion has been attributed to the negative attitude of consumers towards sustainable fashion (Goworek, Hiller, Fisher, Cooper and Woodward, 2013). This further increases the attitude-behaviour gap of consumers who might be interested in buying sustainable fashion but do not follow through with actual action or behaviour (McNeill and Moore 2015. This study aims to investigate South African consumers' knowledge, awareness, and attitudes toward sustainable fashion and how likely they are to adopt it. Therefore, the goal of the study is to learn more about customer understanding, perceptions, and responses to sustainable fashion. The effect of fast fashion on the environment means that global greenhouse gas emissions will continue to rise, so consumers need to change their attitudes and buying habits and shift towards sustainable fashion. The research objective is split into five constructs to gain insights into consumer awareness.

1.3 Research objectives

The research objectives of the study were as follows:

- To determine the factors that affect consumer awareness of sustainable clothing,
- To investigate the effect of attitudes towards sustainable fashion on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

1.4 Research questions

The research questions of the study were as follows:

- To determine the factors that affect consumer awareness of sustainable clothing,
- To investigate the effect of attitudes towards sustainable fashion on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

1.5 Significance of the study

Previous studies in developed countries contributed insights into the knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and adoption intention of consumers, with only 1% of studies being conducted in Africa (Busalim, Fox and Lynn, 2022). Given the global nature of sustainable fashion, it is crucial to acknowledge the impact of cultural diversity and background on customer behaviour. Cultural differences across countries can impact consumers' environmental priorities (Kong and Ko, 2017). The goal of the study is to learn more about customer understanding, perceptions, and responses to sustainable fashion. Consequently, the study attempts to acquire a better understanding of potential gaps and constraints in the South African clothing industry.

An exploratory study was undertaken by Carey and Cervellon (2014), to compare the perspectives of youthful consumers in Canada, the United Kingdom regarding and France regarding sustainable fashion. The results revealed significant variations in how consumers perceive sustainable fashion. Canadian respondents viewed sustainable fashion as favourable and stylish, but French respondents expressed reservations about its lack of attractiveness and perceived clothes as "dull." Min Kong and Ko (2017) identified significant distinctions among consumers in South Korea, Japan and China regarding perceived concerns about the environment, advantages and challenges, and sustainable product knowledge in Asia. These findings indicate a necessity for additional global studies on sustainable fashion to explore the influence of cultural distinctions on consumers' values, beliefs, and attitudes towards sustainable fashion (Su et al., 2019). Research on consumers of various genders, cultures, and ages is essential as they may interpret sustainable messaging differently and exhibit distinct behaviours in response (Busalim Fox and Lynn, 2022). This study will, therefore, contribute to research by filling the gap of increasing sustainable fashion perspectives and attitudes from a developing country context, with consumers from different cultural backgrounds due to South Africa's multi-cultural nature. The study will further contribute to perspectives from different genders and ages as the sample did not target a specific gender, and the age group is 18 years and above.

1.6 Delimitations and assumptions of the research study

This study is limited to employees of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) in South Africa aged 18 and above. The study does not include KFC employees outside South Africa and does not include KFC customers.

1.7 Definition of terms

1.7.1 Sustainable fashion

Sustainability fashion (SF) encompasses a range of methods through which a fashion item or behaviour may be regarded as more environmentally and socially responsible, anti-consumption and production practices, reusable and recyclable materials, cruelty-free alternatives, and more (Mukendi, Davies, Glozer and McDonagh, 2020:2874).

1.7.2 Fast fashion

The fast fashion industry operates under a business model that is distinguished by the rapid turnover of designs and the mass production of garments within a brief period. The industry reproduces haute couture creations directly from the catwalk at exceedingly compromised price points (Bick, Halsey and Ekenga, 2018).

1.7.3 Attitude

An attitude can be defined as a psychological inclination that is manifested through a degree of favourability or disfavour towards socially significant objects, groups, events, or symbols. It consists of a relatively stable arrangement of beliefs, emotions, and behavioural tendencies towards that entity (Zhang, Zhang, Zhou, 2021).

1.7.4 Environmental sustainability knowledge

The concept of environmental knowledge pertains to verifiable information possessed by individuals concerning the Earth's ecology, the environment itself, and the impact of human activities on those ecosystems (Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018).

1.7.5 Awareness of sustainable fashion

Consumer awareness encompasses both product knowledge, which pertains to the entirety of the information recorded in an individual's memory, and familiarity, which is determined by the consumer's past experiences with the product (Jimenez-Fernandez, Aramendia-Muneta and Alzate, 2023).

1.7.6 Perceived value of sustainable fashion

The Perceived Value of sustainable fashion is the consumer's overall evaluation and appraisal of products regarding their perceived environmental and sustainable advantage (Chi et al. 2021).

1.7.7 Adoption intention

Intention refers to an individual's subjective capacity to carry out a particular activity or can be defined as the willingness of consumers to buy and utilise a product (Nguyen et al., 2020).

1.8 Assumptions

This study operates under the supposition that all participants provide candid and truthful responses.

1.9 Chapter disposition of the research report

The chapters in this study have been arranged to delve deeper into the subject matter in the following manner:

Chapter 1: Introduction. This section establishes the necessity and aims of the study and provides relevant background information. This chapter aims to provide an overview of the issues associated with the fast fashion industry within the South African context.

Chapter 2: Literature Review This study's literature review will explore journals and information on sustainable fashion. The advantages and downsides of sustainable clothing will be demonstrated in this way. Furthermore, additional research needed in the field will be given to better assess the viability of sustainable clothing as a viable commercial enterprise.

Chapter 3: Research Strategy, Design, Procedure, and Methods The research method, methodology, and tools used in this study will be revealed to achieve the research objectives in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Research Results This chapter presents the data comprehensively with the illustration of tables and graphs, which will be interpreted.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Research Findings This chapter illustrates the analysis, trends, and findings of this study.

Chapter 6: Summary, Consultations, Limitations, and Recommendations This chapter determines whether the objectives were successfully met with significant results that can aid future literature studies.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

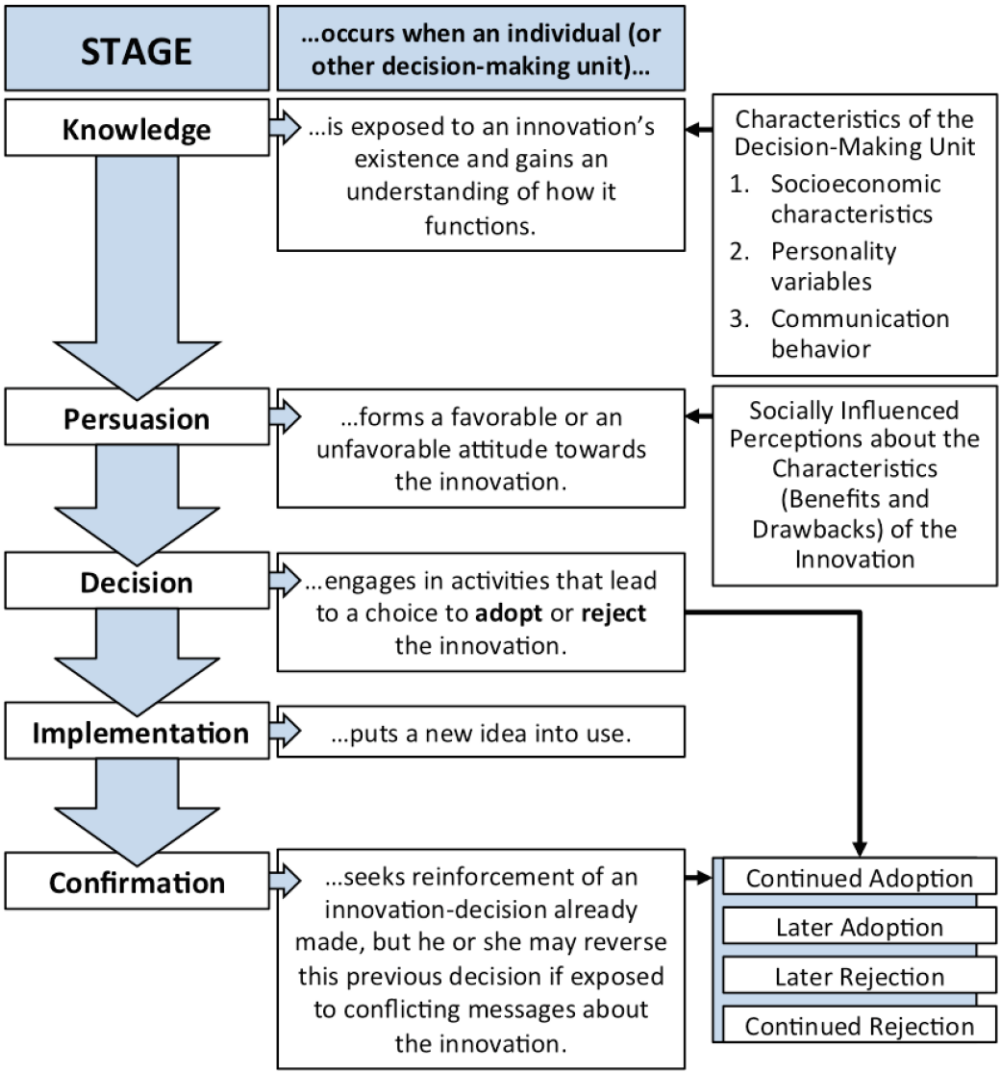
This chapter presents an empirical literature review on sustainable fashion and fast fashion, along with a theoretical framework that underpins the Study. The negative impact of fast fashion is outlined, which necessitates the need for sustainable fashion. The chapter further presents previous studies on the relationship between the identified variables (perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, awareness of sustainable fashion, need for sustainable fashion, perceived value of sustainable fashion and attitude) on adoption intention of sustainable fashion. The literature review provides the framework for the conceptual model for the study, and the chapter ends with a conclusion.

2.2 Theoretical review

2.2.1 Diffusion of Innovation Model

The process of incorporating innovations has been the subject of research for more than three decades. Among the most widely used adoption models is Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations (DOI), which was established in 1962 (Okour, Chong and Abdel-Fattah, 2021). Rogers developed a theoretical model outlining the five stages individuals experience while adopting an innovation: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation, as shown in Figure 2.1 (Taylor et al., 2018).

Figure 2.1: Rogers' Five-Stage Model of the Adoption Process



Source: (Taylor et al., 2018).

Stage 1: Knowledge acquisition - consists of an individual becoming aware of the innovation's existence and actively seeking information regarding it. Questions such as "What?" "How?" and "Why?" are crucial inquiries during the knowledge phase. In this stage, the individual strives to understand the nature of the innovation and its mechanisms and rationale. (Rogers, 2003, 21; Sahin, 2006: 16).

Stage 2: Persuasion – The phase of persuasion commences when an individual develops either a favourable or unfavourable opinion of the innovation. However, it should be noted that the development of a favourable or unfavourable opinion does not invariably result in the innovation's adoption or rejection (Rogers, 2003, 176; Sahin, 2006: 16).

Stage 3: Decision – At the decision stage in the innovation-decision process, the individual chooses to adopt or reject the innovation. Rogers delineated two distinct forms of rejection: passive rejection and active rejection. During active rejection, an individual experiments with an invention and considers adopting it but ultimately chooses not to. Individuals with a passive rejection attitude do not consider embracing innovation (Sahin, 2006: 16).

Stage 4: Implementation – The innovation is executed during the implementation phase. An innovation introduces novelty, which includes a level of uncertainty in its adoption (Rogers, 2003, 180; Sahin, 2006: 17).

Stage 5: Confirmation – the individual seeks validation for their decision. However, if the individual is "exposed to contradictory messages regarding the innovation," this decision may be reversed. At this stage, subsequent adoption or discontinuation of the innovation occurs in accordance with individual attitude and support for its adoption (Rogers, 2003:189; Sahin, 2006:17). Rogers (2003:129) suggests characteristics of innovations that reduce uncertainty around the invention. The attributes of innovations consist of five traits: (1) relative advantage, (2) compatibility, (3) complexity, (4) trialability, and (5) observability. Rogers (2003) states that individuals' views of these attributes can forecast the rate at which innovations are adopted.

This theory is relevant for the study as the consumer decision making process of adoption intention of the innovation of sustainable fashion is similar to Rogers' Five Stage Model of the Adoption Process. The knowledge the consumer acquires, together with the environment sustainability concern, plays a role in influencing attitude and subsequent adoption intention of sustainable fashion, as hypothesised based on literature review.

2.2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

Dangelico, Alvino, and Fraccascia (2022) identify the TPB of Ajzen (1991) as a pertinent social-psychological paradigm that is frequently applied to the study of consumer purchasing behaviour. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) posits that attitude, subjective standards, and perceived behavioural control are significant factors in predicting an individual's behavioural intentions and actions (Ajzen, 1991). Critics have raised concerns regarding this explanation, specifically its limited consideration of moral, affective, and habitual processes, its presumption that behaviours solely stem from attitudes (despite research demonstrating the

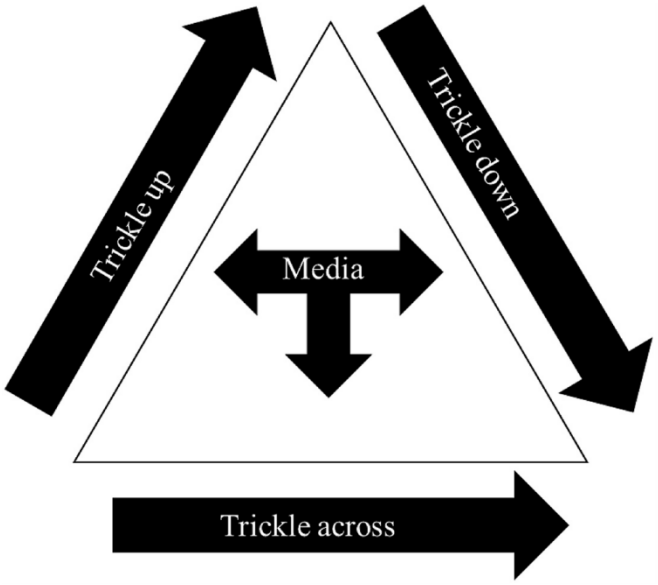
reciprocal relationship between attitudes and behaviours), and its failure to provide contextual information regarding the factors that influence behaviour. Aspects, including behaviours and norms, have been integrated into expanded versions of this model within the framework of sustainability (Camacho-Otero, Boks, and Pettersen, 2019).

The relevance of this theory to this research stems from the fact that numerous factors and variables affect consumer attitudes towards sustainable fashion. These factors are social-psychological and are based on consumer perceptions and knowledge, which subsequently lead to a certain behaviour of adopting or not adopting sustainable fashion.

2.2.3 Triple-trickle theory

The triple trickle theory synthesises the findings of earlier theories that examined the diffusion of fashion hierarchically or horizontally cycle but failed to incorporate technological factors to comprehend fashion adoption (e.g., trickle-down, trickle-across, trickle-up). Thus, the triple-trickle theory provides insight into how fashion disseminates in the current technological era.

Figure 2.2: Triple-trickle theory



Source: Mohr, Fuxman and Mahmoud (2022)

The emergence of sustainable fashion is a consequence of Millennials' growing consciousness regarding social issues and environmental sustainability. Sustainable fashion originates from

the concern for people and the environment trickling up, with Millennials disseminating this knowledge through social media; this, in turn, influences the fashion trend. The sustainable fashion trend source may originate from any location; however, considering that information is responsible for the trend, it is highly probable that it is acquired through news outlets, social media platforms, and the internet. Sustainable fashion is becoming increasingly visible as an increasing number of individuals share content and exchange data via social media. Subsequently, the sustainable fashion trend percolates down social strata when influential individuals are on sustainable brands. Millennial celebrities who advocate for sustainability accelerate the spread of the sustainable fashion trend. As sustainable fashion trends become more prominent in the media, they also spread to similar social groups. As information is disseminated, there is an increasing recognition and acceptance of alternative sustainable choices, like second-hand items, vintage pieces, clothes rentals, and exchanges. The sustainable fashion trend permeates through several societal levels as well (Mohr et al., 2022).

The emergence of sustainable fashion

The rise of sustainable fashion is largely driven by Millennials' growing consciousness regarding social issues and environmental sustainability. This generation's concern for people and the environment acts as a catalyst, initiating a "trickle-up" process where sustainable practices begin at the grassroots level and gain momentum through social media (Mohr et al., 2022). Millennials, as digital natives, use platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok to disseminate knowledge and advocate for sustainable fashion, influencing fashion trends across various demographics.

Dissemination of sustainable fashion

Sustainable fashion trends can originate from any geographic location due to the pervasive nature of digital information. News outlets, social media platforms, and the internet serve as the primary conduits for spreading these trends. As more individuals share content and exchange information about sustainable practices, the visibility of sustainable fashion increases (Mohr et al., 2022). This dissemination process is facilitated by influential figures and celebrities who advocate for sustainability, further accelerating the adoption of sustainable fashion trends.

Trickle-Down mechanism

Once sustainable fashion gains visibility, it begins to trickle down through various social strata. Influencers and celebrities play a crucial role in this phase. When a well-known figure endorses a sustainable brand or practice, it creates a ripple effect, inspiring their followers to adopt similar behaviours. This endorsement from high-profile individuals lends credibility to sustainable fashion and makes it more appealing to the general public (Mohr et al., 2022).

Horizontal spread (Trickle-Across)

Simultaneously, sustainable fashion trends spread horizontally across similar social groups. As information is widely disseminated through social media and other digital platforms, there is an increasing recognition and acceptance of sustainable choices such as second-hand items, vintage pieces, clothes rentals, and exchanges (Mohr, Fuxman and Mahmoud, 2022). This horizontal spread is crucial as it helps to normalize sustainable practices across various segments of society.

Permeation through societal levels

Ultimately, the sustainable fashion trend permeates through multiple societal levels. This multi-layered diffusion is facilitated by the interconnected nature of modern communication technologies, which allow trends to move fluidly across different social, economic, and cultural boundaries (Mohr, Fuxman & Mahmoud, 2022). As sustainable fashion becomes more embedded in mainstream culture, it creates broader acceptance and adoption of environmentally responsible practices in the fashion industry.

Technological influence

The integration of technology into the diffusion process is a key aspect of the triple-trickle theory. Digital platforms not only accelerate the spread of fashion trends but also enhance the accessibility of information regarding sustainable practices. Online communities and influencers can quickly share insights, product reviews, and educational content, which helps to cultivate a more informed and conscious consumer base (Mohr, Fuxman and Mahmoud, 2022). The role of technology in the triple-trickle theory underscores the importance of digital media in shaping contemporary fashion trends and promoting sustainable practices.

2.3 The need for sustainable fashion

The fashion sector ranks as the second most environmentally detrimental industry on a global scale. There is general agreement that there needs to be a change towards the adoption of sustainable fashion (Mohammed and Razé, 2023). Four themes emerged from in-depth interviews with six fashion industry specialists regarding the advantages of sustainable fashion: decreased environmental pollution, increased consumer convenience, decreased costs, and increased societal development (Shafie et al., 2021). It is, therefore, essential to understand what sustainable fashion entails.

2.3.1 Understanding sustainable fashion

The contemporary discourse surrounding sustainable fashion has given rise to various trendy terms, including eco-fashion, green fashion, ethical fashion, slow fashion, and circular fashion (Khandual and Pradhan, 2019; Shafie et al., 2021; Triantafyllidi and Magdy, 2021). Sustainable fashion has frequently been attributed to the fashion industry's premise that garments are merely trendy, which contradicts the sustainability movement's long-term outlook (Henninger, Alevizou, and Oates, 2016). There are various forms of sustainable fashion, as illustrated in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Forms of Sustainable Fashion



Source: Khandual and Pradhan (2019:39)

Environmental sustainability is the primary concern of sustainable fashion, as evidenced by its emphasis on sustainable practices such as the utilisation of renewable and eco-friendly raw materials, carbon footprint reduction, labour rights, equitable wages, and longevity (Niinimaki, 2014). Its overarching objective is to mitigate the adverse effects that a product may have on the environment and society at large. This encompasses the procurement of organic fabrics, such as those derived from cotton, hemp, or bamboo, that are cultivated devoid of detrimental pesticides and synthetic fertilisers (Henninger, 2016). Further, resource conservation and pollution reduction can be achieved through the use of recycled materials, including polyester derived from recycled plastic bottles (Henninger, 2019).

Additionally, circularity is a component of sustainable fashion. Sustainable fashion proposes an alternative approach to the conventional "take-make-dispose" paradigm by promoting a closed-loop system in which products are intentionally engineered to be repaired, recycled, or reused (Niinimaki, 2015). This minimises waste production and prolongs the durability of clothing, thus decreasing the total environmental footprint (Niinimaki, 2015).

2.3.2 The negative impact of fast fashion

2.3.2.1 Social implications of fast fashion

The social element of this issue is considerably more polarising, whereas the environmental arguments for and against rapid fashion just revealed its disadvantages. Scholars have raised concerns about the labour conditions in sweatshops, especially for children and women, in emerging countries (Williams, 2022). Nevertheless, from the perspective of the social benefits for buyers, scholars believe that classism in industrialised nations can be reduced by designing apparel that people of all economic levels can afford (Williams, 2022). Individuals of varying income levels have the ability and desire to purchase these garments (Williams, 2022). Kim, Choo, and Yoon (2012) researched the factors that motivate people to avoid quick fashion. Avoiding fast fashion does not mean engaging in sustainable fashion consumption. However, it does indicate a shift away from traditional habits linked to unethical fashion consumption (Stern, 2000).

2.3.2.2 Poor working conditions/ Unsafe working conditions

Exposure to dangerous chemicals is one typical risk faced by garment manufacturing workers (Williams, 2022). A significant number of workers are unaware of the requisite safety

equipment to avert the detrimental consequences of being exposed to carcinogenic substances, such as potassium dichromate or formaldehyde, which are active in the distressing and treatment of fabrics (Lambert, 2014). Without the proper safety precautions, working with these or similar chemicals may result in mild health effects such as skin irritation and rashes, respiratory issues, or queasiness, as well as more serious health effects that may cause physiological malfunctions, behavioural abnormalities, or lead to cancer (US EPA, 2013).

Factory fires are also of concern for employees producing fast fashion goods (Williams, 2022). Over 100 people died in a factory fire in Bangladesh in 2012, which occurred while the employees were confined within the building due to obstructions at exit points (Williams, 2022). Such incidents could have been avoided. For instance, according to Lambert (2014), clothing manufacturers frequently have "flammable chemicals, faulty electric wiring, overheated machinery, and improper ventilation" in addition to "unclean workspaces" and "blocked or locked fire exits".

Numerous health, safety, labour, environmental, and human rights concerns stem from the practices of fast fashion retailers in order to maintain low prices (Drennan, 2015). Furthermore, in an effort to remain competitive, offshore manufacturing facilities frequently skimp on the financing of these management and infrastructure systems (Drennan, 2015).

2.3.2.3 Poor employee wellness

2.3.2.3.1 Child labour

The public is aware that child labour is used by manufacturers of fast fashion, particularly in developing nations. The countries where child labour is rampant do not enforce child labour laws, making transformation difficult, although many organizations, consumers, and businesses advocate for change (Lambert, 2014). Children are subject to the aforementioned working conditions, which are also imposed on adults who have some authority over where and how they work. Lambert (2014) asserts that child labour continues to be widespread within the apparel sector of developing countries.

Drennan (2015) asserts that several Central Asian countries, including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt, and others, employ children to perform laborious tasks in hazardous environments for equivalent periods as their parents. As of June 23, 2021, 77 countries were found to be in breach

of international standards, according to the U.S. Department of Labour, although child labour is prohibited in the majority of nations (Bureau of International Labour Affairs, 2021). Some adolescents are forced to work in factories located in "underground" areas with far worse circumstances (Drennan, 2015). The textile manufacturing industries have used child labour because children are typically "paid significantly less than the already low minimum wages" and are small, quick, inexpensive, and obedient (Lambert, 2014).

2.3.2.3.2 Feminization of the workplace

The clothing industry typically employs women due to the perception that they are subordinate workers who are easier to control and less likely to engage in unionisation and negotiation in the garment industry (Vijeyarasa and Liu, 2022). Due to the female majority, there are many instances of injustice, including sexual harassment, gender pay inequalities, and a lack of protection for human rights (Vijeyarasa and Liu, 2022). This imbalance is manifested, for example, in the absence of bathroom breaks, which raises the possibility of personal hygiene threats such as Urinary Tract Infections (UTI's), which are made worse by a shortage of water, soap, and menstrual products. In nations like India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, fashion manufacturers are among the biggest sectors of employment, and these situations are typical (Vijeyarasa and Liu, 2022).

One supplier to the fast fashion retailer HandM, whose workforce comprises 74% women, has been implicated in instances of maltreatment and harassment, according to the HandM Group Annual Report 2018 (HandM Group Annual Report 2018, 2019). According to the study "Violence Against Women and Men in the World of Work," violence and harassment in these companies are claimed to happen not only at the production sites but also during commutes and in employer-provided housing (HandM Group Annual Report 2018, 2019, p. 46). Violence against women in the fast fashion sector is a recurring issue caused by factors such as short-term contracts, daily output objectives, disciplinary practices, salary-related rights abuses, long working hours, and unsafe working conditions (Colnago, 2019).

2.4 Determinants of attitudes towards sustainable fashion

Zhang et al. (2021) postulated that attitudes can be defined by three components which are affective, behavioural, and cognitive. These are briefly described below:

- An affective component pertains to an individual’s emotions or feelings towards an object, for example, "I dislike fast fashion products".
- The behavioural component pertains to our actions or behaviour towards an object, for example, "I will refrain from purchasing any fast fashion products".
- Cognitive component: pertains to an individual’s knowledge or convictions regarding a particular subject, exemplified by the statement, "I hold the view that fast fashion products lack sustainability".

This model is known as the tri-component or ABC model of attitudes. This study focuses on the relationship between four independent variables (perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, awareness of sustainable fashion, need for sustainable fashion and perceived value of sustainable fashion) and dependent variables attitude towards sustainable fashion on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

2.4.1 Perceived environmental sustainability knowledge and consumer attitude on sustainable fashion

The discrepancy between consumer intentions and attitudes and their subsequent purchasing behaviour can be mostly attributed to consumer knowledge (Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018). At times, consumers may have a limited understanding of sustainability, focusing solely on energy consumption and recycled products while failing to acknowledge the inherent sustainability concerns associated with apparel usage. The study conducted by Yan et al., (2017) offers insight into the notion that consumer consciousness regarding environmental concerns does not invariably result in the rejection of fast fashion purchases and the substitution of it with eco-friendly alternatives. Several research studies were undertaken to investigate the correlation between consumer attitudes towards environmental sustainability, their level of knowledge on the subject, and the intended adoption or purchase. According to a quantitative cross-sectional survey conducted by Ahmad et al., (2020), there is a statistically significant relationship between knowledge and attitude regarding the adoption of sustainable fashion innovations and the level of primary data collected from upper and middle-level management in garment companies in Jordan.

In contrast, a Peruvian study discovered that a large majority of buyers favour sustainable clothes due to their awareness and concern for current environmental challenges.

Consequently, the individuals' perspective was influenced by their perceived environmental awareness and concern, leading to a growing inclination to purchase sustainable clothing that seeks to minimise ecological footprint (Leclercq-Machado et al., 2022). In addition, a study conducted by Chan and Wong (2012), revealed that consumer intentions to purchase sustainable fashion were more significantly impacted by their environmental attitudes, as opposed to their specific attitudes towards sustainable fashion products. Despite consumers' awareness of the significance of sustainable clothing, they do not manifest this awareness in their purchasing decisions, according to a Chinese survey of young consumers who are fashion-conscious, self-conscious, and seek instant gratification (Park and Lin, 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated.

H_1: Environmental knowledge and awareness significantly influence attitudes towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. This hypothesis builds on Chan and Wong (2012) but focuses specifically on how detailed knowledge impacts attitudes within the sustainable fashion sector, providing a fresh context of their findings.

2.4.2 The need for sustainable fashion and consumer attitude on sustainable fashion

Sustainable fashion has garnered increasing attention and demand in recent years. A greater interest in sustainable alternatives is resulting from consumers' growing awareness of the social and environmental consequences of their purchases (Niinimaki, 2014). Many fashion brands are responding to this demand by adopting sustainable practices and offering eco-friendly options (Morgan, 2020). The need for sustainable fashion is also considered to be based on the conditional value of the perceived green value Chi et al., (2021). On the contrary, the consumption literature consistently revealed that individuals' clothing consumption decisions are not influenced by environmental factors (Joy et al., 2012); instead, they are impacted by social pressures (Ciasullo et al., 2017) and the desire to uphold positive regard (Wei and Jung, 2017). Thus, the subsequent hypothesis was formulated.

H_2: Consumers' adoption intentions towards sustainable fashion are influenced more by social pressures and the desire to uphold positive regard than by environmental awareness and perceived green value. This hypothesis clarifies that the perceived need for sustainable fashion, driven by external factors such as environmental concerns and social trends, directly contributes to forming positive attitudes towards sustainable fashion.

2.4.3 Awareness of sustainable fashion and consumer attitude on sustainable fashion

Awareness of sustainable fashion's influence is believed to be rooted in the emotional significance of the perceived environmental value (Chi et al., 2021). Research studies have linked the awareness of sustainable fashion to a good attitude towards sustainable fashion. The effects of consumers' general environmental attitudes, environmental knowledge and conservational garment attitudes influence their purchase intentions of sustainable garments were investigated quantitatively among college students in the United States. The study revealed that consumers frequently have limited awareness or comprehension of sustainable fashion, specifically regarding (i) the availability of sustainable fashion products and (ii) the societal and environmental consequences of sustainable fashion. Moreover, Chang and Watchravesringkan (2018), assert that these consumers hold the belief that sustainable fashion items are crafted using high-end organic materials. Hence, with the advancement of consumers' understanding regarding sustainable fashion, there is a possibility that this will reconcile the divide that exists between their intentions, attitudes, and subsequent purchasing behaviour (Busalim et al., 2022).

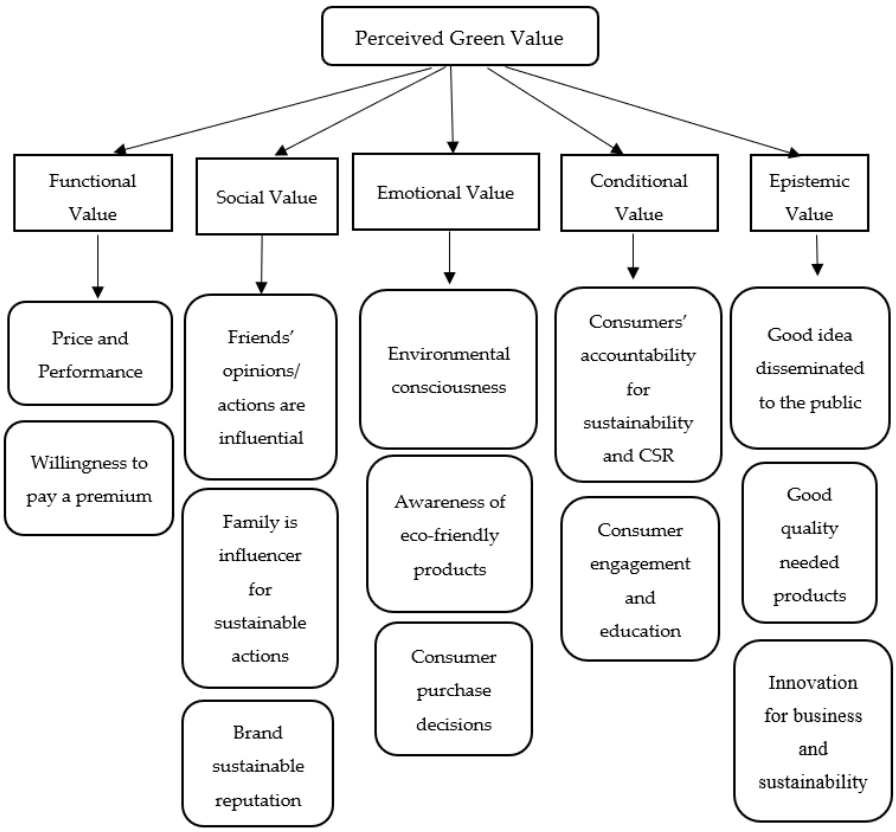
Su, Watchravesringkan, Tu, Zhou and Gil (2019) conducted a comparable investigation examining the consumption patterns and perceptions of young Millennials in China and the United States regarding sustainable clothing products. The study revealed that young Millennials' awareness of sustainable clothing practices significantly and positively influenced consumer attitudes and intent to purchase such products. In the same vein, consumer awareness of 'eco-fashion' was acknowledged as a motivating factor for eco-fashion adoption in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), according to a qualitative study (Munir, 2020). On the other hand, a survey conducted in Iceland to ascertain the disparity between consumers' behaviour and attitudes regarding sustainable fashion revealed that the impact of such attitudes on purchasing behaviour was negligible (Halldórsdóttir, 2021). Moreover, the study conducted by Chan and Wong (2012) revealed that consumer intentions to purchase sustainable fashion were significantly impacted by their environmental attitudes, as opposed to their specific attitudes towards sustainable fashion products. Likewise, according to the findings of Park and Lin (2018), consumers' knowledge of sustainable fashion concepts does not substantially influence their purchasing decisions. Thus, the subsequent hypothesis was formulated.

H_3: Awareness and knowledge of sustainable fashion significantly influence consumer attitudes towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. While similar to existing findings, this hypothesis emphasizes the unique pathways through which awareness, facilitated by digital media and social influencers, shapes consumer attitudes in the modern context.

2.4.4 Perceived value of sustainable fashion and consumer attitude on sustainable fashion

Consumers generally exhibit scepticism towards environmentally responsible clothing as a result of the absence of standardised criteria to ascertain whether a given product delivers on its claimed benefits (Munir, 2020). Chi et al., (2021) highlight that there are five main values of sustainable apparel or perceived green value identified in the literature that affect purchase intention of sustainable fashion, namely social value, functional value, conditional value, emotional value, and epistemic value, as illustrated in Figure 2.4 below.

Figure 2.4: Perceived green values for sustainable apparel



Source: Chi et al. (2021:13)

The functional value is based on the price and performance of the product which further translates into the desire of the consumer to pay a premium. In some studies, this is referred to as financial value (Puiu, 2021). Social value relates to the opinions or actions of friends and family that influence a consumer to buy sustainable fashion, and emotional value is based on environmental consciousness, awareness of eco-friendly products and consumer purchase decisions. Conditional value involves the consumer's accountability for sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR), while epistemic value involves the dissemination of the proposed idea to the public, the need for high-quality garments and innovation for business and sustainability.

Consumer attitudes and subsequent intentions to adopt or purchase sustainable fashion have been widely examined in various studies. Perceived value was identified as a significant predictor of consumer attitude towards sustainable fashion, as well as purchase intention and experience, in an online survey of young male consumers in the United States concerning sustainable fashion (Sung and Woo, 2019; Park and Lin, 2018). Consumers are more likely to give positive feedback when they are aware of the intrinsic value of sustainable fashion. In the fashion and apparel industry, a literature review on user acceptance of circular offerings revealed that the solution's capacity to provide non-financial benefits and value was identified as a determinant of an individual's participation decision (Camacho-Otero et al., 2019). A similar conclusion was reached by Jacobs, Petersen, Horisch, and Battenfeld (2018), regarding female German consumers, wherein they discovered that consumer attitudes are positively influenced by personal values such as self-improvement and self-exceedance. According to Bardi and Schwartz (2003), self-transcendence entails social justice, wisdom, equality, and a world at peace, whereas self-enhancement involves components of power and achievement.

A study conducted by Su et al., (2019), examined the consumption behaviour and perceptions of young Millennials in China and the United States regarding sustainable apparel products. The findings revealed that the personal values of young Millennials had a significant and positive influence on their consumer attitude towards sustainable clothing. This, in turn, had a strong and positive effect on their purchase intention. The following hypothesis was thus formulated as a result.

H_4: There is a positive and significant relationship between the perceived value of sustainable fashion and attitude towards sustainable fashion in the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

2.4.5 Attitude towards sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion

Fostering a positive attitude regarding sustainable fashion serves as an effective initial stride in promoting environmentally conscious consumption (Park and Lin, 2018). It is more probable that consumers who possess a positive attitude will manifest this sentiment in their purchasing behaviour (Hustvedt and Dickson, 2009). According to the findings of a qualitative study that interviewed consumers in Ho Chi Minh City, the attitude towards sustainable fashion is the most reliable predictor of purchase intent (Ho, Vu and Vu, 2020). In the same way, a favourable disposition frequently results in favourable purchasing intentions, according to a survey of consumers who have personally engaged in green consumption in Vietnam (Nguyen et al., 2019). However, in contrast to the above positive results, a study conducted by Chan and Wong (2012) revealed that consumer intentions to purchase sustainable fashion were more significantly impacted by their attitudes towards the environment as a whole, as opposed to their specific attitudes towards sustainable fashion products. Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated.

H_5: There is a positive and significant relationship between attitude towards sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

2.6 Synthesisation of literature findings

The empirical literature review on sustainable fashion and fast fashion, along with the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study, highlights the negative impact of fast fashion, necessitating the need for sustainable fashion (Okour, Chong and Abdel-Fattah, 2021). Previous studies on the relationship between perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, awareness of sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion provide the foundation for the conceptual model of the study (Taylor et al., 2018). Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Model (1962) outlines the five stages individuals experience while adopting an innovation, emphasizing the importance of knowledge acquisition, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation (Sahin, 2006; Rogers, 2003). Similarly, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) posits that attitudes, subjective norms and perceived

behavioural control influence behavioural intentions and actions (Dangelico, Alvino, and Fraccascia, 2022).

The Triple-Trickle Theory synthesizes earlier theories of fashion diffusion and incorporates technological factors to understand fashion adoption in the digital era (Mohr, Fuxman and Mahmoud, 2022). This theory underscores the role of Millennials' growing consciousness of social and environmental issues in driving the emergence of sustainable fashion trends. While the literature acknowledges the need for sustainable fashion, it also highlights challenges such as environmental pollution, poor working conditions and child labour in the fast fashion industry (Mohammed and Razé, 2023; Lambert, 2014). These challenges underscore the urgency of transitioning towards sustainable fashion practices. Research gaps identified in the literature include the limited consideration of moral, affective and habitual processes in theoretical models such as the TPB, as well as the need for more comprehensive investigations into the factors influencing consumer attitudes and intentions towards sustainable fashion (Camacho-Otero et al., 2019; Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018).

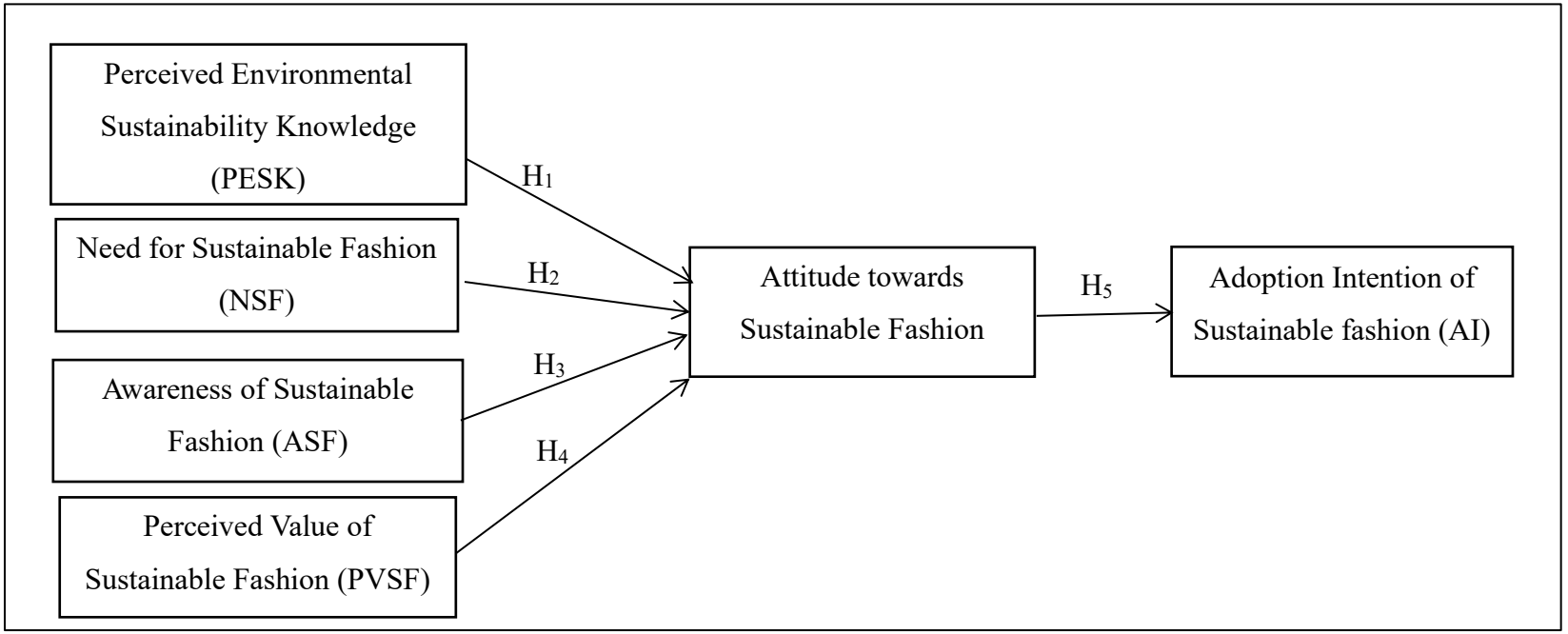
As such, while the literature provides valuable insights into consumer awareness and attitudes towards sustainable fashion, there remain gaps in understanding the complex interplay of individual beliefs, societal norms and environmental concerns shaping consumer behaviour (Okour, Chong and Abdel-Fattah, 2021). Future research should address these gaps to inform policy interventions and industry practices aimed at promoting sustainable consumption patterns in the fashion industry.

2.6 Conceptual research model

The study's conceptual model is derived from the findings of the empirical literature review. The relationship between the variables being investigated is explained by the conceptual model shown in Figure 2.5 below.

.

Figure 2.5: Conceptual Model



Source: Researcher's construction

The conceptual model above, based on the review literature, highlights the relationship between the study's variables and the following identified hypotheses:

- H_1: Environmental knowledge and awareness significantly influence attitudes towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.
- H_2: Consumers' adoption intentions towards sustainable fashion are influenced more by social pressures and the desire to uphold positive regard than by environmental awareness and perceived green value.
- H_3: Awareness and knowledge of sustainable fashion significantly influence consumer attitudes towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.
- H_4: There is a positive and significant relationship between the perceived value of sustainable fashion and attitude towards sustainable fashion in the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.
- H_5: There is a positive and significant relationship between attitude towards sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

2.6.2 Conceptual framework

The theoretical background provided by the Diffusion of Innovation Model, Theory of Planned Behaviour, and Triple-Trickle Theory establishes a foundation for understanding the adoption of sustainable fashion. The integration of these theories helps in constructing a conceptual framework that illustrates the relationships between the key variables: perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, awareness of sustainable fashion, need for sustainable fashion, perceived value of sustainable fashion, and consumer attitude towards sustainable fashion. This framework is crucial for testing the hypotheses and understanding the factors influencing the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the theoretical foundation of the study, which highlighted the negative environmental effects of rapid fashion, including waste, pollution, and carbon and greenhouse gas emissions. Unsafe working conditions cast light on the lack of safety measures for workers in the clothing industry, as well as the low wages that contribute to exploitative working conditions. The value and advantages of sustainable fashion were emphasised in this chapter, including decreased pollution of the environment, increased convenience for customers, decreased costs, and improved societal development. Sustainable fashion encompasses various

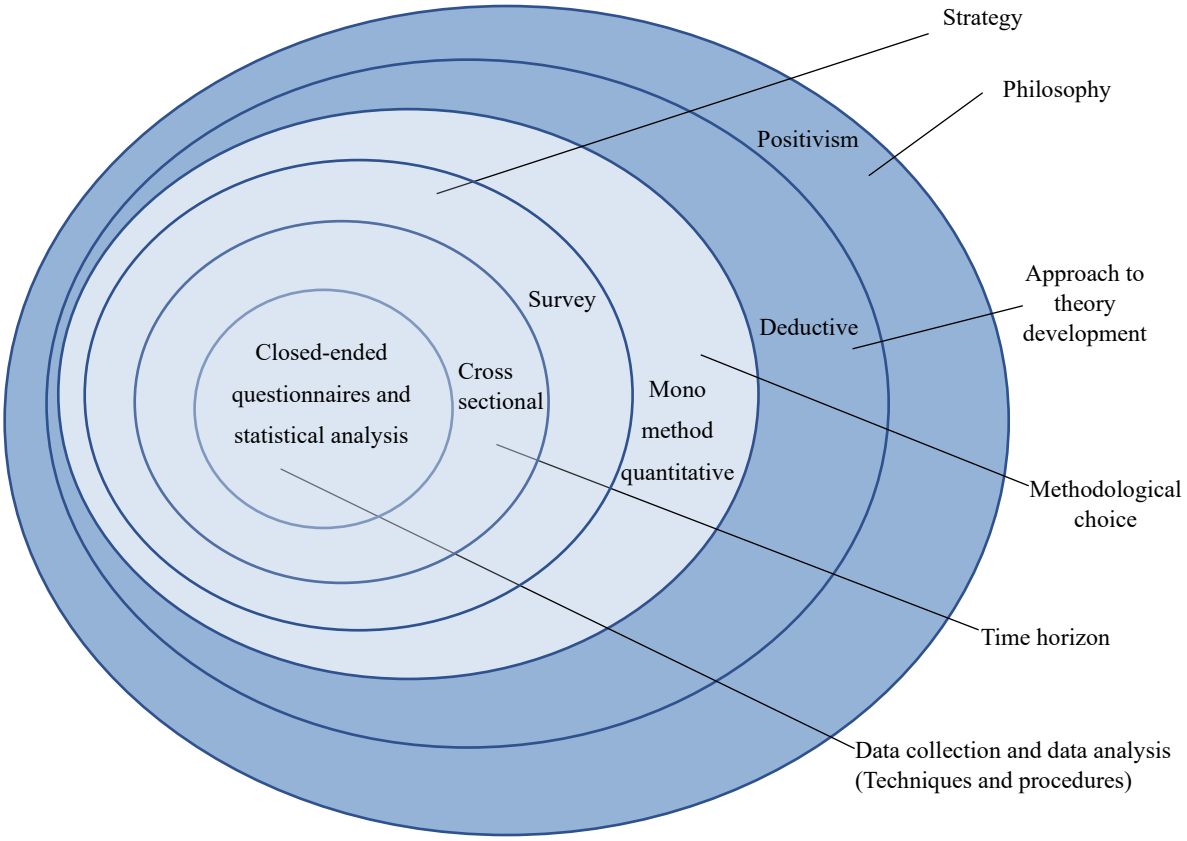
forms including collaborative consumption, custom-made or made-to-order items, sustainable design processes and production methods, fair and ethically constructed products, waste management practices, as well as sourcing second-hand garments. Prior research on the correlation between the studied variables was examined to establish hypotheses for the study. To show the relationships between the research variables, a conceptual model was developed in contrast to the findings of the literature review.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the methodologies employed for information gathering, processing, and analysis to achieve the empirical objectives of this study. This chapter encompasses the following: research methodology, research design and techniques, sampling and population selection, data collection and analysis techniques, considerations of ethics, the reliability of the research instruments and methodology, and lastly, a chapter summary. The study's research methodology is presented in the research onion diagram below, modified from Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009).

Figure 3.1: Research Onion for the Study



Source: Researcher's construction -adapted from Sauders et al. (2009)

The adapted research onion for the study shows that the study's philosophy for the study is positivism while the research method is deductive in nature. The research method is quantitative only; hence mono method quantitative selection on the research onion. The

research strategy is in the form of a survey, while the time horizon for the study is cross-sectional. Data was collected by means of a close-ended questionnaire and analysed using statistical analysis. The subsequent section details the research methodology for the study.

3.2 Research approach

Table 3.1 illustrates the distinguishing features of the two primary research approaches or modes of reasoning: inductive, which is employed in qualitative methods, and deductive, which is utilised in quantitative research (Ragab and Arisha, 2018).

Table 3.1: Research Approaches and their characteristics

Research Approach	Deduction	Induction
Approach to investigation	Highly structured	Flexible
Paradigm	Positivist	Interpretivist
Sequence of Investigation	1. Theory 2. Hypothesis 3. Observation 4. Confirmation	1. Observation 2. Patterns 3. Hypothesis 4. Theory
Purpose	Explanatory; Explanation of causal relationships between variables	Exploratory; Gaining understanding of the phenomena
Data Collected	Quantitative	Qualitative
Generalisation	Need to generalise conclusions	Less concern with generalisation

Source: Ragab and Arisha (2018: 33)

The research approach for this study is deductive due to its quantitative methodological choice. The deductive approach is further relevant because the study explained relationships between variables as outlined in the five identified hypotheses. A positivist philosophy is appropriate for this study because it is commonly associated with experiments and quantitative research (Ryan, 2018).

3.3 Research design

Research design is a systematic approach utilised by researchers to address problems effectively and accurately in a legitimate, objective, and cost-efficient manner (Kumar, 2011).

There are four categories of research: exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, and experimental. Deductive research is explanatory in nature and involves the explanation of causal relationships between variables, and the need to generalise conclusions. This study employed explanatory research because it determined the effects of behaviour on a social phenomenon and predicted how one phenomenon would modify or differ concerning another variable through hypotheses (Strydom, 2013). The variables studied in this research are the relationship between four independent variables (perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, awareness of sustainable fashion, need for sustainable fashion and perceived value of sustainable fashion) and the dependent variables attitude towards sustainable fashion on adoption intention of sustainable fashion. The following are the advantages and disadvantages of the quantitative research approach.

Table 3.2: Quantitative research advantages and disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
Objectivity, generalisability and effectiveness are three remarkable characteristics of quantitative research methods.	Researchers fail to develop a more profound understanding of underlying meanings and explanations involved in respondents' viewpoints.
Lack of bias with either data collection or data analysis as the researcher is not in direct contact with the respondents.	The reliability of data is very dependent on the quality of answers and on the survey' structure.
Findings yielded from quantitative studies can be generalised to a larger population in different settings due to a larger sample size.	Rigidity of the structure.
Data collection and analysis are effective and less time-consuming.	

Source: Researcher own construction based on Queirós, Faria and Almeida (2017); Xiong (2022)

3.4 Data collection methods

The research approach of this study is quantitative, and the appropriate research strategy is a survey.

3.5 Population and sample

3.5.1 Population

Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019:594) define population as "the universe of units from which a sample is to be selected". The population for this study is all KFC employees aged eighteen and older. Moreover, target population encompasses a diverse array of disposable income groups, educational levels and varying life stages. This demographic variety offers significant insights into the understanding of consumer awareness in sustainable clothing, particularly within the context of fast fashion in South Africa. The target population represent different income brackets, from lower to higher income groups, which allows for an analysis of how financial capacity influences awareness and purchasing decisions regarding sustainable clothing. Educational levels among target population range from high school diplomas to advanced degrees, providing a spectrum of perspectives on the impact of educational attainment on the understanding of sustainable practices and ethical consumption in the fashion industry. Additionally, the varying life stages of the target population including young adults, middle-aged individuals and older adults, facilitate a nuanced exploration of how age and life experiences affect awareness and attitudes towards sustainable fashion. This demographic diversity within the target population enriches the research by offering a comprehensive view of consumer awareness and behaviour concerning sustainable clothing in the South African fast fashion sector.

3.5.2 Sample and sampling method

The probability random sampling method was employed, which allows the participation of the vast majority of individuals (Thielo, 2021). The sufficiency of the sample size in a regression relationship investigation was assessed using a sample design that included n=207 respondents (Green, 1991). Probability random sampling was appropriate as the study is quantitative in nature.

3.6 The research instrument

The research strategy for this study is a survey, and therefore data was collected by means of closed-ended questionnaires. To assess the validity of the hypothesis in this study, a questionnaire was devised and administered to a sample of 207 respondents to extrapolate the results to the greater South African community. The questionnaire utilized the Likert scale, a structured five-point measurement construct scale, to collect structured data. The Likert scale

is a psychometric instrument that comprises an online questionnaire where respondents express their level of agreement, disagreement, or neutrality towards a series of statements (Joshi, 2015). This scale attempts to organize the attitudes of the respondents on a particular topic and identify trends in the study's findings. The scales for each variable in the conceptual model were adapted from previously validated instruments in the literature: perceived environmental sustainability knowledge from Chang and Watchravesringkan (2018), awareness of sustainable fashion from Jimenez-Fernandez, Aramendia-Muneta, and Alzate (2023), need for sustainable fashion from Henninger, Alevizou, and Oates (2016), perceived value of sustainable fashion from Chi et al. (2021), attitude towards sustainable fashion from Zhang, Zhang, and Zhou (2021), and adoption intention from Nguyen et al. (2020).

Due to the nature of the questionnaire instrument, which is not susceptible to biases in interpretation or form interpretation by the researcher, deviations from a large sample size are not permitted. The duration of the questionnaire will be limited to ten minutes to reduce respondents' apathy and encourage completion (Joshi, 2015). The independent variables that determined the adoption intention of sustainable fashion included perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, awareness of sustainable fashion, need for sustainable fashion and perceived value of sustainable fashion. The 5-point Likert scale had twenty items for the factors, with four to five items for each variable, which were developed from the previously used items found in literature. In view of this, the questionnaire was designed as follows (See Appendix 3):

The questions for the demographics were generated by the researcher

A1 Please indicate your gender:

Male	1	Female	2	I prefer not to indicate	3

A2 Please indicate your age category:

18 – 24 years	1	25 – 34 years	2	35 – 44 years	3	>45 years	4

A3 Please indicate your education level:

Matric/ High School	1
Diploma	2
Degree	3
Post-graduate Degree	4
Other (specify)	5

A4 Please indicate your current employment status:

Student	1
Employed	2
Self-employed	3
Unemployed	4
Retired	5

A5 Please indicate your total monthly household income

Below R10 000	1
R11 000-R20 000	2
R21 000-R30 000	3
R31 000-R40 000	4
R41 000-R50 000	5
Exceeding R50 000	6

A6 How financially well-off do you consider your household to be?

Somewhat wealthy	1	Very wealthy	3
Not so wealthy	2	Not wealthy at all	4

A7 How much money do you spend on clothing each month?

Less than R1 000	1
R1 001- R2 000	2
R2 001- R3 000	3
R3 001- 4 000	4
R4 001- R5 000	5
More than R5 000	6

Please answer ALL the below questions by indicating to which extent you disagree or agree with each statement on sustainable fashion.

Please note that 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree.

The questions on the perceived environmental sustainability knowledge (PESK) were adopted from Zhang, Zhang and Zhou (2021)

PERCEIVED ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY KNOWLEDGE (PESK)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
PESK 1	I am aware of social equity issues in the fast fashion industry such as working conditions of factory worker and fair trade.	1	2	3	4	5
PESK 2	I am aware of child labour and sweatshop issues in the global supply chain of the fast fashion industry.	1	2	3	4	5

PESK 3	I am informed of environmental issues in the fast fashion industry such as waste and pollution caused by excessive production of garments	1	2	3	4	5
PESK 4	I am knowledgeable about the apparel brands that sell eco-friendly fashion products.	1	2	3	4	5

The questions on need for sustainable fashion (NSF) were adopted from Chu and Kim (2021)

NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION (NSF)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
NSF1	I want to consider the idea of sustainable fashion when buying new fashion products.	1	2	3	4	5
NSF2	I have little experience with sustainable fashion products.	1	2	3	4	5
NSF3	Generally, there is a need for more information about sustainable fashion	1	2	3	4	5
NSF4	Information about sustainable fashion is not readily available and is needed	1	2	3	4	5

The questions on the perceived value of sustainable fashion (PVSF) were adopted from Sweeney and Soutar (2001)

PERCEIVED VALUE OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION (PVSF)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
PV1	Sustainable fashion clothing is reasonably priced.	1	2	3	4	5
PV2	Sustainable fashion clothing offers value for money	1	2	3	4	5
PV3	Sustainable fashion clothing would improve the way I am perceived.	1	2	3	4	5
PV4	Sustainable fashion clothing is the one that I would feel relaxed using.	1	2	3	4	5

The questions on awareness of sustainable fashion (ASF) were adopted from Preuit and Yan 2016

AWARENESS OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION (ASF)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
ASF1	I am familiar with the term sustainable fashion.	1	2	3	4	5
ASF2	I know where to purchase fast fashion apparel.	1	2	3	4	5
ASF3	I know about the environmental impacts of sustainable fashion apparel	1	2	3	4	5
ASF4	I have often read articles or news about sustainable fashion apparel	1	2	3	4	5

The questions on the attitude towards sustainable fashion were adopted from Allen, Machlet and Kleine (1992), Ahluwalia, Unnava and Burnkrant (2001) and Bansal, Taylor and St. James (2005)

ATTITUDE TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FASHION (ATTITUDE TOWARDS IDEA)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
ATT1	I believe that the concept of sustainable fashion is a good idea.	1	2	3	4	5
ATT2	I believe that the concept of sustainable fashion is beneficial.	1	2	3	4	5
ATT3	I believe that the concept of sustainable fashion can be rewarding.	1	2	3	4	5
ATT4	The concept of sustainable fashion is helpful in decision-making when shopping for fashion garments	1	2	3	4	5
ATT5	I believe that the concept of sustainable fashion is worth trialling.	1	2	3	4	5

The questions on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion were adopted from Cheung, Luo, Sia and Chen (2009)

ADOPTION INTENTION OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
AI1	After considering information about sustainable fashion products, I will likely buy fashion products guided by the information provided.	1	2	3	4	5
AI2	After considering information about sustainable fashion products, I will purchase fashion products next time with this idea.	1	2	3	4	5
AI3	After considering information about sustainable fashion products, I will try fashion products with the information in mind.	1	2	3	4	5
AI4	After considering information about sustainable fashion products, I will recommend that friends buy fashion products with a sustainable fashion idea.	1	2	3	4	5

3.7 Procedure for data collection

The research instrument was disseminated as an online survey to facilitate access on mobile devices such as smartphones and laptops and to reduce the risk associated with in-person interviews. An online survey facilitates easy access by respondents and, therefore, can reach high numbers of respondents and is cost-effective.

3.8 Data analysis strategy and interpretation

Prior to verifying the hypotheses in this study, the data collected from respondents was rigorously inspected for consistency, completeness, and clarity. The data was encoded in an Excel sheet, and SPSS 24 was used for data classification and descriptive statistics. AMOS 23 and SPSS 23 statistical software were also utilized to generate descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics through Structural equation modelling (SEM). According to Dabula (2016),

inferential statistics involves evaluating statistical hypotheses and estimating population values. In this study, the proposed research framework contains multiple relationships between the research constructs. Based on theory testing rather than theory development, SEM is a confirmatory rather than exploratory analysis. The combination of the path analysis and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Phiri, 2018). In the measurement model, each set of indicators for the construct functions collectively to define the construct (Phiri, 2018). Internal consistency is measured by the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, which is used to assess the reliability of all variables in a measurement instrument.

3.9 Quality assurance

The validation of a measurement instrument is established through the meaningful and suitable interpretation of the data derived from the analyses (Sürücü, and Maslakçı, 2020).

3.9.1 External validity

External validity refers to the degree to which conclusions gained from a specific study's sample can be applied to a wider population or other target populations. It can be categorised into generalizability and transportability. Generalizability refers to making inferences from a sample taken from a defined community, while transportability relates to making inferences from a sample intended for a different population (Findley, Kikuta and Denly, 2021). The study utilised random sampling to assure generalizability and transportability of the sample.

3.9.2 Internal validity

A common approach in empirical research is to test statistical methods through confirmatory factor (CFA) to test the accuracy of the scale and the model in studies conducted using pre-tested scales (Sürücü, and Maslakçı, 2020). In this study, CFA was employed to ensure internal validity of the 5-point Likert scale questionnaires.

3.9.3 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of results produced by a research instrument when utilised repeatedly in the same conditions (Heale and Twycross, 2015). A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was used due to its limited vagueness of responses from the respondents and has further ensured ease of data analysis.

3.10 Ethical considerations when collecting research data

Ethics is a framework of guidelines and rules that aids researchers in systematically conducting a study (Grant, 2014). The goal of research ethics is to safeguard the anonymity and confidentiality of study respondents and to guide researchers away from deceptive conduct. In addition, the researcher attained consent from each respondent, outlining the nature of their participation and any potential hazards associated with it. It is essential to state that respondents can withdraw their participation during or after the research is conducted. Researchers must minimize all potential risks to the sample group. The research project is low-risk and does not require the assistance of psychologists (Grant, 2014).

Before recruiting potential respondents, the research instruments have been approved by the supervisor and the Ethics committee. The research data is accessible only to the supervisor, who will supervise the study's findings and ensure adherence to ethical regulations. In addition, the data will be safeguarded and will not be made available to third parties who may use the information for profit.

The research questions were written in such a manner that they did not contain sensitive information. The purpose of the study and its designation as an academic study were formally conveyed to the respondents. For all intents and purposes, respondents' identities were kept strictly confidential, and they were not asked to disclose their names. The survey questionnaire contained only questions pertinent to the study.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the research strategy, design, procedure, and methods employed in this study to demonstrate that the data was collected ethically and tested for validity and reliability using a variety of instruments.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the empirical results and data analysis and discusses the findings of the study in detail. The demographic information of the respondents in this study is represented with descriptive statistics illustrating the demographic variables, reliability, and validity of the measurement instruments. The confirmatory factor analysis is then used to determine the model fit indices and the factor loading. This is then followed by the respondents' attitudes towards sustainable clothing through the use of path modelling that provides SEM results and indicates the relationship between the constructs in this research to better understand consumer benefits and gaps in adopting sustainable clothing. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 28 and AMOS 28 were used to analyse the data in this study.

4.2 Socio-demographic profile of respondents

This section analyses the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The researcher employed descriptive statistics to define specific traits (Phiri, 2018). The measures that have been taken and the sample are both described using descriptive statistics. Age, gender, income, and other factors may be included in descriptive statistics. There are supporting tables, charts, and graphs, as well as a qualitative analysis of the findings and data limitations.

Although 300 questionnaires were sent out, 207 were received back, resulting in a 93-attrition rate of non-respondents, translating into a 69% response rate. Out of the 207 respondents, 84 of them identified as male, 117 as female, and 06 chose not to identify their gender. Table 4.1 provides details of respondent's socio-demographic characteristics.

Table 4.1: Socio-demographic profile of Respondents

Gender		
	Frequency	**Percent**
Male	84	40.6
Female	117	56.5
Prefer not to say	6	2.9
Total	207	100.0
Age Group (years)		
	Frequency	**Percent**
18 - 24 years	26	12.6
25 - 34 years	97	46.9
35 - 44 years	58	28.0
44 and above	26	12.6
Total	207	100.0
Level of Education		
	Frequency	**Percent**
Matric/ High School	140	67.6
Diploma	14	6.8
Degree	27	13.0
Post Graduate Degree	17	8.2
Other	9	4.3
Total	207	100.0
Employment		
	Frequency	**Percent**
Employed	33	15.9
Self-employed	57	27.5
Unemployed	61	29.5
Retired	56	27.1
Total	207	100

Table 4.1 above presented female respondents outnumbered male respondents by 15,9%. The age range between 25-34 years old was well-represented, at 97 (47%) of the 207 respondents. The 35-44 age group had 28% (58) of the respondents, followed by the 18-24 and 44 and older age groups, which had only 13% each (26). Most respondents have a high school qualification (67,6%). Respondents in the age range of 18 and 24 are seeking higher educational qualifications, and the respondents in the age range of 25 and 34 have not obtained a bachelor's degree. The minority of respondents in the study have other (4,3%) qualifications which were not specified. As shown in Table 4.1, a significant number of respondents, 29.5% are unemployed, followed by those who are self-employed at 27,5% and retired individuals at 27,1%.

a) Monthly Income

Figure 4.1: Monthly Income of Respondents

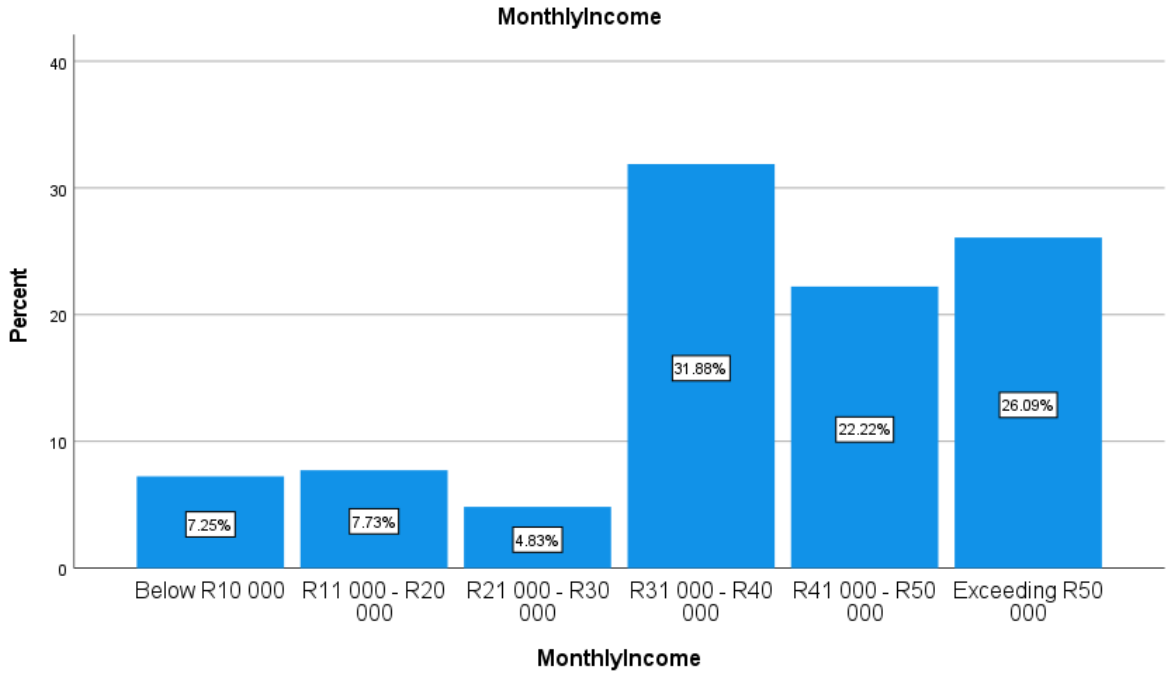


Figure 4.1 above illustrates that the majority of respondents (31.88%) obtain a monthly income between R31 000 and R40 000, followed by those with income exceeding R50 000, who make up 26.09% of the respondents. 22.22% of the respondents earn between R41 000 and R50 000, followed by 7.73% and 7.25% of respondents who earn between R11 000-R20 000 and below R10 000, respectively. Lastly, 4.83% of the respondents' earnings range from R21 000 and R30 000.

b) Financial Status

Figure 4.2: Financial Status of Respondents

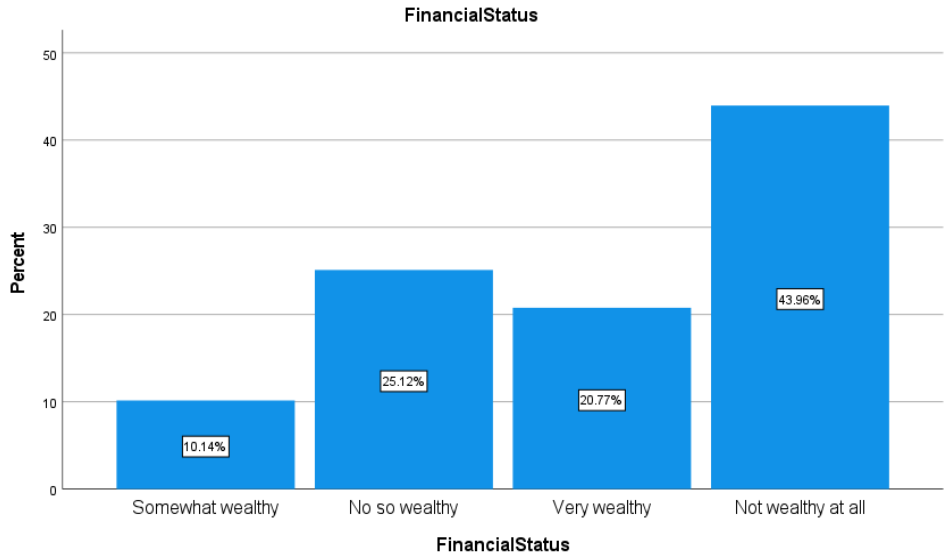


Figure 4.2 above illustrates that 10.14% of the respondents are somewhat wealthy, while 43.96% of the respondents highlighted that they are not wealthy at all. On the other hand, 20.77% identified as being wealthy, while 25.12% said that they were not so wealthy.

c) Expenditure

Figure 4.3: Clothing Expenditure of Respondents

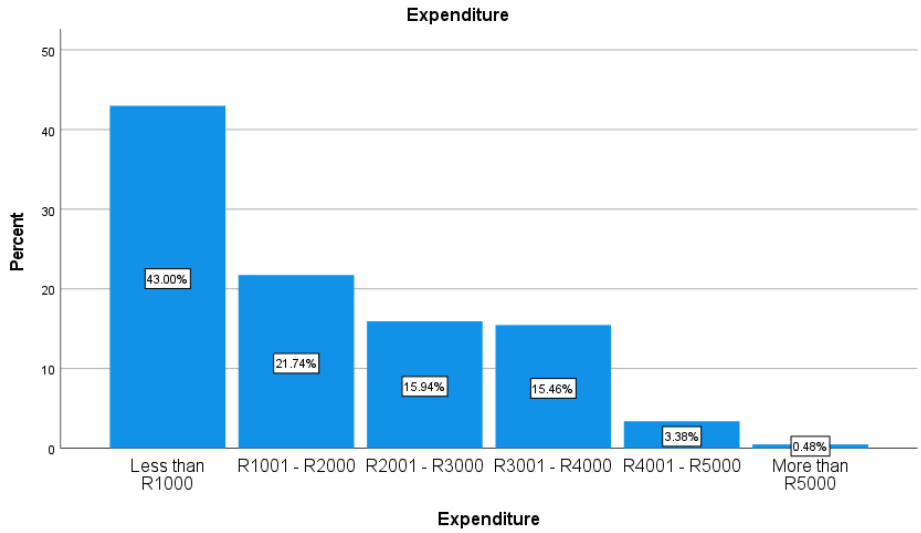


Figure 4.3 above indicates that 43% of the respondents spend less than R1000 on clothing each month, while 21.74% spend between R1001 and R2000. 15.94% and 15.46% of the

respondents highlighted that they spend between R2001 – R3000 and R3001 – R4000, respectively, on clothing per month. The highest expenditures are between R4001 – R5000 per month and more than R5000 per month, which make up 3.38% and 0.48% of the respondents, respectively.

Inferential statistics

According to Dabula (2016), inferential statistics involves evaluating statistical hypotheses and estimating population values. In this study, the proposed research framework contains several relationships between the research constructs. In addition, structural equation modelling (SEM) was implemented as a consequence. Based on theory testing rather than theory development, SEM is a confirmatory rather than exploratory analysis. The combination of the path analysis and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Phiri, 2018). Each set of construct indicators in the measurement model serves to define the construct collectively (Phiri, 2018).

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

SEM facilitates the identification and verification of correlations between a multitude of variables. According to Leguina (2015), the capability of structural equation modelling (SEM) to examine correlations between multiple latent constructs in a manner that minimizes model error may be its greatest asset. As stated by Hair, Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2021), this function enables evaluation and, ultimately, deletion of variables with inadequate measurement. Consequently, SEM techniques are optimal for attaining these objectives.

In this investigation, SEM was utilized because it is a technique that permits the simultaneous testing of multiple dependent and independent variables. The SEM was used to investigate the path relationship in the structural model. The measurement model included the following constructs: information quality, idea credibility, idea needs, idea source credibility, idea utility, attitude toward the idea, and adoption intent. This section presents an analysis, support, and discussion of the reliability, validity, and model fit outcomes of the measuring instrument. According to current literature (Hair, Gabriel, and Patel, 2014), all values fell within acceptable ranges. The findings are indicated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Measurement of Constructs' Mean, Reliability and Validity

Research Construct		Descriptive Statistics				Cronbach's Test		C.R. Value	AVE Value	Factor Loading
		Mean Value		Standard Deviation		Item - total	α value			
PESK	PESK1	3,643	3,871	0,949	0,890	0,547	0,727	0,733	0,530	0,705
	PESK2	3,903		0,935		0,529				0,630
	PESK3	4,043		0,802		0,573				0,672
	PESK4	3,894		0,875		0,428				0,540
NSF	NSF1	3,087	3,428	1,062	0,934	0,736	0,841	0,840	0,692	0,895
	NSF2	3,130		1,074		0,762				0,919
	NSFI3	3,720		0,806		0,586				0,545
	NSF4	3,773		0,795		0,652				0,611
ASF	ASF1	4,029	3,688	0,769	0,850	0,292	0,563	0,545	0,312	0,570
	ASF2	3,420		0,808		0,330				0,406
	ASF3	3,628		0,920		0,408				0,557
	ASF4	3,676		0,901		0,356				0,381
PVSF	PVSF1	3,589	3,376	0,966	0,941	0,416	0,690	0,689	0,473	0,567
	PVSF2	2,942		1,008		0,402				0,435
	PVSF3	3,290		0,992		0,614				0,617
	PVSF4	3,681		0,797		0,487				0,753
ATT	ATT1	3,734	3,741	0,745	0,834	0,644	0,768	0,785	0,548	0,748
	ATT2	3,676		0,901		0,448				0,506
	ATT3	3,710		0,802		0,704				0,758
	ATT4	3,580		0,946		0,436				0,499
	ATT5	4,005		0,773		0,514				0,716
AI	AI2	3,913	3,844	0,860	0,826	0,692	0,808	0,792	0,689	0,731
	AI3	3,797		0,768		0,606				0,776
	AI4	3,821		0,849		0,677				0,735

Constructs' Mean and Standard Deviation

The preceding table depicts the standard deviation and the mean values for the respective constructs. The average position of respondents represents the mean value of each construct. The standard deviation indicates how significantly respondents deviated from the mean. The majority of items did not noticeably depart from the 1 value. Consequently, this indicates that all respondents shared a similar perspective on each construct. The respondents did not significantly deviate from the majority in their responses. In this study, the reliability of the instruments was evaluated using the Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability tests. The test results will be discussed subsequently.

4.3 Cronbach alpha

Internal consistency is measured by the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, which is used to assess the reliability of all variables in a measurement instrument. The closer the coefficient is to 1, the more accurately the study's constructs can be measured. To be considered reliable, Cronbach Alpha values cannot exceed 0.6 (Lee, 2008). According to Brown (2012), if a measurement's reliability exceeds 0.60, it is regarded as trustworthy. The null hypothesis is rejected if the P-value is less than or equal to the – value. As shown in Table 4.2 above, Cronbach Alpha ranges from 0.563 to 0.841, indicating that, apart from ASF (0.563), all constructs are above the minimum acceptable value.

4.4 Composite reliability

The composite reliability (CR) index is acceptable and sufficient at 0.7. Internal reliability is confirmed with the use of composite reliability. Table 4.3 below shows that the CR results for PESK=0,733, NSF=0,840, ATT=0,785 and AI=0,792 are above the acceptable threshold of 0,7 except for ASF (0.563) and PVSF (0.690). According to a recent study by S. H. (2019), "thresholds for composite reliability are debatable (a reasonable threshold can range from 0.60 to greater than 0.60), with various authors suggesting different thresholds. The items present on the scale significantly influence the outcome. The use of a smaller number of scale items is generally associated with lower levels of dependability, whereas employing a larger number of scale items tends to yield higher levels of reliability. Consequently, according to S. H. (2019), PSVF is moderately acceptable. This indicates that all structures satisfy the acceptable CR threshold apart from ASF, which is below 0.6%.

Table 4.3: Composite Reliability

			Estimate	Composite reliability (CR)		
				$(\sum\lambda Yi)^2$	summation of error terms	**CRη=(Σλyi)2/[(Σλyi)2+(Σεi)]**
					ɛ̀i	∑ɛ̀i	CR
PESK	<---	PESK1	0,705	6,487	0,503	2,363	0,733
	<---	PESK2	0,630		0,603		
	<---	PESK3	0,672		0,548		
	<---	PESK4	0,540		0,708		
NSF	<---	NSF1	0,895	8,821	0,199	1,684	0,840
	<---	NSF2	0,919		0,155		
	<---	NSF3	0,545		0,703		
	<---	NSF4	0,611		0,627		
ASF	<---	ASF1	0,570	3,663	0,675	3,055	0,545
	<---	ASF2	0,406		0,835		
	<---	ASF3	0,557		0,690		
	<---	SASF4	0,381		0,855		
PVSF	<---	PVSF1	0,567	5,626	0,679	2,542	0,689
	<---	PVSF2	0,435		0,811		
	<---	PVSF3	0,617		0,619		
	<---	PVSF4	0,753		0,433		
ATT	<---	ATT1	0,748	10,414	0,440	2,848	0,785
	<---	ATT2	0,506		0,744		
	<---	ATT3	0,758		0,425		
	<---	ATT4	0,499		0,751		
	<---	ATT5	0,716		0,487		
AI	<---	AI2	0,731	5,027	0,466	1,323	0,792
	<---	AI3	0,776		0,398		
	<---	AI4	0,735		0,460		

Similar to the Cronbach Alpha, composite reliability assesses the internal consistency of scale items. The Composite Reliability Index was also employed to assess the consistency of the instrument scales in this study.

4.5 Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The average variance extracted, according to Chinomona and Pretorius (2011), reveals the total variances of the latent construct. Considering this, the AVE must be greater than 0.4 to be considered a reliable construct. When the extracted average variance (AVE) is greater than 0.50, both the construct and the individual variables have a high level of validity, according to Fornell and Larcker (1981). Phiri (2018) states that an AVE of 0.4 is acceptable. However, Pezeshkian and Sadeghi (2015) recommend that the average variance extracted for a construct should be greater than 0.50 or less than 0.50 if the composite reliability is greater than 0.60. In the past, Hair et al. (2006) argued that a minimal threshold of 0.3 is acceptable for the social sciences. Table 4.4 below shows that the AVE values in this study range from 0.312 to 0.692, which is within the marginally acceptable range of 0.3, and the CR values range from 0.545 to 0.840. The convergent validity of all constructs remains adequate. The preceding table demonstrates that all AVE values are within the acceptable range and have adequate reliability and internal consistency for this study.

Table 4.4: Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

			Estimate	λyi²	∑λyi²	ε̇i	∑ε̇i	∑λyi² / (∑λyi² + ∑ε̇i)
PESK	<---	PESK1	0,705	0,497	1,637	0,295	1,453	0,530
	<---	PESK2	0,63	0,397		0,370		
	<---	PESK3	0,672	0,452		0,328		
	<---	PESK4	0,54	0,292		0,460		
NSF	<---	NSF1	0,895	0,801	2,316	0,105	1,030	0,692
	<---	NSF2	0,919	0,845		0,081		
	<---	NSF3	0,545	0,297		0,455		
		NSF4	0,611	0,373		0,389		
ASF	<---	ASF1	0,57	0,325	0,945	0,430	2,086	0,312
	<---	ASF2	0,406	0,165		0,594		
	<---	ASF3	0,557	0,310		0,443		
	<---	ASF4	0,381	0,145		0,619		
PVSF	<---	PVSF1	0,567	0,321	1,458	0,433	1,628	0,473
	<---	PVSF2	0,435	0,189		0,565		
	<---	PVSF3	0,617	0,381		0,383		
	<---	PVSF4	0,753	0,567		0,247		
ATT	<---	ATT1	0,748	0,560	2,152	0,096	1,773	0,548
	<---	ATT2	0,506	0,256		0,168		
	<---	ATT3	0,758	0,575		0,174		
	<---	ATT4	0,499	0,249		0,247		
	<---	ATT5	0,716	0,513		0,196		
AI	<---	AI2	0,731	0,534	1,677	0,269	0,758	0,689
	<---	AI3	0,776	0,602		0,224		
	<---	AI4	0,735	0,540		0,265		

4.6 Testing for Validity

The validity of the instruments in this study is determined by the factor loadings, correlation matrix, and extracted average value (AVE).

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity refers to the extent to which two or more measures capture the same construct (Carlson, 2012). Using convergent validity, tests were conducted to comprehend the item loadings of constructs exceeding 0.5. All the items in this study were above the 0.5 threshold, excluding ASF2 (0.406), ASF4 (0.381) and PSVF2 (0.435). The factor loadings are between 0.381 and 0.919. Therefore, the table above indicates the acceptability of the majority of each item's relationship with each variable.

Table 4.5: Factor Loadings

Research Construct		Factor Loading
PESK	PESK1	0,705
	PESK2	0,630
	PESK3	0,672
	PESK4	0,540
NSF	NSF1	0,895
	NSF2	0,919
	NSF3	0,545
	NSF4	0,611
ASF	ASF1	0,570
	ASF2	0,406
	ASF3	0,557
	ASF4	0,381
PVSF	PVSF1	0,567
	PVSF2	0,435
	PVSF3	0,617
	PVSF4	0,753
ATT	ATT1	0,748
	ATT2	0,506
	ATT3	0,758
	ATT4	0,499
	ATT5	0,716
AI	AI2	0,731
	AI3	0,776
	AI4	0,735

4.7 Discriminant validity

To establish discriminant validity, the correlation between the research constructs must be less than 1. This is achieved by determining whether the observed variable has a higher loading on its construct than on any other construct present in the structural model. Using the inter-construct correlation matrix, Hair et al. (2002) determined the degree of dissimilarity and similarity between the constructs. In Table 4.7, the existence of discriminant validity is demonstrated by the fact that all paired latent variables have intercorrelation values less than 0.5. The findings indicate that the correlation with the maximum value is 0.694%. Multi-collinearity was not an issue because the correlations between the variables were not exceedingly significant (greater than 0.8).

Table 4.6: Inter-Correlation Matrix

	PESK	NSF	ASF	PVSF	ATT	AI
PESK	1					
NSF	.228**	1				
ASF	.615**	.385**	1			
PVSF	.384**	.395**	.511**	1		
ATT	.539**	.413**	.644**	.618**	1	
AI	.509**	.319**	.624**	.594**	.694**	1

4.8 CFA Model Fit Indices

Utilizing a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the model's fit was evaluated. The normed chi-square (CMIN/DF) was 2.298%, the goodness of fit index (GFI) was 0.901%, the normal fit index (NFI) was 0.905%, the relative fit index (TLI) was 0.966%, the comparative fit index (CFI) was 0.969, and the random measure of standard error approximation (RMSEA) was 0.029. All of the indicators mentioned above exhibited statistical significance at a significance level of $p < 0.01$. All of these indices satisfied the permissible threshold established in the literature (Hair et al., 2014), so the model fit was deemed adequate.

Table 4.6: CFA Model Fit Indices

Model Fit	Acceptable threshold	Results	Outcome
CMIN/DF	<3	2,298	Acceptable
GFI	>0,900	0,901	Acceptable
NFI	>0,900	0,905	Acceptable
RFI	>0,900	0,927	Acceptable
IFI	>0,900	0,957	Acceptable
TLI	>0,900	0,966	Acceptable
CFI	>0,900	0,969	Acceptable
RMSEA	<0,08	0,029	Acceptable

4.9 Structural model

Following the validation of the measurement model, version 28 of IBM SPSS Amos Graphics was used to estimate the structural model using a maximum likelihood estimate. SEM is utilized to evaluate the structural model, assess the measurement model, and examine the hypothesized relationships. The structural model assessed the hypothesized relationships between the constructs. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to analyse the structural pathways of the research model by applying path analysis and path modelling (Phiri, 2019).

The second model generated in structural equation modelling (SEM) is the theoretical framework that illustrates the interrelationships between the components (Malhotra, 2010). The acceptable threshold index and actual index values based on field data are displayed in Table 4.7 below.

The final model had good-fitting indices, with Chi-square (2/df) = 1.691 being acceptable compared to the threshold of 3 for acceptable model fit (Hair et al., 2014). NFI= 0,901, RFI= 0,914, TLI= 0,959, CFI= 0,961, and IFI= 0,954 have stable values that are greater than the criterion of >0.9 for a well-fitting model (Hair et al., 2014). The Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), which is 0.906, is marginally above the recommended cut-off value of >0.9 (Hair, 2012). (Hair et al., 2014) RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) of 0.053 is less than the recommended 0.08, indicating that the model suits the data well. From the findings, it is evident that every indicator value utilized in this study meets the cutoff as mentioned above factors. The values observed in this study were found to fall within the permissible ranges as reported in the existing literature (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 4.7 Model Fit Indices (Structural)

Model fit Criteria	**Model Fit Structural**							
Model Fit	**NFI**	**RFI**	**IFI**	**TLI**	**CFI**	**GFI**	**CMIN/DF**	**RMSEA**
Threshold	>0,900	>0,900	>0,900	>0,900	>0,900	>0,900	<3	<0,08
Indicator Value	0,901	0,914	0,954	0,959	0,961	0,906	1,691	0,034

The fit indices, validity, and reliability measurements indicate that the study's proposed model suits the data collection process well. The structural model is examined subsequently.

4.9.1 Path modelling (Structural model)

After confirming that the model was appropriate, the researcher continued to evaluate the hypotheses. After evaluating the model's fit, the structural paths according to the hypothesized relationships were investigated. The significance levels of 1%, 5%, and 10% (with p-values less than 0.01, 0.05, and 0.1, respectively) have been applied.

After determining that the model fit, the researcher continued to examine the hypotheses. After assessing the model's fit, the structural routes corresponding to the hypothesized relationships

were investigated. The applied significance levels are 1%, 5%, and 10% (p-values of 0.01, 0.05, and 0.1, respectively). Table 4.8 displays the conclusions derived from the hypotheses.

4.9.2 Hypothesis Testing

Table 4.8: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesized relationship		Path coefficients/Estimates	P-Value	Outcome
H_1	PESK → ATT	0,238	***	Supported
H_2	NSF → ATT	0,012	0,846	Not supported
H_3	ASF → ATT	0,657	***	Supported
H4	PVSF → ATT	0,639	***	Supported
H_5	ATT → AI	0,825	***	Supported

Significance level p<0.05; **significance level <0.01; and ***significance level <0.001

Source: by the Researcher

Table 4.8 above shows that out of the five hypotheses examined, four were determined to be statistically significant at a significance level of 1%. These significant findings were announced with a significance level of 0.01 and are indicated by the use of asterisks (***) in Table 4.8 when presenting the calculated probability value or p-value. However, the H_2 hypothesis did not receive support and did not demonstrate statistical significance.

4.10 Discussion of hypothesis results

H_1: *Environmental knowledge and awareness significantly influence attitudes towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.*

H_1 shows results on a positive and significant relationship between perceived environmental sustainability knowledge and attitude towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. The results show a path coefficient value of 0,238 at $p < 0.01$, as indicated by a p-value of ***. Therefore strong evidence in favour of the relationship between perceived environmental sustainability knowledge and attitude towards credibility exists. Thus implying that the more favourable the perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, the more positive the attitude towards sustainable clothing.

H_2: *Consumers' adoption intentions towards sustainable fashion are influenced more by social pressures and the desire to uphold positive regard than by environmental awareness and perceived green value.*

The results on H_2 show that the relationship between the need for sustainable fashion and attitude towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion is not significant. The results indicate that a path coefficient value of 0,012 at p>0,846, shows a weak relationship between the need for sustainable fashion and the attitude towards credibility exists. This implies that the less favourable the need for sustainable fashion, the less favourable the attitude towards sustainable clothing.

H_3: *Awareness and knowledge of sustainable fashion significantly influence consumer attitudes towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.*

The results also show that H_3 has a positive relationship between awareness of sustainable fashion and attitude towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. The results indicate that a path coefficient value of 0,657 at p<0,01 (***), shows a strong relationship between the awareness of sustainable fashion and attitude towards sustainable clothing. Consequently, this implies that the more favourable the awareness of sustainable fashion, the more favourable the attitude towards sustainable clothing.

H_4: *There is a positive and significant relationship between the perceived value of sustainable fashion and attitude toward sustainable fashion in the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.*

The results also show that H_4 has a positive relationship between the perceived value of sustainable fashion and attitude towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. The results indicate that a path coefficient value of 0,639 at p<0,01 (***), shows a strong relationship between the perceived value of sustainable fashion and attitude towards sustainable clothing. Consequently, this implies that the more favourable the perceived value of sustainable fashion, the more favourable the attitude towards sustainable clothing.

H_5: *There is a positive and significant relationship between attitude towards sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion.*

The results also show that H_5 has a positive relationship between attitude towards sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion. The results indicate that a path

coefficient value of 0,825 at p<0,01 (***), shows a strong relationship between attitude towards sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion. Consequently, this implies that the more favourable the attitude towards sustainable fashion, the more favourable the adoption intention of sustainable clothing in a fast fashion world.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter presents the final findings of the statistical study. The chapter commenced with an overview of descriptive statistics and then proceeded to examine the validity and reliability of the measurement instruments. Following the presentation of inferential statistics and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess validity and reliability, the hypotheses were examined. The upcoming chapter will analyse the research findings.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In chapter four, the outcomes of the research were presented. These results met the study's objectives, which centred on understanding consumers' influences and attitudes regarding their adoption intentions of sustainable fashion. In chapter four, the objectives were supported using hypotheses derived from empirical data, which was affirmed to be sufficient using literature aligned with the quantitative design and modelling. The results are discussed in this chapter by comparing and juxtaposing them with the literature presented in chapter two.

5.2 Perceived environmental sustainability knowledge positively influences the attitudes toward the adoption intention of sustainable fashion

In this study, four items were used to measure the determinants of perceived environmental sustainability knowledge that have a positive effect on attitudes regarding the intention to adopt sustainable fashion. The items investigated the fast fashion industry consciousness of social justice, knowledge of harsh working environments in the clothing factories, and environmental consciousness of the impact of the fast fashion industry, as well as knowledge of companies that market sustainable fashion products (Zhang, Zhang, and Zhou, 2021).

The results of this study indicate a significant and positive correlation between perceived environmental sustainability knowledge and attitude towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. Therefore, the implication is that the attitude towards sustainable fashion improves as the perceived environmental sustainability knowledge increases. These results are consistent with the findings of studies by Ahmad et al., (2020) and Leclercq-Machado et al., (2022). In the Ahmad et al. (2020) study, it was found that there was a statistically significant impact on sustainability knowledge and attitude toward the adoption of sustainable fashion innovation, while in the Leclercq-Machado et al., (2022) it was found that care for the environment and their perceived environmental knowledge affected consumers' attitude with subsequent result of higher buying intention of eco-fashion.

However, the results of this study contradict those of the study by Park and Lin (2018) where it was found that although consumers are aware of the value of sustainable clothing, their knowledge did lead to them buying sustainable fashion clothing.

5.3 The need for sustainable fashion influences the attitude towards sustainable fashion in the adoption intention of sustainable fashion

In this study, four items were used to measure the determinants of the need for sustainable fashion that have a positive effect on attitudes regarding the intention to adopt sustainable fashion. The items investigated the idea of considering sustainable fashion when buying new fashion products, the limited experience with sustainable fashion products, the need for more information about sustainable fashion, and the need for readily available information about sustainable fashion (Chu and Kim, 2011).

The results of this study indicate that the relationship between the need for sustainable fashion and the attitude towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion is not significant. This implies that the need for sustainable fashion does not influence the attitude towards the adoption attention of sustainable fashion. These negative correlation results are consistent with consumer behaviour literature that consistently found that consumers are not influenced by environmental issues when deciding on their purchase but are instead, consumers do not correlate their clothing purchase intentions with the impact of the environment in mind (Joy et al., 2012) but are rather influenced by social pressures (Ciasullo et al., 2017) and avoiding embarrassment (Wei and Jung, 2017).

However, these findings are inconsistent with Chan and Wong's (2012) study where consumer buying decisions were found to be highly influenced by their attitude towards the environment instead of how they felt about the actual sustainable fashion apparel.

5.4 Awareness of sustainable fashion positively influences the attitudes towards sustainable fashion in the adoption intention of sustainable fashion

In this study, four items were used to measure the determinants of awareness of sustainable fashion that have a positive effect on attitudes regarding the intention to adopt sustainable fashion. The items investigated familiarity with the concept of sustainable fashion, knowledge of places to buy sustainable fashion, awareness of what impact sustainable fashion has on the environment, and how often communication products on eco-fashion are consumed (Preuit and Yan, 2016).

The results of the study show a positive relationship between awareness of sustainable fashion and attitude towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. This means that awareness of sustainable fashion does influence the attitudes towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. There is consistency in the results of the studies by Munir (2020) and Su et al. (2019). A study by Su et al. (2019), found that there is a significant and positive relationship between knowledge of sustainable fashion by Generation Y youth and attitude towards eco-fashion, subsequently has a positive and significant effect on buying intention while in the Munir (2020) study it was found that knowledge of sustainable fashion is one of the factors that motivated consumers to adopt sustainable fashion.

However, the results of this study contradict those of Park and Lin (2018), which found that although consumers are aware of the value of sustainable clothing, their knowledge did lead to them buying sustainable fashion clothing. The strong and positive correlation between awareness of sustainable fashion and attitude towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion suggests that consumers stand to benefit from transparent practices by clothing retailers, provided that the relevant information is readily available. Furthermore, the provision of sustainability information can aid consumers in improving their efficacy when making more educated purchasing selections. According to Singla (2023), retailers can potentially gain advantages by aligning themselves with sustainability initiatives. This can be achieved through strategies such as improving the accessibility of sustainable garments and effectively communicating their environmental commitments to consumers (Arnesson, 2018).

5.5 Perceived value of sustainable fashion positively influences the attitudes toward the adoption intention of sustainable fashion

In this study, four items were tested to quantify the determinants of perceived value of sustainable fashion that have a positive effect on attitudes regarding the intention to adopt sustainable fashion. The items investigated the perception of the reasonableness of prices for sustainable fashion clothing, the perception of the value for money offered by sustainable fashion clothing, the perception of how sustainable fashion clothing would improve the way respondents are perceived, and the perception of feeling relaxed when using sustainable fashion clothing (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001).

The study's results show a positive relationship between the perceived value of sustainable fashion and a positive effect on attitudes regarding the intention to adopt sustainable fashion. This means that perceived value of sustainable fashion does influence the attitudes towards the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. These results are consistent with the studies by Sung and Woo (2019) Camacho-Otero et al., (2019) and Jacobs et al., (2018). A study by Sung and Woo (2019) states that the attitudes of consumers towards sustainable fashion were found to be influenced by perceived value, in turn having a buying decision and actual purchase, while the Camacho-Otero et al., (2019) study found that the prospect of the sustainable fashion innovation to be of both financial and non-financial worth to a consumer is known to have a positive influence on sustainable fashion adoption. Similarly, the results of Jacobs et al., (2018) study found that the value that a consumer receives, including "self-enhancement" and "self-transcendence" influences the attitude of the consumer towards sustainable fashion. There were no contradictory studies found in the literature to this effect. This implies that the perceived value of sustainable fashion is commonly found to have a positive effect on attitudes towards sustainable fashion and subsequent adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

5.6Attitude towards sustainable fashion positively influences the adoption intention of sustainable fashion

In this study, five items were used to measure the determinants of attitude towards sustainable fashion that have a positive effect on intention to adopt sustainable fashion. The items investigated the belief that sustainably is a good idea, the belief that sustainable fashion is beneficial, the belief in the concept of sustainable fashion as being rewarding, the belief that sustainable fashion is helpful in decision-making when shopping for fashion garments, and the belief that sustainable fashion is worth trialling (Allen, Machlet and Kleine, 1992; Ahluwalia, Unnava and Burnkrant, 2001; and Bansal, Taylor and St. James, 2005).

The results of the study show a positive relationship between attitude towards sustainable fashion and intention to adopt sustainable fashion. This means that attitude towards sustainable fashion does influence the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. These results are consistent with those of Ho et al., (2020) and Nguyen et al., (2019). In the Ho et al., (2020) study, it was found that buying intention is strongly influenced by attitude towards sustainable, while Nguyen et al., (2019) results showed that being willing to buy sustainable fashion is preceded by a positive attitude toward sustainable fashion.

However, in contrast to the above positive results, attitudes toward sustainable fashion products did not have an impact on buying intention, unlike consumer attitudes towards the environment, which had a positive buying intention (Chan and Wong, 2012). Similarly, the study by Halldórsdóttir (2021) found that attitude towards sustainable fashion was neutral in affecting purchase behaviour.

5.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, attitudes toward sustainable fashion are comprised of multiple variables: perceived environmental sustainability knowledge, awareness of sustainable fashion, need for sustainable fashion and perceived value of sustainable fashion. The research findings suggest that the purchase of sustainable products is consumed by consumers who have positive attitudes. However, attitude may function as a mediating factor between the availability of knowledge, the influence of peers, and a shift in mindset towards supporting sustainable clothes, finally resulting in the intention to make a purchase. Even if consumers have the means to purchase ethically, the purchase intent is low for sustainable fashion if their attitudes toward sustainable fashion are negative. In addition, actual knowledge may moderate the relationship between attitudes and purchase intent.

Thus, H_1 indicates that there is a positive correlation between perceived environmental sustainability knowledge and attitude toward sustainable fashion in the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. H_2 has a low significance regarding the correlation. Both H_3 and H_4 have a positive relationship between awareness of sustainable fashion and attitude, as well as between perceived value of sustainable fashion and attitude. Lastly, according to H_5, there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between attitude towards sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

These research findings suggest that companies must develop strategies that will sway customers' attitudes toward sustainable fashion and show them the value of the innovation and its benefits to their social and personal views, thereby influencing them to buy sustainable fashion. These strategies should include information for awareness creation. The following chapter concludes the study and provides recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The problem was identified that fast fashion has a negative ecological impact on the environment as well as the individuals in the manufacturing cycle in chapter one. In a highly competitive and saturated market, the fashion industry relies heavily on the cost-effective manufacturing of trend-focused seasonal apparel. Manufacturers are compelled to manufacture items utilizing finite and scarce resources to satisfy the continuous demands of the market.

Global concerns have been raised regarding social impact, industry economic development, and environmental conservation as a result of the rising use of natural resources required to satisfy fast fashion demand at competitive prices. Moreover, the heavy reliance on international manufacturers limits job creation in South Africa, where the gross domestic product is low and unemployment is high. As a result, the study focused on consumers' awareness of sustainable clothing.

The research objectives investigated in this study were to:

- To determine the factors that affect consumer awareness of sustainable clothing,
- To investigate the effect of attitudes towards sustainable fashion on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion.

This chapter presents a comprehensive summary of the study, including a review of the findings, the derived conclusions, the identified limitations, and the recommendations provided for businesses, the government, and consumers, as well as future research endeavours.

6.2 Summary of the study

The summary of the study consists of two sections: the findings from the literature review and the findings from the primary data collected in the survey.

6.2.1 Findings from the literature review

The literature review provided a synthesis of theoretical and empirical research. The theoretical review identified three relevant theories for this study, namely; Diffusion of Innovation, Theory of Planned Behaviour and Triple Trickle Theory. The relevance of the theories to this study was outlined to show how they formed the foundation of consumer behaviour when faced with

the innovation of sustainable fashion. The empirical review was based on the five identified research objectives. A review of the literature on the effect of perceived environmental sustainability knowledge and attitude on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion showed that there is a significant impact of sustainability knowledge and attitude toward green fashion innovation adoption (Ahmad et al., 2020; Leclercq-Machado et al., 2022).

However, contradictory findings were evident in another study (Park and Lin, 2018). This led to the development of $H_{1.}$ The literature reviewed on the effect of the need for sustainable fashion and consumer attitude on the adoption intention found a positive correlation (Chan and Wong, 2012). In contrast, other studies did not show such a correlation (Joy et al., 2012; Ciasullo et al., 2017; Wei and Jung, 2017). This led to the development of $H_{2.}$ Similarly, the literature on the effect of awareness of sustainable fashion and attitude on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion highlighted results that found a positive and significant relationship (Busalim et al., 2022; Su et al., 2019; Munir, 2020).

However, several studies did not find a similar positive relationship (Halldórsdóttir, 2021; Chan and Wong, 2012; Park and Lin, 2018). This resulted in the development of $H_{3.}$ Unlike other objectives, the literature on the effect of the perceived value of sustainable fashion and consumer attitude on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion showed both positive relation only (Sung and Woo, 2019; Camacho-Otero et al., 2019; Jacobs et al., 2018), with on literature showing any negative correlation. This resulted in the development of $H_{4.}$ Lastly, literature on the effect of attitude towards sustainable fashion and adoption intention of sustainable fashion showed mixed results where some studies found a positive relationship (Ho et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2019) while another study did not find such positive relationship (Chan and Wong, 2012). This led to the development of the final hypothesis, $H_{5.}$

6.2.2 Findings from the primary data

Five factors that affect sustainable consumer awareness of sustainable clothing were identified in literature, and these were Perceived Environmental Sustainability Knowledge (PESK), Attitude towards Sustainable Fashion, Awareness of Sustainable Fashion (ASF) Perceived Value of Sustainable Fashion (PVSF) and Need for Sustainable Fashion (NSF). These five factors were investigated using hypothesis testing. In this regard, the study developed five hypotheses to test effect of four determinants of attitudes towards sustainable fashion in the

adoption intention of sustainable fashion. In contrast, the fifth hypothesis tested the effect of attitudes toward sustainable fashion on the adoption intention of sustainable fashion. The results indicated positive and significant results for four of the five tested hypotheses (H_1, H_3, H_4 and H_5), while a low significance was for H_2. These results were also found to be consistent with some studies but in contradiction with others, with the exception of H_4 where no contradictory studies were found in the literature reviewed.

6.3 Limitations

One of the confines of this study is that the sample utilized for the present investigation skewed towards female respondents. The aspect mentioned above was not regarded as a constraint in the study. However, future research endeavours may strive to achieve a more equitable representation of respondents to examine the disparities in sustainable fashion consumption across genders. Secondly, this was a perception survey which was based on a cross-sectional study; hence, there is a degree of bias which may not give an accurate or reliable result.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Recommendations for Businesses

For businesses, it is crucial to enhance consumer education and awareness by developing marketing strategies that emphasize the environmental benefits and sustainability of products. This can involve detailed labelling, informative advertising campaigns, and collaborations with environmental organizations. Providing transparency in the supply chain to build trust and highlight sustainable practices is also essential. Businesses should innovate and sustain by investing in sustainable materials and technologies to reduce the environmental footprint of clothing production. Designing products that appeal to both the aesthetic and ethical preferences of consumers can drive adoption. Furthermore, fostering engagement and community building by creating platforms for consumer feedback and developing loyalty programs that reward sustainable purchases will encourage repeat buying behaviour.

6.4.2 Recommendations for the Government

For government, implementing regulatory frameworks that mandate sustainability disclosures for fashion brands is essential to ensure that consumers have access to accurate information about the environmental impact of their purchases. Governments should provide incentives for businesses that adopt sustainable practices such as tax breaks or subsidies. Promoting public

awareness campaigns through educational initiatives and collaborations with educational institutions can raise public awareness about the importance of sustainable fashion and its environmental impact. Governments should support sustainable innovation by funding research and development in sustainable fashion technologies and materials. Establishing public-private partnerships can drive innovation and scalability in sustainable fashion. These efforts will contribute to a more informed and engaged consumer base and support businesses in adopting more sustainable practices.

6.4.3 Recommendations for Consumers

Consumers should increase their personal knowledge and awareness by seeking out information about the sustainability practices of brands and making informed purchasing decisions. Participating in community groups or online forums dedicated to sustainable fashion will help consumers stay updated on trends and innovations. Adopting sustainable consumption habits by prioritizing purchasing from transparent brands with a proven track record of ethical production and practicing mindful consumption by reducing impulsive buying and opting for quality over quantity will contribute to more sustainable consumer behaviour. Consumers should also engage in advocacy and peer influence by advocating for sustainable fashion within their personal networks and on social media platforms. Supporting and participating in initiatives that promote sustainability such as clothing swaps and second-hand purchases can further influence others and expand the impact of sustainable practices.

6.4.4 Recommendations for future studies

For future studies, it is essential to expand research on diverse populations to understand the variations in sustainable fashion adoption across different segments of the population. Conducting longitudinal studies will track changes in consumer behaviour and attitudes over time, providing insights into the long-term effects of awareness and education initiatives. Integrating perspectives from psychology, sociology and environmental science can develop a more holistic understanding of consumer behaviour in the context of sustainable fashion. Future research should investigate the role of emerging technologies in promoting sustainability in the fashion industry. Examining barriers to adoption by identifying and analysing barriers such as price sensitivity, perceived inconvenience and lack of availability will help develop strategies to overcome these obstacles and facilitate wider adoption of sustainable practices. By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can significantly

enhance consumer awareness and adoption of sustainable fashion, contributing to a more sustainable future in South Africa and beyond.

6.5 Conclusion

In South Africa, sustainable fashion consumption is correlated with affluence and social standing. Due to the high number of impoverished individuals in South Africa, the moral importance of their clothes purchases is not considered a primary concern. This may be due to the prevalence of unemployment and a stagnant economy in South Africa. As a result, the awareness and demand for sustainable fashion among consumers is currently confined to a very restricted demographic. There is a lack of awareness, confusion in understanding, and little demand for sustainable fashion among South African customers.

The attitude construct encompasses various variables, such as environmental and social welfare concerns, perceived and actual knowledge, price perceptions, perceived quality and style-perceived consumer effectiveness (Stern, 2000). Nevertheless, the direct influence of attitude on sustainable fashion consumption remains unclear. There is a prediction that attitude will serve as a mediating element in the relationship between personal competence and buying intention for sustainable fashion (Stern, 2000).

The anticipated range of personal purchasing capacity for sustainable fashion is projected to vary from low to high. It is imperative to acknowledge that individuals possess diverse financial means and exhibit differing levels of understanding of sustainable fashion brands (Arnesson, 2018). Nevertheless, it is improbable that a strong personal aptitude alone can account for the ambition to engage in consuming sustainable fashion. The role of attitude can serve as a mediator in elucidating the association between an individual's capabilities and their intention to make a purchase (Arnesson, 2018).

In the absence of favourable attitudes, individuals may have a diminished propensity to develop purchasing intentions towards sustainable fashion, irrespective of their capabilities. This proposition is substantiated by empirical studies that suggest that attitudes do not exert a direct impact on the intention to purchase ethical products. Rather, attitudes serve as a mediating factor between capability, contextual elements, and the intention to purchase ethical products

(Stern, 2000). This study has provided insights into how different variables can affect attitudes towards sustainable fashion intention adoption, albeit with mixed results.

REFERENCES

Ahmad, A., Madi, Y., Abuhashesh, M., and Nusairat, N. M. (2020). The knowledge, attitude, and practice of the adoption of green fashion innovation. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 6(4), 107.

Bardi, A. and Schwartz, S.H. (2003), "Values and behaviour: strength and structure of relations", Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29(10), 1207-1220.

Bureau of International Labor Affairs. (2021). List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor | U.S. Department of Labor

Busalim, A., Fox, G., and Lynn, T. (2022). Consumer behaviour in sustainable fashion: A systematic literature review and future research agenda. International Journal of Consumer Studies, 46(5), 1804-1828.

Boykoff, M. C. (2021). Examining climate change and sustainable/fast fashion in the 21st century: 'Trash the Runway'. *Oxford Open Climate Change.*

Brown, T. a. (2012). Confirmatory factor analysis. *Handbook of structural equation modelling*, 361-379.

Chang, H. J., and Watchravesringkan, K. (Tu). (2018). Who are sustainably minded apparel shoppers? An investigation to the influencing factors of sustainable apparel consumption. International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management, 46(2), 148–162

Chen, M. X. (2021). Internet Celebrities' Impact on Luxury Fashion Impulse Buying. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 16(6), 2470-2489.

Chi, T.; Ganak, J.; Summers, L.; Adesanya, O.; McCoy, L.; Liu, H.; Tai, Y. (2021). Understanding Perceived Value and Purchase Intention toward Eco-Friendly Athleisure Apparel. *Insights from U.S. Millennials. Sustainability* 2021, 13(14),7946.

Colnago, Q. C. (2019). The ethical concerns of the fast fashion consumer: A gender perspective.

Correa, M. E. (2021). *Fashion, Design and Sustainability. New Horizons in the Ways of Conceiving Production Processes. In Sustainable Fashion and Textiles in Latin America.* Singapore: Springer.

Dabula, N. (2016). *The influence of social media political marketing on trust, loyalty and voting intention of youth voters in South Africa* (Doctoral dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, Wits Business School).

Dangelico, R. M., Alvino, L., and Fraccascia, L. (2022). Investigating the antecedents of consumer behavioural intention for sustainable fashion products: Evidence from a large survey of Italian consumers. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 185, 122010.

Das, M., Herweyers, L., Moons, I., and Du Bois, E. (2021). Strategic design opportunities to increase sustainable fashion awareness and behaviour. *Proceedings of the Design Society*, 1, 2711-2720.

Dissanayake, D. G. (2021). Towards Circular Economy in Fashion: Review of Strategies, Barriers and Enablers. *Circular Economy and Sustainability*, 1-21.

Drennan, K. (2015). Picking Up the Threads. Alternatives Journal, 41(3), 20–23. Fashion's tiny hidden secret. (2019, March 13). UNEP.

Engineering News. (2022). Less than 1% of discarded textiles are recycled back into clothing. Online available from: https://m.engineeringnews.co.za/article/less-than-1-of-discarded-textiles-are-recycled-back-into-clothing-2022-09-27

Fanoberova, A., and Kuczkowska, H. (2016). Effects of source credibility and information quality on attitudes and purchase intentions of apparel products: A quantitative study of online shopping among consumers in Sweden.

Fornell, C., and Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of marketing research*, 18(1), 39-50.

Gibbard, A. (2008). *Reconciling our aims: In search of bases for ethics.* Oxford University Press.

Goworek, H., Hiller, Al., Fischer, T. Cooper, T. and Woodward, S. (2013). Consumers' attitudes towards sustainable fashion: clothing usage and disposal. Sustainability in Fashion and Textiles, 17, 376-392.

Grant, C. a. (2014). Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: Creating the blueprint for your "house". *Administrative Issues Journal*, 4(2), p.4.

Hagman, O., Segerqvist, I., and Wahlström, S. (2017). Credibility of green marketing in the fast fashion industry.

Hair, J.F., Gabriel, M. and Patel, V. (2014). AMOS covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM): Guidelines on its application as a marketing research tool. *Brazilian Journal of Marketing*, *13*(2).

Hair Jr, J., Hair Jr, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., and Sarstedt, M. (2021). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)*. Sage publications.

Halldórsdóttir , H.R. (2021). *Fashion Consumption towards sustainability: Influencing factors of the attitude-behaviour gap in relation to sustainable fashion*. Doctoral Thesis. University of Iceland.

Han, J., Seo, Y., and Ko, E. (2017). Staging luxury experiences for understanding sustainable fashion consumption: A balance theory application. *Journal of Business Research*, 74, 162-167.

Helsinki: Aalto University. Available at: https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/handle/123456789/13770 Date Accessed: (1 August 2023).

HandM Annual Report. Available at:

https://about.hm.com/content/dam/hmgroup/groupsite/documents/masterlanguage/Annual%20Report/Annual%20Report%202018.pdf Date Accessed: (31 July 2023)

Henninger, C.E., Alevizou, P.J. and Oates, C.J., 2016. What is sustainable fashion?. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, *20*(4), pp.400-416.

Ho, T. T. H., Vu, T. N. P., and Vu, H. M. (2020). Determinants influencing consumers purchasing intention for sustainable fashion: Evidence from Ho Chi Minh City. The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business (JAFEB), 7(11), 977-986.

Hustvedt, G., and Dickson, M. A. (2009). Consumer likelihood of purchasing organic cotton apparel. Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, 13(1), 49–65.

Jacobs, K., Petersen, L., Hörisch, J., and Battenfeld, D. (2018). Green thinking but thoughtless buying? An empirical extension of the value-attitude-behaviour hierarchy in sustainable clothing. Journal of Cleaner Production, 203, 1155–1169.

Joshi, A. K. (2015). Likert scale: Explored and explained. *British Journal of Applied Science and Technology*, 7(4), 396.

Kang, J. W., and Namkung, Y. (2019). The information quality and source credibility matter in customers' evaluation toward food O2O commerce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *78*, 189-198.

Khandual, A., and Pradhan, S. (2019). Fashion brands and consumers approach towards sustainable fashion. *Fast fashion, fashion brands and sustainable consumption*, 37-54.

Lascity, M. E. (2021). *Communicating fashion: Clothing, culture, and media.* . Bloomsbury Publishing.

Leclercq-Machado, L., Alvarez-Risco, A., Gómez-Prado, R., Cuya-Velásquez, B. B., Esquerre-Botton, S., Morales-Ríos, F., ... and Yáñez, J. A. (2022). Sustainable fashion and consumption patterns in Peru: An environmental-attitude-intention-behavior analysis. Sustainability, 14(16), 9965.

Lee, S. a. (2008). Assessment methods in human body composition. . *Current opinion in clinical nutrition and metabolic care*, 11(5), p.566.

Leguina, A. (2015). A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).

Lambert, M. (2014). The Lowest Cost at Any Price: The Impact of Fast Fashion on the Global Fashion Industry (p. 155).

Mohammed, V., and Razé, A. (2023). Towards Sustainable Fashion Consumption: An Exploratory Study of Consumer Behaviour in a Developing Country. *Journal of Sustainable Marketing*, 4(1), 90-109.

Malhotra, N. K. (2010). *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation*. (Sixth ed.). Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall.

May, J. (2022). TWYG New report offers advice on how to green the South Africa clothing and textile industry. Available at: https://twyg.co.za/new-report-offers-advice-on-how-to-green-the-south-african-clothing-and-textile-industry/ Date accessed: (01 August 2023)

McNeill, L., and Moore, R. (2015). Sustainable fashion consumption and the fast fashion conundrum: fashionable consumers and attitudes to sustainability in clothing choice. International Journal of Consumer Studies, 39(3), 212-222.

Min Kong, H., and Ko, E. (2017). Why do consumers choose sustainable fashion? A cross-cultural study of South Korean, Chinese, and Japanese consumers. Journal of Global Fashion Marketing, 8(3), 220–234.

Mishra, S. M. (2021). Impact of self-expressiveness and environmental commitment on sustainable consumption behavior: the moderating role of fashion consciousness. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 1-23.

Mohr, I., Fuxman, L., and Mahmoud, A. B. (2022). A triple-trickle theory for sustainable fashion adoption: the rise of a luxury trend. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 26(4), 640-660.

Morgan, B. (2020) 11 Fashion Companies Leading the Way in Sustainability. Available at:https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2020/02/24/11-fashion-companies-leading-the-way-in-sustainability/?sh=4cdab0ed6dba

Mukendi, A., Davies, I., Glozer, S., and McDonagh, P. (2020). Sustainable fashion: current and future research directions. *European Journal of Marketing*, 54(11), 2873-2909.

Munir, S. (2020). Eco-fashion adoption in the UAE: Understanding consumer barriers and motivational factors. *Fashion Practice*, 12(3), 371-393.

Nguyen, T. K. C., Nguyen, D. M., Trinh, V. T., Tran, T. P. D., and Cao, T. P. (2020). Factors affecting intention to purchase green products in Vietnam. The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business, 7(4), 205-211.

Niinimäki, K. (2011). *From disposable to sustainable: the complex interplay between design and consumption of textiles and clothing. Doctoral dissertation*.

Niinimäki, K., 2015. Ethical foundations in sustainable fashion. *Textiles and Clothing Sustainability*, *1*, pp.1-11.

Okour, M.K, Chong, C.W. and Abdel-Fattah, F.A.M. (2021) Knowledge management systems usage: application of diffusion of innovation theory. Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication. 1-16

Park, J. and. (2016). Qualitative versus quantitative research methods: Discovery or justification? *Journal of Marketing Thought*, 3(1), 1-8.

Park, H. J., and Lin, L. M. (2018). Exploring attitude–behavior gap in sustainable consumption: comparison of recycled and upcycled fashion products. Journal of Business Research, (August), 1–16.

Pezeshkian, S., and Sadeghi, T. (2015). An Investigation into the Effect of Internet Banking Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction (Case Study: Khorasan Razavi Saderat Bank). *Fen Bilimleri Dergisi (CFD)*, *36*(6).

Phiri, N. E. M. (2018). *The mediating role of emotions in the relationship between experiential marketing and repurchase intention of energy drinks: a case of generation Y* (Doctoral dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management).

Pokhylko, S. V. (2021). *Drop shipping development under COVID-19 circumstances as the most common method of e-commerce.*

President Cyril Ramaphosa: 2023 State of the Nation Address | South African Government. (2023, February 9). *President Cyril Ramaphosa: 2023 State of the Nation Address | South African Government. https://www.gov.za/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-2023-state-nation-address-9-feb-2023-0000*

Preuit, R., and Yan, R. N. T. (2016). *Fashion and sustainability: increasing knowledge about slow fashion through an educational module*. Paper presented at the International Textile and Apparel Association Annual Conference Proceedings, Iowa State University Digital Press.

Puiu, I. A (2021). The effect of the consumer decision-making process on perceived value towards slow fashion. *Three Seas Economic Journal*, 2(1), 1-7.

Queirós, Faria, and Almeida (2017). Strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research methods. European Journal of Education Studies, 3(9), 369-387.

Rogers, E.M. (2003). Diffusion of innovations (5th ed.). New York: Free Press.

Ryan, G. 2018. Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. Nurse Researcher. 25. 14-20

Sahin, I. (2006). Detailed review of Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory and educational technology- related studies based on Rogers' theory. Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology,5(2),14-23.

Shafie, S., Kamis, A., Ramli, M. F., Abu Bedor, S., and Ahmad Puad, F. N. (2021). Fashion Sustainability: Benefits of Using Sustainable Practices in Producing Sustainable Fashion Designs. *International Business Education Journal*, 14(1), 103-111

Shen, D., Richards, J. and Liu, F. (2013). Consumer awareness on sustainable fashion. *Marketing Management Journal*, Fall 2013, 23(2), 134 - 147.

South Africa's Unemployment Rate Remains the Highest in the World (2023). Available at: https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/south-africas-unemployment-rate-remains-highest-in-world-6f892261-5da0-450d-975c-65a0953f6d06 Date Accessed: (01 August 2023)

Srivastava, M. (2015). Influencers of Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty Relationship A Conceptual Research Model. *Journal of Faculty of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University*, 7(1), 54-65.

Su, J., Watchravesringkan, K. (Tu), Zhou, J., and Gil, M. (2019). Sustainable clothing: perspectives from US and Chinese young millennials. International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management, 47(11), 1141–1162.

Sung, J., and Woo, H. (2019). Investigating male consumers' lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) and perception toward slow fashion. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 49(September 2018), 120–128.

Sweeney, J. C., and Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 77, 203–220.

Taylor, C., Spacco, J., Bunde ,D.P, Zeume,T., Butler,Z., Bort,H., Maiorana, F. and Hovey, C. L. (2018). Propagating the adoption of CS educational innovations. In Proceedings of ITiCSE 2018, Larnaca, Cyprus, June 2018 (ITiCSE '18), 1 - 16.

Thielo, A. J. (2021). The Opt-In Internet Survey. . *The Encyclopedia of Research Methods in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 1, 274-279.

Thomas, D. (2019). Fashionopolis: The Price of Fast Fashion and the Future of Clothes. Penguin Press. Available at:

https://unmhonorsart.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/thomas_fashionopolis__price_of_furious_fashion.pdf Date Accessed: (01 August 2023)

To, S. H. (2019). Composite Reliability: Definition. *online]. Retrieved from: https://www.statisticshowto.com/composite-reliability-definition/ [Accessed 14 June, 2021]*.

Triantafyllidi, A., and Magdy, R. (2021). *An Innovation Resistance Theory Perspective on Sustainable Fashion*. Seminar date: 26th of May 2021

United States Environmental Protection Agency (2020). What you should know about microfiber pollution. Available at: https://www.epa.gov/trash-free-waters/what-you-should-know-about-microfiber-pollution Date Accessed: (01 August 2023)

US EPA, O. (2013, May 17). Health and Ecological Hazards Caused by Hazardous Substances [Overviews and Factsheets].

UN News (2019). UN launches drive to highlight environmental cost of staying fashionable. Available at: https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/03/1035161 Date Accessed: (31 July 2023)

UN Environment Programme (2019). Fashion's tiny hidden secret. Available at: https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/fashions-tiny-hidden-secretDate Accessed: (31 July 2023)

Vijeyarasa, R., and Liu, M. (2022). Fast Fashion for 2030: Using the Pattern of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to Cut a More Gender-Just Fashion Sector. Business and Human Rights Journal, 7(1), 45–66

Wei, X. and Jung, S. (2017), "Understanding Chinese Consumers' Intention to Purchase Sustainable Fashion Products: The Moderating Role of Face-Saving Orientation", Sustainability, Vol. 9 No. 9, pp. 1570.

Whitfield, L. and Mkhabela, V. (2023). The Business Strategies of South African Textile Firms and Global Trends in 4IR and Sustainability Technologies. *SARChI Industrial Development Working Paper Series, WP 2023-01*. SARChI Industrial Development, University of Johannesburg.

Williams, E., 2022. Appalling or Advantageous? Exploring the Impacts of Fast Fashion From Environmental, Social, and Economic Perspectives. *Journal for Global Business and Community*, *13*(1).

Zhang, B.; Zhang, Y.; Zhou, P. (2021). Consumer Attitude towards Sustainability of Fast Fashion Products in the UK. *Sustainability*, 13(4), 1-23.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INVITATION LETTER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

Good day,

My name is Skhumbuzo Makwasa, a student studying towards a Master of Business administration degree at Wits Business School in Johannesburg, South Africa. As part of my studies, I must undertake a Business Venture Proposal. The aims of the study investigate the need and adoption of sustainable clothing. You are hereby invited to participate in the research study.

Your participation is voluntary. The survey is confidential and anonymous. Anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed. No personal information is required in the questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers. You may withdraw from this study at any stage or not answer any questions if you feel uncomfortable. In addition, your participation involves no risk, no disadvantages, penalties, or loss of benefits if you do not choose to participate or withdraw from the study.

The information required from this questionnaire will be used solely for academic purposes. Your response will be of great value to this study. Please feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr Thomas Dorson, or me should you have any questions regarding the study.

Kind Regards,

Skhumbuzo Makwasa
Researcher
Email: 0600420Y@students.wits.ac.za
Contact number +27 71 351 9415

Supervisor
Dr Thomas Dorson
Email: thomas.dorson.anning@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM

Your participation in the study is very important to us. You may choose not to participate in the study and stop at any point without any negative consequences.

You will not receive any financial benefit from this study; however, your participation will contribute to a wealth of academic knowledge in the country and globally.

The study results will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal.

Please answer the questions as completely and honestly as possible.

Please indicate your acceptance or refusal to complete the survey.

Yes I consent

No, I do not consent

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE

This study aims to investigate the attitudes and adoption intention of South African consumers towards sustainable fashion. Sustainable fashion is concerned with the ecological means of how clothing manufacturers produce clothing and how clothing is utilised and discarded by consumers. The fashion industry relies heavily on cost-effective manufacturing of trend-focused seasonal clothing in a highly competitive and saturated market. Consumers' purchase cycles, utilisation, and discarding of fashionable clothing negatively impact the environment due to the high demand. Manufacturers have to produce goods with limited, scarce resources to meet the ongoing market demands.

Moreover, manufacturer production methods have a carbon footprint. The fast fashion trend has influx sales with clothing being washed too frequently and not discarded when no longer perceived as fashionable. In contrast, sustainable fashion aims to have a low impact on the environment through ethical means of design, procurement, and production.

BIOGRAPHICAL & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

This section seeks background information about you. The information you provided remain anonymous and will be used for research purposes only. Please indicate your answer by crossing (x) to the appropriate block.

A1 Please indicate your gender:

Male	1	Female	2	I prefer not to indicate	3

A2 Please indicate your age category:

18 – 24 years	1	25 – 34 years	2	35 – 44 years	3	>45 years	4

A3 Please indicate your education level:

Matric/ High School	1
Diploma	2
Degree	3
Post-graduate Degree	4
Other (specify)	5

A4 Please indicate your current employment status:

Student	1
Employed	2
Self-employed	3
Unemployed	4
Retired	5

A5 Please indicate your total monthly household income

Below R10 000	1
R11 000-R20 000	2
R21 000-R30 000	3
R31 000-R40 000	4
R41 000-R50 000	5
Exceeding R50 000	6

A6 How financially well-off do you consider your household to be?

Somewhat wealthy	1
Not so wealthy	2

Very wealthy	3
Not wealthy at all	4

A7 How much money do you spend on clothing each month?

Less than R1 000	1
R1 001- R2 000	2
R2 001- R3 000	3
R3 001- 4 000	4
R4 001- R5 000	5
More than R5 000	6

Please answer ALL the below questions by indicating to which extent you disagree or agree with each statement on sustainable fashion.

Please note that 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree.

PERCEIVED ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY KNOWLEDGE (PESK)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
PESK 1	I am aware of social equity issues in the fast fashion industry such as working conditions of factory worker and fair trade.	1	2	3	4	5
PESK 2	I am aware of child labour and sweatshop issues in the global supply chain of the fast fashion industry..	1	2	3	4	5
PESK 3	I am informed of environmental issues in the fast fashion industry such as waste and pollution caused by excessive production of garments	1	2	3	4	5
PESK 4	I am knowledgeable about the apparel brands that sell eco-friendly fashion products.	1	2	3	4	5

Zhang, Zhang, and Zhou (2021).

NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION (NSF)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
NSF1	I want to consider the idea of sustainable fashion when buying new fashion products.	1	2	3	4	5
NSF2	I have little experience with sustainable fashion products.	1	2	3	4	5
NSF3	Generally, there is a need for more information about sustainable fashion	1	2	3	4	5
NSF4	Information about sustainable fashion is not readily available and is needed	1	2	3	4	5

Chu and Kim, 2011)

PERCEIVED VALUE OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION (PVSF)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
PV1	Sustainable fashion clothing is reasonably priced.	1	2	3	4	5
PV2	Sustainable fashion clothing offers value for money	1	2	3	4	5
PV3	Sustainable fashion clothing would improve the way I am perceived.	1	2	3	4	5
PV4	Sustainable fashion clothing is the one that I would feel relaxed using.	1	2	3	4	5

Sweeney and Soutar (2001)

AWARENESS OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION (ASF)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
ASF1	I am familiar with the term sustainable fashion.	1	2	3	4	5
ASF2	I know where to purchase fast fashion apparel.	1	2	3	4	5
ASF3	I know about the environmental impacts of sustainable fashion apparel	1	2	3	4	5
ASF4	I have often read articles or news about sustainable fashion apparel	1	2	3	4	5

Preuit and Yan, 2016)

ATTITUDE TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FASHION (ATTITUDE TOWARDS IDEA)						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
ATT1	I believe that the concept of sustainable fashion is a good idea.	1	2	3	4	5
ATT2	I believe that the concept of sustainable fashion is beneficial.	1	2	3	4	5
ATT3	I believe that the concept of sustainable fashion can be rewarding.	1	2	3	4	5
ATT4	The concept of sustainable fashion is helpful in decision-making when shopping for fashion garments	1	2	3	4	5
ATT5	I believe that the concept of sustainable fashion is worth trialling.	1	2	3	4	5

Allen, Machlet and Kleine (1992), Ahluwalia, Unnava and Burnkrant (2001) and Bansal, Taylor and St. James (2005)

ADOPTION INTENTION OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
AI1	After considering information about sustainable fashion products, I will likely buy fashion products guided by the information provided.	1	2	3	4	5
AI2	After considering information about sustainable fashion products, I will purchase fashion products next time with this idea.	1	2	3	4	5
AI3	After considering information about sustainable fashion products, I will try fashion products with the information in mind.	1	2	3	4	5
AI4	After considering information about sustainable fashion products, I will recommend that friends buy fashion products with a sustainable fashion idea.	1	2	3	4	5

Cheung, Luo, Sia, and Chen (2009)

Thank you for your participation!