

Impact of Fashion Literacy on Sustainable Fashion Adoption and Consumption: Theoretical Foundations and Research Agenda

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Abstract: The fast fashion industry contributes significantly to environmental and social challenges through overconsumption and wasteful practices. This study explores the role of fashion literacy in promoting sustainable practices, particularly in the growing e-retail market. The research uses the TCCM Framework (Theory, Context, Characteristics, Methodology) to review key studies and understand how fashion literacy influences consumer behavior and supports sustainability. It draws on various theories, including the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory, Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), etc., to understand a conceptual framework for studying the impact of fashion literacy on sustainable consumption. The findings suggest that improving fashion literacy enables consumers, especially Millennials and Generation Z, to make informed, sustainable choices by understanding the ethical and environmental impacts of their purchases. However, fast fashion continues to appeal due to affordability and convenience. The study emphasizes the need for educational initiatives, digital tools, and targeted campaigns to bridge the gap between awareness and action, while urging brands and policymakers to address price barriers and improve access to sustainable alternatives. Ultimately, the research underscores the critical role of fashion literacy in reshaping consumption patterns and advancing sustainability in the fashion industry, offering valuable insights, and proposing future research directions to drive meaningful change.

Keywords: Fashion Literacy, Sustainable Fashion, Consumer Behavior, Circular Economy, Sustainable Consumption

1. Introduction

In the e-commerce industry, the Asia-Pacific region has become the world's fastest-growing market, contributing to more than half of the global online retail sales (Deloitte, 2017). Within this context, among the largest polluters in fashion industry is apparel, creating various social as well as environmental challenges (McNeill & Venter, 2019). The fashion industry's push for sustainability is at odds with its fast-paced production of new designs, making it a major polluter. It contributes 8-10% of global emissions and is the second-largest consumer of water worldwide, despite efforts by manufacturers and retailers to showcase their green credentials Shrivastava et al., (2021). The fashion industry's environmental and societal impact remains concerning, as the fast fashion business model encourages overconsumption and excessive waste. The IDH (2023) report highlights that both production and consumption trends result in significant textile waste generation and emission of greenhouse gases (CHGs). These Greenhouse gases (GHGs), especially carbon dioxide (CO₂), are major contributors to global climate change, which presents unprecedented risks to the environment, sustainable development, and overall ecological balance (Raihan & Tuspekova, 2022). This presents an opportunity for innovation and technological advancement, particularly in textile waste recycling, which can bring economic, social, and environmental benefits. The fashion industry has been propelled by consumption-driven growth, largely led by fast fashion companies (Garcia-Ortega et al., 2023). Fast fashion, known for its rapid turnover and low prices, is a key contributor to apparel waste, pushing consumers to buy more frequently and dispose of garments quickly (Madhavan, 2022). Fast fashion has transformed clothing consumption patterns over the past few decades, providing consumers with affordable, trendy apparel at a rapid pace



(McNeill & Moore, 2015; Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). Consumers now expect low-priced apparel, with frequent collections and seasonal sales driving repeat purchases (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). These behaviors have driven impulsive buying and increased clothing disposal (Joung, 2014; Weber et al., 2017). Studies show that sustainable fashion often loses out due to the higher price point when compared to fast fashion, which is a significant barrier for consumers (Ceylan, 2019; KPMG, 2019). Understanding generational consumer behavior is key to addressing these challenges. Generation Y is particularly mindful of business practices that impact society and the environment, advocating for ethical production methods and being willing to pay a premium for socially responsible products (Deloitte, 2019; López-Fernández, 2020). However, this generation also represents a significant portion of the fast fashion market due to its demand for style, quality, and affordability (Hill & Lee, 2015; Lundblad & Davies, 2016). They tend to dispose of clothing quickly, contributing to a cycle of unsustainable consumption (Bray et al., 2011; Ekström et al., 2015). Generation Z, the largest global population group at 32%, is known for its digital nativity, preferring visual content over text, and expecting rapid innovation in fashion (Miller & Lu, 2018; Prakashyadav & Rai, 2017). This generation is known for impulse buying, with 41% saying they make quick purchases, compared to 34% of Millennials and 32% of Generation X (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). Therefore, fast fashion continues to dominate the market for younger consumers, despite growing awareness of environmental concerns (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). Consumer behavior can be influenced through effective marketing communication strategies that focus on sustainability and fashion literacy (Utkarsh et al., 2019). While many consumers express support for ecological fashion, their purchasing decisions do not always reflect their awareness of environmental issues (Ceylan, 2019). The majority of consumers are unwilling to spend extra on sustainable fashion brands and prefer prices similar to fast fashion (KPMG, 2019). However, studies suggest that sustainability can positively affect buying decisions, especially when clothes are made from reused materials (Lundblad & Davies, 2016; Grazzini et al., 2020). For the sustainable future of the apparel sector, it is essential to move away from the fast fashion model to reduce overproduction and waste (Mandarić et al., 2022). While price, value, and quality dominate purchasing decisions, the urgency of shifting toward sustainability is growing. Increasing fashion literacy can reduce fast fashion's dominance and promote sustainable practices (Mandarić et al., 2022). There are various challenges in sustainable adoption, such as the disconnect between environmental awareness and action, known as the attitude-behavior gap. High behavioral costs, lack of infrastructure, and limited consumer knowledge about sustainability hinder the widespread adoption of sustainable fashion (Syed et al., 2024). The global apparel industry faces sustainability challenges due to overconsumption and wasteful discarding, with most clothing ending up in landfills (Beltrami et al., 2020; Wiedmann et al., 2020; Madsen et al., 2007).

In this context, our study explores the relationship between fashion literacy and sustainability, examining the implications this connection holds for fashion brands. We have investigated how increasing fashion literacy among consumers can foster sustainable practices, helping to reduce the fast fashion mindset. The research also aims to uncover key theories and constructs that explain this relationship, offering insights into how fashion literacy encourages sustainability by shifting consumer preferences from fast fashion to long-term, sustainable fashion. By analyzing these theoretical frameworks, we seek to highlight the mechanisms through which fashion literacy impacts sustainability. This provides valuable guidance for fashion brands seeking to align their marketing and educational strategies with the growing consumer awareness of sustainable fashion practices.

Thus, our study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: How does fashion literacy among consumers influence the adoption of sustainable fashion, and its implications of this for fashion brands?

RQ2: Which essential theories and concepts explain the impact of fashion literacy on sustainable fashion adoption, and how can these insights inform future research and strategic planning in the field?

2. Methodology

This study employs the TCCM Framework (Theory, Context, Characteristics, Methodology) introduced by Paul et al. (2019) to systematically review and synthesize existing literature on the impact of fashion literacy on sustainable fashion consumption. The theoretical dimension focuses on identifying key theories relevant to understanding the link between fashion literacy and sustainable consumption. These theories were selected based on their ability to explain consumer decision-making processes, sustainability adoption, and behavioral transitions. Foundational studies published in earlier decades were prioritized to ensure a strong theoretical grounding and to connect contemporary discussions with well-established frameworks. The methodological dimension emphasizes conceptual studies and secondary data synthesis, utilizing peer-reviewed articles, industry reports, and government publications published

between 2000 and 2023. Initially, 638 papers were identified through a meticulous screening process using relevant keywords, and 146 papers were selected for further review as shown in Table 1. Literature was systematically identified using databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science with keywords including “fashion literacy,” “sustainable fashion,” and “circular economy,” ensuring inclusivity and relevance. Articles were categorized based on their alignment with the TCCM dimensions to build a cohesive narrative linking fashion literacy to sustainable practices, with a focus on underexplored areas such as the role of digital tools and emerging markets. This process facilitated the identification of research gaps, key theories, and the formulation of several research questions. The Table 1 shows the bibliographic sources on fashion literacy, sustainability, and consumer behavior in our study:

Table 1: Bibliographic Sources on Fashion Literacy, Sustainability, and Consumer Behavior in Our Study

Bibliographic Source	Article in Review	Total %
Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	1	1
Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences	1	1
Advances in consumer research	1	1
Advances in experimental social psychology	2	1
Annual review of psychology	1	1
Articles	3	2
Australasian Marketing Journal	1	1
Books	2	1
British Food Journal	1	1
Cleaner and Responsible Consumption	1	1
Communication and persuasion	1	1
Contemporary educational psychology	1	1
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	1	1
CyberPsychology & Behavior	1	1
Decision Support Systems	1	1
Deloitte	2	1
Energy Efficiency	1	1
Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal	1	1
Food Policy	1	1
Global journal of enterprise information system	1	1
H&M	1	1
Human ecology review	1	1
Information & Management	1	1
International Journal of Advertising	2	1
International Journal of Consumer Studies	8	5
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	1	1
International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education	2	1
International journal of information management	1	1

International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	2	1
Journal of Brand Management	1	1
Journal of Business Ethics	4	3
Journal of Business Research	6	4
Journal of Cleaner Production	6	4
Journal of Consumer Affairs	1	1
Journal of Consumer Behavior	2	1
Journal of Consumer Marketing	1	1
Journal of consumer policy	1	1
Journal of economic psychology	1	1
Journal of Enterprise Information Management	1	1
Journal of Environmental psychology	1	1
Journal of Euromarketing	1	1
Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	2	1
Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal	2	1
Journal of Global Fashion Marketing	1	1
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	2	1
Journal of interactive marketing	1	1
Journal of International Consumer Marketing	1	1
Journal of Macromarketing	2	1
Journal of Marketing	1	1
Journal of Marketing Analytics	1	1
Journal of Marketing Communications	1	1
Journal of Marketing Research	1	1
Journal of Product and Brand Management	1	1
Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing	1	1
Journal of retailing and consumer services	4	3
Journal of Risk and Financial Management	2	1
Journal of services marketing	1	1
Journal of Social issues	2	1
Journal of Strategic Marketing	1	1
Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	1	1
Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research	1	1
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	1	1
Journal of vacation marketing	1	1
KPMG	1	1
Marketing Intelligence and Planning	1	1
Marketing Management Journal	1	1

Marketing Theory	1	1
McKinsey&Company	1	1
Nature communications	1	1
Nature Reviews Earth & Environment	1	1
Online Information Review	1	1
Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin	1	1
Psychology & Marketing	2	1
Public Relations Review	1	1
PWC Report	1	1
Reports	7	5
Resources, Conservation & Recycling Advances	4	3
Science and Technology Progress and Policy	1	1
Science of the total environment	1	1
Scientific Programming	1	1
Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC	1	1
Sustainability	8	5
Textile & Leather Review	1	1
The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research	1	1
The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business	1	1
Tourism management	1	1
Waste Management and Sustainable Consumption	1	1
International Marketing Review	1	1
Google Scholar	4	3
	147	100

3. Literature review

3.1. Fashion Literacy: Conceptualization and Importance

Lazer (1963) introduced lifestyle as a segmentation tool in marketing, which helps understand consumer behavior based on how they live, what they own, and the way they interact socially (Gunter, 2016). Lifestyle factors like values, self-image, fashion orientation, and fashion literacy help evaluate a person's behavior and decisions (Dahana et al., 2019). One key measure is fashion literacy, which allows individuals to align their fashion decisions with their lifestyle values (Dursun et al., 2019). Greater awareness of environmental issues is associated with higher involvement in pro-environmental behaviors, including sustainable purchasing, as shown in studies on fair trade products (De Pelsmacker & Janssens, 2007). Fashion literacy, according to Schroeder et al. (2015), goes beyond brand perception, fostering personal and cultural associations. Fashion-literate consumers seek novelty and excitement to fulfil emotional needs like pleasure and curiosity, often shopping more and focusing on social values to build identity and status (Blake et al., 2007; Quigley & Notarantonio, 2009). In contrast, low fashion literacy leads to prioritizing price over quality, driving fast fashion purchases (Goldsmith & Newell, 1997; Lumpkin & McConkey, 1984). Promoting sustainable fashion literacy can shift behavior towards reducing environmental harm (Lee et al., 2020), with environmental knowledge positively influencing sustainable fashion purchases (Ho et al., 2020). Fashion literacy, as defined by Schroeder et al. (2015), involves understanding fashion to make informed, value-driven choices.

Fashion literacy is important because it influences how consumers approach fashion in terms of sustainability, identity-building, and social status. Highly literate consumers tend to invest more in fashionable products and are more

conscious of social values and trends (Quigley & Notarantonio, 2009). On the other hand, low fashion literacy often leads to a focus on price, making fast fashion more appealing (Goldsmith & Newell, 1997; Lumpkin & McConkey, 1984). Promoting sustainable fashion literacy is crucial for changing consumer behavior and reducing the environmental impact of fashion (Lee et al., 2020). Campaigns aimed at enhancing fashion literacy can help consumers make more eco-friendly decisions by educating them on the environmental consequences of their fashion choices and encouraging pro-environmental behaviors (Ho et al., 2020).

3.2. Interplay Between Fashion Literacy and Sustainable Consumption Behavior

Sustainable fashion focuses on eco-friendly practices like using renewable materials, reducing emissions, and producing durable goods (Shen et al., 2013). Slow fashion promotes ethical production, prioritizing quality over quantity (Ertekin & Atik, 2015). However, despite the rise of sustainable options, consumers still favor fast fashion. Without improved education and fashion literacy, ethical consumption remains limited (Grunert et al., 2014). Studies show sustainability ranks low in purchase decisions, with limited impact on buying, care, or disposal habits (Harris et al., 2016; Mandarić et al., 2022). Clothing sustainability is complicated, and many consumers do not have a clear understanding of sustainable practices. To encourage sustainable fashion consumption, consumer-focused marketing is necessary. Marketing must address customer needs and purchasing behaviors while considering social issues (Mandarić et al., 2022). There are notable differences between attitudes and behaviors, as fashion-conscious consumers often fail to adopt sustainable practices, despite claiming concern for social and environmental impacts. Although sustainability has become a ‘megatrend’ (Mittelstaedt et al., 2014), brands using terms like ‘eco-friendly’ and ‘organic’ in their marketing must do more to encourage sustainable buying behavior (Chen & Chang, 2013). Strengthening marketing efforts and improving fashion literacy, especially among Generation Z, is crucial to reducing fast fashion consumption and fostering sustainable habits. To make lasting changes, systemic efforts are needed to redefine fashion and influence consumer behavior (Niinimäki et al., 2020).

Fashion literacy is key to promoting sustainable consumption behavior, helping consumers understand fashion’s environmental and social impacts. It raises awareness of the harm from fast fashion and the benefits of slow, ethical options. Despite this, many consumers choose fast fashion due to price and convenience. Improving fashion literacy can bridge this gap and foster conscious consumerism, especially among Generation Z. While cost and convenience remain barriers, fashion literacy educates consumers on the long-term value of sustainable choices.

3.3. Socialization Agents of Fashion Literacy

Consumer socialization examines how individuals acquire attitudes, knowledge, and skills over time, with socialization agents such as influencers and marketers playing a crucial role in shaping norms and behaviors related to fashion trends (Ogle et al., 2014; Moschis & Churchill, 1978; Thaichon, 2017). Key agents influencing fashion literacy include social media platforms, Digital Humans, influencers, and environmental advocates, which together enhance consumer understanding of sustainability and ethical consumption (Su & Tong, 2020). Often referred to as micro-celebrities or "instafamous" personalities (Khamis et al., 2017; Jin et al., 2019), these influencers hold significant influence as opinion leaders. By sharing information about sustainable fashion, they educate their followers on the negative impacts of fast fashion and the benefits of choosing ethical, eco-friendly alternatives. They serve as trusted voices that effectively communicate complex concepts of sustainability, ethical sourcing, and responsible consumption, guiding their audiences toward more informed fashion decisions (Labrecque et al., 2013; Gomes et al., 2022a). Social media significantly impacts consumer behavior through its visual appeal and broad reach, serving as an effective tool for promoting fashion products and sustainable practices (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018; VenusJin et al., 2020). While it can trigger impulsive buying, social media also encourages thoughtful consumption by sharing sustainability-focused content and peer recommendations that are often viewed as credible (De Veirman et al., 2017; Nash, 2019; Dover, 2019). The platform facilitates a shift from mere concern for the environment to active participation in eco-friendly consumption, ultimately promoting sustainable purchasing behaviors (Chen et al., 2024). Additionally, technological advancements have introduced Digital Humans—photo-realistic 3D avatars that engage consumers in personalized conversations about sustainable choices, thereby improving fashion literacy (Nobile et al., 2021; Noris et al., 2021; Akram et al., 2022; Silva & Bonetti, 2021). Lastly, environmental advocates enhance fashion literacy through advocacy stemming from positive consumer experiences, inspiring others to adopt ethical fashion behaviors and driving a cultural shift toward responsible consumption (Chelminski & Coulter, 2011; Barreto & Ramalho, 2019; Kong et al., 2012; Campbell et al., 2022).

4. Potential Impacts of Fashion Literacy on Consumer Behavior

4.1. *Conscious Consumerism*

Beliefs are shaped when individuals recognize how their actions (or inaction) impact issues aligned with their values (Strübel et al., 2023). One key construct of environmentally responsible consumption (ERC) is "conscious consumption" (Gupta & Agrawal, 2018), which involves behaviors like avoiding waste, using resources moderately, and minimizing excess consumption. Conscious consumers are described as those who incorporate ethical considerations into their purchasing decisions, such as choosing eco-friendly brands, engaging in recycling, and advocating against harmful practices (Ogiemwonyi et al., 2023). Fast fashion, known for its low cost, low quality, and short usage cycle, leads to increased textile waste, environmental degradation, and social issues like child labor and modern slavery (Lueg et al., 2015; Piippo et al., 2022). Fashion literacy informs consumers about the harmful effects of fast fashion and the efforts by companies to adopt more sustainable practices. For instance, brands like H&M, Zara have introduced environmentally friendly collections ("Conscious Collection" & "Join Life") to promote sustainability (Wallwork, 2016; H&M, 2017). Eco-labeling also plays a significant role in encouraging environmentally responsible consumption by providing consumers with sustainability information at the point of purchase, which influences their evaluation and buying choices (Pagiaslis & Krontalis, 2014; Cho et al., 2017). Individuals with greater subjective knowledge are generally more confident in their buying decisions, enhancing the connection between intention and actual behavior (Aertsens et al., 2011).

Fashion literacy provides insights into the environmental and social impacts of fashion choices, fostering conscious consumerism. This approach emphasizes thoughtful purchasing that prioritizes sustainability, such as reducing waste and supporting ethical practices. By educating consumers about the negative effects of fast fashion, fashion literacy encourages more sustainable and ethical purchasing decisions. With knowledge of eco-labeling, consumers can identify eco-friendly options, whether from sustainable lines of fast fashion brands or slow fashion alternatives. Conscious consumption promotes moderate purchasing, extending garment life, and supporting recycling efforts, countering fast fashion's rapid cycle. Ultimately, fashion literacy bridges the gap between consumers' ethical intentions and actual behavior, empowering them to make sustainable choices and reduce the negative effects of fast fashion.

4.2. *Increased Preference for Sustainable Alternatives*

The luxury fashion sector is evolving, as consumer and regulatory pressure for environmental responsibility grows, fashion brands are shifting toward sustainability, exploring eco-friendly alternatives to their traditional practices (Abdelmeguid et al., 2024). Governments and international institutions are promoting sustainable consumption practices to reduce the waste discarded by consumers. For example, the European Circular Economy Action Plan encourages the reuse of products to extend their lifespan (European Commission, 2011). The fashion industry, under increased scrutiny from policymakers, is shifting from a "thrown-away fashion" model (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010) to embracing circular economy principles, promoting clothes made from renewable materials and the recycling of old clothes into new products. Partnerships between retailers and consumers in clothing disposal can foster loyalty (Lee et al., 2020). Ethical consumption has gained attention, as consumers are motivated by concerns for societal and environmental welfare (Zabkar & Hosta, 2013). However, there remains a gap between awareness and actual behavior, known as the ethical purchase gap (Bray et al., 2011). Fashion literacy is essential for educating consumers about sustainable practices like fair trade, which supports fair pricing and eco-friendly production (Schenk, 2019). Interest in sustainable fashion and the circular economy is increasing, but while second-hand consumption thrives in developed countries, attitudes in India remain negative (Madhavan, 2022). The fast-fashion cycle promotes frequent buying and disposal (McNeill et al., 2020), and social stigma combined with limited awareness of second-hand outlets hampers second-hand shopping (Silva et al., 2021). Despite these challenges, technological innovations for recycling and regenerating textile waste are emerging (Shirvanimoghaddam et al., 2020).

Fashion literacy equips consumers with knowledge about sustainable practices, such as recycling, reusing, and fair trade, enabling informed purchasing decisions. By understanding the environmental and social impacts of their choices, consumers are more inclined to prefer sustainable alternatives over fast fashion. This awareness empowers them to choose options like second-hand clothing and fair-trade products, reducing reliance on fast fashion. Additionally, fashion literacy helps bridge the gap between consumers' values and their purchasing behavior, encouraging practices that contribute to the circular economy. Ultimately, this relationship drives a shift toward sustainability, promoting long-lasting, eco-friendly, and ethically produced clothing while reducing the harmful effects of fast fashion on the environment.

4.3. Sustainability Advocacy Behavior

Advocacy involves consumers sharing information and suggestions derived from their positive experiences (Chelminski & Coulter, 2011). Organizations that foster high consumer engagement benefit from advocacy, where advocates, driven by intrinsic or extrinsic motivations, encourage others to change (Barreto & Ramalho, 2019; Kong et al., 2012). Intrinsic advocates are motivated by social norms and personal values, while extrinsic advocates seek rewards and validation (Kong et al., 2012). In the context of fashion, advocacy can enhance fashion literacy by promoting sustainable fashion behaviors. Campaigns by governments, nonprofits, or brands educate consumers and empower them to make informed decisions, leading to a cultural shift towards sustainability in fashion (Campbell et al., 2022).

Fashion literacy not only involves understanding sustainable fashion alternatives but also fosters sustainability advocacy behavior, encouraging consumers to actively promote eco-friendly practices. As consumers become more fashion-literate through education and campaigns, they are more likely to engage in advocacy, raising awareness of the harmful effects of fast fashion and the benefits of sustainable options. Intrinsically motivated advocates promote sustainable fashion aligned with values like environmental responsibility, influencing others to adopt similar behaviors. This advocacy can spark a cultural shift toward sustainability, making it the norm and gradually reducing fast fashion demand. By empowering consumers to make informed choices, fashion literacy helps shift consumption patterns toward eco-friendly practices and mitigates fast fashion's negative environmental impact.

4.4. Knowledge of garment life extension practices

Fashion literacy refers to a consumer's understanding of fashion processes, including production, consumption, and disposal practices. By enhancing fashion literacy, consumers can better grasp the environmental impact of their clothing choices, particularly regarding garment life extension practices (GLEPs). Shopping for second-hand clothing is a key garment life extension practice, aligning with the circular economy. The re-commerce model promotes sustainability by prolonging apparel use while maintaining profitability Shrivastava et al., (2021). Attitudes and beliefs, which influence behavior (Schwartz, 1994; Inkpen & Baily, 2020), play a critical role in shaping how consumers react to environmental challenges. As consumers become more educated about the benefits of extending the life of their garments—such as saving items for future use or passing them to others—they are more likely to adopt GLEPs.

A circular economy e-business system promotes sustainability by offering economic, social, and environmental benefits. It presents promising opportunities to build more robust, reliable, and sustainable business marketing strategies to increase fashion literacy (Fatimah et al., 2023). By promoting the redesign of products from leftover materials (Piippo et al., 2022) and educating consumers on the economic, personal, and environmental benefits of GLEPs (Burton & Eike, 2023), fashion literacy can drive sustainable consumer behavior. Early-formed values, which tend to remain stable over time, guide these sustainable practices, ultimately reducing waste and encouraging more conscious fashion consumption. Thus, fashion literacy plays a crucial role in fostering knowledge of garment life extension, which in turn supports sustainability efforts in the fashion industry. According to Garcia-Ortega et al., (2023), if fashion industry firms innovate their business models to increase product usage and promote more sustainable consumption, they will still create economic value and new revenue streams. By transitioning to a Circular Economy, economic resilience can be boosted by creating new industries around recycling, remanufacturing, and repair (Khalifa et al., 2024).

4.5. Receptivity to Green Communication

Fashion literacy refers to a consumer's knowledge and understanding of fashion, including awareness of industry trends, practices, and sustainability issues. When consumers possess higher level of fashion literacy, they tend to recognize the adverse environmental impacts of fashion and appreciate brands that adopt eco-friendly practices. This knowledge enhances their receptivity to green communication, as they are more attuned to the environmental messages in advertisements and more likely to develop a positive attitude toward green marketing efforts (Bailey et al., 2016a) and can address the "green gap" where environmentally conscious individuals fail to act on their ethical beliefs due to external or contextual barriers (Ogiemwonyi et al., 2023).

By effectively communicating their green initiatives, fashion brands can build trust with knowledgeable consumers who are already inclined to value sustainability. These consumers, due to their fashion literacy, are more likely to respond favorably to eco-friendly messages, improving their perception of the brand and ultimately influencing their behavioral intentions, such as purchasing green products or supporting environmentally responsible

companies (Lai et al., 2010). Thus, fashion literacy strengthens the connection between green communication and consumer trust in sustainable fashion brands, leading to greater receptivity and positive consumer actions.

5. Theoretical underpinnings to study the Impact of Fashion Literacy on Sustainability

In this section, we explore several theories that can enhance our understanding of the influence of Fashion Literacy on Sustainable Buying Behavior. Researchers can utilize these theories to create conceptual frameworks and research models for future studies aimed at discouraging Fast Fashion and promoting Sustainability

5.1. Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory

The Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory, proposed by Stern et al. (1999) to explain social movement support, interprets how personal values (altruistic, biospheric, egoistic) shape beliefs (ecological worldview, awareness of consequences, ascription of responsibility), which foster personal norms driving pro-environmental behaviors. This model has been applied to various contexts, including environmentalism and green product purchasing (Ghazali et al., 2019; Gomes et al., 2022b). Kiatkawsin and Han (2017) highlight the role of intentions in sustainable behavior. Fashion literacy can enhance consumers' intentions to adopt sustainable purchasing by reinforcing personal norms that prioritize ethical choices. Additionally, Bigliardi et al. (2020) stress that informed consumers are more likely to make conscientious decisions.

The application of the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory is essential for studying the impact of fashion literacy on sustainability because it provides a framework for understanding how personal values and beliefs shape sustainable behaviors. Fashion literacy, which encompasses knowledge of sustainable practices, plays a vital role in shaping consumer values and beliefs. This heightened awareness can align with the VBN pathway, reinforcing personal norms against unsustainable purchasing behaviors. Researchers can use the VBN theory to empirically investigate how improved fashion literacy fosters value-driven beliefs and norms that reduce fast fashion consumption. It also allows for a deeper exploration of the value-driven nature of sustainable consumption, which is crucial for driving long-term change in the fashion industry.

5.2. Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) Theory

The Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) theory, formulated by Rogers (1995), offers a structure for comprehending how new ideas, practices, or technologies are integrated and circulated within societies, organizations, or individuals. Innovation in this context refers to anything perceived as new, and according to Grover et al., (2019) diffusion represents the process through which this innovation is transmitted and adopted gradually. This theory explains how, why, and at what rate these innovations are adopted, emphasizing the importance of communication channels, time, and social systems in the diffusion process. Rogers (2003) describes the adoption process as occurring in stages—knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation.

Fashion literacy initiatives can effectively guide consumers through the stages of the adoption process—knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation—regarding sustainable practices like circular economy, renting, thrift fashion, and the use of Digital Humans. Educational campaigns can raise awareness of the environmental benefits (knowledge), persuade consumers of the advantages over fast fashion (persuasion), encourage adoption (decision), support implementation (implementation), and reinforce positive behavior through community support (confirmation). By applying Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) theory, these initiatives can shift consumer behavior from fast fashion to more sustainable alternatives. DOI theory helps explain how practices like renting and exchanging clothes spread within social systems, their adoption speed, and which consumer segments are most likely to embrace them, ultimately promoting a more sustainable and ethically responsible fashion industry.

5.3. Social cognitive theory (SCT)

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), proposed by Bandura (1986, 2001b), posits that human behavior is shaped by the dynamic interaction of personal factors (thoughts, feelings), behaviors, and environmental influences, creating a "collaborative decision association." SCT emphasizes individuals as active agents who shape their behavior through symbolic communication, observational learning, and self-regulation. Shephard et al. (2016) highlight that SCT explains how psychological components, including interactions with others and environmental factors, influence thoughts and actions. For example, Shang et al. (2012) used SCT to study information sharing among online customers, while Zhao et al. (2018) examined factors influencing participation in virtual brand communities, focusing on how environmental and cognitive factors drive knowledge-sharing behavior.

In the context of fashion literacy and sustainable fashion consumption, SCT can be used to understand how consumers learn and adopt sustainable behaviors. By enhancing key components of SCT—observational learning (learning by watching others), self-efficacy (belief in one's ability to perform a behavior), and outcome expectations (beliefs about the consequences of behavior)—fashion literacy can drive consumers to make more informed and sustainable choices. With consumers becoming more knowledgeable of the environmental and societal impacts of fast fashion, they likely develop stronger self-efficacy in adopting sustainable practices and higher expectations for positive outcomes from such behaviors. This, in turn, may result in decreased fast fashion consumption and a transition toward more sustainable fashion practices.

5.4. Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1984, 1986), describes how people process messages through two routes: the central route, which involves deep, thoughtful processing and leads to lasting attitude changes, and the peripheral route, which involves superficial processing and often results in temporary changes. This model emphasizes that different individuals, depending on their moods, abilities, and motivations, may not always fully engage with a message before making a decision (SanJosé-Cabezudo et al., 2009). According to Chang et al. (2015), an individual's likelihood of elaboration moderates which route they take, those with higher elaboration likelihood engage in central route processing, leading to more consistent and predictable behavior changes, while those with lower likelihood take the peripheral route, resulting in short-term and inconsistent changes.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is valuable for understanding the impact of fashion literacy on sustainability by highlighting how individuals process information. Those engaging in central route processing, where consumers thoughtfully analyze detailed information, are more likely to form lasting attitudes and behaviors toward sustainable fashion. Fashion literacy, through this route, can foster deep understanding of sustainability, leading to long-term commitment to eco-friendly choices. On the other hand, peripheral route processing leads to short-term behavior changes through less involved engagement.

5.5. Theory of reasoned action (TRA)

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977) posits that behavioral intentions are primarily influenced by attitudes and subjective norms. According to Kim et al. (2009), individuals are more likely to act in accordance with their attitudes, suggesting that fashion literacy can increase the likelihood of selecting sustainable fashion over fast fashion. Subjective norms also play a crucial role, as individuals often conform to the expectations of significant others, such as peers and influencers, who advocate for sustainable choices. TRA has been extensively validated in consumer behavior research (Nysveen et al., 2005), highlighting how attitudes, beliefs, and social pressures shape.

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) emphasizes the significance of attitudes and subjective norms in shaping behavioral intentions, which is crucial for understanding the impact of fashion literacy on fast fashion buying behavior. By applying TRA, researchers can explore how enhanced fashion literacy influences consumers' attitudes towards sustainable fashion, making them more likely to choose eco-friendly options over fast fashion. Additionally, TRA highlights the role of subjective norms, suggesting that as fashion-literate individuals interact with peers and influencers advocating for sustainable choices, their intentions to adopt these behaviors may strengthen. This interplay between individual attitudes and social influences highlights the necessity of integrating TRA into studies of fashion literacy, as it can provide valuable insights into fostering more sustainable consumer practices and reducing reliance on fast fashion.

5.6. Self-determination theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), introduced by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (Deci et al., 1985), focuses on internal sources of motivation, particularly the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. According to this theory, when these psychological needs are fulfilled, individuals are more inclined to engage in behaviors that resonate with their intrinsic motivations, like the pursuit of knowledge or independence (Vallerand, 1997). This theory posits that individuals need to feel engaged, capable, and self-directed to experience psychological growth (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Studies have shown that satisfying these needs leads to changes in social identity and encourages individuals to involve themselves in purposeful activities (Tsai & Pai, 2014).

By applying SDT for Fashion Literacy and its impact on sustainable buying behavior, we can infer the three key needs that have been identified by Ryan and Deci (2017), that when consumers feel autonomous (making informed, independent choices), competent (understanding the impacts of their fashion choices), and connected (relating to broader environmental and social goals), they are more likely to adopt sustainable buying behaviors. Intrinsic motivation is fueled by the fulfillment of autonomy, competence, and relatedness whereas Motivation driven by external rewards or pressures, such as money, grades, or approval from others fuels the Extrinsic motivation. Fashion literacy can empower consumers by enhancing their competence and autonomy, driving intrinsic motivation to choose sustainable fashion options over fast fashion. By fostering these internal motivations, SDT can help explain how fashion literacy leads to lasting changes in consumer behavior towards sustainability.

5.7. Goal framing theory (GFT)

Goal-Framing Theory (GFT), introduced by Lindenberg & Steg (2007), explores how different motivations shape an individual's environmental behavior. The theory suggests that specific goals can become prominent based on both value priorities and situational factors (Steg et al., 2014). When a goal is activated, it influences how individuals focus their attention, process information, and form attitudes, ultimately guiding their behavior in a given context (Pancer et al., 2017). Situational cues, for instance, can prompt consumers to prioritize sustainability-related goals, leading to more eco-friendly choices (Thøgersen & Alfinito, 2020). GFT identifies three main types of motivations: gain motivations (focused on personal benefits), hedonic motivations (centered on pleasure and enjoyment), and normative motivations (driven by ethical and moral considerations) (Hameed & Khan, 2020).

In the context of Fashion Literacy, GFT can be used to analyze how increased knowledge and awareness influence sustainable buying behavior. Fashion literacy can activate normative motivations by educating consumers about the ethical implications of fast fashion, encouraging them to choose sustainable alternatives. It can also enhance gain motivations by highlighting the practical advantages of sustainable fashion, such as longevity and value for money. Additionally, by portraying sustainable fashion as a desirable and enjoyable choice, fashion literacy can tap into hedonic motivations. By framing these goals effectively, fashion literacy can play a pivotal role in guiding consumers towards more sustainable purchasing decisions.

5.8. Theory of Consumption Value (TCV)

The Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), introduced by Sheth et al. (1991), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding why consumers make specific purchasing decisions. By examining consumption from a behavioral perspective, TCV identifies various perceived values that influence consumer choices (Boksberger & Melsen, 2011). This theory is instrumental in explaining the motivations behind consumption behavior, focusing on key consumption values that drive decision-making (Tanrikulu, 2021). TCV has been effectively used in recent studies to explore outcomes such as consumer satisfaction (Rivera et al., 2018), purchase intentions (Kushwah et al., 2019; Qasim et al., 2019; Rivera et al., 2018), and brand loyalty (Poushneh & Vasquez-Parraga, 2019).

When we apply this to Fashion Literacy, TCV can illuminate how fashion literacy impacts sustainable buying behavior. Fashion literacy enhances various consumption values, including functional value (practical benefits of sustainable fashion), social value (alignment with eco-conscious social norms), emotional value (positive feelings from making ethical choices), epistemic value (satisfying curiosity about sustainable practices), and conditional value (context-specific factors that influence sustainable purchases). By strengthening these values, fashion literacy can lead consumers to choose sustainable fashion over fast fashion, promoting long-term commitment to sustainability in their buying habits.

5.9. Norm Activation Theory (NAT)

The Norm Activation Model (NAM), proposed by Schwartz (1977), explains prosocial and environmentally conscious behavior by focusing on personal norms and moral duty. It emphasizes how intrinsic motivations, particularly personal obligations, shape responsible actions (Schwartz, 1982). NAM identifies two key influences: informational, which involves how individuals interpret information (e.g., from social media), and normative, which pertains to social pressure from content creators or groups (Han et al., 2021; Hvass & Munar, 2012). Understanding these influences is crucial in light of growing environmental challenges like climate change and pollution (Onwezen et al., 2013).

Fashion literacy plays a significant role in enhancing awareness of consequences and ascription of responsibility, leading to the activation of personal norms that discourage fast fashion consumption. By educating

consumers on the environmental impacts of fast fashion, fashion literacy strengthens informational influence, encouraging individuals to adopt sustainable practices. Additionally, normative influence is amplified as consumers feel social pressure from influencers and peers to embrace sustainability. In this way, fashion literacy fosters personal responsibility and social expectations, driving eco-conscious purchasing decisions.

Various psychological and behavioral theories highlight constructs such as values, beliefs, norms, and intrinsic motivation, explaining their role in fostering sustainable attitudes and behaviors. These theories emphasize factors like consumer socialization, perceived value, intention-behavior alignment, and intrinsic motivation, demonstrating how fashion literacy can drive sustainable practices and choices, as summarized in the Table 2:

Table 2: Theoretical Foundations and Their Relevance to Fashion Literacy's Impact on Sustainability

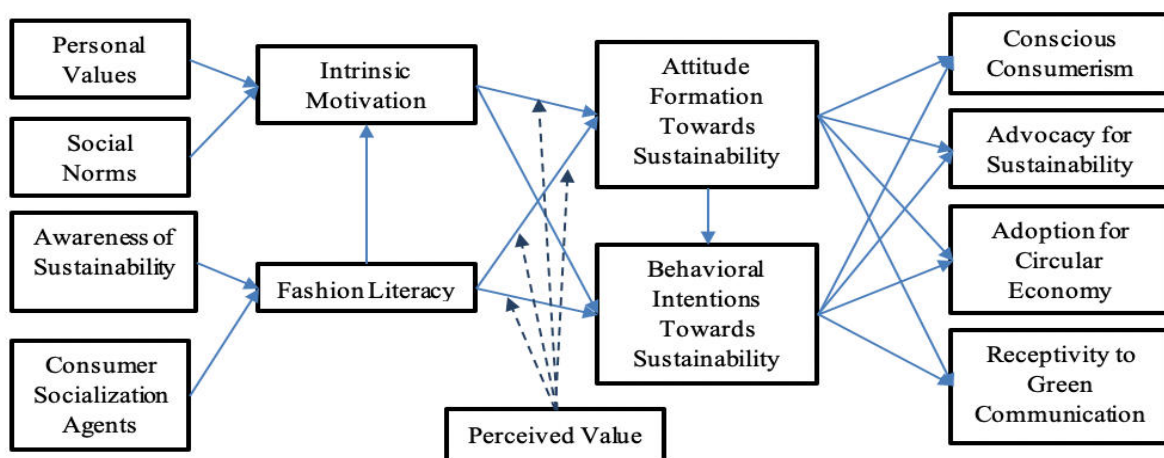
Theory (Author, Year)	Constructs in the Theory	Relevance to Impact of Fashion Literacy on Sustainability
Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory (Stern et al., 1999)	Values Beliefs Norms	Fashion literacy fosters Intrinsic Motivation by shaping personal values and norms for sustainable choices. Perceived Value moderates this link, enhancing behavioral intentions (Stern et al., 1999; Bigliardi et al., 2020).
Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) (Rogers, 1995)	Relative Advantage Compatibility Complexity Triability Observability	Promotes Awareness for Circular Economy and Receptivity to Green Communication by showcasing eco-friendly innovations. Consumer Socialization Agents accelerate diffusion (Rogers, 1995; Grover et al., 2019).
Social cognitive theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986)	Behavioral Environmental Cognitive	Highlights the role of Consumer Socialization Agents in influencing sustainability attitudes and behaviors through peers, media, and influencers (Bandura, 1986; Shang et al., 2012).
Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984)	Central Route to Persuasion Peripheral Route to Persuasion Motivation and Ability Message Quality	Enhances Attitude Formation by encouraging deeper processing of sustainable practices. Perceived Value moderates the link between attitudes and behavior change (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984, 1986).
Self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci et al., 1985)	Autonomy Competence Relatedness	Explains how Intrinsic Motivation is developed when individuals feel autonomous and competent in adopting sustainable fashion practices (Ryan & Deci, 2020).
Goal framing theory (GFT) (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007)	Hedonic Goal Normative Goal Gain Goal	Frames sustainable behaviors by emphasizing benefits (gain goal) and moral alignment (normative goal). Fashion Literacy activates these frames, moderated by Perceived Value (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007).
Theory of Consumption Value (TCV) (Sheth et al., 1991)	Functional Value Social Value Emotional Value Epistemic Value Conditional Value	Demonstrates how Fashion Literacy enhances perceived value (social, functional) to align with Awareness of Sustainability and promote sustainable intentions (Sheth et al., 1991; Tanrikulu, 2021).

Theory (Author, Year)	Constructs in the Theory	Relevance to Impact of Fashion Literacy on Sustainability
Norm Activation Theory (NAT) (Schwartz, 1977)	Situational Responsibility, Awareness of Consequences, Awareness of Need, Efficacy Ability Denial of Responsibility	Links Awareness of Sustainability with moral obligations, fostering Behavioral Intentions (Schwartz, 1977; Onwezen et al., 2013). Perceived Value reinforces the alignment of norms and intentions.
Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977)	Intention Attitudes Subjective Norms Belief Behavior	Highlights how Attitude Formation and Social Norms lead to sustainable behavioral intentions. Perceived Value strengthens the intention-behavior link (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977; Nysveen et al., 2005).

6. Proposed Conceptual Framework

The proposed conceptual framework, which is based on knowledge from the literature research, shows the connections between important concepts that affect sustainable fashion practices. Fashion literacy, the main notion, is defined as the consumer's awareness and comprehension of sustainable fashion. Personal values, social norms, sustainability awareness, and consumer socialization agents are some of the elements that influence it. Positive attitudes toward sustainability are formed by customers as a result of increased intrinsic motivation brought about by fashion literacy. Their behavioral intentions toward sustainability, such as their desire to adopt sustainable practices or make eco-friendly purchases, are subsequently influenced by this. These goals are associated with more general results, such as receptivity to green communication, adoption of circular economy practices, advocacy for sustainability, and conscious consumerism. Furthermore, Perceived Value highlights the significance of perceived advantages in influencing customer choices by moderating the relationships among fashion literacy, intrinsic motivation, and sustainability-oriented aspirations. The proposed conceptual framework is in line with important theoretical underpinnings in sustainability research and offers a thorough framework for comprehending the interaction of cognitive, social, and motivational elements in encouraging sustainable fashion habits, as depicted in Figure 1

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



7. Discussion, implications, and limitations

7.1. Findings

Consumers are becoming more aware of how fashion impacts the environment, yet this awareness does not consistently lead to sustainable purchases. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) explains that people's actions are influenced by their attitudes and social pressures. However, there is still a gap in understanding how fashion literacy

(people's knowledge about fashion) can shift these attitudes and social norms to bridge the gap between awareness and action. Fashion literacy could enhance positive attitudes toward sustainability and strengthen social expectations, making sustainable fashion the preferred choice over fast fashion.

One important gap relates to how Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) applies to fashion literacy. This theory highlights how peer influence, media, and social modeling shape behavior. People who are knowledgeable about sustainable fashion may initially be interested but need continuous support from peers, influencers, and media to sustain these habits. Integrating SCT into fashion literacy programs could help by boosting self-efficacy (confidence in their ability to make sustainable choices) and reinforcing positive expectations from choosing sustainable fashion.

Another finding points out that while Generations Y and Z are more open to sustainable fashion, Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) Theory suggests that these groups should not be treated as a single, homogeneous block. There is a gap in understanding how different segments of these generations (e.g., based on income levels or geographic location) adopt sustainable fashion practices. More tailored campaigns and strategies are needed to engage these diverse groups more effectively, accelerating the adoption of sustainable fashion across different consumer segments.

Additionally, Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory shows that raising awareness about garment life-extension practices (GLEPs), such as recycling or repairing clothes, can strengthen a sense of personal responsibility, which in turn promotes sustainable consumption. However, the challenge lies in making these practices mainstream. Few studies have looked at how fashion literacy can make these actions part of everyday fashion choices, connecting them to personal values and encouraging widespread adoption.

A significant gap is also found in the role of digital platforms and virtual influencers in promoting fashion literacy. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) could be applied to investigate how tools like AI-driven fashion advisors and virtual try-ons can engage consumers more deeply with sustainability. The gap in current research lies in understanding how these digital tools can be personalized and used effectively to create long-term commitment to sustainable fashion.

Furthermore, the study reveals a gap in how fashion-literate consumers can become advocates for sustainability within their communities. Norm Activation Theory (NAT) suggests that once individuals adopt norms around sustainable fashion, they may influence others and drive wider social and policy changes. However, this process is still underexplored, and future research should focus on how to empower fashion-literate individuals to inspire larger social movements that go beyond personal consumption.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) also points out a gap in understanding how fashion literacy can foster autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are crucial psychological needs for intrinsic motivation. By meeting these needs, fashion literacy could lead to lasting behavioral changes, helping consumers feel more in control and confident in making sustainable fashion choices over time.

Another important finding is that price, convenience, and fast fashion's appeal still heavily influence consumer decisions, even among those aware of sustainability. There is a need to explore how fashion literacy can tackle these barriers by educating consumers not only on the environmental benefits of sustainable fashion but also on the long-term value and durability of such choices, compared to the short-term gains of fast fashion. These findings collectively highlight the gaps in research and suggest that enhancing fashion literacy across different demographic groups, using digital platforms, and creating community advocates are crucial steps toward making sustainable fashion the norm.

Lastly, in order to address the gaps, the study proposes a conceptual framework that places fashion literacy at the center and connects intrinsic motivation to societal norms, consumer socialization agents, environmental awareness, and personal values. This in turn promotes the development of attitudes and behavioral intentions toward sustainability, which, when tempered by perceived value, results to adoption of the circular economy, advocacy for sustainability, conscious consumption, and responsiveness to green communication. The model provides a thorough foundation for further studies and useful tactics to improve fashion literacy for sustainability.

7.2. Implications for Managers and Policymakers

7.2.1. Practical Implications for Managers

Consumers gain greater awareness of the environmental and social impacts of their fashion choices, especially the harmful effects of fast fashion, they are more inclined to transition from unsustainable fast fashion to more responsible, eco-friendly alternatives. Fashion brands can play a crucial role by launching strategic and engaging educational campaigns that highlight the detrimental consequences of fast fashion and the benefits of choosing

sustainable fashion. By emphasizing the environmental damage caused by fast fashion, such as excessive waste and pollution, alongside the advantages of eco-friendly alternatives, brands can drive deeper consumer engagement. Leveraging storytelling and collaborations with influencers can make sustainability messages more relatable and compelling, steering consumers away from fast fashion. Brands should focus on expanding and promoting sustainable fashion lines made from eco-friendly materials, designed for durability, and incorporating circular fashion elements like rental services and second-hand clothing. These offerings resonate with consumers who want to reject fast fashion in favor of more sustainable, long-lasting alternatives. Digital technologies, such as AI and virtual assistants, can further assist consumers in making informed, sustainable choices by providing personalized recommendations tailored to their preferences. These tools can help guide consumers away from fast fashion and toward environmentally friendly products, thereby reducing return rates and fostering a more mindful approach to fashion consumption. Fashion literacy can also enhance the overall customer experience by embedding sustainability within the brand's core values, directly contrasting with the unsustainable practices of fast fashion. Brands should prioritize transparency in their supply chains and ethical practices, as this fosters trust and cultivates long-term loyalty among consumers who are eager to avoid fast fashion's harmful impact. Customer support also plays a vital role in this transition. Managers should ensure that customer service teams are well-equipped to educate consumers on sustainable fashion choices and answer questions about the environmental and social impact of their purchases. Providing transparent information on product origins, materials used, and sustainability certifications can foster trust and empower consumers to make more informed decisions. In addition, customer support can actively assist in facilitating circular fashion models, such as helping customers navigate clothing rental services, repairs, or garment recycling programs.

Finally, businesses should explore circular fashion models, including rental services, recycling initiatives, and resale platforms, as key alternatives to the fast fashion model. As consumer awareness grows through increased fashion literacy, the demand for sustainable and circular fashion options will rise, offering brands an opportunity to engage more effectively with eco-conscious consumers while reducing the reliance on fast fashion.

7.2.2. Policy implications

Policymakers can play a critical role in encouraging sustainable fashion practices by establishing frameworks that support sustainability efforts. They should advocate for fashion literacy programs, particularly those emphasizing sustainability. Additionally, implementing regulations requiring fashion brands to disclose information about their supply chains, material sourcing, and environmental impact is essential. This transparency will empower consumers to make informed and responsible fashion choices. Certification and eco-labeling systems can further guide consumer decisions. In collaboration with fashion brands and NGOs, policymakers should run awareness campaigns highlighting the harmful effects of fast fashion on the environment and society, promoting mindful consumption and encouraging consumers to shift to sustainable alternatives. Offering incentives such as tax reductions or subsidies to brands that adopt sustainable production methods and ethical labor practices can help overcome cost barriers and make sustainable fashion more accessible. Furthermore, policymakers should promote circular fashion by supporting businesses that provide rental services, recycling programs, and second-hand markets, helping to reduce textile waste and extend the life cycle of clothing. Encouraging fashion brands to embrace sustainable business models, such as take-back schemes, recycling initiatives, and on-demand production, through financial incentives like grants or tax breaks, can significantly aid in the transition toward more sustainable practices in the fashion industry.

7.3. Limitations of the study

When assessing the proposed conceptual framework, the study admits its limitations. Because cultural and demographic differences affect things like intrinsic motivation, perceived value, and reactions to green communication, it could not adequately capture qualitative components of attitude development and behavioral intentions toward sustainability. It's possible that the significance of consumer socialization agents, social norms, and knowledge of sustainability certifications is understudied. Adoption of circular economy methods may also be impacted by financial limitations and brand trust. Additionally, the framework requires empirical validation to ensure its applicability across diverse contexts and robust engagement with sustainability efforts. The Table 3 illustrates future research directions, based on the research gaps and limitations of the study:

8. Conclusion

The study concludes that fashion literacy plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between consumers' environmental awareness and their purchasing behaviors. While sustainability is increasingly important, fast fashion remains appealing due to factors like price and convenience. However, greater fashion literacy can lead consumers, particularly Generation Y and Z, to make more informed and sustainable choices by understanding the ethical and

environmental impacts of their decisions. This shift in knowledge might diminish the appeal of fast fashion, as consumers become more aware of its negative consequences. The research emphasizes the importance of targeted educational campaigns, supported by theories such as the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) and Theory of Reasoned Actions (TRA), to promote sustainable fashion. Additionally, price sensitivity remains a significant barrier that brands and policymakers must address to encourage sustainability.

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