

# EXIT-posters

Graduates 2025

Master's programmes in Fashion and Textile Management

# Reducing Size- and Fit-Related Returns in Fashion E-commerce: **Exploring Al-driven Virtual Fitting Solutions**



- A study on the benefits and challenges from the retailer's perspective

# **Background**

High return rates in fashion e-commerce, often caused by uncertainty around size and fit, lead to significant environmental and financial costs as customers frequently order multiple sizes and return what doesn't fit - sometimes before even trying the garments. Al-driven Virtual Fitting Rooms (VFRs) address this issue by providing personalized size recommendations through 3D simulations and input of user data such as height, weight, and choosing body shape, enhancing product visualization and purchase confidence. Despite their promise in reducing returns and improving customer satisfaction, VFRs remain underexplored in both academic literature and real-world settings. Existing studies largely focus on consumer attitudes, while there is a lack of empirical research on the practical benefits and challenges from the retailer's perspective - limiting understanding of their true impact and hindering service providers from optimizing their solutions to better meet retailer needs.

# Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is understanding the retailer's perspectives on Al-driven VFRs to better address how such technologies can optimize size selection and reduce return rates, thereby tackling the significant challenges related to size and fit in online shopping.

# Research Questions (RQs)

RQ1: What are the benefits and challenges of Al-driven virtual fitting solutions in fashion e-commerce according to retailers?

RQ2: To what extent do Al-driven virtual fitting solutions reduce return rates and increase conversion rates?

# **Results**

By the use of thematic analysis the author was able to identify three themes for the benefits and four themes for the challenges:

# Benefits:

- Positive sustainability impacts
- Cost savings
- Customer loyalty and brand differentiation

# Challenges:

- Technological limitations and implementation barriers
- Financial considerations
- Consumer expectations and personalization challenges
- A broader perspective questioning whether Al-driven VFRs address the root cause of high return rates

# Contribution

This study contributes insights for three main groups:

- 1.) Fashion e-commerce companies
- 2.) Virtual fitting solution providers
- 3.) Consumers



Fashion companies can use the findings to choose or implement virtual fitting tools more effectively, helping to reduce returns and boost customer satisfaction. Virtual fitting solution providers gain valuable feedback to improve their solution based on real needs from retailers. Consumers benefit from a smoother shopping experience when theese tools are well designed and used properly. Each group interacts with virtual fitting solutions in different ways and benefits to different extent depending on the context.

- 2. (2017). "Uncovering consumers' returning behaviour: a vand Consumer Research, 27(3), pp. 284-299, doi: 10.10 or 10.10 w of Retail, Distribution and Co nt Network, (2024). *Environme*

# Method

- Semi-structured interviews with fashion retailers using Al-driven VFR solutions to gain insights into their experiences.
- Collection of quantitative data on reduced return rates and increased conversion rates from interviewed companies, along with secondary data on Al-driven VFR providers for benchmarking purposes.



50% of all returns are due to difficulties in finding the right size online.

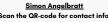
# Conclusion(s)

- There is a notable gap between Al-driven VFR providerreported data and retailer-reported outcomes, suggesting that the claimed benefits of VFRs may not be universally applicable.
- While VFRs can improve size accuracy and user experience, their impact on reducing return rates is often moderate due to other influencing factors such as market condition, product offerings, and company changes.
- The persistent consumer behavior of ordering multiple sizes for convenience, driven by free return policies, remains a major obstacle to lowering return rates.
- Retailers frequently switch VFR providers due to shortterm expectations and lack of measurable results, showing the need for long-term strategies and solution stability.
- Technological gaps such as poor fabric simulation and limited consumer interaction data, undermine the realism and effectiveness of VFRs, reducing consumer trust.
- The effectiveness of VFRs is highly dependent on the underlying technology and the specific service provider, as there can be significant differences in outcomes.

Al-driven VFR provider	Reduction in return rate	Increase in conversion rate	
1	28.5%	18%	
2	30%	20%	
3	55%	15%	
4	36%	20%	
5	33%	16.7%	
AVERAGE:	36,5%	17,94%	

Table: Reduction in return rates and increase in conversion rates for five different Al-driven VFR providers







# Styled By The Algorithm

Fashion Microtrends on TikTok and its Impact on Consumption and Self-Image

Elsa Claesson

Elin Egelbäck Starud

# **Purpose**

The purpose of this research was to explore how female fashion consumers interpret TikTok-driven microtrends and how it is expressed in their consumption. The study also explored how fashion microtrends impacts females self-image.

# Method

This is a qualitative study, utilizing semi-structured interviews and a content analysis of microtrends on TikTok. The females interviewed was fashion interested, between the ages 23-30 and regular users of the application. The final number of interviewees were 9 women.

# Findings & Implications

Findings suggest that microtrends on TikTok are embraced subconsciously and are factors for being perceived as trendy and fashionable. Females' fashion consumption as well as presentation of self and self image are revealed to be impacted by microtrends on TikTok. Even though we conclude microtrends on TikTok to be strongly affecting women's fashion choices, consumption and interpretation of self concept, there were indications from some individuals that a similar study needs to be applied to a younger audience. Our suggestion would therefore be for future research to determine the impact of TikTok microtrends on consumption and self-image on a younger demographic.







# THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT:

BLOCKCHAIN AND SMART CONTRACTS IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY - A CASE STUDY OF A EUROPEAN DENIM BRAND

# PURPOSE

# The Core Issue: The Fashion Industry's Hidden Complexities

Beyond the glamour, the fashion industry conceals a devastating truth: an intricate, sprawling, and fundamentally opaque global supply chain from raw material to final garment. This pervasive lack of transparency isn't just a business challenge; it's the Achilles' heel of sustainability, directly sabotaging efforts to create a responsible future. This hidden complexity fuels:

- The Hesitant Sustainability Mission
- A Trust Deficit with Growing Consumer Demand
- Rapidly Evolving Regulations
- The Integration of Digital Transformation

The Research Objectives are to identify key barriers to supply chain transparency in fashion production, assess the potential of blockchain and smart contracts in improving traceability and accountability, investigate the feasibility of blockchain implementation within fashion supply chains, and provide strategic recommendations for blockchain adoption in sustainable fashion.



# Unveiling the Path to Transparency:

**Current Challenges:** Pervasive opacity, fragmented traceability, and significant trust deficits undermine sustainability claims in fashion supply chains.

**Blockchain's Potential:** It can establish enhanced transparency, facilitate proactive regulatory compliance (e.g., EU DPP, CSRD, CSDDD), and optimize operations.

**Critical Hurdles:** Realizing this potential requires overcoming digital knowledge barriers & readiness gaps, high implementation costs with unclear immediate ROI, and deep-seated trust barriers.

**Strategic Insight:** Blockchain is not a standalone solution; it demands strategic integration, collaborative governance, and a long-term, phased adoption roadmap.

# MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

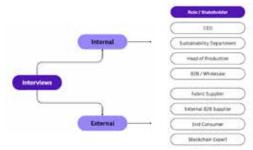
# **Actionable Steps for Fashion Brands & Industry Leaders:**

- Building a compelling business case with clear ROI
- Prioritize Foundational Digital Readiness Across the Supply Chain
- Phased Implementation and Scalability Roadmap
- Fostering Trust and Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement
- Integration with Existing Systems and Certification Schemes
- Leveraging Blockchain for Proactive Regulatory Readiness
- Advocate for Industry-Wide Standards and Supportive Regulatory Frameworks

# **2** METHODOLOGY

# **Approach & Data Collection**

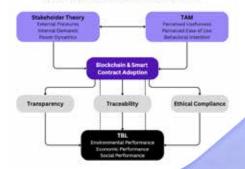
Adopting a qualitative case study approach, the research draws empirical data from semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders of a mid-sized European denim brand, as well as external experts, complemented by analysis of internal company documentation and publicly available reports.



# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The data is interpreted through a comprehensive multi-theoretical framework triangulating Stakeholder Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL).

(Freeman, 1984; Davis, 1989; Elkington, 1997)



# KEY

In an industry demanding more accountability, how can we truly verify sustainability from source to stitch? Could Blockchain be the ultimate answer?





# AN EXPLORATION OF THE TENSIONS BETWEEN QUALITY IN FAST FASHION AND CIRCULARITY

## PLIRPOSE

To explore how fast fashion affects textile quality and the effect this has on the feasibility of reuse and textile-to-textile recycling

## **METHODOLOGY**

- Explorative, qualitative approach
- 6 semi-structured interviews with textile sorters & resellers, and mechanical and chemical recyclers
- A participant observation at a textile sorting facility

# MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Circular waste streams are shifting as a result of more fast fashion.
   Less is reusable and more is sent to recycling and energy recovery
- Several strategies are used by reuse and recycling actors to address material flow uncertainties and changing markets. These include process innovations to preserve quality, stronger collaboration across supply chains, and business model adaptations
- Circular actors are pleading for policy involvement to maintain product quality and protect future feasibility







## **PRODUCTION**

The focus is on minimizing costs and optimizing speed by limiting quality control and product development processes and by using cheap materials and manufacturing.



## DETAIL

Fast fashion is attractive to consumers because of its price, trendiness, and versatility. This drives consumption despite lower intrinsic quality.



## USE

During use, consumers experience the lower intrinsic quality and quick style obsolescence. This, combined with low prices, drives early disposal.



## **COLLECTION & SORTING**

Increased consumption and disposal behavior in fast fashion increases textile waste and shifts the ratio between low and high-quality clothing in collection.



# CHEMICAL RECYCLING

Chemical recyclers express less concerns with fast fashion, but this technology is still under development and not yet focused on complex material compositions.



# **MECHANICAL RECYCLING**

Fast fashion fabrics are often blended, synthetic, and have short fibers. Also, ultra-fast fashion can contaminate the material flow with hazardous chemicals, limiting recyclability.



# **LOCAL REUSE**

Low durability limits reusability. Also, actors struggle to compete with the low prices of new fast fashion items. Therefore, more clothing is forced to be sent to export or recycling.



# ENERGY RECOVERY

More is sent to energy recovery, but the high percentages of synthetics are increasing CO2 emissions.



# **EXPORT**

More items are sorted for export, but large quantities of fast fashion bring down batch quality and monetary value.



Hanne van Gompel hanne.v.gompel@gmail.com







# The story of the 21st Century Neo Dandies DANDYISM REVIVAI

'They challenge traditional masculinity blending historical elegance with modern gender fluidity and individuality.

They, are neo dandies'

# RESEARCH FOCUS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

· Exploring how men use fashion to challenge gender norms and fill a gap in research on male subcultures offering insights into alternative masculinities for researchers, brands, and marketers in fashion and gender studies.

Appropriation: aesthetic labor, carefully sourcing, repairing, reworking garments to build personal identity through style:

- · Locke, Olivecrona, Rogers, Bourdieu, Butler, Crenshaw
- · Style as symbolic authorship: neo dandies reclaim and rework historical fashion through aesthetic labor, emotional investment, and cultural fluency. Appropriation becomes identity-making through curated vintage, nostalgia, and gendered resistance.

Masculinity: Classic tailoring meets traditionally feminine details, reshaping masculinity into an ethical, selfexpressive model:

- Connell, Butler, Bridges & Pascoe, Crenshaw
- · Masculinity is not fixed: neo dandies perform alternative manhood through tailored elegance, flamboyant detail, and care. Fashion becomes a stage for negotiating power, queering norms, and embodying new masculinities shaped by intersectionality.



Willy CHAVARRIA and MALUMA, Getty Images, Ilmage online] Available at: <a href="https://www.vogue.com/slideshow/met-gala-2025-red-">https://www.vogue.com/slideshow/met-gala-2025-red-</a> carpet>



## METHODOLOGY

• Qualitative study, 9 Semi structured in depth interviews for method of data collection.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Clothing as Narrative: Vintage garments become cultural statements, rejecting fast fashion's disposability.
- Hybrid Masculinity: Strength and sensitivity merge, challenging rigid gender norms.
- Sustainability in Style: Repair and mindful consumption offer ethical alternatives to mass
- Social Media Power: Online communities shape trends and empower alternative masculinities.

# INDUSTRY RELEVANCE

- Consumer Shift: Growing demand for authenticity, sustainability and meaningful fashion.
- New Market Demand: Unique demand with cultural and ethical values.
- Rethinking Masculinity: Representing Masculinity through subcultural preferences. Including more inclusivity and flexible style norms.





(@jazzmorgan); Julius LINDAHL (@juliuslindahl); Irma VAN DEN POEL (@yami.irma); Albin LIEDHOLM (@a.liedholm); Klara PETERS BASTIN (@klaras.antikvariska); Philip ÖRUM WESTRE (@philgondor) Credit photo: Alexander MARCHESAN

Laura VELASCO ZAPATA



Leelou BAZIRE







# IS SECONDHAND TRULY SUSTAINABLE?

# Exploring the impact of online secondhand fashion on consumption behavior.

**Background**: The fashion industry faces increasing pressure to reduce its environmental impact, particularly in relation to overproduction and textile waste. In response, secondhand fashion - especially through digital resale platforms is growing rapidly and often celebrated as a sustainable alternative to fast fashion. However, while secondhand fashion extends the life of garments, the rise of online resale platforms may also encourage new forms of unsustainable consumption.

Purpose: This study explores whether online secondhand fashion truly promotes sustainable consumption or simply shifts overconsumption into a new form.

Method: Qualitative study with five semi-structured interviews of consumers aged 20-30 in Sweden and Finland.



# Results:

## Consumers' intentions:

Make purchases only when needed and according to plan.

# Consumers' motivations:

Environmental motivations exist but price and convenience dominate purchasing behavior.

# Consumers' iustifications:

Sustainability assumptions, cheap price and reselling help to justify secondhand purchases.

## Consumers' behavior:

The habit of frequently buying and reselling clothes seems similar to fast fashion practices.

# Rebound effect

The accessibility, low price, and guilt-free perception of secondhand fashion encourage increased and impulsive consumption.

# What this means for the fashion industry?

Challenges sustainability assumptions

Helps to avoid greenwashing

Highlights the importance of consumer education

Supports true circularity



Contact authors: Alma Brander Filippa Toompea



# NAVIGATING COMPLIANCE WITH DIGITAL PRODUCT PASSPORT - CHALLENGES IN HOME TEXTILES

# RESEARCH PURPOSE

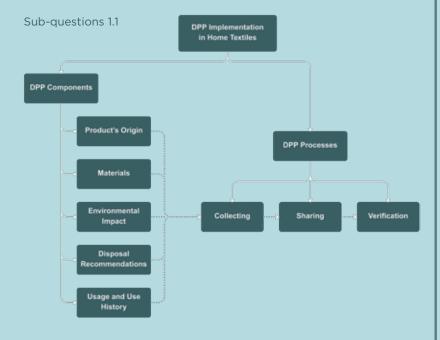
This study intends to examine how home textile companies navigate the transition towards sustainability and circularity in their upstream supply chain, particularly concerning compliance with the DPP. Future requirements and the potential challenges related to the adoption are investigated to provide insights into DPP's processes of data collection, sharing, verification, and additional factors.

# **METHODOLOGY**

- Qualitative and explorative approach
- Mixed theoretical approach that integrates deductive and inductive reasoning
- Data sources: primary and secondary data
- The primary data was collected from semi-structured interviews with 3 home textile companies in Scandinavia
- Secondary data is used to enhance the richness of the findings

# DPP White the second s

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK





# **RESULTS**

Research question: How are home textile companies preparing for DPP implementation?

- Companies see the DPP as a regulatory obligation and a strategic opportunity
- Some struggle with accessing funding and navigating complex support mechanisms
- While some companies take proactive steps, many SMEs remain unaware or only meet minimum requirements

Sub-questions 1.1: What are the essential components and processes involved in DPP implementation for home textile companies?

- Components: product origin, material composition, environmental impact, disposal, usage and use history
- Processes: data collection, data sharing, data verification

Sub-question 1.2: What are challenges influencing home textile companies' compliance with DPP requirements?

- Organizational: internal organizational characteristics and the complexity of supply chains influence the capacity to engage with requirements
- Technological: uncertainty about whether DPP will be centralized or decentralized; companies still rely on manual data systems; emerging technologies are costly, complex, and confidentiality remains a concern
- Regulatory: absence of final specifications, delegated acts, and companies call for clearer guidance and EU support

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Publications Giftee of the European Linion (2024) EU; Digital Product Passport Advancing transparency and ustainability.
27 September. The Official Portal for European Data. https://data.europa.eu/en/news-event/news/eus-digital-product-passport-advancing-transparency-and-ustainability.

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# Bridging The Attitude-Behaviour Gap

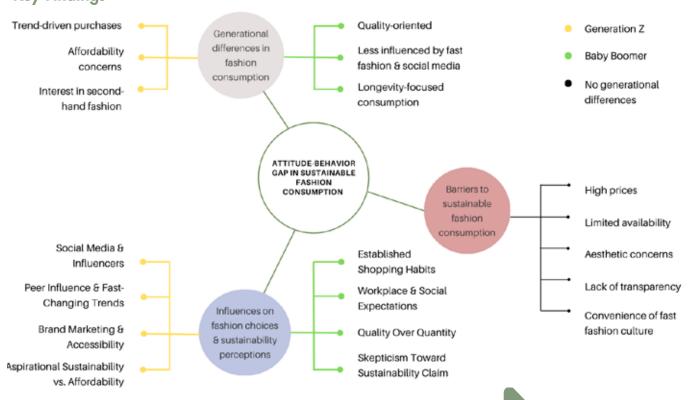
Investigating the conflict between Sustainability Attitudes and Fashion consumption behaviours among Generation Z and Baby Boomers in Central-Northern Europe

# Purpose -

- Explore how sustainability attitudes differ between Generation Z and Baby Boomers
- the reasons why Investigate consumers sustainable values continue to choose unsustainable fashion, with a focus on how self-expression needs and social image concerns influence their decisions
- Provide actionable insights to help bridge the attitude-behaviour gap

- · Qualitative research design
- 20 semi-structured interviews
- Participants: Gen Z (1997–2012) and Baby Boomers (1946-1964)
- Countries: Germany and Sweden
- Theoretical framework:
  - Consumer Culture Theory
  - Bourdieu's Theory of Practice
  - Theory of Planned Behavior

# **Key Findings**



# Key takeaways for the industry

- Offering affordable, sustainable alternatives without sacrificing style
- Targeted communication strategies based on the motivations of the generations
- Promote repair culture, second hand platforms and transparent branding
- Recognize the pragmatic habits of baby boomers as underutilized sustainability drivers
- Empower Generation Z to put ethical intentions into action through incentives and accessibility





# Lost in Translation: Making Sense of Sustainability in Swedish Fashion Companies

02

# **PURPOSE**

This study investigates how sustainability regulations influence internal organizational change by addressing:

RQ1: How do managers in Sweden's women's fashion industry navigate and implement evolving sustainability regulations?

RQ2: How are these regulatory changes

RQ2: How are these regulatory changes perceived and experienced by employees within the organization?



# RESULTS & ANALYSIS

Five key themes emerged:

Uncertainty and Interpretation – Regulations are ambiguous; lack of tools and templates leads to inconsistent implementation.

Leadership and Communication – Top-down decisions and unclear responsibilities reduce employee engagement and ownership.

Employee Engagement and Burden –

Sustainability tasks feel administrative rather than purposeful without sufficient support.

Supply Chain Coordination – Difficulty in tracing and verifying supplier compliance impairs progress.

Structural Change and Long-Term Vision – Sustainability is becoming strategic, but full institutionalization is still developing.

# Scan Me!





# 01

# **INTRODUCTION**

The fashion industry is under growing pressure to transition toward sustainability. New EU regulations like the CSRD, ESPR, and the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles now require companies to shift from voluntary initiatives to enforceable sustainability practices. While these regulations aim to improve transparency, circularity, and social responsibility, their implementation poses organizational challenges, on both managerial and employee level.

03

# **METHODOLOGY**

Approach: Qualitative case study
Data Collection: 6 semi-structured interviews
with managers, sustainability officers, and
employees

**Analysis:** Thematic coding combining inductive and deductive approaches

Theoretical Framework: Kotter's 8-Step Model, Lewin's Change Model, and the Sequential Sustainability Transformation Model (STM)

05

# DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Managers are initiating change, but ambiguity and resource limitations slow down effective implementation. Employees engage in sustainability routines, but often lack clarity and purpose, risking symbolic compliance. While some progress is evident, internal infrastructures, cross-level communication, and strategic clarity are underdeveloped. The shift toward sustainability is ongoing—but not yet fully embedded.

06

# **CONTRIBUTIONS**

To Industry: Highlights the need for internal clarity, leadership support, and employee empowerment to move beyond symbolic compliance.

To Research: Fills a gap by combining managerial and employee perspectives under evolving regulation; encourages longitudinal and comparative studies.

To Policymakers: Stresses the importance of clearer timelines, templates, and support tools to facilitate practical implementation.

**Julia Nyman & Katherine Giedraitis** 

# **Exploring Implementation** Science frameworks for **Textile and Apparel** industry

Addressing the knowledge-action gap in green supply chain management

# **BACKGROUND**

The textile and apparel industries current linear management contributes heavily to environmental degradation through water, energy, and chemical use, as well as waste and emissions. Green supply chain management offers a promising approach to reduce this impact and increasing profits, yet implementation is slow and fragmented due to financial, regulatory, and organizational barriers. While GSCM practices are gaining traction, there is a need for more structured and systematic approaches to support adoption across the supply chain. Implementation science is an area of study used in the healthcare sector aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of evidence-based practices into action. It offers tailored, setting specific frameworks, presenting a valuable, but unexplored solution for advancing GSCM practices uptake in the textile and apparel industry.



# **RESEARCH AIM**

Research into barriers and facilitators of green supply chain management has been well covered, but what guides these practices into action has not been. The purpose of this study is to determine what IS frameworks that were proven effective in facilitating research-toaction transitions in healthcare are relevant to the textile and apparel industry. Including, how they can be adapted to improve the implementation of green supply chain management practices within the TA sector.

# **ANALYSIS**

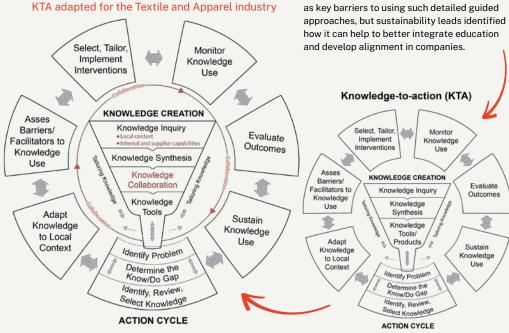
# Adaptations to the KTA for better fit in the TA context:

- · Addition of knowledge collaboration during Knowledge Creation to increase education and alignment before implementation
- Consideration of collaboration through the Action Cycle and across the supply chain. expanding resources and understanding.
- · Consideration for internal capabilities and supplier capabilities should be a key part during knowledge inquiry.
- The local context of suppliers should be considered during Knowledge Creation as well as in the Action Cycle.

The effective utilization of the new KTA model can directly address a number of challenges in GSCM adoption. Most prominently, it can help overcome Economic and Financial Barriers as well as Supply Chain Complexity/Collaboration Barriers by providing structured and localized guidance.

# **METHODOLOGY**

The study uses an exploratory, qualitative approach with semi-structured interviews. Reflections and perceptions from a variety of supply chain managers and sustainability professionals were collected to understand what is important for implementation, and what IS frameworks were seen relevant to improve the uptake and overcome barriers to green supply chain management.



Source: Author's illustration modified from Graham et al. (2006)

# **RESULTS**

- Structured frameworks were seen as important for companies to align their goals and better organize themselves for successful implementation and sustainment of GSCM
- Participants preferred the Knowledge-toaction (KTA) framework for its clarity, flexibility, and emphasis on knowledge creation.
- The Action Cycle of KTA was favoured for its iterative and organized flow
- Supply chain managers identified cost and time as key barriers to using such detailed guided

# Source: Author's illustration adapted from Graham et al. (2006)

# **IMPLICATIONS**

For policy makers, this study can guide the development of frameworks that offer structured phases for companies within their TA programs, emphasizing clear planning tools and stakeholder collaboration. For companies, it is important for them to prioratize localizing and maintaining flexibility in their GSCM approaches to suit specific business contexts, while also streamlining existing practices. Lastly, for researchers this study emphasizes the need for collaboration with industry stakeholders.

MATHEA HARRIS MINA NUR GONUL

**AUTHORS** 

# **DOMINANT THEMES IN** SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNICATION: AN ANALYSIS OF FASHION INDUSTRIES SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS

WHAT ARE THE DOMINANT THEMES IN THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNICATION IN SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS WITHIN FASHION INDUSTRIES?

# **AUTHORS**

Erika Heldtander One-Year master in Textile Management



# INTRODUCTION

This study examines how fashion brands use sustainability reports to balance accountability with brand image. While environmental efforts are often highlighted, social and economic issues are underreported or vaguely addressed. The research explore how these narratives are framed, questioning the credibility and consistency of such disclosures in a highly scrutinized industry





# **METHODOLOGY**

This study uses qualitative, inductive content analysis to explore how fashion brands communicate sustainability from 2020-2024. This flexible, datadriven approach allows key themes and patterns to emerge without relying on pre-set theoires, offering fresh insights into evolving communication strategies

> Methodology used Inductive content analysis

# **OBJECTIVE**

The aim of this thesis is to explore how sustainability communication is articulated in the official reports of global fashion companies. Specifically, it examines the dominant themes presented in the reports, the balance between environmental, social and economic sustainability, and the communicative strategies used to frame corporate sustainability narratives

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



# TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

The TBL framework evaluates sustainability through three interconnected dimensions: Economic: Focuses on financial health, profitability, and

long.term viability
Environmental: Addresses ecological impacts like
emissions, resource use, and waste reduction.
Sociat Considers labor practices, human rights, and
community well-being.

TBL promotes a balanced approach, highlighting that true sustainability requires integrating all three dimensions.

Elkington (1994)

# **LEGITIMACY THEORY**

Sees organizations as operating within a social contract, needing to aligns actions with societal norms to maintain legitimacy with societal norms to maintain legitimacy.
This perceptions is dynamic, shaped by
stakeholders and corporate disclosures.
Often, these disclosures are more about
managing perceptions than real change,
masking accountability gaps and hindering
geuine sustainability progress.
Deegan (2019)



# **RESULT & ANALYSIS**

While environmental efforts are more measurable, social and economic sustainability remain underdeveloped. This imbalance lifts a strategic use of sustainability reports for legitimacy rather than holistic accountability, challenging the TBL framework's call for equal emphasis on all three dimensions.

Key themes identified in the reports:

CIRCUI AR FRONOMY & RESOURCE **EFFICIENCY** 

CLIMATE ACTIONS & DECARBONIZATION

SUPPLY CHAIN TRANSPARENCY & ETHICAL PRACTICES

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY & COMMUNITY **ENGAGEMENT** 

It is clear that the companies use these reports not only to document their sustinability initatives but also as a storytelling tool. I noticed frequent use of forward-looking language, suggesting that the companies may be postponing addressing the issues at hand while simultaneously projecting an image of taking action.





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# A FASHION EVOULUTION: ULTRA-FAST FASHION & DIGITAL RETAIL

# **PURPOSE**

my many man

This study aimed to understand what factors motivated the female middle-class consumers in Kampala, Uganda when purchasing ultra-fast fashion.

With a growing middle class and limited academic research in this part of the world. This study wanted to fill this gap and inspire further research on this growing population in Sub-Sharan Africa.

"I believe that sometimes cheap is expensive in the long run, because once you get something cheaply, you'll find that it is probably going to get spoiled faster" – Adrine



# METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research methods were used to get a deeper understanding of the motivating factors behind a purchase.

Seven semi structed interviews were conducted with middle class women aged 24-41, in Kampala, Uganda.

·M.

# **FINDINGS**

The main motivations for purchase

Mark Market

- Quality
- Price
- Fit

WTP was higher if the perceived quality was offered.

**Brands** and **Made in labels** was not a motivating factor.

**Selection of goods** are made via apps. **Shipping & Purchases** through **Agents** or **Relatives** abroad.



"I prefer secondhand clothes because I feel the quality is really, really good, even though they have been used before, especially if I'm lucky to find the first class secondhand items". -Beatrice





# **IMPLICATIONS**

New market research - Insights into a new consumer segment and their purchasing behaviours.

Educational possibilities - there is a lack of knowledge of the negative impact the fashion industry & overconsumption has on the environment.

Incentive to do more research on these "new consumer".

"I buy clothes to look good. If you look good, you feel good.
Buying clothes helps with depression".
-Fiona





THE SWEDISH SCHOOL
OF TEXTILES
UNIVERSITY OF BORAS

M.SC. DEGREE PROJECT IN TEXTILE MANAGEMENT SPRING 2025
"ULTRA-FAST FASHION & DIGITAL RETAIL HIT THE KAMPALA MIDDLE CLASS"
BY: MATHILDA HOLM KIGOZI



# From wardrobe to webshop

-A qualitative study exploring challenges and resources in re-commerce apparel logistics

Authors: Emmy Persson & Ellen Johannson









# Background

- The fashion industry face growing pressure to adopt circular business models
- Re-commerce, the online resale of secondhand clothing, has emerged as a key solution, offering both sustainability and business potential
- Success in re-commerce relies on efficient logistics, yet many retailers face challenges. highlighting the need to explore them along with the important resources for efficient operations

# Purpose

This study explores the logistics challenges and key resources for secondhand fashion retailers in B2C re-commerce. As sustainability and regulations reshape the industry, it offers insights into achieving operational efficiency and adapting to circular market demands. The study also fills a theoretical gap by examining resource-based strategies in circular supply chain management.

# Method

- · Qualitative research approach
- Semi-structured interviews with 10 stakeholders, including fashion brands, charities and independent resellers operating in the Nordic region.
- The data is analyzed thematically and interpreted through the lens of the Resource Based View (RBV), with a specific focus on the VRIO framework to evaluate resource value and competitive potential.

# Results

- The findings revealed three main challenges commonly faced by companies operating B2C re-commerce models: the laborintensive nature of individual garment handling, inefficiencies, subjectivity and inconsistency in sourcing and sorting, and the persistent difficulty of achieving profitability.
- Through the analysis of the interviews with the participating companies, five important resources emerged: garment supply infrastructure, assortment strategy, standardization, operational technology, and customer-facing resources.
   Additionally, within each main resource, additional sub-resources were identified.

# Conclusion

This study explored the logistics challenges and resource needs of secondhand fashion retailers operating in B2C recommerce. As circular business models gain traction due to environmental concerns and regulatory developments like the ERP directive, re-commerce is emerging as both a sustainable and commercially viable approach. The findings indicate that the strategic use and availability of key resources help reduce logistical complexity, particularly in managing unique and labor-intensive processes. By addressing these interconnections, the study contributes to a better understanding of what it takes to build efficient and scalable re-commerce operations. Ultimately, supporting the growth of re-commerce requires not only technological and operational improvements but also a broader strategic alignment with circular economy goals.

# Managerial implications

This study offers practical insights for companies in the fashion, resale, and charity sectors to scale re-commerce through efficient logistics, strong tech infrastructure, and strategic resource networks. Standardization, automation and strict intake requirements reduce labor-intensive tasks like sorting and listing, while partnerships with charities and logistics providers enable cost-effective scaling for smaller actors. Staying ahead of regulations like EPR enhances competitiveness and positions companies to seize a growing business opportunity in the circular market.

SECANO

Donations





# BEYOND THE LENS: SEEING IS FEELING

# Introduction

- This study explores how Augmented Reality (AR) try-ons impact emotional arousal, engagement, and purchase intention in luxury fashion.
- Few studies capture real-time emotional responses in luxury AR. Most rely on self-reported tests (Javornik, 2016; Pozharliev et al., 2022).
- Framed through the Theory of Interactive Media Effects (TIME) with a focus on modality interactivity.

# **Research Questions**

# Methodology

# **Research Design**

Convergent parallel designcombining qualitative and quantitative data.

# **Participants**

45 (23 males, 21 females and one non-binary), within the age group 19-36.

# **Data Collection**

- Physiological data from GSR -Skin Conductance Level (SCL).
- Observations.
- Short structured interviews.

# **Data Analysis**

Thematic coding and statistical analysis - Paired T-test, Linear Mixed-Effects Model (LMM).

# **Experiment Design**

This research used a semi-controlled experiment where participants tried 24 AR filters from the DRESSX app, while wearing Shimmer3 GSR+sensors to measure physiological arousal.

 Participants described excitement and curiosity. Negative affect tied to body distortions.

**Qualitative Findings** 

- Perceived as immersive and novel. Participants explored filters beyond social norms.
- AR was viewed as a helpful tool rather than a trigger for purchase; used for preselection and exploration.

# **Quantitative Findings**

**Results** 

- Paired t-tests showed a significant increase in physiological arousal during AR try-ons.
- LMM revealed that filters F11–F24 significantly increased arousal
- Filters F11–F24 showed the highest arousal.

# **Comparative Study**

- Positive valence and high arousal confirm deep emotional engagement.
- Engagement varies by filter realism and alignment with consumer identity.
- AR serves more as a bridge to consideration than a direct driver of purchase

# Skin Conductance Level by AR Filter

GSR measures the electrical conductance of the skin (SCL), which varies with its moisture level (Shimmer, 2015).

# **Managerial Implications**

- Realistic, interactive filters boost emotional engagement is key for effective AR in luxury retail.
- AR integration boosts consumer interaction and supports purchase decisions.
- AR offers strategic value, but smaller brands may struggle with its technical and financial demands.

# Conclusion

- This research shows ARs potential not just as a retail tool but as a way to enhance emotional perception and strengthen brand engagement.
- As luxury brands embrace digital transformation, understanding ARs psychological and experiential impact is key to staying relevant and emotionally resonant.

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# Ownership Transfer & Lifecycle Management **Using Digital Product Passports**

A Study on Consumer Perception of Garments Re-use

MIZANUR RAHMAN | NAZMUL HASSAN

# **PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY**

This study explores how consumers perceive ownership transfer and lifecycle management using Digital Product Passports (DPP) during garment use. In response to the fashion industry's challenges with overproduction, rapid consumption, and environmental degradation, the study investigates how DPP can engage consumers to support resale, rental, and reuse. As DPP are not yet widely implemented, understanding consumer attitudes, social influence, and digital accessibility is essential for designing inclusive, consumer-centered systems that enable circular practices and facilitate ownership transfer in the textile industry.





# **METHODOLOGY**

# **Research Approach:**

A qualitative, exploratory approach was used to gain indepth insights into consumer perceptions of Digital Product Passports (DPP) in relation to ownership transfer and lifecycle management.

# **Data Collection:**

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with consumers in Sweden who had experience or awareness of circular fashion practices such as resale, rental, or reuse.

# **Data Analysis**

The interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, quided by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to identify key patterns in attitudes, social influence, and perceived behavioral control.

# **FINDINGS**

- Positive attitudes toward DPP when they are easy to use and trustworthy.
- Digital skills and privacy concerns affect engagement.
- Emotional attachment and garment type impact reuse behavior.
- Interface design influences trust and usability.

# **MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

To support ownership transfer and lifecycle management, brands should design user-friendly and transparent DPP that document product history. Using DPP in resale and rental platforms can build trust and boost consumer participation. Policymakers must ensure standardization, data privacy, and promote consumer education for broader adoption.

This study highlights the potential of Digital Product

Passports (DPP) to support ownership transfer and garment reuse. Consumer engagement depends on ease of use, trust and social influence. Designing inclusive and user-centered DPP systems is key to enabling circular practices in the textile industry



Contact:

Ruiqi Pan & Karl Sedeborn Holst

# FASHION, CARS & LIBIS

- A CULTURAL BRANDING APPROACH TO ENGAGING GEN-Z IN THE CHINESE MARKET 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

# PROBLEM & PURPOSE

**Problem:** In China's hypercompetitive auto market, brands struggle to connect with Gen-Z consumers who seek cultural relevance and reject traditional ads.

Purpose: To explore how automotive brands can use fashion collaborations to create resonant brand narratives for Chinese Gen-Z. This study analyzes Lynk & Co's use of fashion for cultural "mythmaking".



**METHOD** 

This study uses a qualitative approach grounded in Cultural Branding Theory.

**Data Collection:** Semi-structured interviews with 6 key employees at Lynk & Co in Sweden and China.

**Participants:** Included heads of design, brand strategy, and clubhouse managers to ensure a holistic view.

Analysis: Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify core patterns and insights.

heron

**FINDINGS** 

- 1. Co-Created Narratives: Fashion is used as a catalyst for co-creation. In China, users design merchandise and partner their businesses with the brand ("Lynk-Land Partners"), turning them into co-authors of the brand story.
- **2. Storytelling Through Design:** Design philosophy is heavily influenced by fashion and urban culture, not traditional luxury, to convey authenticity. This appeals to the "youthful mindset" of a broad audience, resolving the "target audience paradox."
- 3. Building the Brand Myth: The internal mantra "Dare to be Lynk & Co" guides an original design approach. Concept cars are framed as "haute couture"—expressive statements that build the brand myth rather than sell a product.
- 4. Design-Driven Localized Community: Clubhouses act as local community hubs. In China, they tap into the "松弛感" (chillax) culture, while in Europe, they incorporate local art, translating the global myth into a locally resonant experience.





# **MANEGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 1. **Prioritize** Value Alignment: Choose partners based on shared values and authentic storytelling, not just audience size.
- 2. **Empower** Genuine Co-Creation: Grant creative freedom to partners. Gen-Z values genuine passion over a heavily controlled corporate message.
- 3. Leverage Collaboration for Differentiation: Use unexpected partnerships to define a unique market space and generate buzz.
- 4. **Redefine** KPIs: Measure success beyond sales. Track social sentiment, user-generated content, and brand resonance to understand long-term loyalty.









# 'A Brand Without a Community is no Brand'

-Exploring the Dynamics Between Brands and Brand Communities

# Why did we do this?

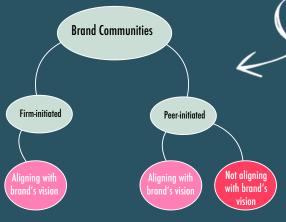
In today's social media-driven world, consumers are not just buying from brands; they're reshaping them. We wanted to understand how communities form around brands. A brand community can be defined as a group of consumers connected by shared interest, identity or loyalty toward a brand.

The purpose was to explore how different brand communities affect a brand's identity and how these communities can both support and challenge the brand's intended values. There are two types of brand communities:

- Firm-initiated brand communities: created and hosted by the company
- Peer-initiated brand communities: formed independently of the company



We focused on investigating different brand communities, which formed



# Outcome

As an outcome of this thesis, we created new terms to describe and divide brand community types. This offers new subcategories to distinguish brand communities at a more specific level. Internal brand communities are aligned with the brand's values and messaging, while external brand communities emerge independently and may reinterpret or challenge the brand's identity.



# **Future solutions for brands**

- Understand and engage with both firm-initiated and peer-initiated brand communities to navigate how brand identity is shaped.
- Embrace co-creation over control by involving consumers in dialogue.
- Monitor and respond to emerging narratives across platforms to protect brand integrity and adapt communication strategies.

Therese Nordin Hällgren Xenia Schelper M.Sc. in Textile Management





# WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.

FROM A COMMUNITY MANAGER'S PERSPECTIVE: COMMUNITY BUILDING IN RESPONSIBLE FASHION REFRAMING 'SUSTAINABLE FASHION'

HANA SCHWALBE & VICTOR ESKILSSON

Brand communities are unique groups of people connected by their shared admiration for a brand, forming structured social relationships that go beyond physical location (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001).

# **PURPOSE**

This thesis explores how community managers at responsible fashion brands use community-building strategies to foster brand loyalty, trust and consumer engagement.

# **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Main Research Question:

How do community managers of responsible fashion brands use community building as a marketing strategy?

# Sub-questions:

- What specific community-building strategies do responsible fashion brand managers implement?
- How do community managers ensure authenticity in responsibility messaging within brand communities?
- What are the advantages and limitations of digital brand communities compared to offline, inperson communities?

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Brand Community Theory Shared Consciousness Rituals and Traditions Moral Responsibility

Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001

Service Dominant Logic Co-Creation Participatory Engagement Mutual Value Creation

usch and Vargo. 2004

# COMMUNITY BUILDING STRATEGIES

Educational Storytelling Transparency & Authenticity Emotional Engagement Online & Offline Integration Co-Creation & Participations

# OUTCOMES

Trust
Perceived Authenticity
Brand Loyalty
Community Co-Creation

# **METHODOLOGY**

- **\*\*** Qualitative research design
- Combination of purposive and convenience sampling
- 7 in-depth semi-structured interviews with community managers of resonsible fashion brands from the Western World

# **KEY FINDINGS**

- Educational storytelling and transparency build consumer trust.
- Emotional and participatory engagement enhances perceived authenticity.
- Integration of digital and physical experiences strengthens brand loyalty.
- Community managers foster meaningful co-creation beyond traditional marketing.

# **COMPANIES**

- **\* UNNA**
- Lilia the Label
- MUD Jeans
- **\*** Wollow
- Merz b. Schwanen
- **\* 2 Anonymous brands**

# MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

- \* Hire dedicated community managers to lead engagement.
- Use storytelling to communicate sustainability clearly and emotionally.
- \* Prioritize transparency and authenticity to build consumer trust.
- \* Combine online and offline strategies to strengthen community ties.
- Involve consumers through co-creation and participatory activities.
- \* View community building as a long-term brand investment.









# IN TEXTILE AND APPAREL MANUFACTURING

**Current Practices** 



**Opportunities** 









# Purpose

This study explores how textile and apparel manufacturers adopt Circular Economy practices, the challenges they face, and the opportunities they perceive for advancing circularity

# Theoretical framework

# **Supply Network Configuration Theory**



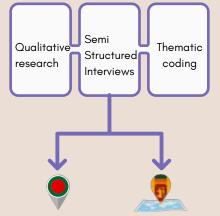






Network Supply Chain

# Methodology



12 companies were selected for interviews from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka

# Leverage policy support for circular growth. Invest in technology and design innovation. Tackle high costs and infrastructure gaps. Strengthen supply chain collaboration. Align strategy with barriers and opportunities.

# **Authors Contact**





Shatabdi Das





Hansika Dharmathilaka

# Findings and Result

	4	Am .	A	品
Current Practices	Sustainable Sourcing     Design for Circularity	Waste Sorting & Recycling     Reduced Waste via Process     Optimization     Tech Investment	<ul><li>Local &amp; Global Partnerships</li><li>Supplier Engagement</li><li>Supplier Education</li><li>Networking with Recyclers</li></ul>	<ul><li>Vertical Integration</li><li>Material Traceability</li><li>Supplier Monitoring</li></ul>
Challenges	<ul><li>High Material Costs</li><li>Limited Material Supply</li><li>Recycled Quality Issues</li><li>Performance Limitations</li></ul>	High Investment Cost     Technological Challenges     Lack of Infrastructure     Company Culture	<ul> <li>Low Consumer Demand</li> <li>Brand Apathy Toward Circularity</li> <li>Lack of Global Regulation</li> <li>Weak Government Support</li> </ul>	<ul><li>High Logistics Emissions</li><li>Traceability Issues</li><li>Inconsistent Supply Chain Adoption</li></ul>
Opportunities	New Market Access     Policy Alignment     Material Cost Savings     Raw Material     Preparedness	Resource Optimization     Energy Efficiency     Process Innovation     Reusing waste materials	<ul><li>Meet Brand Targets</li><li>Tap into Green Demand</li><li>Environmental Benefits</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Circularity Drives Innovation</li> <li>Collaboration Strengthens the value chain</li> </ul>



# Digital Product Passport Data Attributes for Circularity

# Downstream circular actors' requested data attributes

Purpose: To explore requested DPP data attributes as input by downstream circular actors and what data these actors can disclose as output concerning their interactions with the product to further support the circularity of products.

How? Seven qualitative semi-structured interviews & one workshop

# What is a Digital Product Passport (DPP)?

- Consumers and stakeholders can scan the DPP which is attached to the garment, such as a QR code, to access detailed product information.
- All textiles sold on the EU market must be accompanied by a DPP by 2027.

# Why research about DPP for circularity?

- The research is a part of the research project "System demonstrator for a sustainable textile system", aiming to achieve extended garment life cycles.
- · The DPP is highlighted as a key tool for managing information exchange and ensuring an efficient flow of data between actors in the circular economy.

## Contributions?

- · A categorization of specific data attributes based different actors
- · Offering guidance for actors with similar R-strategy or companies working with these actors
- · Calling for further multi-stakeholder collaboration, to get the perspectives and needs of all value chain actors

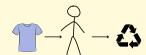


# Remake

# Recycle









# **BEYOND THE GEAR:** MOTIVATIONAL DRIVERS AND IDENTITY SHAPING IN OUTDOOR APPAREL BRAND COMMUNITIES

A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING CONSUMER MOTIVATIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE OUTDOOR APPAREL BRAND COMMUNITIES AND HOW THIS ENGAGEMENT SHAPES THEIR IDENTITY



# **PURPOSE**

The study examines why consumers engage in outdoor apparel brand communities and how this participation influences their identity. It aims to identify key motivations for involvement and explore how brand interactions shape self-perception, offering insights to improve marketing and community-building strategies.

# **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopts a qualitative research methodology, using semi-structured interviews with individuals involved in skiing, snowboarding, and surfing communities. The data is analysed using thematic analysis to identify the key motivations and recurring patterns.

# **FINDINGS**

Consumer engagement in outdoor apparel brand communities is deeply tied to identity formation, going beyond product use to include emotional, social, and symbolic motivations. The key motivations identified are *connection* and belonging, brand loyalty and trust, and personal expression. Brand communities serve as dynamic spaces for identity exploration, continuously shaped by shared values, immersive online and offline interactions, and expressive performances. The study found that consumer motivations within these communities profoundly influence individual identity formation by fostering a sense of belonging, enabling self-expression through active participation, and providing crucial social validation. Brands should shift from transactional loyalty to fostering participatory, value-driven environments that support consumer identity development. Future strategies must emphasise authenticity, adaptability, and co-creation to build lasting and meaningful consumer relationships.

