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An Analysis of Consumer Perceptions Towards Sustainable Fashion Trends

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Abstract

Background: Fashion globally is being held more accountable for its environmental impact, driving growth in sustainable alternatives such as thrifting, upcycling, and green brands. Attitudes of consumers are crucial to understanding the move toward a circular fashion economy, yet comprehensive examination of attitudes toward these fundamental areas is unexplored. **Objectives:** The current study aimed at profiling consumer attitudes across five dimensions of

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sustainable fashion: (1) thrifting preference, (2) upcycling interest, (3) being green knowledge, (4) environmental knowledge, and (5) social influence and convenience. **Methods:** A cross-sectional quantitative design was utilized with a self-report questionnaire of 236 participants. The instrument had 25 items answered on a 5-point Likert scale. Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis) for testing central tendency and response distributions per construct. **Findings:** Results showed high environmental awareness (M=3.84-3.98) and theoretical support towards sustainable practices but huge intention-action gaps. Thrifting was valued for value (M=3.79) and novelty (M=3.52) above ecologic concerns (M=3.00). Upcycling elicited strong normative support (M=3.81-3.84) but lower personal engagement (M=3.53). Green brands enjoyed unexpected trust (M=3.86) and premiums paid (M=3.74). Affordability and availability were strongest brakes, with statement "I would buy more if it were more affordable and widely available" highest overall (M=4.04). **Conclusion:** Consumers show passionate ideological allegiance to eco-fashion but in purchasing decisions prioritize functionality over environmental concerns. The intention-action gap persists not due to awareness gaps but due to structural barriers. **Implications:** Results show that advocates of sustainable fashion must emphasize practical benefits as well as environmental reasons, while sector players must address cost and access barriers. Policymakers can provide incentives and standardization assistance, and educators must emphasize developing competencies to bridge the intention-action gap for activities like upcycling.
Keywords: Sustainable Fashion, Consumer Perception, Thrifting, Upcycling, Eco-friendly Brands, Environmental Awareness, Intention-Action Gap, Circular Economy

Introduction

The global fashion economy stands at a point of reckoning, as increasing criticism hits its high environmental footprint, characterized by natural resource degradation, water contamination, and growing garment waste (Amrith, 2024; Gautam, 2024). To this, the sustainable-fashion model has emerged as a counter to the fast-fashion standard by challenging consumers to embrace practices such as thrifting, upcycling, and green-brand patronage (Copeland, 2024; Regmi et al., 2025, Jain et al., 2024). All these alternatives aim to create a more circular and accountable fashion economy. Consumer perception is key, as success within this transition also hinges not just on the availability of sustainable options but on widespread public adoption and implementation (Polyportis et al., 2025; Shrestha et al., 2025; Carrete et al., 2012). This study explores the multifaceted landscape of consumer sentiment to map the current awareness and motivation for sustainable fashion trends.

The concept of sustainable fashion encompasses broad practices, from the purchasing of second-hand clothing to refurbishing existing clothing and choosing brands with established ethical practices (Jayakody et al., 2025; D'Adamo et al., 2022). Thrifting, the practice of purchasing second-hand clothing, has become not just cost-effective but a resistance against excess

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consumption (Jongh, 2025; Joshi et al., 2025). Upcycling, also the artistic recycling of old garments into new items, offers a concrete solution towards waste reduction (Wu et al., 2022; Stanescu, 2021; Kamble & Behera, 2021; Zavagno, 2021). Meanwhile, increasing numbers of eco-conscious brands are capturing the marketplace, promoting sustainable production and sourcing (Ismail, 2025; Hudayberganov et al., 2024; Alam et al., 2022). Consequently, consumer engagement with these practices is influenced by the complex interplay of measures such as awareness, accessibility, social influence, and trust.

Despite growing debate, a conclusive and quantifiable comprehension of the manner in which consumers perceive these diverse elements of sustainable fashion remains an ongoing need. While general awareness is likely to be increasing, the extent to which this is translating into actual behavior change and/or whether there remains huge underlying resistance is unknown. There are questions still being posed about whether consumers find thrifted items to be qualitatively equivalent to their new versions, whether they trust their sustainability assertions from sustainable brands, and to what extent their decisions are being influenced by peer group compared to practical considerations like price and availability. This research strives to move beyond anecdotal evidence and provide a systematic, empirical analysis of these perceptions.

It is therefore motivated by the need to systematically investigate and measure consumer attitudes in the significant domains of thrifting, upcycling, green brands, and environmental awareness. Employing a systematic quantitative research approach, the research aims to dissect the drivers and barriers that inform today's sustainable fashion. The findings that are generated are valuable to educators, marketers, and policymakers interested in closing the intention-action gap among consumers to build a more sustainable, responsible fashion system.

Lastly, achieving the success of the sustainable fashion movement depends on instilling consumer values within buying behaviour. This study assists towards this end by providing an in-depth diagnosis of dominant attitudes, highlighting areas of strong consensus and patches of resistance that are most important to overcome. In mapping out the perceptual terrain of sustainable fashion, this study provides a central evidence base to inform future strategies for enlisting wider and more meaningful consumer participation in creating a circular fashion economy.

Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

To develop a profile of the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

To measure and describe the level of consumer preference and attitude towards thrifting.

To establish the interest and perceived usefulness of consumers in upcycling clothes.

To measure consumer attitudes towards environmentally friendly and sustainable fashion brands.

To ascertain consumer general environmental knowledge regarding the fashion industry.

To establish the influence of social networks and perceived availability of sustainable fashion.

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Hypotheses

H1: Thrifting Preference

Interviewees agree that thrifting is an affordable and offbeat way of using sustainable fashion.

H2: Interest in Upcycling

Interviewees show interest in upcycling, valuing its creative and environmental worth.

H3: Perception of Eco-Friendly Brand

Respondents positively dispose towards green brands, enjoying their style and value.

H4: Environmental Awareness

Respondents are highly sensitive to the negative environmental impact of fast fashion and consumer priority and more stringent regulation of the fashion industry.

H5: Social Influence & Accessibility

Respondents quote that social influence is moderate and unaffordability and unavailability are the primary problems inhibiting adoption.

Materials and Methods

Consistent with the strong analysis of attitudes towards sustainable fashion, the study employed a systematic quantitative approach in analyzing consumer attitudes on five key dimensions. A cross-sectional design was used with a self-report survey sent to a convenient sample of 236 respondents. The survey instrument consisted of six sections: demographic information followed by five constructs measured on 25 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree). The constructs were methodically investigated such as thrifting preference, upcycling interest, green brand perception, environmental awareness, and social influence with access to cover all determinants of sustainable fashion.

The scales employed a well-designed questionnaire whose validity was assured through pretesting and expert validation. The data gathering was done offline for enhanced representation using convenience sampling and approached respondents with fashion consumption experience. The sample of 236 people was sufficiently large to provide descriptive analysis statistical power, and the consistency that data were captured in full indicated high response quality. IBM SPSS Statistics software was employed as the primary analysis tool, utilizing descriptive statistics in terms of means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis in addressing all research hypotheses and establishing central tendencies and responses in distributions on all being measured constructs.

The approach maintained in mind systematic measurement on all hypotheses on dedicated questionnaire items. H1 (preference for thrifting) was ascertained via five environmental

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motivation, quality perception, uniqueness, affordability, and brand preference items. H2 (interest in upcycling) assessed creativity, environmental, and educational factors via another five items. H3 (perception of eco-friendly brand) assessed research behavior, willingness to pay, style perception, trust, and corporate responsibility. H4 (environmental awareness) assessed recognition of pollution, guilt, prioritizing waste, understanding of benefits, and regulatory attitudes. Finally, H5 (social influence and accessibility) tested peer influence, media effects, physical access, social desirability, and affordability barriers to offer comprehensive hypothesis testing with expert measurement instruments.

Results and Analysis

Table 1: Thrifting Preference

Questionnaire	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
I frequently shop at thrift stores to reduce my environmental impact.	236	1	5	3.00	1.124	-.298	.158	-1.042	.316
Thrifted clothing is just as good in quality as new clothing.	236	1	5	3.31	1.092	-.047	.158	-.790	.316
I find unique and stylish clothing options when thrifting.	236	1	5	3.52	1.033	-.617	.158	-.084	.316
Thrifting is a more affordable alternative to buying new clothes.	236	1	5	3.79	.915	-.651	.158	.465	.316
I prefer thrifting over buying from fast fashion brands.	236	1	5	3.31	1.077	-.405	.158	-.497	.316
Valid N (listwise)	236								

Based on the complete descriptive statistics of the Thrifting Preference construct, meticulous scrutiny through extensive analysis reveals significant information on consumer opinion and response distribution. The results indicate variation in agreement between the various dimensions of thrifting, with discernible patterns of central tendency and distributional characteristics providing insight into consumer opinion.

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The mean scores establish a clear hierarchy of agreement with the statements regarding thrifting. There is greatest consensus on the affordability of thrifting (M=3.79), followed by finding personalized and trendy goods (M=3.52), with preference to quality perception and fast fashion averaging 3.31. Perhaps most notably, environmental awareness as a primary driver scores exactly at mid-point (M=3.00), meaning that it is not a primary driver for the average consumer. All mean scores are above the 3-scale midpoint, indicating a net positive thrifting orientation, although differing in strength of commitment between items. This pattern partially supports H1, confirming that respondents do see thrifting as inexpensive and unconventional but are equivocal about environmental and quality aspects.

Properties of distributions revealed by skewness statistics are of fundamental significance for shedding light on response patterns. All five of these have negative skewness, ranging from -0.047 to -0.651, indicating responses leaning towards the higher end of the scale (Agree and Strongly Agree). The most extreme negative skewness occurs for afford-ability (-0.651) and having the ability to find various things (-0.617), validating strong positive in both of these indicators. Low skewness for environmental impact (-0.047) approximates a symmetrical distribution and suggests nearly equal distribution of scores above and below the mean for the item.

The kurtosis values further clarify the grouping of responses. Negative kurtosis on environmental impact (-1.042), quality perception (-0.790), and preference over fast fashion (-0.497) indicate platykurtic distributions - flatter than the normal curve with more scores at the tails. This would indicate that these items have polarized sentiments, with big clusters of respondents at both the positive and negative ends of the scale. The affordability statement, however, shows positive kurtosis (0.465), indicating a leptokurtic distribution where responses are grouped closer to the mean, reflecting higher agreement on this attribute.

Practically, the standard deviations (0.915 to 1.124) indicate moderate to highly variable responses for all items. Environmental motivation is the most unpleasant factor (SD=1.124), as it is actually the most divisive quality of thrifting, while affordability is the most pleasant one (SD=0.915). This pattern shows that while utilitarian advantages like cost-effectiveness are universally applicable for all types of thrifting, ideological motivation and quality factors are contentious issues that block overall positive orientations. The combination of distribution measures reveals that thrifting is valued most highly for utilitarian reasons rather than environmental ideology, and there are large segments of the population segmented along a variety of key dimensions of second-hand clothing consumption.

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Table 2: Upcycling Interest

Questionnaire	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
I enjoy re-purposing or modifying old clothes to create new styles.	236	1	5	3.53	1.016	-.719	.158	.063	.316
Upcycling is an effective way to reduce textile waste.	236	1	5	3.81	.931	-.895	.158	.697	.316
I feel creative and satisfied when I upcycle clothing.	236	1	5	3.72	.894	-.417	.158	-.176	.316
I would participate in workshops or tutorials on clothing upcycling.	236	1	5	3.74	.971	-.660	.158	.065	.316
Upcycled fashion should be more promoted as a sustainable option.	236	1	5	3.84	.950	-.876	.158	.701	.316
Valid N (listwise)	236								

The descriptive statistics for the Upcycling Interest construct indicate very positive sentiments among respondents, with all five items well above the neutral midpoint of 3. All the means range from 3.53 to 3.84, indicating a consensus ranging from "Agree" to "Strongly Agree." The highest level of agreement is with the normative and pragmatic assertions that "Upcycled fashion should be more promoted" (M=3.84) and that "Upcycling is an effective way to reduce textile waste" (M=3.81). This is followed closely by a willingness to engage in learning, as supported by the mean for workshop attendance (M=3.74), and individual feeling of satisfaction and creativity from the process (M=3.72). The baseline level of enjoyment for the practice of repurposing garments, though still positive, has the lowest mean (M=3.53) and suggests that while the idea of upcycling is strongly supported, the practical process itself is less frequent.

The skewness measure provides further information about the distribution of positive attitudes. There is significant negative skewness in all five items with values ranging from -0.417 to -0.895. This is a testament to the fact that the answers are not only above 3 but are significantly skewed towards the upper end of the scale (4 = "Agree" and 5 = "Strongly Agree"). The most extreme negative skew is evident for the responses "Upcycling is a good means of saving on textile waste" (-0.895) and "Upcycled fashion should be promoted more" (-0.876), which represent very strong agreement and the vast majority of responses on the positive side. This pattern confirms that

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responders view upcycling not only positively, but also as a highly important and neglected sustainable activity.

Kurtosis measures tell us about the "peakedness" of the response distributions. For both of the most extreme items in terms of means and skewness (effectiveness and promotion), positive kurtosis measures of 0.697 and 0.701, respectively, indicate a leptokurtic distribution, with responses highly clustered around the high mean, indicating strong consensus and agreement on these items. The other three items (enjoyment, creativity, and workshop involvement) all exhibit levels of kurtosis very close to zero (0.063, -0.176, 0.065), indicating these distributions are more or less normal in shape (mesokurtic), but merely skewed towards the positive end of the distribution. What this suggests is that for the more individual, behavior-style items, opinions are more scattered, although still inclined to lean towards the positive.

Based on this expanded data, the results strongly support H2. The hypothesis was that there would be a positive interest expressed in upcycling, considering its environmental and creative benefits, even if direct involvement would be smaller. The findings confirm this trend precisely. Identification of the environmental benefits (Q7, M=3.81) and the associated creative satisfaction (Q8, M=3.72) were very high on the scale. Above all, as would be expected, the activity of active enjoyment (Q6, M=3.53) had the lowest mean score, where, while the idea is highly valued, the concrete action of upcycling is slightly less common. The strong willingness to attend workshops (Q9, M=3.74) also supports H2 by showing that interest exists but maybe conditional on learning and skill development.

In conclusion, the analysis provides a very vivid picture of a sample that is highly welcoming to upcycling theoretically and recognizes its tremendous environmental and artistic advantages. There is unanimous consensus that it is a worthwhile waste-reduction strategy and should be encouraged even further. However, a slight decrease in the personal enjoyment score, coupled with great willingness for workshops, suggests an "intention-action gap." Value is recognized and desire to learn more is there, but everyone may not be participating in upcycling yet, maybe due to barriers such as a lack of skills, time, or confidence. This gives a great chance for brands and educators to cover this gap by supplying the resources and motivation needed to turn good attitudes into universal practice.

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Table 3: Eco-Friendly Brand Perception

Questionnaire	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
I actively research brands before buying to check their sustainability practices.	236	1	5	3.68	.912	-.844	.158	.818	.316
I am willing to pay more for clothing from eco-friendly brands.	236	1	5	3.74	1.034	-1.025	.158	.812	.316
Eco-friendly brands offer stylish and trendy clothing options.	236	1	5	3.75	.923	-.530	.158	.243	.316
I trust the ethical claims (e.g., fair trade, organic materials) of sustainable brands.	236	1	5	3.86	.843	-.752	.158	.851	.316
Sustainable brands are doing enough to promote environmental responsibility.	236	1	5	3.73	.891	-.457	.158	-.115	.316
Valid N (listwise)	236								

The descriptive statistics for the Eco-Friendly Brand Perception scale demonstrate uniformly positive opinion, with all five items firmly above the neutral midpoint of 3. Means are tightly clustered between 3.68 and 3.86, demonstrating a strong consensus that skews toward "Agree." Highest agreement is with, "I trust the ethical claims. of sustainable brands" (M=3.86), a critical and desirable result. This is closely followed by the perceptions that "Eco-friendly brands offer fashionable and trendy fashion products" (M=3.75) and that their sample "would pay more" for them (M=3.74). The high means for engaged research (M=3.68) and the perception that sustainable brands are "doing enough" (M=3.73) all create a picture of a highly trusting and accepting consumer base.

Skewness analysis provides more insight into the distribution of these kinds of responses. Each of the five statements shows significant negative skewness with values ranging from -0.457 to -1.025. This is a very strong indicator that not only are the responses biased above 3, but they are closely clustered to the "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" end of the scale. The most extreme negative skew

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is for willingness to pay more (-1.025), and it indicates a vast majority of interviewees are leaning toward this positive financial commitment. The extreme negative skew for trusting ethical claims (-0.752) and going out of one's way to investigate brands (-0.844) also attests that this positive feeling is not shallow but underpinned by a disposition to investigate and trust brand messages.

The kurtosis measures reveal an interesting pattern in the data. In four of the five items—trust in ethical statements (0.851), willingness to pay extra (0.812), active inquiry (0.818), and trendy (0.243)—the kurtosis values are positive. This indicates leptokurtic distributions, with answers tightly packed around the high mean, reflecting strong consensus and homogeneity of opinion on these factors. In contrast, for "Sustainable brands are doing enough," the kurtosis statistic is near zero (-0.115), indicating a near-normal distribution. What this suggests is that while respondents are in agreement, there is more disagreement on this given, more negative question than with the others.

Based on this rich information, the results confirm H3 to some extent but in the opposite way to the hypothesized prediction. H3 forecasted a "favorable but critical" view, anticipating skepticism over ethical claims and whether brands are fulfilling their responsibilities. The findings, however, show a strongly positive view with minimal indication of the anticipated skepticism. The respondents indicated high levels of trust in ethical claims (contrary to the hypothesis), a high willingness to pay extra, and the perception that brands are doing enough. The most polarized product (doing enough) also possesses a high mean (3.73) that can be interpreted as mild criticism at best. Therefore, the evidence does not support the "critical" element of H3; instead, it is a consumer group that is highly trusting and optimistic about sustainable brands.

Conclusion, the analysis presents us with the picture of a market that is not only receptive but welcoming eco-fashion. Customers characterize themselves as knowledgeable researchers, financially disposed to pay, and convinced of the style and sustainability promises of the brands. The relatively high standard deviations (about 0.9) do still show some variety, but the significant negative skew and positive kurtosis mean that the dominant trend is one of confirmation. For marketers and brands, this is a comforting sign that the efforts invested in ethical communication and sustainability are reaping rewards and are positively influencing consumer attitudes and behavior. The challenge will be to continue this high level of trust and living up to rising expectations of an increasingly expanding conscious consumer base.

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Table 4: Environmental Awareness

Questionnaire	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Fast fashion significantly contributes to environmental pollution.	236	1	5	3.76	.933	-.808	.158	.636	.316
I feel guilty when buying from non-sustainable fashion brands.	236	1	5	3.54	1.029	-.517	.158	-.217	.316
Reducing textile waste should be a priority for consumers.	236	1	5	3.95	.829	-.719	.158	.924	.316
I understand the environmental benefits of sustainable fashion.	236	1	5	3.98	.777	-.739	.158	1.464	.316
The fashion industry needs stricter regulations to promote sustainability.	236	1	5	3.98	.870	-.866	.158	.896	.316
Valid N (listwise)	236								

The descriptive statistics for Environmental Awareness construct are very high, as to be expected from a construct involving awareness and care. All five items were far above the neutral midpoint of 3, ranging from 3.54 to 3.98. The highest levels of consensus are with the assertions "I comprehend the environmental advantages of sustainable fashion" and "The fashion sector must have tougher regulations," both of which have a mean of 3.98 and indicate nearly universal agreement. Following this is the view that "Decreasing waste in textiles must be prioritized by consumers" (M=3.95) and recognition that "Fast fashion plays a huge role in contributing to environmental pollution" (M=3.76). The claim to feeling guilty when shopping from non-sustainable brands, while remaining positive itself, has the lowest mean (M=3.54), suggesting that cognitive awareness is more common than the following emotional response.

Measurement of skewness provides additional evidence for the strength of these attitudes. All five items show significant negative skewness from -0.517 to -0.866. This confirms that the answers are highly focused at the "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" end of the scale. The most extreme negative skew is on tighter regulation (-0.866), indicating a strong overall mood towards industrial

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change. The high negative skew for the benefits of understanding (-0.739) and the imperative to cut waste (-0.719) serves again to demonstrate that this is not a hesitant awareness but one of strongly held beliefs among the majority of respondents.

The kurtosis scores provide valuable insight into the unanimity of response to these matters. In four of the five measures, we observe positive kurtosis, testifying to leptokurtic distributions whereby answers are intensely peaked around the high mean. This is most pronounced on perception of environmental gain, which registers with a very high kurtosis of 1.464 and an extreme level of consistency on this topic. Similarly, the value placed on reducing waste (0.924) and controlling the industry (0.896) report highly peaked distributions, signifying strong consensus. By contrast, the index on feeling guilty does possess a weak negative kurtosis (-0.217), which indicates a flat, platykurtic distribution. This means that on this emotional indicator, opinions are more spread out, with greater sections feeling more and less guilty than the mean, even though the overall mean is positive.

Based on this data, the results form solid and unambiguous evidence supporting H4. The hypothesis prediction was that participants would have a high sense of awareness about the environmental price of fast fashion and a desire to do things differently. Not only does the data confirm this but indicate that awareness is one of the highest among all constructs that were measured. The near-ceiling-level scores for understanding the benefits, valuing reduced waste, and demanding tougher legislation (all ~3.95-3.98) are ringing endorsement. The high level of agreement that fast fashion is polluting (M=3.76) does so squarely affirm the essence of the hypothesis. The only caveat is that said high level of cognitive awareness slightly anticipates the individual emotional response of guilt, but the mean for guilt remains solidly in the "Agree" range.

Overwhelmingly, the analysis produces a sample not only informed but highly informed and one that advocates responsibility and change. Respondents evidence a very high level of mature comprehension that bridges over from individual responsibility (reduction of waste), business responsibility (fast fashion's role), to the need for government or regulatory intervention. The extremely high means, high negative skewness, and high kurtosis on all items with the exception of four create a picture of a population that is well-organized and vocal in environmental concern with fashion. This provides a clear mandate to the industry: consumers know, they are concerned, and are demanding tangible action and stricter regulation to overcome the environmental impact of fashion.

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Table 5: Social Influence & Accessibility

Questionnaire	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
My friends/family influence my decision to buy sustainable fashion.	236	1	5	3.48	.996	-.775	.158	.290	.316
Social media encourages me to thrift, upcycle, or buy eco-friendly brands.	236	1	5	3.73	.981	-.615	.158	-.039	.316
Thrift stores and sustainable brands are easily accessible in my area.	236	1	5	3.50	1.094	-.364	.158	-.713	.316
Sustainable fashion is often portrayed as trendy and desirable in my social circle.	236	1	5	3.64	.942	-.364	.158	-.336	.316
I would buy more sustainable fashion if it were more affordable and widely available.	236	1	5	4.04	.801	-.771	.158	.995	.316
Valid N (listwise)	236								

The descriptive statistics of the Social Influence & Accessibility measure reveal a clear distinction between practical barriers and social influence, with one item being the strongest in the entire dataset. The means show a clear trend, from a moderate 3.48 to a very high 4.04. The strongest statement is "I would buy more sustainable fashion if it were more affordable and widely available" (M=4.04), which is the highest mean score ever recorded among all constructs that have been examined so far. Social media encouraging (M=3.73) and considering sustainable fashion as stylish (M=3.64) are modestly positive, and the effect of family and friends directly (M=3.48) and feeling that shops are readily accessible (M=3.50) are lowest in the set but still above the mean.

The analysis of skewness and kurtosis provides a better insight into how these issues agree. All again have negative skewness, confirming a positive tendency to respond. The affordability/availability question is strongly negatively skewed (-0.771) and is positively kurtic (0.995), indicating a leptokurtic distribution where responses are strongly bunched up at the "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" position of the scale. This is very one-sided. On the other hand,

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friend/family influence and social media encouragement items, although negatively skewed, display kurtosis scores close to zero (0.290 and -0.039), suggesting a more normal distribution of opinions. Most notably, the local accessibility item has a negative kurtosis of -0.713, a platykurtic distribution which is broad and flat, indicating a definite absence of agreement and strong polarization in respondents' views of how easy it is to access sustainable ones.

When these findings are viewed in light of H5, the findings strongly and sharply support. The hypothesis also predicted that social influence would be moderate, but that the biggest disincentive to adoption would be that perceived lack of affordability and accessibility. The results confirm this trend to the letter. The friends/family and social media channels for social influence (M=3.48 and M=3.73 respectively) are positive but the lowest in this group, confirming their moderate role. Above all, the data bear out the expected barrier: the extremely high mean measure for the affordability/availability statement (M=4.04) helps to convey that this is the one factor most inhibiting consumption. To add, the low mean and flat, polarized distribution measure for local accessibility (M=3.50, Kurtosis=-0.713) help to convey that physical access is a real and divisive problem, with a very large percentage of the sample finding it difficult to access sustainable fashion locally.

The implications are highly actionable. The data shows that while social media and networks have a supporting part to play in encouraging sustainable fashion, they are not the best drivers or the best barriers. The biggest barrier is largely pragmatic: cost and availability. Consumers are firmly suggesting that their consumer spending is most constrained by price and the simple unavailability. The polarized responses to local accessibility indicate that it is not a levelled concern but a widespread issue in the case of the majority of the population, if implied through geographic location and socioeconomic class.

In conclusion, this discourse reveals a population intellectually and socially persuaded of sustainable fashion's worth but being held back by market and infrastructural limitations. Respondents have evidently moved beyond needing conviction regarding the advantages, as seen in previous constructs, and are now focusing on the practical hurdles to action. To bring the sustainable fashion movement to the next level, attention must be given to overcoming these basic issues of price and distribution. Governments and brands that want to promote sustainable consumption need to prioritize making the products more affordable and as widely available as their fast-fashion counterparts.

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Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a rich and nuanced landscape of consumer attitudes towards sustainable fashion characterized by strong ideological commitment counterbalanced by practical constraints. The analysis shows that while the interview participants possess high degrees of environmental awareness and favorable attitudes toward sustainable practices like thrifting and upcycling, there are huge intention-behavior mismatches. This intention-behavior discrepancy is a significant obstacle to the sustainable fashion agenda, suggesting that while the theoretical groundwork for change is solid, there are both structural and perceptual impediments to overall behavioral adoption. The consistently high measures of environmental awareness constructs show effective transmission of fashion's environmental impact, but it does not equally translate to behavior.

The thrifting preference analysis (H1) suggests a pragmatic consumer behavior in which price and uniqueness are more compelling forces than environmental motivation. The neutral ranking of environmental motivation as a primary driver for thrifting, coupled with moderate rankings for perceived quality and preference for thrifting over fast fashion, suggests that sustainability proponents cannot only rely on environmental appeals. Instead, they must emphasize the functional benefits—cost savings and unique style—which immediately appeal to buyers. This observation is congruent with behavioral economics theory that immediate tangible rewards more frequently dominate intangible, far-off concerns like safeguarding the earth, even among ostensibly thoughtful buyers.

For upcycling interest (H2), high support for its promotional value and environmental value, compared with the relatively lower personal enjoyment score, indicates a "supportive hesitation" phenomenon. Respondents appreciate the theoretical value of upcycling and are eager to learn but actually take part at a slow pace, most likely because of barriers like skill inadequacies, time constraints, or low confidence levels. This opens a rich window of opportunity for educators and businesses to produce economical points of entry by providing workshops, simple assembly DIY kits, and simple step-by-step tutorials that reduce the threshold of entry. The high measures of those who do participate having satisfaction and creativity scores suggest that emphasizing the worth of the rewarding experience can be employed as a gap-closing mechanism.

In response to counterintuitive results, the findings for the green brand perception (H3) yielded unexpectedly high trust and a desire to pay premium prices despite hypothesized skepticism. This may reflect actual brand success at building credibility or some social desirability bias in responses. Marginally more reserved judgment as to whether brands are "doing enough" reveals

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consumers as somewhat cautious, but overall, the findings provide reassuring news for sustainable brands. This social capital is valuable trust that must be worked hard for by brands to be maintained through honesty and sincere practice, since breaches would cause disproportionate damage to consumer trust in the entire sustainable fashion industry.

The results for social influence and accessibility (H5) provide perhaps the most insightful results, with affordability and availability uniquely standing out as the dominant adoption barriers. The extreme dichotomy between the highest rating throughout the entire study ("I would buy more if it were more affordable and widely available") and the polarized responses on local availability points to a severe market failure. It suggests that current sustainable fashion options are economically or geographically inaccessible to most prospective consumers. These structural barriers to be countered by better distribution, economies of scale to reduce costs, and strategic placement in mass-market retail environments appears imperative to translating favorable attitudes into consistent sustainable purchasing habits.

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of attitudes toward sustainable fashion trends among consumers and discovers a population at the juncture of awareness and action. The findings consistently demonstrate strong cognitive and ideological support for sustainable practices, with very high levels of environmental concern and awareness of the harms of the fashion industry. Respondents displayed evident understanding of the benefits of thrifting, upcycling, and green brands, and indicated strong trust in green claims from brands—a remarkable finding that contradicts the widespread assumptions of consumer skepticism. The theoretical foundations for mass adoption of sustainable fashion therefore appear firmly in place, with respondents expressing recognition of environmental imperative and the potential benefits of other fashion consumption practices.

There is a clear intention-action gap, however, neatly revealed by the research, with favorable attitudes not translating into wholesale behavioral change. The motivation hierarchy indicates that pragmatic more than ideational motivations—like cost, convenience, and immediate gratification—always take priority over environmental concern. Even though people knew about the environmental advantages of thrifting, economic and stylistic motivations were stronger. Similarly, while in principle they agreed with upcycling, their personal involvement was modest. This trend shows that sustainable fashion has conquered the heads of consumers but not even half conquered their lives and shopping routines.

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That affordability and accessibility were seen to be the most influential barriers is pivotal to know for the future of sustainable fashion. The strongest correlation with all measures of "I would purchase more sustainable fashion if it were cheaper and more available locally" indicates that there is a large market potential. The same time, the polarized responses towards local availability are indicating the regional variance in availability of sustainable fashion. These infrastructural hurdles seemingly have a stronger effect on consumer behavior than social factors or individual levels of awareness, suggesting that today's structural constraints hinder the building of sustainable fashion more than psychological or social forces.

The study ultimately presents a challenging but hopeful situation: consumers are willing, prepared, and increasingly conscious of sustainable fashion, but the market infrastructure is not fully established to their readiness. The rampant levels of trust in sustainable brands and premium price willingness are indicators of an open market, and the widespread acknowledgement of thrifting and upcycling benefits is proof of a developing cultural trend toward new consumption habits. It is now merely a matter of filling the gap between this consumer readiness and the functional parameters of availability, price, and convenience that now act as barriers to mainstream adoption.

Recommendations

To Sustainable Fashion Brands and Retailers

- Prioritize competitive price positions and clearly articulate the long-term value proposition of sustainable apparel in order to overcome the cost hurdle.
- Expand distribution channels and brick-and-mortar presence to increase access, particularly in those markets where currently the sustainable options are scarce.
- Leverage the high degrees of trust by sustaining transparency in the form of clear certification, supply chain transparency, and authentic storytelling to sustain consumer trust.
- Emphasize style, quality, and uniqueness in marketing communications because these functional attributes had stronger effects on consumer behavior than environmental appeals.

For Educators and Community Organizations:

- Develop low-cost, first-time upcycling classes to build skills and confidence, taking advantage of the expressed desire to learn while covering the participation gap.
- Create learning materials that highlight the economic and aesthetic benefits of sustainable fashion and environmental information to attract material and idealistic incentives.
- Create clothing exchange parties and thrifting outings that socially orient sustainable fashion and demonstrate its concrete benefits.

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For Policymakers and Industry Associations:

- Investigate incentives for sustainable fashion businesses that would minimize production cost and ultimately consumer prices.
- Promote investment in textile recycling and upcycling facilities that may support more circular fashion systems.
- Develop certification standards and labeling requirements that build on existing consumer trust and make claims verifiable and meaningful.

For Future Research:

- Explore the specific price differentials where consumers switch to sustainable from traditional fashion in order to support more specific guidance on affordability.
- Carry out geographic mapping of access to sustainable fashion to identify targeted underserved areas and populations.
- Investigate the role of technology and online platforms in mitigating accessibility challenges through virtual try-on, rental, and enhanced online distribution.
- Use longitudinal approaches to monitor how attitudes and behaviors shift as sustainable fashion goes mainstream.

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