Australian National University

Reconciling Materialism and Anti-consumption: A Grounded Approach to the Co-existence of Solid-Liquid Consumption in Fashion Rentals

NABILA NISHA

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of The Australian National University

October 2023

© Copyright by Nabila Nisha, 2023

All Rights Reserved

Declaration of Originality

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: On: 6th October 2023

Dedication

To the memory of my father, Mahbubul Hoque.

To the living inspiration of my mother, Shahina Mahbub.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for this opportunity to convey my gratitude to the many individuals who have been instrumental in contributing significantly to the accomplishment of this academic milestone.

My supervisory panel: Associate Professor Patrick L'Espoir Decosta, Dr. Toni Eagar, and Dr. Mikael Andéhn. Your unwavering support, guidance, and expertise have been instrumental in shaping this thesis and guiding me through the challenging journey of doctoral research.

My primary supervisor and chair of my supervisory panel: Associate Professor Patrick L'Espoir Decosta. I owe a special debt of gratitude to you. Your dedication, mentorship, and tireless commitment to my research have been nothing short of extraordinary. Without your constant belief in both me and my research, this thesis would not have been possible.

My mother, Shahina Mahbub. Your love, sacrifice, understanding, and continuous support have been my rock throughout this journey. You truly have been my source of strength.

My sister, Nazifa Nisha. Your patience in listening to my thesis-related rants, despite it not being your field of expertise, and your constant love and encouragement have been instrumental. I could not have accomplished anything without your support.

My PhD colleagues, Caths and Hang. Your words of encouragement have always made this journey rich and rewarding, and I cherish the memories we have created together.

My friends, Mehree and Shahreen. Your friendship has been a source of comfort and motivation throughout this journey, making even the challenging days feel bearable.

I also want to express my sincere gratitude to the academic and administrative staff of the Research School of Management for cultivating a warm and supportive environment. I would like to acknowledge that the research conducted in this thesis has been granted unconditional ethics approval by the Australian National University Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol Number 2020/372). I would further like to acknowledge the editing services provided by Elite Editing and note that editorial intervention was restricted to copyediting and proofreading only, as covered in Standards D ('Language and illustration') and E ('Completeness and consistency') of the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*.

Abstract

As a sub-type of anti-consumption, the rise of access-based services such as rentals triggered an ontological disconnect with the notion of materialism by shifting the focus from owning possessions, like luxury fashion, towards their usage. The once straightforward binary philosophical understanding of ownership-based (solid) vs. access-based (liquid) consumption however has been upended as access-based services facilitate the quick circulation of luxury fashion items through rentals, catering to the consumers' insatiable desires. Additionally, access-based services present the potential for acquiring these items at discounted prices via rent-to-buy options.

Access-based services have therefore intensified the conflict between material possession pursuits and anti-consumption principles, resulting in dissonances among consumers that signal the possibility of more underlying ontological disconnects and changes to consumption to emerge. The accelerated usage and post-usage object acquisition in liquid consumption also negate the idea that materialism solely identifies with solid consumption and challenge the conventional antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption. This thesis explores the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption that consumers experience in liquid consumption, particularly in the fashion rental context.

Using a constructivist grounded theory approach, this thesis is underpinned by a netnographic study where archived data from an online community and two consumer review websites were triangulated with 50 semi-structured interviews of consumers of a popular fashion rental platform. Data analysis followed the cyclical application of the constructivist coding process and analytical strategies of constant comparisons, memo writing, theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, and theoretical saturation that ultimately led to the emergence of three core categories.

Findings suggest that the conflict between materialistic desires and higher-order goals in solid consumption led consumers to liquefy their consumption by subscribing to fashion rentals. Fashion rentals enable consumers to adopt minimalistic practices where they prioritise higher-order goals that are embedded in both materialistic and anti-consumption values, thereby resolving the desire-goal conflict. Upon anticipating that the quick circulation of luxury fashion may threaten their anti-consumption-based higher-order goal in fashion rentals, consumers resolve the conflict with self-serving justifications that emphasise higher-order goals characterising both anti-consumption and materialistic values. With rising desires for luxury fashion, consumers revert to solid consumption, through purchases of second-hand items, which they anticipate may threaten their anti-consumption-based higher-order goal. To resolve the conflict, consumers employ self-licensing through their prior restrictive buying, and prioritisation of higher-order goals embedded in anti-consumption values.

Using the combined analytical lenses of Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation, Schwartz et al.'s (2012) refined theory of basic values, and Kotabe and Hofmann's (2015) self-control theory, this thesis contributes to existing scholarship by:

(i) redefining the dynamic process of desire;

(ii) identifying motivations to control, downplay, or endorse desires;

(iii) emphasising desire-goal conflicts as a catalyst for transitions across the solid-liquid consumption continuum.

(iv) illustrating the co-existence of materialistic values and anti-consumption values at both the solid and liquid end of the consumption continuum.

The study however has contextual limitations such as: (i) the focus on fashion rentals as a form of liquid consumption, (ii) the lack of consideration of variations in luxury perceptions in fashion rentals and (iii) the lack of acknowledgement of the influence of environmental constraints in desire-goal conflicts and resolution process. Future studies could

explore: (i) alternative forms of liquid consumption (e.g., borrowing), (ii) the perceptions of luxury value associated with the rental brands and (iii) the influence of environmental factors (e.g., peers or social groups).

Table of Contents

Declaration of Originality ..... **i**
Dedication ..... **ii**
Acknowledgements ..... **iii**
Abstract ..... **v**
Table of Contents ..... **viii**
List of Tables ..... **xi**
List of Figures ..... **xii**
List of Abbreviations ..... **xiii**
Chapter 1: Introduction **14**
1.1 Research Background 14
1.2 Empirical Rationale 19
1.3 Theoretical Rationale 24
1.4 Research Problem and Gaps 30
1.5 Research Purpose, Objectives and Questions 33
1.6 Approach to the Study 34
1.7 Research Context 35
1.8 Research Design 36
1.9 Significance of the Study 37
1.10 Structure of the Thesis 38
Chapter 2: Literature Review **40**
2.1 Materialism 40
2.1.1 Antecedents and Consequences 42
2.2 Contrasting Concepts to Materialism 44
2.2.1 Anti-Consumption 46
2.3 Materialism vs. Anti-consumption 49
2.4 Modes of Consumption: Ownership and Non-ownership 53
2.4.1 Ownership Mode 53
2.4.2 Non-ownership Mode 54
2.5 Dimensions of Consumption: Solid and Liquid 56
2.5.1 Solid Consumption 57
2.5.2 Liquid Consumption 59
2.6 Fashion Consumption 62
2.6.1 Luxury Fashion Brands 62
2.6.2 Fast Fashion Brands 66
2.6.3 Fashion Rentals 70
2.7 Overlaps: Materialism, Anti-consumption and Liquid Consumption 75
2.8 Conclusion 80
Chapter 3: Methodology **83**
3.1 Research Paradigm 83
3.1.1 Ontology and Epistemology 84
3.1.2 Qualitative Methodology 85
3.2 Constructivist Grounded Theory 86
3.2.1 Philosophical Assumptions 87

3.2.2 Symbolic Interactionism 89
3.2.3 Rationale for Methodology 91
3.3 Operationalisation of Methodology 94
3.3.1 Netnographic Archival Data 96
3.3.2 Interviews 102
3.4 Quality in Grounded Theory 109
3.5 Reflexivity 111
3.6 Ethical Considerations 114
3.7 Limitations 116
3.8 Conclusion 118

Chapter 4: Data Analysis 120
4.1 Analytical Strategies 120
4.2 Coding Process 124
4.2.1 Initial Coding 127
4.2.2 Focused Coding 137
4.2.3 Theoretical Coding 142
4.2.4 Emergence of Core Themes 147
4.3 Constant Comparative Method 149
4.4 Theoretical Sensitivity 150
4.5 Memo Writing 151
4.6 Theoretical Sampling and Saturation 152
4.7 Conclusion 153

Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion 155
5.1 Becoming Minimalist 157
5.1.1 Yielding to the Next New Trend 157
5.1.2 Seeking to Regulate Spending Habits 164
5.1.3 Developing Environmental and Social Consciousness 170
5.1.4 Adopting Minimalistic Consumption 177
5.2 Promoting Social-and-Self Interests 185
5.2.1 Reviving the Wear Once Trend 186
5.2.2 Supporting Social Causes 196
5.2.3 Safeguarding Livelihoods 201
5.2.4 Generating Income Sources 204
5.3 Redefining Consumption 208
5.3.1 Circling Back to Purchase 208
5.3.2 Leveraging Justification Cues 214
5.4 Conclusion 221

Chapter 6: Conclusion 224
6.1 Revisiting the Research Rationale 224
6.2 Revisiting the Research Process 227
6.3 Summary of Findings 228
6.4 Propositions 234
6.5 Conceptual Model: Connecting with the Research Questions 237
6.5.1 Cultural Socialisation of Desire 237
6.5.2 Desires: Impellers and Instigators 237
6.5.3 Materialistic Values: Solid Consumption 238
6.5.4 Anti-Consumption-Natured Values: Solid Consumption 238
6.5.5 Materialistic Values: Liquid Consumption 239
6.5.6 Anti-Consumption Values: Liquid Consumption 240

6.5.7 Conflict Between Materialism and Anti-Consumption 240
6.5.8 Conflict Reconciliation Processes 242
6.6 Theoretical Contributions 240
6.6.1 Desire Theorisation and Dimensions 240
6.6.2 Desire–Goal Conflicts: A Catalyst for Consumption Transitions 247
6.6.3 Desire–Goal Conflicts: Motivation Sources 248
6.6.4 Co-Existence: Materialism and Anti-Consumption 251
6.7 Environmental, Social and Practical Implications 253
6.8 Limitations and Future Research 256
References 259
Appendix 1: Interview Protocol 290
Appendix 2: Coding Processes 291

List of Tables

Table 3.1 Key Market Players of Fashion Rental Platforms 98
Table 3.2 Platform Classifications 99
Table 3.3 Interviews: Phases, Sources, and Numbers 107
Table 3.4 Demographic Profile of Interview Participants 107
Table 4.1 Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Fast fashion Tendencies) 128
Table 4.2 Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Spending on Fast fashion Purchases) 129
Table 4.3 Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Post-Purchase Reflections) 130
Table 4.4 Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Environmental and Social Consequences) 131
Table 4.5 Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Shifts in Consumption Mindset) 132
Table 4.6 Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Consumption Transformations with Rentals) 133
Table 4.7 Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Environmental Consciousness with Rentals) 134
Table 4.8 Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Savings from Rentals) 136
Table 6.1 List of Main Findings 231
Table 6.2 Reconciliation Processes and Propositions 234
Table A.1 Yielding to the next new trend (Sub-category 1, Theme 1) 291
Table A.2 Seeking to regulate spending habits (Sub-category 2, Theme 1) 295
Table A.3 Developing environmental and social consciousness (Sub-category 3, Theme 1) 298
Table A.4 Adopting minimalistic consumption (Sub-category 4, Theme 1) 302
Table A.5 Reviving the wear once trend (Sub-category 1, Theme 2) 311
Table A.6 Supporting social causes (Sub-category 2, Theme 2) 326
Table A.7 Safeguarding livelihood (Sub-category 3, Theme 2) 328
Table A.8 Generating income sources (Sub-category 4, Theme 2) 330
Table A.9 Circling back to purchase (Sub-category 1, Theme 3) 333
Table A.10 Leveraging justification cues (Sub-category 2, Theme 3) 335

List of Figures

Figure 3.1 Methodological Approach 94
Figure 4.1 Cyclical Process of Data Collection and Analysis 126
Figure 5.1 Ideograph of Sub-categories and Core Themes 156
Figure 6.1 Conceptual Model 236
Figure 6.2 Desire-Goal Conflict Reconciliation Process: An Oblong Framework of Solid-Liquid Consumption 239
Figure A.1 Ideograph: Theme 1 310
Figure A.2 Ideograph: Theme 2 332
Figure A.3 Ideograph: Theme 3 337

List of Abbreviations

B2C	business-to-consumer
BLM	Black Lives Matter
CGT	constructivist grounded theory
DEI	diversity, equity and inclusion
EGT	evolved/Straussian grounded theory
EOA	environmentally oriented anti-consumption
NAM	norm-activation model
P2P	peer-to-peer
RTR	Rent the Runway
SI	symbolic interactionism
TGT	traditional/classic grounded theory
UGC	user-generated content
VBN	value-belief-norm

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the research background of this thesis, specifically the traditional view of materialistic behaviours within the fashion industry. The subsequent section offers empirical evidence of fashion rentals as a form of anti-consumption that has emerged as a response to the detrimental effects of materialistic behaviours. To contextualise the research problem, the chapter presents theoretical insights into materialism and anti-consumption, highlighting the contradictory nature of these concepts. Following this, the potential conflicts arising from materialism within the anti-consumption context of fashion rentals are outlined, alongside the possible dissonance this conflict may trigger among consumers. The chapter also identifies gaps in the existing literature and demonstrates how they, along with the research problem, contribute to the formulation and support of the research purpose and objectives, guided by the research questions. The adopted research approach, along with the research context and research design, as well as the significance of the study, are presented as well. Concluding this chapter is an overview of the structure of the thesis, which comprises six distinct chapters.

1.1 Research Background

> Liking fashion and being concerned about the impending doom of our planet often feels like an inescapable moral contradiction. (O'Neill, 2020)

In a society propelled by consumerism and the allure of acquisition, the concept of materialism stands as a defining force that shapes our desires, values, and behaviours. At its core, materialism encapsulates the significance that individuals attach to possessions and their relentless pursuit, often as a means to attain desired states of happiness and success (Richins & Dawson, 1992a). Materialism thus navigates the intricate relationship between desire and acquisition of material possessions, since the excessive reliance on possessions to achieve

desired states involves the desire for more and more acquisitions (Ger & Belk, 1999; Richins, 2017).

Within the philosophical realm of materialism, the emphasis on the acquisition of material possessions generally entails consumption through the ownership of objects (Richins, 2017; Richins & Fournier, 1991). In light of this, materialism is closely associated with Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) logic of solid consumption that is characterised by an enduring, ownership-based, and material form of consumption. Moreover, the enduring aspect of solid consumption aligns with Ger and Belk's (1996) materialistic trait of preservation that reinforces the notion of safeguarding and maintaining one's acquired possessions.

This ideology of materialism however, may come at the expense of other non-material aspects of life such as relationships (Kasser & Ryan, 1993; LeBaron et al., 2018), well-being (Bauer et al., 2012; Kasser et al., 2014), and quality of life (Sirgy, 1998; Sirgy et al., 2013). Materialistic traits of possessiveness, non-generosity, and envy also tend to make consumers selfish, lack moral values, and become indifferent to social concerns (Belk, 1985; Richins & Fournier, 1991). Materialism is thus criticised for inducing excessive consumption and damaging consumers' well-being, society, and the environment (Kramarczyk & Oliver, 2022).

The criticism of materialism applies especially to luxury brands (e.g., Armani) in the fashion industry, the consumption of which suggests wasteful and thoughtless consumption of inessential and needlessly expensive items for personal pleasure and conspicuousness (Achabou & Dekhili, 2013; Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2014). Although many consumers fantasise and dream about owning, wearing, and acquiring catwalk looks or celebrity couture fashions, only a 'happy few' with the ability to pay the high prices can access luxury fashion brands (Husic & Cicic, 2009; Miller, 2013).

However, the emergence and rapid dissemination of fast fashion brands (e.g., Zara) have targeted consumers' desires for luxury fashion brands by replicating their designs at rapid speed and by making them available to consumers at affordable prices (Amatulli et al., 2016; Joy et al., 2012). To fulfill their aspirations for luxury fashion brands, consumers subscribe to a culture of impulse buying, short-term use, and premature disposal of clothing from fast fashion brands (Armstrong et al., 2015; Blasi et al., 2020; Ertekin, 2019). Fast fashion purchases thus reflect the consumers' materialistic desires for 'more' and result in clothing overconsumption (Armstrong et al., 2015) or hyper-consumption (Blazquez et al., 2020).

The overconsumption of clothing from these fast fashion brands often goes beyond consumers' actual needs or financial capacities (Lang, 2018; Lang et al., 2020). Negative social and environmental consequences that challenge the sustainability of clothing consumption, like animal cruelty, clothing production, waste, and labour exploitations, have led consumers to question their role in the consumption of luxury fashion and fast fashion brands (Ertekin et al., 2020; Franco et al., 2019; Lundblad & Davies, 2016). Nevertheless, social media influencer culture and a toxic mindset of 'wear once and done' fuel consumers' acquisition of fast fashion brands, compelling them to continually renew their wardrobes and stay trendy (Amatulli et al., 2016; Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016; Nguyen, 2020). The anti-conformist stance of never wearing the same outfit twice also stems from the belief that others pay close attention to and value one's appearance (Thompson & Haytko, 1997). This viewpoint transforms mass-produced fashion goods like fast fashion into a strategic tool within a larger social competition, allowing individuals to exhibit their uniqueness and symbolically gain a social advantage by remaining at the forefront of fashion trends (Murray, 2002; Thompson & Haytko, 1997). Consumers thus struggle as their growing consciousness for sustainability clashes with their materialistic desires for luxury fashion brands and the

constant array of new clothing from fast fashion brands – thereby, resulting in a fashion paradox (McNeill & Moore, 2015).

This increased consciousness for sustainability has led to new models of consumption to emerge, one of the most recognised is liquid consumption, which presents an ephemeral, access-based, and dematerialised form of consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017). In the realm of liquid consumption, the rise of access-based services such as rentals allow consumers to access goods and services that can be temporarily used for a fraction of the cost needed for ownership (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012, 2017). As a result, access-based services have effectively enabled many consumers to enact affluence and enjoy experiences that would otherwise be inaccessible through the traditional ownership-centred logic of solid consumption (Atanasova & Eckhardt, 2021). For instance, luxury fashion brands offered for short-term use through fashion rental platforms provide consumers with the ephemeral experience of ownership without incurring the total cost of actual ownership (Light, 2019; Schwartz, 2018).

Fashion rentals promote the belief that the collaborative or 'shared usage' of clothing can enable consumers to contribute to the reduction of environmental harms from new clothing production and the waste induced by large disposals of clothing items (Brydges et al., 2020; Park & Armstrong, 2017). By this logic of shared usage, fashion rentals can be categorised as a sub-type of anti-consumption (Balderjahn et al., 2020; Vesterinen & Syrjälä, 2022), an ideology that emphasises the reuse of once-acquired goods with the goal of avoiding consumption (Makri et al., 2020). Aligned with anti-consumption principles, shared usage in fashion rentals reduces the 'acquisition' of clothing items without rejecting the 'use' of the items (Akbar et al., 2016; Balderjahn et al., 2020; Lee, 2022). Positioned as a variant of anti-consumption, fashion rentals have consequently prompted a fundamental divergence

from the concept of materialism by redirecting attention away from the ownership of items such as luxury fashion, and toward their shared usage instead.

As a natural complement, the fashion rental platforms have introduced resale opportunities where consumers can acquire second-hand items from luxury fashion brands at reduced costs (Biron, 2023; Farra, 2021; Fonrouge, 2023a). The premise of second-hand luxury consumption promotes the belief that consumers can prevent excessive consumption, minimise waste through prolonging the lifespan of clothing items, and actively participate in the circular economy by extending the fashion cycle (Cervellon et al., 2012; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Machado et al., 2019). In fact, the purposeful and mindful choice to abstain from mass fashion production (e.g., fast fashion) while valuing pre-owned items via second-hand luxury consumption signifies orientations aligned with anti-consumption principles (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Guzzetti et al., 2021; Roux & Korchia, 2006).

Fashion rentals can therefore be presented as utopic in that as a form of consumption it empowers consumers to fulfill their materialistic desires for luxury fashion brands; while, at the same, it helps create an illusion among these consumers that they are being environmentally sustainable (Lang et al., 2020; Parguel et al., 2017). However, the idea of a rotating wardrobe that facilitates constant new clothes and keeping up with fashion trends caters to consumers' insatiable desires to acquire objects in fashion rentals, albeit on a temporary basis (Gan, 2021; Rabkin, 2019; Schwartz, 2018). Similarly, the possibility of acquiring second-hand items from luxury fashion brands enhances the attractiveness of the resale market for consumers by providing them with a sustainable and budget-friendly means to fulfill their insatiable desires of acquiring objects (Erdly, 2022; Farra, 2021; Hanbury, 2021). This manifestation of materialistic pursuits through the temporary acquisition of objects via access and ownership at discounted rates could potentially undermine consumers'

perceptions of environmental virtuousness that is, ironically, part of the allure of the anti-consumption principles associated with fashion rentals.

1.2 Empirical Rationale

The fashion rental industry has been made possible by online rental platforms (e.g., Rent the Runway in the United States; GlamCorner in Australia; By Rotation in the United Kingdom) that facilitate short-term access to designer clothes from luxury fashion brands for one-off fees or via low-cost subscriptions (Little, 2019; Schwartz, 2018). Imagine sporting a Gucci suit retailing at £2,100 for £34 a day (mywardrobehq.com)! Fashion rental is not a new phenomenon; there is a long history of brick-and-mortar stores that facilitate clothing rentals (e.g., tuxedos for men) for special occasions (e.g., weddings) (Baek & Oh, 2021; Raju, 2014). Consumers' environmental concerns, their conscientiousness about consumption and materialism, and their need to avoid social media faux pas have particularly fuelled the rise of fashion rental platforms (Cissé, 2020; Danziger, 2019).

Fashion rental platforms typically operate as either business-to-consumer (B2C; i.e., company-ownership of fashion products) or peer-to-peer (P2P; i.e., peer-ownership of fashion products) services (Arrigo, 2021b). Touted as a 'closet in the cloud', these platforms provide budget-friendly access to a constant stream of designer clothes from luxury fashion brands through pay-per-usage or monthly subscription plans (Brydges et al., 2020; Conlon, 2020). For example, the P2P platform of By Rotation in the United Kingdom is compared with the 'Airbnb of Fashion' because they typically operate on a pay-per-usage plan (e.g., 5% of the item's retail price as a daily rate) (Hall et al., 2020). Monthly subscription plans are dominant for the B2C platforms like Rent the Runway in the United States (e.g., US$199 a month) and GlamCorner in Australia (e.g., AU$149 a month) - making these platforms comparable with the 'Netflix of Fashion' (Danziger, 2019; Healey, 2021a; Thomas, 2020b). Given the increasing adoption of subscription-based models by the fashion rental platforms, a report by

Research and Markets (2023) projects that the value of the global online clothing rental market will grow from US$ 1.26 billion in 2019 to US$ 3 billion by 2026.

On the basis of these subscription-based models, the fashion rental platforms are able to make available the luxury fashion brands to aspirational consumers who otherwise lack the required income or purchasing power to purchase these designer clothes (Baird, 2019; Rivera, 2018). This is apparent through the assertion made on the official website of Rent the Runway, where they state their commitment to granting 'everyday consumers' the opportunity to access 'authentic luxury fashion' with subscriptions starting as low as US$69 (Rent the Runway, 2023b).

Besides the affordable access, these platforms offer consumers an infinite clothing assortment that ranges from formal wear for black-tie functions or weddings to everyday clothing for work and casual occasions (Bradley, 2019). With the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for fashion rentals was somewhat dampened by contamination concerns from virus transmission via shared clothes, lack of social engagements, and budget constraints in the crisis-induced economic downturn (Brydges et al., 2020; Chan, 2020; Shacknai, 2020a). However, the demand for fashion rentals interestingly witnessed a revival with the emergence of new lockdown practices and fashion needs (e.g., digital events, Zoom meetings, social media amusements) as well as a return to socialising in the 'new normal' post-lockdown (O'Neill, 2020; Tempesta, 2020; Thomas, 2020a).

Consumers are therefore able to have a fleeting experience with the clothes as they can fulfill their temporary fashion needs and rotate the clothes at will in order to follow the fast-moving fashion trends (Little, 2019; Schwartz, 2018). This is evident from the official website of Rent the Runway (see https://www.renttherunway.com), where they highlight the concept of a 'rotating closet' along with the 'freedom and access to experiment and have fun with fashion' that is facilitated by this rotating closet (Rent the Runway, 2023b). Fashion

rental platforms thus provide consumers with a constant thrill of new clothes from luxury fashion brands with no commitment to ownership, storage, cleaning, or caring for the clothes (Baird, 2019; Cartner-Morley, 2019).

Furthermore, fashion rental platforms such as Rent the Runway have ventured into the expansive US$30 billion resale market, strategically targeting a segment of consumers inclined towards second-hand consumption (Hanbury, 2021). According to a report from CNBC, the global resale market's valuation is projected to reach a substantial US$100-120 billion by 2024, with the U.S. market itself accounting for a significant US$64 billion (Fonrouge, 2023a). By the close of 2023, the resale sector is anticipated to encompass approximately 15% of the total luxury market, with resale items constituting around 27% of the wardrobes of second-hand buyers (Fonrouge, 2023a).

In a strategic response to the post-pandemic landscape, Rent the Runway has therefore forged collaborations with online resale platforms like ThredUp and third-party retailers including Amazon (Farra, 2021; Fonrouge, 2023a). This partnership has paved the way for the availability of luxury fashion pieces for sale, offered at a fraction of their original price (Farra, 2021). The official Rent the Runway website (see https://www.renttherunway.com) actively promotes this resale avenue with the tagline ‘Love it? Buy it?’ and sweetens the deal by providing complimentary shipping for resale items originating from luxury fashion brands (Rent the Runway, 2023a). This strategic shift allows fashion rental platforms to provide an alternative for consumers, where they have the opportunity to make permanent additions to their wardrobes by purchasing second-hand clothing items from luxury fashion brands instead of simply having a fleeting experience with the items through rentals.

Fashion rental platforms further position themselves as an environment-friendly alternative able to counterbalance the negative consequences of consumers’ clothing consumption of fashion brands (Brydges et al., 2020). Within the fashion industry, the social

effects of luxury fashion and fast fashion brands include poor working conditions (e.g., sweatshops, low wages, long hours), exploitation of child labour, workers' health and safety risks, and animal welfare issues (e.g., use of animal skins, cashmere wool) (Pedersen & Andersen, 2015). Apart from such social effects, luxury fashion brands engage in environmentally unsustainable practices to protect brand exclusivity – for instance, Burberry burnt US$38 million worth of unsold stock in 2017 (Ertekin, 2019).

Fast fashion brands also largely contribute to around 100 billion items of clothing production and approximately 56 million tons of clothing purchases each year worldwide (Beall, 2020; Braithwaite, 2018). Of this, approximately 50% of fast fashion clothing items are disposed of within a year after their production, contributing to an estimated 92 million tons of global textile waste each year that ends up in landfill (Lang et al., 2020; Niinimäki et al., 2020). As of 2023, the Australian Fashion Council released a report stating that approximately 227,000 tonnes of clothing are disposed of in Australian landfills annually, with only 7,000 tonnes being recycled (Moodie, 2023). The environmental challenges of the fashion industry are further exacerbated by toxic chemical use, the waste and pollution of water, and the continued use of fossil fuels in clothing production (Blazquez et al., 2020). Through generating approximately 8-10% of global carbon emissions and nearly 20% of wastewater, the fashion industry is one of the world's most unsustainable industries (Ro, 2020).

Awareness of the social and environmentally detrimental effects of the fashion industry has grown significantly among consumers (Stringer et al., 2020). For instance, media reports of the 2013 Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh that killed 1,134 garment workers created awareness among consumers of poor labour conditions in the garment factories (Karlsson & Ramasar, 2020). Not only have the annual reports of luxury fashion brands revealed incineration practices for unsold stock and unused fabric (Ertekin, 2019), but

documentaries like The True Cost in 2015 (https://truecostmovie.com/) and RiverBlue in 2016 (https://riverbluethemovie.eco/) exposed the fast fashion brands as a major contributor to pollution and waste in the fashion industry (Karlsson & Ramasar, 2020).

As a solution for these detrimental effects, fashion rental platforms promise consumers a pathway to sustainability in the fashion industry by marketing their services as significant contributors to the circular fashion movement (Lang et al., 2020). The mechanism of fashion rentals entices consumers by asserting that they enhance the use intensity and longevity of clothing items through shared usage among multiple users and subsequently contribute to the reduction of new clothing production, pollution, and textile waste (Jain et al., 2022; Lang & Armstrong, 2018). For example, the fashion rental platform - Rent the Runway in the United States claims to produce average reductions of 24% in water usage, 6% in energy usage, and 3% in carbon emissions per rental garment in comparison with purchasing a new clothing item (Chan, 2021). Even the resale choices offered by the rental platforms are marketed as being in line with the circular fashion principles, adding to their appeal by suggesting they help reduce the consumers' environmental footprints (Armstrong et al., 2015; Arribas et al., 2022). Fashion rental platforms are thus marketed as an environmentally sustainable alternative where fashion consumption is promoted with a guilt-free conscience (Brydges et al., 2020).

Fashion rental platforms leverage aspects from the fast fashion business model – for instance, affordability, speed, variety, and constant novelty - to provide consumers access to luxury fashion brands (Guzzetti et al., 2021; Schwartz, 2018). Consumers are thus able to overcome the financial and ownership burdens that typically emanate from their clothing consumption via purchase with the added benefit of fulfilling their aspirations of luxury fashion brands through fashion rentals (Baird, 2019; Bradley, 2019). Since the biggest allure of fashion rentals is that one can enjoy the latest fashion trends without destroying the planet

(Cline, 2019; Farra, 2021; Fonrouge, 2023a), consumers may believe they are being environmentally virtuous by engaging in fashion rentals.

Yet, consumers can feel entangled in their incessant materialistic desires for the latest fashion trends of luxury fashion brands as they mindlessly rotate the clothing items in fashion rentals (Biron, 2023; Hanbury, 2021; Schwartz, 2018; Semic, 2020). Moreover, consumers purchase pre-owned items that fulfill their aspirations of luxury fashion brands from rental platforms at discounted prices (Farra, 2021; Hanbury, 2021). As a result, consumers may experience a contradiction between their beliefs of being environmentally virtuous about clothing consumption and their demonstration of materialistic behaviours in fashion rentals.

1.3 Theoretical Rationale

Materialism, also referred to as terminal materialism (Belk & Pollay, 1985), traditional materialism (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2020) or accumulative materialism (Kramarczyk & Oliver, 2022), is strongly associated with consumption since the materialistic consumers display an excessive desire to acquire and keep possessions (Ger & Belk, 1996; Lee & Ahn, 2016). As the characterisation of materialism places a high value on the acquisitions of material possessions (Richins & Fournier, 1991), materialism is best conceptualised as a value-orientation or a set of value-laden beliefs that guides the consumers' consumption decisions (Richins, 2017). The value-oriented approach of materialism comprises three beliefs: acquisition centrality, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, and possession-defined success (Richins & Dawson, 1992a).

Acquisition centrality in materialism is the extent to which possessions and their acquisitions are placed at the centre of one's life (Richins, 2017; Richins & Dawson, 1992a). The excessive concern for possessions makes consumers display the traits of possessiveness and preservation through their desire for greater control through ownership of possessions and their inclination to save and retain possessions (Belk, 1984, 1985; Ger & Belk, 1996). This

preoccupation with possessions also makes consumers selfish, non-generous, and envious as they become unwilling to give or share possessions with others and become resentful of those who own the desired possessions (Bauer et al., 2012; Belk, 1985).

The value-oriented approach views materialism as an economic consumer value that emphasises the type and quantity of goods consumed (Inglehart, 1981; Richins & Dawson, 1992a). Consistent with this view, materialistic consumers believe that the acquisition of more or different possessions can increase happiness and well-being (Richins, 2017). Moreover, materialistic consumers use their possessions as an indicator of their own and others' success (Richins, 1994; Richins & Dawson, 1992a). As a result, materialistic consumers are driven by the desire to acquire socially sanctioned objects that can function as symbols of status, wealth, and prestige (Richins & Fournier, 1991).

Consumers thus desire luxury brands for their symbolic value, which stems from the ability of luxury brands to signal one's success, wealth, and social achievement to others (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004; Wiedmann et al., 2009). In a similar vein, consumers purchase trendy clothing or the latest fads due to the social or symbolic value of fast fashion brands (Richins & Fournier, 1991; Willems et al., 2012). As consumers consider possessions as part of themselves (Belk, 1988), they also use their possession of symbolic products (e.g., clothing) or brands (e.g., luxury fashion, fast fashion) to construct their self-identity or to present themselves to others (Escalas & Bettman, 2009; Loussaïef et al., 2019).

The importance of possessions and their acquisition can, however, entangle consumers in a never-ending cycle wherein the pleasure of acquiring new possessions can be quickly forgotten and replaced with a desire for more (Belk et al., 2003; Richins & Dawson, 1992a; Richins & Fournier, 1991). Consumers end up spending disproportionate amounts of resources in this acquisitive process (Goldsmith et al., 2011) and this is especially true for the

consumption of luxury brands (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012) and fast fashion brands (Lang, 2018). This cycle of acquiring possessions can amplify the materialists' insatiableness (Belk et al., 2003; Campbell, 1987; Richins & Fournier, 1991), negatively impact well-being, and lead to dissatisfaction for consumers (Lee & Ahn, 2016; Richins & Dawson, 1992a).

Materialists' acquisition of possessions is often criticised as being mindless and without purpose (Richins et al., 1992). This is because materialists are more likely to engage in self-gifts (Kim et al., 1993; McKeage, 1992), impulse buying (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012; Rose, 2007), compulsive buying (Dittmar et al., 2007; Rindfleisch et al., 1997; Roberts, 2000), and overconsumption (Sirgy, 1998). An emphasis on material possessions is also linked to having little or no concern for the nature or environment because consumers' pursuit of self-interests predominates over community goals like environmental protection (Banerjee & McKeage, 1994; Richins & Dawson, 1992a). Materialism is thus identified as the primary driver of environmental degradation and associated with environmentally unsustainable behaviours (e.g., waste generation) (Hurst et al., 2013; Kasser & Sheldon, 2000), less sustainable lifestyles (Witt et al., 2014), and a growing 'throwaway culture' (Evers et al., 2018).

Increasingly, consumers are becoming aware of the negative environmental effects of their materialistic behaviours and they are more conscious that their fast fashion purchases can stimulate excessive consumption (Ertekin, 2019; Joy et al., 2012). Consumers are showing interest in being environmentally sustainable by raising awareness about the throwaway fashion mindset and altering their purchase patterns of disposable fashion (Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014; McNeill & Venter, 2019; Stein, 2019). In response to growing environmental consciousness regarding the problematic nature of materialism and overconsumption, consumers are engaging in anti-consumption by reducing, rejecting, or

avoiding consumption for environmental sustainability (Culiberg et al., 2022; Oral & Thurner, 2019).

Anti-consumption is defined as 'intentionally and meaningfully excluding or cutting goods from one's consumption routine or reusing once-acquired goods with the goal of avoiding consumption' (Makri et al., 2020, p. 178). Anti-consumption behaviours can range from avoidance behaviours (e.g., avoiding specific brands and products) to minimisation behaviours (e.g., voluntary simplicity) and active rebellions (e.g., consumer boycotts) (Fournier, 1998). When anti-consumption behaviours occur with the specific objective of protecting the environment, this environmentally oriented anti-consumption (EOA) converges with sustainable consumption (García-de-Frutos et al., 2018; Scott & Weaver, 2018).

The notion of anti-consumption implies 'against consumption' which denotes an opposition to consumption (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013; Cherrier et al., 2011; Kuanr et al., 2021) or materialism (Lee & Ahn, 2016). The antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption is illustrated by the contrast between Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional values of materialism (i.e., acquisition centrality, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, and possession-defined success) and Peifer et al.'s (2020) anti-consumption value of non-materialism (i.e., lack of importance that one places on material possessions for success or happiness). Anti-consumption values comprise low desires for material acquisitions and possessions, intrinsic goals for happiness (e.g., personal growth), macro-level concerns (e.g., societal interest), and high consumption control (Lee & Ahn, 2016). In contrast, materialistic values include high desires for material acquisitions and possessions, extrinsic goals for happiness (e.g., financial success), micro-level concerns (e.g., self-interest), and low consumption control (Lee & Ahn, 2016).

The opposition between materialism and anti-consumption is also evoked by the value-belief-norm (VBN) theory of environmentalism (Stern, 2000; Stern et al., 1995, 1999),

where the biospheric and altruistic values that drive anti-consumption behaviours contrast with the egoistic values that drive materialistic behaviours (Herziger et al., 2020; Kuanr et al., 2020). The VBN theory is also associated with Schwartz's (1992) Theory of Basic Values, with the biospheric and altruistic values that correspond to self-transcendence values sitting in opposition to the egoistic values that correlate with self-enhancement values (Kuanr et al., 2020; Stern et al., 1995). Self-enhancement values, in turn, have been associated with materialism that contradicts the self-transcendence values related to the anti-consumption value of environmentalism (Banerjee & McKeage, 1994; Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Kasser, 2016; Tang & Hinsch, 2018).

The antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption, however, has been challenged by the rise of liquid consumption through access-based services such as rentals that are classified as a variant of anti-consumption (Akbar et al., 2016; Balderjahn et al., 2020; Lee, 2022). Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) logic of liquid consumption diverges from Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional notion of materialism due to the fundamental difference in their perspectives on the acquisition and retainment of possessions. While Richins and Dawson (1992a) emphasise the importance of acquiring material possessions via ownership and retaining the possessions for an enduring period, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) propose a contrasting approach through liquid consumption where consumers acquire objects via access and use the objects for a temporal period. This shift in focus from ownership to access through access-based services in liquid consumption represents a significant departure from the traditional notion of materialism that forms the basis for the antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption.

The emphasis on 'using' the objects in liquid consumption, however, demonstrates the prevalence of instrumental materialism over terminal materialism that underlies 'having' the objects as an end in itself (Belk & Pollay, 1985; Durgee & O'Connor, 1995). Simultaneously,

resale, that typically associated with anti-consumption orientations (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Guzzetti et al., 2021), can be seen as illustrating terminal materialism. This is because consumers engage in the acquisition of rental or pre-owned items from the platforms, treating the possession of the objects as an ultimate goal. Rentals also accelerate the circulation of objects, implying the presence of materialistic tendencies in liquid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017). Materialism can even arise within liquid consumption settings, such as digital nomadism, through deliberate curation of items, purposeful focus on experiential consumption, and consumption polarisation across solid-liquid consumption (Atanasova & Eckhardt, 2021). Furthermore, the enjoyment of goods and experiences is highlighted as a manifestation of materialism within the context of liquid consumption (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2020).

Focusing on anti-consumption contexts beyond liquid consumption (e.g., voluntary simplicity), materialism reflects an appreciative rather than accumulative nature which is achieved via the voluntary non-possession and/or non-accumulation of objects, alongside an extended ethical viewpoint that encompasses taking care of these objects (Kramarczyk & Oliver, 2022). The manifestations of materialism in liquid consumption, including the anti-consumption contexts, therefore blur the divergence between Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) logic of liquid consumption and Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional notion of materialism.

As the line between materialism and anti-consumption becomes increasingly blurred, the consumers' beliefs of environmental virtuousness that align with anti-consumption principles in turn conflict with their materialistic behaviours in liquid consumption. This contrast is in line with Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory, which underscores the impact of value-driven beliefs on behaviours. This misalignment between beliefs and actions is often

demonstrated through the notion of an intention-behaviour gap (Sheeran, 2002) or an attitude-behaviour gap (Carrington et al., 2014).

In the absence of consistency between one's beliefs and actions, Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory states that an individual's experience of psychological discomfort may give rise to pressures towards reducing that dissonance (Armstrong et al., 2019). This may be achieved by changing one's cognitions, creating new consonant cognitions, minimising the importance of dissonant cognitions, or increasing the importance of consonant cognitions (Festinger, 1957; Harmon-Jones, 2000; McGrath, 2017). Building on the cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957; Harmon-Jones & Mills, 2019), consumers may therefore engage in a dissonance-reducing process as access-based services through rentals intensify the conflict between materialistic pursuits and anti-consumption principles, resulting in dissonances among consumers.

1.4 Research Problem and Gaps

In the rationales above, it is both theoretically and empirically clear that the once straightforward binary philosophical understanding of ownership-based (solid) vs. access-based (liquid) consumption has been upended as fashion rentals facilitate the quick circulation of luxury fashion items and offer the possibility of purchasing these second-hand items at discounted prices. The accelerated usage and post-usage object acquisitions in liquid consumption therefore suggest the presence of materialistic pursuits in the anti-consumption context of fashion rentals. Such manifestation of materialism is problematic for consumers because, though they may believe they are being environmentally virtuous about clothing consumption, they may find themselves entangled in a cycle of materialistic pursuits that contradicts the anti-consumption principles of fashion rentals.

This contradiction between the consumers' beliefs and actions can lead them to experience a dissonance and they may engage in a process to reduce this dissonance that is

evoked by the presence of materialism in fashion rentals. Therefore, there is a need for empirical inquiry into the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption that consumers experience in the context of fashion rentals. This conflict between materialism and anti-consumption in fashion rentals also negates the idea that materialism solely identifies with solid consumption and challenges the conventional antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption.

Scholarly research, however, has only tangentially addressed the issue of the manifestation of materialism in liquid consumption, often employing ad-hoc approaches. Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) raised inquiries regarding the nature of materialism, suggesting that non-ownership modes of consumption (e.g., rentals) are perceived as less materialistic than solid consumption. And yet, the quick circulation of objects, which also implies their rapid accumulation, reflects a materialistic value in liquid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017) that does not align with Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional values of materialism. On the basis of contrasting arguments, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) acknowledged the need to further explore the relationship between liquid consumption and materialism. Alongside, Alonso-Almeida et al. (2020) identified the enjoyment of goods and experiences as an indicative of materialism in liquid consumption, but the value dimensions of materialism in liquid consumption did not receive much attention.

In contrast, Atanasova and Eckhardt (2021) illustrated that the absence of ownership centrality in liquid consumption can involve a preoccupation with consumption which can be material and experiential. Especially, the pursuit of achieving happiness and signalling success, status, or wealth that underlies Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional values of materialism may stem from the access to objects in liquid consumption contexts of digital nomadism (Atanasova & Eckhardt, 2021). While Atanasova and Eckhardt's (2021) study re-chartered the boundaries of materialism in liquid consumption, the delineation of materialistic

values remains unexplored in the specific context of fashion rentals that may align or go beyond Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional values of materialism.

In turn, Kramarczyk and Oliver (2022) conceptualise the expression of appreciative materialism and identify caring ethics for objects as a value that does not oppose traditional materialistic values or anti-consumption values. However, these authors illustrated this materialistic value dimension in the anti-consumption context of voluntary simplification (Kramarczyk & Oliver, 2022). Furthermore, Kramarczyk and Oliver (2022) encouraged researchers 'to familiarise themselves with the context in which consumers express appreciative forms of materialism' (p. 714). This call for research therefore provides an opportunity to explore materialism beyond the traditional materialistic values in alternative anti-consumption contexts such as liquid consumption.

Lee and Ahn (2016) identified and compared anti-consumption values with materialistic values at the level of the four key constructs: control over consumption, scope of concerns, material desire, and source of happiness. Yet, much of the focus of the anti-consumption values in the literature has been directed toward the context of voluntary simplification (Kuanr et al., 2020; Peifer et al., 2020). Since liquid consumption (e.g., rentals) has received limited attention as a form of anti-consumption (Akbar et al., 2016; Balderjahn et al., 2020; Lee, 2022), the anti-consumption values that may be derived from liquid consumption remain unexplored in the literature.

Prior studies have argued that cognitive dissonance can arise as consumers are confronted with the negative environmental consequences of their materialistic behaviours (e.g., Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008; Lu et al., 2016; Tang & Hinsch, 2018). Given liquid consumption is perceived as less materialistic than solid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017), the cognitive dissonance that typically stems from the materialistic behaviours of purchase tends to be lower in liquid consumption such as rentals (Durgee & O'Connor, 1995).

Yet, the notion that the presence of materialism in liquid consumption might trigger a conflict and result in a sense of dissonance among consumers has not been thoroughly investigated in existing literature.

According to Kilbourne and Pickett (2008), consumers may reconcile their dissonance by shifting their purchase patterns towards green products. To Miller et al. (2010), the reconciliation is done by rejecting information about negative environmental effects. While Tang and Hinsch (2018) called for participating in environmentally friendly activities, Lu et al. (2016) suggested discarding environmental concerns that conflict with their materialistic values as reconciliation measures. Within the realm of liquid consumption, consumers may reduce their cognitive dissonance through the use of moral licenses such as environmental benefits for stimulating impulse buying (Parguel et al., 2017) or prosocial-oriented P2P platform earnings for rationalising dishonest tax reporting (Berger et al., 2020).

Importantly, the process that consumers undergo to navigate the dissonance stemming from the conflict between materialistic pursuits and anti-consumption principles remains unexplored in the literature. The emergence of materialism in anti-consumption contexts further challenges the established antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption, providing an opportunity to revisit this relationship in the context of fashion rentals.

1.5 Research Purpose, Objectives and Questions

In view of the above, the overarching purpose of this thesis is to explore the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption that consumers experience in the context of fashion rentals. To achieve that purpose, this thesis aims at realising the following objectives:

1. identify the *value dimensions* of materialism and anti-consumption in fashion rentals
2. investigate the *conflict* that the presence of materialistic values can create for consumers in fashion rentals

3. explore the *process* through which consumers manage the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption in fashion rentals.

To address and make the problems researchable, this thesis tackles the following overarching question: How do consumers navigate the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption in fashion rentals?

To address this research question, and given the gaps identified in the literature, four sub-questions have been developed:

- RQ1: What are the value dimensions through which consumers demonstrate their desires for materialism in fashion rentals?
- RQ2: What are the value dimensions through which consumers demonstrate their inclination toward anti-consumption in fashion rentals?
- RQ3: How do materialistic values create a conflict for consumers in fashion rentals?
- RQ4: How do consumers resolve the conflict induced by materialistic values in fashion rentals?

1.6 Approach to the Study

The scope of this research takes into consideration the philosophical realm of materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992b, 1992a) and its theoretical derivative of anti-consumption (Balderjahn et al., 2020; Lee & Ahn, 2016) in order to situate the traditional antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption. Furthermore, Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory and Schwartz et al.'s (2012) refined theory of basic values acts as explanatory theories in this thesis to elucidate the antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption through value dimensions and the consequent behaviours of consumers. By drawing on the enabling theoretical lens of Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) solid-liquid consumption, this thesis further demonstrates the conflict between the notions of materialism and anti-consumption in the context of fashion rentals.

1.7 Research Context

In order to establish the research within its contextual framework, this thesis centres its focus on the emerging phenomenon of fashion rentals. This phenomenon revolves around the dynamic practice of consumers engaging in the temporary acquisition of clothing items from luxury fashion brands, facilitated by affordable subscription prices. By renting clothes rather than purchasing, consumers gain access to otherwise unaffordable items from luxury fashion brands while circumventing the associated environmental and financial burdens tied to traditional ownership (Lang, 2018; Lang et al., 2019, 2020). Characterised by their emphasis on ephemerality, access-based consumption, and the accumulation of limited items, fashion rentals can be categorically positioned within the realm of liquid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017).

Fashion rentals notably promote the shared usage of clothing items among multiple users, thereby curtailing the need for new garment production and potentially extending the life cycle of clothing items (Becker-Leifhold, 2018; Lang et al., 2020). This collaborative essence significantly contributes to portraying fashion rentals as an environmentally sustainable form of consumption (Arrigo, 2021a). Furthermore, the classification of fashion rentals as a sub-type of anti-consumption is aptly noted, predominantly due to the accentuated importance placed on shared usage over individual ownership of items (Akbar et al., 2016; Balderjahn et al., 2020; Lee, 2022). This categorical alignment echoes the fundamental principle of anti-consumption that prioritises utilisation rather than acquisition of items (Balderjahn et al., 2020; Makri et al., 2020).

Overall, fashion rentals underscore a paradigm shift in consumer behaviour as they represent a utopic phenomenon where consumers seek to reconcile their desire for material possessions with a conscious effort to align with anti-consumption principles that may reduce their environmental impact.

1.8 Research Design

This research is inherently exploratory, embodying the essence of a qualitative inquiry. The decision to adopt an exploratory approach stems from the novel emergence of fashion rentals as a distinctive variant of anti-consumption within the realm of liquid consumption. Additionally, the potential for variation in the materialistic and anti-consumption value dimensions across individuals, societies, cultures, and consumption contexts further underscores the need for exploration. Understanding the interplay of materialistic and anti-consumption values, as well as subsequent behaviours, in fashion rentals therefore necessitates the research to take an exploratory approach and follow inductive reasoning to derive findings from the data in order to provide rich descriptions of this relatively uncharted phenomenon.

Aligned with this objective, the research methodology follows Charmaz's (2006) constructivist grounded theory (CGT). This choice is fitting due to the limited existing knowledge surrounding fashion rentals as a subtype of anti-consumption. This methodology also enables the construction of an explanatory framework that may unravel the interplay between values, behaviours, and conflicts arising from the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption within the realm of fashion rentals. In operationalising this qualitative methodology, Kozinets' (2002, 2015) netnography, an Internet-based method, is employed. Archival data is extracted from an online community and two distinct consumer review websites associated with a popular fashion rental platform. Additionally, interviews are conducted with community members who engage in clothing rentals from luxury fashion brands via the platform. Both primary data elicited through interviews and secondary data drawn from archival sources ensure data triangulation and methodological triangulation in this thesis.

The analysis of data commenced with a structured implementation of the constructivist coding process, encompassing distinct phases including initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding. This process culminated in the delineation of sub-categories and core categories, facilitated by the application of abductive logic. To ensure methodological rigor, the constructivist coding process was reinforced by a cyclic application of analytical strategies such as the constant comparative method, memo writing, theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, and theoretical saturation. This holistic approach navigated the unknown phenomenon of fashion rentals as a subtype of anti-consumption and systematically generated meaningful insights about the notions of materialism and anti-consumption across the solid-liquid consumption continuum, thus contributing to the broader discourse in this domain.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study stems from its pursuit of the outlined research objectives. The study's first objective, centred around identifying the value dimensions of materialism and anti-consumption in the context of fashion rentals, enriches the understanding of the underlying factors that shape consumers' clothing consumption choices. The study's second objective, focused on examining the conflict arising from the presence of materialistic values in fashion rentals, contributes to the understanding of the interplay between consumers' materialistic desires and environmental virtuousness within the fashion rental landscape. The study's third objective, delving into the process that consumers use to manage the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption, provides insights into the mechanisms that consumers employ to reconcile the conflict. In terms of theoretical advancement, this study is significant as the exploration of values, conflict, and the process of managing the conflict contributes to the broader theoretical understanding of the concepts of materialism and anti-consumption. From a practical standpoint, the study holds considerable

importance for fashion rental platforms by offering insights into the emerging trends within the realm of rentals, as well as the integration of resale options, informed by consumers' materialistic pursuits and environmental virtuousness.

1.10 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis unfolds across six comprehensive chapters, each serving a distinct purpose in the exploration and analysis of its central subject.

Commencing with Chapter 1, the foundational groundwork is laid, encompassing the contextual backdrop, research rationale fortified by both empirical and theoretical underpinnings, and the articulation of the research problem and gaps in the existing literature. This chapter also meticulously delineates the purpose, research objectives, and research questions, while concurrently elucidating the research scope and pivotal contributions of this thesis.

Chapter 2 provides an extensive literature review, delving into the theoretical concepts of materialism and anti-consumption. Within these frameworks, the prevailing dimensions of value inherent to both concepts are examined in the light of the VBN theory of environmentalism and the refined theory of basic values. Contextualising the study within the broader domain of consumption, this chapter extends its exploration to the nuanced interplay between solid and liquid forms of consumption. Notably, the chapter probes the intricate landscape encompassing luxury fashion brands, fast fashion brands, and luxury fashion rentals to scope the specific context underpinning this research.

Chapter 3 navigates into the domain of research paradigms, explaining the constructivist approach that underpins this investigation. The rationale and operationalisation of the CGT as the qualitative research methodology are detailed in this chapter. Integral to this discussion is the incorporation of netnography as the research method, encompassing data collection methods like netnographic archival data and interviews. Trustworthiness criteria

and the researcher's reflexivity within the constructivist grounded theory, along with ethical considerations and methodological limitations are also addressed in this chapter.

The analytical journey of this study unfolds in Chapter 4, revealing the multifaceted processes that operationalised the research methodology. The constructivist coding process, spanning initial, focused, and theoretical coding phases to the emergence of sub-categories and core categories, forms the analytical backbone of this chapter. Methodological rigor is also discussed in this chapter which includes the consistent employment of the constant comparative method, memo writing, theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, and theoretical saturation throughout the analytical process.

Chapter 5 represents the empirical exploration, manifesting the findings extracted from the careful analysis of netnographic archival data and semi-structured interviews. These findings yield insights into the intricacies of consumers' clothing consumption, catalysing transformations in their consumption behaviours, as elucidated through verbatim excerpts. Anchored in the empirical data, these findings engage in a meaningful dialogue with existing literature, capturing their significance for theory and practice.

The concluding Chapter 6 provides a synthesis of the entire scholarly journey. It revisits the pivotal steps, such as the research rationale, methodological process, and research findings. The culmination of this synthesis brings forth a compelling set of propositions and an associated conceptual model, substantiating theoretical underpinnings. The theoretical contributions and implications emanating from this thesis are also underscored in this chapter, complemented by an exploration of the limitations and promising avenues for future research within the realm of the research topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides a comprehensive critical review of the two central theoretical concepts that form the foundation of this thesis: materialism and anti-consumption. To begin with, this chapter offers an overview of the diverse conceptualisations of materialism, delving into its origins and outcomes. The concept of anti-consumption is introduced as a contrasting notion to materialism, accompanied by an exploration of its various expressions, origins, and effects. This chapter places particular emphasis on demonstrating the inherent opposition between materialism and anti-consumption. This is achieved by examining their distinct value dimensions, modes of consumption involving ownership and non-ownership, as well as the solid and liquid dimensions of consumption. Additionally, this chapter situates this contrast within the realm of fashion consumption, with a specific focus on clothing purchases from both luxury fashion brands and fast fashion brands, as well as clothing rentals from fashion rental platforms. To pinpoint the research gap that guides this study, this chapter underscores the areas of overlap between the concepts of materialism and anti-consumption, particularly within the dimension of liquid consumption.

2.1 Materialism

Materialism is a multifaceted and intricate concept that has given rise to various interpretations, leading to the development of an extensive body of literature in consumer research. Belk's (1985) seminal work has conceived materialism as the manifestation of three personality traits such as possessiveness, non-generosity and envy which reflect orientations with possessions. As a consumer trait, materialism involves the desire to own or control one's personal belongings (i.e., possessiveness); a hesitation to share one's possessions with others (i.e., non-generosity); and, the desire for someone else's wealth (i.e., envy) (Belk, 1985). Ger and Belk (1996) have introduced a fourth trait of preservation to describe materialism where the emphasis is on the tendency to conserve and retain memory-laden objects. In relation to

Belk's (1985) personality traits, Belk and Pollay (1985) have distinguished between terminal materialism where an individual gains satisfaction from possessing something as a final goal in itself as opposed to instrumental materialism where satisfaction is derived from the utility provided by the possessions.

Richins and Dawson (1992a) have proposed an alternative perspective on materialism, defining it as a personal value orientation manifested through the importance individuals attribute to acquiring and possessing objects as a means to achieve their goals. Within this system of personal values, materialism encompasses three aspects: the centrality of acquisition (the significance of possessions in an individual's life); the pursuit of happiness through acquisition (the belief that obtaining possessions enhances happiness); and, possession-defined success (the belief that material possessions signal success) (Richins & Dawson, 1992a, 1992b). This value-oriented view of materialism has also been denoted as traditional materialism (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2020) or accumulative materialism (Kramarczyk & Oliver, 2022).

Differing from the consumption-centred perspective of materialism, Inglehart (1981) has delineated materialism as an economic inclination towards life that prioritises lower-order needs for material comfort and physical safety over higher-order needs like self-expression, sense of belonging, aesthetic fulfillment, and overall quality of life. In Inglehart's (1981) conceptualisation, the economic orientation of materialism contrasts with the concept of post-materialism in which non-material sources of satisfaction are assigned lesser importance and the fulfillment of higher-level needs becomes more significant even if it means sacrificing monetary gains.

Kasser and Ryan (1993, 1996), on the other hand, have offered a perspective on materialism centred around goals by emphasising the significance individuals assign to extrinsic goals such as financial success and social recognition in comparison to intrinsic

goals like affiliation and self-acceptance. Shrum et al. (2013) have put forth a similar understanding of materialism, defining it as a motivated goal pursuit intended to construct and maintain self-identity through the symbolic consumption of products, services, or experiences. Kramarczyk and Oliver (2022) have further introduced an alternative expression of materialism in their work, proposing the concept of appreciative materialism that is more sustainable and illustrative of new materialism. Diverging from Richins and Dawson's (1992a) value-based view of materialism, appreciative materialism attributes significance to objects in an individual's life, achieved by deliberately choosing not to possess or accumulate these objects (Kramarczyk & Oliver, 2022). Moreover, Kramarczyk and Oliver's (2022) appreciative materialism stands in contrast to Belk's (1985) personality traits of possessiveness and non-generosity since this concept encompasses caring ethics to things, achieved through the act of sharing and giving possessions to others.

Given the multiplicity of conceptualisations for materialism, this thesis adopted Richins and Dawson's (1992a) value-oriented approach to materialism that underscores the significance attributed to the acquisitions of material possessions in guiding the consumers' consumption decisions (Richins, 2017). In the subsequent section, a brief overview is presented regarding diverse antecedents and consequences that have been associated with materialism in the extant literature.

2.1.1 Antecedents and Consequences

Several antecedents of materialism have been identified in the literature that includes: advertising (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2003; Nairn & Opree, 2021; Sirgy et al., 2012); television viewership (Shrum et al., 2005; Sirgy et al., 1998a); family disruptions and family communications (Grougiou & Moschis, 2015); childhood socialisation, social structure, socioeconomic status, gender (Jiang et al., 2021; Sirgy et al., 1998b); cultural orientations

(Shammout et al., 2022); self-doubt (Chang & Arkin, 2002); and, depression, anxiety, self-esteem, and affect (Segev et al., 2015).

Different motives of materialism have also been documented, such as self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, belonging, efficacy, and meaning (Gurel-Atay et al., 2021; Shrum et al., 2013; Sirgy et al., 2013); and, happiness, success, and social recognition (Dittmar et al., 2014; Gurel-Atay et al., 2021; Kasser & Ryan, 1993; Richins & Dawson, 1992a; Sirgy et al., 2013; Thyroff & Kilbourne, 2018). Shrum et al.'s (2022) classification of the determinants of materialism further provided a comprehensive categorisation where parental, peer, and media influences were identified as factors originating from interpersonal sources. Meanwhile, psychological aspects such as self-esteem, power dynamics, a sense of belonging, and self-concept were labelled as factors stemming from intrapersonal influences (Shrum et al., 2022). Materialism has been evidenced in the literature to manifest across different countries, within and between cultures, and throughout both affluent and less affluent societies (Belk, 2015; Ger & Belk, 1996, 1999).

Positive outcomes of materialism have been identified in the literature, including increased life satisfaction (Sirgy et al., 2013, 2021), enhanced self-esteem (Shrum et al., 2014; Sirgy, 1999), wealth creation (Sirgy, 1999), and higher subjective well-being (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012). Yet, much of the literature has demonstrated the negative correlation of materialism with happiness (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Kasser & Ryan, 1993, 1996), loneliness (Pieters, 2013), personal and social relationships (Kasser & Ryan, 1993; LeBaron et al., 2018), life-satisfaction (Sirgy et al., 2012, 2013, 2021), subjective well-being (Bauer et al., 2012; Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Dittmar et al., 2014; Kasser et al., 2014), and quality of life (Sirgy, 1998; Sirgy et al., 2013; Sirgy et al., 1998a). A number of studies (e.g., Bardi & Schwartz, 2003; Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Kasser, 2016; Tang & Hinsch, 2018) have found negative relationships between materialism and environmentalism such that

materialism has been denounced for driving environmental degradation (Hurst et al., 2013; Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008). Moreover, materialism has been negatively associated with prosocial behaviours such as helping (Kasser, 2005); volunteering (Bauer et al., 2012); and donations (Ku & Zaroff, 2014).

Prior studies (e.g., Richins et al., 1992) have particularly highlighted negative feelings (e.g., disappointment, anxiety, envy) that arise in materialism given the cognitive dissonance that may result from high expectations and the reality as to what possessions can accomplish in an individual's life. Materialism thus drives a vicious cycle of consumption to reduce these negative feelings that may incorporate impulse buying (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012; Seinauskiene et al., 2016), compulsive buying (Moschis, 2017; Tarka, 2020; Tarka et al., 2022), overconsumption (Sirgy, 1998), conspicuous consumption (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012; Segal & Podoshen, 2013; Wong, 1997), luxury consumption (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012; Shammout et al., 2022; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998), and high financial debt (Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2015; Richins, 2011).

With the negative consequences associated with materialism's emphasis on ownership and possessions, new consumption habits and alternative perspectives have emerged that challenges the materialistic ideals. The next section provides a description of theoretical notions that can be positioned as opposites or antagonistic concepts to materialism.

2.2 Contrasting Concepts to Materialism

One of the philosophies of consumption that opposes materialism when it comes to the ideals of ownership and possessions is minimalism. The theoretical concept of minimalism challenges the culture of consumerism with the core intention of mitigating the negative impacts of materialism and, as a result, enhancing both the environment and society (Jain et al., 2023). Especially, the economic upheaval and the enduring financial concerns brought

about by the COVID-19 pandemic have significantly amplified the interest in this philosophy of consumption (Pangarkar et al., 2021).

Minimalist consumers prioritise simplicity, owning fewer possessions, reducing excessive consumption, and minimising reliance on materialistic aspects that offer immediate gratification (Iyer & Muncy, 2016; Seegebarth et al., 2016). The embrace of the notion that less is more, deriving satisfaction from owning fewer material possessions, practicing conscious and mindful consumption, and giving priority to sustainable and environmentally-friendly behaviours in minimalism all signify an underlying rejection of the values typically associated with materialism (Jain et al., 2023; Lloyd & Pennington, 2020; Wilson & Bellezza, 2022). Additionally, minimalism underscores that the implicit rejection of consumerism can contribute to subjective well-being, happiness, and an enhanced quality of life - which directly challenges the core principles of materialism (Meissner, 2019; Wilson & Bellezza, 2022).

Considering its contrasting stance towards materialism, Pangarkar et al. (2021) have categorised minimalism into four dimensions, including voluntary simplicity, consumption reduction, inconspicuousness, and the practice of anti-consumption. Voluntary simplicity within minimalism focuses on finding contentment with fewer material possessions; reduced consumption arises from unforeseen life events that require individuals to spend less; and, inconspicuousness involves consumers choosing understated designs and logos to convey sophistication and subtlety to others (Pangarkar et al., 2021). Yet, it is perhaps the typification of minimalism as an anti-consumption behaviour that has received much attention in the literature. Prior studies such as Iyer and Muncy (2009) and Lee et al. (2009) have initially portrayed the concept of minimalism as a form of anti-consumption. Dopierała (2017) has similarly regarded minimalism as a social practice aligned with anti-consumption, one that stands in opposition to the culture of excess and waste driven by irrationality, desires and

impulsive whims commonly associated with materialism. Pangarkar et al. (2021) have thus characterised minimalism as a form of anti-consumption behaviour in which individuals are motivated by normative pressures to actively contribute to sustainability and societal well-being concerns.

Within the realm of anti-consumption research, Lee and Ahn's (2016) study have played a crucial role in presenting anti-consumption as a concept that opposes materialism. The authors introduced the idea of non/anti-materialism as a theoretical opposite to materialism, suggesting that it involves rejecting the importance of material possessions and disregarding possessions as a source of happiness. However, Lee and Ahn (2016) have argued that 'non/anti-materialism is virtually impossible and not applicable for the majority of people' (p. 24). Instead, the authors have contended that anti-consumption is a more fitting contrast to materialism since it primarily focuses on the reasons and processes against consumption, rather than entirely rejecting the concept of materiality. Building on Lee and Ahn's (2016) argument, this thesis thus considers the notion of anti-consumption as an antagonistic concept to materialism to further the discussion in this chapter.

2.2.1 Anti-Consumption

Anti-consumption has been examined from diverse conceptual angles, encompassing actions that span from voluntary choices to involuntary behaviours (Albinsson et al., 2010). Zavestoski (2002) have defined anti-consumption as an attitude encompassing various forms of resistance, distaste, resentment, or rejection of consumption. This perspective primarily emphasises two aspects: (i) rejection, which involves intentionally excluding specific products or brands from consumption, and (ii) resistance, which involves reducing, cutting, or limiting consumption. Iyer and Muncy (2009) and Lee et al. (2009) have similarly viewed anti-consumption as actions directed against specific brands, products, or the broader consumer culture.

In contrast, Black and Cherrier (2010) have focused on non-voluntary anti-consumption, where consumption reduction or avoidance occurs due to economic constraints. This differs from Kropfeld et al.'s (2018) categorisation of voluntary anti-consumption, where consumers make deliberate choices based on their values and desire for a better life. Lee et al. (2011), on the other hand, have conceptualised anti-consumption as opposition to the entire consumption process, encompassing acquisition, use, and dispossession of products. They classify anti-consumption into acts of rejecting, reducing, and reclaiming, with a specific emphasis on the rejection and reduction of goods from one's consumption cycle.

Chatzidakis and Lee (2013) have further distinguished anti-consumption as a set of reasons against consumption, conceptually separate from reasons for consumption. Similarly, García-de-Frutos et al. (2018) have viewed anti-consumption as a behavioural counterpart to consumption. Taking a broader perspective, Makri et al. (2020) have categorised anti-consumption into two forms: (i) general opposition to consumption, reflecting negative attitudes toward consumption practices in general rather than specific items, and (ii) targeted actions, involving behaviours against the consumption of particular brands, products, or companies without implying a reduction in all forms of consumption.

Given the diversity of conceptualisations, this thesis adopts Makri et al.'s (2020) view of anti-consumption where the intentional exclusion or reduction of goods from one's consumption, or the reuse of previously acquired goods to avoid consumption, is voluntary and driven by a deliberate intent to reduce consumption.

2.2.1.1 Antecedents and Consequences

The literature has offered various manifestations of anti-consumption, with Fournier (1998) outlining a continuum of anti-consumption behaviours that encompass: (i) avoidance behaviours (i.e., brand/product avoidance); (ii) minimisation behaviours (i.e., voluntary simplicity); and, (iii) active rebellion (i.e., consumer boycotts/buycotts). Avoidance

behaviours involve deliberately avoiding certain brands or products. Such avoidance can stem from negative personal experiences, conflicts with one's identity or values, moral concerns (Lee et al., 2009); environmental concerns linked to specific brands (Kuanr et al., 2021); or, health and economic considerations regarding food products (Arslan et al., 2018; Tosun & Gürce, 2018). Symbolic rejection of goods for personally or socially significant reasons can also fall into this category (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013).

On the other hand, voluntary simplicity is an example of minimisation behaviour which involves the reduction and rejection of excessive consumption without total renunciation (Etzioni, 1998). People may pursue voluntary simplicity to cut down on consumption, embrace material simplicity (Cherrier, 2009; Zavestoski, 2002); find satisfaction in non-material aspects of life (Huneke, 2005); or, for religious (Chowdhury, 2018), environmental, and social reasons (Alexander & Ussher, 2012; Iyer & Muncy, 2009; Kramarczyk & Oliver, 2022; Kuanr et al., 2020). Alongside, active rebellion against consumption can take several forms such as resistance to including certain goods in one's routine consumption (Albinsson et al., 2010; Cherrier, 2009; Lee et al., 2011), switching brands/products to support organisational changes for environmental or societal benefits (buycotts) (Braunsberger & Buckler, 2011; Hoffmann et al., 2018), or restraining oneself from purchasing specific products due to ideological incongruence (Paschen et al., 2020). Another stream of literature has classified debt-free living as a subtype of anti-consumption where individuals prioritise financial stability and refrain from spending beyond their means, (Balderjahn et al., 2020; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2015). This categorisation is rooted in the argument that debt typically arises from the urge or necessity to engage in consumption, thereby positioning debt-free living as a variant of anti-consumption (Balderjahn et al., 2020; Ziesemer et al., 2021).

Within these various manifestations, existing literature has identified common collective-level factors that drive anti-consumption behaviours such as prosocial concerns (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013; Lee et al., 2009) and ecological concerns (Cherrier, 2009; Iyer & Muncy, 2009). In contrast, individual-level motivators encompass self-actualisation and the pursuit of intrinsic goals (Zavestoski, 2002), the desire to enhance the quality of life (Huneke, 2005), the quest for a simpler lifestyle (Iyer & Muncy, 2009), and political ideology/animosity (Pecot et al., 2021; Sandıkcı & Ekici, 2009), among others. On the other hand, the consequences of anti-consumption behaviours can be classified into three levels: micro (individuals), meso (organisations), and macro (societies, nations, and the environment) (Makri et al., 2020). At the micro level, research has shown that anti-consumption is associated with enhanced life satisfaction (Iyer & Muncy, 2009), happiness (Zavestoski, 2002), and overall well-being (Lee & Ahn, 2016). At the meso level, anti-consumption behaviours may impact firms by influencing their image, reputation, sales, and profitability (Makri et al., 2020). Finally, at the macro level, anti-consumption has been suggested to contribute to the development of a more sustainable society (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Cherrier et al., 2011) and environment (García-de-Frutos et al., 2018; Vesterinen & Syrjälä, 2022).

With the respective conceptualisations, antecedents, and consequences of materialism and anti-consumption serving as a foundation for understanding these concepts, the following section focuses on presenting evidence that anti-consumption is antithetical to materialism.

2.3 Materialism vs. Anti-consumption

To illustrate that anti-consumption provides a strong contrast to materialism, the first set of evidence can be drawn from Schwartz's (1992) Theory of Basic Values and Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory. The value-oriented approach to materialism clusters with Schwartz's (1992) self-enhancement values that are self-oriented and focus on relative success and dominance over others (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Kasser, 2016; Tang &

Hinsch, 2018). Within the realm of Schwartz's (1992) self-enhancement values, materialism predominantly aligns with the dimensions of hedonism (i.e., pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself), achievement (i.e., personal success that is demonstrated by socially acceptable competence), and power (i.e., social status, prestige, control or dominance over people and resources). In addition, Schwartz's (1992) self-enhancement values correlate with Stern et al.'s (1999) egoistic values since they both revolve around the idea of self-interest, personal gains, and the pursuit of one's own well-being (Groot & Steg, 2008; Sivapalan et al., 2021; Tan et al., 2022). Materialistic values thus conflict with Schwartz's (1992) self-transcendence values that emphasise concern for the welfare and interest of others and align with environmentalism (Schwartz, 2012; Tang & Hinsch, 2018).

Banerjee and McKeage (1994) have identified environmentalism as a conservation-oriented, anti-consumption value that opposes the pro-consumption value of materialism. The anti-consumption value of environmentalism is best aligned with Schwartz's (1992) self-transcendence values, especially the dimensions of universalism (i.e., welfare protection of people and nature) and benevolence (i.e., preservation and enhancement of significant others) (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003; Tang & Hinsch, 2018). Moreover, Schwartz's (1992) self-transcendence values correlate with Stern et al.'s (1999) altruistic and biospheric values because they share a common focus on broader social and environmental concerns, as well as a sense of responsibility beyond individual interests (Groot & Steg, 2008; Sivapalan et al., 2021; Tan et al., 2022). In their study, Kuanr et al. (2021) have illustrated that collectivistic values, which positively relate to Schwartz's (1992) self-transcendence values and emphasise collective goals, collaboration, and welfare of common people, are prevalent in anti-consumption contexts. Given the prioritisation of environmental and societal well-being, it is clear that anti-consumption values stand in contrast to Schwartz's (1992) self-enhancement values, which are in alignment with materialism.

The second set of evidence regarding the antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption can be drawn from the theoretical notions of post-materialism and non-materialism. The anti-consumption value of environmentalism has been associated with Inglehart's (1981) post-materialistic values that reject the materialistic notion of possessions being the source of happiness and success and instead, emphasise environmental protection. Furthermore, the dimensions of anti-consumption values, such as self-actualisation (Zavestoski, 2002) and quality of life (Huneke, 2005), resonate with Inglehart's (1981) post-materialistic values which prioritise higher-order needs. In light of Inglehart's (1981) perspective on materialism being at odds with post-materialism, the alignment of anti-consumption values with post-materialistic values serves as additional evidence of the contrasting relationship between materialism and anti-consumption. Similarly, Peifer et al.'s (2020) anti-consumption value of non-materialism, which downplays the significance of material possessions in achieving success or happiness, contradicts Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional values of materialism that emphasise the importance of material possessions for achieving success or happiness.

The third set of evidence can be drawn from Lee and Ahn's (2016) study that has conceptualised the antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption with respect to four constructs: (i) control over consumption; (ii) scope of concerns; (iii) material desire; and, (iv) source of happiness. When it comes to control over consumption, materialistic values are often linked with low self-determination and autonomy (Kashdan & Breen, 2007). In contrast, anti-consumption values inherently promote voluntariness and autonomy (Zavestoski, 2002). Materialistic individuals tend to be influenced by advertising messages that reinforce their desire for material possessions (Sirgy, Lee, Kosenko, et al., 1998). Conversely, anti-consumption values demonstrate conscious consumption choices by resisting marketing messages (Lee, Fernandez, et al., 2009; Lee, Motion, et al., 2009).

Overall, materialistic values suggest less control due to the relentless pursuit of possessions, while anti-consumption values reflect a high degree of control over consumption, driven by individual motivations to resist consumerism (Lee & Ahn, 2016).

Materialistic values have also been associated with personal concerns (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002) and self-centeredness (Bauer et al., 2012), validating Belk's (1985) traits such as selfishness, envy, and a lack of generosity. Materialistic values thus primarily revolve around micro-level concerns related to personal wealth and well-being, rather than macro-level concerns such as environmental or societal issues (Lee & Ahn, 2016). In contrast, anti-consumption values are primarily motivated by broader environmental and societal concerns (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Chatzidakis et al., 2007; Iyer & Muncy, 2009), indicating a greater emphasis on macro-level issues, unlike materialism (Lee & Ahn, 2016). Materialistic values are further characterised by an insatiable desire for material possessions (Richins & Dawson, 1992a, 1992b), leading to dissatisfaction following the acquisition of possessions and consequently the emergence of a cycle of desire (Belk et al., 2003). This contrasts with anti-consumption values, which emphasise a simpler lifestyle, reduced acquisition of material possessions, and a focus on experiential consumption (Cherrier, 2009; Lee, 2022; Lee & Ahn, 2016; Zavestoski, 2002).

Materialistic individuals prioritise extrinsic goals, aligning materialistic values with dimensions like success and seeking approval from others (Kasser & Ryan, 1996). This implies that those with materialistic values may strive to attain extrinsic goals by working more, earning more, and spending more, believing it will bring happiness (Lee & Ahn, 2016). In contrast, anti-consumption values are associated with working less, earning less, and consuming less and instead, investing more time in pursuing intrinsic goals such as personal growth, quality time with friends and family, and self-actualisation (Huneke, 2005; Lee & Ahn, 2016; Zavestoski, 2002).

The previous discussion has underscored the contrasting relationship between materialism and anti-consumption, focusing on the various value aspects linked to these two ideas. Beyond their value-oriented aspects, the contrasting nature of materialism and anti-consumption can be elucidated by delving into the modes of consumption that are fundamental to each concept.

2.4 Modes of Consumption: Ownership and Non-ownership

In the realm of consumption, resources are typically obtained through purchase in the marketplace, with the prevailing mode being ownership (Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2016). On the other hand, consumers have the option to obtain consumption resources through non-ownership modes that facilitate access to products over ownership (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012).

2.4.1 Ownership Mode

Ownership, the normative ideal among modes of consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012), entails a total, exclusive right to goods with unlimited usage and rights of transfer (e.g., sell, gift, destroy) (Watkins et al., 2016). Often associated with adulthood, ownership is normally earned by labour (Rifkin, 2000), and is known to provide continuity and permanence in life (Cheshire et al., 2010). Ownership is believed to entail perceived advantages since it is cheaper, allows the accumulation of capital and provides one with independence, security, status, choice and freedom (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Durgee & O'Connor, 1995). Building on Richins and Dawson's (1992a) study, the focus on acquiring possessions through purchases that ultimately lead to ownership is a prominent and pivotal aspect of materialism.

2.4.2 Non-ownership Mode

Non-ownership consumption, that is facilitated through access, allows for the temporary and restricted utilisation of assets managed by networks of suppliers (Rifkin, 2000). Typically characterised as an inferior consumption mode (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012) access associated with traditional rentals is particularly seen as wasteful, precarious, and limited in individual freedom (Cheshire et al., 2010). Access through traditional rentals also did not provide the pride of ownership or the sense of security typically connected to ownership (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012). Furthermore, consumers engaging in access through traditional rentals are categorised as being purely financially motivated, comprising lower financial power and status, or being at a more transitory life stage (Durgee & O'Connor, 1995). Beyond traditional rentals, there has been a surge in access-based services in the marketplace through the rise of commercialised platforms that provide consumers with access to products and services (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012).

Access as a consumption mode has garnered popularity due to changing consumer attitudes, a shift in consumer mindset following the 2008 global economic crisis, and the structural move towards urbanisation (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Botsman & Rogers, 2010). An increase in environmental consciousness and a transitory lifestyle has made consumers favour access because this consumption mode provides sustainable ways of consumption and more efficient resource utilisation (Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Lovelock & Gummesson, 2004). Likewise, the weakening appeal of showy, materialistic wealth and a growing intolerance for wasteful consumerism largely contributes to consumers' preference for access since it allows them to own less and to be more flexible (Yeoman, 2011). Besides, consumers are more mindful of their spending habits and rethinking their values, especially the relationship between ownership and well-being, following the 2008 global financial crisis that depressed the world economy (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Davidson et al., 2018). In fact, the

rising costs of acquiring products and maintaining ownership over time, instability in social relationships, uncertainties in labour markets, and space limitations due to urbanisation have made access a more attainable and less precarious consumption mode (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Cheshire et al., 2010).

Access-based services thrive on the idea of utilising resources without the financial, emotional, or social burdens of ownership and this concept of usage has been largely advanced by the notion of the sharing economy (Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2016). However, Eckhardt and Bardhi (2015) have argued that the sharing economy is more aptly construed as an access economy if the sharing is market-mediated - that is, it constitutes an economic exchange where consumers pay to access someone else's goods or services for a particular period of time. Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012) have thus coined the term access-based consumption, which is defined as the 'transactions that may be market-mediated in which no transfer of ownership takes place' (p. 881).

Access-based consumption can be enabled through three different access practices like renting, sharing and borrowing (Bardhi et al., 2014). Renting is classified as a market-mediated access practice, which takes the form of an economic exchange where consumers are primarily motivated by utilitarian motives, avoid identification with the object being accessed, and are governed by market norms of reciprocity (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2016). In contrast, sharing and borrowing are categorised as non-market mediated access practices, which are forms of social exchanges, motivated by prosocial motives, embedded in social relationships, and ruled by social norms of reciprocity (Belk, 2013; Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2016). Consumers can thus access consumption resources: (i) by renting for temporary usage from companies (e.g., car sharing via Zipcar; luxury fashion clothing via Rent the Runway); (ii) from other individuals via marketplaces (e.g., apartment

renting via Airbnb; short-term car rides via Uber); or (iii) by sharing and borrowing of resources outside the marketplace (e.g., family and friends) (Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2016).

Several studies have suggested that practices involving non-ownership such as sharing or collaborative forms of consumption (e.g., borrowing, leasing, or renting) can be seen within the context of anti-consumption (e.g., Balderjahn et al., 2020; Guzzetti et al., 2021; Lee, 2019; Ozanne & Ballantine, 2010; Vesterinen & Syrjälä, 2022; Ziesemer et al., 2021). Within this framework, communal ownership of goods (Ozanne & Ballantine, 2010) and engagement in commercial sharing systems (Akbar et al., 2016; Lee, 2019) are also considered forms of anti-consumption. Collectively, these findings from the literature provide substantial evidence that access-based consumption closely aligns with the principles of anti-consumption. With ownership being the essence of materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992a, 1992b), the association between access and anti-consumption is indicative of the contrasting nature of materialism and anti-consumption.

Within the scope of ownership and non-ownership/access as consumption modes, Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) conceptualisation of ownership as a solid dimension and access as a liquid dimension of consumption offers additional support for the contrasting positions of materialism and anti-consumption.

2.5 Dimensions of Consumption: Solid and Liquid

Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) have categorised ownership and access as opposing points on a continuum, introducing new dimensions of consumption as solid and liquid. Solid consumption emphasises ownership, characterised by an enduring nature of consumer-object relationships which leads to a strong attachment of consumers to their possessions (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017). On the other hand, liquid consumption, which centres around access, is marked by an ephemeral nature of consumer-object relationships that results in a fluid attachment of consumers to the objects (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017).

2.5.1 Solid Consumption

The acquisition of objects via ownership in solid consumption grants certainty of possessions (Jenkins et al., 2014), to the extent that possessions become known as 'things we call ours' (Belk, 1988, p. 139). Possessions may include external objects, places, personal and group possessions (e.g., watch, toilet articles) and even body parts (e.g., skin) and vital organs (Belk, 1988). Although Belk (1988) has referred to objects being part of possessions, Molesworth et al. (2016) and Watkins et al. (2016) have argued that objects become possessions when they are separated from the commodity sphere. In this regard, the notion of de-commodification has been addressed in literature that refers to the transition of commodities from its homogenising market sphere into the domain of personal possessions (Molesworth et al., 2016; Ostergaard et al., 1999; Watkins et al., 2016).

Ostergaard et al. (1999) have specified that the de-commodification of commodities into possessions involves two processes: singularisation and appropriation. Consumers personalise and integrate objects into their lives through singularisation (Epp & Price, 2010; Miller, 1987) and in the process, the objects become unique, singular and irreplaceable for their owners (Grayson & Shulman, 2000; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). On the other hand, appropriation as a process transforms the anonymous commodity into a distinctive and often affective object for its owner (Ostergaard et al., 1999). The practices of appropriation particularly refer to actions through which consumers make the object theirs and thereby, a part of the self (Belk, 1988; Gruen, 2017). Appropriation can thus occur through threefold sets of practices: (i) by creating or making an object; (ii) through knowing an object intimately; and (iii) by controlling or being able to use, destroy or modify the object (Belk, 1988; Gruen, 2017; Pierce et al., 2001). The two processes of de-commodification, therefore, collectively specify the consumer as the owner of the objects and the objects as something of his own (Ostergaard et al., 1999).

Molesworth et al. (2016) and Watkins et al. (2016), however, have argued that the possession rituals of singularisation and acts of appropriation that enable the acquisition of proprietary feelings needed for possession assume a level of control that may be enabled or restricted by consumption modes. In fact, it is only under conditions of full ownership that consumers can engage in practices needed to transition the commodities into personal possessions (Watkins et al., 2016). Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012) and Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) have thus suggested that long-term interactions between consumers and objects solely form in solid consumption since ownership provides the certainty of possessions that fosters practices of appropriating objects.

The processes of singularisation and appropriation also provide meanings to possessions which can be used as resources to construct consumers' identity (Watkins et al., 2016). Consequently, consumers tend to form attachments to possessions that can define and maintain consumers' identities, which in turn, make up consumers' self-concept or sense of self (Kleine III et al., 1993; Kleine et al., 1995; Kleine & Baker, 2004; Molesworth et al., 2016). Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) have specifically suggested that the appropriation practices of the objects lead consumers to form strong attachments to possessions in the realm of solid consumption. The strong attachment to possessions is more central to the self and consumers are thus more likely to identify with their owned objects and extend the self to the objects they own in solid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Belk, 1988; Kleine & Baker, 2004). Chen's (2009) study has exemplified the core of solid consumption by highlighting that the collectors (i.e., purchasers of artworks) seek enduring relationships with their acquisitions, ultimately leading to a strong sense of self-identification with material objects.

By applying Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) logic of solid consumption, the alignment with Richins and Dawson's (1992a) notion of materialism becomes evident, particularly in

the context of acquiring material possessions through ownership. Belk's (1985) characterisation of materialism, which involves the desire for control over one's possessions, further implies an appropriation practice that originates from full ownership and results in enduring consumer-object relationships in solid consumption. Additionally, Ger and Belk's (1996) aspect of materialism centred on preserving possessions indicates the existence of long-term interactions between consumers and their objects, thereby mirroring the core essence of solid consumption. In summary, the dimension of solid consumption aligns with the concept of materialism, with the focal point residing in ownership and possessions.

2.5.2 Liquid Consumption

The acquisition of objects via access in liquid consumption is a temporary and circumstantial consumption context, where consumers are not granted full ownership rights but they get only a limited time with the accessed objects (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012). As a result, the de-commodification processes that are needed to transition the objects into personal possessions such as appropriation and singularisation are impeded in liquid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Jenkins et al., 2014; Watkins et al., 2016). The absence of appropriation and singularisation processes thus leads to an ephemeral nature of consumer-object relationships in liquid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017).

In their study, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012) have particularly showcased that personalisation (i.e., singularisation) and appropriation practices do not take place during short-term access to company-owned car-sharing programs (e.g., Zipcar). Yet, a long duration of access (e.g., rented apartment for tenancy) may allow time for appropriation practices to take place which results in a perceived sense of ownership of the accessed material object (Strahilevitz & Loewenstein, 1998). Similarly, there may be room for certain appropriation practices concerning the material objects being accessed in public consumption contexts such as toy libraries (Ozanne & Ozanne, 2011), peer-to-peer sharing and habitual consumption of

community gardens (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012). Furthermore, appropriation practices tend to be more dominant when there is extensive consumer involvement with the accessed material object (e.g., car sharing) compared to limited involvement (e.g., renting a hotel room) (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012). Contrarily, Jenkins et al. (2014) have argued that consumers may not engage in any appropriation practices or experience any sense of perceived ownership in access-based consumption. Molesworth et al. (2016) and Watkins et al. (2016), in their respective works, have concurred that the absence of full ownership compromises the consumers' singularisation attempts and impedes their desire to possess the objects that are accessed temporarily. On the other hand, Loussaïef et al. (2019) have illustrated that temporary appropriation and personalisation may take place when consumers access luxury garments.

Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012, 2017) have suggested that the absence of appropriation and singularisation processes and the consequent ephemeral nature of consumer-object relationships lead to fluid attachment to objects in liquid consumption. This implies that consumers may not look to extend the self to the objects they access for temporary use in liquid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Weiss & Johar, 2016). For instance, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012) have showcased that the short-term temporal duration, anonymity and market-mediation inhibit the consumers' sense of identification with the cars they access and consequently, the object does not become part of consumers' extended self. Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) have proposed a potential explanation for this transient attachment to objects in liquid consumption. The authors have suggested that consumers exhibit a fluid attachment to accessed objects because the importance of their functional use outweighs their role in shaping personal identity (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017). Access, in fact, serves as a lifestyle facilitator for consumers (Bernthal et al., 2005), who lack the necessary economic means to

consume brands, products, and services that would otherwise be out of reach (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017).

Chen (2009) has thus equated access to art museums with the experience of consumption for consumers who cannot afford to buy and collect art. Along the same lines, Bardhi et al. (2012) have argued that individuals value objects only temporarily due to their situational use value, functionality and portability, thereby providing evidence of an ephemeral consumer-object relationship and fluid attachment to objects in global nomadism. The authors also claimed that no singularisation or appropriation of objects takes place in global nomadism and migrant consumers may not incorporate the material objects into the extended self in conditions of global mobility (Bardhi et al., 2012). However, Gruen (2017) has illustrated that the design of the access system that allows personalisation of the accessed material object (e.g., personal settings within uniform car sharing systems) can drive a strong sense of attachment and identification to the accessed object for the consumers. In addition, Loussaïef et al. (2019) have argued that access to luxury clothing and accessories fosters a temporary extended self and reflects consumers' identity in a way similar to possessions in liquid consumption.

By applying Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) logic of liquid consumption, the lack of alignment with Richins and Dawson's (1992a) notion of materialism becomes evident since objects are acquired through access rather than ownership. Due to the lack of appropriation and singularisation processes associated with temporary access, Belk's (1985) trait of materialism, which revolves around exerting control over one's possessions, is notably absent in liquid consumption. Furthermore, the shared access to objects like cars (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012) or luxury garments and accessories (Loussaïef et al., 2019) among multiple individuals contradicts Belk's (1985) portrayal of materialism that inherently involves a reluctance to share one's possessions with others. Conversely, communal access to objects

encourages the optimal utilisation of these items and supports the idea of possession avoidance through rejecting or reducing acquisitions, which aligns more closely with the principles of anti-consumption (Balderjahn et al., 2020; Seegebarth et al., 2016; Ziesemer et al., 2021). The ephemeral consumer-object relationships in liquid consumption also counter Ger and Belk's (1996) preservation aspect of materialism since the temporal period of access to objects does not suggest any enduring interactions between consumers and their objects. In summary, the dimension of liquid consumption contradicts materialism and aligns more with the concept of anti-consumption, with the focal point residing in access and usage.

While the contrast between materialism and anti-consumption has been exemplified through the solid and liquid consumption dimensions, this distinction has become particularly conspicuous in the context of fashion consumption.

2.6 Fashion Consumption

Fashion is characterised as a system that encourages the constant renewal of goods and as an industry responsible for producing textiles and clothing (Lehmann, 2022). Fashion inherently embodies materialism which is evident in the acquisition of items such as garments or clothing (Woodward & Fisher, 2014). Moreover, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) have asserted that consumers develop a strong attachment to objects that they own for their identity value in solid consumption. A substantial portion of supporting evidence for this concept arises from the solid consumption of fashion clothing from both luxury fashion and fast fashion brands, which not only offers identity value but also mirrors materialistic tendencies. It is therefore important to delve into the contexts of luxury fashion and fast fashion brands to exemplify the essence of materialism in solid consumption.

2.6.1 Luxury Fashion Brands

The modern roots of the word 'luxury' can be traced back to Adam Smith, who conceptualised luxury as a category of consumption of goods that are in limited supply,

difficult to obtain and very expensive (Berthon et al., 2009; Smith, 1776). Luxury products are thus defined as those 'goods for which the simple use of display of a particular branded product brings esteem on the owner, apart from any functional utility' (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004, p. 486). Kapferer and Bastien (2009) have argued that a product is luxury as long as it exhibits the requisite seal of the brand and this makes the luxury brand go beyond the object. Heine (2012), accordingly, has referred to luxury brands as symbols 'associated with products which exceed what is necessary and ordinary compared to the other products of their category' (p. 51). For example, anyone can own a purse, a watch, or a pair of shoes, but it is the specific brand of purse, watch and shoes that make it a luxury object (Han et al., 2010).

The consumption of luxury has been central to the court societies of emperors, monarchs and princes, whereby excessive display and consumption of luxuries provided an important set of distinctions between royalty, aristocrats and the common people (Featherstone, 2014). In his seminal work, Veblen (1899) specifically outlined the acquisition of luxury goods as a means of social class differentiation where individuals in a high social class differentiate themselves from individuals in a lower social class through the conspicuous display of wealth indicated by their luxury consumption. The concept of luxury is, therefore, inherently connected with exclusivity (Atwal & Williams, 2009) which has a binding relationship with limited accessibility (Chandon et al., 2016) and rarity that are used as justifications for a high price of luxury products (Hennigs et al., 2012; Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000). High-priced luxury products ensure the inability of the masses to obtain luxury products (Heyes & Lashley, 2017; Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). The ability to pay high prices can make consumers feel superior as one of the few who can afford to purchase the luxury products (Han et al., 2010) and that they belong to a select group of rare elites (Hudders et al., 2013; Husic & Cicic, 2009).

Consumers pursue luxury brands for their exclusivity, yet they also expect a certain level of value from their purchases of luxury brands (Wiedmann et al., 2007, 2009). The consumption of luxury brands, which constitute the highest level of prestigious brands (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999), can involve several dimensions of consumer perceived value (Hennigs et al., 2015). Vigneron and Johnson (1999) have proposed five perceived values which can differentiate luxury and non-luxury brands. The authors identify perceived conspicuous value, perceived unique value, and perceived social value based on the interpersonal constructs, while perceived emotional value and perceived quality value are proposed under personal constructs in the value framework. Vigneron and Johnson (2004) have further classified luxury value into personal perceptions (i.e., perceived hedonic value and perceived extended self) and non-personal perceptions (i.e., perceived conspicuousness, perceived uniqueness and perceived quality).

As an extension to Vigneron and Johnson's (2004) framework, Wiedmann et al. (2007) have developed a four-dimensional model with functional value (e.g., basic product performance), individual value (e.g., personal orientation), social value (e.g., status and prestige) and financial value (e.g., direct monetary aspects). Wiedmann et al. (2007) have also identified key determinants related to the four dimensions of the consumers' luxury value perceptions, such as: financial value (i.e., price value); functional value (i.e., usability value, quality value, uniqueness value); social value (i.e., conspicuous value, prestige value); and individual value (i.e., self-identity value, hedonic value and materialistic value). As an alternative approach, Berthon et al. (2009) have emphasised three distinct value-based dimensions for luxury brands: functional, experiential and symbolic. Functional dimension lies in the material embodiment of luxury brands; while, experiential dimension is the realm of individual, subjective value that emphasises individuals' taste as the ultimate arbiter of luxury brands and a means of achieving social distinction (Berthon et al., 2009). Shukla and

Purani (2012) have argued that the self-directed and other-directed symbolic value (i.e., social dimension), experiential value (i.e., individual dimension), functional value and cost/sacrifice value (i.e., financial dimensions) are prevalent in cross-national contexts. Shukla et al. (2015), in their study, have also demonstrated the significance of functional, experiential (i.e., individual dimension) and symbolic (i.e., social dimension) values of luxury brands across the Asian markets.

Although functional, experiential, and symbolic value dimensions have been identified, the core motivation behind acquiring luxury items remains rooted in their symbolic value (Amatulli et al., 2016). In this regard, Berthon et al. (2009) have outlined two aspects of symbolic value associated with luxury brands: one, the value that the luxury brand signals to others (i.e., other-directed); and two, the value that the luxury brand signals to the consumers themselves (i.e., self-directed). Kapferer and Bastien (2009) and Kastanakis and Balabanis (2014) have thus recognised two predominant motives in luxury consumption, known as 'luxury for others' (i.e., status symbols) and 'luxury for oneself' (i.e., personal pleasure).

The connection between the solid consumption of luxury brands and materialism primarily hinges on the dimensions of the symbolic value of luxury brand consumption. Escalas and Bettman (2009) and Husic and Cicic (2009), for instance, have illustrated that consumers acquire luxury brands in the pursuit of materialistic values which involve creating and projecting a self-image that can have a favourable impression on others. Extant literature (e.g., Chan et al., 2015; Hennigs et al., 2012; Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2014; Wang & Griskevicius, 2014; Wiedmann et al., 2017) have showcased that materialistic consumers frequently acquire and use their possession of symbolic products, such as clothing from luxury fashion brands, to signal their success, wealth, and social status to those around them. The elements of exclusivity, premium pricing, and the portrayal of luxury brands as symbols of wealth, success and status render them especially attractive to individuals who place a

premium on material wealth and possessions to engage in social comparisons (Chan et al., 2015; Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012; Lee et al., 2020; Shao et al., 2019). Prior studies (e.g., Shukla & Purani, 2012; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004; Wiedmann et al., 2007, 2009) have also argued that materialistic consumers may derive hedonistic pleasure from the act of purchasing and owning items from luxury brands.

The alignment with Richins and Dawson's (1992a) materialism, which revolves around the pursuit of acquisition as a pathway to happiness and possession-defined success, thus becomes evident in the context of luxury brand consumption. Luxury fashion brands thus serve as symbols of success, wealth, and social status, making them attractive to individuals with materialistic tendencies. The desire for the symbolic consumption of luxury brands may be prevalent among consumers, however, the unattainability of these brands due to their exorbitant prices has redirected attention towards fast fashion brands.

2.6.2 Fast Fashion Brands

Joy et al. (2012) have referred to fast fashion as low-cost clothing collections that mimic high-cost luxury fashion trends in order to fulfill the consumers' luxury fashion desires. Miller (2013) has supported the characterisation of fast fashion provided by Joy et al. (2012), highlighting that consumers who desire and fantasise about owning luxury fashion items often gravitate toward purchasing replicas of runway designs or celebrity couture fashion available through fast fashion brands. Amatulli et al. (2016) have further suggested that fast fashion helps transform consumers' dreams of luxury into reality.

Fast fashion emerged and rapidly spread due to the sociocultural changes in the lifestyle of consumers, who possess constant knowledge about changing fashion trends and feel the need to adapt to these changes in an affordable and dynamic manner (Gabrielli et al., 2013). Barnes and Lea-Greenwood (2006) and Bhardwaj and Fairhurst (2010) have underscored this consumer-centric nature of fast fashion in their respective studies,

highlighting the prioritisation of gaining a competitive edge by catering to consumers' demand for novelty in fashion clothing. To meet the consumers' demand for on-trend fashionable clothing that is universally affordable and continually changing, the fast fashion business model embodies quick response to frequent changes in fashion trends, short lead-time, mass production and rapid inventory turnarounds (Amatulli et al., 2016; Cachon & Swinney, 2011; Loureiro et al., 2019). Byun and Sternquist (2012) and Miller (2013) emphasised the 'buy it now because it won't be here tomorrow' scarcity mentality that is increasingly promoted by the fast fashion business model. Joy et al. (2012) have also characterised fast fashion as 'McFashion', emphasising its ability to promptly fulfill consumer desires through a constant rotation of clothing items that stay in tune with evolving fashion trends. Fast fashion brands are therefore distinguished by their affordable prices, imitation of designer styles, extensive selection, swift production, and on-trend clothing (Amatulli et al., 2016; Mrad et al., 2020). These qualities have collectively made fast fashion appealing to a broad demographic, encompassing both younger and older consumers (Joy et al., 2012). Tokatli (2008) has thus contended that fast fashion has effectively substituted exclusivity, glamour, originality, and luxury with the concept of massclusivity and orchestrated spontaneity.

In implementing the accelerated business model, Joy et al. (2012) and Blazquez et al. (2020) have underscored that fast fashion brands (e.g., Zara, H&M) use cheap labour and materials and subsequently make the clothing items available to consumers at much lower costs. Prior studies (e.g., Blazquez et al., 2020; Stringer et al., 2020, 2021) have drawn attention to the adverse working conditions characterised by low wages, extended working hours, the utilisation of child labour, and the provision of substandard working environments. The combined strategies of enhanced design, quick response and affordable pricing of the fast fashion business model also make consumers susceptible to shorter trend cycles, impulse

buying and high rate of disposability (Gabrielli et al., 2013; Joy et al., 2012). Extant literature (e.g., Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010; Bick et al., 2018; Blazquez et al., 2020; Cook & Yurchisin, 2017; Niinimäki et al., 2020) have thus documented a rise in waste, notably at landfill sites, stemming from the swift turnover and high disposability of fast fashion inventory and the heightened use of chemicals.

Lang (2018) and Lang et al. (2020), in their respective studies, have highlighted that consumers often engage in frequent purchases of clothing at lower prices from fast fashion brands and these purchases frequently exceed their actual needs or financial means. Likewise, Mrad et al. (2020) have concurred that consumers' inclination to prioritise quantity over quality drives them to spend more money on fast fashion acquisitions, without incurring significant financial repercussions, since fast fashion is typically budget-friendly. Blasi et al. (2020) and Armstrong et al. (2015) have thus contended that fast fashion promotes a culture of short-term usage and premature disposal of clothing, fostering a trend of excessive consumption.

The connection between the solid consumption of fast fashion brands and materialism can be drawn from prior studies (e.g., Joy et al., 2012; Lang, 2018; Lang et al., 2020; Mrad et al., 2020) that signified the notion of quantity over quality for fast fashion consumption. The excessive acquisition of fast fashion clothing items thus conforms to Richins and Dawson's (1992a) materialistic value of acquisition centrality. Moreover, the rapid speed of fast fashion turnover that caters to consumers' constant pursuit of novelty, as outlined by Amatulli et al. (2016) and Blazquez et al. (2020), adheres to the insatiable desire for possessions that characterises materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992a, 1992b). Given that fast fashion brands emulate the look of designer clothing from luxury fashion brands (Joy et al., 2012; Miller, 2013), Willems et al. (2012) have further argued that materialistic consumers may be drawn to fast fashion brands for symbolically aligning themselves with luxury.

The alignment with Richins and Dawson's (1992a) materialism, which revolves around acquisition centrality and possession-defined success, thus becomes evident in the context of fast fashion consumption. Fast fashion brands thus cater to the materialistic tendencies of individuals by providing an array of fashionable, affordable, and rapidly changing clothing options.

In their respective studies, Ertekin (2019) and Stringer et al. (2020) however have asserted that consumers are becoming more aware of their materialistic inclinations, especially in relation to fast fashion. Prior studies (e.g., Ertekin, 2019; Joy et al., 2012; Niinimäki et al., 2020) have specifically noted a rising trend where consumers critique the rapid production of inexpensive clothing items, which fuels excessive consumption in the fast fashion industry and leads to adverse social and environmental consequences. Carrigan and Attalla (2001) and Birtwistle and Moore (2007) have argued that consumers are expressing their interest in ethical consumption and displaying concerns about the impacts of their consumption habits on the world. Manchiraju and Sadachar (2014) have further pointed out that this heightened awareness of clothing consumption can be attributed to increased media coverage, the widespread availability of information, and the accessibility of alternative products. Moreover, McNeill and Venter (2019) have outlined that consumers are modifying their purchasing behaviours when it comes to disposable fashion to steer clear of the disposable mindset associated with it.

Culiberg et al. (2022) and Oral and Thurner (2019), in their respective works, have particularly emphasised that consumers are embracing anti-consumption as a response to their growing environmental consciousness concerning the problematic nature of materialism and excessive fast fashion consumption. In parallel, Bick et al. (2018), Brydges et al. (2020) and Mukendi and Henninger (2020) have highlighted fashion rentals as a potential remedy that consumers are adopting to address the overconsumption dilemma brought about by their fast

fashion consumption. Fashion rentals have thus become a significant phenomenon within the realm of fashion consumption.

2.6.3 Fashion Rentals

Fashion rentals date back to traditional brick-and-mortar stores that cater to special occasions like weddings (Baek & Oh, 2021). Prior studies (e.g., Brydges et al., 2020; Henninger et al., 2021, 2022; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020) have argued that the fashion rental concept evolved within the fashion industry through the establishment of platforms that sought to offer consumers continuous access to a virtual 'closet in the cloud', filled with a diverse range of clothing options. Fashion rentals thus exemplify a market-mediated access practice in liquid consumption wherein consumers pay a fee to use the accessed object for a specific period of time without ownership being transferred (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012, 2017).

Yuan and Shen (2019) and Lang et al., 2020) have delineated the collaborative consumption business model that underpins the fashion rental platforms, emphasising the concept of product sharing. Extant literature (e.g., Arrigo, 2021b; Iran & Schrader, 2017; Jiang & Tian, 2018) has further highlighted two variations of this collaborative consumption model that operate as either peer-to-peer (P2P) or business-to-consumer (B2C) platforms. P2P platforms enable the direct sharing of fashion products between individual consumers, with a facilitating role played by a company (Iran & Schrader, 2017). On the other hand, B2C platforms offer the platform and hold ownership of the fashion products that consumers can rent from them (Arrigo, 2021b).

With its low-cost subscriptions, the fashion rental platforms particularly enable consumers to access inaccessible luxury products for an affordable monthly fee that they could not have otherwise been able to afford (Arrigo, 2021a; Brydges et al., 2020; Henninger et al., 2021, 2022; Jain et al., 2022). This challenges the luxury market from being the exclusive domain of elites (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2006) by making the exclusive

become accessible or commonplace (Hudders et al., 2013). This transformation of luxury from being exclusive to being accessible is part of a process of democratisation of luxury (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; Yeoman, 2011). The fashion rental platforms thus serve as a catalyst for the democratisation of luxury, dismantling the notion that luxury brands are exclusively reserved for individuals in the high social class (Bardhi et al., 2020; Eckhardt et al., 2015).

The interpretation of fashion rentals has manifested in different ways. For instance, Brydges et al. (2020) have positioned rentals as a novel, budget-friendly and environmentally conscious approach to clothing consumption. Mukendi and Henninger (2020) have regarded rentals as a substitute for clothing ownership and possession, while Henninger et al. (2021) have described fashion rentals as an economical choice for accessing clothing from luxury fashion brands. Habibi et al. (2016) have emphasised the financial advantages of rentals, particularly their affordability compared to the cost of purchasing, as a significant factor for consumers. Mukendi and Henninger (2020) and Baek and Oh (2021) have underscored the importance of cost savings and getting value for money as key economic benefits that consumers derive from using fashion rentals. Several previous studies (e.g., Henninger et al., 2021, 2022; Jain et al., 2022; Lang et al., 2020; Park & Armstrong, 2017) have recognised economic incentives as substantial drivers of consumers' adoption of fashion rentals, especially the idea that consumers do not need to pay the full price to enjoy clothing items from luxury fashion brands. In contrast, Edbring et al. (2016) have argued that rentals can be more expensive than outright purchases, portraying them as potentially costly due to the short-term use of items. Lawson et al. (2016) concurred with this perspective, suggesting that the limited usage of products may make rentals more expensive than buying them. Schaefers et al. (2016) have further contended that rental payments accumulated over time could surpass

the cost of purchasing the product. Lang (2018) has thus posited that consumers might view rentals as a waste of money due to the absence of ownership of items.

Conversely, Becker-Leifhold and Iran (2018) have documented hedonistic factors, such as the enjoyment derived from the experience, as a significant driver of consumer engagement in collaborative fashion consumption. Lang (2018) and Lang et al. (2019) have likened the act of renting to a playful treasure hunt, which can provide consumers with enjoyment at an affordable cost. Armstrong et al. (2015), Edbring et al. (2016) and Lang et al. (2020) have all acknowledged that the ability to wear the latest fashion items without incurring high costs and having access to new fashion trends more frequently contributes to the hedonistic aspects associated with collaborative fashion consumption.

Alongside, Mukendi and Henninger (2020) and Baek and Oh (2021) affirmed that the opportunity to access luxury fashion items that would otherwise be unaffordable and the ability to experiment with various styles without committing to purchases significantly enhance the experiential value that consumers derive from fashion rentals. Conversely, Armstrong et al. (2016) and Cook and Hodges (2015) have argued that while fashion rentals may offer a unique experience to consumers, they cannot replicate the hedonistic aspects of shopping or retail therapy. Mukendi and Henninger (2020) and Baek and Oh (2021) have also emphasised the practical or utilitarian value of fashion rentals as significant motivators. This includes the opportunity to experiment with multiple styles and the convenience of changing styles or returning items. In contrast, Baek and Oh (2021) found the social value of fashion rentals to be insignificant, suggesting that using rented clothes does not contribute to making a positive impression or feeling socially accepted. Becker-Leifhold and Iran (2018) have argued that the absence of ownership, which includes status and a sense of control, is a drawback of rentals. Catulli et al. (2013) also reported a social stigma associated with rentals,

as this mode of consumption is sometimes perceived as suitable only for less fortunate individuals.

Significant barriers have also been addressed in the academic literature when it comes to the use of fashion rentals. For instance, Armstrong et al. (2015) have identified issues related to garment maintenance, hygiene, and quality as major barriers that impede collaborative fashion consumption. Catulli et al. (2013) and Baek and Oh (2021) have also pointed out that consumers may have concerns about contamination since rental clothes are shared and worn by multiple users. Mukendi and Henninger (2020) have argued that consumers may question the hygiene of rented items and feel more comfortable renting from established companies rather than individuals, as they tend to trust the hygiene standards of businesses over those of strangers. This lack of trust in rental providers acting as a barrier has also been acknowledged in the respective works of Armstrong et al. (2015) and Edbring et al. (2016). Additionally, Mukendi and Henninger (2020) have found that the fear of damaging the rental item or accidentally ruining it, such as through permanent staining, is a prominent barrier to using fashion rentals. Even the requirement to return rental items and a lack of understanding of the rental process can serve as obstacles to the adoption of rentals (Mukendi & Henninger, 2020).

Concurrently, Henninger et al. (2022) have presented fashion rentals as a sustainable alternative that enables guilt-free fashion consumption. In fact, the sustainability dimension of fashion rentals has garnered significant attention in the academic literature. Armstrong et al. (2016) and Park and Armstrong (2017) have construed fashion rentals as an integral part of the circular economy paradigm, which deviates from the linear take-make-dispose model towards a circular model focused on reuse. Lang et al. (2020) supported this sustainability perspective on fashion rentals, asserting that the collaborative consumption model can contribute to prolonging the lifespan of clothing items and reducing carbon emissions.

Similarly, Becker-Leifhold and Iran (2018) and Iran and Schrader (2017) have argued that fashion rentals lead to a reduction in clothing disposal rates and extend the longevity of garments. Furthermore, Lang et al. (2019) have positioned fashion rentals as eco-friendly due to their capacity to minimise adverse environmental impacts and mitigate issues of overconsumption.

Nevertheless, Armstrong et al. (2015), Catulli et al. (2013) and McNeill and Venter (2019) have reported that sustainability ranks as the least influential factor driving consumer engagement with collaborative fashion consumption. Zamani et al. (2017) have specifically contended that fashion rentals carry environmental impacts stemming from frequent clothing deliveries and increased water and energy consumption for garment maintenance tasks like laundering and ironing. As a result, Park and Armstrong (2019) did not identify environmental motives as a significant driver of collaborative fashion consumption. Similarly, Baek and Oh (2021) found no substantial influence of green values or environmental benefits on consumers' adoption of fashion rentals. Contrarily, Mukendi and Henninger (2020) have documented sustainability as an important factor that drives the use of fashion rentals.

Importantly, the act of avoiding ownership and possessions, coupled with the environmental advantages stemming from shared item usage in fashion rentals, establishes a connection with the concept of anti-consumption. Botsman and Rogers (2010) have contended that the sharing concept represents a means to reduce the purchasing aspect within the consumption cycle, regardless of the usage component. As a result, Akbar et al. (2016) have framed sharing as a form of anti-consumption concerning possession, although not necessarily pertaining to the use of specific products or brands. In their respective studies, Balderjahn et al. (2020) and Ziesemer et al. (2021) have positioned collaborative consumption, such as rentals, as a variant of anti-consumption because it promotes the rejection or reduction of acquisition without necessarily rejecting the use of objects.

Similarly, Vesterinen and Syrjälä (2022) have suggested that renting embodies the principles of anti-consumption by focusing on reducing the necessity for acquisition and prolonging the use of products. Fashion rentals therefore do not align with Richins and Dawson's (1992a) materialism, which revolves around acquisition centrality.

The preceding discussion clearly illustrates the connection between solid consumption of luxury fashion and fast fashion brands and materialism, contrasting with liquid consumption such as fashion rentals and anti-consumption. However, there exists a body of literature that has raised questions regarding the presence of materialism in liquid consumption, even though it appears to align with the principles of anti-consumption.

2.7 Overlaps: Materialism, Anti-consumption and Liquid Consumption

Durgee and O'Connor (1995) associated the usage of an item, which is emphasised in the context of renting within liquid consumption, to be more closely associated with Belk and Pollay's (1985) instrumental materialism. While Guiot and Roux (2010) and Guzzetti et al. (2021) illustrated that the purchase of second-hand clothing items may be motivated by anti-consumption orientations, the notion of acquiring the items through ownership suggests the prevalence of Belk and Pollay's (1985) terminal materialism.

Within the realm of liquid consumption, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012) argued that materialism encourages the adoption of access-based services because these services allow consumers to attain a luxurious lifestyle that would be financially out of reach otherwise. Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) further presented conflicting arguments that characterised liquid consumption as less materialistic than solid consumption due to the diminished significance attributed to the acquisition of material objects. Yet, the authors suggested that the quick circulation of objects could be a dimension of materialism in liquid consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017). Moreover, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) underscored that Richins and Dawson's (1992a) value dimensions of materialism do not align with this liquid consumption

perspective on materialism. These conflicting arguments led Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) to call for further research on the relationship between materialism and liquid consumption. In parallel, Alonso-Almeida et al. (2020) demonstrated that materialism has evolved from traditional materialism towards new materialism which emphasises the enjoyment of goods and experiences in the sharing economy. While Alonso-Almeida et al. (2020) argued that the enjoyment of goods and experiences can replace Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional materialistic values, they did not specifically delineate the value dimensions associated with new materialism in the sharing economy.

In another study on materialism, Atanasova and Eckhardt (2021) demonstrated that the absence of a central focus on ownership in liquid consumption can also lead to an intense preoccupation with consumption and its utility for materialistic pursuits, akin to the conventional materialism observed in solid consumption. Interestingly, the authors documented that the traditional materialistic values outlined by Richins and Dawson (1992a), which encompass the pursuit of happiness through acquisition and defining success by possession, are prevalent within liquid consumption. Atanasova and Eckhardt's (2021) findings thus addressed Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) call for further research by reshaping the boundaries of traditional materialism in liquid consumption. Yet, the authors did not delve into the specific value dimensions of materialism within the context of liquid consumption that goes beyond Richins and Dawson's (1992a) conceptualisations. Furthermore, the identification of materialistic values in Atanasova and Eckhardt's (2021) study is situated within the liquid consumption context of digital nomadism. This observation opens up an opportunity to investigate the presence of these values in rentals, which also represents an anti-consumption context. Considering these contradictory viewpoints, it becomes apparent that the concept of materialism should be re-examined, with particular attention to the value dimensions that hold relevance within the context of liquid consumption.

Materialism has also been explored in anti-consumption contexts that extend beyond liquid consumption. For instance, Kramarczyk and Oliver (2022) identified the enactment of caring ethics as a dimension of new materialism that associates with the proximity, attachment, and commitment developed by individuals for objects in the anti-consumption behaviour of voluntary simplification. The authors further coined new materialism in anti-consumption as appreciative materialism that does not contradict the traditional materialistic values or anti-consumption values but rather aligns positively with the idea of sharing (Kramarczyk & Oliver, 2022). Given Kramarczyk and Oliver's (2022) study primarily centred on voluntary simplicity, this focus implies a potential avenue for exploring materialistic values within different anti-consumption contexts, such as rentals. Conversely, prior studies (e.g., Kuanr et al., 2021; Lee & Ahn, 2016; Peifer et al., 2020) have presented evidence of anti-consumption values, with a specific emphasis on the realm of voluntary simplicity. Consequently, the emerging concept of rentals being considered a form of anti-consumption has received relatively limited attention in existing literature. This indicates that the potential anti-consumption values stemming from liquid consumption, like rentals, have yet to be thoroughly explored in scholarly research.

The presence of materialism in liquid consumption, including the anti-consumption contexts of rentals, is illustrative of a misalignment between the consumers' beliefs of environmental virtuousness and their materialistic behaviours. This misalignment between beliefs and actions has been addressed as an intention-behaviour gap (Sheeran, 2002) or an attitude-behaviour gap (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Carrington et al., 2014; Farjam et al., 2019).

In addition to rentals, the misalignment between the consumers' beliefs of environmental virtuousness and their materialistic behaviours is evident in the collaborative consumption context of resale. Park and Armstrong (2017) have shed light on the concept of

ownership transfer through resale as a facet of collaborative consumption, wherein ownership is redistributed through the acquisition of second-hand items. Second-hand resale can manifest in various forms, such as P2P exchanges like flea markets or B2C exchanges involving the online retail sale of used clothing among consumers (Gopalakrishnan & Matthews, 2018; Turunen et al., 2020; Turunen & Pöyry, 2019; Zaman et al., 2019). Kim-Vick and Yu (2023) have specifically highlighted the surge in second-hand luxury resale on digital platforms like Facebook Marketplace, P2P resale apps, online consignment shops, and specialised second-hand luxury retailers.

For luxury fashion, Amatulli et al. (2018) and Kessous and Valette-Florence (2019) have interpreted second-hand resale as a means for consumers to access luxury brands that might typically be financially out of reach. Existing literature (e.g., Cervellon et al., 2012; Machado et al., 2019; Turunen et al., 2020; Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015) has documented several key motivations driving consumers to engage in second-hand resale, including financial considerations, hedonistic pleasures, and the symbolic value associated with these transactions. Conversely, Arribas et al. (2022) and Liu et al. (2023) have portrayed second-hand resale as a pivotal element of circular fashion, a concept aimed at extracting residual value from pre-owned fashion items, reducing demand for new products and easing financial burdens on consumers. Prior studies (e.g., Cervellon et al., 2012; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Machado et al., 2019) have also underscored the sustainability benefits of second-hand resale as it curtails excessive consumption, maximises item utility and minimises waste by extending the lifespan of clothing items. Some studies (e.g., Guiot & Roux, 2010; Guzzetti et al., 2021; Roux & Korchia, 2006) have thus argued that second-hand luxury resale aligns with anti-consumption principles for emphasising the intrinsic worth of pre-owned items.

While second-hand fashion resale may appear to align with anti-consumption principles, it presents a paradox akin to that seen in the fashion rentals. Consumers often

partake in the purchase of second-hand luxury items under the belief that it represents environmentally responsible behaviour. However, the acquisition of luxury goods at discounted prices through resale can paradoxically stimulate consumers' inherent desire for possession, which is a fundamental aspect of materialism. The presence of an intention-behaviour gap (Sheeran, 2002) or an attitude-behaviour gap (Carrington et al., 2014) is therefore apparent in fashion resale.

Even though it is evident that consumers might experience a conflict when their materialistic pursuits clash with anti-consumption principles, this particular conflict has received limited exploration, particularly within the context of liquid consumption. In their respective studies, Armstrong et al. (2019) and Cairns et al. (2021) underscored that consumers can experience feelings of discomfort when their beliefs clash with their actions. This discomfort, rooted in Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance, arises from the inconsistency between one's actions and their beliefs. In line with Festinger's (1957) theory, individuals typically strive to 'establish internal harmony, consistency, or congruity among their opinions, attitudes, knowledge and values' (p. 260). Consequently, consumers may adapt their belief systems, actions, or the perception of their actions to alleviate the dissonance stemming from gaps between their intentions and behaviours, or between their attitudes and behaviours (Festinger, 1957; Harmon-Jones, 2000; McGrath, 2017).

The academic literature has explored various strategies for alleviating cognitive dissonances. Some of these strategies include disregarding information regarding adverse environmental impacts (Miller et al., 2010), shifting purchase habits towards environmentally friendly products (Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008) or even dismissing environmental concerns that contradict materialistic values (Lu et al., 2016). Additionally, several studies (e.g., Berger et al., 2020; Burger et al., 2022; Parguel et al., 2017; Tang & Hinsch, 2018; Warburg et al., 2021) have shed light on the concept of moral licensing as a means of reducing cognitive

dissonances. For example, engagement in environmentally friendly activities (Tang & Hinsch, 2018), voluntary purchases of carbon offsets (Warburg et al., 2021) and reminders of past eco-conscious behaviour (Burger et al., 2022) can all play a role in the moral licensing process, which helps individuals reconcile conflicting beliefs and actions. Alternatively, Parguel et al. (2017) have highlighted that cost savings and environmental benefits associated with second-hand P2P platforms can reduce cognitive dissonances as they provide license to consumers for engaging in impulsive buying within collaborative consumption. Furthermore, Berger et al. (2020) have identified earnings on prosocial-oriented P2P platforms in the sharing economy as a form of licensing that can mitigate ethical dissonance (a subtype of cognitive dissonance) and rationalize dishonest tax reporting.

Despite numerous dissonance-reducing strategies explored in existing literature, the specific process by which consumers address the dissonance stemming from the conflict between their materialistic pursuits and anti-consumption principles has largely remained uncharted. This gap in the literature is particularly notable in the context of fashion consumption, such as rentals and resale, where collaborative practices ostensibly aligned with anti-consumption principles paradoxically exhibit materialistic tendencies. Furthermore, the emergence of materialism within anti-consumption contexts challenges the conventional understanding of the antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption. This phenomenon opens an opportunity to revisit the relationship between materialism and anti-consumption within the realm of liquid consumption.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter laid the groundwork for understanding the theoretical concepts of materialism and anti-consumption by exploring the various aspects, including the definitions, origins, and outcomes associated with these concepts. Taking a values-centred approach, this chapter highlighted how self-enhancement values are linked to materialism, contrasting them

with non-materialism, environmentalism, post-materialistic and self-transcendence values that underpin anti-consumption principles. Additionally, this chapter examined the modes of consumption, emphasising the ownership-based consumption associated with materialism and the non-ownership or access-based consumption that aligns more with anti-consumption ideals. This chapter further illustrated the inherent opposition between materialism and anti-consumption through the lens of consumer-object relationships and attachment to objects, considering both solid and liquid consumption dimensions. To provide context, this chapter explored the consumption of fashion clothing, encompassing luxury fashion and fast fashion brands as solid consumption, and fashion clothing rentals as liquid consumption.

With the contrast between materialism and anti-consumption being evident from existing literature, this chapter emphasised the relatively unexplored territory of materialism in liquid consumption, such as rentals. The existing body of work offers conflicting perspectives on the presence and alignment of traditional materialistic values in liquid consumption. Notably, there has been limited exploration of how materialism manifests in rentals, which are typically considered anti-consumption contexts. This raises questions about the value dimensions associated with materialism and anti-consumption within liquid consumption and the ensuing conflict that consumers might experience when their materialistic pursuits clash with anti-consumption principles. Furthermore, this chapter highlighted that there is a dearth of research on the process through which consumers navigate this conflict arising from the manifestation of materialism and anti-consumption contexts such as rentals.

Given these gaps in the literature, this chapter underscored the importance of investigating the value dimensions linked to materialism and anti-consumption, the conflict arising from materialism in anti-consumption settings like rentals, and the processes used to reconcile these conflicting ideals. The emergence of materialism in anti-consumption contexts

thus challenges the conventional understanding of the antagonistic relationship between materialism and anti-consumption, providing an opportunity to re-evaluate this relationship within the domain of fashion rentals. The following chapter is therefore dedicated to detailing the methodology employed in this study, which aims to investigate the conflict arising from consumers' materialistic pursuits and their adherence to anti-consumption principles within the domain of fashion rentals, a facet of liquid consumption.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter presents and justifies the exploratory research methodological approach adopted in this thesis as well as the method of netnography, a research method reliant on online archival data and interviews. At the outset, this chapter outlines the interpretivist philosophy that informs the research approach, discussing the researcher's constructivist stance to research and the consequent choice of the constructivist grounded theory (CGT) as the exploratory qualitative methodology. The chapter then presents the rationale behind the chosen methodology and describes its operationalisation via the research method of netnography. Netnographic data were gathered from an online community and two consumer review websites and the data were triangulated using semi-structured interviews of consumers regarding a popular fashion rental platform. The chapter also discusses the quality criteria and the researcher's reflexivity within the CGT and concludes with an outline of the ethical considerations and limitations of the methodology.

3.1 Research Paradigm

Supported by philosophical assumptions regarding ontology, epistemology and methodology, paradigms are the basic belief systems or worldviews that guide researchers (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The tripartite linkage of ontology (i.e., nature of reality), epistemology (i.e., the implication of the relationship between the researcher and reality for knowledge) and methodology (i.e., the researcher's techniques for exploring reality) is referred to as a metaphysical paradigm (Morgan, 2007; Sobh & Perry, 2006). Among the metaphysical paradigms of positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism, this research is informed by the constructivism paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The central tenet of constructivism adheres to an interpretivist philosophy that focuses on the constant meaning interpretation of the social world (Williamson, 2006) and the ways in which individuals construct the social world (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 1994; Lincoln & Guba,

1985, 1988). There are two major constructivist approaches: the first approach favours the individual construction of meanings (i.e., personally constructed reality; Kelly, 1955) and the second approach supports the shared construction of meanings (i.e., socially constructed reality; Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Constructivism, therefore, aims to interpret the variety of constructions of the social world to achieve some consensus on meaning, while always considering new interpretations that come with experience and increased information (Appleton & King, 2002; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Constructivism is a suitable choice for this research because this paradigm supports the exploration of diverse perspectives and interpretations – in this case, enabling an understanding of the complexities and nuances of how consumers perceive materialism and anti-consumption in the fashion rental context. In parallel, this paradigm provides a suitable framework from which the dynamic nature of materialism and anti-consumption as fashion rental trends can be considered, including how they evolve over time and consumers accumulate diverse experiences through these shifting trends. Informed by the tripartite interconnections of ontology, epistemology and methodology, the philosophical underpinnings of the constructivism paradigm shed light on its assumptions of reality and knowledge and influence the choices of methodology and methods made for this research.

3.1.1 Ontology and Epistemology

Ontologically, constructivism asserts that 'realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exists as many such constructions as there are individuals (although clearly many constructions will be shared)' (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 43). With this relativist ontological position (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), the constructivist approach adheres to the social construction of knowledge through social processes, thereby giving meaning to realities through social interactions (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Williamson, 2006). This research assumes a relativist ontological position given that consumer perceptions of materialistic and

anti-consumption values and their subsequent behaviours are multiple, dynamic and constructed by individual consumers within the context of their social environment. For instance, the construction of anti-consumption behaviours constitutes a collaboration between various subjective and individualistic needs and values and societal needs for environmental protection (Black & Cherrier, 2010). Similarly, consumption behaviours are driven by materialistic values that underlie interactions between individual consumers, consumption contexts and cultures, meaning that the materialistic values for one person may not be the same for others (Cleveland et al., 2009; Kilbourne et al., 2005).

Epistemologically, constructivism denies the researcher any position of complete objectivity. It rather emphasises the subjective interrelationship between and among the researcher and participants, as well as the co-construction of meaning through their interactions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mills et al., 2006). Within this subjectivist epistemological position (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), the constructivist approach foregrounds subjective interpretations of participants' constructions via interactive processes between and among the researcher and participants. This research assumes this subjectivist epistemological position given that the novel phenomenon of fashion rentals as a sub-type of anti-consumption requires knowledge of materialistic and anti-consumption values and subsequent behaviours. It is understood that such knowledge can be elicited and refined only via subjective interpretations of the researcher-participant interactions.

The ontological and epistemological stances, together with the research questions, endorse the engagement of qualitative research methodology within the constructivism paradigm.

3.1.2 Qualitative Methodology

In the constructivism paradigm, methodology focuses on (i) interpreting individual social constructions by using hermeneutical techniques and (ii) comparing and contrasting

diverse constructions through a dialectical interchange (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Since the purpose of inquiry in constructivism is on understanding and reconstructing previously held constructions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), qualitative research methodologies are deemed essential for engaging in these hermeneutical and dialectical processes.

Qualitative research methodologies involve an interpretative, naturalistic approach that enables the researcher to understand the subjective meanings of individuals' own accounts of events, occurrences or phenomena across social and temporal contexts (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Chivanga & Monyai, 2021; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative inquiry is typically undertaken because there is a lack of theory or because an existing theory inadequately explains a phenomenon, thus requiring any inquiry to be exploratory (Merriam, 2002; Putney et al., 1999). Among the approaches taken toward qualitative inquiry, Creswell (1998) has identified five traditions: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study. These approaches position the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, and the researcher follows inductive reasoning (i.e., derives findings from the data) to provide rich descriptions of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2002).

A qualitative inquiry is appropriate for this study insofar as the primary goal of this research is to explore the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption that consumers navigate in the context of fashion rentals. In seeking a qualitative research methodology that fits relativist ontological and subjectivist epistemological positions, this research thus draws upon the constructivist grounded theory (CGT) (Charmaz, 2000, 2003, 2006) to interpret multiple social realities in the context of fashion rentals.

3.2 Constructivist Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is a research methodology that focuses on the generation of theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), specifically theory that is 'grounded' in data that have been

systematically gathered and analysed (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). It is a methodology that is appropriate for emergent research areas where little is known about a phenomenon and the purpose is to construct an explanatory theory that uncovers a process inherent to the essential area of inquiry (Alemu et al., 2015; Tie et al., 2019). Grounded theory thus takes an inductive approach. More specifically, the researcher avoids preconceived theories and pre-formulated hypotheses, engages in critical analysis and conceptual abstractions, demonstrates openness to emerging ideas and relies on empirical data to develop theory (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Grounded theory encompasses three distinct methodological genres: traditional/classic grounded theory (TGT) associated with Glaser and Strauss (1967); evolved/Straussian grounded theory (EGT) associated with Strauss and Corbin (1990); and CGT associated with Charmaz (2006). Among the three genres of grounded theory methodology, CGT is considered most fitting for this study as it is 'a method of conducting qualitative research that focuses on creating conceptual frameworks or theories through building inductive analysis from the data' (Charmaz, 2006, p. 187). This genre of methodology adopts the philosophical assumptions of the constructivism paradigm through relativist ontological and subjectivist epistemological positions (Charmaz, 2006, 2008). These demarcate CGT as a divergent methodology from the traditional and the evolved grounded theory (Tie et al., 2019).

3.2.1 Philosophical Assumptions

The relativist ontological position of the CGT assumes the existence of multiple realities that are social constructions of the mind and that are subject to alterations with more information and experience (Charmaz, 2000, 2003). This ontological belief of Charmaz's (2006) CGT, however, opposes the ontological positions of TGT and the EGT. For instance, Glaser and Strauss's (1967) TGT is ontologically realist given its implicit assumption of an objective external reality to which the researcher can converge given the discovery of truth

that emerges from the data (Charmaz, 2000; Mills et al., 2006). The idea of 'discovering' a pre-existing theory that emerges from the data closely correlates the traditional grounded theory with the positivist paradigm (Charmaz, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

In contrast, the assertions of Strauss and Corbin's (1990) EGT are consistent with the post-positivist paradigm (Kenny & Fourie, 2015). Taking an ontological position of critical realism, EGT affirms the existence of an external, objective reality but argues that the researcher's limited understanding can create only an imperfect representation of that reality (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Charmaz's (2006) CGT, however, denies the existence of objective reality and thus departs from the post-positivist paradigm of EGT and the positivist paradigm of TGT.

CGT also opposes the objectivist epistemological positions of TGT and EGT, insofar as TGT treats the researcher as an objective observer and requires the researcher to remain distant and detached during data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2000; Sebastian, 2019). More specifically, the researcher is required to suspend any pre-existing knowledge from the literature, enter the field of inquiry as a blank slate, and immerse in the emerging data to develop theoretical sensitivity in the traditional grounded theory (Glaser & Holton, 2007; Mills et al., 2006). Strauss and Corbin's (1990) EGT also treats the researcher as an objective observer with the acknowledgement that the researcher's pre-conceptions may lead to biases in the research process (Alemu et al., 2015). EGT thus favours the researcher's sensitivity to strengthen the overall research and data collection with prior insights, while also requiring the researcher to maintain their objectivity during interactions with research participants and data analysis (Mills et al., 2006; Sebastian, 2019).

In contrast, CGT takes a subjectivist epistemological position by endorsing knowledge co-construction between the researcher and participants that aims toward an interpretative understanding of meanings through social interactions (Charmaz, 2000, 2003). This

epistemological position has been criticised on the basis that the intrusion of the researcher entails an obtrusive effect on data and diminishes the participant's perception of the phenomenon (Glaser, 2007). In opposition, Charmaz (2006) stressed that because the researcher is part of the social world that is being studied and from which data are being collected, it is impossible for any researcher to maintain an unobtrusive relationship in the research process. As a consequence, CGT does not negate the interactive effects of the researcher on the data (Charmaz, 2006). Despite these conflicting philosophical assumptions, CGT endorses the sociological assumptions of TGT and EGT that are drawn from the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism (Charmaz, 2006; Kenny & Fourie, 2015).

3.2.2 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism (SI) is a social psychological and sociological theory that describes meaning as a social product that arises from one's use of symbols in social interactions with others (Blumer, 1969; Carter & Fuller, 2016; Mead, 1934). The roots of SI lie in Dewey's (1930) pragmatist views of humans engaging in a continual process of adaptation in the ever-changing social world – a process that becomes possible in accordance with the existence of a mind able to aid in the understanding of a situation (Jeon, 2004). Following this pragmatist philosophy, Mead (1934) highlights that the creation of meaning (mind) by a person (self) occurs through interactions with oneself and others in a social context (society) (Olshansky, 2015). Echoing Mead's (1934) work, Blumer (1969) refers to SI as a subjective process whereby individuals construct the meaning of their reality through interactions with others and with themselves within a social context. The theoretical perspective of SI views reality as being socially constructed (Olshansky, 2015) and, therefore, complements the relativist ontological position of Charmaz's (2006) CGT.

SI also contends that meanings are not pre-given but rather intersubjective, uniquely perceived and constantly reinterpreted by individuals in different social interactions (Carter &

Fuller, 2016). Consequently, meanings cannot be examined or predicted as every individual and social interaction is unique, resulting in the continual adaptation or change in human actions (Carter & Fuller, 2016; Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013). This means that both meanings that arise from social interactions and resultant actions require interpretation (Carter & Fuller, 2016). Since the researcher interacts with participants, the data and themselves to co-construct meaning in the constructivism paradigm, this interpretative understanding of meaning via interactive processes advanced by SI complements the subjectivist epistemology of CGT (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Along with the concepts of meaning (mind) and social interactions (society), Mead (1934) foregrounds the 'self' as a product of social interaction that is subject to development and refinement through the continuous process of participation in society (Jeon, 2004). Mead (1934) views 'self' as consisting of the subjective 'I' that is natural to oneself and not hampered by others and the objective 'me' that is a reflection of both what others see and what one sees when looking back at oneself (Jeon, 2004). Drawing from Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach – a sub-theory of SI (Grove & Fisk, 1983), the subjective 'I' is compared to the back-region performance and the objective 'me' resonates with the front-region performance of individuals, showing the way they perform as actors to present their 'selves' before an audience with whom they interact. 'I' and 'me' are thus continually constituted via reflexive processes or self-interactions to create an act or behaviour (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013) that can change depending on time and context to manage impressions of the self for the audience (Neale et al., 2011).

The reflexive processes between the 'I' and the 'me' that influence actions and interactions and result in an interpretative understanding of meaning have been attributed to the set of analytical strategies in grounded theory (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013; Charmaz, 2006; Urquhart, 2002). These analytical strategies – which include coding, constant

comparative method, theoretical sensitivity, memo writing, theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation – typically derive from TGT and have been adopted by CGT as part of its support from SI (Charmaz, 2006; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). The reflexive processes between the 'I' and the 'me' can thus be evidenced as the researcher ascribes meanings to data in the coding process and continually reassesses meanings across codes and categories by using the constant comparative method in CGT (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013; Tie et al., 2019). The action and interaction processes of SI is also illustrated in CGT as the researcher interacts with participants and data to progressively determine the research sample (i.e., theoretical sampling) and reach the saturation point in the concurrent data collection and analysis (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). In addition, the reflexive processes between the 'I' and the 'me' are evident in CGT as the researcher reflects on data via memo writing (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013; Charmaz, 2008). CGT also incorporates reflexive processes between the 'I' and the 'me' as the researcher develops theoretical sensitivity via data immersion, co-construction of meanings and data extraction for constructing the substantive theory (i.e., the theoretical interpretation of a problem within a specific arena) (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013; Kenny & Fourie, 2015; Mills et al., 2006).

Taking the sociological assumptions of SI and CGT's philosophical assumptions into consideration, this chapter next presents the rationale for CGT as an appropriate qualitative research methodology to interpret the multiple and dynamic social realities in liquid forms of consumption.

3.2.3 Rationale for Methodology

In the domain of liquid consumption, prior studies that examined materialism primarily implemented a quantitative methodology (e.g., Akbar et al., 2016; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2020; Davidson et al., 2018). Conversely, although Atanasova and Eckhardt (2021) did not explicitly mention their methodology as they explored materialism in liquid consumption,

the use of a qualitative approach can be inferred from their research method (e.g., semi-structured interviews). Quantitative methodology also dominates in previous studies that framed sharing practices (e.g., Lee, 2019; Ozanne & Ballantine, 2010) and collaborative consumption (e.g., Balderjahn et al., 2020; Guzzetti et al., 2021) as forms of anti-consumption. An exception is Ziesemer et al.'s (2021) study that explored collaborative consumption as a form of anti-consumption through a qualitative approach. These points demonstrate the limited use of qualitative methodologies in the domain of liquid consumption.

Methodologically, this is problematic because materialistic and anti-consumption value dimensions may vary across individuals, society, cultures and consumption contexts (e.g., Black & Cherrier, 2010; Cleveland et al., 2009; Kilbourne et al., 2005). This implies that the symbolic meaning (mind) appropriated from materialistic and anti-consumption values may be perceived uniquely by individuals (self) through their interactive processes with others in different social contexts (society). Consequently, a researcher's interactions with individuals who have experiences of liquid consumption such as fashion renting may facilitate the interpretation of these symbolic meanings that individuals ascribe to the materialistic and anti-consumption values. These implications reflect the theoretical tenets of Mead's (1934) SI and represent Charmaz's (2006) relativist ontological and subjectivist epistemological positions, rationalising the use of CGT in this thesis as an appropriate qualitative research methodology.

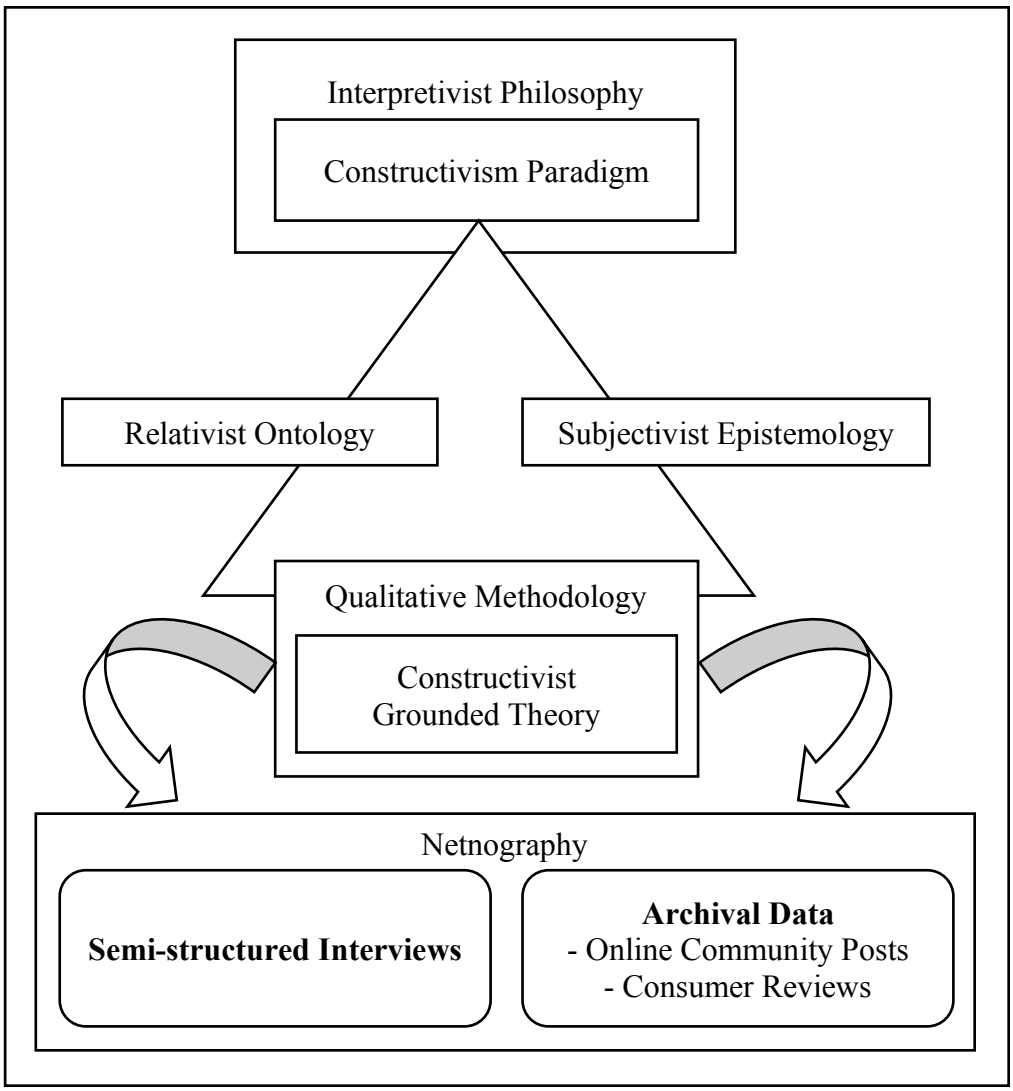
The collaborative relationship between the researcher and research participants often contributes to the construction of a substantive theory that is grounded in the participants' experiences (Kenny & Fourie, 2015). Substantive theory in the grounded theory methodology implies theory generation that applies to a specific context. This can be used, in turn, as a bedrock to generate a formal theory with applicability to other contexts through additional

study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). In exploring the theoretical foundations of materialism and anti-consumption value dimensions, as well as the conflict stemming from materialistic values in liquid forms of consumption, this thesis focuses on the specific context of fashion rentals. The use of CGT in this thesis is thus directed to the construction of a substantive theory that is limited to fashion rentals as a form of liquid consumption.

More specifically, the goal of the substantive theory is to explore (i) the phenomenon of materialism and anti-consumption, emphasising the 'what' of the consumer values being sought; (ii) the 'how' of the conflict being evoked by the manifestation of materialistic values; and (iii) the 'how' of the conflict being resolved by consumers in the context of fashion rentals. To construct this substantive theory, this thesis operationalises the qualitative research methodology of CGT by examining primary data and secondary data collected through the Internet-based method of netnography. The methodological approach is depicted in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1

Methodological Approach



3.3 Operationalisation of Methodology

Online qualitative data collection is associated with netnography, or ethnography on the Internet, that adapts techniques of ethnographic research to study cultures and communities that emerge through computer-mediated communications (Kozinets, 2002). Naturalistically oriented, the use of netnography can provide rich, thick descriptions of the cultural contexts and naturally occurring behaviours in online communities (Kozinets et al., 2014). Kozinets (2010) has classified three different types of netnographic data: archival data,

elicited data and field note data. Archival data refer to pre-existing online communications (e.g., user reviews) that lack any active researcher involvement (Jeacle, 2021). In contrast, elicited data are co-created by researchers and online community members through active interactions within the community (e.g., interviews of community members) (Costello et al., 2017; Kozinets et al., 2014). Interviews typically yield responses that include direct quotations from individuals about their experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings and knowledge (Patton, 2002). Field note data, conversely, relate to reflexive field notes that are actively produced by researchers during their observations of the online community (Jeacle, 2021; Kozinets et al., 2014). Based on Kozinets' (2010) classifications of netnographic data, elicited and field note data can therefore be classified as primary data sources while archival data are secondary qualitative data sources.

This thesis collected qualitative data by combining both primary and secondary netnographic data sources. First, netnographic archival data were collected in the form of user-generated content (UGC) from an online community and two independent consumer review websites associated with the fashion rental platform. Second, interview data were elicited from community members who rent clothing from luxury fashion brands from the fashion rental platform. Netnographic archival data capture the subjective essence of online interactions and the social construction of reality within online communities, and also provide insight into the wider context, including historical, cultural and social factors that influence these interactions. Interviews with the online community members further reveal the dynamic and co-constructed nature of knowledge, as the researcher interacts with and subjectively interprets members' experiences to elicit data.

Netnography therefore complements the qualitative methodology of CGT by enabling a deeper understanding of consumers' experiences and interactions within online communities with reference to broader social, cultural and historical contexts. Netnographic archival data,

alongside interview data, also facilitate notions of data triangulation (i.e., data gathered from a variety of people at different times and social situations) and methodological triangulation (i.e., use of more than one method to gather data; see Denzin, 1978). The collection of netnographic archival data for this thesis is outlined next.

3.3.1 Netnographic Archival Data

In netnography, archival data refer to the communications and postings of online members that constitute a cultural baseline for members' activities before the involvement of the researcher in the community (Jeacle, 2021; Kozinets et al., 2014). The monitoring and observation of archival data are also referred to as a form of passive netnography (Costello et al., 2017). When compared with personal interviews, netnographic archival data are largely unobtrusive in nature insofar as they comprise the pre-existing observations of users and consumers in a context that is devoid of any researcher involvement (Kozinets et al., 2014). Netnographic archival data are publicly available in most online forums and social media communities that additionally allow continuing and unobtrusive access to and collection of the data (Kozinets, 2002; Kozinets et al., 2014).

Archival data in netnography is typically synonymous with UGC, defined as publicly available content over the Internet that reflects some creative effort and is created outside of professional routines and practices (Vickery & Wunsch-Vincent, 2007). UGC can take the form of texts/numbers (e.g., forum messages, reviews, ratings), visuals (e.g., avatar images), audio (e.g., songs exchanged on forums), and video (e.g., video blogs) (An & Alarcón, 2021; Singh & Chakrabarti, 2020). Consumers often create, share, collaborate and communicate their consumption experiences as well as represent themselves through UGC in the online environment (see Bialecki, O'Leary, & Smith, 2017). As netnographic archival data, UGC is therefore an appropriate resource for grasping the vivid experiences and honest opinions of consumers who rent clothes from luxury fashion brands through the fashion rental platform.

This thesis collected netnographic archival data to develop a holistic understanding of the context that surrounds online social interactions as individuals rent clothes from luxury fashion brands through the fashion rental platform. Netnographic archival data were gathered from two secondary sources: (i) member posts in an online community and (ii) user reviews from two independent consumer review websites. For netnographic studies, Kozinets (2002) recommends the following methodological stages and procedures: (i) entrée, (ii) data collection and analysis, (iii) providing trustworthy interpretation, (iv) research ethics and (v) member checks. This thesis drew on Kozinets' (2002) guidelines, with entrée and data collection explained in the following two subsections of this chapter and the analysis of the data is detailed in Chapter 4. Trustworthy interpretation and research ethics are explained in Sections 3.4 and 3.6, respectively. As member checks have little relevance to passive netnography (Lima et al., 2014), the fifth and final step of Kozinets' (2002) guidelines has been omitted in this thesis.

3.3.1.1 Entrée

The first step in conducting a netnographic study involves formulating specific research questions and then identifying particular online forums or communities appropriate for the study. In this thesis, the main research question centres around 'how' consumers navigate the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption in the context of fashion rentals. Considering the context of the research question, online communities of fashion rental platforms that operate on Facebook were deemed to be appropriate forums for this study.

Online or virtual communities are constructed on the basis of social interactions for sharing information and knowledge and, consequently, they function as rich information sources with regard to individuals' motivations, perceptions, opinions and experiences (Liou et al., 2016; Xharavina et al., 2020). Several online communities of fashion rental platforms operate on Facebook, including a mix of public groups and members-only private groups,

with community members ranging from fewer than a hundred to thousands of individuals. Before conducting a generic search for online communities of fashion rental platforms on Facebook, popular market research reports were drawn from Future Market Insights (2021), Research and Markets (2021) and Verified Market Research (2021) to identify major key players that operate as commercialised platforms in fashion rentals. The major players in the fashion rental platform industry have been compiled into Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Key Market Players of Fashion Rental Platforms

Verified Market Research	Future Market Insights	Research and Markets
Dress Hire AU	Dress & Go	Dress & Go
Gwynnie Bee	Dress Hire AU	GlamCorner
Le Tote	Front Row	Gwynnie Bee
Rent it Bae	GlamCorner	Le Tote
Rent the Runway	Gwynnie Bee	Rent it Bae
Shared Wardrobe	Le Tote	Rent The Runway
StyleLend	Lending Luxury	StyleLend
The Clothing Rental	Nuuly	The Clothing Rental
	Rent it Bae	
	Rent the Runway	
	Rotaro	
	Secret Wardrobe	
	StyleLend	

Note: Only platforms specialising in luxury fashion clothing were collated by the researcher from the reports that were published in 2021.

Sources: Future Market Insights (2021), Research and Markets (2021), and Verified Market Research (2021)

Juxtaposing the key players across the three reports, a total of 15 fashion rental platforms were collated into Table 3.2, of which two platforms operate as peer-to-peer (P2P) services; the rest of the 13 platforms operate as business-to-consumer (B2C) services.

Table 3.2

Platform Classifications

Platforms	Operations	Country
Dress & Go	B2C	Brazil
Dress Hire AU	B2C	Australia
Front Row	B2C	UK
GlamCorner	B2C	Australia
Gwynnie Bee	B2C	US
Le Tote	B2C	US
Lending Luxury	B2C	Australia
Nuuly	B2C	US
Rent it Bae	B2C	India
Rent The Runway	B2C	US
Rotaro	B2C	UK
Secret Wardrobe	B2C	Australia
Shared Wardrobe	P2P	New Zealand
StyleLend	P2P	US
The Clothing Rental	B2C	India

Sources: Future Market Insights (2021), Research and Markets (2021), and Verified Market Research (2021)

In the list of B2C platforms in Table 3.2, Rent the Runway (RTR) in the US stands as the pioneering B2C platform within the online clothing rental market (Healey, 2021b). As of April 2023, RTR boasts approximately 141,205 active subscribers (Fonrouge, 2023b) and the platform held a global market share of 39.1% according to the 2021 industry report of the online clothing rental market (Grand View Research, 2021). Given its pioneering role in the fashion rental industry, RTR is chosen as the B2C platform for the netnographic study in this thesis. A brief history of RTR is presented below:

Co-founded by Jennifer Hyman and Jennifer Fleiss, RTR launched as an e-commerce company in 2009 with the goal of becoming the Amazon Prime of rentals (Lamare, 2020; Maheshwari, 2019). In 2014, the company opened its first brick-and-mortar store in New York and expanded business in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago and Washington, D.C. (Lamare, 2020). RTR's business model builds on designer partnerships insofar as the

platform showcases clothing collections from established as well as new and unknown designers to promote fashion empowerment (Galbraith, 2013). RTR caters to female customers through rental offerings that range from designer dresses for black-tie events, casual clothing for work, vacation and daily wear, to accessories like jewellery and handbags (A. Schwartz, 2018). The platform operates via one-off rentals and monthly subscriptions to rent four (US$89), eight (US$135) or 16 (US$199) items per month, along with the option to buy items at discounted prices (Benveniste, 2020; Maheshwari, 2019). RTR joined the 'unicorn club' after receiving an investment of US$125 million in 2019 that raised the platform's valuation to US$1 billion (Robert, 2019). RTR has also partnered with Amazon and the online resale platform of ThredUp to broaden the resale of items beyond rental subscribers (Benveniste, 2020; Hanbury, 2021).

With RTR selected as the B2C platform, a generic search for online communities of this platform was conducted on Facebook by the platform name as well as by the short form of RTR. The search resulted in the identification of 15 online communities that are members-only private groups of the RTR platform. These RTR online communities were then compared with regard to the number of community members, and one of the groups with over 500-plus members was purposely selected to access a large number of participants. The selected RTR online community presents pre-existing member interactions concerning motivations, perceptions, opinions and experiences of renting clothes from luxury fashion brands from the fashion rental platform. Besides being relevant to the topic of this study, this online community has a large number of members, a high traffic of posts and detailed and descriptively rich data. Given these points, the members' posts were identified as suitable netnographic archival data sources in this thesis.

Consumers also post reviews of fashion rental platforms on independent websites to 'convey their evaluations of products, services, and rental experiences' (Lang et al., 2020,

p.135). Lang et al. (2020) has demonstrated the use of consumer review websites as reliable data sources for studying consumers' online fashion rental experiences. In line with the research questions and following Lang et al. (2020), consumer reviews collected from two independent review websites of Sitejabber (see https://www.sitejabber.com) and Trustpilot (see https://au.trustpilot.com) were considered appropriate netnographic archival data sources in this thesis.

3.3.1.2 Data Collection

In netnography, online data are typically recorded through two fundamental techniques: (i) manual copy-paste of content into word processing software like Microsoft Word files and (ii) screenshot capture of content (Kozinets et al., 2014). For this thesis, member posts from the online community and consumer reviews from the independent websites were thus directly copied and pasted into Microsoft Word files.

An average of 308 posts (including main posts and replies to posts) per month are posted in the selected RTR online community. Using purposive sampling, and given the online community initiated in 2017 with posts gaining traction by the end of 2018, member posts were gathered between the periods of January 2019 and June 2022. Following Kozinets (2002), the collected posts were classified first as primarily social (i.e., casual elements) or informational (i.e., descriptive) and then as primarily on-topic or off-topic (where the topic implies being relevant to the research questions). For instance, member birthday wishes were social and off-topic posts, details of coupon code usage were informational and off-topic posts, webinar details of the rental platform were social and on-topic posts, and experiences of wearing a rental outfit to an event were informational and on-topic posts. After excluding posts with limited descriptive content (e.g., recommendation-seeking questions as posts), informational and on-topic posts were primarily considered for analysis. In total, around 4,690 information and on-topic posts were considered for analysis in this research.

In the case of consumer reviews for RTR, the website of Sitejabber contained 523 reviews (from August 2010 to June 2022) and the website of Trustpilot contained 35 reviews (from March 2017 to May 2022). Since the reviews on Sitejabber and Trustpilot have open access to the public, there were no restrictions on the use of any pre-existing data from these websites.

As with the traditional grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), data collection and analysis are concomitant in netnography, and data collection typically continues for as long as new insights are still being generated (Kozinets et al., 2014). Data collection of the online community posts continued until the point of theoretical saturation was reached and the posts collected were representative of consumers' experiences shared in pre-pandemic and during-pandemic periods. At the point of theoretical saturation for consumer reviews, the process of theoretical sampling concluded with a total of 490 reviews from Sitejabber and 29 reviews from Trustpilot. During the process of data collection, notes were also made by the researcher for reflecting, comparing and elaborating on the concepts emerging from the online community posts and the consumer reviews. The coding process to analyse the online community posts and the consumers' reviews was carried out using NVivo Version 12 software. Concurrent with the archival data collection, interviews were also undertaken in this thesis as part of the netnographic study.

3.3.2 Interviews

Interviews are the most used and the best-documented data collection method in qualitative research (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993). Kvale (1996) defines interviews as an attempt to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to describe the meaning of peoples' experiences and to uncover people's lived world prior to any scientific explanations. Interviews primarily centre on individual perspectives and firsthand experiences, which, being highly individualistic, may overlook the intricate cultural dimensions inherent in social

actions (Moisander et al., 2009). Interviews are however particularly important because they provide the researcher a valuable opportunity to enter the world of the participant and to generate insider knowledge about their lived world (Kvale, 1996; Lopez & Whitehead, 2013). Interviews are thus deemed reality-construction, meaning-making occasions where interviewers collaborate with their interviewees to co-construct knowledge through meaning interpretations (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Data were therefore elicited through interviews of community members to gain insight into the meanings that participants ascribe to materialistic and anti-consumption values as they rent clothing of luxury fashion brands from the fashion rental platform. The selection of participants for the interviews followed a sampling process, as outlined in the next section.

3.3.2.1 Sampling Process

Qualitative sampling aims to include all variants of the objects of observations that are considered relevant for the study to explore the phenomenon and its meanings from as many angles as possible and to ensure information-richness (Busetto et al., 2020). For qualitative sampling, this thesis followed Robinson's (2014) non-sequential, iterative four-point approach to sampling. This approach is suggested for interview-based qualitative studies and encompasses: (i) defining the sample universe, (ii) deciding on sample size, (iii) selecting a sample strategy and (iv) sourcing cases.

3.3.2.1.1 Sample Universe

Sample universe, also known as the study or target population, is 'the totality of persons from which cases may legitimately be sampled in an interview study' (Robinson, 2014, pp. 25-26). The sample universe is determined through a set of inclusion criteria (i.e., attributes that qualify a case for the study) and exclusion criteria (i.e., attributes that disqualify a case for the study) (Patton, 2002; Robinson, 2014).

In this thesis, the target population comprised all individuals who were familiar with the commercialised platforms that facilitate the renting of clothes from luxury fashion brands. The sampling frame, or the selection of cases from which data are actually collected (Babin et al., 2020; Robinson, 2014), included all individuals with RTR rental experiences of luxury fashion brand clothing. It is important to note that fashion rental platforms typically cater to female consumers (Arrigo, 2021b), and the list inventories of luxury fashion clothing (and accessories) included in the official website of RTR (see https://www.renttherunway.com) are directed to women. Accordingly, the participants selected for this thesis were all female consumers.

To specify the sampling frame, the first inclusion criterion required participants to be active users of RTR. The second inclusion criterion required participants to have at least one experience of renting clothes of luxury fashion brands from RTR. It is this direct experience with renting clothes of luxury fashion brands from the B2C platform that made the participants information-rich cases for this thesis. The ultimate purpose of setting these two inclusion criteria was to overcome any sampling frame error (i.e., the sampling element does not accurately represent the population) (Babin et al., 2020; Malhotra, 2019) in this thesis.

3.3.2.1.2 Sample Size

The number of participants in the sample or the determination of when to stop data collection is typically ensured through saturation – a criterion in qualitative research for discontinuing data collection and analysis (Bowen, 2008; Saunders et al., 2018). The original concept of theoretical saturation derives from Glaser and Strauss's (1967) traditional grounded theory and 'uses the development of categories and the emerging theory in the analysis process as the criterion for additional data collection, driven by the notion of theoretical sampling' (Saunders et al., 2018, p.1896). The theoretical sample is therefore

'dynamically led by the emerging theory until the point of saturation' (Kenny & Fourie, 2015, p.1271).

Given these notions of theoretical saturation and, therefore, theoretical sampling has been adopted by CGT (Charmaz, 2008), this thesis used the perspective of theoretical sampling to determine when to halt the collection of data and, further, to determine the sample size for the interviews. With the aim of achieving theoretical saturation and guided by the data collection that took place in three phases for the interviews, theoretical sampling resulted in a sample size of 50 interviews.

3.3.2.1.3 Sample Strategy

To draw a representative sample of participants, this thesis employed the non-probability sampling method where the likelihood of participant selection is unknown and arbitrary because the researcher relies on personal judgement or convenience (Babin et al., 2020). The non-probability sampling method is practical for this study because it is difficult to generate an accurate list for a sampling frame that comprises all individuals with experience in renting clothes from luxury fashion brands from RTR. As a result, the sample for this thesis has been selected using the non-probability sampling techniques of purposive (judgement) sampling. Purposive sampling is a deliberate selection of information-rich cases as sample members because of their proficiency and their characteristic of being well-informed about a phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Patton, 2002). In this thesis, purposive sampling ensured access to participants with the required knowledge and experience of renting clothes from luxury fashion brands from RTR.

3.3.2.1.4 Sourcing Cases

To initiate data collection, participants were recruited for interviews from the online RTR community using the social media platform of Facebook. Participant recruitment began in October 2019 and continued until May 2020, a period of eight months.

To recruit participants, the private message option on Facebook was used to seek permission from the gatekeepers of the online community to make a post in the group calling for interview participation. The call for participation was posted on the online community along with a brief description of the general outline of the research and the inclusion criteria for participation. Although the call for participation received expressions of interest from 27 members of the online community, only those participants who met the inclusion criteria were contacted via email to arrange a date and time for the interview convenient for the participant. Selected participants were also sent the participant information sheet and an informed consent form through emails prior to conducting the interviews. No financial incentives were offered by the researcher to source the required sample in this thesis.

Data collection began with an initial set of interviews conducted with 18 RTR users who were members of the online community on Facebook. Since analysis of the first 18 interviews revealed the need for more data collection, additional interviews were conducted with 15 members of the community. Emerging codes and concepts during the concurrent data analysis highlighted the need for additional data collection. Accordingly, permission was sought from the gatekeepers of the online community to post a second call for interview participation. In consequence, a further 17 interviews were conducted with users from the online community on Facebook.

Following the data collection phases, data analysis was exhausted (as explained in Chapter 4) when no new data were emerging. More specifically, the point of theoretical saturation was reached and the process of theoretical sampling concluded when a total of 50 interviews had been conducted, as illustrated in Table 3.3. The demographic profile of the participants, detailing age, racial identity and ethnic identity, is presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.3

Interviews: Phases, Sources, and Numbers

Data Collection Phases	Recruitment Sources	Fashion Rental Platform
		Rent the Runway
Phase 1	Facebook	18
Phase 2	Facebook	15
Phase 3	Facebook	17
Total Number		**50**

Table 3.4

Demographic Profile of Interview Participants

Participant ID	Subscription	Age	Racial Identity	Ethnic Identity
R1	RTR	31	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R2	RTR	33	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R3	RTR	25	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R4	RTR	35	African American	Hispanic or Latino
R5	RTR	35	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R6	RTR	26	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R7	RTR	29	American Indian	Hispanic or Latino
R8	RTR	41	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R9	RTR	32	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R10	RTR	34	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R11	RTR	38	American Indian	Hispanic or Latino
R12	RTR	42	African American	Hispanic or Latino
R13	RTR	37	American Indian	Hispanic or Latino
R14	RTR	35	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R15	RTR	45	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R16	RTR	40	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R17	RTR	36	African American	Not Hispanic or Latino
R18	RTR	28	White	Hispanic or Latino
R19	RTR	27	White	Australian
R20	RTR	31	White	Australian
R21	RTR	31	White	Australian
R22	RTR	28	Asian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R23	RTR	50	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R24	RTR	38	African American	Hispanic or Latino
R25	RTR	27	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R26	RTR	33	African American	Not Hispanic or Latino
R27	RTR	37	White	Australian
R28	RTR	26	White	Australian
R29	RTR	34	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R30	RTR	28	White	Hispanic or Latino
R31	RTR	29	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R32	RTR	32	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino

R33	RTR	35	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R34	RTR	26	White	Australian
R35	RTR	42	African American	Hispanic or Latino
R36	RTR	27	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R37	RTR	40	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R38	RTR	46	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R39	RTR	36	American Indian	Hispanic or Latino
R40	RTR	29	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R41	RTR	37	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R42	RTR	29	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R43	RTR	27	White	Not Hispanic or Latino
R44	RTR	39	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R45	RTR	44	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R46	RTR	48	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R47	RTR	40	African American	Hispanic or Latino
R48	RTR	34	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R49	RTR	44	American Indian	Not Hispanic or Latino
R50	RTR	39	African American	Not Hispanic or Latino

3.3.2.2 Data Collection Procedures

Interviews conducted in this thesis followed a semi-structured format, guided by a flexible interview protocol and supplemented by follow-up questions, probes and comments (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Open-ended questions drawn from the study's central focus were developed in the protocol of the semi-structured interviews, and flexibility was retained to enable the exploration of issues that emerged from participants' stories (see Lune & Berg, 2017). While the interview protocol served as a guide, the sequence in which questions were asked during the interviews varied across participants (see Knox & Burkard, 2009). As initial data were collected from the interviews and analysed (as explained in Chapter 4), additional questions were added to collect rich data for further analysis. The semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix 1) evolved to comprise a total of 23 main questions with follow-up questions and probes included as and when necessary.

Since the participants recruited for the interviews were geographically dispersed across the United States, interviews were conducted online using video conferencing platforms like Zoom and Skype. The interviews took place over an eight-month period

between October 2019 and May 2020, with each participant interviewed once. Interview duration ranged from 25 minutes to 1 hour 45 minutes and, with the participants' permission, the interviews were recorded using the recording features of the conferencing platform. During the interviews, notes of keywords or phrases from participants' stories were also made by the researcher to facilitate their reflection and elaboration of emerging concepts. Interview recordings were manually transcribed into word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word files) and the transcripts were used to initiate the coding process in the NVivo Version 12 software.

3.4 Quality in Grounded Theory

Quality is a crucial aspect of qualitative research (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). To assess and ensure quality, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness criteria – credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of research findings – are typically used as the yardstick (Loh, 2013). Trustworthiness ensures that the findings of a qualitative inquiry are 'worth paying attention to, worth taking account of' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). As well as the trustworthiness criteria, the researcher's reflexivity is increasingly cited as a criterion of quality in qualitative research (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021).

However, given the multiplicity of qualitative research traditions and the diversity of their respective ontological and epistemological underpinnings, the criteria for evaluating quality remain disconnected, even fragmented (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Consequently, the criteria for evaluating quality in grounded theory vary across the methodological genres (e.g., traditional, evolved, constructivist) of grounded theory (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). With regard to CGT, quality is demonstrated through four main criteria: credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). CGT, in addition, relies on developing and maintaining methodological self-consciousness through

reflexivity to ensure the credibility of the research findings and to enhance the quality of the qualitative study (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021).

To assure quality, this thesis demonstrates credibility – meaning the accuracy and truthfulness of the depiction of the participant's lived experiences (Creswell & Miller, 2000) – by gathering sufficient relevant data (see Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021) directly through interviews and indirectly through netnographic archival data. As explained in detail in Chapter 4, credibility is also achieved by making constant comparisons throughout the data collection and analysis process, and by documenting a transparent account of the data analysis procedures (see Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). The detailed descriptions of data analysis steps outlined in Chapter 4, as well as the research methods and sampling process, ensure the dependability of findings by enabling future researchers to replicate the study in different contexts (see Carcary, 2009).

Credibility (internal validity), dependability (reliability) and confirmability (objectivity) of the research findings are additionally achieved through triangulation of data sources, methods and investigators (Denzin, 1978; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). This thesis relies on the use of multiple copies of one type of data source (e.g., interview respondents) as well as different sources of the same information (e.g., interviews, online community posts, consumer reviews) (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data triangulation through different sources adheres to Kozinets' (2002) guidelines for netnographic studies and fulfils the condition of providing trustworthy interpretations through the use of netnographic archival data. The use of multiple qualitative data collection methods (e.g., interviews and netnographic archival data) in this research also enables within-method triangulation (see Denzin, 1978) and triangulation by different methods (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Moreover, verification of codes and findings across additional investigators/coders (in this case, the research supervisor) contributes to the credibility and confirmability of the research findings

in this thesis (see Denzin, 1978). Thick descriptions of the research context (e.g., luxury fashion rentals, business-to-consumer rental services) enable transferability (external validity) of the findings to other contexts in fashion rental platforms (e.g., peer-to-peer services) (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Wallendorf & Belk, 1989).

With regard to originality, this thesis substantially advances the notion of a conflict between materialism and anti-consumption that has emerged with the rise of liquid forms of consumption. In particular, this thesis offers original insights by proposing the process that consumers use to manage this conflict between materialism and anti-consumption in the context of fashion rentals. Resonance is attained in this thesis through the use of direct quotations from interviews and frequent referral to data sources (e.g., interview transcripts, online posts, reviews) during data analysis to ensure that emergent insights are drawn from participants' experiences. These insights from the participants' experiences also demonstrate usefulness by identifying practical implications related to fashion rental platforms and by laying the foundation for further research in the areas of materialism, anti-consumption and liquid consumption. Finally, the credibility and quality of this study are enhanced via reflexive accounts of the researcher's methodological decisions and positions, actions and assumptions that reflect the researcher's methodological self-consciousness (Charmaz, 2017). These points are discussed in the next section.

3.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity, which refers to the methodological self-consciousness underlying CGT, relates to how the researcher's identity, personal background, values and experiences affect their observations and analysis (Charmaz, 2017). The researcher's reflexive stance can therefore inform 'how the researcher conducts his or her research, relates to the research participants, and represents them in written reports' (Charmaz, 2006, p. 189).

As the researcher, my influence on the research initially derived from my knowledge of professional fashion content creators who rent clothes from luxury fashion brands from the fashion rental platforms. I came to learn about these content creators from social media platforms, and these content creators led me to social media accounts of individuals who rent clothes from luxury fashion brands from the fashion rental platforms for social events and workplaces. This knowledge piqued my interest to understand how their experiences with fashion renting are shaped and affected by social interactions across various contexts. Hearing the stories of individuals who rent clothes from luxury fashion brands was therefore a significant step in my academic research. My knowledge of prior academic literature also made me realise that the phenomenon of materialism being manifested in liquid forms of consumption, which also represent anti-consumption contexts, has scant supporting evidence.

Informed by my prior knowledge, the research topic and the initial research questions were theoretically rationalised and formulated in this thesis. Similarly, that same prior knowledge comforted me in assuming individuals' experiences of fashion renting to be multiple, dynamic, contextual and constructed through social interactions. As people shared their experiences with me, my interactions (as the researcher) with consumer participants were also assumed to result in subjective and modifiable meaning interpretations and constructions. Given my philosophical assumptions align with the constructivism paradigm, this research engages the qualitative methodology of CGT because it facilitates subjective interpretations of the symbolic meanings that individuals ascribe to the notions of materialism and anti-consumption in the context of fashion rentals.

In my role as the researcher, there were aspects of my own identity, background and biases that may have influenced my interactions with participants during data collection through interviews as well as been reflected in my memo writing. As a fashion aficionado, I could relate to the participants' propensities towards fashion clothing consumption. However,

my socioeconomic status prevented me from fully understanding the participants' rental experiences of luxury fashion brand clothing. As a doctoral candidate, my limited income from scholarships did not allow me to experience the fashion rental platforms as I could not afford the subscriptions required by these platforms to rent clothes from luxury fashion brands. My sole experience of renting was limited to apartments and cars and this resulted in my rental experiences being only partially comparable with those who rent clothing items. Although these forms of difference positioned me as an outsider to liquid forms of consumption, they also prompted the participants to share their stories and make their rental experiences of luxury fashion brand clothing easily known to me. I shared stories of my apartment and car rental experiences when appropriate, drew on my common knowledge of luxury fashion brand clothing during the interviews, and documented reflections in memos in an effort to minimise my distance from the participants.

As I immersed myself in the research process, I was aware of my personal biases regarding the sharing of clothes through rental platforms being unhygienic because clothes are worn too close to the skin. To avoid imposing this bias on data collection and analysis, I was keen to learn about different rental experiences of participants and I gathered knowledge from prior literature to understand the alternative views that people have on the sharing of clothes. My knowledge of prior literature also helped me to develop theoretical sensitivity and to utilise my insights during data collection and analysis to recognise what is meaningful and what is of significance in the data. For instance, my knowledge of prior literature formed the basis of initial interview questions and, over the course of the interviews, my knowledge from netnographic archival data and prior interviews guided my interactions with participants and reflections in memos. Indeed, my previous knowledge ensured that data collection through interviews became more collaborative and contributed to conceptual understandings of participants' rental experiences which later improved my analytical abilities. Immersion in

prior literature and the development of conceptual understandings through the data collection and analysis processes has therefore helped me to manage my biases, better interpret participants' ascribed meanings and develop my expertise as a grounded theory researcher.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethics, which typically pertains to the protection of human participants in any study (Orb et al., 2001), is deemed intrinsic to this research. This is because the qualitative research methodologies that facilitate hermeneutical and dialectical processes require close personal interactions with participants, potentially leading to problems of confidentiality, anonymity and other interpersonal difficulties (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 1994). Accordingly, the researcher sought and secured unconditional ethics approval from the Australian National University Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol Number 2020/372). To ensure ethical research, the researcher took all the necessary steps pertaining to the principles of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality that secure the ethical standards for qualitative research (see Eide & Kahn, 2008).

In netnography, online content (e.g., social media posts, reviews) is typically considered publicly available data, meaning that explicit consent to analyse public posts is deemed unnecessary (Haggerty, 2004; Langer & Beckman, 2005). Insofar as the public have unrestricted access to the content on the websites of Sitejabber and Trustpilot, the reviews posted on these independent consumer review websites classify as publicly available data. This meant that the use of consumer reviews as netnographic archival data did not require permission from the website managers. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained in this thesis by using pseudonyms to refer to a particular review (e.g., Review#1) rather than the online usernames of those who were submitting the reviews on these websites.

To initiate data collection from the online community on Facebook, the researcher sought permission from the community's gatekeepers to join the group. Kozinets (2002)

emphasises the necessity of securing permission to use data provided by community members, disclosing the researcher's presence in the online community and ensuring informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality of community members. Langer and Beckman (2005) argue that Kozinets' (2002) ethical guidelines in netnographic studies are appropriate for 'restricted (semi) private online communication' (p. 195). Since the online community selected for this study classifies as a members-only private group, Kozinets' (2002) ethical guidelines were therefore appropriate and permission was sought from the gatekeepers of the online community to use the members' posts. The gatekeepers of the online community made a group-wide post informing members of the presence of the researcher and informed them about research being conducted across the online community. Permission and the group-wide post from the gatekeepers ensured informed consent and disclosed the presence of the researcher in the online community. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity concerning online usernames and the identities of people making the posts in the online community, pseudonyms were used to refer to a particular social media post (Post#1).

In addition, the researcher made a post in the online community to extend an invitation to participate in interviews for the research. All those individuals who agreed to participate in the interviews were provided an information sheet and informed consent form prior to their interview. The information sheet described the research project, confidentiality, privacy, investigator's names, data storage and ethical disclosures. Participants were informed about the voluntary nature of their participation and that they could withdraw from the interview at any time during the process. They were also assured of confidentiality and their anonymity. The researcher ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of interview participants by using pseudonyms to refer to participant quotes or verbatims (e.g., R1) and by removing any identifying information related to the participants in the writing up of the thesis. Participants

were also informed that information provided during the interviews would be securely stored against access by people other than the researcher for a five-year period and that, at the end of that period, all records would be destroyed by the researcher.

Once the participants familiarised themselves with the information sheet, those interested in participating consented (i) to their voluntary participation in the interviews and (ii) for the interviews to be voice-recorded. Participants were also provided with a copy of the consent form to retain for their records. The researcher took cultural and social considerations and sensitivities into account by excluding any culture-related questions or sensitive questions. In addition, interview data were sorted and compared following the interviewees' demographic profiles in Table 3.4. This allowed the researcher to detect culturally-imbued or biased responses and to consider the particular characteristics of different interviewees in the analysis of the data. It is important to note that all data collected via archives and interviews and their subsequent analysis have been stored in a password-protected digital format that is accessible by only the researcher.

3.7 Limitations

A number of methodological issues prevail in this thesis with regard to the selection of CGT and its operationalisation through netnographic archival data and interviews. As a methodology, grounded theory remains controversial for being 'differentiated by contrasting philosophical frameworks and conflicting methodological directives' (Kenny & Fourie, 2015, p. 1270). In particular, the flexible, intuitive and open-ended nature of CGT (see Charmaz, 2000) challenges the consistent execution of the methodology. To ensure a consistent approach in this thesis, the underlying philosophical and theoretical positions, the use of precepts and literature, and the coding conventions of CGT are clearly identified and demonstrated.

In the operationalisation of CGT in this thesis, the data sources, sampling, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the data collection procedures presented a handful of challenges. Among the key players of fashion rental platforms listed in Table 3.1, a number of B2C platforms (e.g., Rotaro, Lending Luxury) and P2P platforms (e.g., StyleLend, Shared Wardrobe) did not have functional online communities, widespread use of hashtags on social media platforms or adequate community posts and consumer reviews. Consequently, the sampling frame in this thesis remained limited to B2C fashion rental platforms.

Even within the selected sampling frame, a deliberate oversampling occurred as the netnographic archival data and interviews overrepresented users, posts and reviews of the B2C platform of RTR. Since the netnographic archival data and interviews overrepresented the experiences of consumers from the United States (the RTR country of origin), this oversampling resulted in a demographically-skewed sample. The target market of fashion rental platforms being limited to female consumers (see Arrigo, 2021b) also resulted in a biased demographic sample for this thesis.

The process of participant recruitment for interviews primarily involved the use of purposive sampling in the online community members from Facebook. As a result, sampling selection bias (see Baltar & Brunet, 2012) may have resulted from sampling error (i.e., missing out on an online community), sampling bias (i.e., overrepresentation of individuals active on Facebook) and coverage (i.e., individuals who are users of the fashion rental platform but may not use Facebook). Efforts were made to mitigate sampling selection bias through the use of snowball sampling. This resulted in the inclusion of referrals sourced from the interview participants in this thesis.

A setback during this research arose from the logistical issues accompanying the use of a remote mode of data collection given the increased need for participants to have technological competence with video conferencing platforms (e.g., Zoom). In addition, data

collection in this thesis was disrupted by prospective interview participants requesting postponement or cancellation and expressing reluctance to participate in interviews because they or their loved ones were dealing with COVID-19.

Other methodological limitations pertain to time, logistics and the lack of experience on the part of the researcher that is inherent at the level of doctoral study. The researcher did not have previous experience with collecting netnographic archival data or conducting online interviews. The high volume of netnographic archival data gathered from online community posts and consumer reviews required the researcher to spend a considerable amount of time carefully evaluating and selecting data relevant to the research questions of the thesis. In online interviews, the researcher faced challenges including audio dropouts, freezing of the video, unstable Internet connection, time lags that disadvantaged rapport-building with participants and participant distractions (e.g., a child requiring assistance) that necessitated additional interview time. The researcher also discovered a disproportionate gap as the time involved in transcription was much higher than the interview duration (e.g., one hour of interview recording took more than six hours to transcribe). While the repeated listening to interview recordings and the high levels of concentration needed for transcription were physically exhausting, the quality of the audio recordings (e.g., background noises, incomplete sentences, audio dropouts) posed further challenges for the researcher.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the constructivism research paradigm that informs the qualitative research methodology adopted in this thesis, in particular the constructivist grounded theory. The operationalisation of the CGT methodology was primarily carried out through a netnographic study where netnographic archival data – member posts from an online community and consumer reviews from two independent review websites – were collected to conduct the research. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with

consumers who rent clothes from luxury fashion brands from the fashion rental platform. The use of this multi-method approach contributed to data triangulation and methodological triangulation of the study. The trustworthiness criteria used to assess and ensure quality in the application of CGT and the researcher's reflexivity have also been discussed in this chapter. Ethical issues considered in conducting the research have been addressed, along with the limitations of the methodology and research methods used in this thesis. The next chapter will provide a detailed description of the CGT analytical process undertaken in this thesis.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

This chapter details and illustrates the processes of data analysis that were undertaken in this thesis. To begin with, this chapter discusses the analytical strategies adopted from the constructivist grounded theory to guide the data analysis. Specifically, the systematic emergence of a core theme has been described and exemplified through the initial, focused, and theoretical phases of the constructivist coding process. Other analytical strategies that complemented the constructivist coding process, such as the constant comparative method, memo writing, theoretical sensitivity, sampling, and saturation, are also discussed in this chapter.

4.1 Analytical Strategies

A hallmark of CGT is the concurrent data collection and analysis that comprises the systematic yet flexible application of a set of analytical strategies to construct theories grounded in the data (Charmaz, 2014; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). In this thesis, the data collection and analysis process involved the utilisation of emergent analytical strategies, specifically coding and constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2008). To ensure a comprehensive and rigorous approach to data collection and analysis, these were complemented by theoretical sensitivity, sampling, saturation and reflexivity strategies, such as memo writing (Charmaz, 2008, 2012).

Data analysis using a CGT approach allows for codes to emerge at different stages of the process (Charmaz, 2008). Coding is about 'naming segments of data with a label that simultaneously categorises, summarises, and accounts for each piece of data' (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43). The use of codes allows the researcher to ascribe meaning to data by defining what constitutes the data and by making views, actions and processes more explicit within the data in accordance with SI principles (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013; Tie et al., 2019). Codes are constructed as the researcher interacts with the data and these interactions become

comparative as the researcher, in the later phases of coding, makes comparisons across the data, codes and emerging categories (Charmaz, 2012). Coding is therefore reliant on the constant comparative method, defined as 'a method of analysis that generates successively more abstract concepts and theories through inductive processes of comparing data with data, data with category, category with category, and category with concept' (Charmaz, 2006, p. 187). The constant comparative method facilitates continual meaning reassessment as the researcher interacts with data in the coding process to interpret and refine interpretations across different contexts following SI principles (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013). By coding, the researcher moves beyond making concrete statements in the data to making analytical interpretations of the data (Charmaz, 2006).

To support the coding process and the constant comparative method, the researcher must be sensitive to the underlying meaning of the data (Thistoll et al., 2016). Within CGT, this is referred to as theoretical sensitivity and is acquired and developed through the researchers' previous experiences, academic knowledge and immersion in the data (Kenny & Fourie, 2015; Tie et al., 2019). Theoretical sensitivity demonstrates the researcher's insights into what is meaningful and of significance in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). As well as theoretical sensitivity, the reflexivity strategy of memo writing is integral to CGT. Glaser (1978) defines memo writing as 'the theorising write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding' (p. 83). Memos capture the researchers' thoughts, feelings and spontaneous ideas throughout the data collection and analysis process (Birks & Mills, 2015). Memo writing helps researchers remain actively engaged in the analysis, fosters analytical momentum and informs the grounded theory findings (Birks & Mills, 2015; Charmaz, 2012). Writing successive memos facilitates the constant comparative method because the researcher can make comparisons in the coding process and articulate conjectures about these comparisons (Charmaz, 2006, 2014).

The coding of data and making constant comparisons across the coding process often reveal gaps and unexpected concepts that may warrant the need to collect additional data (Kenny & Fourie, 2015). In the later phases of the coding process, emerging categories are integrated and synthesised to contribute to the development of the substantive theory, meaning a 'theoretical interpretation or explanation of a delimited problem in a particular area' (Charmaz, 2014, p. 344). As part of the constant comparative method, the substantive theory is compared with the literature, and this comparison can also result in the identification of gaps that may necessitate additional data collection (Glaser & Holton, 2007; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). These unfolding identifications guide the development of the researcher's research sample in a progressive manner instead of predetermining the sample at the beginning of the study (Kenny & Fourie, 2015). This evolving method of sampling data for the development of categories and, subsequently, the substantive theory is known as theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2006, 2008). Theoretical sampling continues until the point of theoretical saturation, which is when collecting more data provides no further insight into the properties of the categories developed through the coding process and the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2008).

CGT adopts the analytical strategies of the constant comparative method, memo writing, theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation from the precepts of Glaser and Strauss's (1967) TGT. However, CGT takes a divergent stance on the development of theoretical sensitivity when compared with Glaser and Strauss's (1967) TGT and Strauss and Corbin's (1990) EGT. In developing theoretical sensitivity, TGT asserts that prior knowledge from the literature can violate the basic premise of grounded theory and suggests that the researcher postpone the literature review process until the end of the study (Alemu et al., 2015; Glaser & Holton, 2007). In contrast, EGT encourages the use of academic literature with restraints so that new revelations emerging from the data are also incorporated into the

research process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). CGT favours a balanced approach of utilising the literature at every stage of the research to develop theoretical sensitivity, with total immersion delayed until the end of the research (Charmaz, 2006; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). CGT also varies from TGT and EGT by endorsing a coding process characterised by a constructivist philosophy (Kenny & Fourie, 2015).

In grounded theory, the process of coding is iterative in nature and each genre of grounded theory uses different terminologies to refer to these iterative phases of coding (Tie et al., 2019). For instance, TGT uses two main phases of coding that precipitate the discovery of an emergent theory: substantive coding and theoretical coding. Within substantive coding, there are two sub-phases: open and selective coding (Glaser & Holton, 2007; Holton, 2010). This coding structure is primarily critiqued for being subjective given the researcher's discretion in data collection and analysis, and for being inconsistent with the positivist paradigm of TGT (Bryant, 2002; Urquhart, 2002). Alternatively, the coding structure of EGT uses a structured approach with three stages: open coding, axial coding and selective coding, and these three stages are collated into a conditional matrix to create a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Although Strauss and Corbin's (1990) coding structure can be applied flexibly and adapted to different circumstances, the constructivist approach to grounded theory criticises this coding structure for being positivist, rigid, narrow and over-complicated (Charmaz, 2000).

The coding process in CGT follows a fluid framework that comprises at least two phases of coding: initial coding and focused coding (Charmaz, 2008). In addition to initial and focused coding, the constructivist coding process often adapts a third phase of coding – namely, theoretical coding – from TGT (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). With initial, focused and theoretical codes, the CGT coding process enables the researcher to construct conceptual interpretations instead of an exact apprehension of the phenomenon, meaning that the

constructive coding process remains true to the constructivism paradigm (Charmaz, 2006). In line with CGT, this thesis employed the fluid framework of initial, focused and theoretical codes. As the coding process initiates data analysis, the next section of this chapter describes and exemplifies the constructivist coding process that has been applied in this thesis.

4.2 Coding Process

As the commencement of the analysis process in CGT, initial or open coding typically requires a close reading and active interrogation of the data (Charmaz, 2008). During initial coding, questions are asked of the data to determine its relevance to the study, the processes that are evident, what the data are saying and whose viewpoints the data represents (Glaser, 1978; Mills et al., 2014). To pursue initial coding, codes are inductively generated through word-by-word, line-by-line, paragraph-by-paragraph or incident-by-incident coding, and more than one of these strategies can be used (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014). Codes are typically constructed with gerunds – the noun forms of verbs (e.g., revealing, defining, feeling or wanting). This builds action into codes, makes implicit processes visible, makes connections between codes and keeps the analysis active and emergent (Charmaz, 2008, 2012). In-vivo codes can also be used to conduct initial coding, where the research participant's direct statements are utilised as codes (Charmaz, 2008).

Once initial codes have been established, the coding process moves onto the second phase of focused coding which 'uses the most significant or frequent initial codes to sort, synthesise, integrate, and organise large amounts of data' (Charmaz, 2014, p. 113). These codes typically provide the 'analytic momentum' and 'carry the weight of the analysis', also described as 'carrying capacity' (Charmaz, 2008, p. 164). Focused codes are more directed, selective and conceptual than initial codes because they transform data into abstract concepts that enable a theory to emerge from the data (Charmaz, 2006). In focused coding, recurring codes are identified and collated into categories and these tentative categories are then

subjected to further analytical treatment through the third phase of theoretical coding (Charmaz, 2006, 2008).

Theoretical codes are primarily represented in TGT as conceptualising 'how the substantive codes may relate to each other as hypotheses to be integrated into a theory' (Glaser, 1978, p. 72). These codes consist of the logic, ideas and perspectives – analytical tools and lenses – that researchers import from pre-existing theories into the research process (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014). Glaser (1978) compiled a list of 18 theoretical coding families (e.g., Six Cs, process, cultural family, identity-self family) and identified codes within these families (e.g., phases, progressions, transitions, etc.) as a guide to researchers. The conscious adoption and application of codes from the theoretical coding families, however, opposes the essence of CGT (Charmaz, 2012; Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014).

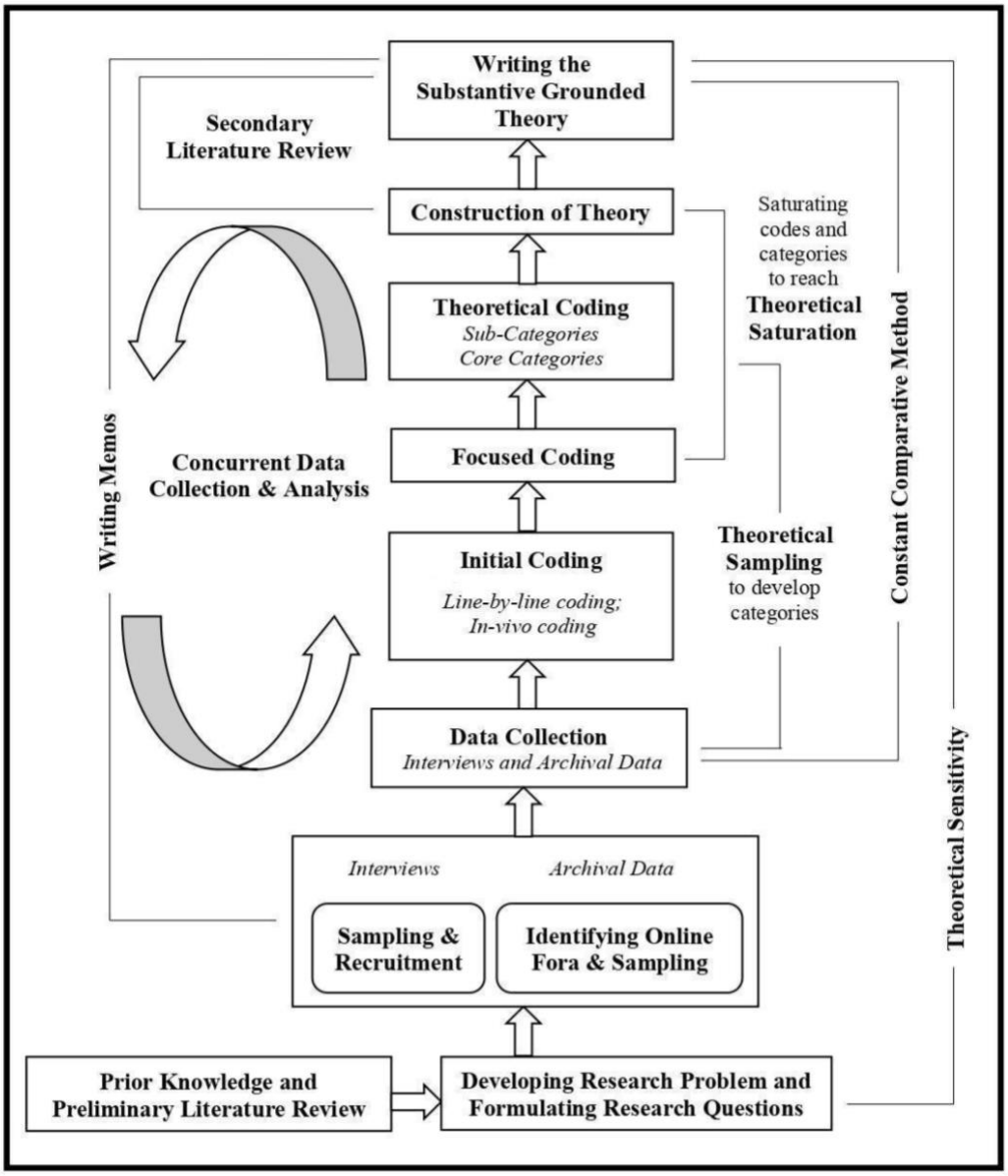
The emphasis of CGT is on the emergence of codes, where codes arise from the researcher's interactions with the data instead of emanating from an earlier frame applied to the data (Charmaz, 2006). The application of theoretical codes thus takes an a posteriori approach in CGT, where knowledge or codes emerge from the data, rather than an a priori approach that applies knowledge or pre-determined codes to data (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). Moreover, Glaser's (1978) list list of theoretical coding families is not exhaustive and the absence of established criteria for theoretical coding families means that some of the coding families appear to be arbitrary and vague (Charmaz, 2006). Despite these cautions, Charmaz (2006) has argued that theoretical codes lend form to focused codes by specifying possible relationships between categories that were developed in CGT's focused coding phase. In particular, theoretical codes add precision and clarity to analysis and aid the CGT researcher in telling a coherent analytical story (Charmaz, 2006, 2014).

Theoretical codes are subsequently elevated to core themes and the coding process concludes with the construction of a theory that is basically the researcher's interpretative

understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Hallberg, 2006; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). To outline the coding process in this thesis, the construction of the initial and focused codes through to the theoretical codes is traced, including their culmination in the emergence of the core theme 'Becoming Minimalist'. Although this outline of the coding process may appear linear in the following discussion, coding was applied in a cyclical process in line with the analytical strategies of CGT. This cyclical process is illustrated in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1

Cyclical Process of Data Collection and Analysis



4.2.1 Initial Coding

The process of initial coding commenced right after the collection of netnographic archival data from online community posts and consumer reviews through secondary sources. Simultaneously, the first interview with the online community members was conducted, and initial coding was promptly applied at that stage. This concurrent coding process ensured compliance with the CGT tenet of simultaneous data collection and analysis and facilitated data triangulation. During initial coding, a line-by-line coding strategy was applied to allocate codes quickly and spontaneously to each line of the interview transcript and of the archival data record. These initial codes were kept simple and precise to capture the essence of the data; the occasional use of in-vivo codes further ensured that the codes fit the data. Because, at times, a single line of the interview transcript or archival data record represented multiple meanings, two or more codes could be allocated to a single line to sufficiently summarise and account for the data. Excerpts have been taken from the interview transcripts as well as archival data records to demonstrate the emergence of the initial codes (see Tables 4.1- 4.8 inclusive) that were used to progressively describe the trajectory of the respondents' clothing consumption.

Several codes were identified in the initial coding phase as the respondents discussed their clothing consumption through purchase. Respondents revealed their desires for luxury brands by construing the brands through codes like 'luxury brands being dream pieces', 'luxury brands being special purchases', 'luxury brands being statement pieces', and 'luxury brands being coveted brands'. They also used codes like 'cannot afford luxury brands', 'luxury brands being inaccessible', and 'luxury brands being exclusive' with a greater emphasis on 'luxury brands being expensive' and the 'high price point of luxury brands' to present their view of luxury brands. Respondents believed the luxury brands 'signals wealth',

'signals success', 'signals status in society' and therefore 'luxury brands create class differences', and can be 'associated with prestige'.

In parallel, the respondents highlighted fast fashion brands as 'inexpensive substitutes of luxury' that 'closely resembles luxury' and 'caters to unfulfilled luxury brand desires'. Initial codes like 'preference for fast fashion brands', 'constant fast fashion purchases', 'purchase only fast fashion', 'impulsive fast fashion purchases', 'recurring behaviour for fast fashion', and 'constant fast fashion shopping tendency' thus revealed the respondents' inclinations and impulsiveness toward fast fashion brands. Several respondents justified their inclinations toward the genre of fast fashion in their clothing purchases via initial codes such as 'need to avoid outfit repetition', 'need to wear the current style', 'need for fresh wardrobe', 'boredom from wearing same outfit', and 'fear of social media faux pas'. Respondents especially emphasised the 'affordable prices of fast fashion', 'quick style turnover', and construed fast fashion as clothes that 'caters to multiple fashion seasons', 'fulfills novelty needs', and 'helps to avoid outfit repetitions'. Other codes like 'wear once tendency', 'purchase results in wear once clothes', 'wear once clothing trend' identified the respondents' tendencies towards wearing fast fashion clothes only once. Such tendencies resulted in a 'throwaway mindset' and a 'vicious cycle' of 'continually buying new clothing' for the respondents. The development of these codes is illustrated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Fast fashion Tendencies)

Excerpts	Initial codes
I buy cheap clothes from Forever 21 and all those fast fashion like H&M all the time. [R25]	• constant fast fashion purchases
I found my wardrobe full of items I'd wear a few times, then never again. [Review#12] I have so many unique pieces in my wardrobe but *I end up wearing them once or twice a year at most*. [Post#214]	• wear once tendency

I bought a dress for $200 from a high-end department store for a special event or something right and *then I wear it a couple of times.* [R48]	• purchase results in wear once clothes

Respondents, however, emphasised that fast fashion purchases involve high costs as captured through initial codes such as 'high cost incurred to purchase clothes'. Along the same lines, codes like 'fast fashion purchase results in high spending', 'spend money on fast fashion clothes', 'high spending on fast fashion', 'high spending on wear once clothes' identified the respondents' tendencies to incur high spending in their clothing consumption through fast fashion purchases. Moreover, codes like 'incur severe debt' and 'incur credit debt to purchase fast fashion' indicated financial debt being a consequence for respondents who indulged in fast fashion clothing purchases to keep pace with the current trends. The development of these codes is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Spending on Fast fashion Purchases)

Excerpts	Initial codes
I bought some things - some crazy expensive things. The salesperson said the total and I was like okay, where's my credit card - so, that's *how much it costs to buy like brand new really nice clothes.* [R24]	• high cost incurred to purchase clothes
I'm someone who *spends several thousand dollars/month just on clothes.* [Review#95] As a businesswoman, *I would spend a lot on clothes from these fast fashion brands.* [Post#44]	• spend money on fast fashion clothes
And my bills, you should see *how much I owe in credit card bills!* [R43]	• incur credit debt to purchase fast fashion

Data also captured the respondents' post-purchase reflections as they exhibited feelings of guilt and remorse about high spending on their fast fashion purchases through codes such as 'guilty of high spending on purchases', 'buyer's remorse', 'guilt feeling from fast fashion purchases'. Initial codes like 'clothes are obsolete over time', 'fast fashion lacks

quality', 'low resale value of fast fashion' specifically reflected a number of limitations emanating from fast fashion clothing purchases. Respondents also realised that fast fashion purchases resulted in hoarding as revealed through codes like 'purchased clothes occupy closet space', 'limited closet space', 'unused new clothes stored in closet', 'purchase results in collecting clothes'. Furthermore, codes like 'money wastage in fast fashion purchase', 'wasteful to purchase clothes', 'not financially viable to spend money' demonstrated that the respondents associated fast fashion purchases with the wastage of money.

As a consequence, codes like 'lack willingness towards high spending', 'avoid high spending on wear once clothes', 'unwilling to purchase new outfits', 'avoid spending on fast fashion shopping' captured the respondents' willingness to avoid high spending on fast fashion clothing purchases. Alongside, the respondents' increasing willingness to change their spending habits was identified through codes like 'to change spending habits', 'to spend money wisely', 'need to save money', 'regulate fast fashion spending', and 'reduce purchase to save money'. The development of these codes is illustrated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Post-Purchase Reflections)

Excerpts	Initial codes
I usually feel guilt after I purchase fast fashion. If I spend $200 when I go shopping, I like the things that I come home with but it feels really like a little bit of guilt afterwards. [R30]	• guilt feeling from fast fashion purchases
There are plenty of times where I buy things and then it sits in my closet. [R11]	• purchased clothes occupy closet space
See, I still have things that I have tags on them. I haven't worn them but I bought them. And, it's just taking up space. [R46]	• unused new clothes stored in closet • purchased clothes occupy closet space
I kind of just felt that I was throwing my money away. [R1]	• money wastage in fast fashion purchase

I needed clothes but *I did not want to spend a lot of money on fast fashion clothes.* [R25]	• lack willingness towards high spending
I want to make sure that I spend my money wisely. [R38]	• to spend money wisely

Conversely, the respondents associated fast fashion purchases and its disposition practices with clothing waste as captured through codes like 'fast fashion purchase creates clothing wastage', 'fast fashion clothing being wasteful', 'concern of clothes dumped in landfills', 'fast fashion ends up in landfills'. Other limitations related to fast fashion clothing production and labour exploitations were also highlighted by the respondents for fast fashion through codes like 'unethical production of fast fashion', 'wrong practices of quick clothing production', 'low pay of fast fashion labour', 'poor working conditions of fast fashion firms', 'unfair employee treatments'. Fast fashion purchases were therefore positioned by the respondents as being harmful to the environment with codes such as 'fast fashion purchases pollute environment', 'fast fashion purchase being unsustainable', 'horrible for the environment' in the narratives. Table 4.4 illustrates the development of these codes.

Table 4.4

Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Environmental and Social Consequences)

Excerpts	Initial codes
The fact that we buy fast fashion and get rid of it - it's just waste. [R28]	• fast fashion purchase creates clothing wastage
In a way, it gives people employment but it also *encourages faster production at the cost of low wages for those labour.* [R21]	• wrong practices of quick clothing production • low pay of fast fashion labour
The reason is that not only do they produce things unethically but also, *they don't last long which means that they end up in landfills sooner.* [R46]	• fast fashion ends up in landfills • unethical production of fast fashion

I think it's not sustainable to just constantly buy new clothes from these fast fashion brands. [R39]	• fast fashion purchase being unsustainable

Significant shifts in the respondents' mindset towards their clothing consumption through fast fashion purchases also came to the forefront in the initial coding phase. For instance, codes such as 'prevent excess fast fashion shopping', 'changes mindset of repeat fast fashion purchases', 'reservations about purchase of new clothes', 'avoid purchase of new clothes', 'avoid fast fashion shopping', demonstrated the respondents' reservations towards fast fashion clothing purchases. Furthermore, the respondents' increasing willingness to change their unsustainable consumption habits were identified through codes like 'trying to be more sustainable', 'emphasise being eco-conscious', 'believe in sustainable consumerism', 'avoid environmental footprint', and 'not contribute to clothing waste'. These codes are illustrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Shifts in Consumption Mindset)

Excerpts	Initial codes
It helps curb my fast fashion shopping. [Review#78]	• prevent excess fast fashion shopping
I didn't want to keep buying cheap throwaway clothes. [Post#34]	• reservations about purchase of new clothes
I kind of think twice before purchasing something that is cheaply made or fast fashion. [R19]	• avoid fast fashion shopping
I'm just trying to change my consumption to be more sustainable because I love fashion. [R39]	• trying to be more sustainable
You feel good in what you're wearing but *avoid buying things you don't need.* [Post#29]	• believe in sustainable consumerism

Data revealed that these shifts in the respondents' mindset induced a transition as they embraced rentals over purchase for their clothing consumption. Initial codes such as 'renting being sustainable alternative', 'allows conscious clothing consumption', 'encourages less

consumerism', 'reduces carbon footprint', 'contributes in terms of sustainability' showcased that the respondents considered rentals as a sustainable and conscious way to clothing consumption. The transition towards rentals enabled the respondents to attenuate their clothing purchases, especially fast fashion, as identified through codes like 'allows to avoid fast fashion purchase', 'reduces fast fashion purchase', 'less purchase of wear once clothes', and 'helps to avoid fast fashion'. Codes such as 'purchase only basic clothing items', 'helps to do essential purchases', 'only purchase staples if renting', 'closet with purchased staple items' particularly reflected an inclination towards essential clothing purchases as respondents embraced rentals. Moreover, rentals facilitated the respondents to 'detoxify wardrobe' as they 'engage in consigning clothes', 'donate clothes to friends', 'give away clothing grown out of' and consequently, they had 'less clutter' and managed to 'save closet space'. By embracing rentals, the respondents were therefore able to 'appreciate minimalist practices' and 'practice minimalism' as they could 'maintain capsule wardrobe' and a 'closet of items truly loved'. The development of these codes is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Consumption Transformations with Rentals)

Excerpts	Initial codes
I have been thinking about new ways to consume clothing, in a more conscious way. So, renting became quickly high on my list. [R46]	• allows conscious clothing consumption
I just tried to find out what other alternatives could be - without still giving up my love for dresses, but using some more *sustainable alternatives and rental is that opportunity.* [R39]	• renting being sustainable alternative
I think being able to rent has stopped me from purchasing as many items. I would probably say that I have purchased a third of what I did a couple of years ago. Renting feels good to me because *I feel I'm doing something good, you know, like stopping fast fashion.* [R18]	• reduces clothing purchases • helps to avoid fast fashion

I don't buy clothing like I legitimately have bought very little clothing besides personal items and swimsuits in almost 2 years. [R15]	• reduces clothing purchases • purchase only basic clothing items
I keep staples in my wardrobe that I own and use RTR to rent more unique pieces. *It is a great way to minimise wasting closet space on clothes.* [Post#200]	• closet with purchased staple items • save closet space
I've turned into one of those people with a capsule wardrobe. [Review#27] *Ninety percent of my wardrobe now is RTR—I own very minimal things!* [Review#12]	• maintain capsule wardrobe • practice minimalism

Codes like 'reduces clothing wastage', 'avoid throwing clothes into trash', 'reduces clothing production', 'lowers the need to manufacture', 'increases product life', 'enables optimum usage of clothing' also demonstrated that clothing reuse induced by rentals minimises waste, lowers production, and increases end-of-life for clothes. As a result, the respondents showcased their support for clothing reuse as captured by codes such as 'like the idea of clothing reuse', 'promote reuse of clothes', 'reuse of clothing makes sense', and 'changes mindset of limited clothing use'. Several codes like 'reduces throwing away of clothes', 'allows to be environmentally responsible', 'promotes helping the planet' further suggested that the transition to rentals for clothing consumption made respondents environmentally responsible. In turn, codes like 'removes guilt of impacting environment', 'guilt-free with renting clothes', reflected an attenuation in the respondents' guilt as rentals enabled an environmentally conscious way of clothing consumption. Table 4.7 illustrates the development of these codes.

Table 4.7

Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Environmental Consciousness with Rentals)

Excerpts	Initial codes
On top of that, if you are also thinking about the environment, *it is a great way to reduce waste, or constantly throwing out clothes.* [R50]	• reduces clothing wastage

	• avoid throwing clothes into trash
I think somewhere it does reduce the burden where, you know, as compared to someone producing 1000 pieces, they're probably producing 800. [R21]	• reduces clothing production
I am wearing something and I know it is going back and other people are wearing it and it is not just going into a landfill. [R13]	• reuse of clothing makes sense • avoid throwing clothes into trash
Renting clothes is a great way to indulge yourself in fashion while being environmentally responsible. [R24] You really feel you are on trend but with what is right with the environment and *you don't have guilt either about destroying our environment.* [R25]	• allows to be environmentally responsible • removes guilt of impacting environment

Concurrently, rentals offer 'affordable subscriptions' that 'caters to all income levels' and 'considers budgetary constraints' of different consumers. Rental subscriptions 'enables wearing expensive items without purchase', 'provides access to otherwise inaccessible items', 'allows access to luxury brands', and help the respondents to 'overlook price tags' and 'wear expensive clothes without paying full price'. By embracing rentals, respondents were also able to reduce their spending on clothing purchases and save money as revealed through codes like 'easy on wallet', 'free shipping and returns', 'reduces spending on fast fashion', 'enables to avoid splurging on fast fashion', 'saves dry-cleaning cost', 'saves money', 'helps to save money on laundry'.

Clothing consumption through rentals was therefore positioned by the respondents as more cost-effective than purchase with codes like 'renting being cost-effective', 'purchase cost higher than rental subscription', 'cheaper than purchasing multiple clothes', 'renting being cheaper than fast fashion purchase'. Moreover, codes like 'getting money's worth', 'higher value for money', 'get more clothes with less money' showcased the respondents deriving value for money from their clothing consumption through rentals. In fact, codes such as 'feel smart to rent', 'financially smart lifestyle', 'allows to be financially savvy'

demonstrated that the transition from purchase to rentals for clothing consumption made respondents adopt a lifestyle characterised by prudent financial choices. Table 4.8 illustrates the identification of these codes.

Table 4.8

Initial Line-by-Line Coding (Savings from Rentals)

Excerpts	Initial codes
The money is also important for me *because I definitely spend less a month on the rental program than I do when I was buying fast fashion clothes. So, I am actually saving money by doing it that way.* [R6]	• reduces spending on fast fashion • saves money
It's kind of fun to see that *I am only paying such a small amount per month and I'm getting so much value, so much clothes out of it.* [R48]	• higher value for money • get more clothes with less money
I recognised that through Rent the Runway, *I could still get what I needed or wanted out of fashion for honestly an achievable price than I was paying before.* [R43]	• renting being cost-effective
If I bought all that stuff, it would be $1000. So, I have this great wardrobe and it only cost me $200 to rent. [R48]	• renting being cheaper than purchase
I think that's a *financially smart way to live your life fashion-wise.* [R13]	• financially smart lifestyle

As initial codes were progressively emerging from the archival data records and the interview transcripts, the researcher revisited some of these codes and renamed them to improve the degree to which they captured the participants' and users' meanings and actions. The researcher also moved back and forth between the initial codes whenever new threads for analysis emerged from the data. The meanings and actions captured through the initial codes were explored further by moving the coding process towards the second phase of focused coding, as illustrated next.

4.2.2 Focused Coding

To initiate the phase of focused coding, the most significant and frequent initial codes were identified by the researcher. To elevate these codes to focused codes, tentative conceptual categories were created on the basis of conceptual definitions and by assessing the relationships among the categories (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014). This process of identifying and reviewing conceptual categories occurred by grouping (i) concepts with similar properties that comprise recognisable characteristics or attributes common to all concepts in the category and (ii) concepts with similar dimensions that are the variations of a property along a range or continuum (Tie et al., 2019).

Several initial codes identified the characteristics distinguishing between luxury brands and fast fashion brands in terms of the respondents' clothing consumption. For instance, recurring initial codes like 'luxury brands being dream pieces', 'luxury brands being inaccessible', 'luxury brands being exclusive', 'luxury brands being expensive', 'signals status in society' characterised luxury brands as dream pieces, exclusive, and status symbols. As such, focused codes like 'consider luxury brands as dream pieces', 'consider luxury brands as exclusive for being unaffordable', 'consider luxury brands as status symbols' emerged that capture the *luxury brand characteristics*. In contrast, initial codes such as 'caters to unfulfilled luxury brand desires', 'affordable prices of fast fashion', 'caters to multiple fashion seasons', 'fulfills novelty needs' portrayed fast fashion brands as fulfilling the aspirational luxury dream, being affordable and trendy, and fulfilling novelty needs. Emerging focused codes like 'acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling aspirational luxury dream', 'regard fast fashion as affordable and trendy', 'acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling novelty needs' thus reflected the *fast fashion brand characteristics*.

With the respondents' dominant consumption being fast fashion, the initial codes such as 'need to avoid outfit repetition', 'need to wear the current style', 'need for fresh wardrobe', 'boredom from wearing same outfit', 'fear of social media faux pas' outlined the various reasons behind their consumption. This resulted in the emergence of focused codes that captured the respondents' *rationalisation for fast fashion* like 'acknowledge the need for novelty', 'acknowledge being bored of similar outfits', 'acknowledge the need to avoid outfit repetitions', 'being conscious of outfit repetition stigma', 'feel social pressure for outfit rotations', 'feel sense of excitement with new outfits'. In contrast, the respondents highlighted various limitations of fast fashion consumption that were emphasised by initial codes like 'clothes are obsolete over time', 'fast fashion lacks quality', 'low resale value of fast fashion', 'purchased clothes occupy closet space', 'impulsive fast fashion purchases', 'constant fast fashion shopping tendency'. These initial codes were grouped into focused codes that reflected the respondents' *realisation related to fast fashion* like 'realise low utility of fast fashion clothing', 'realise low resale value of fast fashion clothing', 'realise fast fashion purchases to result in hoarding', and 'regard fast fashion as impulsive and recurring purchases'.

As the respondents discussed their fast fashion clothing consumption, initial codes such as 'high cost incurred to purchase clothes', 'fast fashion purchase results in high spending', 'spend money on fast fashion clothes', 'high spending on fast fashion' were grouped into the focused code 'incur high spending on fast fashion purchases' to capture their *high spending patterns*. Initial codes like 'incur credit debt to purchase fast fashion', 'money wastage in fast fashion purchase', 'wasteful to purchase clothes', 'not financially viable to spend money' further highlighted *debt* and *money wastage* as financial demerits of the respondents' spending patterns on fast fashion purchases. Focused codes like 'incur severe

debt with fast fashion purchases' and 'criticise fast fashion purchases as money wastage' were therefore formulated by collating the initial codes.

Recurring initial codes like 'guilty of high spending on purchases', 'buyer's remorse', 'guilt feeling from fast fashion purchases' also identified *guilt* to emanate from fast fashion clothing purchases that were grouped into the focused code 'exhibit remorse from fast fashion spending'. Initial codes like 'lack willingness towards high spending', 'avoid high spending on wear once clothes', 'unwilling to purchase new outfits', 'avoid spending on fast fashion shopping' thus reflected *cost avoidance* on fast fashion purchases that were collated into the focused code 'exhibit reluctance about high spending on fast fashion purchases'. To counter the demerits, initial codes like 'to change spending habits', 'to spend money wisely', 'need to save money', 'regulate fast fashion spending', and 'reduce purchase to save money' identified *spending control* through reduced fast fashion purchases as a way to attain financial stability. Accordingly, the focused code 'show willingness to reduce frequent fast fashion purchases' emerged from the initial codes.

In contrast, initial codes like 'affordable subscriptions', 'wear expensive clothes without paying full price', 'renting being cost-effective', 'cheaper than purchasing multiple clothes', 'higher value for money', 'get more clothes with less money' highlighted *affordability*, *cost-effectiveness*, and *value for money* as financial rewards when it comes to clothing rentals. As such, the initial codes were arranged into focused codes like 'recognise the affordability of rental subscriptions', 'wear expensive outfits without paying full price', 'make conscious choice to rent for affordable subscriptions', 'gain access to unaffordable luxury brands with subscriptions', 'disregard outfit price within subscriptions', and 'realise rentals being more cost-effective than purchases'. Initial codes like 'easy on wallet', 'reduces spending on fast fashion', 'saves dry-cleaning cost', 'saves money', 'financially smart lifestyle' further reflected the respondents' *reduced spending patterns*, *cost savings*, and

financial smartness that are induced by the financial rewards of rentals. This led to the emergence of focused codes ‘reduce high spending on fast fashion purchases’, ‘gain the economic benefit of saving money’, and ‘become financially smart about spending’.

Besides the financial properties, several initial codes identified the properties of environmental and social consciousness in relation to the respondents’ fast fashion clothing consumption. For instance, initial codes like ‘fast fashion purchase creates clothing wastage’, ‘fast fashion clothing being wasteful’, ‘wrong practices of quick clothing production’, ‘concern of clothes dumped in landfills’, ‘fast fashion ends up in landfills’ demonstrated *high environmental waste* and *greater environmental concern* for production and disposal of fast fashion clothing. These initial codes were arranged into focused codes like ‘acknowledge fast fashion as the creator of clothing waste’, ‘appear conscious about quick clothing production’, and ‘show concern for constant clothing disposal’. Initial codes such as ‘fast fashion purchases pollute environment’, ‘fast fashion purchase being unsustainable’, ‘horrible for the environment’ thus highlighted *low environmental sustainability* for fast fashion purchases that were grouped into the focused code ‘realise fast fashion purchases as environmentally unsustainable’. In addition, initial codes like ‘unethical production of fast fashion’, ‘low pay of fast fashion labor’, ‘poor working conditions of fast fashion firms’, ‘unfair employee treatments’ highlighted *social impacts* that stem from fast fashion purchases, and these codes were collated into the focused code ‘being conscious about labour exploitations’.

Recurring initial codes like ‘prevent excess fast fashion shopping’, ‘reservations about purchase of new clothes’, ‘avoid fast fashion shopping’ thus indicated *reluctance* about fast fashion purchases that were collated into focused codes ‘being cognisant of frequent fast fashion purchases’ and ‘exhibit reluctance about frequent fast fashion purchases’. To counter the demerits, initial codes like ‘trying to be more sustainable’, ‘avoid environmental footprint’, ‘not contribute to clothing waste’ identified *footprint control* through reduced fast

fashion purchases as a way to endorse environmental sustainability. Accordingly, the focused code ‘express desire to be environmentally sustainable’ emerged from the initial codes.

Alternatively, initial codes like ‘reduces clothing wastage’, ‘avoid throwing clothes into trash’, ‘reduces carbon footprint’, ‘allows conscious clothing consumption’, ‘encourages less consumerism’, ‘allows to be environmentally responsible’ identified *minimal environmental waste*, *low carbon footprint*, and *greater environmental responsibility* in rentals. The focused code ‘being environmentally responsible through rentals’ then emerged from the initial codes. In particular, initial codes such as ‘promote reuse of clothes’, ‘reduces clothing production’, ‘lowers the need to manufacture’, ‘increases product life’, ‘enables optimum usage of clothing’ highlighted garment reuse, low clothing production, and high clothing end-of-life with clothing rentals as *environmental benefits* of rentals. These initial codes were grouped into several focused codes ‘recognise rentals promoting clothing reuse’, ‘support clothing reuse’, ‘support the reduction of clothing production’, and ‘support the increase of clothing end-of-life’. Subsequently, initial codes like ‘renting being sustainable alternative’, ‘contributes in terms of sustainability’, ‘promotes helping the planet’ identified *high environmental sustainability* of rentals that were arranged into the focused code ‘recognise the sustainability prospective of rental subscriptions’.

As the respondents discussed their clothing consumption through rentals, initial codes such as ‘appreciate minimalist practices’, ‘practice minimalism’ indicated their *minimalist practices* that were collated into the focused code ‘embrace minimalism’. With regards to minimalism, initial codes like ‘purchase only basic clothing items’, ‘helps to do essential purchases’, identified *essential purchases* undertaken by the respondents that formulated into the focused code ‘engage in only staple purchases’. In addition, initial codes such as ‘detoxify wardrobe’, ‘engage in consigning clothes’, ‘donate clothes to friends’, ‘give away clothing grown out of’ indicated *disposal* of pre-owned clothing purchases by the respondents that

were elevated to the focused code ‘dispose pre-loved and outworn clothing’. Initial codes like ‘allows to avoid fast fashion purchase’, ‘reduces fast fashion purchase’, ‘less purchase of wear once clothes’, ‘helps to avoid fast fashion’ further reflected *reduced purchases* of fast fashion clothing on the respondents’ part that were grouped into the focused code ‘manage to reduce fast fashion purchases’.

Initial codes such as ‘removes guilt of impacting environment’, ‘guilt-free with renting clothes’ thus reflected a reduction in guilt among respondents due to the use of rentals, and these codes were collated into the focus code ‘reduce remorse with rentals’. Furthermore, initial codes like ‘maintain capsule wardrobe’ ‘closet of items truly loved’, ‘less clutter’ ‘save closet space’ indicated the prevalence of a *minimal wardrobe* with capsule collections for the respondents. Accordingly, the focused code ‘maintain minimal wardrobe’ was formulated from the initial codes.

In the coding process demonstrated above, the adequacy and conceptual strength of both the initial codes and the focused codes were revisited and renamed from time to time to improve the fit of the codes to the data. The tentative conceptual categories that emerged as focused codes were then explored further by moving the coding process towards the third phase of theoretical coding. This is outlined in the next subsection of this chapter.

4.2.3 Theoretical Coding

In accordance with Charmaz’s (2012) constructive stance on emergence, theoretical codes were cautiously used in this thesis by avoiding the imposition of a forced framework of coding families to the data. Instead, in this coding phase, this thesis adopted Thornberg and Charmaz’s (2014) suggestion of using the logic of abduction to identify and use the appropriate theoretical codes. Abductive reasoning, introduced by Peirce (1955), involves an iterative dialogue between data and a combination of pre-existing theories or propositions from the literature (van Maanen et al., 2007). The codes and categories from the focused

coding phase were therefore explored and compared with the researcher's pre-existing knowledge, as well as with developing knowledge and theories, to search for patterns and the best possible explanations. Following this abductive logic, the theoretical codes emerged in this thesis.

One of the conceptual categories in the focused coding phase emphasised the consumers' desire for luxury brands, with codes like 'consider luxury brands as dream pieces', 'consider luxury brands as exclusive for being unaffordable', 'consider luxury brands as status symbols' emerging in the theoretical code '*acknowledge the desire for luxury brands*'. Alongside, three conceptual categories in the focused coding phase identified the three possible ways in which the fast fashion brands catered to the consumers' desires. First, focused codes such as 'acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling aspirational luxury dream' captured the notion of luxury dream fulfillment that is evoked by fast fashion and this code was elevated to the theoretical code '*acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling aspirational luxury dream*'.

Second, focused codes like 'acknowledge the need for novelty', 'acknowledge being bored of similar outfits', 'acknowledge the need to avoid outfit repetitions', 'being conscious of outfit repetition stigma', 'feel social pressure for outfit rotations', 'feel sense of excitement with new outfits' were grouped into the theoretical code '*acknowledge the need to avoid outfit repetitions*', indicating the notion of outfit repetitions that is hindered by fast fashion. Third, focused codes such as 'regard fast fashion as affordable and trendy' and 'acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling novelty needs' suggested novelty needs fulfillment that is induced by fast fashion and these codes were collated into the theoretical code '*acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling novelty needs*'.

Another conceptual category in the focused coding phase identified the propensity of high spending in consumers' fast fashion clothing purchases and the possible explanation of

impulsive and recurring purchases behind such spending habits. Accordingly, the focused codes like 'regard fast fashion as impulsive and recurring purchases' and 'incur high spending on fast fashion purchases' emerged in the theoretical code '*incur high spending on fast fashion purchases*'. One more conceptual category in the focused coding phase demonstrated consumers' criticism of high spending on fast fashion and possible explanations for the criticism was associated with debt, money wastage, low utility, low resale value, and hoarding emanating from clothing purchases. The theoretical code '*criticise fast fashion purchases as money wastage*' thus emerged from focused codes like 'incur severe debt with fast fashion purchases', 'criticise fast fashion purchases as money wastage', 'realise low utility of fast fashion clothing', 'realise low resale value of fast fashion clothing', and 'realise fast fashion purchases to result in hoarding'.

As a consequence of the criticism, a conceptual category in the focused coding phase highlighted the consumers' willingness to reduce fast fashion purchases and possible explanations for this willingness stemmed from their remorse and reluctance toward high spending on fast fashion. The focused codes like 'exhibit remorse from fast fashion spending', 'exhibit reluctance about high spending on fast fashion purchases', and 'show willingness to reduce frequent fast fashion purchases' were therefore grouped into the theoretical code '*show willingness to reduce frequent fast fashion purchases*'.

In contrast, one of the categories showcased consumers' acknowledgment of rentals to be affordable with possible reasons highlighted as low-cost subscriptions and access to high-priced luxury brands at fractional payments. While focused codes like 'recognise the affordability of rental subscriptions', and 'wear expensive outfits without paying full price' were grouped into the theoretical code '*recognise the affordability of rental subscriptions*'; another code like 'make conscious choice to rent for affordable subscriptions' was elevated to the theoretical code '*make conscious choice to rent for affordable subscriptions*'. Besides,

focused codes such as ‘gain access to unaffordable luxury brands with subscriptions’ and ‘disregard outfit price within subscriptions’ were collated into the theoretical code ‘*gain access to unaffordable luxury brands with subscriptions*’.

Categories in the focused coding phase also highlighted the financial benefits that stem from rentals and possible factors that explain these benefits emanating from cost-effectiveness, reduced fast fashion spending, a financially smart lifestyle, and cost savings from the use of rentals. As such, the focused codes like ‘realise rentals being more cost-effective than purchases’, ‘reduce high spending on fast fashion purchases’, ‘gain the economic benefit of saving money’, and ‘become financially smart about spending’ emerged in the theoretical code ‘*attain the financial benefits of rentals*’.

In parallel, categories identified the consumers’ propensity for constant fast fashion purchases and captured their consciousness about fast fashion being environmentally unsustainable with possible explanations that were associated with clothing waste, quick clothing production, and constant disposal. Thus, the theoretical code ‘*being environmentally conscious about fast fashion purchases*’ emerged from focused codes like ‘realise fast fashion purchases as environmentally unsustainable’, ‘acknowledge fast fashion as the creator of clothing waste’, ‘appear conscious about quick clothing production’, ‘being cognisant of frequent fast fashion purchases’, and ‘show concern for constant clothing disposal’.

Another conceptual category highlighted consumers’ social consciousness about fast fashion purchases and possible explanations were related to labor exploitations. As such, the focused code like ‘being conscious about labor exploitations’ emerged in the theoretical code ‘*being socially conscious about fast fashion purchases*’. In consequence, a category captured consumers’ reluctance about fast fashion purchases where the theoretical code ‘*exhibit reluctance about frequent fast fashion purchases*’ emerged from the focused code like ‘exhibit reluctance about frequent fast fashion purchases’. Moreover, a conceptual category

reflected consumers' desire for environmental sustainability that led to the emergence of the theoretical code '*express desire to be environmentally sustainable*' from the focused code like 'express desire to be environmentally sustainable'.

Contrarily, a conceptual category identified rentals to be a sustainable alternative where the theoretical code '*make conscious choice to rent for being sustainable*' emerged from the focused code 'recognise the sustainability prospective of rental subscriptions'. Possible explanations behind this view of rentals as a sustainable alternative were related to garment reuse, lower clothing production, higher clothing end-of-life, and fulfillment of environmental responsibility. Accordingly, the theoretical code '*being environmentally responsible through rentals*' emerged from focused codes like 'recognise rentals promoting clothing reuse', 'support clothing reuse', 'support the reduction of clothing production', 'support the increase of clothing end-of-life' and 'being environmentally responsible through rentals'.

Conceptual categories additionally highlighted the consumers' use of rentals to encourage minimalism and possible minimalistic practices were associated with staple clothing purchases, pre-owned clothing disposal, and the maintenance of a minimal wardrobe. Thus, focused codes like 'embrace minimalism', 'engage in only staple purchases', 'dispose pre-loved and outworn clothing', 'maintain minimal wardrobe' emerged in the theoretical code '*embrace minimalism with restrictive buying and staples*'. Another minimalistic practice outlined reduced fast fashion purchases and the guilt of fast fashion being reduced through the use of rentals, such that the focused codes like 'manage to reduce fast fashion purchases' and 'reduce remorse with rentals' resulted in the emergence of the theoretical code '*embrace minimalism by reducing fast fashion purchases*'.

As these theoretical codes progressively emerged, the researcher engaged in their continual refinement to determine which theoretical codes could be subsumed by others and

how the theoretical codes fitted together. This refinement process led to the emergence of sub-categories and, subsequently, the core themes, as outlined in the next subsection of this chapter.

4.2.4 Emergence of Core Themes

The theoretical codes that emerged from the analysis of the data were categorised across four main ideas through continual refinement: trends, spending, consciousness and minimalism. The storylines across these four main ideas reflected trajectories in the respondents' fast fashion clothing consumption toward the use of fashion rentals. Accordingly, the theoretical codes associated with each of these ideas were collated into four sub-categories and these sub-categories were then elevated to a core conceptual theme to construct the overall grounded theory.

Desire for luxury brands lies at the core of making the respondents engage in constant fast fashion purchases. Through these purchases, the respondents are able to satisfy their aspirations for luxury, as well as their cravings for newness and frequent wardrobe changes. As a result, the first sub-category that relates to '*yielding to the next new trend*' through fast fashion purchases emerged from theoretical codes like 'acknowledge the desire for luxury brands', 'acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling aspirational luxury dream', 'acknowledge the need to avoid outfit repetitions', and 'acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling novelty needs' (see Appendix 2).

With regard to the respondents' constant fast fashion purchases, the incurrence of high spending and the subsequent criticisms of such spending prompted them to be willing to reduce their fast fashion purchases. Accordingly, the second sub-category that relates to '*seeking to regulate spending habits*' in clothing consumption emerged from the theoretical codes like 'incur high spending on fast fashion purchases', 'criticise fast fashion purchases as

money wastage', and 'show willingness to reduce frequent fast fashion purchases' (see Appendix 2).

Beyond spending, the respondents' growing environmental and social consciousness about fast fashion gained prominence and resulted in them displaying hesitancy toward their fast fashion purchases while emphasising their desire to be environmentally sustainable. Thus, the third sub-category that relates to '*developing environmental and social consciousness*' emerged from the theoretical codes like 'being environmentally conscious about fast fashion purchases', 'being socially conscious about fast fashion purchases', 'exhibit reluctance about frequent fast fashion purchases', and 'express desire to be environmentally sustainable' (see Appendix 2).

The respondents' inclination to regulate spending and address their environmental and social consciousness prompted them to shift toward rentals as a conscious choice for their clothing consumption. This transition to rentals led the respondents to realise the affordability of rental subscriptions, access to unaffordable luxury brands, the financial benefits of rentals, and a sense of environmental responsibility. Furthermore, the respondents were notably motivated to embrace minimalism through the use of rentals, leading to restrictive buying, essential purchases, and reduced fast fashion purchases. Accordingly, the fourth sub-category that relates to '*adopting minimalistic consumption*' emerged from several theoretical codes like 'make conscious choice to rent for affordable subscriptions', 'recognise the affordability of rental subscriptions', 'gain access to unaffordable luxury brands with subscriptions', 'attain the financial benefits of rentals', 'make conscious choice to rent for being sustainable', 'being environmentally responsible through rentals', 'embrace minimalism with restrictive buying and staples', and 'embrace minimalism by reducing fast fashion purchases' (see Appendix 2).

The four sub-categories can therefore be weaved into a storyline that demonstrates how consumers initially embrace emerging trends via fast fashion purchases; and yet, they are driven to regulate their spending and address their evolving environmental and social awareness stemming from their frequent fast fashion purchases. Consequently, consumers shift away from fast fashion purchases and gravitate toward fashion rentals, embodying the adoption of minimalistic consumption practices.

Therefore, the core theme of '*Becoming Minimalist*' emerged from these four sub-categories of 'yielding to the next new trend', 'seeking to regulate spending habits', 'developing environmental and social consciousness', and 'adopting minimalistic consumption'. The coding process exemplified from initial and focused codes through to the theoretical codes and towards the emergence of the core theme has thus been presented in ideographs (see Appendix 2). In total, three core themes (including the one exemplified) emerged from the analysis of data in this thesis, and the ideographs showcasing the coding phases for the other three core themes are also illustrated in Appendix 2.

As previously mentioned, the coding process exemplified in this section was permeated with the analytical strategies of the constant comparative method, theoretical sensitivity, memo writing, theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation. The next sections of this chapter demonstrate each of these analytical strategies following the guidelines of CGT.

4.3 Constant Comparative Method

CGT largely depends on using the constant comparative method wherein each part of the data – such as codes, categories, properties and dimensions – is constantly compared with other parts and other sources of data (Charmaz, 2014). In this thesis, as directed by Glaser and Holton (2007) and Holton (2010), the researcher engaged in four levels of constant comparisons.

At the first level, codes were compared with codes in the initial coding phase by enabling comparisons with other data segments and by identifying similarities and differences in the patterns of the data. In the second and third levels, codes were compared with emerging categories, and categories were also compared with one another to generate and refine the categories. Such comparisons, which took place in the focused coding phase, allowed the researcher to move between the codes and categories that emerged from the same data source (e.g., multiple interviews) and different data sources (e.g., interviews, archival data records). At the fourth level, the categories and emerging theories in the theoretical coding phase were also compared with existing theoretical frameworks in the literature.

The constant comparative method was therefore used in this thesis throughout all stages of the analysis and records of these comparisons were maintained through memo writing (see Section 4.5). The constant comparative method enabled the researcher to develop and refine the categories that ultimately guided further data collection and subsequently attain theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation (see Section 4.6). Moreover, the engagement with existing theoretical frameworks to support the constant comparative method contributed to the development of theoretical sensitivity as detailed in the next section of this chapter.

4.4 Theoretical Sensitivity

To complement the constant comparative method, CGT favours the use of the literature throughout the research as a means to attain theoretical sensitivity (Charmaz, 2006). Furthermore, CGT argues that the writing of the literature review should be postponed until after the completion of data analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). In this thesis, the researcher's prior knowledge of the academic literature, as well as that of her supervisors, were used as sources of theoretical sensitivity throughout the research.

At the beginning of the study, a preliminary review of the literature was undertaken by the researcher to gain and apply theoretical insights to the phenomenon being studied in this

thesis. This engagement with the literature helped the researcher to establish a theoretical dialogue with the data across the three phases of coding toward the emergence of the core themes. Following Charmaz (2006), a comprehensive literature review was also compiled after data analysis to reinforce the researcher's credibility and maintain the researcher's openness and creativity during immersion in the data. The researcher also took measures to ensure that prior knowledge of the academic literature would not block the emergence of codes and categories in the coding process. For this purpose, the researcher actively maintained a reflexive account to show how the codes and categories were grounded in the data and how the codes and categories relate to prior academic knowledge. This reflexivity helped the researcher minimise bias and avoid the imposition of preconceived ideas and theoretical frameworks on the data. The reflexive account was primarily maintained by the researcher through memo writing as elucidated in the next section of this chapter.

4.5 Memo Writing

Memo writing is typically presented in CGT as a crucial intermediate step between data collection and writing up the drafts of the study (Charmaz, 2006). In this thesis, memo writing was constantly carried out throughout the data collection and analysis process in order to gather and maintain the researcher's analytical ideas. Memos were informally written to preserve the researcher's natural voice and were modified and revisited throughout the research process to incorporate the researcher's emerging ideas. To maintain links to the data being analysed in this thesis, memos were created within the same project file that contained the interview transcripts and the archival data records in the NVivo Version 12 software.

During data collection and analysis, memo writing was implemented to record issues, gaps and insights about the sources of data. In the coding process, memos were maintained to describe the significance of the codes, record patterns among the emerging codes, and elaborate on the most frequent codes. Memos also detailed the properties and the dimensions

of the codes and categories and delineated the conditions and the consequences associated with the codes and categories in order to aid the coding process. Moreover, memos demonstrated connections between tentative categories to identify the major and minor categories that shaped the emerging analysis and led to the identification of core themes.

At times, raw data in the form of verbatims were included in the memos to ensure that analysis was grounded in the data. Much memo writing was also concerned with making comparisons between data and between codes and emerging categories to facilitate the constant comparative method. Memos were used to discover and explore ideas emerging from the coding process, record conjectures and identify gaps in the data and the coding process. To enhance the comparisons of codes and categories to the relevant literature and to develop theoretical sensitivity, memo writing also involved the recording of ideas and concepts from the literature. As a result, memo writing guided further data collection and facilitated the theoretical sampling and, consequently, the theoretical saturation in this thesis.

4.6 Theoretical Sampling and Saturation

In CGT, theoretical sampling provides specific directions to 'grounded theorising through sorting and integrating categories' (Charmaz, 2006, p. 177). Theoretical sampling is typically guided by the constant comparison of the conceptual level of data. This allows the researcher to raise questions about the depth of the concepts derived from data and to subsequently direct the ongoing data collection (Ligita et al., 2020). In this thesis, theoretical sampling was used to develop and refine the categories that emerged from the constructivist coding process by subjecting the categories to the constant comparative method.

Categories started to emerge during the concurrent processes of data collection and analysis and constant comparisons were made by the researcher between the emerging codes and categories. Through these constant comparisons, the properties and dimensions of these categories were delineated and the relationships and variations between them were able to be

identified (see Corbin & Strauss, 2008). To further refine them, categories were also compared with theoretical frameworks from the literature. An audit trail of these constant comparisons and emerging categories was maintained through memo writing.

Guided by the emerging categories, theoretical sampling occurred as additional data were collected through interviews, and the previously coded interview transcripts were revisited to support the category development and refinement process. Theoretical sampling also occurred when some of the respondents introduced new concepts through their interviews, and the archival data records were re-examined as a source of comparative analysis. Theoretical sampling thus enabled the researcher to increase the precision of the categories, make the analysis more abstract, and develop an emerging theory that is grounded in the data (Charmaz, 2006). Driven by theoretical sampling, the researcher employed the constant comparative method and continued data collection through interviews and archival data records until the theoretical saturation was reached in this thesis. That is, data collection and analysis continued till the category properties were saturated and a theory was explicated in this thesis.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter described the analytical processes in this thesis that adhered to the strategies of the constructivist grounded theory. Data analysis commenced with the systematic application of the constructivist coding process, where initial codes emerged from the line-by-line coding of excerpts from the archival data records and interview transcripts. Initial codes were elevated to tentative conceptual categories in the focused coding phase through the collation of concepts with similar properties and dimensions. An abductive logic was then applied to the focused codes that led to the emergence of theoretical codes through an iterative dialogue between prior codes and categories and the researcher's pre-existing knowledge of theories. These theoretical codes were then categorised across common themes

and elevated to sub-categories that resulted in the emergence of core themes. Overall, this chapter has illustrated a systematic application of the constructivist coding process, along with a cyclical application of the analytical strategies such as constant comparative method, memo writing, theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, and theoretical saturation.

Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion

This chapter provides empirical descriptions of the findings from the analysis of archival data and the semi-structured interviews conducted in this research. These findings outline the possible explanations of consumers' clothing consumption and the associated changes in their consumption behaviours, as evidenced by verbatims from the data. To grasp their significance for theory and practice, the findings are then explored using extant literature. Discussions of each theme show how they support or diverge from existing knowledge in the domain and provide insight into the best answers to the main research question of this thesis.

The coding process in the data analysis, which followed Charmaz's (2006) CGT, led to the emergence of three core themes of explanation:

- Becoming minimalist
- Promoting social-and-self interests
- Redefining consumption.

These three core themes of explanation capture 'reconciliation processes' that consumers undergo to navigate the desire–goal conflicts they experience in their clothing consumption contexts. Indeed, the data in the form of archival information and interview transcripts were reduced through successive rounds of coding. These rounds encompassed initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding and led to the development of sub-categories (see Section 4.2). Ten sub-categories emerged from the application of comparative analysis at the level of the theoretical codes:

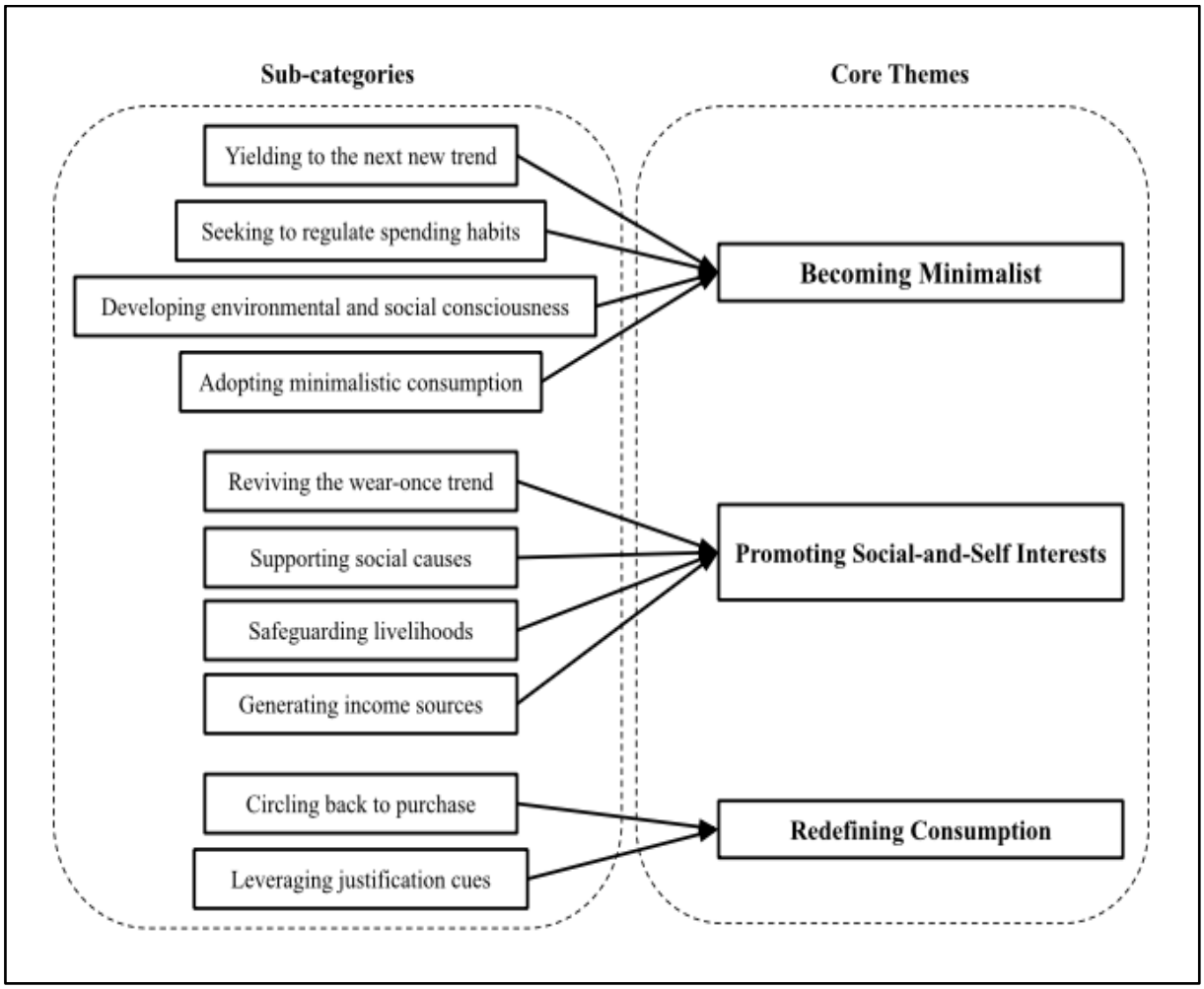
- Yielding to the next new trend
- Seeking to regulate spending habits
- Developing environmental and social consciousness
- Adopting minimalistic consumption

- Reviving the wear once trend
- Supporting social causes
- Safeguarding livelihoods
- Generating income sources
- Circling back to purchase
- Leveraging justification cues.

Constant comparative methods of analysis (see Section 4.3) used to further question and reduce the data resulted in the categorisation of these sub-categories into the three core themes of explanation. The ideograph of the three core themes is illustrated in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1

Ideograph of Sub-categories and Core Themes



Each of these three core themes revolves around conflicts between the consumers' desires and their higher-order goals. These conflicts are triggered by the concurrent activation of a specific desire and one or more incompatible higher-order goals in consumers' clothing consumption context. The desire–goal conflicts experienced by consumers are therefore at the core of the discussion in this chapter. Consideration of these themes and conflicts outlines their foundational sub-categories with additional insights drawn from the literature across the solid-liquid consumption continuum surrounding the consumers' clothing consumption.

5.1 Becoming Minimalist

The first theme pertains to the consumers' consumption journey, beginning at the solid end of the consumption continuum with fast fashion and illustrating their transition toward the liquid end of consumption as they embrace fashion rental subscriptions. At the solid end of the consumption continuum, consumers fulfil their aspirations for luxury fashion through the consumption of luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands. Here the need for novelty, social image and environmental considerations such as social media influences and societal expectations encourage consumers to yield to the latest trends through their fast fashion choices. As consumers perpetuate a vicious cycle of repeated fast fashion buying, resultant excessive purchasing poses challenges to their personal interests through disproportionate spending and negative effects on collective interests (e.g., contributing to environmental harm and unfair working conditions for fast fashion labour). To regulate their spending habits and address their environmental and social consciousness, consumers embrace fashion rental subscriptions. This leads to a transition toward a minimalist approach to their fashion clothing consumption.

5.1.1 Yielding to the Next New Trend

Luxury fashion is regarded as a figment of the imagination with several respondents describing luxury items as 'dream pieces' (R8) that one would love to have in the closet

except that they are not items that one can 'afford in everyday shopping' (R7). It is these aspects of limited accessibility and unaffordability that intensify the desire for luxury fashion brands, as noted by R21:

> I like the luxury brands so much that I want to be able to walk into the store and be able to afford it. But, all of us come from different socioeconomic backgrounds and not everything is easily accessible or affordable. I think that is a huge factor that I feel makes the luxury brands even more special for me. It is something that I love but it is not easily accessible and I definitely want to buy it with my hard-earned money someday.

In her narrative, R21 emphasised the significance of socioeconomic backgrounds, given that they often determine the accessibility and affordability of luxury brands. Indeed, several respondents believed the affordability of luxury brands serves as 'an outward visible key to one's success' (R4) and 'depicts people's statuses in society' (R12). It is the notion of possessing a 'status icon' (R4), something that is 'out of the reach for most people' (R12), that motivated the respondents to 'save up money' (R7) to someday purchase luxury brands. R21's narrative also reflects this hopeful anticipation that one day she will be able to afford the luxury brands with her hard-earned money. R1 also expressed her belief that the 'aspiration to have it someday' fuels the desire for luxury brands for people who cannot readily afford them.

Drawing on Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation, inaccessibility cultivates one's desire to obtain an object – indeed, more distance and resistance to the pursuit of acquisition can intensify this desire. In particular, Belk et al. (2003) identified financial barriers as a factor that can create a distance between consumers and their objects of desire. Following similar principles, luxury fashion brands are distanced from the masses through the employment of a premium pricing strategy such that high prices evoke exclusivity, making

these brands accessible to only a few people (Fionda & Moore, 2009; Husic & Cicic, 2009; Joy et al., 2012). In their respective works, Joy et al. (2012) and Ertekin (2019) have acknowledged the high prices of luxury brands signify status for those who can afford them and represent an aspirational dream for those who cannot. Belk et al. (2003) have further documented that the desire for objects is built on conveying one's social position to valued others. It can also be stimulated by self-constructed fantasies of obtaining objects of desire and thereby imitating the consumption behaviour of real and imaginary others. Prior studies (e.g., Ertekin, 2019; Joy et al., 2012; Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016, 2018; Loureiro et al., 2018) have also emphasised that the aspirational dream of attaining accessibility enhances consumers' desire as well as their inclination to purchase the luxury brands. This is because of their goals of demonstrating a higher social status and emulating the luxury lifestyles of wealthy individuals and celebrities. Considering luxury fashion brands as aspirational thus aligns with Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation in which the desire for objects arises from hope and imaginative explorations of obtaining the object.

It is this sense of hopeful anticipation for luxury brands that is capitalised on by fast fashion brands when they 'mimic the latest runway styles and provide a constant stream of new styles at affordable prices' (R21). Several respondents acknowledged their insufficient purchasing power to obtain luxury fashion brands as the reason they 'constantly keep buying items from fast fashion brands' (R10). Fast fashion can thus be characterised as a catalyst for the desire for the latest runway styles of luxury fashion that many respondents could not actualise because of their insufficient purchasing power. In R12's view, fast fashion brands 'bridge the gap' between individuals and their aspirations of owning luxury fashion brands by offering 'affordable replicas', if not the genuine items themselves.

Prior studies (e.g., Amatulli et al., 2016; Ertekin, 2019; Joy et al., 2012; Miller, 2013) have also described fast fashion as low-cost clothing collections that imitate luxury fashion

trends and offer consumers affordable knockoffs of catwalk looks or celebrity couture fashion. Fast fashion therefore makes the consumers' aspirational dream of luxury come true, allowing them to fulfil their desires by wearing inexpensive substitutes of the latest luxury fashion clothing trends (Ertekin, 2019; Joy et al., 2012). However, in line with Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation, the availability of affordable luxury fashion replicas offered by fast fashion brands suggests that the desires of the respondents are not realised in absolute terms. Rather, consumers achieve a relative realisation of their desires for luxury fashion from obtaining items from fast fashion brands that closely resemble luxury items at more affordable prices.

Despite the relative realisation of their luxury fashion desires, the consumers' needs for novelty and social image enhance their desire to purchase luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands. Several respondents mentioned that their frequent fast fashion purchases were driven by their need to 'wear something new all the time' (R6) and 'follow the current fashion trends' (R8). The respondents' susceptibility to fast fashion as a means of realising their luxury fashion desires through replicas is perpetuated by the accelerated trend cycles in fashion and popularised micro-trends in clothing styles. Media reports substantiate that fast fashion retailers like Shein feed on shorter fashion trend cycles and the prevalence of micro-trends, allowing them to release over 10,000 new styles a day, of which only 6% remain in stock for more than 90 days (Upton-Clark, 2023; Ward, 2023; Williams, 2022). Hence, social media and the influencer culture foreground the latest trends for consumers and build pressure to remain relevant by constantly upgrading to these new trends.

Considering these rapid changes in fashion trends, some respondents expressed boredom with having to wear the same outfit multiple times, describing an urge to frequently refresh and upgrade their style with new outfits. As one of the respondents shared:

> I get bored if I've to wear the same outfit more than once. I need to wear the current style and I keep refreshing my closet with new outfits from these fast fashion brands. It always gives me that quick rush of dopamine when I've got the new style to wear. (R21)

R21's narrative coincides with Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation where boredom regarding a once-desired object (i.e., a new outfit) reignites desire for a new object (i.e., another new outfit). This cycle of desire initiated by boredom is reflected in R21's narrative when she seeks novelty to alleviate the boredom that arises from wearing the same outfits repeatedly. By constantly upgrading to current fashion trends with new outfits from fast fashion brands, R21 addresses her need for novelty and actualises having fresh and diverse styles in her wardrobe. Consistent with Barnes and Lea-Greenwood (2006) and Joung (2014), frequent fast fashion consumption among respondents can be traced to their insatiable need for newness.

The need for novelty that triggers the respondents' continuous desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands aligns with the higher-order goal of openness to change that underlies the basic value of stimulation (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Stimulation value, also alluding to Stern et al.'s (1999) egoistic value, emphasises the pursuit of self-interested goals such as excitement, novelty and change that derive from the organismic need for variety and stimulation (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). While R21's narrative indicates her need for variety and stimulation in response to boredom, the dopamine rush she experiences reflects her excitement from the next upgrade in her outfits. Miller (2013) has explained this by suggesting that consumers derive excitement from the transient nature of fast fashion items as it enables them to continuously create unique looks and enhance their appearances.

An emphasis on appearance can also be observed from the respondents' hesitations about wearing the same outfit twice because they feared that others may form presumptuous opinions and judge them for outfit repetitions. For instance:

> There is a stigma around women's fashion that you cannot wear the same thing more than once. It's just a constant social pressure for us to dress in the current style and follow the trend and then we have social media which calls us out when we wear the same thing twice. (R43)

Here, R43 addressed societal expectations and attitudes on social media toward fashion consumption. According to such expectations, it is imperative for women to follow current fashion trends and avoid wearing the same outfits so that they conform to some external 'unspoken' standards. Popular fashion magazines also corroborate that the need for a constantly refreshed wardrobe is influenced by both visual social media platforms (e.g., Instagram) that scrutinise one's sartorial choices and the influencer culture that adds pressure to stay relevant by continually upgrading to new trends (Nguyen, 2020; Servian, 2022). Indeed, the popularity of influencer culture and Instagram has reached the extent that an individual wearing the same outfit twice may be viewed as socially unacceptable or 'taboo' (Venkatakrishnan, 2021). Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation also recognises one's desires to be social-inspired, with external sources (e.g., media) functioning as a seduction mechanism to stimulate desire for a specific object (in this case, luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands).

These societal expectations and social media influences perhaps caused the respondents to be wary of re-wearing outfits when they 'have already got photos in it' (R20). Specifically, they were 'concerned about what are people going to think' (R6) if they did not adhere to the wear once culture. As one of the respondents shared:

> In my circle, you need something new and trendy to wear every weekend just to show people and anytime I've got something special, I need something new. I cannot be seen in the same outfit again, no way. I don't think people will invite me if I'm seen wearing the same dress a second time. So, for me, I'd turn to fast fashion because you can get something new right away. (R42)

This makes clear that R42, in wearing new outfits each time she had to socialise, engaged in fast fashion purchases to fit in with society. R2 also expressed that she felt the need to wear new outfits that aligned with current fashion trends to be perceived as 'stylish and fashionable in social networks'. These points suggest that the respondents are conscious of their social image and that they subsequently use their consumption of trendy new apparel from fast fashion brands to 'fit in' with the expectations of peers or the broader society. The need to maintain social image that prompts the respondents' continuous desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands aligns with their higher-order goal of self-enhancement that underlies the basic value of power (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Power value, also alluding to Stern et al.'s (1999) egoistic value, emphasises the pursuit of self-interested goals such as social status, prestige and recognition that contribute to the maintenance of face or public image and the avoidance of humiliation (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012).

In Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation, consumers' desire for objects is stimulated when these objects are conduits to recognition and status from social relations. Prior studies (e.g., Cairns et al., 2021; Ruane & Wallace, 2013) have thus suggested that consumers resist outfit repetitions when they present themselves to others because they remain conscious of their image or how they are perceived by others when it comes to their clothes. However, this reliance on fast fashion brands to create and enhance social image contradicts Mrad et al. (2020) who have described fast fashion brands as an outlet to fulfil consumers' fashion dreams, but one that does not necessarily express or enhance consumers' social identities.

Conversely, Gupta and Gentry (2018) have supported the finding of fast fashion brands being used to create and enhance social image such that the frequent upgrading to new outfits via fast fashion consumption enables one to present multiple selves to others.

The previous discussion reveals that the respondents' continuous desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands do not contradict their personal goals informed by values of stimulation and power. Consequently, it is not surprising that the respondents readily yield to the latest trends in their fast fashion consumption. However, this perpetual cycle of yielding to the next new trend reignites the desire for novelty and social image and eventually challenges one's spending habits.

5.1.2 Seeking to Regulate Spending Habits

Several respondents actualised their luxury fashion desires with replicas from fast fashion brands on the basis of low prices, making it affordable for them to 'frequently shop new clothing' (R12), 'reduce boredom' (Post#124) and keep up with 'rapid trend changes in fashion' (R6). As a result, respondents were 'buying items from fast fashion brands constantly' (R10) and 'almost impulsively' (R15). Prior academic studies (e.g., Cook & Yurchisin, 2017; Joy et al., 2012; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Morgan & Birtwistle, 2009; Niinimäki et al., 2020) have identified these recurring impulsive purchases as common materialistic behaviours among fast fashion consumers. Moreover, affordable prices, quick style turnover and a constant influx of new styles from fast fashion brands have been acknowledged as encouraging materialism with consumers engaging in recurring impulsive purchases (Bick et al., 2018; Cairns et al., 2021; Joy et al., 2012; Lang et al., 2016; Watson & Yan, 2013).

A number of respondents situated their recurring purchases with the throwaway mindset. That is, they were frequently purchasing new outfits from fast fashion brands to

wear the outfits one or two times only before having the urge to buy a new outfit and dispose of previous purchases. R36 corroborated the strength of this cycle:

> I'm always buying trendy fast fashion clothes and then wearing them once and getting sick of it because it goes out of style so fast. I feel I'm continuously buying and replacing my clothes but I've to remain updated fashion-wise.

Here R36 demonstrates a seemingly uncontrollable and ultimately endless cycle as she experienced only short-term satisfaction with her fast fashion purchases: an insatiable drive for novelty and social image reignited her desires and caused her to acquire more clothes to remain fashionable. This acquisitive process represents one of the drivers of materialism where excessive desire for material acquisitions drives people to acquire 'just one more' possession in a repeat cycle without ever being satisfied with their acquisitions (Richins & Fournier, 1991). In theory, Belk et al. (2003) have characterised this consumption sequence as a cycle of desire that builds on Gould's (1991) Wheel of Life stages, with the post-consumption bliss derived from acquiring a desired object being short-lived and leading to the rebirth of desire for a new object. Furthermore, the disillusionment experienced by R36 when she becomes bored by her once-desired object supports Campbell's (1987) contention that the cycle of desire can be initiated, in the fast fashion context, by boredom leading to the reformulation of desire for a new object.

The short-term satisfaction of the respondents' desires that triggers the emergence of new desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands often results in the acquisition of 'more clothes than necessary' (R36), a point indicative of overconsumption. This phenomenon of overconsumption of fast fashion clothing resulting from continuous purchases has been extensively documented in prior academic studies (e.g., Armstrong et al., 2016; Birtwistle & Moore, 2007; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Mrad et al., 2020; Niinimäki et al., 2020). Upon reflection on this continuous desire cycle post-purchase, R40 admitted she

‘crazily spends enormous amounts a month on fast fashion’. R32 characterised her fast fashion spending as frivolous considering her ‘credit card bills were enormous’. Along the same lines, R9 mentioned:

> I spend several thousand dollars a month just on clothes. When I see my credit card bills, I just think to myself: you have this debt because you are trying to have new clothes and keep up with trends all the time. (R9)

In her narrative, R9 illustrated the high spending she incurred on fast fashion from her continuous purchases – a practice ultimately stimulated by her reformulation of desires in line with her need for novelty and social image. Prior studies have also discussed high spending on fast fashion (e.g., Garðarsdóttir & Dittmar, 2012; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2015; Richins, 2011; Watson, 2003), with a greater tendency to spend money and frequently overuse credit cards observed among consumers engaged in the frequent acquisition of material possessions. Several respondents in this study expressed their awareness that fast fashion clothes have a low utility that primarily stems from styles that rapidly change, causing ‘clothes [to] go out of fashion’ (R2) and low clothing quality given the ‘fabric only lasts one or two washes’ (R6). The temporary usage of fast fashion clothes has been documented in academic literature, with emphasis given to the underlying factors of new fashion trends (Joung, 2014; Kim et al., 2013) and low clothing quality (Joung, 2014; Joy et al., 2012; McAfee et al., 2004) that affect its utility. The low utility of fast fashion clothes is the main reason why the respondents were ‘unlikely to wear the same outfits again’ (Post#211), meaning that they ‘simply keep collecting the clothes in the wardrobe as trying to resell it hardly gives back any money’ (R40).

While Joung (2014) has substantiated the hoarding of unwanted or unused fast fashion clothes by consumers, this work did not support the notion of low resale price as a factor leading to post-purchase hoarding of fast fashion clothes. In this study, although respondents

struggled with ‘limited closet space’ (R42) for their hoarding tendencies and ‘cannot even get half of the money back when trying to resell’ (R40) items, they still ‘find the urge to go shopping again’ (R37) to acquire new outfits from fast fashion brands. This suggests that the cycle of desire incites continuous purchases and leads to high spending on fast fashion. Joy et al. (2012) have suggested that trendy items and the low quality of fast fashion often give consumers a reason to update their wardrobes frequently. In line with this point, the respondents incurred personal costs as they experienced the low utility of fast fashion clothes. More specifically, they ended up spending significant amounts of money in actualising their luxury fashion desires by frequently replacing their wardrobes with new replicas from fast fashion brands.

The personal costs incurred by respondents in their recurring fast fashion purchases potentially undermine their higher-order goal of self-enhancement informed by the basic value of power (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). One of the facets of the basic value of power, which also alludes to Stern et al.’s (1999) egoistic value, underscores the pursuit of self-interested goals such as wealth accumulation as helping individuals exert control over the events in their life (Schwartz et al., 2012). Conversely, the acquisition of more clothes has a significant effect on the respondents’ personal resources, particularly their financial resources. This is because continuous purchases add up to a significant expense over time and result in high credit card bills, entailing financial strain and affecting the respondents’ sense of stability. Lang (2018) and Lang et al. (2020) have also illustrated this notion of consumers exceeding their financial capacity from trying to continuously purchase fast fashion to keep pace with the latest trends. However, this point of financial strain resulting from high spending on fast fashion contradicts Mrad et al. (2020) who have argued that the low prices of fast fashion brands may lead to high spending but inhibit adverse financial consequences for consumers.

Since their continuous desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands threaten their personal higher-order goal of wealth accumulation, this desire–goal conflict leads respondents to view their spending on fast fashion purchases as wasteful. For instance:

> I was dropping thousands of dollars on fast fashion each month, that I would wear just a handful of times and ultimately that is not the best use of my money. And my bills, you should see how much I owe in credit card bills! It's such a waste. (R43)

Contrary to Joy et al. (2012) and Mrad et al. (2020), R43's perception of her spending on fast fashion purchases indicates the respondent did not rationalise her purchases as pragmatic or overlook her spending as a serious problem simply because of the affordable prices of fast fashion. Instead, R43 was critical of her spending on fast fashion purchases, recognising that money was being spent on clothing items that have very limited temporary usage. Indeed, many respondents construed their desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands as problematic when they realised 'it is just not financially viable to be spending that kind of money on these fast fashion items' (R32). Prior studies on materialistic behaviours have also demonstrated that consumers spending beyond their financial means in a continuous acquisition of possessions experience financial worries (e.g., Donnelly et al., 2013; Garðarsdóttir & Dittmar, 2012; Watson, 2003). In this instance, upon recognising that they should refrain from acting upon their desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands, the respondents sought 'changes in [their] spending habits' (R16) and emphasised that the key to altering their spending habits was to 'simply reduce buying fast fashion' (R32).

Drawing from the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), desire–goal conflict may trigger a control motivation or an aspiration to control the desire that threatens one's higher-order goals. The respondents arguably demonstrated a motivation to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands, aiming to achieve their higher-order goal of wealth accumulation. That is,

respondents expressed an intention to reduce their fast fashion purchases in anticipation that this change in behaviour would result in regulating their spending habits. One possible mechanism that explains the respondents' control motivation is the guilt they experienced post-purchase, as R8 has articulated:

> I bought so many dresses from these fast fashion brands which are sitting in the wardrobe forever and I spent thousands of dollars on them. I cannot even resell them. Now I feel so guilty when I think about the money.

In their respective works, Cairns et al. (2021), Cook and Yurchisin (2017) and Sorensen and Jorgensen, 2019) have all agreed that consumers experience guilt in the aftermath of their fast fashion purchases. Drawing on Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance, Sweeney et al. (2000) have characterised this guilt as a post-purchase cognitive dissonance whereby the respondents experience discomfort upon reflection on their high spending in recurring fast fashion purchases, given that this expenditure resulted in financial strain. Although Cairns et al. (2021) and Stringer et al. (2021) have addressed post-purchase cognitive dissonance, the discomfort described by consumers in these studies was related mainly to environmental and social issues of fast fashion consumption rather than to their qualms about personal spending. Kotabe and Hofmann (2015) have argued that goal-inconsistent behaviours are associated more with self-conscious emotions like guilt, and that one may aspire to control desire to avoid guilt. Hence, the post-purchase guilt experienced by respondents can be classified as a motivation source for (i) exerting control over the enactment of their desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands and (ii) resolving the conflict in favour of their goal-directed behaviour by reducing fast fashion purchases.

Interestingly, the respondents' desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands create a conflict not only with their personal higher-order goals but also with social higher-order goals that prioritise the well-being and interests of others and nature.

5.1.3 Developing Environmental and Social Consciousness

One of the most significant concerns that several respondents expressed about fast fashion was its effects on the environment. For instance, R12 worried that constant clothing purchases from 'most fast fashion brands produce a lot of waste'. R32 highlighted that because the high number of seasonal cycles in fast fashion induces a need to follow the current fashion trends, this results in people 'buying more fast fashion that is just making more trash'. R32 also believed that fast fashion brands engage in 'terrible practices to really quickly produce clothing' to meet the surging demand for new clothes – demand that corresponds to the constantly changing fashion trends that these brands create. Similarly, R20 was aware that because the tendency to frequently purchase fast fashion 'bump[s] demand and production', heavy consumerism from fast fashion contributes to toxic effects on the environment. In addition, respondents were cognisant that in 'get[ting] rid of fast fashion sooner than needed' (R44), their premature disposal of fast fashion 'contributes to an enormous amount of waste' (R9), with clothes often ending up in landfill. For example, R25 believed that this vicious cycle in fast fashion of frequent purchase and rapid disposal makes 'all those clothes go into the environment and pollute the environment'. There was a consensus among several respondents that consumption of fast fashion clothing was generally unsustainable and toxic for the environment.

From the preceding evidence, it is clear that respondents were concerned and aware of the significant and far-reaching environmental effects of fast fashion from its production to post-consumption disposal stages. Quick production practices and the rapid disposal of fast fashion clothing before the end of its actual life cycle have been well-documented in the literature (e.g., Birtwistle & Moore, 2007; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Morgan & Birtwistle, 2009). It has also been acknowledged that the rapid disposal of fast fashion clothing has a detrimental effect on sustainability. This is because the discarding of outdated or unwanted

outfits leads to an increase in unrecyclable textile waste in landfill and causes environmental damage (Gupta & Gentry, 2018; Niinimäki et al., 2020). In their respective work, Stringer et al. (2020) have shown evidence of consumers being well-aware of the environmental consequences of frequent fast fashion purchases.

Embedded within this recognition of the adverse environmental consequences associated with fast fashion behaviour is a widely shared belief among respondents that 'human activities are causing significant harm to the planet' (Post#67). Indeed, awareness of the negative environmental effects of behaviours related to fast fashion caused several respondents to realise that their frequent fast fashion purchases are part of the reason behind the increase of clothing waste in landfill. For instance, as R9 puts this, 'the more we purchase, the more we contribute to the clothing waste'. R41 also appeared to hold herself responsible for the adverse environmental consequences of fast fashion, noting that her practices 'have encouraged the throwaway culture by purchasing fast fashion'. McNeill and Moore (2015) and Kim et al. (2013) have substantiated these findings, claiming that consumers realise their roles in fast fashion consumption and its corresponding effects on the environment.

In line with Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory of environmentalism, the respondents' overarching belief that human beings should be held accountable for the ongoing environmental degradation reflects the emergence of a new environmental paradigm and demonstrates their heightened environmental concerns (Dunlap et al., 2000; Dunlap & Liere, 2008). Such beliefs may prompt the respondents to recognise the detrimental environmental consequences of fast fashion and connect them with their own fast fashion purchasing behaviours as per Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory. These environmental concerns and beliefs shown by respondents – 'care about sustainability and the environment' (R25) – reflect their higher-order goal of self-transcendence, a goal informed by the basic value of universalism (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Notably, the basic value of universalism that

underpins the pursuit of social-interested goals and alludes to Stern et al.'s (1999) biospheric value, fosters the preservation of the natural environment (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Accordingly, the respondents' continuous desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands – characterised by their excessive purchases and resulting in harmful environmental consequences – become problematic as they pose a threat to environmental preservation.

As well as this concern for the environment, a number of respondents showed increasing awareness of workers' exploitation by fast fashion brands. As R30 shared:

> I know how companies are kind of capitalising on workers from other countries for very little money and the unsafe working conditions – I read some articles about it and it's sad how Forever 21 and some other brands produce those clothes.

R30's claim demonstrates her awareness of the heavy reliance of fast fashion on low-cost labour that results in poor working conditions and low wages for garment workers. Common ethical concerns related to workers' welfare and labour practices within the fast fashion industry have been well-documented in the literature (e.g., Joergens, 2006; Niinimäki, 2010; Stringer et al., 2020). Specifically, it has been acknowledged that by outsourcing production to third-world countries, fast fashion brands capitalise on unsafe working conditions and use child labour to ensure the production of inexpensive clothing (Blazquez et al., 2020; Stringer et al., 2020, 2021). Several studies (e.g., Lundblad & Davies, 2016; Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014; Niinimäki, 2010; Niinimäki et al., 2020; Stringer et al., 2020) have also provided evidence that consumers are conscious of social and ethical issues associated with the fast fashion industry.

R21, for instance, noted her frequent purchases as implicated in the quick production practices of fast fashion and the subsequent low labour wages that facilitate such production:

> Look at these fast fashion cloth manufacturers. You will find that the more frequently consumers like me are buying from them – in a way, it gives people employment but it also encourages faster production at the cost of low wages for those labour. (R21)

Data from customer reviews provide additional evidence that respondents believed that the pressure to meet their demands prompted fast fashion brands '[to] neglect working conditions and treat the workers unfairly' (Post#22). In agreeing with media reports that 'labour[er]s regularly work in unsafe conditions to fulfil the ever-increasing fast fashion demands', R32 further notes that her fast fashion purchases are a trigger for wrongful exploitation. These findings, where the respondents assumed responsibility for labour exploitations, contradict prior literature that has indicated that consumers often rationalise their own behaviours. For instance, consumers may deny responsibility for exploitative practices (Carrington et al., 2021; Ritch & Schröder, 2012), condemn fashion retailers (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001), assume the acceptability of exploitative practices in developing countries (Ritch & Schröder, 2012), emphasise that workers voluntarily take jobs (Iwanow et al., 2005) or apply wilful ignorance and prioritise other criteria (e.g., price, quality) when purchasing products (Ehrich & Irwin, 2005).

In accordance with Schwartz's (1977) norm-activation model (NAM), respondents in this study appear to have some awareness that their purchases have consequences for the welfare of others (i.e., fast fashion labour) and they subsequently accept responsibility for these acts and their consequences. Underlying these beliefs – and evidenced by their care about the 'safety and health of labour[er]s from third-world countries' (Post#119) who are affected by exploitative practices – the respondents' higher-order goal of protecting the welfare of others is apparent. This higher-order goal of protecting the welfare of others is also informed by the basic value of universalism that emphasises the pursuit of social-interested goals and alludes to Stern et al.'s (1999) altruistic value (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al.,

2012). Therefore, it can be suggested that the respondents' continuous desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands, characterised by their excessive purchases and resulting in adverse social consequences, become problematic because of their threat to the higher-order goal of welfare protection.

In alignment with this recognition of desire–goal conflict, R41 expressed both her remorse for her fast fashion purchases and her intention 'to do something different than just consume fast fashion in a way that contributes to less waste'. Similarly, R9 argued that 'in order to take care of the world, we cannot just keep buying a bunch of fast fashion stuff and putting it in landfills'. R20 also emphasised that the fulfilment of 'responsibility towards caring for the environment' can be achieved only by curbing the frequent fast fashion purchases that have negative environmental effects. R15 expressed her intention to reduce her fast fashion purchases to avoid experiencing regret for being the potential cause of negative social consequences. For instance:

> I really don't want to perpetuate the toxic buying cycle that puts workers' lives at risk and makes them work long hours in dangerous environments. I want to make a difference and if that means less fast fashion, sure! At least, there will be fewer regrets. (R15)

These feelings of remorse experienced by the respondents exemplify Sweeney et al.'s (2000) post-purchase cognitive dissonance that arises upon reflection that one's fast fashion purchases have led to detrimental environmental and social effects. This finding aligns with prior studies (e.g., Cairns et al., 2021; Stringer et al., 2021) where consumers' consciousness of the environmental and social consequences of their fast fashion consumption have resulted in post-purchase cognitive dissonance. Drawing from the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), self-conscious emotions like guilt can serve as a motivating force for control and stimulate the aspiration to control desires that

conflict with one's higher-order goals. Arguably, the preceding points indicate the respondents' motivation to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands with the aim of achieving the higher-order goals of environmental preservation and welfare protection. In pursuit of this aim, some respondents revealed their intention to reduce their fast fashion purchases in anticipation that their change in behaviour may result in reduced environmental harm and less unfair treatment of workers. The post-purchase guilt experienced by respondents can therefore serve as a motivating factor to exercise control over their desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands. Furthermore, the intention to reduce fast fashion purchases can resolve the desire–goal conflict in favour of their goal-directed behaviour.

In parallel with these self-conscious emotions, the respondents' moral considerations (i.e., associations between awareness of consequences, the ascription of responsibility and personal norms) also triggered their motivation to control desires that conflict with their higher-order goals. As one of the respondents shared:

> There is a morality argument like if somebody cares about impacting the environment and the questionable labour that manufactures those articles of clothing, they should be more conscious and buy less fast fashion. (R43)

R43's morality argument is the foundation of her care for the environment and for fairness for fast fashion labourers. In line with Graham et al.'s (2011, 2013) Moral Foundations Theory, Karpiak and Baril (2008) and Milfont et al. (2019) have supported the attribution of moral foundations of care and fairness to pro-environmental and prosocial behaviours respectively. R43's morality argument is further supported in the studies of Clark et al. (2017), Culiberg et al. (2022) and Jansson and Dorrepaal (2015) who have observed that moral foundations evoke personal norms or feelings of moral obligation.

R43 felt morally obligated to modify her clothing consumption to alleviate the environmental and social effects triggered by consumption. This finding has theoretical support in Schwartz's (1977) NAM and Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theories, where individuals are prompted to feel sufficiently obligated to engage in moral behaviour – for instance, when they are aware of the environmental or social consequences associated with their actions and assume responsibility for these consequences (Groot & Steg, 2007, 2009). Prior studies on moral considerations in clothing consumption (e.g., Joanes, 2019; Nielsen & Hofmann, 2021) have also indicated that awareness of the ethical and environmental dimensions of clothing may cause consumers to moralise clothing consumption and make a consideration of moral norms an integral part of their decision-making process. For example, Stringer et al. (2021) have contended that consumers may feel morally obligated to prevent harm to the environment once they perceive environmental effects as personal, easy to address and can identify actions that can visibly curb these consequences. However, Stringer et al. (2021) have also questioned the development of moral obligations toward workers' welfare because consumers may consider labour violations to occur in geographically and culturally distant countries, a point that can nullify their connection with the workers' plight. Nevertheless, Lee et al. (2009) have argued that consumers can develop moral obligations toward workers' welfare despite geographical distance, on the basis that labour exploitation in developing countries can activate a moral avoidance of brands known for their negative effects on social welfare.

In Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory, moral consideration tends to underlie biospheric and altruistic values. However, Schwartz's (2012) basic value of universalism, which drives higher-order goals of environmental preservation and welfare protection, identifies as moral-centric, informed by the moral foundations of care and fairness (Cowan & Yazdanparast, 2019; Helkama, 2004; Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004). Insofar as Schwartz's (2012) basic value of universalism connects with Stern et al.'s (1999) biospheric and altruistic values, there is

room to believe that moral considerations stem from one's higher-order goals of environmental preservation and welfare protection. In line with the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), Nielsen and Hofmann (2021) have suggested that moral considerations trigger the motivation to resist desires perceived to be in conflict with higher-order goals. R43's narrative presents compelling evidence to suggest that moral considerations can serve as a driving force, motivating respondents to exert control over their desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands. By intending to reduce fast fashion purchases, the respondents strive to address the conflict between their desires and higher-order goals and, thereby, align their behaviour with goal-directed pursuits of environmental preservation and welfare protection.

5.1.4 Adopting Minimalistic Consumption

In their pursuit to regain control over their desires for luxury fashion replicas and reduce their purchases from fast fashion brands, several respondents found themselves captivated by the emerging trend of fashion rentals that offers a cost-effective and sustainable alternative to fast fashion. For several respondents, the most enticing aspect of fashion rentals resides in the ability to access clothing items from luxury fashion brands at affordable prices through subscription services. Respondents regarded the low-cost of rental subscriptions as 'very doable for anybody with a modest salary' (R28) and one that does not require 'any significant long-term financial commitment' (R35). Many respondents highlighted that, with their different tiers or plans, rental subscriptions 'cater to a wide range of income levels' (R7), enabling them to 'choose the subscription that best fits one's budget and need' (R17). For the respondents, it is this 'flexibility of different tiers of subscriptions' (R7) that makes fashion rentals a 'more accessible and affordable alternative to fast fashion' (R13). In addition, respondents saw the free shipping and returns as well as insurance coverage included in the

subscription package as an ‘added value to the overall offering’ (R2), again making fashion rentals more appealing to them.

Academic literature (e.g., Becker-Leifhold, 2018; Lang, 2018; Shrivastava et al., 2021) has extensively acknowledged fashion rentals to be an affordable option for fashion-conscious consumers who do not want to spend money on clothes frequently replaced with new styles. For instance, Lang et al. (2020) have provided evidence of the free shipping policies included in subscription services encouraging consumers to use fashion rentals. The respondents, however, came to appreciate the true value of fashion rentals when they observed that low-cost subscriptions are ‘more cost-effective than the high cost of purchasing these luxury items outright’ (R16).

As R7 mentioned: ‘If I were to actually buy these luxury items, I reckon that would be hundreds of dollars for me and I can perhaps do that, say once or twice a year’. Here, R7 demonstrates her awareness of the exorbitant costs associated with purchasing clothing items from luxury brands, as well as her limited purchasing power that hinders her ability to frequently acquire such items. R29 believed that the rental subscriptions liberated her, and many others, from ‘the constraints of limited buying capacity’ and allowed them to access luxury brands by ‘just paying a fraction of the price or even lesser’. Some of the respondents stated that they could easily ‘disregard the high price tags’ (R32) of the clothing items in rentals, although they are from luxury brands, because the individual item price becomes negligible given the subscription cost is a ‘flat amount based on one’s usage’ (R36).

Several studies (e.g., Arrigo, 2021a; Cook & Hodges, 2015; Lang et al., 2020; Lee & Chow, 2020; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020) have also underlined the cost-effectiveness of fashion rentals in alleviating financial constraints for those who cannot ordinarily afford high-end clothing and inducing tolerance for individual product prices. The cost-effectiveness of rental subscriptions also made the respondents view their subscription costs as a ‘worthwhile

investment' (Post#75) and 'not a waste of money' (R2) when compared with their previous spending on multiple fast fashion purchases. As R41 has described: 'I find it [rental subscription] to be a much more economical use of my money rather than buying a dress from the fast fashion brands that I'm only going to wear once or twice – then, the money is just tossed'.

The economical use of money in fashion rentals, however, contradicts past studies (e.g., Clube & Tennant, 2020; Lang, 2018) where rental services were often described as being overpriced and a waste of money given the financial risk of not receiving sufficient value for the money spent. Illustrating this discrepancy, several respondents contended that the cost-effectiveness of fashion rentals helped them save money insofar as they were spending less when compared with their fast fashion purchases. For instance: 'If you do the math, the membership saves you money because you are spending way more than that annually and just collecting clothes with fast fashion' (R26). Moreover, R6 outlined that the responsibility for cleaning the clothing items lies with the rental platform and, as a result, subscribers can 'save money on dry-cleaning' as well. Based on this aspect of cost-savings, many respondents thus construed the use of fashion rentals as a 'financially smart way to live life fashion-wise' (R37).

Extant studies (e.g., Jain et al., 2022; Jain, 2022; Jain & Mishra, 2020; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020) have characterised cost-savings as an external reward and economic value that aligns with the utilitarian consumption value dimension (Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Arrigo (2021a) and Lang et al. (2020) have suggested that consumers primarily derive cost-savings through access to luxury brands at affordable prices in fashion rentals. Consistent with the findings of several past studies (e.g., Armstrong et al., 2015; Arrigo, 2021a; Jain et al., 2022; Lang et al., 2020; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020; Park & Armstrong, 2019), cost-savings appear to be a significant utilitarian consumption value that the

respondents in this study derived from the use of fashion rentals. Given consumption values are instrumental in attaining higher-order goals (Lai, 1995), the utilitarian value dimension of cost-savings arguably contributes to the attainment of the respondents' self-enhancement goals such as wealth accumulation, goals informed by the basic value of power (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012).

In the course of highlighting the financial positives of fashion rentals, several respondents asserted that they have developed more intentional acquisition behaviours and mindful spending habits through using rental subscriptions. With rentals fulfilling their diverse fashion needs, many respondents reported reducing their 'clothing purchases by a significant third' (R18), with some mentioning that they 'bought very little clothing besides personal items and swimsuits' (R14). Testimonials from consumers further show that fashion rentals have turned them into 'one of those people with a capsule wardrobe' (Review#27) where they 'own very minimal things' (Review#12) and use their subscriptions 'to rent more unique pieces' (Review#17). Likewise, R38 mentioned that her rental subscriptions enabled her to work her way toward minimalism with fewer purchases of new items and paring down to a 'capsule wardrobe with staples and only the favourite items'.

This minimalistic behaviour shown by respondents conforms to Pangarkar et al.'s (2021) typology of minimalism focused on reducing consumption. Consistent with Pangarkar et al. (2021) – and exemplified by their limitation of purchases to essential personal items or swimsuits – the respondents' purchases appear to be mostly driven by necessity and utility. That is, the respondents' claims of restrictive buying do not imply they have completely given up on clothing purchases but rather that they have moderated their purchases because their rental subscriptions cater to most of their fashion needs. This aligns with Pangarkar et al.'s (2021) study, which emphasises that consumers conform to the avoidance goal orientation

when, as part of leading a minimalist lifestyle, they purchase items in accordance with their needs and requirements.

Consistent with Dopierała (2017), restrictive buying behaviour also aligns with the 'cautious shopping' aspect of minimalism such that the respondents demonstrate a reflective and intentional approach to their purchases and actively avoid mindless and excessive clothing purchases. Fashion rentals thus encourage respondents to embrace a minimalist lifestyle through restrictive buying and, ultimately, leads them to the adoption of a capsule wardrobe. The notion of a capsule closet or minimalist wardrobe has been outlined in prior studies on minimalist fashion (e.g., Bardey et al., 2022; Martin-Woodhead, 2022), and promotes reducing one's wardrobe space to minimum essential items with a limited number of quality fashion items that can be coordinated across seasons and events. Drawing from consumer testimonials and R38's narrative, the capsule wardrobe comprises only essential clothing items and a selection of the respondents' favourite pieces – with the rest of the respondents' fashion needs being supported through rental subscriptions.

The premise of fashion rentals stems from the respondents' post-purchase cognitive dissonance or self-conscious emotions of guilt that motivated them to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas and reduce their fast fashion purchases to regulate their spending habits. The respondents' utilisation of fashion rentals demonstrates their intentional commitment to reducing their overall clothing consumption, reflecting a broader practice of restrictive buying. The minimalist practice of restrictive buying, coupled with cost-effective access to luxury fashion brands, thus effectively saves money with fashion rentals preventing respondents from making unnecessary and excessive clothing purchases from fast fashion brands. Drawing from the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), the utilitarian value of cost-savings arguably serves as a motivation for the respondents to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands and

achieve their higher-order goal of wealth accumulation through the minimalist practice of restrictive buying. Pangarkar et al. (2021) have also confirmed that the choice to regulate spending habits may evoke engagement in the minimalist practice of restrictive buying. This study, therefore, suggests that because restrictive buying practices can result in cost-savings, restrictive buying practices can resolve the conflict that previously existed between desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands and the higher-order goal of wealth accumulation.

Fashion rentals were also considered a 'more efficient way to consume fashion' (R42), with some respondents noting that they could 'wear items multiple times to get the most use out of it' (R30) and subsequently 'increase the lifecycle of the item' (R9). As R37 put forward:

> I like the idea of wearing something a few times and then passing it along to someone else to wear. This is good for sustainability because reusing clothes is getting us out of the mindset of repeated buying. (R37)

Respondents perceived the reuse of clothes to be more sustainable because the 'same items are being rented out multiple times' (R21). This reduces repeat buying and therefore 'the need to manufacture more clothing' (R43). Extant studies (e.g., Arrigo, 2021a; Brydges et al., 2020; Lang, 2018; Lang et al., 2019, 2020; Lang & Armstrong, 2018) have provided evidence supporting the notion that fashion rentals contribute to a more sustainable form of consumption and promote the principles of the circular economy and resource-efficiency. In their works, Lang et al. (2020) and Park and Armstrong (2017) have emphasised that the reuse of the same clothing items by multiple individuals induces circularity and ensures the complete use of the item during the period of its potential lifecycle. In addition, the reuse of clothing items in fashion rentals has been acknowledged to reduce the production of new garments (Becker-Leifhold, 2018; Lang et al., 2020).

The realisation of fashion rentals as being 'more environmental-friendly' (R24) eliminated 'buyer's remorse' (R20) and the 'guilt about destroying the environment' (R25) for a number of respondents. The ability to engage in fashion consumption that 'promotes reuse rather than waste' (R25) and 'helps with sustainability' (R33) therefore became a compelling proposition for respondents to use fashion rentals. Past studies (e.g., Khan & Rundle-Thiele, 2019; McNeill & Venter, 2019; Park & Armstrong, 2019), however, have revealed that environmental sustainability is not a motivating factor for consumers to participate in collaborative fashion consumption. Likewise, Baek and Oh (2021) and Becker-Leifhold (2018) have not discovered a significant influence of sustainability as a green or environmental consumption value dimension in the intention to engage in fashion rentals. Conversely, extant studies (e.g., Armstrong et al., 2015; Lang et al., 2019; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020) have highlighted sustainability as an environmental benefit that drives consumers to use fashion rentals. This study also reveals sustainability as a significant green consumption value that the respondents derived from the use of fashion rentals. As consumption values are instrumental for achieving one's higher-order goals (Lai, 1995), the green consumption value dimension of sustainability contributes to the fulfilment of the respondents' self-transcendence goal of environmental preservation, a goal informed by the basic value of universalism (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012).

Several respondents admitted that the use of fashion rentals has encouraged them to 'stop buying fast fashion' (R20), noting that this has 'cut down on the waste of clothes' (R33) because they no longer accumulated huge quantities of clothing that they would eventually discard. R40 specifically highlighted that fashion rentals allowed her to avoid perpetuating the fast fashion cycle of 'constantly buying and throwing away clothes'. Some respondents thus believed that the reuse of clothes propelled by fashion rentals is 'a way to slow down fast fashion' (R7) and 'promote sustainability' (R30). Consistent with the findings of this study,

previous research has recognised the role of fashion rentals in discouraging excessive purchases (Becker-Leifhold & Iran, 2018; Lang & Armstrong, 2018; Piscicelli et al., 2015) and consequently reducing the amount of clothing ending up in landfill (Castellani et al., 2015; Farrant et al., 2010; Gill et al., 2016; Sandin & Peters, 2018).

According to Pangarkar et al.'s (2021) typology of minimalism, the avoidance behaviour that respondents presented toward fast fashion exemplifies anti-consumption, with consumers renouncing the consumption of certain products or brands (e.g., fast fashion). The respondents' oppositional stance toward fast fashion stems from their post-purchase cognitive dissonance or self-conscious emotions of guilt, feelings that motivated them to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas and therefore reduce their fast fashion purchases to mitigate environmental harm. Existing studies (e.g., Cairns et al., 2021; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Sudbury & Böltner, 2011; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018) have documented an attitude-behaviour or intention-behaviour gap whereby one's beliefs about environmental or social consequences – of fast fashion consumption, for example – do not always translate into the modification of purchases and may trigger feelings of cognitive dissonance. However, the respondents' use of fashion rentals shows that their intentional efforts to attenuate their fast fashion purchases have materialised in actual anti-consumption practices. This implies that fashion rentals can function as an enabler that, concerning the respondents' fast fashion purchases, bridges the gap between attitudes, intentions and behaviours.

The minimalist practice of anti-consumption, coupled with the reuse of clothes from luxury fashion brands, thus effectively contributes to environmental sustainability. This is because fashion rentals prevent respondents from making fast fashion purchases. Drawing from the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), the green value of environmental sustainability serves as a motivation for respondents to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas and achieve their higher-order goal of

environmental preservation through the minimalist practice of anti-consumption. This study, therefore, suggests that anti-consumption practices, resulting in environmental sustainability, can resolve the conflict that previously existed between desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands and the higher-order goal of environmental preservation.

Through their utilisation of fashion rentals, the respondents thus showcase a deliberate inclination toward minimalism in their clothing consumption, reflecting both their conscious approach to acquisition and their mindful spending habits. By translating their negative perception of fast fashion into actual avoidance behaviours, the respondents further exemplify their commitment to embracing a more sustainable and minimalistic lifestyle. While fashion rentals facilitated the control of desires for luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands, they also served as a conduit through which respondents could endorse their desires by gaining cost-effective access to second-hand clothing from luxury fashion brands. However, the practice of constantly swapping items in fashion rentals also led respondents to question their sustainable and minimalist approach to clothing consumption.

5.2 Promoting Social-and-Self Interests

The second core category unfolds the consumers' fashion consumption at the liquid end of the consumption continuum with fashion rentals. Consumers are observed to fulfil their aspirations for luxury fashion by utilising fashion rentals, wherein their inherent need for novelty and social image prompt them to revive the trend of wearing a clothing item once only through their rental choices. As consumers engage in a cycle of repeated swapping of rental items, they anticipate that the rapid circulation of clothing could have a detrimental effect on collective interests by contributing to environmental damage. To counterbalance possible negative environmental implications, consumers utilise fashion rentals as a means to prioritise alternative collective interests centred around social justice, equality and welfare

protection; and place parallel emphasis on generating income sources that cater to their personal interests.

5.2.1 Reviving the Wear Once Trend

Accessing luxury fashion brands through rental subscriptions offers a pathway for the respondents to fulfil their desires for luxury fashion, facilitated by their constant swapping of items. Many respondents acknowledged that rental access to luxury fashion brands provided them with the opportunity to 'pretend to own' (R47) the items and 'create an illusion of a luxurious lifestyle' (R27) by 'show[ing]-off to the world' (R12) that they have a wardrobe filled with luxury items. In academic literature, the acquisition and conspicuous display of luxury items have been extensively associated with status symbolism insofar as the mere use or display of luxury items can confer prestige or status to the owner (Han et al., 2010; Hennigs et al., 2012, 2013; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999, 2004; Wiedmann et al., 2017). Correspondingly, prior studies (e.g., Jain & Mishra, 2020; Lawson et al., 2016; Mishra et al., 2021; Yeoman, 2011) have provided evidence that access-based consumption via rentals appeals to status-seeking consumers by allowing them to gain a taste of the luxury lifestyle without paying the full price for the privilege.

Accessing a luxury lifestyle via subscriptions, the respondents found themselves increasingly capable of 'escaping their everyday selves' (R49) and embodying a 'fantasy version' (R41) of themselves, in which they assumed the role of the owner of luxury fashion items. This illusion of being the owner of such items allowed the respondents to embrace a 'keeping up with the Joneses' (R37) mentality such that they were able to project their social status by showcasing their ability to wear high-priced luxury fashion items. As a result, many respondents characterised fashion rentals as 'a tool for self-expression' (R27) that allowed one to 'look different every time' (R36), 'creatively present oneself' (Post#387) and 'dress the part' (R50) to impress people.

Prior studies on luxury consumption (e.g., Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; Park et al., 2008) have illustrated the role of luxury products in shaping social image and enhancing self-presentation. As an extension to the luxury consumption literature, several studies have acknowledged fashion rentals are a practical way to creatively express oneself (Mishra et al., 2021), enhance one's social image (Lang & Armstrong, 2018) and build a favourable self-presentation to meet societal expectations (Baek & Oh, 2021; McNeill & Venter, 2019). Durgee and O'Connor (1995) and Yeoman (2011) have also shown that rentals enable consumers to adopt an alternative persona and project themselves as desired for a short period. In support, Loussaïef et al. (2019) have shown that access to luxury fashion empowers consumers to perform a fluid and flexible transformation of their self-presentation, allowing them to adjust their appearance for specific occasions or to project a fantasy version of themselves.

Their sporadic forays into the luxury lifestyle via fashion rentals – wearing the luxury fashion items favoured by celebrities, fashion models and individuals who possess the financial means to purchase such brands – allowed the respondents to 'feel like part of the elite crowd' (R34). This use of rental subscriptions to cultivate a sense of affiliation with celebrities and affluent consumers aligns with Leibenstein's (1950) concept of bandwagon consumption, a model of consumption whereby emphasis is placed on acquiring status from assimilation with affluent lifestyles or celebrities (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Wang, 2022; Wiedmann et al., 2007, 2009). The imitative implications of fashion rentals allowed the respondents to attain social status and satisfy their desires to consume the luxury items associated with the social class they aspired to emulate. These findings also align with Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation, suggesting that the respondents are able to fulfil their fantasies of imitating the consumption behaviour of real and imaginary individuals, while also conveying their social status to valued others.

Social status has been characterised as an external motivation (Eastman & Eastman, 2015; Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2021; Shao et al., 2019) and a social consumption value (Hennigs et al., 2012, 2013; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Wiedmann et al., 2007, 2009) that influences consumers to consume luxury brands. In agreement with past studies on fashion rentals (e.g., Baek & Oh, 2021; Jain & Mishra, 2020; Lang & Armstrong, 2018; Pantano & Stylos, 2020), this study shows that status can be construed as a dimension of social consumption value that the respondents attain via their conspicuous display of luxury brands accessed through rentals. Since consumption values play a crucial role in achieving one's higher-order goals (Lai, 1995), the social consumption value dimension of status arguably contributes to the fulfilment of the respondents' self-enhancement goal, a goal informed by the basic value of power (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012).

Fashion rentals also served as a 'guilty pleasure' (R12) for many respondents, allowing them to indulge in the experience of 'playing dress up' (R24) with an array of new clothing items. Respondents emphasised that their 'enjoyment of playing dress up' (R25) stemmed from the constant swapping of items available in fashion rentals, something that they referred to as the 'constant rotating wardrobe' (R50). The respondents highly valued the experience of having a rotating wardrobe because it provided them with constant access to trendy clothing items from luxury fashion brands. Past studies (e.g., Lang, 2018; Lang et al., 2019; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020) have also described fashion rentals as an endless closet that provides access to a variety of always-trendy and new-to-the-user clothing items.

This constant access enabled respondents to fulfil their multifaceted fashion needs, ranging from casual occasions and themed events to weddings, vacations, work attire and even clothing for Zoom calls. In particular, R29 described her experience with the rotating wardrobe as 'immensely enjoyable and exciting' given the access it provided to a 'plethora of new and emerging brands'. Similarly, R44 emphasised that by offering a vast selection of

clothing styles conveniently at her disposal, fashion rentals' rotating wardrobe facilitated the 'evolution of [her] personal style'. The respondents also highlighted that the rotating wardrobe offers them flexibility so that they can rent and swap clothes to 'adjust with [their] body changes' (Post#366). Such wardrobe flexibility allows the respondents to avoid being committed to a specific clothing size and alleviates concerns when dealing with weight fluctuations or significant life events like pregnancy.

Moreover, some respondents found excitement in 'waiting for the delivery of the next new item' (R9) to see how they could dress up and present themselves in these outfits, enhancing the overall experience of playing dress up each time. In this regard, respondents highlighted the provisions of easy shipping and returns, home delivery and quick turnaround of the next new item as providing them with 'instant gratification' (R21) in the constant swapping of items. R27 also found that playing dress up made her experience a 'positive and uplifting feeling' about herself. More specifically, the opportunity to wear new clothes constantly brought her immense happiness. Since the opportunity to wear these outfits had previously existed only in the respondents' imaginations, their excitement and enjoyment were heightened by the fact that these outfits belonged to high-priced luxury fashion brands. As R19 shared:

> [I]t's more exciting and fun when you have the opportunity to play dress up and be whoever you want to be with clothes that come from luxury brands. Honestly, I feel like a princess, I feel like it is a boost to my happiness. It's really exciting. (R19)

R19 found happiness in actualising her fashion fantasies of luxury brands through the use of rentals, whereas R2 believed that the ability to access outfits from luxury brands 'without the need to make a purchase' brought her happiness. Without purchase obligations and because the rentals represented 'a virtual closet' (Post#295), respondents were no longer 'hoarding clothes' (R29), meaning 'more space for other things than clothes' (R32) in their personal

wardrobes. It is perhaps the lack of ownership obligations and reduced closet clutter that made R16 characterise fashion rentals as 'all joy without any kind of pain'.

Extant studies have documented pleasure, gratification and excitement as intrinsic motivations (Truong, 2010; Truong & McColl, 2011; Tsai, 2005) and experiential or emotional benefits underlying the emotional or hedonic consumption value (Hennigs et al., 2013, 2015; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Wiedmann et al., 2007, 2009) that influences consumers toward the consumption of luxury brands. Consistent with past studies on fashion rentals (e.g., Baek & Oh, 2021; Lang, 2018; Lang et al., 2019; Lang & Armstrong, 2018; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020; Park & Armstrong, 2019), emotional consumption value can be associated with the opportunity to trial and wear a variety of new clothing items from luxury brands – an opportunity that provides respondents with excitement, enjoyment and pleasure. Additionally, respondents' experience of emotional consumption value by enjoying the usage of the clothing items without the burden of ownership coincides with the findings of Lang et al. (2020) and Lang et al. (2019). Since consumption values are significant for attaining one's higher-order goals (Lai, 1995), the emotional consumption value dimensions of pleasure, excitement and enjoyment arguably contribute to the fulfilment of the respondents' self-enhancement goal, a goal informed by the basic value of hedonism (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012).

The pleasure, excitement and enjoyment derived from the rotating wardrobe experience, coupled with the illusion of a luxury lifestyle and social status, were thus instrumental in the respondents' use of fashion rentals as a conduit to fulfil their desires for luxury fashion. Drawing from the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), the social value of status and the emotional value of pleasure conceivably serve as motivations for the respondents to endorse their luxury fashion desires and attain their higher-order goals of power and hedonism, respectively. Several respondents

thus actively utilised the rotating wardrobe to its fullest extent, engaging in a constant swapping of clothing items to showcase their adherence to the latest trends in luxury fashion and portray their social status. In the case of R4, for example, it was the 'constant flow of new items' that brought her immense pleasure and created the impression of owning a vast collection of the latest luxury fashion clothing. Because the respondents had a fresh wardrobe on a whim, there was never a 'dull moment of repeating an outfit' (R1). Indeed, R45 believed that the primary idea behind the rental subscription was to 'avoid repeating outfits altogether' insofar as the platform promoted 'an endless closet'. This emphasis on the practice of wearing rental outfits once only indicates a resurgence of the wear once culture previously associated with fast fashion.

Indeed, the pleasure that derived from items is generally short-lived because the respondents 'wear, feel the joy and swap the item for the next new one' (R39). Many respondents viewed rentals as something to be worn 'for the moment' (R27), and they appreciated that the transient nature of the rental process allowed them to swap for a new outfit after a brief period of usage. Because they have set a precedent of wearing luxury fashion and consider it crucial to showcase new items to demonstrate their adherence to the latest trends, the respondents consistently remained attentive to new arrivals on the platform. As R12 shared:

> I'm always wearing the latest fashion and people around me know that whatever I wear is luxury. Many of my friends and family now expect me to wear the latest fashion, post photos wearing them, but without new collections, it becomes difficult to keep up my appearance and update my Instagram. (R12)

R12 also acknowledged the influence of social media and societal expectations. Recognising the need to constantly adapt and stay up-to-date with the latest trends, she felt the need to adorn new outfits for every social interaction. Many respondents were therefore in consensus

that ‘the rotating closet is only good as long as they add new items’ (Post#231) and that, without a continuous influx of new items, they would eventually have ‘access to the same items repeatedly’ (Post#157). A constant arrival of new items was also necessary because the respondents had to uphold a ‘social media presence’ (R22) that consistently showcased them ‘being fashionable’ (R8) and in line with the latest trends, further highlighting the significance of the rotating wardrobe for the respondents.

The constant swapping of clothing items in fashion rentals illustrates a seemingly uncontrollable and ultimately endless cycle wherein the respondents experience only a momentary joy from their rental outfits from luxury fashion brands. Fuelling an insatiable drive for novelty and social image, this cycle reignites respondents’ desires for luxury fashion, leading them to repeatedly swap rental outfits for new ones to stay relevant in the ever-changing landscape of fashion trends. The need for novelty that triggers the respondents’ continuous desires for luxury fashion rentals aligns with their higher-order goal of openness to change and is informed by the basic value of stimulation (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). In parallel, the projection of a social image according to which one is always wearing new clothing items that reflect the latest luxury trends coincides with the respondents’ higher-order goal of self-enhancement and is driven by the basic value of power (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012).

Conversely, the momentary joy that the respondents derive from their constant swapping of clothing items coincides with Belk et al.’s (2003) desire theorisation whereby fulfilment from a desired object (i.e., a new outfit) is ephemeral and reinitiates the desire for a new object (i.e., another new outfit). This cycle of desire suggests that the respondents’ desire for luxury fashion persists in accordance with the pleasure derived from the experience of renting outfits. That is, the desire to relive these pleasures reignites their desires, leading them to constantly swap items from the platform. Contrary to Campbell’s (1987) boredom-initiated

cycle that reformulated desires for fast fashion in this study, the desire cycle for luxury fashion rentals thus appears to be fulfilment-initiated.

Because the short-term satisfaction of the respondents' desires triggers the emergence of new desires for luxury fashion, the constant swapping process in fashion rentals results in consumers accessing more clothes than necessary (e.g., 20 items per month). This pattern of overconsumption, observed in the context of fashion rentals, can be seen as distinct from overconsumption in fast fashion. This is because the acquisition and retention of rental items is temporary given that items are returned to the platform after use. The swapping process in fashion rentals can therefore be likened to the acquisitive process that forms one of the foundations of Richins and Fournier's (1991) understanding of materialism. Similar to the acquisition of fast fashion items that illustrated materialism, it is the excessive desire to access clothing that drives people to repeatedly rent new items in an ongoing cycle, never finding satisfaction in their access to these items.

Reports in media outlets also argue that fashion rentals, like fast fashion, are premised on the idea of quickly cycling through trends with the promise of new clothes every week – capitalising on consumers' insatiable desires and keep up with trends (Gan, 2021; Semic, 2020). The constant renting and swapping of items in fashion rentals is, in fact, acknowledged as the driver behind consumers' incessant demand for the latest must-have item – a demand that is not very different from endlessly buying and throwing away items from fast fashion brands (Conlon, 2020; Semic, 2020). Thus, the swapping process in fashion rentals, which serves as an expression of materialism, theoretically aligns with Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) suggestion that access practices facilitating the rapid accumulation and circulation of items are indicative of materialism in liquid consumption. Consistent with Alonso-Almeida et al. (2020) and Atanasova and Eckhardt (2021), the findings also imply that the enjoyment of

goods and experiences derived from the constant flow of new clothing items emphasises materialism in liquid forms of consumption.

At the same time, the constant swapping of clothing items in fashion rentals raises concerns about potential environmental implications. For example, their increasing dependence on fashion rentals motivated the respondents to embrace a minimalist approach by 'detoxifying the existing wardrobe' (R39) through the disposal of their pre-loved and outworn clothing items. Consistent with prior studies on minimalism (e.g., Dopierała, 2017; Martin-Woodhead, 2022; Rodriguez, 2018; Uggla, 2019), the clutter removal or decluttering actions demonstrated by respondents signifies a key aspect of minimalism – specifically the removal of unwanted clothing with the intention of altering consumption habits. Correspondingly, R35 acknowledged decluttering 'at least two-thirds of the closet' after realising that, because she predominantly relied on rentals, she no longer required a huge closet of clothing items. However, the increased clutter removal undertaken by respondents also implies accelerated disposal of clothing items – a potentially premature discarding of items that subsequently contributes to clothing waste in landfill.

The environmental footprint of fashion rentals can also be discerned from the fact that clothes are dry-cleaned each time the respondents send them back to the platform. Although some respondents believed that the dry-cleaning process addressed 'hygiene concerns' (R6) associated with reused clothes, they also recognised that the 'frequent wash and dry-cleaning cycles' (R45) resulting from their constant swapping may 'significantly contribute to carbon emissions' (R8). Reflecting on their swapping practices, the respondents were aware that their increased rental frequency also involves a higher cycle of transportation, packaging and cleaning that may have harmful consequences for the environment. As R47 has shared, 'With the transportation and packaging and all that cleaning they do, we are most likely making a

carbon footprint. That makes me wonder whether rentals are really as sustainable as they claim to be'.

As R47's words make clear, rentals can evoke conflicting emotions among respondents because of the potential environmental implications associated with the constant swapping of clothing items. The respondents thus experience a sense of anticipated dissonance leading to the overall sustainability of fashion rentals being construed as uncertain. In their respective works, Zamani et al. (2017) and Piontek et al. (2020) have argued that the environmental effects of fashion rentals are contingent on the behaviour of consumers, specifically their use intensity of rental garments. Levänen et al.'s (2021) study has further suggested that swapping clothes back and forth between the warehouse and consumers involves increased delivery and packaging, as well as greater transportation and dry-cleaning of clothing items, amounting to high environmental costs. Studies analysing the environmental effects of fashion rentals (e.g., Monticelli & Costamagna, 2022; Piontek et al., 2020) have thus contended that the higher usage intensity of rental garments by consumers – entailing increased washing cycles, additional transport and more energy consumption by dry-cleaning machines – may lead to negative environmental effects.

Given these points, the respondents' desires for luxury fashion arguably become problematic insofar as the constant swapping of clothing items contradicts their higher-order goal of self-transcendence, a goal informed by the basic value of universalism that highlights the significance of environmental preservation (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Despite this desire–goal conflict, respondents tended to downplay the potential negative environmental implications associated with the constant swapping of clothing items. The respondents rather employed self-serving justifications that supported both their collective and personal interests and rationalised their ongoing practice of frequently swapping clothing items through fashion rentals.

5.2.2 Supporting Social Causes

One of the ways respondents justified their constant swapping of luxury fashion items through fashion rentals was by asserting that they are protecting the interests of underrepresented businesses in the fashion industry through their rental subscriptions. Many respondents were aware that the fashion industry remains subject to scrutiny regarding the lack of adequate representation and opportunities for women designers and designers of colour. For example, it was disheartening for R42 to learn from social media that the 'brands created by people of colour face significant underrepresentation' and she advocated for active steps that can dismantle this barrier. Reports from popular media have provided supporting evidence that Black-owned brands encounter systemic racism and unconscious bias within the fashion industry, resulting in challenges to achieve opportunities equal to their White counterparts (Coker, 2020; Edelson, 2020).

R13 additionally argued that the issue of underrepresentation extends to women of colour designers in particular because these designers encounter a 'double jeopardy' owing to their identities as both female and people of colour. This double jeopardy reflects the theoretical notion of intersectionality and its capture of overlapping forms of discrimination with respect to gender, race and other categories of differences among individuals (Brydges & Hracs, 2019; Davis, 2008). In this study, the respondents emphasised that the discrimination encountered by women of colour designers in the fashion industry can be attributed to their intersecting identities of gender and racial background. Knowledge of discrimination in the fashion industry was especially emphasised by R13 and she asserted that women of colour designers encounter 'limited visibility and opportunities for advancement' compared with their male counterparts. Media reports have substantiated the existence of discrimination in the fashion industry – particularly towards Black female-owned businesses – with these businesses encountering obstacles such as inadequate funding and significant barriers to

representation (Edelson, 2020). R17 further noted that the issue of underrepresentation for women of colour designers not only limits diversity in the fashion industry but also 'perpetuates exclusion and inequality'.

To this end, many respondents commended the efforts of the fashion rental platform in embracing diversity and creating more equitable and inclusive opportunities for women and people of colour designers. One significant effort made by the fashion rental platform pertained to the '15 percent pledge' (R44) that the respondents believed could address 'the long-standing underrepresentation of Black-owned fashion brands' (R27). R12 further elaborates:

> Rent the Runway may have been publicising more people of colour designers because of the whole Black Lives Matter movement, but I consider their commitment to the 15 percent pledge as progress and we should all support this initiative. (R12)

In R12's narrative, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement is identified as a key underlying event that led the fashion rental platform to actively promote the underrepresented group of people of colour designers as part of their commitment to the 15 percent pledge. The BLM movement, which highlights racism, discrimination and inequality experienced by Black people, gained momentum with the rising police violence toward the Black community in the United States (Buchanan et al., 2020; Campbell, 2021). It is the social movement of BLM that has increased societal recognition of inequality and demand for less discrimination on the consumers' part, and that has led to brands committing to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives (Chandy et al., 2021; Ferraro et al., 2022).

One such DEI initiative is the 15 percent pledge. This is an equal representation campaign to encourage major retailers to commit to buying 15% of their inventory from Black-owned businesses given that Black people make up 15% of the population of the United States (Boyd, 2020; Shacknai, 2020b). In an effort to ensure greater representation of

Black lives, RTR committed to the 15 percent pledge via an Instagram announcement. Specifically, RTR donated to organisations combating racial injustice and allocated funds to support Black designers (Petrarca, 2020). Such DEI initiatives were lauded by the respondents as they believed the platform had taken proactive steps toward 'raising voices for the Black fashion designers' (R23) and effectively responded to the 'racial injustice in the fashion industry' (R44).

Furthermore, R23 stressed that the platform gave ample exposure to 'people of colour designers and, more importantly, women of colour designers who never got much shine in the fashion industry'. The respondents' observations of the rental inventory also described a 'level-playing field' (R17) because a significant portion of the inventory is dedicated to 'women-led and Black-owned brands' (R13). For many respondents, such initiatives indicated the active contribution of the fashion rental platform to the visibility and success of underrepresented communities. R16 highlighted that 'emerging and small fashion brands share a similar spotlight as the luxury brands' on the fashion rental platform. With the support extended to emerging and small fashion brands suggesting a diversification of offerings, R16 characterised this exposure of underrepresented entities as a 'way to promote inclusivity and equity' by the fashion rental platform.

The platform's initiatives for underrepresented entities thus align with Arsel et al.'s (2022) definition of DEI insofar as these actions mitigate differences in representation, ensure fairness for people and brands in terms of opportunity, and foster belongingness across diverse groups. The DEI initiatives can also be considered in the context of brand activism (Sarkar & Kotler, 2020), where brands voluntarily take a public stance on controversial issues (e.g., rights of gender minorities, racism, LGBTIQA+ rights, reproductive rights, gun control and immigration) to influence improvements in society (Shetty et al., 2019; Vredenburg et al., 2020).

Consistent with Vredenburg et al.'s (2020) study, the DEI initiatives of the RTR platform can be characterised as brand activism because they address controversial issues of racism, discrimination and social injustice and adopt a progressive stance via the 15 percent pledge to benefit society at large. Specifically, given the purpose of social change drives the platform's activism and that they contribute to the social issue through messaging (i.e., Instagram announcement) and practice (i.e., donations, fund allocations), these DEI initiatives can be classified as Vredenburg et al.'s (2020) typology of silent brand activism. As an emerging marketing tactic, Vredenburg et al.'s (2020) silent brand activism uses low activist marketing messaging – evident from the platform's single social media announcement of the 15 percent pledge – instead of large-scale advertising. Silent brand activism also signifies high engagement in prosocial practices (Vredenburg et al., 2020), which can be inferred from the rental inventory where there is greater representation and visibility for underrepresented cohorts.

In response to the platform's activism, several respondents consciously chose to patronise and support the platform by persistently using fashion rentals. As one of the respondents shared:

> I'm very much in support of small businesses, businesses run by women and most of all, Black-owned businesses. I do find myself gravitating toward these groups because they have not been getting their shine for quite some time. I feel the platform is getting their voice amplified with the 15 percent pledge and I want to support the platform in this stride. (R23)

It is therefore evident that this respondent believed the platform is 'walking the talk' as the platform's implementation of the 15 percent pledge has given recognition to several underrepresented business communities. Contrary to Sobande (2019) and Vredenburg et al. (2020), this implies that respondents do not consider the platform's DEI initiatives as a

marketing ploy or as making misleading and unsubstantiated claims (i.e., woke washing). Instead, R23 endorsed the platform because their initiatives were uplifting historically underrepresented business communities and she wanted to support the recognition of these businesses. R12 also justified her decision to rent from the platform when she identified that her rentals could 'support up-and-coming designers' and contribute to the promotion of equal representation and recognition. Similarly, R16 wanted to 'raise awareness about Black-owned brands' and she made conscious efforts through her social media to share her positive experiences with any Black-owned businesses. Once R16 realised the platform was working to 'generate recognition for the brands of people of colour', she believed her rentals could help to increase the recognition of such brands.

This shared belief that their rentals contribute to increased visibility and support for underrepresented businesses suggests that the respondents perceived their subscriptions to the rental platform to be an altruistic act. The dissonance that respondents experienced from their concerns about the sustainability of renting presumably pushed them to redefine their rental subscriptions as altruistic. This provided respondents with a self-serving justification that offset the possible negative environmental implications of constant swapping in fashion rentals. Both Barkan et al. (2015) and Shalvi et al. (2015) have referred to self-serving altruism as pre-violation justifications that redefine questionable behaviours as excusable and diminish threats to one's sense of morality. In this case, the respondents believed that their subscriptions to the rental platform helped underrepresented businesses gain the recognition they rightfully deserved. This belief served as a justification to continue engaging in the constant swapping cycle of luxury fashion clothing by downplaying the possible negative environmental implications of fashion rentals.

As noted in Huberts et al. (2014a), the perception of an altruistic act exemplifies a justification-based mechanism that causes goal transgressions for the respondents such that

they generate justifications to demote their higher-order goal of environmental preservation. Drawing from the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), these self-serving justifications can be a source of motivation that prioritises an alternative higher-order goal to help respondents strike a balance with their luxury fashion desires. For instance, the increased visibility and support for underrepresented businesses that the respondents asserted was generated through their rental subscriptions, aligns with their higher-order goal of self-transcendence informed by the basic value of universalism (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Notably, the basic value of universalism – which underscores the pursuit of social-interested goals and alludes to Stern et al.'s (1999) altruistic value – promotes the endorsement of social justice and equal opportunity for all (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). It can therefore be suggested that by prioritising the higher-order goals of social justice and equality, the respondents use self-serving justifications to reconcile their desires for the constant swapping of luxury fashion through fashion rentals with their sustainability concerns.

5.2.3 Safeguarding Livelihoods

In their contemplation of the potential adverse environmental effects of fashion rentals, some respondents also justified their frequent swapping of luxury fashion items by asserting that their rental subscriptions were safeguarding the welfare of workers employed by the rental platform. Many respondents endorsed the fashion rental platform for its positive contributions to the economy and society, highlighting the platform's ability to create job opportunities for numerous individuals. In their narratives, the respondents acknowledged that the jobs created by the platform provide people with 'a sense of security' (R5) and allow them to have 'greater control over their lives' (R12). Respondents thus valued the jobs the platform created, believing these jobs 'significantly contribute to the financial well-being' (R12) of those working in the offices and warehouses of the platform. Not only did the respondents

recognise the platform's role in generating job opportunities, but they viewed their subscription spending on fashion rentals as crucial for sustaining the employment provided by the platform. As one of the respondents shared: 'People do need work and they want that pay check. I want to support the rental company because this is a platform that gives people work and my rentals let them keep those people employed' (R7).

Recognising the importance of employment, R7 construed her rental subscriptions as a means of securing the livelihoods of those working for the platform. R5 further characterised the act of securing employment for others through her rentals as 'a great way to show kindness to others'. Indeed, respondents viewed their rentals as rewarding because the money they spent on rental subscriptions fulfilled not only their own fashion needs but contributed to the financial well-being of others. Some respondents insisted that the thought of 'giving back to society' (R13) through their rental subscriptions instilled in them a sense of happiness. This is the argument that rental subscriptions exemplify prosocial spending behaviours (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013; Dunn et al., 2008, 2014) insofar as the money spent on rental subscriptions arguably helps others. Prior studies (e.g., Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013; Aknin, Dunn, et al., 2013; Aknin et al., 2022; Curry et al., 2018) have documented that prosocial spending intended to benefit others can generate happiness. The respondents' feelings of happiness from prosocial spending thus illustrate Andreoni's (1990) notion of a warm glow – an emotional benefit derived from spending money on other people.

Prosocial spending is, however, a surprising finding in this research because these generous acts are being directed toward platform employees who are complete strangers to the respondents. This finding contradicts the respective works of Maner and Gailliot (2007) and Aknin et al. (2011b) where prosocial actions are found to be more pronounced in close relationships than among strangers. For instance, in their study on prosocial spending, Dunn et al. (2014) have suggested that the warm glow of giving can emerge only when giving

satisfies the core human needs for relatedness, competence and autonomy. The prosocial spending observed in this study clearly does not fully satisfy the core human needs for relatedness and competence. This is primarily because there are no social connections established between the respondents and the employees, and the respondents cannot envision any concrete effects on the employees' lives resulting from their generous actions. In addition, the emotional benefits derived from this prosocial spending fail to meet the core human need for autonomy because the respondents did not actively choose to engage in fashion rentals to benefit others. Rather, contributing to the financial well-being of others is merely an incidental outcome of rental subscriptions primarily engaged in to fulfil the respondents' fashion needs.

The notion that their rentals can support the livelihoods of the platform workers implies that the respondents regarded their subscriptions to the rental platform as an act of altruism. In this instance, the anticipated dissonance felt by the respondents regarding the sustainability of rentals led them to redefine their rental subscriptions as altruistic. This redefinition of fashion rentals as a way of supporting the financial stability of the platform workers provided respondents with a self-serving justification to offset the potential adverse environmental consequences of frequent swapping. Following Barkan et al. (2015) and Shalvi et al. (2015), such self-serving altruism serves as a pre-violation justification that reframes questionable behaviours as acceptable and reduces the perceived threat to one's sense of morality.

In this case, the respondents believed that they were part of 'a force of good' (R12) and 'doing something right by contributing to someone's pay check' (R13) through their rental subscriptions. Several prior studies (e.g., Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013; Aknin, Dunn, et al., 2013; Aknin et al., 2011a; Dunn et al., 2014) have supported the notion that prosocial spending undertaken by consumers can promote social welfare. The findings of this

study further align with Miles and Upenieks (2022) in the sense that prosocial acts directed towards unknown people can lead consumers to view themselves as moral. The belief that respondents were promoting social welfare thus served as a justification for them to persist in the continuous cycle of swapping luxury fashion clothing, a justification that effectively downplayed the potential negative environmental consequences of fashion rentals.

The perception of undertaking altruistic acts demonstrates Huberts et al.'s (2014a) justification-based mechanism that leads to goal transgressions for the respondents, prompting them to generate justifications that undermine their higher-order goal of environmental preservation. In line with the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), self-serving justifications serve as a source of motivation that prioritises an alternative higher-order goal that assists the respondents achieve a balance with their luxury fashion desires. For instance, supporting the livelihoods of the platform workers through their rental subscriptions aligns with the respondents' higher-order goal of self-transcendence informed by the basic value of universalism and able to highlight the importance of safeguarding the well-being of others (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). By framing their subscription spending as beneficial to the platform's workers – and thereby prioritising the higher-order goal of welfare protection – the respondents utilise a self-serving justification to reconcile their desires for the constant swapping of luxury fashion through fashion rentals with their sustainability concerns.

5.2.4 Generating Income Sources

As they grappled with the possible negative environmental implications of fashion rentals, the respondents also justified their constant swapping of luxury fashion items by asserting that their rental subscriptions cater to both their self-interests and collective interests. For example, many respondents construed fashion rentals as a catalyst for their income sources insofar as they were able to transform their passion for fashion into profitable

ventures. R4 and R38, for instance, referred to themselves as ‘small entrepreneurs’ because they utilised the clothes rented from the fashion rental platform to support their personal wardrobe styling businesses. Respondents access a diverse range of high-end clothing for their businesses through rental services, saving a significant amount when compared with the expense of purchasing them outright. For R31, the low-cost subscriptions mean she can accommodate a diverse range of clients by providing them with a wide choice of clothing styles and sizes ‘without the need for a large investment’. R4 thus classified the rental subscription cost as a ‘low barrier to entry’ for individuals who want to start a wardrobe styling business.

Prior studies (e.g., Kim & Jin, 2021; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020; Vincent & Gaur, 2021) have extensively documented the low-cost feature of fashion rentals as allowing consumers to rent clothes at a fraction of the cost of the retail price. Hence, it is not surprising that the respondents considered the use of fashion rentals a cost-effective way to start their own businesses. As R17 shared:

> Cost-effectiveness – I think that was what made me consider renting clothes for my business. I mean, there are overheads to run[ning] a business but at least, I’m not spending anything on clothes beyond my subscriptions.

R17 highlights that it is the absence of additional expenses beyond the rental subscription cost that makes it cost-effective to use the clothes rented from the platform in the wardrobe styling business. Respondents who viewed fashion rentals as an affordable approach for utilising a wide range of outfits for the creation of their social media content presented a similar mindset. For instance:

> Rental was affordable because if I had to frequently shop for new outfits to create my travel and fashion content – it would cost a lot more than the money that I earn with my content. I couldn’t afford to buy all of that stuff ever. (R23)

Past studies (e.g., Arrigo, 2021a; Lang et al., 2020; Lee & Chow, 2020) have also described fashion rentals as a more cost-effective means of accessing clothing that through conventional purchasing. As shown in this study, the cost-effectiveness of fashion rentals ultimately encouraged respondents to extend their subscription usage beyond personal fashion needs into new avenues such as styling businesses and content creation. Accordingly, this thesis extends the findings of previous studies (e.g., Amasawa et al., 2023; Henninger et al., 2022; Jain et al., 2022; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020), highlighting multiple avenues for the use of clothes rented from fashion rental platforms.

The utilisation of rental subscriptions for styling businesses and content creation is particularly significant because respondents were able to achieve financial independence. For R4, her wardrobe styling business could be established only because she had access to luxury fashion items with her subscription, with this access providing her with a 'stable source of income' as an entrepreneur. In the case of R23, the use of various rental outfits has significantly enhanced her fashion-focused content on social media, resulting in 'more collaborative opportunities with various brands'. As a result of these brand collaborations and through 'sponsored content and paid partnerships' with other influencers on social media, R23 benefits from additional income. R31, in turn, emphasised that her wardrobe styling business experienced significant growth from rentals; the utilisation of luxury fashion items through rentals added a 'touch of panache' to her styling services and enabled her to 'curate distinctive looks' for her clients. R38 also believed that the use of luxury fashion items through rentals in her styling business has attracted more clients. This is because many brands seek her expertise in outfit coordination for photoshoots, resulting in a substantial increase in her income as a wardrobe stylist.

In their study on luxury closet sharing, Vincent and Gaur (2021) have acknowledged that consumers can lend their own items on P2P rental platforms to both earn back the money

spent on purchasing those items and earn extra cash via repeated closet sharing. Beyond Vincent and Gaur's (2021) study, academic literature has not extensively addressed the aspect of utilising rentals to generate personal income sources, especially in the context of B2C platforms. That their rentals generated personal income sources provides another context from which the respondents can justify their deviation from the higher-order goal of environmental preservation. More specifically, the dissonance respondents experienced regarding the sustainability of rentals resulted in them perceiving tangible benefits from their rentals that prioritise their immediate financial interests over the higher-order goal of environmental preservation. As has been reported in Huberts et al.'s (2014a) justification-based mechanism, the perception of personal financial benefits provided the respondents with a self-serving justification to offset the possible negative environmental implications of constant swapping in fashion rentals. This finding is in opposition to Parguel et al.'s (2017) study that shows that consumers use environmental benefits as justification for their indulgent consumption in the context of second-hand P2P platforms. Instead, this thesis demonstrates that self-centred benefits may be framed as pre-violation justifications to reframe questionable behaviours as acceptable and attenuate perceived threats to one's sense of morality. In doing so, this study adds to the respective works of Barkan et al. (2015) and Shalvi et al. (2015) that otherwise focused on collective benefits like self-serving altruism as pre-violation justifications.

With reference to the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), self-serving justifications serve as a source of motivation when a self-interested higher-order goal is prioritised to assist respondents to strike a balance with their luxury fashion desires. The personal financial benefits that the respondents asserted they derived from the utilisation of their rental subscriptions subsequently align with their higher-order goal of self-enhancement. Informed by the basic value of power, this goal contributes specifically to wealth accumulation (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). The respondents,

therefore, utilise self-serving justifications to reconcile their desires for a constant swapping of luxury fashion through fashion rentals with their sustainability concerns by prioritising the higher-order goal of wealth accumulation.

Despite employing self-serving justifications to support the continuous swapping of luxury fashion items through fashion rentals, the transient nature of this practice also served as a reminder to some respondents that they did not truly possess these items. This realisation prompted them to redefine their approach to clothing consumption, bringing them back to purchases of discounted second-hand clothing from the rental platform.

5.3 Redefining Consumption

The third theme is focused on the consumers' consumption journey, which involves a shift towards the solid end of the consumption continuum through discounted purchases of luxury fashion. However, this transition is coupled with the ongoing utilisation of fashion rentals to inform buying choices, indicating the consumers' consistent engagement with the liquid end of the consumption continuum. The needs for novelty and social image, as well as environmental considerations such as platform discounts, encourage consumers to circle back to purchases of discounted second-hand clothing from the rental platform to fulfil their individual aspirations for true ownership of luxury fashion. As consumers perpetuate a vicious cycle of repeated discounted purchases of luxury fashion, excessive purchases present possible negative implications for collective interests by contributing to environmental harm. In retrospect, consumers leverage their prior restrictive buying and collective interest centred around welfare protection as licenses to endorse their luxury fashion desires and subsequently engage in discounted purchases of luxury fashion from the rental platform.

5.3.1 Circling Back to Purchase

With their rental subscriptions, respondents were able to seamlessly access luxury fashion brands and immerse themselves in the illusion of owning items that would have been

financially out of reach for them to buy outright. However, the respondents were aware that their portrayal of owning luxury items was deceptive because the items were in their possession only temporarily. For R27, her use of luxury fashion items through the rentals made her feel she was 'cheating the system' and giving 'false impressions' of owning the luxury items. R36 expressed a similar view, admitting to feeling 'like a fraud' because of the realisation that she did not really own the luxury items, despite her social media being filled with images showcasing her wearing them. In the case of R45, individuals within her social media circle would frequently inquire about her ownership of the luxury items, seemingly assuming that she owned these items and being awed by her apparent level of affluence. There were moments when R45 desired to have those items in her personal wardrobe, allowing her to 'show off' to people that she 'truly had the means to afford' such items. Similarly, R29 confessed to experiencing a 'sense of emptiness' when she had to return luxury items to the platform and that she desired to hold onto the items so that she could convey to others that she 'genuinely own[s] the items'.

These points make clear that the respondents felt that by temporarily accessing and showcasing luxury fashion items through rentals, they were projecting an image that did not align with their true ownership status. This discordance between temporary access and true ownership can contribute to feelings of inauthenticity, similar to the imposter syndrome described by Goor et al. (2020). The latter argues that imposter syndrome is generated when consumers evaluate their own behaviour and perceive a discrepancy between their true self and their projected self, resulting in feelings of inauthenticity. The findings of this study thus extend the notion of Goor et al.'s (2020) imposter syndrome to the fashion rental context where temporary access to luxury fashion items leads respondents to feel less authentic about themselves because they do not truly own the items.

The fleeting experience with luxury items served as a reminder that respondents' desires for luxury fashion were not realised in absolute terms because they did not truly own the items. As well as the influence of social media and societal expectations, the ephemerality associated with access thus reignited respondents' desires to truly own the items. As a result, because they wanted to incorporate the items into their 'permanent wardrobe' (Post#95) and showcase their status as one who can genuinely afford to own such items, many respondents circled back to making purchases of luxury fashion clothing from the rental platform. Respondents emphasised the role of rent-to-buy options in this regard, wherein the platform provided them with the opportunity to purchase luxury fashion clothing at discounted prices. For instance:

> Oftentimes, Rent the Runway allows you to purchase luxury pieces at a discount. Say, an item that originally was $1000 but through Rent the Runway, I can purchase it for $200. So, it is worth it for me to spend $200 versus $1000 on an item that is reused by many different people including myself. (R25)

Other respondents also shared the belief that discounted purchases of the rental clothing were worth the spend, and they perceived these purchases as being distinct from new clothing purchases given the outfits were 'basically second-hand clothes' (Post#102). For several respondents, rent-to-buy options provided them with the ability to afford luxury items that they otherwise could not purchase outright. As one of the respondents shared: 'I cannot really afford almost anything that is on the site unless it is discounted and those 80%–90% discounts make it so much more affordable for me to buy the luxury brands' (R11). It was, therefore, the substantial discounts offered on the luxury brands they had always desired that tempted the respondents to make frequent purchases of clothing items from the platform. In theory, luxury resale or the second-hand luxury market is a means by which consumers can access luxury brands that would normally be out of financial reach (Amatulli et al., 2018;

Kessous & Valette-Florence, 2019). In particular, Kim-Vick and Yu (2023) acknowledged the rise of the resale of pre-owned fashion items across digital resale platforms such as Facebook Marketplace, P2P resale apps, online consignment or second-hand retailers of luxury products. Popular media reports have further documented the growth of luxury fashion resale as rental platforms like RTR have expanded into the resale market and collaborated with third-party retailers (e.g., Amazon) to provide consumers with access to discounted second-hand luxury clothing (Biron, 2023; Farra, 2021; Fonrouge, 2023a).

Prior studies (e.g., Amatulli et al., 2018; Cervellon et al., 2012; Sihvonen & Turunen, 2016; Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015) have identified the relative inexpensiveness of second-hand luxury products compared with their brand new or first-hand counterparts, seeing this as a primary determinant of second-hand luxury purchases. In the context of access-based services, Rosenberg et al. (2023) have also contended that marked-down prices make it convenient for consumers to purchase second-hand items. Contrary to Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation, access thus appears to cultivate the respondents' desire to obtain luxury fashion items. That is, the distance previously created by the high prices of items is attenuated via rent-to-buy discounted options. Indeed, along with actualising consumers' desires, digital platforms like eBay (Denegri-Knott, 2011) and access-based services (Atanasova, 2021) have allowed and supported the reduced distance between consumers and their desired objects. Although Rosenberg et al. (2023) have acknowledged that access reduces the distance between consumers and their desired objects, they also suggest that access to luxury fashion items via rentals cools down the desires of consumers. In contrast, in this study, platform discounts increase the intensity of desires for the respondents, pushing them to circle back to purchasing luxury clothing items.

These rent-to-buy discounted options are effective illustrations of Belk et al.'s (2003) seduction mechanism, whereby platform discounts serve as an external stimulus that

intensifies the desire for luxury fashion items. In addition, these discounted offers cater to the fulfilment of a hopeful anticipation that is associated for many respondents with the aspirational dream of owning luxury brands. For instance, 'I purchase when discounts reach 90% off retail … it just adds to the thrill of being able to buy the brands I otherwise couldn't afford and have them in my personal wardrobe' (Post#301). This excerpt demonstrates that platform discounts enable respondents to realise their desires for luxury fashion, even if not in absolute terms. By taking advantage of these discounts, respondents may fulfil their aspirational dreams of owning luxury fashion brands that would otherwise remain unaffordable. However, the fact that these luxury fashion items are second-hand impedes the absolute realisation of their desires.

Consistent with Arcuri and Veludo-de-Oliveira (2018), Post#301 further illustrates that the desire to seize full control over an object – such as having the items in one's personal wardrobe – promotes item purchase. The thrill of purchasing otherwise unaffordable luxury fashion items referred to in the post also explains R49's sentiments as she emphasises the pleasure that she derives from having these items in her personal wardrobe. Cervellon et al. (2012) have also noted intrinsic pleasure that consumers may derive from possessing lower-price second-hand luxury fashion items. This is pleasure that coincides with the respondents' higher-order goal of self-enhancement, a goal informed by the basic value of hedonism (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012).

As respondents continue to purchase discounted luxury items and expand their personal wardrobes, they recount instances where they 'proudly disclose' (Post#80) their ownership of these items to others but choose not to mention that they acquired them at discounted prices. For instance: 'No one needs to know it was discounted, I just tell them I bought it' (R7). This is evidence that the respondents are cautious about potential social judgements, and that they desire others to perceive them as having the social status reflected

in the capacity to buy luxury items at their full price. As a result, the disclosure of discounted purchases could undermine the social perceptions of the respondents' status. In their study, Wong et al. (2023) have demonstrated that consumers pass subjective judgements believing that only those with high wealth can afford luxury items. According to this view, those perceived as not wealthy in possession of such items are imposters or inauthentic luxury consumers. This implies that the disclosure of discounted purchases is likely to negatively affect the social perception of the respondents' status in the eyes of others, leaving them to be considered inauthentic or imposters.

Although respondents want to feel authentic through true ownership of luxury items to satisfy their self-judgements, they also reveal a tendency to conceal the fact that they obtained ownership of the items at discounted prices. These findings, therefore, add to Wong et al.'s (2023) notion of social judgements whereby, to avoid judgement as an imposter, one may maintain the illusion of affordability in society by concealing that ownership of luxury items is facilitated by discounted prices. In prior studies (e.g., Amatulli et al., 2018; Kessous & Valette-Florence, 2019), social status and climbing the social ladder have been identified as determinants driving the purchase of second-hand luxury products. Ownership has also been confirmed as representing a status symbol that can influence consumer preferences for fashion consumption models, favouring those that involve owning over renting (Armstrong et al., 2015; McNeill & Venter, 2019; Mukendi & Henninger, 2020).

Nonetheless, although respondents attain true ownership of the luxury items, their discounted purchases can end up triggering a vicious cycle of repeated buying and disposal, much like that of fast fashion. Respondents, however, appear to leverage justification cues to endorse their luxury fashion desires and subsequently engage in discounted luxury fashion purchases.

5.3.2 Leveraging Justification Cues

As the opportunity for attaining true ownership of luxury items at discounted rates presents itself to the respondents, they become entangled in repeated purchases from the rental platform. For R28, her frequent purchases from the platform were focused on 'rebuilding [her] wardrobe' with luxury clothing, taking advantage of their availability at discounted prices. R8 highlighted her ongoing rental activities with the intention of 'eventually purchasing the rental items' when they became available at reduced prices and enhancing the 'elegance of [her] wardrobe'. Consequently, in directing their subscription usage toward determining potential purchases of luxury items, respondents amplified their practices of continuously swapping rental items. Many respondents further adopted a disposable mindset when it came to these recurring discounted purchases, where they purchased luxury fashion items, relished having them in their closet for a while and then felt that urge to purchase another item and dispose of previous purchases. R50 corroborated this vicious cycle:

> I keep buying from each new collection to have that dream wardrobe where everything is just luxury. There's a momentary thrill when I get the outfit but then I go back to my thinking-to-buy list and wait for the prices to drop to buy another one to add to my wardrobe and show others that I've finally bought it. (R50)

This excerpt illustrates a seemingly uncontrollable and endless cycle in which the respondent becomes entangled. She experiences only a momentary joy with her discounted luxury fashion purchases, with an insatiable drive for novelty and social image reigniting her desires to purchase more clothes with which to update her wardrobe. This consumption sequence coincides with Belk et al.'s (2003) cycle of desire where the joy experienced after acquiring the desired luxury fashion items fades quickly, fuelling the resurgence of desire for a new item. Contrary to Campbell's (1987) boredom-initiated cycle that reformulated desires

for fast fashion in this study, the desire cycle for discounted luxury fashion purchases appears to be fulfilment-initiated. In line with Belk et al.'s (2003) fulfilment-initiated cycle, the respondents' desire for luxury fashion persists in accordance with the joy derived from the discounted purchases. The desire to relive these pleasures reignites their desires, prompting them to frequently buy luxury fashion items from the platform.

The need for novelty that triggers respondents' continuous desires for discounted luxury fashion clothing aligns with their higher-order goal of openness to change, a goal that is informed by the basic value of stimulation (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Moreover, the projection of a social image that creates the illusion of having the status where one can afford luxury items coincides with the respondents' higher-order goal of self-enhancement underpinned with the basic value of power (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Conversely, the momentary joy that triggers the emergence of new desires for discounted luxury fashion clothing can result in the acquisition of an excessive amount of clothing. This may provide respondents with a 'renewed luxury wardrobe' (Post#433) but also exemplifies overconsumption. Contrary to Turunen and Leipämaa-Leskinen's (2015) study that characterises the purchase of second-hand luxury products as a strategy to tackle overconsumption, this study illustrates that the discounted purchases of second-hand luxury fashion clothing from rental platforms may in fact result in overconsumption.

In addition, because these luxury fashion clothing items are second-hand, this suggests that even after being purchased their 'accelerated wear and tear' (Post#501) will limit their usage, a further encouragement of the throwaway culture. For instance: 'Sometimes the clothes are outworn and I've to throw them out after a few uses and get new clothes from the platform' (Post#545). The implication here is that discounted luxury fashion purchases from the rental platform may have negative environmental effects and contribute to an increase in clothing waste in landfill. This finding contradicts prior studies (e.g., Armstrong et al., 2015;

Arribas et al., 2022) that have positioned fashion resale as the central pillar of circular fashion. This is the claim that resale maximises item usage, extends product lifespan and reduces environmental effects. The heightened reliance on rentals among respondents to assess potential purchases indicates an additional environmental drawback – specifically that the accentuated swapping cycle may result in increased transportation, packaging and cleaning of the luxury items. Plausibly, the respondents' desires for luxury fashion may become problematic considering their discounted purchases from the rental platform contradict their higher-order goal of self-transcendence underpinned by the basic value of universalism and highlighting environmental preservation (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012).

Upon being confronted with the notion that their clothing purchases could have adverse environmental consequences, the respondents thus found themselves pausing to contemplate the potential harm that their purchases might inflict upon the environment. Despite the anticipated dissonance felt by the respondents regarding the sustainability of their clothing purchases from the rental platform, they did not exhibit a significant change in their second-hand purchase behaviour or a reduction in their desire for luxury fashion items. Instead, the anticipated dissonance arising from this desire–goal conflict prompted the respondents to promote their luxury fashion desires by framing their previous restrictive behaviour of minimalistic consumption as justifications.

This is the point that their growing dependence on rental subscriptions allowed the respondents to embrace a minimalistic approach to their clothing consumption. Their clutter-free minimalist wardrobe led the respondents to believe that they have exercised restraint in their purchases for a considerable period, generating a 'sense of emptiness' (R29) among them. For R2, for example, the reduced quantity of clothing items in her closet made her feel like 'something is missing'. Similarly, R9 expressed a desire to 'refill [her] wardrobe'

because her capsule collection ‘lacks variety’ and she had ‘outgrown [her] favourite pieces’. The notion that the clutter-free wardrobe may prove too minimalist for consumers finds support in Rosenberg et al.’s (2023) study. Guy and Banim (2000) and Rosenberg et al. (2023) have also noted that because fashion anxieties related to finding something suitable to wear may result from emptiness or a lack of variety in the closet, they can amplify the consumers’ desires to purchase clothing items. Consequently, many respondents justified their discounted luxury fashion purchases. Specifically, they perceived ‘replenish[ing] [their] wardrobe with luxury clothing’ (R11) as a ‘reward for [their] commitment’ (R50) to restrictive buying.

Feeling that they deserve a reward because of previous virtuous behaviour via restrictive buying, is a notion that respondents used to grant themselves license to engage in behaviour incongruous with their higher-order goals. This is in alignment with Merritt et al.’s (2010) concept of moral self-licensing. In addition, the respondents’ previous restrictive buying is a good example of Huberts et al.’s (2014a) justification-based mechanism where their prior restraints provide moral credentials to subsequently engage in discounted purchases, despite such purchasing violating their moral principles of care for the environment (Effron et al., 2009, 2012; Graham et al., 2011; Merritt et al., 2010). Studies by Effron et al. (2012), Mukhopadhyay et al. (2008) and Mukhopadhyay and Johar (2009) have also provided details of prior restraints serving as a justification cue wherein consumers’ thoughts of prior good deeds led to subsequent indulgent choices or immoral behaviours. Drawing from the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), self-licensing has been characterised as a motivation that can be employed to control the desire threatening higher-order goals. Although this study illustrates that self-licensing may act as a motivation source, the respondents have used the motivated reasoning

of their prior restrictive buying to endorse – instead of control – their luxury fashion desires and engagement in discounted luxury fashion purchases.

Conversely, several respondents valued their access to luxury fashion clothing but did not want the rental platform to 'overpower the businesses' (R22) of the luxury fashion brands and 'put the brands at a disadvantage' (R29). These respondents explicitly depicted the financial challenges faced by luxury fashion brands, describing the rental platform as slowing down the brands' businesses by allowing people to rent rather than purchase clothing items. These respondents' perceptions of their use of rental platforms contradicts Feng et al.'s (2020) argument that brands earn a higher profit with the presence of rental platforms. This is because increases in demand for the brands' products in the rental market drive decreases in demand to purchase the same items. Indeed, the respondents felt that their practices of renting clothes for a fraction of the item's full price encroached on the earnings of the luxury fashion brands. As one of these respondents shared: 'When you rent the clothes, the brand is not getting any money and that makes it a little bit harder. Renting is fun but I don't want the brands to lose money' (R28). To their credit, Feng et al. (2020) have contended that the fluidity of brands' financial benefits from the presence of the rental platforms has more bearing on consumer segments who prefer to rent instead of purchasing the items. In this study, respondents were concerned about the potential effects of fashion rentals on the profitability of luxury fashion brands and they believed that their second-hand luxury clothing purchases could help offset these effects by 'generating additional revenue' (R3) for the brands. For instance: 'I buy the clothes I rent. I feel the brands will at least make some money when I buy' (R47).

The notion that their second-hand clothing purchases can 'help the brands financially' (R29) further implies that respondents regarded their subscriptions to the rental platform as an act of altruism. As has been noted, such altruistic acts exemplify prosocial spending

behaviours (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013; Dunn et al., 2008, 2014). In this instance, the idea is that the money spent on clothing purchases may help luxury fashion brands. Prosocial spending in support of luxury fashion brands is an oxymoron that contradicts prior studies (Aknin et al., 2011b, 2011a; Dunn et al., 2008, 2014; Maner & Gailliot, 2007) that have always considered individuals as the recipient of prosocial spending rather than firms or brands.

Interestingly, respondents were aware that their second-hand clothing purchases may be 'partly indulgent' (R28) despite items being purchased at discounted prices. This characterisation is logical since purchases imply the acquisition of clothing that contradicts the respondents' conscious approach to acquisition and subsequently challenges their deliberate inclination toward minimalism in their clothing consumption. These indulgent purchases of second-hand luxury fashion from the platform also result in decreases in the rental inventory and the luxury fashion brands may need to 'add more items to the platform' (R18) to facilitate the resale process. Some respondents believed that such resale could increase the 'overall demand' for luxury fashion brand items and contribute to the 'overall growth of the resale market' (R3).

This awareness that their purchases of second-hand clothing are a sign of indulgence suggests that respondents did consider such purchases 'not truly sustainable' (R50). The resale of second-hand luxury clothing from the rental platform challenges the foundational principle of fashion rentals which revolves around reducing the production of new garments. By extending the lifespan of clothing items, fashion rentals claim to reduce the production of new clothes and to subsequently minimise environmental harm (Becker-Leifhold, 2018; Lang et al., 2020). However, although resale may maximise usage and extend the lifespan of clothing items (Arribas et al., 2022), the risk of a reduced rental inventory pool could potentially compel luxury fashion brands to produce more garments to sustain the demand for

fashion resale. Although the respondents acknowledged their anticipated dissonance regarding the sustainability of their clothing purchases from the rental platform, their behaviour regarding second-hand purchases and their desire for luxury fashion items did not undergo a substantial alteration. Rather, the anticipated dissonance stemming from this desire–goal conflict encouraged respondents to promote their desires by portraying their clothing purchases as acts of altruism towards luxury fashion brands.

Respondents insisted that their second-hand luxury clothing purchases were 'not a breach of any kind' (R22) of their minimalistic approach to clothing consumption because these purchases were undertaken to help luxury fashion brands. Many respondents thus redefined their clothing purchases under the pretext that 'there's nothing wrong in buying' (R28) because 'it is meant for the greater good' (R29). The realisation of second-hand clothing purchases being indulgent and potentially unsustainable can be assumed to push respondents to seek justification for their indulgence, particularly because this indulgence violates their minimalistic intentions and moral principles of care for the environment (Effron et al., 2009, 2012; Graham et al., 2011; Merritt et al., 2010). As Effron and Conway (2015) have suggested, people strategically create evidence of a moral credential when they need a license to justify actions that may be perceived as less-than-virtuous.

Arguably, the respondents perceived their indulgent acts of clothing purchases as less-than-virtuous because of their negative environmental effects. They subsequently construed their clothing purchases as being altruistic acts, consistent with the moral self-licensing concept (Merritt et al., 2010). Past studies (e.g., Khan & Dhar, 2006; Mukhopadhyay & Johar, 2009) have also shown how altruistic acts can serve as a license with consumers' imagination of having contributed to charitable causes leading them to engage in subsequent indulgent choices or immoral behaviours. In this instance, perceiving second-hand clothing purchases as altruistic acts suggests that the respondents have prioritised an alternative higher-order goal as

part of their self-licensing process. For instance, the welfare of the luxury fashion brands that the respondents asserted to support through their rental subscriptions aligns with their higher-order goal of self-transcendence, a goal informed by the basic value of universalism that emphasises the protection of others' well-being (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). In line with the integrative theory of self-control (Hofmann et al., 2012; Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015), this study, therefore, indicates that self-licensing may serve as a motivation source. More specifically, the respondents have used the motivated reasoning of their altruistic acts to endorse their luxury fashion desires and subsequently engage in discounted luxury fashion purchases with the 'unintended' motive of supporting luxury fashion brands' earnings.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter set out to illustrate the state of flux consumers find themselves in as a result of the new propositions that fashion rental platforms make available to them. This state of flux finds resonance with the relativist ontological view presented in this thesis, with consumers displaying diverse perceptions concerning multiple values (egoistic, biospheric, altruistic) and corresponding higher-order goals (self-enhancement, self-transcendence). These values and goals are intertwined with consumers' desires, creating a dynamic interplay between them. Consumers' desires, in turn, are notably impelled by their needs for novelty and social image and instigated by the surrounding social environment, encompassing elements such as social media and societal expectations.

Furthermore, the consumers' desires and their higher-order goals exhibit a dynamic nature as they shift across a continuum of solid-liquid consumption. These transitions across the consumption continuum are triggered by the activation of the desire-goal conflicts and the subsequent mechanisms that is employed to reconcile these conflicts. Overall, this chapter suggests that consumers navigate the continuum of solid-liquid consumption through three stages, from fast fashion to fashion rentals, and eventually back to purchases of second-hand

luxury items coupled with the persistent utilisation of fashion rentals. In each stage, the process of reconciliation of the desire-goal conflicts is shaped by different sources of motivation that guide consumers to either control, downplay, or endorse their desires.

In the first stage, consumers purchase luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands to fulfil their desires for luxury fashion. Influenced by social media and societal expectations and their need for novelty and social image, consumers' desires for fast fashion emerge and amplify, resulting in frequent purchases. Yet, these desire-driven purchases lead to excessive spending, environmental harm, and unfair working conditions for fast fashion labour. As a result, consumers encounter conflicts between their materialistic desires and higher-order goals of self-enhancement (wealth accumulation) and self-transcendence (environmental preservation, welfare protection). Upon experiencing post-purchase dissonance, consumers are motivated by their self-conscious emotions and moral considerations to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas and they proactively seek to reconcile the desire-goal conflicts stemming from their fast fashion purchases.

In the second stage, consumers transition toward fashion rental subscriptions as a resolution to the conflicts evoked by their fast fashion purchases. Utilitarian and green consumption values derived from fashion rentals motivate consumers to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas and adopt a minimalist approach to clothing consumption through fashion rentals. Consumers thus embrace restrictive clothing purchases and avoidance of fast fashion, with the social and emotional consumption values motivating them to endorse their desires for luxury fashion through fashion rentals. However, in still seeking novelty and social image, and in conjunction with the influence of social media and societal expectations, consumers are prompted to revive the wear once culture through the use of their rental subscriptions. At the same time, consumers anticipate that the rapid swapping of clothing items they evoke through their subscriptions could have a detrimental effect on collective

interests by contributing to environmental damage. This suggests a conflict between the consumers' materialistic desires and their higher-order goal of self-transcendence (environmental preservation). Upon anticipating dissonance, consumers reconcile this conflict by employing self-serving justifications that motivate them to downplay the risks of their luxury fashion desires and promote the use of fashion rentals. As part of the justification-based mechanisms, consumers emphasise that their rental subscriptions cater to the collective interests of social justice, equality, and welfare protection, along with personal interests of income sources, thereby prioritising higher-order goals of both self-transcendence and self-enhancement.

In the third stage, consumers shift back toward discounted purchases of luxury fashion items from the rental platform and simultaneously continue their use of fashion rentals to inform these second-hand purchases. The dominance of novelty and social image persists, with platform discounts, social media, and societal expectations driving consumer to frequently purchase second-hand clothing and therefore attain true ownership of luxury fashion. However, consumers anticipate that their frequent purchases of second-hand luxury clothing may have adverse effects on collective interests by contributing to environmental damage. This suggests a conflict between consumers' materialistic desires and their higher-order goal of self-transcendence (environmental preservation). Upon anticipating dissonance, consumers reconcile this conflict by engaging in self-licensing that motivates them to endorse their luxury fashion desires and promote discounted purchases of second-hand luxury clothing from the platform. Consumers use their prior restrictive buying as a license to justify their discounted purchases of second-hand luxury fashion, as well as emphasise that such purchases cater to the collective interests of welfare protection, thereby prioritising the higher-order goal of self-transcendence.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

As shown in the previous chapters, this thesis identifies and presents evidence of the reconciliation processes that consumers undergo in navigating the desire–goal conflicts they experience in their clothing consumption contexts. In navigating these desire–goal conflicts, consumers transition through three stages across the solid-liquid consumption continuum. At each stage, the process of reconciliation is influenced by a variety of sources of motivation that lead consumers to control, downplay or endorse their desires, as encapsulated in five related propositions. In conclusion, this thesis proposes a model to elucidate how consumers navigate desire–goal conflicts, particularly when these conflicts arise between their materialistic pursuits and the anti-consumption principles that are prevalent in liquid consumption. Significant contributions made by the thesis to desire theorisation and dimensions, self-control theory and scholarship related to materialism, anti-consumption and solid-liquid consumption are outlined in this chapter. New avenues of research based on the limitations of this thesis are also suggested in this chapter. With the aim of clearly framing these discussions, the chapter commences with a reiteration of the research topic, its aims and the research questions, followed by a succinct overview of the findings.

6.1 Revisiting the Research Rationale

The big idea that drives this thesis sits in the philosophical realm of materialism and its theoretical derivative, anti-consumption. Materialism, which is identified with solid consumption, is characterised by a strong desire to acquire possessions and attain control over those possessions through ownership and preservation (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017; Belk, 1985; Ger & Belk, 1996; Richins & Dawson, 1992a). Antithetical to materialism is anti-consumption (Lee & Ahn, 2016). Anti-consumption is identified with liquid consumption (Balderjahn et al., 2020)– meaning the access-based consumption of objects (e.g., renting) – which emphasises the temporary acquisition and preservation of objects and an overall desire

for fewer possessions (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017). Arguably, the emergence of liquid consumption as a sub-type of anti-consumption has caused a fundamental shift in perspective with consumers valuing the usage of objects, especially luxury fashion, through access-based services, rather than valuing ownership of items (Bardhi et al., 2020).

Empirical evidence of this shift in perspective lies in the rapid growth of the online clothing rental market, which has been projected to reach US$3.5 billion by 2028, with a growth rate of 9.78% during 2022–2028 (Research and Markets, 2023). This surge in popularity for fashion rentals indicates strong interest in access-based services and a move away from traditional ownership patterns. In theory, access-based services like fashion rentals align with the principles of anti-consumption insofar as they prioritise shared usage, minimise the acquisition of clothing items without rejecting the use of the items, and embody an environmentally sustainable form of consumption (Akbar et al., 2016; Arrigo, 2021a; Balderjahn et al., 2020; Lee, 2022). Such a view draws on the point that materialism revolves around the excessive accumulation of – in this case – clothing items. This accumulation fosters cycles of desire for ownership among consumers that are linked with environmentally unsustainable practices – particularly evident in the fast fashion purchase context (Evers et al., 2018; Richins & Dawson, 1992b; Richins & Fournier, 1991). The contrasting contexts of access-based consumption via fashion rentals and ownership-based consumption through fast fashion therefore highlight the fundamental clash and the antithetical relationship between materialism and anti-consumption.

The conventional and binary philosophical differentiation between ownership-based and access-based consumption has, however, been disrupted with access-based services also enabling the rapid circulation of luxury fashion items in the aim of satisfying consumers' insatiable desires. Access-based services have further expanded into the resale market and forged collaborations with third-party retailers (e.g., Amazon) to provide consumers with

access to discounted second-hand luxury clothing (Biron, 2023; Farra, 2021; Fonrouge, 2023). As a result, the distinction between owning and accessing luxury fashion items has become unclear, making consumers' perspectives more complex and intertwined.

The rise of access-based services has intensified the conflict between the pursuit of material possessions and the principles of anti-consumption, resulting in dissonances among consumers. This conflict indicates the potential for further disconnects between the ideologies of materialism and anti-consumption and potential shifts in consumption across the solid-liquid consumption continuum. The rapid usage and post-usage acquisition of luxury fashion items within liquid consumption thus contradict the notion that materialism is linked solely to solid consumption. The conventional antithetical relationship and established ontological connections between materialism and anti-consumption are also challenged.

Existing scholarly research has touched on the issue of materialism in liquid consumption. Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017), for instance, have considered liquid consumption to be less materialistic than solid consumption, but also acknowledge that the quick circulation and accumulation of objects in liquid consumption can reflect materialistic tendencies. In addition, Alonso-Almeida et al. (2020) and Atanasova and Eckhardt (2021) have suggested that the enjoyment of goods and experiences may be indicative of materialism in liquid consumption. These insights highlight the pressing need for a comprehensive and critical exploration of materialistic values in the context of liquid consumption.

In contrast, Lee and Ahn (2016) have identified and compared anti-consumption values with materialistic values across four key constructs: control over consumption, scope of concerns, material desire and source of happiness. Most of the attention given to anti-consumption values, however, centres around voluntary simplification, leaving the values that may be derived from liquid forms of consumption largely unexplored. Consequently, there is a notable gap in the understanding of materialism in liquid consumption and with regard to

consumers' growing preoccupation with navigating the conflict between their pursuit of materialism and the principles of anti-consumption. This thesis addresses this gap within the context of fashion rentals, engaging the overarching research question: How do consumers navigate the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption in fashion rentals?

6.2 Revisiting the Research Process

As has been outlined, the research methodology in this thesis adopts a relativist ontological position, recognising that consumers' perceptions and behaviours can be diverse, dynamic and shaped by their social environment. In parallel, the methodology embraces a subjectivist epistemological stance, which acknowledges that knowledge is elicited and refined through subjective interpretations of researcher-participant interactions in the novel phenomenon of fashion rentals as anti-consumption.

To explore these dynamics, this thesis employs Charmaz's (2006) CGT as the qualitative methodology and draws on Kozinets' (2002) methods of netnography. Data were collected from participants who engaged in renting luxury fashion brands from the fashion rental platform of RTR. Data analysis followed a systematic and cyclical application of the constructivist coding process and resulted in the emergence of three core categories.

Original insights emerged concerning the process that consumers undergo to manage the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption in the context of fashion rentals. In addition, this thesis achieves resonance by using direct quotations from interviews and frequent reference to data sources, ensuring that emergent insights are rooted in participants' experiences.

A major limitation, beyond the technical aspects of methods, is the remote mode of data collection, as well as disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These compounded other challenges such as limited resources (resulting from COVID), time, logistics and the subsequent researcher's steep research and learning journey in this thesis.

6.3 Summary of Findings

In navigating a continuum of solid-liquid consumption, consumers progress through three stages, transitioning from fast fashion purchases to fashion rentals, and eventually back to second-hand luxury fashion purchases accompanied by the continuous use of fashion rentals. Consumer progression through these three stages across the solid-liquid consumption continuum is driven by desire–goal conflicts, with consumers prompted to seek reconciliation through minimalist practices, self-serving justifications and self-licensing.

In the first stage, consumers acquire luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands to realise their desire for luxury fashion. Influenced by the pervasive presence of social media and societal expectations, as well as their pursuit of novelty and a favourable social image, consumers find themselves increasingly drawn to the allure of fast fashion, resulting in frequent purchases. However, this desire-driven behaviour ultimately leads to extravagant spending, environmental degradation, and exploitative labour practices within the fast fashion industry.

Consequently, consumers find themselves entangled in a profound conflict between their materialistic desires and their higher-order goals of self-enhancement (wealth accumulation) and self-transcendence (environmental preservation, welfare protection). When confronted with post-purchase dissonance, consumers are spurred into action by their self-conscious emotions and moral considerations, driving them to exercise control over their desires for luxury fashion replicas. They actively seek to harmonise the conflicts that arise from their fast fashion consumption, thereby striving to align their desires with their overarching higher-order goals.

In the second stage, consumers transition towards fashion rental subscriptions as a strategic response to the internal conflicts triggered by their previous fast fashion purchases. Motivated by utilitarian and green values associated with fashion rentals, consumers actively

rein in their desires for luxury fashion replicas and adopt a more minimalist approach to their wardrobe through rental services. This minimalist approach often results in restrained clothing purchases and a deliberate avoidance of fast fashion by consumers. Underpinned by both social and emotional consumption values, consumers are further motivated to fulfill their luxury fashion desires through the medium of fashion rentals.

However, despite this newfound commitment to conscious consumption, consumers continue to grapple with the desire for novelty and maintaining a favourable social image, exacerbated by the pervasive influence of social media and societal expectations. These factors spur consumers to perpetuate the wear once culture through their rental subscriptions. Simultaneously, there is a growing awareness that the rapid turnover of clothing items associated with these subscriptions could contribute to environmental harm, creating a conflict between consumers' materialistic desires and their overarching higher-order goal of self-transcendence, particularly in the realm of environmental preservation.

As consumers anticipate this dissonance, they employ self-serving justifications to reconcile their desire-goal conflicts. These rationalisations lead them to downplay the potential risks associated with their luxury fashion desires and to champion the use of fashion rentals. Within these justification-based mechanisms, consumers emphasise that their rental subscriptions align with collective interests, including social justice, equality, and worker welfare protection. They also highlight the personal benefits of income generation, thereby prioritising higher-order goals encompassing both self-transcendence and self-enhancement.

In the third stage, consumers revert to purchasing luxury fashion items where they opt for discounted options available on the rental platform. Simultaneously, they maintain their engagement with fashion rentals to guide their choices in acquiring the second-hand luxury items. The powerful motivations of novelty and a positive social image remain prevalent, driven by enticing platform discounts, the influence of social media, and societal

expectations. As a result, consumers frequently engage in the purchase of second-hand clothing with the ultimate aim of achieving true ownership of luxury fashion.

However, a growing awareness emerges among consumers that their frequent acquisitions of second-hand luxury items may have adverse consequences for collective interests, particularly regarding environmental degradation. This realisation triggers a conflict between their materialistic desires and their higher-order goals of self-transcendence, specifically in terms of environmental preservation. In response to this anticipated dissonance, consumers employ a self-licensing mechanism that serves to rationalise their continued endorsement of luxury fashion desires and the pursuit of discounted purchases of second-hand luxury clothing from the platform. Consumers leverage their prior restrained buying behaviour as a kind of moral license to justify these discounted acquisitions. They also emphasise that such purchases contribute to the collective interests of welfare protection, thereby aligning with their higher-order goal of self-transcendence.

In summary, consumers progress through three stages across the solid-liquid consumption continuum, during which they grapple with conflicts and employ mechanisms such as minimalist practices, self-serving justifications and self-licensing to reconcile their materialistic desires with their higher-order goals. Table 6.1 presents the main findings by considering all the three stages of consumer progression, desire-goal conflicts, and associated mechanisms to reconcile the conflicts.

Table 6.1

List of Main Findings

Main findings	Explanations
Consumer progression (across the solid-liquid consumption continuum)	• Stage 1 (Solid Consumption): Fast fashion purchases • Stage 2 (Liquid Consumption): Fashion rentals • Stage 3 (Fusion of Solid-Liquid Consumption): Second-hand luxury fashion purchases and Fashion rentals

Desire precursors (remains consistent across all 3 stages of consumer progression except for platform discounts)	• Need states.
	  ○ Novelty
	  ○ Social image
	• Environmental factors.
	  ○ Social media
	  ○ Societal expectations
	  ○ Platform discounts (only applies to Stage 3 of consumer progression)

Higher-order goals (differs across all 3 stages of consumer progression)	• Self-enhancement.
	  ○ Wealth accumulation
	• Self-transcendence.
	  ○ Environmental preservation
	  ○ Welfare protection

Desire-goal conflicts (dynamic interplay between desires and higher-order goals)	• Stage 1: Fast fashion purchases
	  ○ Desire for luxury fashion replicas.
	vs.
	  ○ Higher-order goals of self-enhancement (wealth accumulation).
	  ○ Higher-order goals of self-transcendence (environmental preservation).
	  ○ Higher-order goals of self-transcendence (welfare protection).

	• Stage 2: Fashion rentals
	  ○ Desire for luxury fashion rentals.
	  vs.
	  ○ Higher-order goals of self-transcendence (environmental preservation).
	• Stage 3: Second-hand luxury fashion purchases and Fashion rentals
	  ○ Desire for pre-loved luxury fashion.
	  vs.
	  ○ Higher-order goals of self-transcendence (environmental preservation).

Desire-goal conflict resolutions	• Stage 1: Fast fashion purchases
	  ○ Control desire for luxury fashion replicas.
	• Stage 2: Fashion rentals
	  ○ Control desire for luxury fashion replicas.
	  ○ Endorse desire for luxury fashion rentals.
	  ○ Downplay risks of desire for luxury fashion rentals.
	• Stage 3: Second-hand luxury fashion purchases and Fashion rentals
	  ○ Endorse desire for pre-loved luxury fashion.

Motivating sources for desire-goal conflict resolutions	• Stage 1: Fast fashion purchases
	  ○ Control desire for luxury fashion replicas.
	  ▪ Self-conscious emotions.
	  ▪ Moral considerations.
	• Stage 2: Fashion rentals
	  ○ Control desire for luxury fashion replicas.
	  ▪ Consumption values (utilitarian, green).
	  ○ Endorse desire for luxury fashion rentals.
	  ▪ Consumption values (social, emotional).
	  ○ Downplay risks of desire for luxury fashion rentals.

	▪ Self-serving justifications (personal and collective interests). • Stage 3: Second-hand luxury fashion purchases and Fashion rentals o Endorse desire for pre-loved luxury fashion. ▪ Self-licensing (prior restraints, collective interests).
Outcomes of desire-goal conflicts	• Stage 1 Conflicts (Fast fashion purchases) o Progression toward liquid consumption (luxury fashion rentals). ▪ Adoption of minimalist practices. • Stage 2 Conflicts (Fashion rentals) o Stagnant position at liquid consumption (luxury fashion rentals). ▪ Self-serving justifications. • Stage 3 Conflicts (Second-hand luxury fashion purchases and Fashion rentals) o Circle back toward solid consumption (pre-loved luxury fashion). o Concurrent position maintenance at liquid consumption (luxury fashion rentals). ▪ Self-licensing.

6.4 Propositions

As shown in Table 6.2, the three mechanisms underlying the reconciliation processes have formed the basis of five propositions that can be drawn from the findings of this research. These propositions provide valuable insights into the dynamics of desire–goal conflicts and transitions along the solid-liquid consumption continuum.

Table 6.2

Reconciliation Processes and Propositions

Reconciliation processes	Propositions
Minimalist practices	P1: Self-conscious emotions, resulting from desire–goal conflicts, may serve as a motivation to control desires in solid consumption.
	P2: Moral considerations, embedded in the higher-order goal of self-transcendence, may serve as a motivation to control desires in solid consumption.
	P3a: Consumption values, associated with the higher-order goals of self-enhancement and self-transcendence, may serve as a motivation to control desires in liquid consumption. P3b: Consumption values, associated with the higher-order goal of self-enhancement, may serve as a motivation to endorse desires in liquid consumption.
Self-serving justifications	P4: Self-serving justifications, associated with the higher-order goals of self-enhancement and self-transcendence, may serve as a motivation to endorse desires in liquid consumption.
Self-licensing	P5a: Self-licensing, stemming from prior restraints, may serve as a motivation to endorse desires in solid consumption. P5b: Self-licensing, associated with the higher-order goal of self-transcendence, may serve as a motivation to endorse desires in liquid consumption.

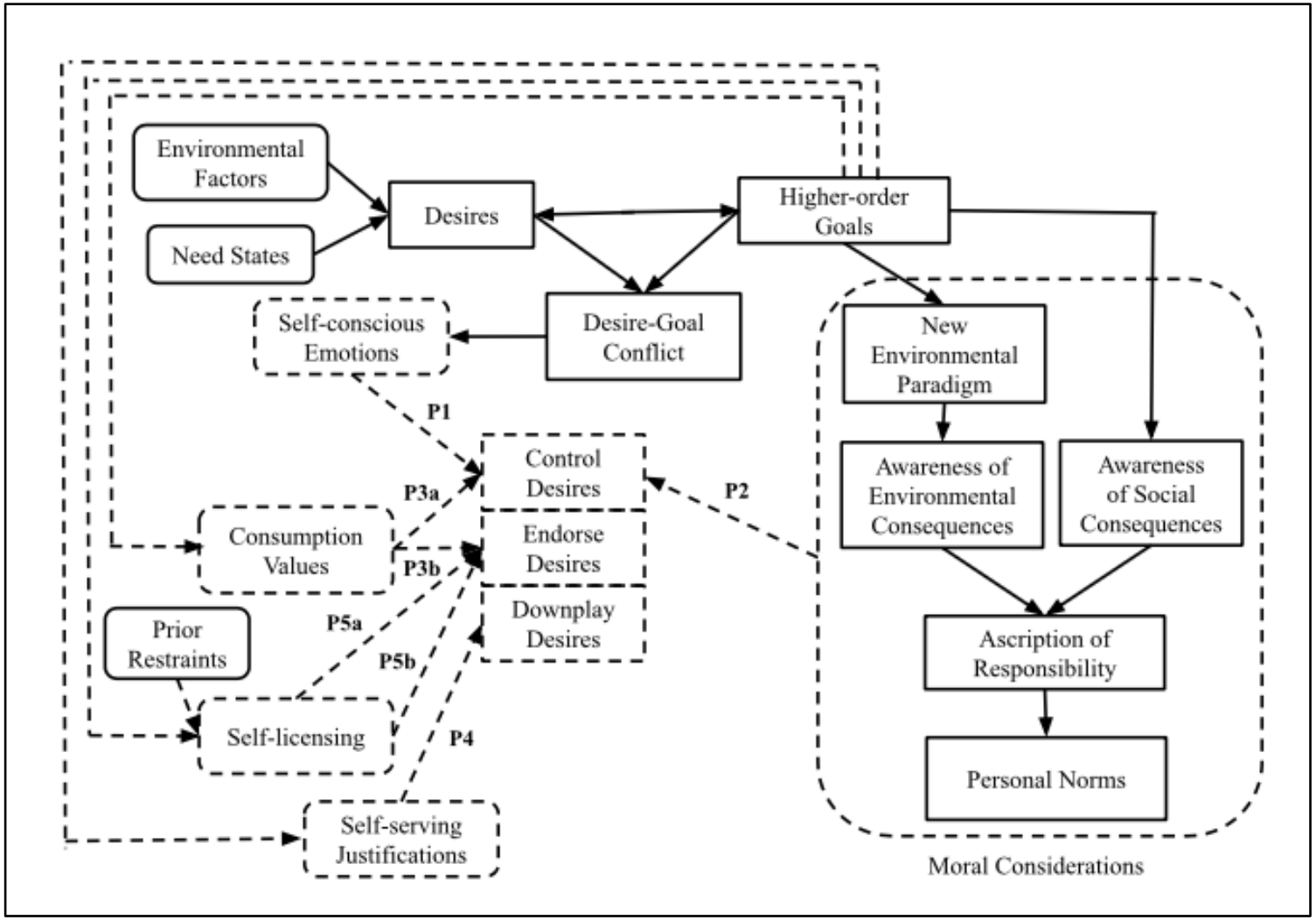
In combination with the reconciliation processes, these propositions contribute to the substantive areas of explanation drawn from the combined analytical lenses of Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation, Schwartz et al.'s (2012) refined theory of basic values, and Kotabe

and Hofmann's (2015) integrative theory of self-control. In addition, these propositions provide a rich understanding of the motivational sources that can either control, downplay or endorse desires, thus affecting the mechanisms of the reconciliation processes across the solid-liquid consumption continuum. To achieve this, the study draws upon (i) Schwartz's (1977) NAM and Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory to gain insight into moral consideration, (ii) Huberts et al.'s (2014) self-serving justifications and self-licensing and (iii) Sheth et al.'s (1991) consumption values.

Drawing on the propositions and associated mechanisms underlying the reconciliation processes, a conceptual model has been developed in this thesis to illustrate the: (i) factors that initiate desire–goal conflicts, (ii) sources that motivate controlling, downplaying or endorsing desires and (iii) mechanisms that lead to conflict reconciliation across the solid-liquid consumption continuum. The conceptual model is depicted in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1

Conceptual Model



6.5 Conceptual Model: Connecting with the Research Questions

6.5.1 Cultural Socialisation of Desire

The conceptual model that emerged in this thesis suggests that luxury fashion desires are nurtured by a cultural socialisation that is bound by the aspects of sociality, inaccessibility and distance described in Belk et al.'s (2003) notion of sociality in desire theorisation. The cultural socialisation of luxury fashion desires fosters a sense of imagination among consumers about what it would be like to possess an object that is unattainable to the masses, distant because of its high price and capable of signalling one's social status to others. This imagination perpetuates the phenomenon of desire among consumers and instils hope of eventually acquiring the coveted item, further intensifying their luxury fashion desires. Consumers realise their luxury fashion desires through three methods: (i) purchasing luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands, (ii) renting items from luxury fashion brands and (iii) purchasing second-hand luxury fashion items from rental platforms.

6.5.2 Desires: Impellers and Instigators

Consumers' desires for luxury fashion replicas, luxury fashion rentals and second-hand luxury fashion items are commonly rooted in their internal need states for novelty and social image as well as external stimuli from social media and societal expectations. This implies that internal need states and external stimuli remain consistent across the solid-liquid consumption continuum. An additional external stimulus of platform discounts was identified from the findings with regard to the context of second-hand luxury fashion items and this stimulus is not observed in the contexts of luxury fashion replicas and luxury fashion rentals. Drawing from Kotabe and Hofmann's (2015) integrative theory of self-control, the consumers' internal need states can be seen as impellers that increase the likelihood of enacting a desire and external stimuli can be seen as instigators that normatively afford the enactment of a desire. It is the combined influence of impellers and instigators that shapes

desires for luxury fashion replicas, luxury fashion rentals and second-hand luxury fashion items. However, the realisation of these desires often conflicts with consumers' higher-order goals in each specific context.

6.5.3 Materialistic Values: Solid Consumption

Within the realm of luxury fashion replicas, consumers' higher-order goals are informed by Schwartz et al.'s (2012) basic values of stimulation (novelty) and power (social image/status and wealth accumulation). Similarly, in the context of second-hand luxury fashion items, consumers' higher-order goals are informed by Schwartz et al.'s (2012) basic values of hedonism (pleasure), stimulation (novelty) and power (social image/status). Although the self-enhancement values of hedonism and power align with Richins and Dawson's (1992a, 1992b) concept of materialism because of their emphasis on self-interests (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Kasser, 2016; Tang & Hinsch, 2018), the value stimulation – as an openness to change – also exhibits materialistic tendencies in this thesis. At the solid end of the consumption continuum, where the purchases of luxury fashion replicas and second-hand luxury fashion items are situated, materialistic value dimensions like novelty, social image/status, pleasure and wealth accumulation thus play a significant role.

6.5.4 Anti-Consumption-Natured Values: Solid Consumption

The contexts of luxury fashion replicas and second-hand luxury fashion items also see the existence of values that exhibit collective interests such that consumers' higher-order goals are informed by Schwartz et al.'s (2012) basic value of universalism (environmental preservation and welfare protection). Although the solid end of the consumption continuum does not inherently oppose consumption, which is the core idea of anti-consumption (Lee & Ahn, 2016), the presence of values that align with anti-consumption principles is evident in solid consumption. At the solid end of the consumption continuum, where the purchases of luxury fashion replicas and second-hand luxury fashion items are situated, anti-consumption-

natured value dimensions like environmental preservation and welfare protection play a significant role.

6.5.5 Materialistic Values: Liquid Consumption

The realm of luxury fashion rentals illustrates that consumers' higher-order goals are informed by Schwartz et al.'s (2012) basic values of hedonism (pleasure, excitement and enjoyment), stimulation (novelty), and power (social image/status and wealth accumulation). With prior studies identifying hedonism and power as materialistic values (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Kasser, 2016; Tang & Hinsch, 2018), and this thesis diagnosing the stimulation value as materialistic, the presence of materialistic tendencies cannot be negated in liquid consumption. The materialistic values that emerged in liquid consumption, however, do not align with Richins and Dawson's (1992a) traditional values of materialism as they are prevalent in solid consumption, specifically acquisition centrality, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness and possession-defined success.

Instead, Richins and Dawson's (1992a) values of materialism are redefined in liquid consumption as temporary acquisition centrality; quick circulation as the pursuit of novelty, pleasure, excitement and enjoyment; and the signalling of success, status or wealth through the access of rental items. At the same time, in support of Atanasova and Eckhardt (2021), the thesis also showcases that the pursuits of achieving happiness and signalling success, status or wealth that are driven by materialistic values in solid consumption may also be present in liquid consumption through access-based services like rentals. Thus, at the liquid end of the consumption continuum, where the rentals of luxury fashion items are situated, materialistic value dimensions like novelty, social image/status, pleasure, excitement and enjoyment and wealth accumulation play a significant role.

6.5.6 Anti-Consumption Values: Liquid Consumption

In the context of luxury fashion rentals, alongside materialistic values, consumers' higher-order goals are informed by Schwartz et al.'s (2012) basic values of universalism (environmental preservation, social justice, equality and welfare protection). The self-transcendence value of universalism further emphasises the protection of nature and others in the larger society (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). This prevalence of environmental and societal interests in the universalism value aligns with Lee and Ahn's (2016) anti-consumption principle of macro-level concerns. Thus, at the liquid end of the consumption continuum, where the rentals of luxury fashion items are situated, anti-consumption value dimensions like environmental preservation, social justice, equality and welfare protection play a significant role.

6.5.7 Conflict Between Materialism and Anti-Consumption

In solid consumption, the materialistic value linked to wealth accumulation creates a conflict between the consumers' higher-order goals of self-enhancement and their materialistic desires for luxury fashion replicas. This conflict becomes evident when consumers' desire for luxury fashion replicas leads to negative outcomes such as excessive spending. Concurrently, anti-consumption-natured values, which prioritise environmental preservation and welfare protection, also generate conflicts in solid consumption. These conflicts arise when the consumers' higher-order goals of self-transcendence clash with their materialistic desires for luxury fashion replicas, as the latter often involve environmentally harmful practices and exploitative labour conditions typical of fast fashion. Furthermore, anti-consumption-natured value, associated with environmental preservation, triggers a conflict between the consumers' higher-order goal of self-transcendence and their materialistic desires for second-hand luxury fashion items. This conflict emerges from the potential negative environmental impacts associated with frequent purchases of second-hand items.

It’s indeed predictable that the anti-consumption-natured values would clash with consumers’ materialistic desires concerning luxury fashion replicas and second-hand luxury items. Yet, the truly captivating aspect lies in how materialistic values, notably those linked with wealth accumulation, also run counter to consumers' materialistic desires, particularly in the context of luxury fashion replicas. This implies that within solid consumption scenarios, consumers' materialistic desires could potentially trigger internal discord among various inherent materialistic values, beyond their contrast with anti-consumption-natured values. Interestingly, the anti-consumption-natured value related to welfare protection gives rise to contradiction when it comes to materialistic desires for luxury fashion replicas. However, this same value drives consumers to pursue their materialistic desires for second-hand luxury fashion items. This underscores the idea that diverse scenarios within solid consumption can exhibit either conflicting or harmonious dynamics between materialistic pursuits and anti-consumption principles.

In liquid consumption, the anti-consumption value tied to environmental preservation gives rise to a conflict between consumers' higher-order goal of self-transcendence and their materialistic desires for luxury fashion rentals. This conflict becomes apparent when consumers' desire for luxury fashion rentals carries the potential for detrimental outcomes, notably environmental harm due to frequent item swapping. What adds to the intrigue is the paradox that these anti-consumption values, which should ostensibly align with the concept of fashion rentals as an environmentally sustainable form of consumption, are the very ones causing negative repercussions. This paradox or incongruity raises inquiries regarding the supposed environmental virtue of fashion rentals since consumers' materialistic desires and the anti-consumption value of environmental preservation are at odds with each other in an anti-consumption context. However, a significant observation comes to light: the existence of materialistic values does not give rise to any conflict between consumers' materialistic desires

and their higher-order goals of self-enhancement and openness to change, even in the context of luxury fashion rentals that align with anti-consumption principles. This suggests that within liquid consumption scenarios, while consumers' materialistic desires might stand in contrast to anti-consumption values, it's not the materialistic values themselves that trigger the conflicts.

The interplay between consumers' materialistic desires and values characterised by anti-consumption principles thus showcases the desire-goal conflict in Kotabe and Hofmann's (2015) integrative theory of self-control. This conflict triggered self-control exertion processes by yielding control motivation that forms the basis of the reconciliation processes that consumers undergo to navigate the conflict between materialism and anti-consumption in fashion rentals.

6.5.8 Conflict Reconciliation Processes

Since consumers realise their desire for luxury fashion in relative terms – by acquiring items that closely resemble luxury fashion items instead of acquiring genuine items – they experience dissonance. More specifically, this dissonance arises when their materialistic desires contradict their higher-order goals of self-enhancement (i.e., wealth accumulation) and self-transcendence (i.e., environmental preservation and welfare protection). This experience of dissonance activates a sense of guilt that relates to their excessive spending on the frequent acquisition of luxury fashion replicas. At the same time that consumers' experience dissonance, they also feel moral considerations from their continuous acquisition of luxury fashion replicas. These moral considerations pertain to environmental harm and the exploitation of fast fashion labour. Both self-conscious emotions and moral considerations, therefore, serve as sources of motivation that lead consumers to control their desires for luxury fashion replicas and enact their higher-order goals of self-enhancement and self-transcendence by shifting from solid toward liquid consumption.

At the liquid end of the consumption continuum, consumers derive utilitarian and green consumption values from their use of fashion rentals. These values motivate them to reinforce control over their desires for luxury fashion replicas. The resulting minimalist approach to clothing consumption enables the enactment of consumers' higher-order goals of self-enhancement (i.e., wealth accumulation) and self-transcendence (i.e., environmental preservation). In addition, consumers derive social and emotional consumption values from their use of fashion rentals that motivate them to endorse their desires for luxury fashion rentals and enact their higher-order goals of self-enhancement (i.e., social image/status and pleasure, excitement and enjoyment). Minimalist practices, striking a balance between consumers' materialistic desires and higher-order goals encompassing both materialistic and anti-consumption values, can therefore be proposed as a mechanism that resolves the desire–goal conflict originating in the solid consumption of luxury fashion replicas.

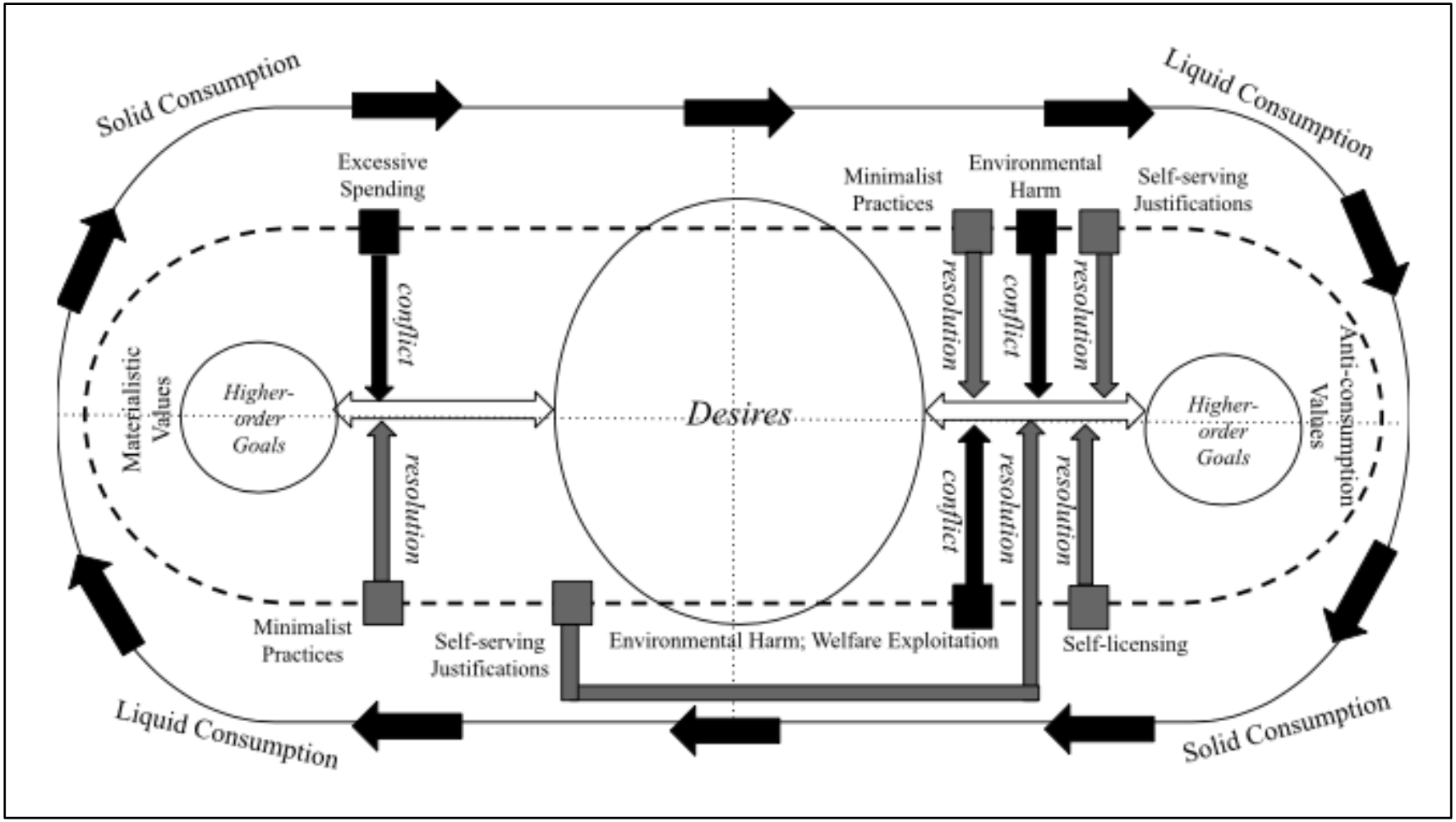
As consumers rent items from luxury fashion brands, they realise their desire for luxury fashion in relative terms insofar as their experience with the items they access through the fashion rentals is of a transient nature. With the relative realisation of luxury fashion desire, consumers anticipate a dissonance as their materialistic desires – prevalent in their continuous swapping of rental items – oppose their higher-order goal of self-transcendence (i.e., environmental preservation). This anticipated dissonance activates self-serving justifications among consumers that motivates them to downplay the risks of their desires for luxury fashion rentals and enact their higher-order goals of self-transcendence (social justice, equality and welfare protection) and self-enhancement (wealth accumulation). Self-serving justifications, striking a balance between consumers' materialistic desires and higher-order goals encompassing both materialistic and anti-consumption values, can therefore be proposed as a mechanism that resolves the desire–goal conflict originating in the liquid consumption of fashion rentals.

In addition, consumers revert to discounted purchases of second-hand luxury fashion items from rental platforms and simultaneously use fashion rentals to guide these purchases. More specifically, consumers realise their desire for luxury fashion in relative terms insofar as these items are second-hand in nature. With the relative realisation of luxury fashion desire, consumers anticipate a dissonance as their materialistic desires – prevalent in their continuous acquisition of second-hand items – contradict their higher-order goal of self-transcendence (i.e., environmental preservation). This anticipated dissonance activates a mode of self-licensing among consumers that motivates them to endorse their desires for second-hand luxury fashion items and enact their higher-order goals of self-transcendence (welfare protection). Self-licensing, striking a balance between consumers' materialistic desires and higher-order goals encompassing anti-consumption values, can therefore be proposed as a mechanism that resolves the desire–goal conflict originating in the solid consumption of second-hand luxury fashion items.

Consumers thus navigate a journey encompassing three distinct stages that do not follow the often-imagined linear continuum of solid-liquid consumption. Rather, consumers move from fast fashion purchases to fashion rentals, and eventually circle back to second-hand luxury fashion purchases, all the while maintaining an ongoing engagement with fashion rentals. As illustrated in Figure 6.2, this progression could be imagined as an oblong figure with mechanisms like minimalist practices, self-serving justifications and self-licensing helping consumers navigate the conflicts between their materialistic desires and their higher-order goals.

Figure 6.2

Desire-Goal Conflict Reconciliation Process: An Oblong Framework of Solid-Liquid Consumption



6.6 Theoretical Contributions

This thesis presents four main theoretical contributions. First, the study advances the models of Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation and Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) desire dimensions by redefining the dynamic process of desire across the solid-liquid consumption contexts. Second, the study expands on the current understanding of the solid-liquid consumption continuum by emphasising that the conflict between desires and higher-order goals acts as a catalyst for consumers to transition between solid and liquid forms of consumption. Third, the study extends Kotabe and Hofmann's (2015) integrative theory of self-control by illustrating that the motivations to control, downplay or endorse desires can underlie self-conscious emotions, moral considerations, consumption values, self-serving justifications and self-licensing. Last, the study contributes to scholarship on materialism and anti-consumption by demonstrating the co-existence of materialistic values and anti-consumption values in both the solid and liquid ends of the consumption continuum.

6.6.1 Desire Theorisation and Dimensions

This thesis emphasises the significant role of consumers' desire for luxury fashion in influencing their clothing consumption choices. The phenomenon of consumers' luxury fashion desire exhibits similarities to Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation in terms of the dynamic process of desire. Simultaneously, consumers' luxury fashion desire varies between the solid and liquid consumption contexts across Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) three desire dimensions: (i) nature of desire, (ii) desire and distance and (iii) cycles of desire.

6.6.1.1 Nature of Desire

As this thesis has shown, luxury fashion desire exemplifies sociality because the acquisition of luxury brands is driven by the desire to showcase one's social standing to others and experience the mimetic allure of belonging to the group of individuals who can afford such luxury items. This desire may be enhanced by the challenge or unlikelihood of

obtaining the desired object, underscoring that desire is often marked by inaccessibility (Belk et al., 2003; Rosenberg et al., 2023). As evidenced in this thesis, the high prices of luxury fashion brands make these brands largely inaccessible because many cannot purchase brand items outright. This thesis therefore affirms the cultural socialisation of desire, identifying sociality and inaccessibility as defining aspects of the nature of the desire for luxury fashion in solid consumption.

It is this aspect of inaccessibility within luxury fashion desire that prompts consumers to consider the solid consumption of luxury fashion replicas. Through fast fashion purchases, consumers can realise their luxury fashion desire by acquiring affordable luxury fashion replicas. This thesis thus illustrates the influence of sociality in the cultural socialisation of luxury fashion desire, with consumers continuously engaging in fast fashion purchases to maintain their social image with replicas. Interestingly, the thesis also demonstrates that inaccessibility may not always characterise the nature of desire in solid consumption. That is, when the context changes from luxury fashion to fast fashion, inaccessibility is no longer a significant factor, as affordable prices make the luxury fashion replicas from fast fashion brands accessible and easily obtainable for consumers.

A similar observation is evidenced in this thesis as consumers consider the solid consumption of second-hand luxury fashion from rental platforms. Consumers engage in second-hand purchases to project the social status of being the true owners of luxury fashion brands, which affirms the effects of sociality in the cultural socialisation of luxury fashion desire. The availability of second-hand luxury items at discounted prices through rental platforms opens up opportunities for consumers to engage with luxury fashion brands that were once perceived as inaccessible because of their high prices. This thesis thus shows that the context shifting from first-hand luxury fashion to second-hand luxury fashion renders

inaccessibility an insignificant factor in the characterisation of the nature of desire in solid consumption.

The insignificance of inaccessibility is further emphasised when consumers gain cost-effective access to luxury fashion brands by embracing the liquid consumption of luxury fashion via rentals. In the realm of liquid consumption, sociality continues to influence the cultural socialisation of luxury fashion desire, as consumers fulfil their aspirations of imitating the consumption behaviour of both real and fictional individuals. Consumers thus convey their social status to valued others by prominently displaying the clothing items of luxury fashion brands obtained through fashion rentals. Rosenberg et al. (2023) have characterised the nature of desire in liquid consumption with limitlessness and fluidity, evidence of which is provided in this thesis in the form of repeated swapping of rental items from luxury fashion brands. However, the notion that fashion rentals provide affordable access to clothing items from luxury fashion brands makes accessibility a defining aspect of luxury fashion desire in liquid consumption, and this has been overlooked in Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) desire dimensions. This thesis, therefore, illustrates that accessibility may characterise the nature of desire in liquid consumption.

In summary, sociality remains a consistent aspect that characterises the nature of desire in both solid and liquid consumption. Conversely, the influence of inaccessibility, which can intensify desires, varies between solid and liquid consumption. Whereas inaccessibility affects desire in the solid consumption context of first-hand luxury fashion, it is rendered less significant in the solid consumption context of luxury fashion replicas and second-hand luxury fashion as well as in the liquid consumption context of luxury fashion rentals. This thesis therefore makes noteworthy contributions to Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation by highlighting that accessibility can also shape the cultural context of desire. Furthermore, this thesis extends Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) desire dimensions by emphasising

that the nature of desire may be characterised by accessibility in both solid and liquid consumption.

6.6.1.2 Desire and Distance

In line with Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation and Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) desire dimensions, this thesis recognises the significant influence of distance in intensifying desire for luxury fashion brands, with distance primarily created by high prices. However, this thesis demonstrates that the perception of distance from luxury fashion brands prompts consumers to turn to fast fashion purchases to fulfil their desires via luxury fashion replicas. This suggests that consumers address the distance between them and their desired luxury fashion items by exploring alternative avenues in solid consumption. These include replicas from fast fashion, an avenue that allows consumers to fulfil their desires with items that closely resemble their desired luxury products.

This thesis acknowledges Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) and Denegri-Knott's (2011) insights that the distance between consumers and their desired luxury fashion items has reduced significantly when consumers can easily access items through the low-cost subscriptions of access-based services. However, this study illustrates that the reduced distance between consumers and the desired object of luxury fashion from access-based services, including rent-to-buy options, actually accentuates and intensifies the desire in liquid consumption instead of cooling it down.

This thesis therefore contributes to Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation by showcasing that the role of distance in desire may lead consumers to explore alternative avenues to fulfil their desire. In addition, this thesis extends Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) desire dimensions by exemplifying that the reduced distance between consumers and their desired objects in liquid consumption can accentuate and intensify desire similar to solid consumption.

6.6.1.3 Cycles of Desire

In the context of luxury fashion replicas, consumers become seduced by their luxury fashion desire and actively nurture their desire by acquiring affordable replicas of luxury fashion from fast fashion brands. Once the luxury fashion desire is realised, desire is reformulated in accordance with the emergence of boredom from acquisition of the replicas. This means that the quest to obtain a new replica from fast fashion brands resurfaces, perpetuating the cyclical nature of desire.

This phenomenon shares similarities with Campbell's (1987) concept of the spirit of modern consumerism, which posits that the continuous pursuit of consumption results in a boredom-initiated cycle of desire and an endless sequence of shifting focus toward new objects of desire. The desire-acquisition-disillusionment-renewal cycle of desire, which is predominant in solid consumption, results in uncontrollable demonstrations of desire realisation and can be accompanied by feelings of guilt (Belk et al., 2003; Rosenberg et al., 2023). This thesis shows that the tendency to continually acquire the latest clothing item led consumers to frequent purchases and to experience self-conscious emotions like guilt following the realisation of desire.

Although Belk et al. (2003) theorised the boredom-initiated cycle of desire as an outcome of desire realisation, they do not offer any specific insights into the nature of desire realisation that gives rise to this particular outcome. This thesis posits that the nature of desire realisation is relative in the solid consumption of luxury fashion replicas. This is because consumers realise their desire via replicas from fast fashion brands rather than acquiring genuine items from luxury fashion brands. Although consumers have actual ownership that provides them with control over the luxury fashion replicas, allowing them to preserve items for an enduring period, the notion of the items being imitations induces this relative realisation of desire. This thesis conceptualises the *relative realisation of desire* as a

realisation that pertains to the attainment of a desire in a modified or alternative manner. In this situation, the original desire may not be fully met, but the essence or underlying motive behind the desire is still achieved. Through the purchase of luxury fashion replicas, consumers therefore adapt their desire realisation to match the core intent of their luxury fashion desire, even if not in its exact form.

In conceptualising the cycle of desire, Rosenberg et al. (2023) have argued that repeat exposure to experiences may fuel the desire for more of such experiences in liquid consumption. Although this is similar to Belk et al.'s (2003) fulfilment-initiated cycle of desire – where the renewal of desire occurs from the emergence of satisfaction following the desire realisation and the wish to repeat the satisfaction rather than boredom or disillusionment with the object of desire – Rosenberg et al. (2023) have not acknowledged this connection. Importantly, Belk et al.'s (2003) fulfillment-initiated cycle of desire is framed with regard to solid forms of consumption and overlooks the consideration of liquid consumption and the potential cycles of desire that may arise within this context.

This thesis therefore extends Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) and Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation with an illustration of the fulfilment-initiated cycle of desire in liquid consumption and by positing that the nature of desire realisation is relative in the liquid consumption of luxury fashion rentals. Through their rentals of luxury fashion items, consumers adapt their desire realisation to match the core intent of their luxury fashion desire in an alternative manner.

This thesis has also illustrated Belk et al.'s (2003) fulfilment-initiated cycle of desire in the solid consumption of second-hand luxury fashion items. Indeed, this thesis shows that the desire realisation of consumers through the purchase of second-hand luxury fashion items results in post-consumption joy which transforms into a desire to relive these pleasures and consequently leads to the reformulation of desires in solid consumption. In other words,

disillusionment or boredom stemming from the acquisition of a desired object may not be the only catalyst in keeping the cycle of desire going in solid consumption. Instead, the fulfilment or joy resulting from the acquisition of a desired object may set into motion the renewal of desire in solid consumption.

Moreover, this thesis contributes to Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation by positing that the nature of desire realisation is relative in the solid consumption of second-hand luxury fashion items. Indeed, the idea that these items are second-hand in nature (i.e., previously owned and used) impedes the absolute realisation of desire. Consequently, this thesis conceptualises the *absolute realisation of desire* as referring to the complete and direct fulfilment of a desire as it is originally envisioned, where there are no modifications or alterations to the desired outcome, and it is achieved in its exact form. That luxury fashion items are second-hand indicates that the desire has not been precisely realised, with only the acquisition of first-hand items providing the realisation of desire in its exact form. Through the purchase of second-hand luxury fashion items, consumers therefore adapt their desire realisation to match the core intent of their luxury fashion desire in a modified manner.

This thesis asserts that the concepts of absolute and relative realisation of desire are relevant in understanding the nuances of desire realisation for consumers. Moreover, it is evident that the nature of the items (first-hand v. second-hand; replica v. genuine) has implications for the nature of the realisation of desire. The mode of acquisition (ownership v. access) and the nature of preservation (enduring v. ephemeral) of the items can also influence the nature of the realisation of desire. As a result, this thesis offers new insights into the dynamic process of desire as presented in Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation and redefines Rosenberg et al.'s (2023) desire dimensions across the solid-liquid consumption continuum.

6.6.2 Desire–Goal Conflicts: A Catalyst for Consumption Transitions

Extant literature has given no consideration to the potential for consumers' desires to induce their transition from liquid consumption to solid consumption, or vice versa. Chen's (2009) static view of desire was presented such that desire was assumed to be constant across consumers and the enactment of desires to occur consistently over time. In this regard, Chen's (2009) study contradicts Belk et al.'s (2003) desire theorisation, which emphasises that desire is inherently dynamic and prone to changes.

Contrary to Chen (2009), Arcuri and Veludo-de-Oliveira (2018) demonstrate that consumers' desires are prone to changes that may induce consumers' transition from solid consumption (e.g., material collection of books) to liquid consumption (e.g., dematerialisation of books). The thesis presents evidence supporting the idea that consumers' desires are subject to change as the consumers develop preferences for luxury fashion replicas, luxury fashion rentals and second-hand luxury fashion items. However, this thesis does not completely concur with Rosenberg et al. (2023). This is because it is not only the changes in consumer desire that influence consumers to liquefy or solidify their consumption, but the interaction between consumers' desires and their higher-order goals. Examined through the lens of Schwartz et al.'s (2012) basic values, these interactions lead to desire–goal conflicts, which, in turn, prompt consumers to liquefy or solidify their consumption.

This function of desire–goal conflict is evident when materialistic desires for luxury fashion replicas oppose the higher-order goals of self-enhancement (wealth accumulation) and self-transcendence (environmental preservation and welfare protection), inducing a transition from solid consumption toward the liquid consumption of luxury fashion rentals. However, the conflict between materialistic desires for luxury fashion rentals and the higher-order goal of self-transcendence (environmental preservation) does not induce any reversal along the

consumption continuum; instead, consumers stagnate at the liquid end of the consumption continuum.

Likewise, the conflict between materialistic desires for second-hand luxury fashion items and the higher-order goal of self-transcendence (environmental preservation) does not lead to any reversal along the consumption continuum; instead, consumers stagnate at the solid end of the consumption continuum. Furthermore, in the context of second-hand luxury fashion items, a combination of solid and liquid consumption is evident, with liquid consumption playing a supplementary role by guiding consumers to acquire second-hand luxury fashion items via rental platforms. This thesis therefore contributes to Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) notion of coexisting, making visible a middle point along the consumption continuum by illustrating that the consumption of luxury fashion items can be both solid (i.e., second-hand purchases) and liquid (i.e., fashion rentals).

6.6.3 Desire–Goal Conflicts: Motivation Sources

Consumers are motivated to control their desire to avoid experiencing negative self-conscious emotions such as guilt (Kotabe & Hofmann, 2015). This thesis, however, illustrates that negative, self-conscious emotions, such as guilt, that arise from conflicts between desires and goals, can manifest within consumers. Only subsequent to this manifestation do these emotions act as triggers, initiating the process of exerting control over desires and facilitating the enactment of higher-order goals.

Therefore, this thesis extends the scope of Kotabe and Hofmann's (2015) self-control theory by establishing negative self-conscious emotions as a source of motivation that precedes the process of desire control and higher-order goal enactment. In doing so, this thesis contributes to the existing body of research on self-control (e.g., Chun et al., 2007; Patrick et al., 2009), demonstrating that guilt arising from desire enactment in the context of luxury fashion replicas can indeed lead to a decrease in desire actualisation. This is evident in

consumers' shifts toward liquid consumption through fashion rentals, which serve as a tangible illustration of their diminished inclination to act upon the desire for acquiring luxury fashion replicas.

Beyond self-conscious emotions, this thesis showcases that consumers' moral considerations can also serve as catalysts in the process of exerting control over desires and facilitating the enactment of higher-order goals. Contrary to self-conscious emotions, moral considerations are not transmitted via desire–goal conflicts. Rather, building on Schwartz's (1977) NAM and Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory, consumers may instead consider partaking in moral behaviour when they possess an awareness of the environmental or social repercussions tied to their behaviours and willingly accept responsibility for these outcomes. Moral considerations thus prompt consumers to pivot toward liquid consumption through fashion rentals, aiming to mitigate the environmental and social ramifications linked to their acquisition of luxury fashion replicas. This transition exemplifies consumers' diminished inclination to act upon their desire for acquiring luxury fashion replicas and facilitates the enactment of their higher-order goals. This thesis therefore broadens the reach of Kotabe and Hofmann's (2015) self-control theory by establishing moral considerations as a source of motivation that precedes the process of desire control and higher-order goal enactment but may not be transmitted via desire–goal conflicts.

This thesis also illustrates that consumption values can motivate consumers to exert control over their desires, as well as promote the enactment of their desires while facilitating the enactment of their higher-order goals. Drawing on Lai's (1995) work, utilitarian, green, social and emotional consumption values are observed to be instrumental in facilitating the enactment of consumers' higher-order goals in the context of luxury fashion rentals. On one hand, utilitarian and green consumption values endorse the benefits of the use of fashion rentals, prompting consumers to reinforce their diminished inclination to act upon the desire

to acquire luxury fashion replicas. On the other hand, social and emotional consumption values also endorse the benefits of the use of fashion rentals, prompting consumers to promote the enactment of their desires for luxury fashion rentals. Thus, contrary to self-conscious emotions, consumption values do not stem from desire–goal conflicts. Drawing on Sheth et al.'s (1991) work, consumers derive consumption values from their use of luxury fashion rentals and, in turn, these values shape their decisions to engage in luxury fashion rentals. This thesis therefore extends the scope of Kotabe and Hofmann's (2015) self-control theory by establishing consumption values as sources of motivation that precede the process of desire control and higher-order goal enactment but may not be stimulated through desire–goal conflicts.

In this thesis, the sense of deservingness becomes evident within the sphere of second-hand luxury fashion items. That is, consumers rationalise their acquisitions by asserting that their previous virtuous behaviour of restrictive buying practices means that they are deserving of a reward. Indeed, the utilisation of self-serving justifications, including altruistic endeavours, are aimed at promoting social justice and equal opportunities for underrepresented enterprises. The same applies to actions driven by personal gain that result in financial benefits for the consumers. In the context of luxury fashion rentals, consumers employ these self-serving justifications to rationalise their constant swapping of luxury fashion items. This thesis further illustrates how self-licensing emerges within the realm of second-hand luxury fashion items when consumers rationalise their acquisitions by asserting that such purchases generate revenue for luxury fashion brands.

Importantly, sources of motivated reasoning like prior restraints, self-serving justifications and self-licensing are channelled through desire–goal conflicts. In essence, the activation of these desire–goal conflicts lead consumers to construct seemingly rational justifications supporting their use of fashion rentals and purchase of second-hand luxury

fashion items – both serving as conduits to the realisation of their luxury fashion desire. Therefore, this thesis extends the work of Huberts et al. (2014a) by showing that consumers may employ motivated reasoning to facilitate their pursuit of materialistic desires while maintaining an illusion of objectivity. Furthermore, this thesis broadens the reach of Kotabe and Hofmann's (2015) self-control theory by establishing prior restraints, self-serving justifications and self-licensing as sources of motivation that are triggered by desire–goal conflicts and lead to the process of desire and higher-order goal enactments.

6.6.4 Co-Existence: Materialism and Anti-Consumption

In this study, consumers demonstrated materialistic pursuits by perpetuating a cycle of acquiring excessive luxury fashion replicas and second-hand luxury fashion items in solid consumption. This cycle involves frequently purchasing these items, which grants consumers a sense of control through ownership, and also displaying preservation (i.e., via hoarding/collecting) tendencies with the clothing items. In this regard, this thesis contributes to Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) insights concerning solid consumption by illustrating the operation of materialism in the solid consumption contexts of luxury fashion replicas and second-hand luxury fashion items.

Concurrently, it is intriguing to observe the presence of values characterised by anti-consumption principles in solid consumption, even though this ownership-based end of the consumption continuum does not inherently reject consumption – which is the fundamental idea of anti-consumption. In this regard, this thesis challenges and expands on Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) characterisation of solid consumption by pointing out the presence of anti-consumption-natured values. The co-existence of materialistic values and anti-consumption-natured values in solid consumption further indicates that the traditional antithetical ontological relationships between materialism and anti-consumption may have become less distinct, particularly in the contexts of luxury fashion replicas and second-hand luxury fashion

items. Lee and Ahn's (2016) characterisation of materialism and anti-consumption as 'antagonistic concepts' is therefore questioned with evidence of materialism and anti-consumption as 'coexisting concepts' at the solid end of the consumption continuum.

In contrast, fashion rentals that encourage the temporary acquisition and preservation of objects via the reuse of items – and subsequently reduce environmental waste – correspond with anti-consumption principles of environmentalism and macro-level concerns. Balderjahn et al.'s (2020) notion of anti-consumption context is accentuated through illustrating fashion rentals as a form of anti-consumption at the liquid end of the consumption continuum. In addition, this thesis concurs with Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) that the temporary acquisition and quick circulation of objects can indeed indicate materialistic tendencies in liquid consumption. Therefore, this thesis expands on Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) characterisation of liquid consumption by demonstrating the existence in liquid consumption of similar dimensions of materialistic values observed in solid consumption.

This is evidence that materialism is not limited to solid consumption but can be equally significant in liquid consumption. This co-existence of materialistic and anti-consumption values in liquid consumption is intriguing, as liquid consumption is inherently associated with an anti-consumption context (Balderjahn et al., 2020). This co-existence indicates that the traditional antithetical relationship and ontological connections between materialism and anti-consumption may have become less distinct, particularly in the context of luxury fashion rentals. As a result, this thesis challenges and extends Lee and Ahn's (2016) characterisation of materialism and anti-consumption as 'antagonistic concepts' by exemplifying materialism and anti-consumption as 'coexisting concepts' at the liquid end of the consumption continuum.

6.7 Environmental, Social and Practical Implications

This thesis demonstrates an ambivalent perception of fashion rental platforms insofar as they simultaneously discourage and promote consumerism. On the one hand, fashion rental platforms promote the concepts of sharing, sustainability and minimalism. Instead of purchasing new clothing items from fast fashion brands, consumers are encouraged to reuse clothing items from luxury fashion brands through shared usage in fashion rentals. In terms of positive social implications, the opportunity to access clothing items from luxury fashion brands at low-cost subscriptions deter consumers from spending excessively on clothing purchases. This, in turn, encourages them to adopt a more sustainable and minimalistic lifestyle, focusing on conscious consumption and the responsible use of resources.

On the other hand, fashion rental platforms encourage consumerism by offering consumers access to a wide variety of clothing items from luxury fashion brands at low-cost subscriptions. The platforms promote the idea of a 'rotating wardrobe' through which consumers can constantly refresh their wardrobe with new and trendy items from luxury fashion brands. However, although the rotating wardrobe fulfils consumers' need for novelty and social image, it also creates a sense of abundance and leads consumers to constantly swap rental items so that they can experiment with different styles and looks. With the rotating wardrobe, consumers therefore end up reviving the wear once culture that was previously construed as the main concern with the consumption of replicas from fast fashion brands.

The constant renting and swapping of items in fashion rentals have negative environmental implications insofar as this greater usage intensity of rental items can result in higher cycles of transportation, packaging and cleaning. Adverse social implications of this constant swapping practice also arise from the fact that consumers may become entangled in the trap of consuming endlessly and keeping up with trends, with the added benefit of the absence of ownership obligations. Moreover, the notion of a rotating wardrobe may create

pressure on consumers to constantly wear new and stylish clothing to keep up with social media trends and societal expectations. This continuous pursuit of new and trendy items from luxury fashion brands can affect consumers' self-image and contribute to an increased emphasis on appearances. The rotating wardrobe further enables consumers to create an illusion of ownership of these luxury items, deceiving others about the true nature of their possessions. This can lead to social pressure for others to match this illusion, contributing to a cycle of striving to maintain appearances and conform to perceived societal expectations.

However, positive social implications may also arise from the use of fashion rentals. For instance, consumers may attain financial independence by leveraging the rotating wardrobe to establish income sources through wardrobe styling businesses and content creation. In their use of rentals, consumers arguably also prioritise the promotion of social justice and equal opportunities for underrepresented businesses in the fashion industry and contribute to the income of workers employed by the rental platforms. This indicates that consumerism driven by fashion rentals results not only in self-oriented benefits for consumers but can also encourage collective-oriented benefits.

In parallel, the rent-to-buy options provided by fashion rental platforms amplify consumerism by allowing consumers to purchase second-hand clothing items from luxury fashion brands at discounted prices. The rent-to-buy options arguably capitalise on consumers' aspirations to own luxury fashion brands, with heavy discounts making it convenient for consumers to acquire their desired items. These second-hand purchases of luxury fashion have negative environmental implications because pre-used items result in accelerated wear and tear, prompting consumers to quickly dispose of the items. This inadvertently encourages a throwaway culture. In addition, consumers may intensify their swapping practices of rental items to guide their next purchase from the platform, resulting in increased environmental effects from greater logistics usage. Thus, rent-to-buy options

exacerbate the environmental footprint of fashion rentals, challenging notions of conscious consumption and the responsible use of resources.

With regard to negative social implications, rent-to-buy options create a perception of getting a good deal on luxury fashion items, which may tempt consumers to make frequent and impulsive clothing purchases. As a result, fashion rental platforms may contribute to a cycle of overconsumption and excessive spending with consumers acquiring their desired luxury fashion items through rent-to-buy options. However, rent-to-buy options can also lead to positive social implications because luxury fashion brands benefit financially when consumers choose to purchase second-hand luxury items from the platform. This suggests that consumerism driven by the rent-to-buy options encourages collective-oriented benefits.

The surge in consumerism facilitated by fashion rental platforms carries significant practical implications for both businesses and consumers. The businesses operating in the contexts of both liquid consumption (fashion rental platforms) and solid consumption (second-hand fashion retailers) may witness an increase in consumer desire to acquire and retain possessions, but with a growing consideration for collective-oriented interests. This trend is evident in the increasing popularity of resale markets, where consumers are increasingly turning to second-hand purchases to fulfil their materialistic desires and keep up with current trends. The increasing popularity of resale is likely to attract more players to the market, intensifying competition for fashion rental platforms and second-hand fashion retailers. To remain competitive and stand out, these businesses must prioritise innovation and distinguish their offerings from competitors. One effective approach could be to highlight collective-oriented benefits in their resale offerings, such as ensuring the protection of workers' welfare or promoting equal opportunities for underrepresented businesses such as Black-owned fashion brands. By incorporating these collective-oriented interests into their

operations, these businesses can attract consumers and differentiate themselves in the increasingly competitive resale market.

Consumers are also exploring upcycled clothing collections from luxury fashion brands, another option that allows them to fulfil their luxury fashion desires. The concept of upcycling implies the reuse of discarded materials to create a product of higher quality, giving new life to pre-existing items and reducing environmental harm in the process (Adıgüzel & Donato, 2021; Kamleitner et al., 2019; Park & Lin, 2020). The inclusion of upcycled clothing collections in the rental inventory of fashion rental platforms presents an opportunity to promote collective-oriented benefits related to environmental preservation. However, it is possible that consumers may engage in frequent swapping of these upcycled items through their subscriptions and even choose to purchase them through the rent-to-buy options provided by the platforms.

To effectively leverage the consumerism of upcycled clothing collections, fashion rental platforms can highlight collective-oriented benefits in their offerings. For instance, they can emphasise how renting these items contributes to promoting equal opportunities for eco-friendly fashion brands on the platforms or how purchasing these items financially supports luxury fashion brands with upcycle collections. By incorporating these collective-oriented interests into their operations, fashion rental platforms can attract consumers, enhance their offerings with sustainable choices and generate increased demand for the upcycled collections of luxury fashion brands.

6.8 Limitations and Future Research

This thesis has three major limitations, which may be considered avenues for future research. First, the research inquiry of this study is centred around the context of fashion rentals at the liquid end of the consumption continuum, where collaborative consumption occurs between businesses and end-consumers. Future studies could explore other forms of

collaborative consumption such as borrowing among friends and family or P2P renting where individuals rent out their own clothing items to others. These different forms of collaborative consumption warrant further investigation to gain a deeper understanding of how desire–goal conflicts manifest and influence consumption choices in various contexts at the liquid end of the consumption continuum.

At the theoretical level, luxury value perceptions form a continuum that encompasses accessible, intermediate and inaccessible levels of luxury (Barnier et al., 2012). However, this thesis does not investigate the variations in luxury perceptions that could potentially influence consumers' desires when using fashion rentals to access luxury fashion items. As a result, future research could delve deeper into understanding the perceptions of luxury value associated with the brands available on rental platforms and the subsequent effects of these value perceptions on the desire–goal conflicts experienced by consumers. Understanding luxury value perceptions and their effects on desire–goal conflicts could provide a nuanced understanding of how consumers transition across the continuum of solid-liquid consumption.

A final aspect that this study did not explore in addressing desire–goal conflicts is the influence of environmental constraints, particularly the presence of other people in one's surroundings. These external factors may have the potential to act as motivational sources by affecting desires or influencing the prioritisation of higher-order goals – subsequently driving transitions between solid and liquid consumption. For future research, it would be valuable to investigate whether the presence of others plays a role in shaping consumers' desires and the prioritisation of their higher-order goals. For instance, does the presence of peers or social groups motivate the resistance of desires that conflict with higher-order goals, leading to more sustainable choices in consumption? But could the presence of others promote desires through a reasoning process whereby materialistic desires are reinforced, despite potential conflicts with higher-order goals related to sustainable choices in consumption? Understanding the

effects of environmental constraints, including social influences, on the desire–goal conflict could provide deeper insights into the mechanisms that guide consumption practices in both solid and liquid consumption.

References

Achabou, M. A., & Dekhili, S. (2013). Luxury and sustainable development: Is there a match? *Journal of Business Research*, *66*(10), 1896–1903.

Adıgüzel, F., & Donato, C. (2021). Proud to be sustainable: Upcycled versus recycled luxury products. *Journal of Business Research*, *130*, 137–146.

Akbar, P., Mai, R., & Hoffmann, S. (2016). When do materialistic consumers join commercial sharing systems. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(10), 4215–4224.

Aknin, L. B., Barrington-Leigh, C. P., Dunn, E. W., Helliwell, J. F., Burns, J., Biswas-Diener, R., Kemeza, I., Nyende, P., Ashton-James, C. E., & Norton, M. I. (2013). Prosocial spending and well-being: Cross-cultural evidence for a psychological universal. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *104*(4), 635–652.

Aknin, L. B., Dunn, E. W., & Whillans, A. V. (2022). The emotional rewards of prosocial spending are robust and replicable in large samples. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *31*(6), 536–545.

Aknin, L. B., Dunn, E. W., Whillans, A. V, Grant, A. M., & Norton, M. I. (2013). Making a difference matters: Impact unlocks the emotional benefits of prosocial spending. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, *88*, 90–95.

Aknin, L. B., Sandstrom, G. M., Dunn, E. W., & Norton, M. I. (2011a). Investing in others: Prosocial spending for (pro) social change. In R. Biswas-Diener (Ed.), *Positive Psychology as Social Change* (pp. 219–234). Springer.

Aknin, L. B., Sandstrom, G. M., Dunn, E. W., & Norton, M. I. (2011b). It's the recipient that counts: Spending money on strong social ties leads to greater happiness than spending on weak social ties. *PLoS ONE*, *6*(2), 1–3.

Albinsson, P. A., Wolf, M., & Kopf, D. A. (2010). Anti-consumption in East Germany: Consumer resistance to hyperconsumption. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *9*(6), 412–425.

Alemu, G., Stevens, B., Ross, P., & Chandler, J. (2015). The use of a constructivist grounded theory method to explore the role of socially-constructed metadata (Web 2.0) approaches. *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries*, *4*(3), 517–540.

Alexander, S., & Ussher, S. (2012). The voluntary simplicity movement: A multi-national survey analysis in theoretical context. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *12*(1), 66–86.

Alonso-Almeida, M. del M., Perramon, J., & Bagur-Femenías, L. (2020). Shedding light on sharing economy and new materialist consumption: An empirical approach. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *52*, 1–9.

Amasawa, E., Brydges, T., Henninger, C. E., & Kimita, K. (2023). Can rental platforms contribute to more sustainable fashion consumption? Evidence from a mixed-method study. *Cleaner and Responsible Consumption*, *8*, 1–9.

Amatulli, C., Mileti, A., Speciale, V., & Guido, G. (2016). The relationship between fast fashion and luxury brands: An exploratory study in the UK market. In F. Mosca & R. Gallo (Eds.), *Global Marketing Strategies for the Promotion of Luxury Goods* (pp. 244–265). IGI Global.

Amatulli, C., Pino, G., Angelis, M. De, & Cascio, R. (2018). Understanding purchase determinants of luxury vintage products. *Psychology & Marketing*, *35*(8), 616–624.

An, W., & Alarcón, S. (2021). From netnography to segmentation for the description of the rural tourism market based on tourist experiences in Spain. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, *19*, 1–13.

Andreoni, J. (1990). Impure altruism and donations to public goods: A theory of warm-glow giving. *The Economic Journal*, *100*(401), 464–477.

Appleton, J. V, & King, L. (2002). Journeying from the philosophical contemplation of constructivism to the methodological pragmatics of health services research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *40*(6), 641–648.
Arcuri, A. G., & Veludo-de-Oliveira, T. M. (2018). The crossing of physical boundaries: De-materialization and the move towards de-collecting. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, *21*(4), 396–415.
Armstrong, C. M., Niinimäki, K., Kujala, S., Karell, E., & Lang, C. (2015). Sustainable product-service systems for clothing: Exploring consumer perceptions of consumption alternatives in Finland. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *97*, 30–39.
Armstrong, C. M., Niinimäki, K., Lang, C., & Kujala, S. (2016). A use-oriented clothing economy? Preliminary affirmation for sustainable clothing consumption alternatives. *Sustainable Development*, *24*(1), 18–31.
Armstrong, G., Kotler, P., Harker, M., & Brennan, R. (2019). *Marketing: An Introduction* (4th ed.). Pearson Education.
Arribas, M., Nylund, P. A., & Brem, A. (2022). Circular business models in the luxury fashion industry: Toward an ecosystemic dominant design? *Current Opinion in Green and Sustainable Chemistry*, 1–10.
Arrigo, E. (2021a). Collaborative consumption in the fashion industry: A systematic literature review and conceptual framework. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *325*, 1–32.
Arrigo, E. (2021b). Digital platforms in fashion rental: A business model analysis. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *26*(1), 1–20.
Arsel, Z., Crockett, D., & Scott, M. L. (2022). Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the Journal of Consumer Research: A curation and research agenda. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *48*(5), 920–933.
Arslan, Y., Yıldırım, E., Dinçer, M. A. M., & Barutçu, M. T. (2018). Examining consumers' anti-consumption tendencies towards food products: A case study from the Turkish food industry. *British Food Journal*, *120*(9), 1980–1993.
Aspers, P., & Corte, U. (2019). What is qualitative in qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology*, *42*(2), 139–160.
Atanasova, A. (2021). Re-examining utopia in contemporary consumption: Conceptualization and implications for marketing. *AMS Review*, *11*(1–2), 23–39.
Atanasova, A., & Eckhardt, G. M. (2021). The broadening boundaries of materialism. *Marketing Theory*, *21*(4), 481–500.
Atwal, G., & Williams, A. (2009). Luxury brand marketing — The experience is everything! *Journal of Brand Management*, *16*(5/6), 338–346.
Babin, B. J., D'Alessandro, S., Winzar, H., Lowe, B., & Zikmund, W. (2020). *Marketing Research* (5th ed.). Cengage Learning.
Baek, E., & Oh, G.-E. G. (2021). Diverse values of fashion rental service and contamination concern of consumers. *Journal of Business Research*, *123*, 165–175.
Baird, N. (2019, July 27). Fashion rental customer journeys show the importance of shopper objectives. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/nikkibaird/2019/07/27/fashion-rental-customer-journeys-show-the-importance-of-shopper-objectives/
Balderjahn, I., Lee, M. S. W., Seegebarth, B., & Peyer, M. (2020). A sustainable pathway to consumer wellbeing. The role of anti-consumption and consumer empowerment. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, *54*(2), 456–488.
Baltar, F., & Brunet, I. (2012). Social research 2.0: Virtual snowball sampling method using Facebook. *Internet Research*, *22*(1), 57–74.
Banerjee, B., & McKeage, K. (1994). How green is my value: Exploring the relationship between environmentalism and materialism. In C. T. Allen & D. R. John (Eds.), *NA -*

Advances in Consumer Research Volume 21 (pp. 147–152). Association for Consumer Research.
Bardey, A., Booth, M., Heger, G., & Larsson, J. (2022). Finding yourself in your wardrobe: An exploratory study of lived experiences with a capsule wardrobe. *International Journal of Market Research*, *64*(1), 113–131.
Bardhi, F., Dalli, D., & Corciolani, M. (2014). Examination of Resource Acquisition Practices. *Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) Conference*.
Bardhi, F., & Eckhardt, G. M. (2012). Access-based consumption: The case of car sharing. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *39*(4), 881–898.
Bardhi, F., & Eckhardt, G. M. (2017). Liquid consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *44*(3), 582–597.
Bardhi, F., Eckhardt, G. M., & Arnould, E. J. (2012). Liquid relationship to possessions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *39*(3), 510–529.
Bardhi, F., Eckhardt, G. M., & Samsioe, E. (2020). Liquid luxury. In F. Morhart, K. Wilcox, & S. Czellar (Eds.), *Handbook of Luxury Branding* (pp. 22–42). Edward Elgar Publishing.
Bardi, A., & Schwartz, S. H. (2003). Values and behavior: Strength and structure of relations. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *29*(10), 1207–1220.
Barkan, R., Ayal, S., & Ariely, D. (2015). Ethical dissonance, justifications, and moral behavior. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *6*, 157–161.
Barnes, L., & Lea-Greenwood, G. (2006). Fast fashioning the supply chain: Shaping the research agenda. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *10*(3), 259–271.
Barnier, V. D., Falcy, S., & Valette-Florence, P. (2012). Do consumers perceive three levels of luxury? A comparison of accessible, intermediate and inaccessible luxury brands. *Journal of Brand Management*, *19*(7), 623–636.
Bauer, M. A., Wilkie, J. E. B., Kim, J. K., & Bodenhausen, G. V. (2012). Cuing consumerism: Situational materialism undermines personal and social well-being. *Psychological Science*, *23*(5), 517–523.
Beall, A. (2020, July 13). Why clothes are so hard to recycle. *BBC*. https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200710-why-clothes-are-so-hard-to-recycle
Becker-Leifhold, C., & Iran, S. (2018). Collaborative fashion consumption – drivers, barriers and future pathways. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *22*(2), 189–208.
Becker-Leifhold, C. V. (2018). The role of values in collaborative fashion consumption - A critical investigation through the lenses of the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *199*, 781–791.
Belk, R. (2015). Culture and materialism. In S. Ng & A. Y. Lee (Eds.), *Handbook of Culture and Consumer Behavior* (pp. 299–323). Oxford University Press.
Belk, R. W. (1984). Three scales to measure constructs related to materialism: Reliability, validity, and relationships to measures of happiness. In T. C. Kinnear (Ed.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 11* (pp. 291–297). Association for Consumer Research.
Belk, R. W. (1985). Materialism: Trait aspects of living in the material world. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *12*(3), 265–280.
Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *15*(2), 139–168.
Belk, R. W. (2013). Extended self in a digital world. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *40*(3), 477–500.
Belk, R. W., Ger, G., & Askegaard, S. (2003). The fire of desire: A multisited inquiry into consumer passion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *30*(3), 326–351.

Belk, R. W., & Pollay, R. W. (1985). Materialism and magazine advertising during the twentieth century. In E. C. Hirschman & M. B. Holbrook (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 12* (pp. 394–398). Association for Consumer Research.

Benveniste, A. (2020, September 17). Rent the Runway is ditching its unlimited membership. *CNN*. https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/17/business/rent-the-runway-unlimited-subscription-plan/index.html

Berger, L., Guo, L., & King, T. (2020). Selfish sharing? The impact of the sharing economy on tax reporting honesty. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *167*(2), 181–205.

Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Anchor Books.

Bernthal, M. J., Crockett, D., & Rose, R. L. (2005). Credit cards as lifestyle facilitators. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *32*(1), 130–145.

Berthon, P., Pitt, L., Parent, M., & Berthon, J.-P. (2009). Aesthetics and ephemerality: Observing and preserving the luxury brand. *California Management Review*, *52*(1), 45–66.

Bhardwaj, V., & Fairhurst, A. (2010). Fast fashion: Response to changes in the fashion industry. *International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, *20*(1), 165–173.

Bialecki, M., O'Leary, S., & Smith, D. (2017). Judgement devices and the evaluation of singularities: The use of performance ratings and narrative information to guide film viewer choice. *Management Accounting Research*, *35*, 56–65.

Bian, Q., & Forsythe, S. (2012). Purchase intention for luxury brands: A cross cultural comparison. *Journal of Business Research*, *65*(10), 1443–1451.

Bick, R., Halsey, E., & Ekenga, C. C. (2018). The global environmental injustice of fast fashion. *Environmental Health*, *17*, 1–4.

Birks, M., & Mills, J. (2015). *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Biron, B. (2023, January 13). Rent the Runway is now selling secondhand designer clothes on Amazon from 35 brands including Tory Burch and Kate Spade. *Business Insider*. https://www.businessinsider.com/rent-the-runway-selling-secondhand-luxury-apparel-amazon-2023-1

Birtwistle, G., & Moore, C. M. (2007). Fashion clothing–where does it all end up? *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *35*(3), 210–216.

Black, I. R., & Cherrier, H. (2010). Anti-consumption as part of living a sustainable lifestyle: Daily practices, contextual motivations and subjective values. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *9*(6), 437–453.

Blasi, S., Brigato, L., & Sedita, S. R. (2020). Eco-friendliness and fashion perceptual attributes of fashion brands: An analysis of consumers' perceptions based on twitter data mining. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *244*, 1–11.

Blazquez, M., Henninger, C. E., Alexander, B., & Franquesa, C. (2020). Consumers' knowledge and intentions towards sustainability: A Spanish fashion perspective. *Fashion Practice*, *12*(1), 34–54.

Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. University of California Press.

Botsman, R., & Rogers, R. (2010). *What's Mine Is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption*. HarperCollins.

Boulstridge, E., & Carrigan, M. (2000). Do consumers really care about corporate responsibility? Highlighting the attitude—behaviour gap. *Journal of Communication Management*, *4*(4), 355–368.

Bowen, G. A. (2008). Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: A research note. *Qualitative Research*, *8*(1), 137–152.
Boyd, S. (2020, June 30). How fashion and beauty brands are supporting the Black Lives Matter movement. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/sboyd/2020/06/30/how-fashion--beauty-brands-are-supporting-the-black-lives-matter-movement/?sh=548143e83869
Bradley, S. (2019, May 3). Access to an infinite wardrobe for work: Rent it. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. https://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/fashion/access-to-an-infinite-wardrobe-for-work-rent-it-20190430-p51igx.html
Braithwaite, N. (2018, July 31). Clothing rental could be the key to a stylishly sustainable fashion industry. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/clothing-rental-could-be-the-key-to-a-stylishly-sustainable-fashion-industry-100106
Braunsberger, K., & Buckler, B. (2011). What motivates consumers to participate in boycotts: Lessons from the ongoing Canadian seafood boycott. *Journal of Business Research*, *64*(1), 96–102.
Bryant, A. (2002). Re-grounding grounded theory. *Journal of Information Technology Theory and Application*, *4*(1), 25–42.
Brydges, T., Heinze, L., Retamal, M., & Henninger, C. E. (2020). Platforms and the pandemic: A case study of fashion rental platforms during COVID-19. *The Geographical Journal*, *187*(1), 57–63.
Brydges, T., & Hracs, B. J. (2019). What motivates millennials? How intersectionality shapes the working lives of female entrepreneurs in Canada's fashion industry. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *26*(4), 510–532.
Buchanan, L., Bui, Q., & Patel, J. K. (2020, July 3). Black Lives Matter may be the largest movement in U.S. history. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/03/us/george-floyd-protests-crowd-size.html
Buijzen, M., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2003). The effects of television advertising on materialism, parent–child conflict, and unhappiness: A review of research. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *24*(4), 437–456.
Burger, A. M., Schuler, J., & Eberling, E. (2022). Guilty pleasures: Moral licensing in climate-related behavior. *Global Environmental Change*, *72*, 1–11.
Burroughs, J. E., & Rindfleisch, A. (2002). Materialism and well-being: A conflicting values perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *29*(3), 348–370.
Busetto, L., Wick, W., & Gumbinger, C. (2020). How to use and assess qualitative research methods. *Neurological Research and Practice*, *2*(1), 1–10.
Byun, S.-E., & Sternquist, B. (2012). Here today, gone tomorrow: Consumer reactions to perceived limited availability. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *20*(2), 223–234.
Cachon, G. P., & Swinney, R. (2011). The value of fast fashion: Quick response, enhanced design, and strategic consumer behavior. *Management Science*, *57*(4), 778–795.
Cairns, H. M., Ritch, E. L., & Bereziat, C. (2021). Think eco, be eco? The tension between attitudes and behaviours of millennial fashion consumers. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 1–16.
Campbell, A. (2021, June 13). What is Black Lives Matter and what are the aims? *BBC*. https://www.bbc.com/news/explainers-53337780
Campbell, C. (1987). *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism*. Blackwell.
Carcary, M. (2009). The research audit trial - Enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, *7*(1), 11–24.

Carrigan, M., & Attalla, A. (2001). The myth of the ethical consumer - do ethics matter in purchase behaviour? *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, *18*(7), 560–578.
Carrington, M., Chatzidakis, A., & Shaw, D. (2021). Consuming worker exploitation? Accounts and justifications for consumer (in) action to modern slavery. *Work, Employment and Society*, *35*(3), 432–450.
Carrington, M. J., Neville, B. A., & Whitwell, G. J. (2014). Lost in translation: Exploring the ethical consumer intention–behavior gap. *Journal of Business Research*, *67*(1), 2759–2767.
Carter, M. J., & Fuller, C. (2016). Symbols, meaning, and action: The past, present, and future of symbolic interactionism. *Current Sociology*, *64*(6), 931–961.
Cartner-Morley, J. (2019, November 30). "Have a one-night-stand with a dress": The fashion rental revolution. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2019/nov/29/one-night-stand-with-a-dress-fashion-rental-revolution-jess-cartner-morley
Castellani, V., Sala, S., & Mirabella, N. (2015). Beyond the throwaway society: A life cycle-based assessment of the environmental benefit of reuse. *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management*, *11*(3), 373–382.
Catulli, M., Lindley, J. K., Reed, N. B., Green, A., Hyseni, H., & Kiri, S. (2013). What is Mine is NOT Yours: Further insight on what access-based consumption says about consumers. In *Consumer Culture Theory (Research in Consumer Behavior, Vol. 15)* (pp. 185–208). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
Cervellon, M., Carey, L., & Harms, T. (2012). Something old, something used: Determinants of women's purchase of vintage fashion vs second-hand fashion. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *40*(12), 956–974.
Chamberlain-Salaun, J., Mills, J., & Usher, K. (2013). Linking symbolic interactionism and grounded theory methods in a research design: From Corbin and Strauss' assumptions to action. *Sage Open*, *3*(3), 1–10.
Chan, E. (2020, May 17). Will the fashion rental market ever recover from Covid-19? *Vogue*. https://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/article/will-the-fashion-rental-market-recover
Chan, E. (2021, September 20). Is renting your clothes really more sustainable? *Vogue*. https://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/article/is-renting-your-clothes-really-more-sustainable
Chan, W. Y., To, C. K. M., & Chu, W. C. (2015). Materialistic consumers who seek unique products: How does their need for status and their affective response facilitate the repurchase intention of luxury goods? *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *27*, 1–10.
Chandon, J.-L., Laurent, G., & Valette-Florence, P. (2016). Pursuing the concept of luxury: Introduction to the JBR Special Issue on "Luxury Marketing from Tradition to Innovation." *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(1), 299–303.
Chandy, R. K., Johar, G. V., Moorman, C., & Roberts, J. H. (2021). Better marketing for a better world. In *Journal of Marketing* (Vol. 85, Issue 3, pp. 1–9). Sage Publications.
Chang, L., & Arkin, R. M. (2002). Materialism as an attempt to cope with uncertainty. *Psychology & Marketing*, *19*(5), 389–406.
Charmaz, K. (2000). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
Charmaz, K. (2003). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry* (2nd ed., pp. 249–291). Sage Publications.
Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*. Sage Publications.

Charmaz, K. (2008). Grounded theory as an emergent method. In S. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Handbook of Emergent Methods* (pp. 155–170). Guilford Publications.
Charmaz, K. (2012). The power and potential of grounded theory. *Medical Sociology Online*, *6*(3), 2–15.
Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing Grounded Theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
Charmaz, K. (2017). The power of constructivist grounded theory for critical inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *23*(1), 34–45.
Charmaz, K., & Thornberg, R. (2021). The pursuit of quality in grounded theory. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *18*(3), 305–327.
Chatzidakis, A., Hibbert, S., & Smith, A. P. (2007). Why people don't take their concerns about fair trade to the supermarket: The role of neutralisation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *74*(1), 89–100.
Chatzidakis, A., & Lee, M. S. W. (2013). Anti-consumption as the study of reasons against. *Journal of Macromarketing*, *33*(3), 190–203.
Chen, Y. (2009). Possession and access: Consumer desires and value perceptions regarding contemporary art collection and exhibit visits. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *35*(6), 925–940.
Cherrier, H. (2009). Anti-consumption discourses and consumer-resistant identities. *Journal of Business Research*, *62*(2), 181–190.
Cherrier, H., Black, I. R., & Lee, M. (2011). Intentional non-consumption for sustainability: Consumer resistance and/or anti-consumption? *European Journal of Marketing*, *45*(11/12), 1757–1767.
Cheshire, L., Walters, P., & Rosenblatt, T. (2010). The politics of housing consumption: Renters as flawed consumers on a master planned estate. *Urban Studies*, *47*(12), 2597–2614.
Chivanga, S., & Monyai, P. (2021). Back to basics: Qualitative research methodology for beginners. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, *8*(2), 11–17.
Chowdhury, R. M. M. I. (2018). Religiosity and voluntary simplicity: The mediating role of spiritual well-being. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *152*, 149–174.
Chun, H., Patrick, V. M., & MacInnis, D. J. (2007). Making prudent vs. impulsive choices: The role of anticipated shame and guilt on consumer self-control. In G. Fitzsimons & V. Morwitz (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 34* (pp. 715–719). Association for Consumer Research.
Cissé, C. (2020, February 4). In the new age of rentable luxury, consumers are less concerned with ownership than ever. *Luxury Society*. https://www.luxurysociety.com/en/articles/2020/02/rise-sharing-economy
Clark, C. B., Swails, J. A., Pontinen, H. M., Bowerman, S. E., Kriz, K. A., & Hendricks, P. S. (2017). A behavioral economic assessment of individualizing versus binding moral foundations. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *112*, 49–54.
Cleveland, M., Laroche, M., & Papadopoulos, N. (2009). Cosmopolitanism, consumer ethnocentrism, and materialism: An eight-country study of antecedents and outcomes. *Journal of International Marketing*, *17*(1), 116–146.
Cline, E. (2019, October 22). How sustainable is renting your clothes, really? *Elle*. https://www.elle.com/fashion/a29536207/rental-fashion-sustainability/
Clube, R. K. M., & Tennant, M. (2020). Exploring garment rental as a sustainable business model in the fashion industry: Does contamination impact the consumption experience? *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *19*(4), 359–370.
Coker, T. (2020, July 29). How Data Reveals Fashion's Inclusivity Problem. *The Guardian*.

Conlon, S. (2020, September 20). The rise of fashion rental. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2020/sep/20/the-rise-of-fashion-rental-scarlett-conlon

Cook, S. C., & Hodges, N. N. (2015). Exploring non-ownership apparel consumption through online fashion product rental services: An application of institutional theory. *International Textile and Apparel Association Annual Conference Proceedings*, *72*(1), 1–2.

Cook, S. C., & Yurchisin, J. (2017). Fast fashion environments: Consumer's heaven or retailer's nightmare? *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *45*(2), 143–157.

Corbin, J. M., & Strauss, A. L. (2008). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Costello, L., McDermott, M.-L., & Wallace, R. (2017). Netnography: Range of practices, misperceptions, and missed opportunities. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *16*, 1–12.

Cowan, K., & Yazdanparast, A. (2019). Moral foundations and judgment: Conceptualizing boundaries. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, *36*(3), 356–365.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*. Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Method Research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory Into Practice*, *39*(3), 124–130.

Culiberg, B., Cho, H., Kos Koklic, M., & Zabkar, V. (2022). The role of moral foundations, anticipated guilt and personal responsibility in predicting anti-consumption for environmental reasons. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1–17.

Curry, O. S., Rowland, L. A., Van Lissa, C. J., Zlotowitz, S., McAlaney, J., & Whitehouse, H. (2018). Happy to help? A systematic review and meta-analysis of the effects of performing acts of kindness on the well-being of the actor. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *76*, 320–329.

Danziger, P. N. (2019, November 16). Why Nordstrom is moving deeper into the rental economy with Rent the Runway. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/pamdanziger/2019/11/16/nordstrom-doubles-down-on-the-rental-economy-by-extending-its-partnership-with-rent-the-runway/

Davidson, A., Habibi, M. R., & Laroche, M. (2018). Materialism and the sharing economy: A cross-cultural study of American and Indian consumers. *Journal of Business Research*, *82*, 364–372.

Davis, K. (2008). Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist Theory*, *9*(1), 67–85.

DeJonckheere, M., & Vaughn, L. M. (2019). Semi-structured interviewing in primary care research: A balance of relationship and rigour. *Family Medicine and Community Health*, *7*(2), 1–8.

Denegri-Knott, J. (2011). "Have it now!": Ebay and the acceleration of consumer desire. In A. Bradshaw, C. Hackley, & P. Maclaran (Eds.), *E - European Advances in Consumer Research Volume 9* (pp. 373–379). Association for Consumer Research.

Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd ed., pp. 1–32). Sage Publications.

Dewey, J. (1930). The quest for certainty: A study of the relation of knowledge and action. *The Journal of Philosophy*, *27*(1), 14–25.
Dittmar, H., Bond, R., Hurst, M., & Kasser, T. (2014). The relationship between materialism and personal well-being: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *107*(5), 879–924.
Dittmar, H., Long, K., & Bond, R. (2007). When a better self is only a button click away: Associations between materialistic values, emotional and identity–related buying motives, and compulsive buying tendency online. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, *26*(3), 334–361.
Donnelly, G., Ksendzova, M., & Howell, R. T. (2013). Sadness, identity, and plastic in over-shopping: The interplay of materialism, poor credit management, and emotional buying motives in predicting compulsive buying. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, *39*, 113–125.
Dopierała, R. (2017). Minimalism–a new mode of consumption? *Przegląd Socjologiczny*, *66*(4), 67–83.
Dunlap, R. E., & Liere, K. D. Van. (2008). The "New Environmental Paradigm." *The Journal of Environmental Education*, *40*(1), 19–28.
Dunlap, R. E., Liere, K. D. Van, Mertig, A. G., & Jones, R. E. (2000). Measuring endorsement of the new ecological paradigm: A revised NEP scale. *Journal of Social Issues*, *56*(3), 425–442.
Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2008). Spending money on others promotes happiness. *Science*, *319*(5870), 1687–1688.
Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2014). Prosocial spending and happiness: Using money to benefit others pays off. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *23*(1), 41–47.
Durgee, J. F., & O'Connor, G. C. (1995). An exploration into renting as consumption behavior. *Psychology & Marketing*, *12*(2), 89–104.
Eastman, J. K., & Eastman, K. L. (2015). Conceptualizing a model of status consumption theory: An exploration of the antecedents and consequences of the motivation to consume for status. *Marketing Management Journal*, *25*(1), 1–15.
Eckhardt, G. M., & Bardhi, F. (2015). The sharing economy isn't about sharing at all. *Harvard Business Review*, *28*(1), 2015.
Eckhardt, G. M., & Bardhi, F. (2016). The relationship between access practices and economic systems. *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*, *1*(2), 210–225.
Eckhardt, G. M., Belk, R. W., & Wilson, J. A. J. (2015). The rise of inconspicuous consumption. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *31*(7–8), 807–826.
Edbring, E. G., Lehner, M., & Mont, O. (2016). Exploring consumer attitudes to alternative models of consumption: Motivations and barriers. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *123*, 5–15.
Edelson, S. (2020, August 10). Black Creatives In Fashion Speak Out On Inequality: We Need To Talk, And You Need To Listen. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/sharonedelson/2020/08/10/black-creatives-are-saying-we-need-to-talk-and-you-need-to-listen/?sh=4a7ffad1346b
Effron, D. A., Cameron, J. S., & Monin, B. (2009). Endorsing Obama licenses favoring whites. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *45*(3), 590–593.
Effron, D. A., & Conway, P. (2015). When virtue leads to villainy: Advances in research on moral self-licensing. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *6*, 32–35.
Effron, D. A., Miller, D. T., & Monin, B. (2012). Inventing racist roads not taken: The licensing effect of immoral counterfactual behaviors. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *103*(6), 916–932.

Ehrich, K. R., & Irwin, J. R. (2005). Willful ignorance in the request for product attribute information. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *42*(3), 266–277.
Eide, P., & Kahn, D. (2008). Ethical issues in the qualitative researcher-participant relationship. *Nursing Ethics*, *15*(2), 199–207.
Epp, A. M., & Price, L. L. (2010). The storied life of singularized objects: Forces of agency and network transformation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *36*(5), 820–837.
Erdly, C. (2022, January 17). Resale set to be star of retail in 2022 for consumers and brands. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/catherineerdly/2022/01/17/resale-set-to-be-star-of-retail-in-2022-for-consumers-and-brands/
Ertekin, Z. O. (2019). Can luxury fashion provide a roadmap for sustainability? *Markets, Globalization & Development Review*, *4*(1), 1–21.
Ertekin, Z. O., Sevil Oflac, B., & Serbetcioglu, C. (2020). Fashion consumption during economic crisis: Emerging practices and feelings of consumers. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, *11*(3), 270–288.
Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2009). Self-brand connections: The role of reference groups and celebrity endorsers in the creation of brand meaning. In J. MacInnis, D., Park, C., Priester (Ed.), *Handbook of Brand Relationships* (1st ed., pp. 107–123). Routledge.
Etzioni, A. (1998). Voluntary simplicity: Characterization, select psychological implications, and societal consequences. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, *19*(5), 619–643.
Evers, U., Gruner, R. L., Sneddon, J., & Lee, J. A. (2018). Exploring materialism and frugality in determining product end-use consumption behaviors. *Psychology & Marketing*, *35*(12), 948–956.
Farjam, M., Nikolaychuk, O., & Bravo, G. (2019). Experimental evidence of an environmental attitude-behavior gap in high-cost situations. *Ecological Economics*, *166*, 1–6.
Farra, E. (2021, June 2). Rent the Runway is now a fully-fledged resale site. *Vogue*. https://www.vogue.com/article/rent-the-runway-launches-resale
Farrant, L., Olsen, S. I., & Wangel, A. (2010). Environmental benefits from reusing clothes. *The International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment*, *15*, 726–736.
Featherstone, M. (2014). Luxury, consumer culture and sumptuary dynamics. *Luxury*, *1*(1), 47–69.
Feng, Y., Tan, Y. R., Duan, Y., & Bai, Y. (2020). Strategies analysis of luxury fashion rental platform in sharing economy. *Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review*, *142*, 1–21.
Ferraro, C., Hemsley, A., & Sands, S. (2022). Embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI): Considerations and opportunities for brand managers. *Business Horizons*, *in-press*.
Festinger, L. (1957). *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Stanford University Press.
Fionda, A. M., & Moore, C. M. (2009). The anatomy of the luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Brand Management*, *16*(5), 347–363.
Fonrouge, G. (2023a, January 12). Rent the Runway to sell second-hand luxury on Amazon as it chases profitability. *CNBC*. https://www.cnbc.com/2023/01/12/rent-the-runway-launches-amazon-storefront-to-sell-secondhand-luxury.html
Fonrouge, G. (2023b, April 12). Rent the Runway's losses narrow as company edges closer to profitability. *CNBC*. https://www.cnbc.com/2023/04/12/rent-the-runway-rent-q4-earnings-2022.html
Fournier, S. (1998). Consumer resistance: Societal motivations, consumer manifestations, and implications in the marketing domain. In J. W. Alba & J. W. Hutchinson (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 25* (pp. 88–90). Association for Consumer Research.

Franco, J. C., Hussain, D., & McColl, R. (2019). Luxury fashion and sustainability: Looking good together. *Journal of Business Strategy*, *41*(4), 55–61.
Future Market Insights. (2021). *Online Clothing Rental Market*. https://www.futuremarketinsights.com/reports/online-clothing-rental-market
Gabrielli, V., Baghi, I., & Codeluppi, V. (2013). Consumption practices of fast fashion products: A consumer-based approach. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *17*(2), 206–224.
Galbraith, S. (2013, December 3). The secret behind Rent the Runway's success. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/sashagalbraith/2013/12/03/the-secret-behind-rent-the-runways-success/
Gan, T. (2021, July 15). Is the fashion industry getting better, or is it all greenwashing? *Green Is the New Black*. https://greenisthenewblack.com/is-the-fashion-industry-getting-better-or-is-it-all-greenwashing/
García-de-Frutos, N., Ortega-Egea, J. M., & Martínez-del-Río, J. (2018). Anti-consumption for environmental sustainability: Conceptualization, review, and multilevel research directions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *148*(2), 411–435.
Garðarsdóttir, R. B., & Dittmar, H. (2012). The relationship of materialism to debt and financial well-being: The case of Iceland's perceived prosperity. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, *33*(3), 471–481.
Ger, G., & Belk, R. W. (1996). Cross-cultural differences in materialism. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, *17*(1), 55–77.
Ger, G., & Belk, R. W. (1999). Accounting for materialism in four cultures. *Journal of Material Culture*, *4*(2), 183–204.
Gill, A., Lopes, A. M., & Kaye-Smith, H. (2016). Practicing sustainability: Illuminating "use" in wearing clothes. *Cultural Studies Review*, *22*(1), 32–58.
Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory*. Sociology Press.
Glaser, B. G. (2007). Constructivist Grounded Theory? *Historical Social Research*, *19*, 93–105.
Glaser, B. G., & Holton, J. (2007). Re-modeling grounded theory. *Historical Social Research*, *19*, 47–68.
Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Aldine.
Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Anchor Books.
Goldsmith, R. E., Flynn, L. R., & Clark, R. A. (2011). Materialism and brand engagement as shopping motivations. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *18*(4), 278–284.
Goor, D., Ordabayeva, N., Keinan, A., & Crener, S. (2020). The impostor syndrome from luxury consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *46*(6), 1031–1051.
Gopalakrishnan, S., & Matthews, D. (2018). Collaborative consumption: A business model analysis of second-hand fashion. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *22*(3), 354–368.
Gould, S. J. (1991). An Asian approach to the understanding of consumer energy, drives, and states. In E. Hirschman & J. N. Sheth (Eds.), *Research in Consumer Behavior* (Vol. 5, pp. 33–59). JAI Press.
Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 47, pp. 55–130). Elsevier.
Graham, J., Nosek, B. A., Haidt, J., Iyer, R., Koleva, S., & Ditto, P. H. (2011). Mapping the moral domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *101*(2), 366–385.

Grand View Research. (2021). *Online Clothing Rental Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report by End-user (Men, Women), by Dress Code (Formal, Casual, Traditional), by Region, and Segment Forecasts, 2022 - 2030*. https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/online-clothing-rental-market

Grayson, K., & Shulman, D. (2000). Indexicality and the verification function of irreplaceable possessions: A semiotic analysis. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *27*(1), 17–30.

Groot, J. I. M. de, & Steg, L. (2007). Value orientations and environmental beliefs in five countries: Validity of an instrument to measure egoistic, altruistic and biospheric value orientations. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *38*(3), 318–332.

Groot, J. I. M. de, & Steg, L. (2008). Value orientations to explain beliefs related to environmental significant behavior: How to measure egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric value orientations. *Environment and Behavior*, *40*(3), 330–354.

Groot, J. I. M. De, & Steg, L. (2009). Morality and prosocial behavior: The role of awareness, responsibility, and norms in the norm activation model. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *149*(4), 425–449.

Grougiou, V., & Moschis, G. P. (2015). Antecedents of young adults' materialistic values. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *14*(2), 115–126.

Grove, S. J., & Fisk, R. P. (1983). The dramaturgy of services exchange: An analytical framework for services marketing. In L. L. Berry, G. L. Shostack, & G. D. Upah (Eds.), *Emerging Perspectives on Services Marketing* (pp. 45–49). American Marketing Association.

Gruen, A. (2017). Design and the creation of meaningful consumption practices in access-based consumption. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *33*(3–4), 226–243.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Sage Publications.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 105–117). Sage Publications.

Guiot, D., & Roux, D. (2010). A second-hand shoppers' motivation scale: Antecedents, consequences, and implications for retailers. *Journal of Retailing*, *86*(4), 355–371.

Gupta, S., & Gentry, J. W. (2018). Evaluating fast fashion: Examining its micro and the macro perspective. In *Eco-friendly and Fair* (pp. 15–23). Routledge.

Gurel-Atay, E., Sirgy, M. J., Webb, D., Ekici, A., Lee, D., & Kahle, L. R. (2021). What motivates people to be materialistic? Developing a measure of materialism motives. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *20*(3), 590–606.

Guy, A., & Banim, M. (2000). Personal collections: Women's clothing use and identity. *Journal of Gender Studies*, *9*(3), 313–327.

Guzzetti, A., Crespi, R., & Belvedere, V. (2021). "Please don't buy!": Consumers attitude to alternative luxury consumption. *Strategic Change*, *30*(1), 67–78.

Habibi, M. R., Kim, A., & Laroche, M. (2016). From sharing to exchange: An extended framework of dual modes of collaborative nonownership consumption. *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*, *1*(2), 277–294.

Haggerty, K. D. (2004). Ethics creep: Governing social science research in the name of ethics. *Qualitative Sociology*, *27*(4), 391–414.

Hall, H., Petter, O., & Young, S. (2020, February 18). London Fashion Week: What happened when The Independent's fashion team put clothing rental websites to the test. *Independent*. https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/london-fashion-week-clothes-rental-online-designer-my-wardrobe-hq-by-rotation-a9340131.html

Hallberg, L. R. M. (2006). The "core category" of grounded theory: Making constant comparisons. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, *1*(3), 141–148.

Han, Y. J., Nunes, J. C., & Drèze, X. (2010). Signaling status with luxury goods: The role of brand prominence. *Journal of Marketing*, *74*(4), 15–30.
Hanbury, M. (2021, June 3). Rent the Runway enters the $30 billion resale market, making its second-hand designer clothes available for all shoppers to buy, as well as rent. *Business Insider*. https://www.businessinsider.com.au/rent-the-runway-sells-used-designer-clothes-to-all-customers-2021
Harmon-Jones, E. (2000). Cognitive dissonance and experienced negative affect: Evidence that dissonance increases experienced negative affect even in the absence of aversive consequences. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *26*(12), 1490–1501.
Harmon-Jones, E., & Mills, J. (2019). An introduction to cognitive dissonance theory and an overview of current perspectives on the theory. In E. Harmon-Jones (Ed.), *Cognitive Dissonance: Reexamining a Pivotal Theory in Psychology* (pp. 3–24). American Psychological Association.
Healey, B. (2021a, April 16). Australian designer rental platform GlamCorner is seizing on exploding demand for circular fashion and using data to give its customers exactly what they want. *Business Insider*. https://www.businessinsider.com.au/designer-rental-service-glamcorner-2021-4
Healey, B. (2021b, October 21). Australia's product rental market is catching up to the rest of the world: Here's how 3 companies are changing the resale landscape. *Business Insider*. https://www.businessinsider.com.au/rental-platforms-circular-economy-australia
Heine, K. (2012). *The Concept of Luxury Brands* (B. Goldmann & K. Vredenburgh, Eds.; 2nd ed.). Technische Universität Berlin.
Helkama, K. (2004). Values, role-taking and empathy in moral development. *New Review of Social Psychology*, *3*(1–2), 103–111.
Hennigs, N., Wiedmann, K.-P., Behrens, S., & Klarmann, C. (2013). Unleashing the power of luxury: Antecedents of luxury brand perception and effects on luxury brand strength. *Journal of Brand Management*, *20*(8), 705–715.
Hennigs, N., Wiedmann, K.-P., & Klarmann, C. (2012). Luxury brands in the digital age – exclusivity versus ubiquity. *Marketing Review St. Gallen*, *29*(1), 30–35.
Hennigs, N., Wiedmann, K.-P., Klarmann, C., & Behrens, S. (2015). The complexity of value in the luxury industry. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *43*(10/11), 922–939.
Henninger, C. E., Amasawa, E., Brydges, T., & Piontek, F. M. (2022). My wardrobe in the cloud: An international comparison of fashion rental. In M. Ertz (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on the Platform Economy and the Evolution of E-Commerce* (pp. 153–175). IGI Global.
Henninger, C. E., Brydges, T., Iran, S., & Vladimirova, K. (2021). Collaborative fashion consumption–A synthesis and future research agenda. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *319*, 1–12.
Herziger, A., Berkessel, J. B., & Steinnes, K. K. (2020). Wean off green: On the (in) effectiveness of biospheric appeals for consumption curtailment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *69*, 1–21.
Heyes, A., & Lashley, C. (2017). Price, exclusivity and luxury: Exploring London's luxury hotels. *Research in Hospitality Management*, *7*(1), 17–25.
Heyink, J. W., & Tymstra, T. J. (1993). The function of qualitative research. *Social Indicators Research*, *29*(3), 291–305.
Hoffmann, S., Balderjahn, I., Seegebarth, B., Mai, R., & Peyer, M. (2018). Under which conditions are consumers ready to boycott or buycott? The roles of hedonism and simplicity. *Ecological Economics*, *147*, 167–178.

Hofmann, W., Baumeister, R. F., Förster, G., & Vohs, K. D. (2012). Everyday temptations: An experience sampling study of desire, conflict, and self-control. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *102*(6), 1318–1335.
Holstein, J. A., & Gubrium, J. F. (1995). *The Active Interview*. Sage Publications.
Holton, J. A. (2010). The coding process and its challenges. *Grounded Theory Review*, *9*(1), 21–40.
Huberts, J. C. D. W., Evers, C., & Ridder, D. T. D. De. (2014a). "Because I am worth it" A theoretical framework and empirical review of a justification-based account of self-regulation failure. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *18*(2), 119–138.
Huberts, J. C. D. W., Evers, C., & Ridder, D. T. D. de. (2014b). Thinking before sinning: Reasoning processes in hedonic consumption. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *5*, 1–6.
Hudders, L., & Pandelaere, M. (2012). The silver lining of materialism: The impact of luxury consumption on subjective well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *13*(3), 411–437.
Hudders, L., Pandelaere, M., & Vyncke, P. (2013). Consumer meaning making: The meaning of luxury brands in a democratised luxury world. *International Journal of Market Research*, *55*(3), 391–412.
Huneke, M. E. (2005). The face of the un-consumer: An empirical examination of the practice of voluntary simplicity in the United States. *Psychology & Marketing*, *22*(7), 527–550.
Hurst, M., Dittmar, H., Bond, R., & Kasser, T. (2013). The relationship between materialistic values and environmental attitudes and behaviors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *36*, 257–269.
Husic, M., & Cicic, M. (2009). Luxury consumption factors. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *13*(2), 231–245.
Inglehart, R. (1981). Post-materialism in an environment of insecurity. *American Political Science Review*, *75*(4), 880–900.
Iran, S., & Schrader, U. (2017). Collaborative fashion consumption and its environmental effects. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *21*(4), 468–482.
Iwanow, H., McEachern, M. G., & Jeffrey, A. (2005). The influence of ethical trading policies on consumer apparel purchase decisions: A focus on The Gap Inc. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *33*(5), 371–387.
Iyer, R., & Muncy, J. A. (2009). Purpose and object of anti-consumption. *Journal of Business Research*, *62*(2), 160–168.
Iyer, R., & Muncy, J. A. (2016). Attitude toward consumption and subjective well-being. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, *50*(1), 48–67.
Jain, R., Jain, K., Behl, A., Pereira, V., Del Giudice, M., & Vrontis, D. (2022). Mainstreaming fashion rental consumption: A systematic and thematic review of literature. *Journal of Business Research*, *139*, 1525–1539.
Jain, S. (2022). Luxury fashion consumption in collaborative economy: A conceptual framework. In S. S. Muthu (Ed.), *Sustainable Approaches in Textiles and Fashion.Sustainable Textiles: Production, Processing, Manufacturing & Chemistry* (pp. 41–61). Springer.
Jain, S., & Mishra, S. (2020). Luxury fashion consumption in sharing economy: A study of Indian millennials. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, *11*(2), 171–189.
Jain, V. K., Gupta, A., & Verma, H. (2023). Goodbye materialism: Exploring antecedents of minimalism and its impact on millennials well-being. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 1–27.
Jansson, J., & Dorrepaal, E. (2015). Personal norms for dealing with climate change: Results from a survey using moral foundations theory. *Sustainable Development*, *23*(6), 381–395.

Jeacle, I. (2021). Navigating netnography: A guide for the accounting researcher. *Financial Accountability & Management*, *37*(1), 88–101.
Jenkins, R., Molesworth, M., & Scullion, R. (2014). The messy social lives of objects: Inter-personal borrowing and the ambiguity of possession and ownership. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *13*(2), 131–139.
Jeon, Y. (2004). The application of grounded theory and symbolic interactionism. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, *18*(3), 249–256.
Jiang, B., & Tian, L. (2018). Collaborative consumption: Strategic and economic implications of product sharing. *Management Science*, *64*(3), 1171–1188.
Jiang, W., Liu, H., & Jiang, J. (2021). The development of materialism in emerging adulthood: Stability, change, and antecedents. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *47*(2), 293–306.
Joanes, T. (2019). Personal norms in a globalized world: Norm-activation processes and reduced clothing consumption. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *212*, 941–949.
Joergens, C. (2006). Ethical fashion: Myth or future trend? *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *10*(3), 360–371.
Joung, H.-M. (2014). Fast fashion consumers' post-purchase behaviours. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *42*(8), 688–697.
Joy, A., Sherry Jr, J. F., Venkatesh, A., Wang, J., & Chan, R. (2012). Fast fashion, sustainability, and the ethical appeal of luxury brands. *Fashion Theory*, *16*(3), 273–295.
Kamleitner, B., Thürridl, C., & Martin, B. A. S. (2019). A Cinderella story: How past identity salience boosts demand for repurposed products. *Journal of Marketing*, *83*(6), 76–92.
Kapferer, J.-N., & Bastien, V. (2009). *The Luxury Strategy: Break the Rules of Marketing to Build Luxury Brands*. Kogan Page Ltd.
Kapferer, J.-N., & Michaut-Denizeau, A. (2014). Is luxury compatible with sustainability? Luxury consumers' viewpoint. *Journal of Brand Management*, *21*(1), 1–22.
Kapferer, J.-N., & Valette-Florence, P. (2016). Beyond rarity: the paths of luxury desire. How luxury brands grow yet remain desirable. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *25*(2), 120–133.
Kapferer, J.-N., & Valette-Florence, P. (2018). The impact of brand penetration and awareness on luxury brand desirability: A cross country analysis of the relevance of the rarity principle. *Journal of Business Research*, *83*, 38–50.
Kapferer, J.-N., & Valette-Florence, P. (2021). Which consumers believe luxury must be expensive and why? A cross-cultural comparison of motivations. *Journal of Business Research*, *132*, 301–313.
Karlsson, M. T., & Ramasar, V. (2020). Selling women the green dream: The paradox of feminism and sustainability in fashion marketing. *Journal of Political Ecology*, *27*(1), 335–359.
Karpiak, C. P., & Baril, G. L. (2008). Moral reasoning and concern for the environment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *28*(3), 203–208.
Kashdan, T. B., & Breen, W. E. (2007). Materialism and diminished well–being: Experiential avoidance as a mediating mechanism. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, *26*(5), 521–539.
Kasser, T. (2005). Frugality, generosity, and materialism in children and adolescents. In K. A. Moore & L. H. Lippman (Eds.), *What do Children Need to Flourish?: Conceptualizing and Measuring Indicators of Positive Development* (pp. 357–373). Springer.
Kasser, T. (2016). Materialistic values and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *67*, 489–514.
Kasser, T., Rosenblum, K. L., Sameroff, A. J., Deci, E. L., Niemiec, C. P., Ryan, R. M., Árnadóttir, O., Bond, R., Dittmar, H., & Dungan, N. (2014). Changes in materialism,

changes in psychological well-being: Evidence from three longitudinal studies and an intervention experiment. *Motivation and Emotion*, *38*(1), 1–22.
Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (1993). A dark side of the American dream: Correlates of financial success as a central life aspiration. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *65*(2), 410–422.
Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (1996). Further examining the American dream: Differential correlates of intrinsic and extrinsic goals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *22*(3), 280–287.
Kasser, T., & Sheldon, K. M. (2000). Of wealth and death: Materialism, mortality salience, and consumption behavior. *Psychological Science*, *11*(4), 348–351.
Kastanakis, M. N., & Balabanis, G. (2012). Between the mass and the class: Antecedents of the "bandwagon" luxury consumption behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, *65*(10), 1399–1407.
Kastanakis, M. N., & Balabanis, G. (2014). Explaining variation in conspicuous luxury consumption: An individual differences' perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, *67*(10), 2147–2154.
Kelly, G. A. (1955). *The Psychology of Personal Constructs*. Norton.
Kenny, M., & Fourie, R. (2015). Contrasting classic, Straussian, and constructivist grounded theory: Methodological and philosophical conflicts. *The Qualitative Report*, *20*(8), 1270–1289.
Kessous, A., & Valette-Florence, P. (2019). "From Prada to Nada": Consumers and their luxury products: A contrast between second-hand and first-hand luxury products. *Journal of Business Research*, *102*, 313–327.
Khan, J., & Rundle-Thiele, S. (2019). Factors explaining shared clothes consumption in China: Individual benefit or planet concern? *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, *24*(4), 1–12.
Khan, U., & Dhar, R. (2006). Licensing effect in consumer choice. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *43*(2), 259–266.
Kilbourne, W. E., & Pickett, G. (2008). How materialism affects environmental beliefs, concern, and environmentally responsible behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, *61*(9), 885–893.
Kilbourne, W., Grünhagen, M., & Foley, J. (2005). A cross-cultural examination of the relationship between materialism and individual values. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, *26*(5), 624–641.
Kim, H., Choo, H. J., & Yoon, N. (2013). The motivational drivers of fast fashion avoidance. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *17*(2), 243–260.
Kim, K., McKeage, R., & Debevec, K. (1993). Self-gifts and the manifestation of material values. In L. McAlister & M. L. Rothschild (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 20* (Vol. 20, pp. 359–364). Association for Consumer Research.
Kim, N. L., & Jin, B. E. (2021). Addressing the contamination issue in collaborative consumption of fashion: Does ownership type of shared goods matter? *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *25*(2), 242–256.
Kim-Vick, J., & Yu, U.-J. (2023). Impact of digital resale platforms on brand new or second-hand luxury goods purchase intentions among US Gen Z consumers. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, *16*(1), 57–69.
Kleine III, R. E., Kleine, S. S., & Kernan, J. B. (1993). Mundane consumption and the self: A social-identity perspective. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *2*(3), 209–235.
Kleine, S. S., & Baker, S. M. (2004). An integrative review of material possession attachment. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, *1*(1), 1–39.

Kleine, S. S., Kleine III, R. E., & Allen, C. T. (1995). How is a possession "me" or "not me"? Characterizing types and an antecedent of material possession attachment. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *22*(3), 327–343.
Knox, S., & Burkard, A. W. (2009). Qualitative research interviews. *Psychotherapy Research*, *19*(4–5), 566–575.
Kotabe, H. P., & Hofmann, W. (2015). On integrating the components of self-control. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *10*(5), 618–638.
Kozinets, R. V. (2002). The field behind the screen: Using netnography for marketing research in online communities. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *39*(1), 61–72.
Kozinets, R. V. (2010). *Netnography: Doing Ethnographic Research Online*. Sage Publications.
Kozinets, R. V. (2015). *Netnography: Redefined* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
Kozinets, R. V., Dolbec, P.-Y., & Earley, A. (2014). Netnographic analysis: Understanding culture through social media data. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis* (pp. 262–276). Sage Publications.
Kramarczyk, J., & Oliver, M. A. (2022). Accumulative vs. appreciative expressions of materialism: Revising materialism in light of Polish simplifiers and new materialism. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *175*, 701–719.
Kropfeld, M. I., Nepomuceno, M. V., & Dantas, D. C. (2018). The ecological impact of anticonsumption lifestyles and environmental concern. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, *37*(2), 245–259.
Ku, L., & Zaroff, C. (2014). How far is your money from your mouth? The effects of intrinsic relative to extrinsic values on willingness to pay and protect the environment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *40*, 472–483.
Kuanr, A., Israel, D., Pradhan, D., & Roy Chaudhuri, H. (2021). Can we anti-consume our way to sustainability? Finding answers at the intersection of cultural values. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *20*(5), 1051–1064.
Kuanr, A., Pradhan, D., & Chaudhuri, H. R. (2020). I (do not) consume; therefore, I am: Investigating materialism and voluntary simplicity through a moderated mediation model. *Psychology & Marketing*, *37*(2), 260–277.
Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Sage Publications.
Lai, A. W. (1995). Consumer values, product benefits and customer value: A consumption behavior approach. In F. R. Kardes & M. Sujan (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 22* (pp. 381–388). Association for Consumer Research.
Lamare, A. (2020, August 28). A brief history of Rent the Runway: Can the clothing rental company survive COVID-19 shutdowns? *The Business of Business*. https://www.businessofbusiness.com/articles/history-rent-the-runway-le-tote-coronavirus-data/
Lang, C. (2018). Perceived risks and enjoyment of access-based consumption: Identifying barriers and motivations to fashion renting. *Fashion and Textiles*, *5*(1), 1–18.
Lang, C., & Armstrong, C. M. J. (2018). Collaborative consumption: The influence of fashion leadership, need for uniqueness, and materialism on female consumers' adoption of clothing renting and swapping. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, *13*, 37–47.
Lang, C., Armstrong, C. M., & Liu, C. (2016). Creativity and sustainable apparel retail models: Does consumers' tendency for creative choice counter-conformity matter in sustainability? *Fashion and Textiles*, *3*(1), 1–15.
Lang, C., Li, M., & Zhao, L. (2020). Understanding consumers' online fashion renting experiences: A text-mining approach. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, *21*, 132–144.

Lang, C., Seo, S., & Liu, C. (2019). Motivations and obstacles for fashion renting: A cross-cultural comparison. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *23*(4), 519–536.
Langer, R., & Beckman, S. C. (2005). Sensitive research topics: Netnography revisited. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, *8*(2), 189–203.
Lawson, S. J., Gleim, M. R., Perren, R., & Hwang, J. (2016). Freedom from ownership: An exploration of access-based consumption. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(8), 2615–2623.
LeBaron, A. B., Kelley, H. H., & Carroll, J. S. (2018). Money over marriage: Marriage importance as a mediator between materialism and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, *39*(2), 337–347.
Lee, H. (2019). The effect of anti-consumption lifestyle on consumer's attitude and purchase intention toward commercial sharing systems. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, *31*(5), 1422–1441.
Lee, M., Bae, J., & Koo, D.-M. (2020). The effect of materialism on conspicuous vs inconspicuous luxury consumption: Focused on need for uniqueness, self-monitoring and self-construal. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, *33*(3), 869–887.
Lee, M., Roux, D., Cherrier, H., & Cova, B. (2011). Anti-consumption and consumer resistance: Concepts, concerns, conflicts and convergence. *European Journal of Marketing*, *45*(11/12), 1680–1687.
Lee, M. S. W. (2022). Anti-consumption research: A foundational and contemporary overview. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *45*, 1–6.
Lee, M. S. W., & Ahn, C. S. Y. (2016). Anti-consumption, materialism, and consumer well-being. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, *50*(1), 18–47.
Lee, M. S. W., Fernandez, K. V, & Hyman, M. R. (2009). Anti-consumption: An overview and research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, *62*(2), 145–147.
Lee, M. S. W., Motion, J., & Conroy, D. (2009). Anti-consumption and brand avoidance. *Journal of Business Research*, *62*(2), 169–180.
Lee, S. H. N., & Chow, P.-S. (2020). Investigating consumer attitudes and intentions toward online fashion renting retailing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *52*, 1–9.
Lehmann, U. (2022). *Fashion and Materialism*. Edinburgh University Press.
Leibenstein, H. (1950). Bandwagon, snob, and Veblen effects in the theory of consumers' demand. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *64*(2), 183–207.
Levänen, J., Uusitalo, V., Härri, A., Kareinen, E., & Linnanen, L. (2021). Innovative recycling or extended use? Comparing the global warming potential of different ownership and end-of-life scenarios for textiles. *Environmental Research Letters*, *16*(5), 1–11.
Light, L. (2019, July 5). Is Rent-the-Runway ruining luxury? *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/larrylight/2019/07/05/is-rent-the-runway-ruining-luxury/
Ligita, T., Harvey, N., Wicking, K., Nurjannah, I., & Francis, K. (2020). A practical example of using theoretical sampling throughout a grounded theory study: A methodological paper. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *20*(1), 116–126.
Lima, M. C., Namaci, L., & Fabiani, T. (2014). A netnographic study of entrepreneurial traits: Evaluating classic typologies using the crowdsourcing algorithm of an online community. *Independent Journal of Management & Production*, *5*(3), 693–709.
Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications.
Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1988). Do inquiry paradigms imply inquiry methodologies? In D. Fetterman (Ed.), *Qualitative Approaches to Evaluation in Educational Research* (pp. 89–115). Sage Publications.

Liou, D.-K., Chih, W.-H., Hsu, L.-C., & Huang, C.-Y. (2016). Investigating information sharing behavior: The mediating roles of the desire to share information in virtual communities. *Information Systems and E-Business Management*, *14*(2), 187–216.
Little, J. (2019, July 29). Hire calling: Why rental fashion is taking off. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2019/jul/29/hire-calling-why-rental-fashion-is-taking-off
Liu, S., Lang, C., & Liu, C. (2023). A systematic review and meta-analysis of Chinese online fashion resale: Toward recipes to stimulate circular fashion. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 334–347.
Lloyd, K., & Pennington, W. (2020). Towards a theory of minimalism and wellbeing. *International Journal of Applied Positive Psychology*, *5*, 121–136.
Loh, J. (2013). Inquiry into issues of trustworthiness and quality in narrative studies: A perspective. *The Qualitative Report*, *18*(33), 1–15.
Lopez, V., & Whitehead, D. (2013). Sampling data and data collection in qualitative research. In *Nursing and Midwifery Research: Methods and Critical Appraisal for Evidence-based Practice* (4th ed., pp. 124–140). Elsevier Health Sciences.
Loureiro, S. M. C., Maximiano, M., & Panchapakesan, P. (2018). Engaging fashion consumers in social media: The case of luxury brands. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, *11*(3), 310–321.
Loureiro, S. M. C., Serra, J., & Guerreiro, J. (2019). How fashion brands engage on social media: A netnography approach. *Journal of Promotion Management*, *25*(3), 367–378.
Loussaïef, L., Ulrich, I., & Damay, C. (2019). How does access to luxury fashion challenge self-identity? Exploring women's practices of joint and non-ownership. *Journal of Business Research*, *102*, 263–272.
Lovelock, C., & Gummesson, E. (2004). Whither services marketing? In search of a new paradigm and fresh perspectives. *Journal of Service Research*, *7*(1), 20–41.
Lu, A. C. C., Gursoy, D., & Del Chiappa, G. (2016). The influence of materialism on ecotourism attitudes and behaviors. *Journal of Travel Research*, *55*(2), 176–189.
Lundblad, L., & Davies, I. A. (2016). The values and motivations behind sustainable fashion consumption. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *15*(2), 149–162.
Lune, H., & Berg, B. L. (2017). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (9th ed.). Pearson Education.
Machado, M. A. D., Almeida, S. O. de, Bollick, L. C., & Bragagnolo, G. (2019). Second-hand fashion market: Consumer role in circular economy. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *23*(3), 382–395.
Maheshwari, S. (2019, March 21). Rent the Runway now valued at $1 billion with new funding. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/21/business/rent-the-runway-unicorn.html
Makri, K., Schlegelmilch, B. B., Mai, R., & Dinhof, K. (2020). What we know about anti-consumption: An attempt to nail jelly to the wall. *Psychology & Marketing*, *37*(2), 177–215.
Malhotra, N. K. (2019). *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation* (7th ed.). Pearson Education.
Manchiraju, S., & Sadachar, A. (2014). Personal values and ethical fashion consumption. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *18*(3), 357–374.
Maner, J. K., & Gailliot, M. T. (2007). Altruism and egoism: Prosocial motivations for helping depend on relationship context. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *37*(2), 347–358.

Martin-Woodhead, A. (2022). Limited, considered and sustainable consumption: The (non) consumption practices of UK minimalists. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *22*(4), 1012–1031.
McAfee, A., Dessain, V., & Sjöman, A. (2004). *Zara: IT for Fast Fashion*. Harvard Business School.
McGrath, A. (2017). Dealing with dissonance: A review of cognitive dissonance reduction. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *11*(12), 1–17.
McKeage, K. K. R. (1992). Materialism and self-indulgences: Themes of materialism in self-gift giving. In F. W. Rudmin & M. L. Richins (Eds.), *SV - Meaning, Measure, and Morality of Materialism* (pp. 140–146). Association for Consumer Research.
McNeill, L. S., & Moore, R. (2015). Sustainable fashion consumption and the fast fashion conundrum: fashionable consumers and attitudes to sustainability in clothing choice. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *39*(3), 212–222.
McNeill, L. S., & Venter, B. (2019). Identity, self-concept and young women's engagement with collaborative, sustainable fashion consumption models. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *43*(4), 368–378.
Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, Self and Society*. University of Chicago Press.
Meissner, M. (2019). Against accumulation: Lifestyle minimalism, de-growth and the present post-ecological condition. *Journal of Cultural Economy*, *12*(3), 185–200.
Merriam, S. B. (2002). Introduction to qualitative research. In S. B. Merriam (Ed.), *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis* (pp. 3–17). Jossey Bass.
Merritt, A. C., Effron, D. A., & Monin, B. (2010). Moral self-licensing: When being good frees us to be bad. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *4*(5), 344–357.
Miles, A., & Upenieks, L. (2022). Moral self-appraisals explain emotional rewards of prosocial behavior. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *23*(5), 1793–1814.
Milfont, T. L. L., Davies, C. L., & Wilson, M. S. (2019). The moral foundations of environmentalism. *Social Psychological Bulletin*, *14*(2), 1–25.
Miller, D. (1987). *Material Culture and Mass Consumption*. Blackwell.
Miller, G., Rathouse, K., Scarles, C., Holmes, K., & Tribe, J. (2010). Public understanding of sustainable tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *37*(3), 627–645.
Miller, K. (2013). Hedonic customer responses to fast fashion and replicas. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *17*(2), 160–174.
Mills, J., Birks, M., & Hoare, K. (2014). Grounded theory. In *Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide* (pp. 107–122). SAGE Publications.
Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006). The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *5*(1), 25–35.
Mishra, S., Jain, S., & Jham, V. (2021). Luxury rental purchase intention among millennials - A cross-national study. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *63*(4), 503–516.
Moisander, J., Valtonen, A., & Hirsto, H. (2009). Personal interviews in cultural consumer research–post-structuralist challenges. *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, *12*(4), 329–348.
Molesworth, M., Watkins, R., & Denegri-Knott, J. (2016). Possession work on hosted digital consumption objects as consumer ensnarement. *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*, *1*(2), 246–261.
Monticelli, A., & Costamagna, M. (2022). Environmental assessment of the rental business model: A case study for formal wear. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 1–19.

Moodie, C. (2023, February 12). Clothing industry put on notice as fast fashion and unwanted clothing takes environmental toll. *ABC News*. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-02-12/fast-fashion-industry-environmental-toll-amid-greenwashing/101912482

Morgan, D. L. (2007). Paradigms lost and pragmatism regained: Methodological implications of combining qualitative and quantitative methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *1*(1), 48–76.

Morgan, L. R., & Birtwistle, G. (2009). An investigation of young fashion consumers' disposal habits. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *33*(2), 190–198.

Moschis, G. P. (2017). Research frontiers on the dark side of consumer behaviour: The case of materialism and compulsive buying. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *33*(15–16), 1384–1401.

Mrad, M., Majdalani, J., Cui, C. C., & El Khansa, Z. (2020). Brand addiction in the contexts of luxury and fast fashion brands. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *55*, 1–12.

Mukendi, A., & Henninger, C. E. (2020). Exploring the spectrum of fashion rental. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *24*(3), 455–469.

Mukhopadhyay, A., & Johar, G. V. (2009). Indulgence as self-reward for prior shopping restraint: A justification-based mechanism. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *19*(3), 334–345.

Mukhopadhyay, A., Sengupta, J., & Ramanathan, S. (2008). Recalling past temptations: An information-processing perspective on the dynamics of self-control. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *35*(4), 586–599.

Murray, J. B. (2002). The politics of consumption: A re-inquiry on Thompson and Haytko's (1997) "Speaking of Fashion." *Journal of Consumer Research*, *29*(3), 427–440.

Nairn, A., & Opree, S. J. (2021). TV adverts, materialism, and children's self-esteem: The role of socio-economic status. *International Journal of Market Research*, *63*(2), 161–176.

Neale, J., Nettleton, S., & Pickering, L. (2011). Recovery from problem drug use: What can we learn from the sociologist Erving Goffman? *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*, *18*(1), 3–9.

Nepomuceno, M. V., & Laroche, M. (2015). The impact of materialism and anti-consumption lifestyles on personal debt and account balances. *Journal of Business Research*, *68*(3), 654–664.

Nguyen, T. (2020, February 3). Fast fashion, explained. *Vox*. https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2020/2/3/21080364/fast-fashion-h-and-m-zara

Nia, A., & Zaichkowsky, J. L. (2000). Do counterfeits devalue the ownership of luxury brands? *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *9*(7), 485–497.

Nielsen, K. S., & Hofmann, W. (2021). Motivating sustainability through morality: A daily diary study on the link between moral self-control and clothing consumption. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *73*, 101551.

Niinimäki, K. (2010). Eco-clothing, consumer identity and ideology. *Sustainable Development*, *18*(3), 150–162.

Niinimäki, K., Peters, G., Dahlbo, H., Perry, P., Rissanen, T., & Gwilt, A. (2020). The environmental price of fast fashion. *Nature Reviews Earth & Environment*, *1*(4), 189–200.

O'Cass, A., & McEwen, H. (2004). Exploring consumer status and conspicuous consumption. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *4*(1), 25–39.

Olshansky, E. F. (2015). Overview of grounded theory. In M. De Chesnay (Ed.), *Nursing Research Using Grounded Theory: Qualitative Designs and Methods in Nursing* (pp. 1–8). Springer.

O'Neill, G. (2020, October 27). Renting clothes is a silver bullet for fashion tragics – if I could find some I wanted to wear. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2020/oct/27/renting-clothes-is-a-silver-bullet-for-fashion-tragics-if-i-could-find-some-i-wanted-to-wear

Oral, C., & Thurner, J. (2019). The impact of anti-consumption on consumer well-being. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *43*(3), 277–288.

Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L., & Wynaden, D. (2001). Ethics in qualitative research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, *33*(1), 93–96.

Ostergaard, P., Fitchett, J. A., & Jantzen, C. (1999). On appropriation and singuralisation: Two consumption processes. In E. J. Arnould & L. M. Scott (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 26* (pp. 405–409). Association for Consumer Research.

Ozanne, L. K., & Ballantine, P. W. (2010). Sharing as a form of anti-consumption? An examination of toy library users. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *9*(6), 485–498.

Ozanne, L. K., & Ozanne, J. L. (2011). A child's right to play: the social construction of civic virtues in toy libraries. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, *30*(2), 264–278.

Pangarkar, A., Shukla, P., & Charles, R. (2021). Minimalism in consumption: A typology and brand engagement strategies. *Journal of Business Research*, *127*, 167–178.

Pantano, E., & Stylos, N. (2020). The Cinderella moment: Exploring consumers' motivations to engage with renting as collaborative luxury consumption mode. *Psychology & Marketing*, *37*(5), 740–753.

Parguel, B., Lunardo, R., & Benoit-Moreau, F. (2017). Sustainability of the sharing economy in question: When second-hand peer-to-peer platforms stimulate indulgent consumption. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *125*, 48–57.

Park, H., & Armstrong, C. M. J. (2017). Collaborative apparel consumption in the digital sharing economy: An agenda for academic inquiry. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *41*(5), 465–474.

Park, H., & Armstrong, C. M. J. (2019). Is money the biggest driver? Uncovering motives for engaging in online collaborative consumption retail models for apparel. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *51*, 42–50.

Park, H. J., & Lin, L. M. (2020). Exploring attitude–behavior gap in sustainable consumption: Comparison of recycled and upcycled fashion products. *Journal of Business Research*, *117*, 623–628.

Park, H., Rabolt, N. J., & Sook Jeon, K. (2008). Purchasing global luxury brands among young Korean consumers. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, *12*(2), 244–259.

Paschen, J., Wilson, M., & Robson, K. (2020). # BuyNothingDay: investigating consumer restraint using hybrid content analysis of Twitter data. *European Journal of Marketing*, *54*(2), 327–350.

Patrick, V. M., Chun, H. H., & MacInnis, D. J. (2009). Affective forecasting and self-control: Why anticipating pride wins over anticipating shame in a self-regulation context. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *19*(3), 537–545.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Pecot, F., Vasilopoulou, S., & Cavallaro, M. (2021). How political ideology drives anti-consumption manifestations. *Journal of Business Research*, *128*, 61–69.

Pedersen, E. R. G., & Andersen, K. R. (2015). Sustainability innovators and anchor draggers: A global expert study on sustainable fashion. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *19*(3), 315–327.

Peifer, J. L., Chugani, S., & Roos, J. M. (2020). The ethical underpinnings of nonmaterialistic values and voluntary simplicity behavior in the United States. *Psychology & Marketing*, *37*(2), 232–249.
Peirce, C. S. (1955). *Philosophical Writings of Peirce*. Dover Publications.
Petrarca, M. (2020, June 9). How fashion brands, designers and industry leaders are supporting the Black Lives Matter movement. *US Magazine*. https://www.usmagazine.com/stylish/pictures/how-fashion-industry-leaders-are-supporting-black-lives-matter/
Pierce, J. L., Kostova, T., & Dirks, K. T. (2001). Toward a theory of psychological ownership in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, *26*(2), 298–310.
Pieters, R. (2013). Bidirectional dynamics of materialism and loneliness: Not just a vicious cycle. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *40*(4), 615–631.
Piontek, F. M., Amasawa, E., & Kimita, K. (2020). Environmental implication of casual wear rental services: Case of Japan and Germany. *Procedia CIRP*, *90*, 724–729.
Piscicelli, L., Cooper, T., & Fisher, T. (2015). The role of values in collaborative consumption: Insights from a product-service system for lending and borrowing in the UK. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *97*, 21–29.
Podoshen, J. S., & Andrzejewski, S. A. (2012). An examination of the relationships between materialism, conspicuous consumption, impulse buying, and brand loyalty. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *20*(3), 319–334.
Putney, L. G., Green, J. L., Dixon, C. N., & Kelly, G. J. (1999). Evolution of qualitative research methodology: Looking beyond defense to possibilities. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *34*(3), 368–377.
Rabkin, E. (2019, November 28). Buy, don't rent: The virtues of owning clothes. *Business Of Fashion*. https://www.businessoffashion.com/opinions/sustainability/op-ed-buy-dont-rent-the-virtues-of-owning-clothes/
Raju, S. (2014, August 10). Borrow, return, repeat. *Huffington Post*. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/borrow-return-repeat-social-commerce_b_5479883
Rent the Runway. (2023a). *Buying on RTR*. https://www.renttherunway.com/buying-on-rtr
Rent the Runway. (2023b). *The Closet*. https://www.renttherunway.com/about-us/product
Research and Markets. (2023). *Online Clothing Rental Market: Global Industry Trends, Share, Size, Growth, Opportunity and Forecast 2023-2028*. https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/5753177/online-clothing-rental-market-global-industry
Richins, M. L. (1994). Special possessions and the expression of material values. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *21*(3), 522–533.
Richins, M. L. (2011). Materialism, transformation expectations, and spending: Implications for credit use. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, *30*(2), 141–156.
Richins, M. L. (2017). Materialism pathways: The processes that create and perpetuate materialism. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *27*(4), 480–499.
Richins, M. L., & Dawson, S. (1992a). A consumer values orientation for materialism and its measurement: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *19*(3), 303–316.
Richins, M. L., & Dawson, S. (1992b). Materialism as a consumer value: Measure development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *19*(4), 303–316.
Richins, M. L., & Fournier, S. (1991). Some theoretical and popular notions concerning materialism. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, *6*(6), 403–414.
Richins, M. L., McKeage, K. K. R., & Najjar, D. (1992). An exploration of materialism and consumption-related affect. In Jr. John F. Sherry & B. Sternthal (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 19* (pp. 229–236). Association for Consumer Research.

Rifkin, J. (2000). *The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism Where All of Life is a Paid-For Experience*. Penguin.
Rindfleisch, A., Burroughs, J. E., & Denton, F. (1997). Family structure, materialism, and compulsive consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *23*(4), 312–325.
Ritch, E. L., & Schröder, M. J. (2012). Accessing and affording sustainability: The experience of fashion consumption within young families. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *36*(2), 203–210.
Rivera, F. M. (2018, September 4). Lifestyle for rent – Luxury brands courtesy of the sharing economy. *European CEO*. https://www.europeanceo.com/lifestyle/lifestyle-for-rent-luxury-brands-courtesy-of-the-sharing-economy/
Ro, C. (2020, March 11). Can fashion ever be sustainable? *BBC*. https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200310-sustainable-fashion-how-to-buy-clothes-good-for-the-climate
Robert, Y. (2019, March 25). Rent the Runway joins the unicorn club at a $1 billion valuation. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/yolarobert1/2019/03/25/rent-the-runway-joins-the-unicorn-club-at-a-1-billion-valuation/
Roberts, J. (2000). Consuming in a consumer culture: College students, materialism, status consumption, and compulsive buying. *Marketing Management Journal*, *10*(2), 76–91.
Robinson, O. C. (2014). Sampling in interview-based qualitative research: A theoretical and practical guide. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *11*(1), 25–41.
Rodriguez, J. (2018). The US minimalist movement: Radical political practice? *Review of Radical Political Economics*, *50*(2), 286–296.
Rose, P. (2007). Mediators of the association between narcissism and compulsive buying: The roles of materialism and impulse control. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, *21*(4), 576–581.
Rosenberg, L. M., Weijo, H. A., & Kerkelä, I. (2023). Consumer desires and the fluctuating balance between liquid and solid consumption: The case of Finnish clothing libraries. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *in-press*.
Roux, D., & Korchia, M. (2006). Am I what I wear? An exploratory study of symbolic meanings associated with second-hand clothing. *Advances in Consumer Research*, *33*(1), 29–35.
Ruane, L., & Wallace, E. (2013). Generation Y females online: Insights from brand narratives. *Qualitative Market Research*, *16*(3), 315–335.
Sandin, G., & Peters, G. M. (2018). Environmental impact of textile reuse and recycling–A review. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *184*, 353–365.
Sandıkcı, Ö., & Ekici, A. (2009). Politically motivated brand rejection. *Journal of Business Research*, *62*(2), 208–217.
Sarkar, C., & Kotler, P. (2020). *Brand Activism: From Purpose to Action*. Idea Bite Press.
Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., Burroughs, H., & Jinks, C. (2018). Saturation in qualitative research: Exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality & Quantity*, *52*(4), 1893–1907.
Schaefers, T., Lawson, S. J., & Kukar-Kinney, M. (2016). How the burdens of ownership promote consumer usage of access-based services. *Marketing Letters*, *27*(3), 569–577.
Schwartz, A. (2018, October 15). Rent the Runway wants to lend you your look. *The New Yorker*. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/10/22/rent-the-runway-wants-to-lend-you-your-look
Schwartz, S. H. (1977). Normative influences on altruism. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (pp. 221–279). Academic Press.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *25*, 1–65.
Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, *2*(1), 1–20.
Schwartz, S. H., & Boehnke, K. (2004). Evaluating the structure of human values with confirmatory factor analysis. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *38*(3), 230–255.
Schwartz, S. H., Cieciuch, J., Vecchione, M., Davidov, E., Fischer, R., Beierlein, C., Ramos, A., Verkasalo, M., Lönnqvist, J.-E., & Demirutku, K. (2012). Refining the theory of basic individual values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *103*(4), 663–688.
Scott, K. A., & Weaver, S. T. (2018). The intersection of sustainable consumption and anticonsumption: Repurposing to extend product life spans. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, *37*(2), 291–305.
Sebastian, K. (2019). Distinguishing between the types of grounded theory: Classical, interpretive and constructivist. *Journal for Social Thought*, *3*(1), 1–9.
Seegebarth, B., Peyer, M., Balderjahn, I., & Wiedmann, K. (2016). The sustainability roots of anti-consumption lifestyles and initial insights regarding their effects on consumers' well-being. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, *50*(1), 68–99.
Segal, B., & Podoshen, J. S. (2013). An examination of materialism, conspicuous consumption and gender differences. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *37*(2), 189–198.
Segev, S., Shoham, A., & Gavish, Y. (2015). A closer look into the materialism construct: The antecedents and consequences of materialism and its three facets. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, *32*(2), 85–98.
Seinauskiene, B., Mascinskiene, J., Petrike, I., & Rutelione, A. (2016). Materialism as the mediator of the association between subjective well-being and impulsive buying tendency. *Engineering Economics*, *27*(5), 594–606.
Semic, S. (2020, February 18). Will renting clothes really make our wardrobes more sustainable? *Elle*. https://www.elle.com/uk/fashion/trends/a30650833/renting-clothes-sustainable/
Servian, A. (2022, April 3). Influencer Culture and Fast Fashion. *Medium*. https://medium.com/@aleska.servian/influencer-culture-and-fast-fashion-4c833596989
Shacknai, G. (2020a, March 30). Where do clothing rental and subscriptions like Rent the Runway fit in a world that works from home? *Fortune*. https://fortune.com/2020/03/30/coronavirus-rental-subscriptions-work-clothes-shopping/
Shacknai, G. (2020b, June 2). '15 percent pledge' calls on major retailers to support black-owned businesses. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/gabbyshacknai/2020/06/02/15-percent-pledge-calls-upon-major-retailers-to-support-black-owned-businesses/?sh=44f929274043
Shalvi, S., Gino, F., Barkan, R., & Ayal, S. (2015). Self-serving justifications: Doing wrong and feeling moral. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *24*(2), 125–130.
Shammout, E., D'Alessandro, S., Small, F., & Nayeem, T. (2022). Lifting the curtain on cultural values, materialism and luxury consumption: Evidence from Jordan. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 1–15.
Shao, W., Grace, D., & Ross, M. (2019). Consumer motivation and luxury consumption: Testing moderating effects. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *46*, 33–44.
Sheeran, P. (2002). Intention-behavior relations: A conceptual and empirical review. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *12*(1), 1–36.
Sheth, J. N., Newman, B. I., & Gross, B. L. (1991). Why we buy what we buy: A theory of consumption values. *Journal of Business Research*, *22*(2), 159–170.

Shetty, A. S., Venkataramaiah, N. B., & Anand, K. (2019). Brand activism and millennials: An empirical investigation into the perception of millennials towards brand activism. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, *17*(4), 163–175.
Shrivastava, A., Jain, G., Kamble, S. S., & Belhadi, A. (2021). Sustainability through online renting clothing: Circular fashion fueled by instagram micro-celebrities. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *278*, 1–10.
Shrum, L. J., Burroughs, J. E., & Rindfleisch, A. (2005). Television's cultivation of material values. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *32*(3), 473–479.
Shrum, L. J., Chaplin, L. N., & Lowrey, T. M. (2022). Psychological causes, correlates, and consequences of materialism. *Consumer Psychology Review*, *5*(1), 69–86.
Shrum, L. J., Lowrey, T. M., Pandelaere, M., Ruvio, A. A., Gentina, E., Furchheim, P., Herbert, M., Hudders, L., Lens, I., & Mandel, N. (2014). Materialism: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *30*(17–18), 1858–1881.
Shrum, L. J., Wong, N., Arif, F., Chugani, S. K., Gunz, A., Lowrey, T. M., Nairn, A., Pandelaere, M., Ross, S. M., & Ruvio, A. (2013). Reconceptualizing materialism as identity goal pursuits: Functions, processes, and consequences. *Journal of Business Research*, *66*(8), 1179–1185.
Shukla, P., & Purani, K. (2012). Comparing the importance of luxury value perceptions in cross-national contexts. *Journal of Business Research*, *65*(10), 1417–1424.
Shukla, P., Singh, J., & Banerjee, M. (2015). They are not all same: variations in Asian consumers' value perceptions of luxury brands. *Marketing Letters*, *26*(3), 265–278.
Sihvonen, J., & Turunen, L. L. M. (2016). As good as new–valuing fashion brands in the online second-hand markets. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *25*(3), 285–295.
Singh, H., & Chakrabarti, S. (2020). Defining the relationship between consumers and retailers through user-generated content: Insights from the research literature. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *49*(1), 41–60.
Sirgy, M. J. (1998). Materialism and quality of life. *Social Indicators Research*, *43*(3), 227–260.
Sirgy, M. J. (1999). Materialism: The construct, measures, antecedents, and consequences. *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*, *3*(2), 78–110.
Sirgy, M. J., Gurel-Atay, E., Webb, D., Cicic, M., Husic, M., Ekici, A., Herrmann, A., Hegazy, I., Lee, D.-J., & Johar, J. S. (2012). Linking advertising, materialism, and life satisfaction. *Social Indicators Research*, *107*(1), 79–101.
Sirgy, M. J., Gurel-Atay, E., Webb, D., Cicic, M., Husic-Mehmedovic, M., Ekici, A., Herrmann, A., Hegazy, I., Lee, D.-J., & Johar, J. S. (2013). Is materialism all that bad? Effects on satisfaction with material life, life satisfaction, and economic motivation. *Social Indicators Research*, *110*(1), 349–366.
Sirgy, M. J., Lee, D.-J., Kosenko, R., Lee Meadow, H., Rahtz, D., Cicic, M., Jin, G. X., Yarsuvat, D., Blenkhorn, D. L., & Wright, N. (1998). Does television viewership play a role in the perception of quality of life? *Journal of Advertising*, *27*(1), 125–142.
Sirgy, M. J., Lee, D.-J., Larsen, V., & Wright, N. (1998). Satisfaction with material possessions and general well-being: The role of materialism. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, *11*, 103–118.
Sirgy, M. J., Yu, G. B., Lee, D.-J., Joshanloo, M., Bosnjak, M., Jiao, J., Ekici, A., Atay, E. G., & Grzeskowiak, S. (2021). The dual model of materialism: Success versus happiness materialism on present and future life satisfaction. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, *16*(1), 201–220.
Sivapalan, A., von der Heidt, T., Scherrer, P., & Sorwar, G. (2021). A consumer values-based approach to enhancing green consumption. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, *28*, 699–715.

Smith, A. (1776). *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Printed for W. Strahana and T. Cadell.
Sobande, F. (2019). Woke-washing:"intersectional" femvertising and branding "woke" bravery. *European Journal of Marketing*, *54*(11), 2723–2745.
Sobh, R., & Perry, C. (2006). Research design and data analysis in realism research. *European Journal of Marketing*, *40*(11/12), 1194–1209.
Sorensen, K., & Jorgensen, J. J. (2019). Millennial perceptions of fast fashion and second-hand clothing: An exploration of clothing preferences using Q methodology. *Social Sciences*, *8*(9), 244.
Stein, S. (2019, February 10). How could changing consumer trends affect fast fashion leaders H&M and Zara? *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/sanfordstein/2019/02/10/how-could-changing-consumer-trends-affect-fast-fashion-leaders-hm-and-zara/
Stern, P. C. (2000). Toward a coherent theory of environmentally significant behavior. *Journal of Social Issues*, *56*(3), 407–424.
Stern, P. C., Dietz, T., Abel, T., Guagnano, G. A., & Kalof, L. (1999). A value-belief-norm theory of support for social movements: The case of environmentalism. *Human Ecology Review*, *6*(2), 81–97.
Stern, P. C., Kalof, L., Dietz, T., & Guagnano, G. A. (1995). Values, beliefs, and proenvironmental action: Attitude formation toward emergent attitude objects. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *25*(18), 1611–1636.
Strahilevitz, M. A., & Loewenstein, G. (1998). The effect of ownership history on the valuation of objects. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *25*(3), 276–289.
Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Sage Publications.
Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 273–285). Sage Publications.
Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
Stringer, T., Mortimer, G., & Payne, A. R. (2020). Do ethical concerns and personal values influence the purchase intention of fast fashion clothing? *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *24*(1), 99–120.
Stringer, T., Payne, A. R., & Mortimer, G. (2021). As cheap as humanly possible: Why consumers care less about worker welfare. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *26*(4), 717–737.
Sudbury, L., & Böltner, S. (2011). Fashion marketing and the ethical movement versus individualist consumption: Analysing the attitude behaviour gap. In A. Bradshaw, C. Hackley, & P. Maclaran (Eds.), *E - European Advances in Consumer Research Volume 9* (pp. 163–168). Association for Consumer Research.
Sweeney, J. C., Hausknecht, D., & Soutar, G. N. (2000). Cognitive dissonance after purchase: A multidimensional scale. *Psychology & Marketing*, *17*(5), 369–385.
Sweeney, J. C., & Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing*, *77*(2), 203–220.
Tan, T. M., Makkonen, H., Kaur, P., & Salo, J. (2022). How do ethical consumers utilize sharing economy platforms as part of their sustainable resale behavior? The role of consumers' green consumption values. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *176*, 1–14.

Tang, Y., & Hinsch, C. (2018). Going green to be morally clean: An examination of environmental behavior among materialistic consumers. *Psychology & Marketing*, *35*(11), 845–862.
Tarka, P. (2020). Influence of materialism on compulsive buying behavior: General similarities and differences related to studies on young adult consumers in Poland and US. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *32*(3), 243–267.
Tarka, P., Harnish, R. J., & Babaev, J. (2022). From materialism to hedonistic shopping values and compulsive buying: A mediation model examining gender differences. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 1–20.
Tempesta, E. (2020, April 2). "Say yes to the WFH dress!" Woman wears different glamorous gowns every day while working from home after using Rent the Runway to fill her closet with elegant designs. *Daily Mail*. https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-8176697/Woman-wears-different-glamorous-gowns-day-working-home-quarantine.html
Thistoll, T., Hooper, V., & Pauleen, D. J. (2016). Acquiring and developing theoretical sensitivity through undertaking a grounded preliminary literature review. *Quality & Quantity*, *50*(2), 619–636.
Thomas, L. (2020a, August 14). The clothing rental start-up Rent the Runway is closing all of its stores for good. *CNBC*. https://www.cnbc.com/2020/08/14/retail-start-up-rent-the-runway-is-closing-all-of-its-stores-for-good.html
Thomas, L. (2020b, September 17). Rent the Runway overhauls subscription plan as pandemic reshapes business. *CNBC*. https://www.cnbc.com/2020/09/17/rent-the-runway-overhauls-subscriptions-as-pandemic-reshapes-business.html
Thompson, C. J., & Haytko, D. L. (1997). Speaking of fashion: Consumers' uses of fashion discourses and the appropriation of countervailing cultural meanings. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *24*(1), 15–42.
Thornberg, R., & Charmaz, K. (2014). Grounded theory and theoretical coding. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis* (pp. 153–169). Sage Publications.
Thyroff, A., & Kilbourne, W. E. (2018). Self-enhancement and individual competitiveness as mediators in the materialism/consumer satisfaction relationship. *Journal of Business Research*, *92*, 189–196.
Tie, Y. C., Birks, M., & Francis, K. (2019). Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers. *SAGE Open Medicine*, *7*, 1–8.
Tokatli, N. (2008). Global sourcing: Insights from the global clothing industry - the case of Zara, a fast fashion retailer. *Journal of Economic Geography*, *8*(1), 21–38.
Tosun, P., & Gürce, M. Y. (2018). Consumer comments about meat anti-consumption. *British Food Journal*, *120*(10), 2439–2453.
Truong, Y. (2010). Personal aspirations and the consumption of luxury goods. *International Journal of Market Research*, *52*(5), 655–673.
Truong, Y., & McColl, R. (2011). Intrinsic motivations, self-esteem, and luxury goods consumption. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *18*(6), 555–561.
Tsai, S. (2005). Impact of personal orientation on luxury-brand purchase value: An international investigation. *International Journal of Market Research*, *47*(4), 427–452.
Turunen, L. L. M., Cervellon, M.-C., & Carey, L. D. (2020). Selling second-hand luxury: Empowerment and enactment of social roles. *Journal of Business Research*, *116*, 474–481.
Turunen, L. L. M., & Leipämaa-Leskinen, H. (2015). Pre-loved luxury: identifying the meanings of second-hand luxury possessions. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *24*(1), 57–65.

Turunen, L. L. M., & Pöyry, E. (2019). Shopping with the resale value in mind: A study on second-hand luxury consumers. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *43*(6), 549–556.
Uggla, Y. (2019). Taking back control. *Sociologisk Forskning*, *56*(3/4), 233–252.
Upton-Clark, E. (2023, May 17). The Devil wears Shein. *Business Insider*. https://www.businessinsider.com/gen-z-fast-fashion-cheap-clothes-tiktok-live-shopping-addiction-2023-5
Urquhart, C. (2002). Regrounding grounded theory-or reinforcing old prejudices? A brief reply to Bryant. *Journal of Information Technology Theory and Application*, *4*(3), 43–54.
van Maanen, J., Sørensen, J. B., & Mitchell, T. R. (2007). The interplay between theory and method. *Academy of Management Review*, *32*(4), 1145–1154.
Veblen, T. (1899). *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Allen & Unwin.
Venkatakrishnan, M. (2021, May 18). The Psychology Behind Fast Fashion. *Medium*. https://miravenkat.medium.com/the-psychology-behind-fast-fashion-92260752047e
Verified Market Research. (2021). *Global Online Clothing Rental Market Size by Dress Code, by End-User, by Geographic Scope and Forecast*. https://www.verifiedmarketresearch.com/product/online-clothing-rental-market/
Vesterinen, E., & Syrjälä, H. (2022). Sustainable anti-consumption of clothing: A systematic literature review. *Cleaner and Responsible Consumption*, *5*, 1–12.
Vickery, G., & Wunsch-Vincent, S. (2007). *Participative Web and User-created Content: Web 2.0 Wikis and Social Networking*. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
Vigneron, F., & Johnson, L. W. (1999). A review and a conceptual framework of prestige-seeking consumer behavior. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, *1*(1), 1–15.
Vigneron, F., & Johnson, L. W. (2004). Measuring perceptions of brand luxury. *Journal of Brand Management*, *11*(6), 484–506.
Vincent, R. L., & Gaur, S. S. (2021). Luxury for hire: Motivations to use closet sharing. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, *29*(4), 306–319.
Vredenburg, J., Kapitan, S., Spry, A., & Kemper, J. A. (2020). Brands taking a stand: Authentic brand activism or woke washing? *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, *39*(4), 444–460.
Wallendorf, M., & Arnould, E. J. (1988). "My favorite things": A cross-cultural inquiry into object attachment, possessiveness, and social linkage. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *14*(4), 531–547.
Wallendorf, M., & Belk, R. W. (1989). Assessing trustworthiness in naturalistic consumer research. In E. C. Hirschman (Ed.), *SV - Interpretive Consumer Research* (pp. 69–84). Association for Consumer Research.
Wang, Y. (2022). A conceptual framework of contemporary luxury consumption. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *39*(3), 788–803.
Wang, Y., & Griskevicius, V. (2014). Conspicuous consumption, relationships, and rivals: Women's luxury products as signals to other women. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *40*(5), 834–854.
Warburg, J., Frommeyer, B., Koch, J., Gerdt, S., & Schewe, G. (2021). Voluntary carbon offsetting and consumer choices for environmentally critical products: An experimental study. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, *30*(7), 3009–3024.
Ward, M. (2023, May 7). Industry targets fast fashion as 200,000 tonnes hits landfill each year. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. https://www.smh.com.au/national/industry-targets-fast-fashion-as-200-000-tonnes-hits-landfill-each-year-20230503-p5d5fd.html

Watkins, R. D., Denegri-Knott, J., & Molesworth, M. (2016). The relationship between ownership and possession: observations from the context of digital virtual goods. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *32*(1–2), 44–70.
Watson, J. J. (2003). The relationship of materialism to spending tendencies, saving, and debt. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, *24*(6), 723–739.
Watson, M. Z., & Yan, R. (2013). An exploratory study of the decision processes of fast versus slow fashion consumers. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *17*(2), 141–159.
Weiss, L., & Johar, G. V. (2016). Products as self-evaluation standards: When owned and unowned products have opposite effects on self-judgment. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *42*(6), 915–930.
Wiederhold, M., & Martinez, L. F. (2018). Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *42*(4), 419–429.
Wiedmann, K.-P., Hennigs, N., & Klarmann, C. (2017). Luxury consumption in the trade-off between genuine and counterfeit goods: What are the consumers' underlying motives and value-based drivers? In J. N. Kapferer, J. Kernstock, T. Brexendorf, & S. Powell (Eds.), *Advances in Luxury Brand Management. Journal of Brand Management: Advanced Collections* (pp. 85–122). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
Wiedmann, K.-P., Hennigs, N., & Siebels, A. (2007). Measuring consumers' luxury value perception: A cross-cultural framework. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, *7*, 1–21.
Wiedmann, K.-P., Hennigs, N., & Siebels, A. (2009). Value-based segmentation of luxury consumption behavior. *Psychology & Marketing*, *26*(7), 625–651.
Willems, K., Janssens, W., Swinnen, G., Brengman, M., Streukens, S., & Vancauteren, M. (2012). From Armani to Zara: Impression formation based on fashion store patronage. *Journal of Business Research*, *65*(10), 1487–1494.
Williams, D. (2022, April 10). Shein: The Unacceptable Face of Throwaway Fast Fashion. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2022/apr/10/shein-the-unacceptable-face-of-throwaway-fast-fashion
Williamson, K. (2006). Research in constructivist frameworks using ethnographic techniques. *Library Trends*, *55*(1), 83–101.
Wilson, A. V, & Bellezza, S. (2022). Consumer minimalism. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *48*(5), 796–816.
Witt, A. H., De Boer, J., & Boersema, J. J. (2014). Exploring inner and outer worlds: A quantitative study of worldviews, environmental attitudes, and sustainable lifestyles. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *37*, 40–54.
Wong, J., Brodowsky, G., & Ho, F. N. (2023). You ain't foolin'me! Imposter judgments in luxury status signaling. *Marketing Letters*, 1–13.
Wong, N. Y. C. (1997). Suppose you own the world and no one knows? Conspicuous consumption, materialism and self. In M. Brucks & D. J. MacInnis (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 24* (pp. 197–203). Association for Consumer Research.
Wong, N. Y. C., & Ahuvia, A. C. (1998). Personal taste and family face: Luxury consumption in Confucian and Western societies. *Psychology & Marketing*, *15*(5), 423–441.
Woodward, S., & Fisher, T. (2014). Fashioning through materials: Material culture, materiality and processes of materialization. *Critical Studies in Fashion & Beauty*, *5*(1), 3–23.
Xharavina, N., Kapoulas, A., & Miaoulis Jr, G. (2020). Netnography as a marketing research tool in the fashion industry in Southeast Europe. *International Journal of Market Research*, *62*(4), 499–515.

Yeoman, I. (2011). The changing behaviours of luxury consumption. *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, *10*(1), 47–50.
Yeoman, I., & McMahon-Beattie, U. (2006). Luxury markets and premium pricing. *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, *4*(4), 319–328.
Yuan, Q., & Shen, B. (2019). Renting fashion with strategic customers in the sharing economy. *International Journal of Production Economics*, *218*, 185–195.
Zaman, M., Park, H., Kim, Y.-K., & Park, S.-H. (2019). Consumer orientations of second-hand clothing shoppers. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, *10*(2), 163–176.
Zamani, B., Sandin, G., & Peters, G. M. (2017). Life cycle assessment of clothing libraries: Can collaborative consumption reduce the environmental impact of fast fashion? *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *162*, 1368–1375.
Zavestoski, S. (2002). The social–psychological bases of anti-consumption attitudes. *Psychology & Marketing*, *19*(2), 149–165.
Ziesemer, F., Hüttel, A., & Balderjahn, I. (2021). Young people as drivers or inhibitors of the sustainability movement: The case of anti-consumption. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, *44*(3), 427–453.

Appendix 1: Interview Protocol

Section I

1. How would you describe a luxury fashion brand?
2. Why are you attracted to luxury fashion brands?
3. Could you describe the clothing brands you usually buy from? Please explain the reasons for your preferences.
4. Could you share your general experiences with clothing purchases?
5. Would you say you have concerns about your fashion choices? Why?
6. Have you found yourself re-evaluating your fashion choices? If so, what prompted you to reconsider? What were the reasons behind it?

Section II

1. How do you feel about the new trend of renting the luxury fashion brands?
2. Why do you rent the luxury fashion brands?
3. Could you share your general experiences with fashion rentals?
4. Would you say that price plays a role in your desire for renting the luxury fashion brands? Why?
5. Could you describe how you feel about yourself when wear a clothing item of a luxury fashion brand that you rented from the platform?
6. Would you say you have concerns about your fashion rentals? Why?
7. Have you found yourself re-evaluating your choices when using the fashion rentals? If so, what prompted you to reconsider? What were the reasons behind it?
8. Is there any social significance that you find in your rentals of clothing items from the luxury fashion brands? Can you give an example?
9. Have fashion rentals benefited you personally? Can you give an example?
10. What kind of reactions do you get when people know you are renting the luxury fashion brands you are wearing or sporting?
11. Do you think the luxury fashion brands you rent gives a true image of yourself? Why?

Section III

1. How do you feel about the rent-to-buy options made available by the rental platform?
2. Why do you engage in the rent-to-buy options?
3. Could you share your general experiences with rent-to-buy options?
4. Would you say that price plays a role in your desire to purchase through the rent-to-buy options? Why?
5. Would you say you have concerns about the purchases made through the rent-to-buy options? Why?
6. Have you found yourself re-evaluating your choices when using the rent-to-buy options for purchases? If so, what prompted you to reconsider? What were the reasons behind it?

Appendix 2: Coding Processes

Theme 1: Becoming Minimalist (exemplified in Chapter 4)

Table A.1

Yielding to the next new trend (Sub-category 1, Theme 1)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• view luxury as desirable purchase • imagine to own luxury brands • luxury brands being investment pieces • luxury brands being statement pieces • luxury brands being coveted brands • luxury brands being dream pieces • luxury brands being something to have in closet • luxury brands treated as treasure • everyone wants copy of luxury brands • luxury brands being occasional purchase • luxury brands being special purchases • luxury brands being treat for special occasions • luxury brands as congratulatory gift for oneself	• Consider luxury brands as dream pieces	• Acknowledge the desire for luxury brands
• view luxury as unaffordable • cannot afford luxury brands • equate luxury with spending power • air of exclusivity for luxury brands • luxury brands being exclusive • exclusivity of luxury brands • exclusivity of luxury designer items • luxury brands preserve exclusivity • high price point of luxury brands • pay high price to have luxury brands	• Consider luxury brands as exclusive for being unaffordable	

• luxury brands being expensive • luxury brands maintain high price point • luxury brands being inaccessible • not something that everybody has • luxury brands being unavailable to masses • luxury brands being limited editions • limited quantity of luxury brands • restricted availability of luxury brands • not mass-produced		
• luxury brands create class differences • selective clientele of high fashion brands • luxury brand purchase shows conspicuousness • luxury brand ownership creates wealth perceptions • signals wealth • luxury brands cater to wealthy people • signals success • prestige makes luxury brands high on hierarchy • associated with prestige • luxury brands being status icon • luxury brands being status symbol • acquiring luxury brands being status symbol • luxury brands are something of worth • signals status in society	• Consider luxury brands as status symbols	
• closely resembles luxury • inexpensive substitutes of luxury • affordable replicas • mimics luxury brands • caters to unfulfilled luxury brand desires • fulfills aspirational dream of luxury	• Acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling aspirational luxury dream	• Acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling aspirational luxury dream
• need to upgrade outfits • need to wear the current style • prefer to purchase new clothes • look for newness	• Acknowledge the need for novelty	• Acknowledge the need to avoid outfit repetitions

• refresh looks with new clothes • follow the current fashion trend • need to wear the current trend • prefer to wear new clothing across seasons • need for fresh wardrobe • to keep closet fresh • being consumed by trends		
• boredom after multiple wears of clothes • boredom from similar looking things • boredom from wearing same outfit	• Acknowledge being bored of similar outfits	
• feel excited with new outfits • get the dopamine rush • feel the pleasure of new outfits	• Feel sense of excitement with new outfits	
• spending pressurises multiple wears • purchase forces multiple wears of same outfit • purchase results in outfit repetition • purchase results in wear once clothes • wear once of purchased clothes • stigma of outfit repetition • outfit consciousness due to photos • avoid getting photographed twice in event clothes	• Being conscious of outfit repetition stigma	
• increases social pressure for different outfits • increases social pressure to follow trends • avoid social media faux pas • fear of social media faux pas	• Feel social pressure for outfit rotations	
• wear once clothing trend • wear once tendency • need to avoid outfit repetition • prefer to rotate clothing items • prefer outfit rotations • to avoid repetition of same looks • to avoid outfit repetition • to avoid repeat wear of purchased outfits	• Acknowledge the need to avoid outfit repetitions	

• no repeat usage • prefer to avoid re-wearing items • avoid wearing clothes multiple times • lack of multiple wears • dislike for outfit repetition • felt awful to wear same outfits • hesitate to repeat outfits		
• affordable prices of fast fashion • quick style turnover • caters to multiple fashion seasons • supports seasonal fashion changes • rapid changes in seasonal trends	• Regard fast fashion as affordable and trendy	• Acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling novelty needs
• no outfit repetition as fast fashion users • enables to get new outfits rapidly • helps to avoid outfit repetitions • get to enjoy variety of outfits • follow fashion trends • fulfills novelty needs • fulfills the purpose of no repetitions	• Acknowledge fast fashion fulfilling novelty needs	

Table A.2

Seeking to regulate spending habits (Sub-category 2, Theme 1)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• impulsive fast fashion purchases • frequently buy fast fashion • constant fast fashion purchases • recurring behaviour for fast fashion • throwaway mindset • vicious cycle • wear the items a handful of times • continually buy new clothing • unable to resist new purchase • endless cycle of purchase	• Regard fast fashion as impulsive and recurring purchases	• Incur high spending on fast fashion purchases
• fast fashion purchase results in high spending • higher cost of purchases • high cost incurred to purchase clothes • high spending on shopping spree • high spending on work clothes • high spending on wear once clothes • spend money on fast fashion clothes • high spending on fast fashion • tendency to splurge on fast fashion brands • realisation of high spending in fast fashion purchase	• Incur high spending on fast fashion purchases	
• wastage of money • money wastage in fast fashion purchase • money wastage with wear once clothing • wasteful to purchase clothes • not economical to purchase • wrong to be conspicuous • bias against high spending	• Criticise fast fashion purchases as money wastage	• Criticise fast fashion purchases as money wastage

• disappointment with high spending • judgmental about high spending • not financially viable to spend money		
• frivolous spending • incur severe debt • incur credit debt to purchase fast fashion • credit card bills	• Incur severe debt with fast fashion purchases	
• clothes loose shape over time • decline of clothing quality over time • deterioration of clothes over time • fast fashion lacks quality • out of fashion • clothes are obsolete over time	• Realise low utility of fast fashion clothing	
• low resale value in second-hand stores • low resale value of fast fashion • no return on money spent	• Realise low resale value of fast fashion clothing	
• insufficient closet space to continue purchase • lack of closet space • limited closet space • occupies space in closet • purchased clothes occupy closet space • fast fashion clothes occupy closet space • closet of wear once clothing • purchase leads to holding onto things • purchase results in collecting clothes • storing clothes that still has tags • purchased clothes but never worn • unused new clothes stored in closet	• Realise fast fashion purchases to result in hoarding	
• guilty of high spending on purchases • guilt feeling from fast fashion purchases • buyer's remorse	• Exhibit remorse from fast fashion spending	• Show willingness to reduce frequent fast fashion purchases

• avoid spending on fast fashion clothing • avoid high spending on wear once clothes • avoid spending on fast fashion shopping • unwilling to purchase new outfits • avoid spending on new clothes • avoid splurging on clothes • lack willingness towards high spending • avoid high spending • avoid spending on clothes that rapidly go out of fashion • avoid fast fashion brands to control spending • avoid spending on purchase	• Exhibit reluctance about high spending on fast fashion purchases	
• reduce purchase to save money • need to be less frivolous • need to save money • need to be economical • reduce buying fast fashion • not wasting money on fast fashion • regulate fast fashion spending • high spending reflects poor financial management • high spending unsuitable for lifestyle • to change spending habits • to spend money wisely • influenced by credit card debt	• Show willingness to reduce frequent fast fashion purchases	

Table A.3

Developing environmental and social consciousness (Sub-category 3, Theme 1)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• fast fashion purchases pollute environment • fast fashion being un-environmental • environmental impact of fast fashion purchases • horrible for the environment • fast fashion purchase being unsustainable • constant clothing purchase being unsustainable • environmental impacts of fast fashion	• Realise fast fashion purchases as environmentally unsustainable	• Being environmentally conscious about fast fashion purchases
• fast fashion purchase creates clothing wastage • fashion industry waste • wastage of clothes • fast fashion clothing being wasteful • aware of fast fashion shopping issues • fast fashion creates trash • fast fashion creates waste • toxicity of fast fashion	• Acknowledge fast fashion as the creator of clothing waste	
• high levels of consumerism • purchase surges up clothing demand • high numbers of seasonal cycles for fast fashion • fast fashion follows current trends • tendency to get new fast fashion clothes • frequently purchase fast fashion clothes • constant fast fashion shopping tendency • need to constantly shop fast fashion • preference for fast fashion shopping • fast fashion purchases • purchase only fast fashion • preference for fast fashion brands	• Being cognisant of frequent fast fashion purchases	

• high purchase of new clothing		
• conscious about clothing production • unethical production of fast fashion • less care into production of fast fashion • environmental impact of creating clothing • wrong practices of quick clothing production	• Appear conscious about quick clothing production	
• throwing purchased clothes create waste • throwaway purchased clothes • always ends up in landfills • concern of clothes dumped in landfills • fast fashion ends up in landfills • fast fashion being of disposable nature • culture of constant purchase and disposal • disposal of clothes being unenvironmental • realisation of premature disposal tendency	• Show concern for constant clothing disposal	
• low pay of fast fashion labour • poor working conditions of fast fashion firms • unfair to work in unsafe conditions • unfair low wages • hamper labour welfare • violate worker welfare • unfair employee treatments • ethical consciousness about worker welfare • concern about safety and health of workers	• Being conscious about labour exploitations	• Being socially conscious about fast fashion purchases
• sustainability needs • rising importance of sustainability • millennials care about sustainability • believe in sustainable consumerism • emphasise on being eco-conscious • trying to be more sustainable • thinking about sustainability • looking for alternatives to sustain clothing love • increasing importance of sustainable fashion	• Express desire to be environmentally sustainable	• Express desire to be environmentally sustainable

• not contribute to clothing waste • reduces clothing wastage • avoid environmental footprint • care about environment • fulfills responsibility for the environment • not hurting the environment • fulfill environmental responsibility		
• avoid purchase • importance of consciousness • be more conscious of consumption • reconsider purchase • become cognisant about consumption • cautious with purchase • avoid purchase of disposable clothing • avoid fast fashion shopping • dislike for fast fashion • lack of purposeful purchase of fast fashion • not a fast fashion person • need to abolish fast fashion • need to get rid of fast fashion • not support fast fashion • people need to stop buying fast fashion • reconsider purchase of cheaply made clothes • not buying fast fashion • swore off fast fashion entirely • unwilling to contribute to fast fashion • reconsider fast fashion purchase • not contributing to fast fashion • to avoid wearing fast fashion • to avoid purchase of fast fashion • unwilling to purchase fast fashion • to avoid frequent purchase of clothes • avoid purchase of new clothes	• Exhibit reluctance about frequent fast fashion purchases	• Exhibit reluctance about frequent fast fashion purchases

• to reduce consumption • changes consumption patterns • changes mindset of repeat fast fashion purchases • concerned about fast fashion shopping • need to reduce fast fashion shopping • prevent excess fast fashion shopping • reduce fast fashion shopping tendency • lack of disposition to purchase • reservations about purchase of new clothes • wasteful to purchase • no sense in purchasing		

Table A.4

Adopting minimalistic consumption (Sub-category 4, Theme 1)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• affordable style representation • provides affordable variety • affordable experience of different styles • renting being affordable • affordable outfit trials • affordable subscriptions • caters to all income levels • different tiers of subscriptions • considers budgetary constraints • considers income levels • considers usage frequency • free shipping and returns • insurance coverage • monthly subscriptions of unlimited items • subscriptions with limited item-swaps • doable subscription price with modest salary	• Recognise the affordability of rental subscriptions	• Recognise the affordability of rental subscriptions
• enables wearing expensive items without purchase • allows outfit trials without purchase expectations • try before buy option • allows outfit trials before investment • lack of financial commitment • allows paying fraction of full price • wear expensive clothes without paying full price	• Wear expensive outfits without paying full price	
• renting due to subscription affordability • subscriptions influence renting • easy on wallet • switch wardrobe at low price point	• Make conscious choice to rent for affordable subscriptions	• Make conscious choice to rent for affordable subscriptions

• no long-term commitment • use of unlimited subscription • no one-time subscription • pay flat amount in renting • affordable alternative to fast fashion • greater value offerings		
• access to unaffordable brands • access to unaffordable clothes • provides access to unattainable clothes • provides access to otherwise inaccessible items • allows access to luxury brands • makes outfits accessible • ability to access expensive items • increased access to luxury brands • accessible to people unable to afford luxury brands • provides ability to obtain high-end fashion pieces • get expensive clothes not considered for purchase • wear expensive items not considered for purchase • try different styles not considered for purchase • try outfits not considered for purchase • rental items not considered for purchase • rent from brands not considered for purchase • try brands unwilling to buy • introduces to brands unconsidered for purchase • introduces to previously unconsidered brands • access to precluded brands for purchase • ability to afford renting fashion brands • fraction of the price • less than purchase cost of luxury brands	• Gain access to unaffordable luxury brands with subscriptions	• Gain access to unaffordable luxury brands with subscriptions
• overlook price tags • insignificance of outfit price in subscriptions • access creates disregard for item price • eliminate price tag in renting	• Disregard outfit price within subscriptions	

• allows to disregard clothing price • not necessary to look at item prices • relaxed about outfit price due to renting • rent outfits disregarding price • rental item selection undirected by price • non-judgemental about outfit price • not concerned about price tag • disregard for item price within subscription		
• less money than fast fashion spending • access luxury with less money • get more clothes with less money • get variety in clothing for value for money • worthwhile to rent • getting money's worth • maximises value • get most out of renting • provides return on investment • value for money via luxury brand • get value for money • higher value for money • cost-effective than buying luxury items • lower price than purchase cost of luxury • renting being cost-effective • cheaper than multiple purchases • rationalise purchase cost in lieu of renting • cheaper than purchasing multiple clothes • price comparisons of rentals and purchase • renting being cheaper than fast fashion purchase • purchase cost higher than rental subscription • subscription price lower than spending on clothes • more economical • no waste of money	• Realise rentals being cost-effective than purchases	• Attain the financial benefits of rentals

• reduces high spending on purchase • reduces spending on fast fashion • enables to avoid splurging on fast fashion	• Reduce high spending on fast fashion purchases	
• helps to save money on laundry • reduces expensive payments for laundry • saves dry-cleaning cost • no dry-cleaning bills • saves expensive trips to cleaners • as an economical tool • economic benefit of renting • economical • people love the economic side of renting • provides economical use of money • saves renters money • maximises money • financial benefits • realisation of saving money • saving money by being on rental platforms • saves money • managing budget by renting • platform promotes money saved from renting	• Gain the economic benefit of saving money	
• feel smart to rent • makes one feel savvy • allows to be financially savvy • appeal of financial aspect • financially smart lifestyle • comprise financial positives • financially-driven • higher spending without rentals	• Become financially smart about spending	
• renting being eco-friendly • renting being sustainable alternative • renting supports sustainable fashion aspect • rental platforms advocate sustainability	• Recognise the sustainability prospective of rental subscriptions	• Make conscious choice to rent for being sustainable

• appeal of sustainability aspect • to showcase sustainable fashion • people rent for sustainable fashion • significance of sustainable fashion • renting is sustainable • contributes in terms of sustainability • helping with sustainability • renting fuels ethical shopping • sustainable option compared to purchase • good for sustainability • rentals promote environmental friendliness • rentals support environment • rentals help the environment • reduces environmental impact • reduces carbon footprint • substantially improves the environment • sustainability influences renting • taking a minimalist approach • allows conscious clothing consumption • conscious choice to rent • encourage less consumerism • sustainable way of having clothes • making mindful choices • contemplating conscious clothing consumption		
• provides option of repeat wear • opportunity to do reuse • repeat wear of clothing • promotes multiple wear of clothes • changes mindset of limited clothing use • allows reuse of clothes • ensure reuse of garments • represents a reuse program • reuse within the service	• Recognise rentals promoting clothing reuse	• Being environmentally responsible through rentals

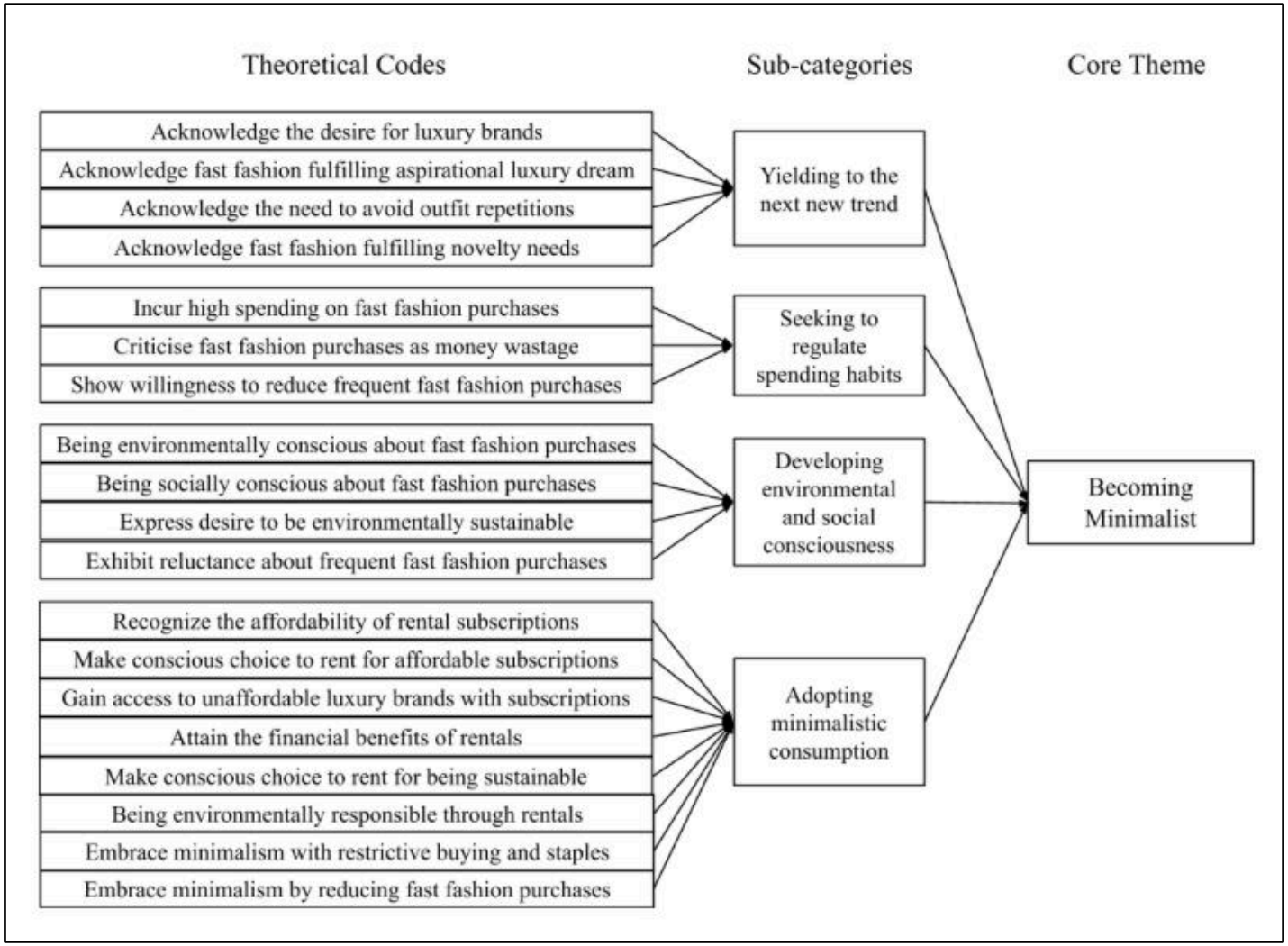
• promote reuse of clothes		
• creates positive habits • allows to consume responsibly • allows to be sustainable • prefer repurposing • reuse of clothing makes sense • like the idea of clothing reuse • reuse being smart • preference towards re-usage	• Support clothing reuse	
• reduces clothing production • reduces clothing imports • lowers the need to manufacture • recycling reduces clothing production • allows emerging brands to produce limited inventory • emerging brands do not worry about selling clothes	• Support the reduction of clothing production	
• increases product life • limited use of clothes being unsustainable • sustainable to wear clothes multiple times • multiple wears provide most use of clothing • enables optimum usage of clothing • allows to determine number of wears	• Support the increase of clothing end-of-life	
• reduces clothing wastage • to avoid wastage of clothes • allows to avoid throwing away clothes • avoid throwing clothes into trash • reduces throwing away of clothes • wastage reduction improves environment • allows to be environmentally responsible • enables to help the environment • fulfills environmentalist needs • environmental benefit of renting • promotes helping the planet • renting to save environment	• Being environmentally responsible through rentals	

• indicates environmental consciousness • appreciated by environmental-friendly people		
• practice minimalism • caters to minimalist nature • justifies fashion consumption • appreciate minimalist practices • promotes sustainable living • propelled to be sustainable • simplify our wardrobe • rent to simplify wardrobe	• Embrace minimalism	• Embrace minimalism with restrictive buying and staples
• allows throwaway of owned clothes • opportunity to let go of clothes not worn • helps to avoid non-usage • no need for prior worn clothes in closet • reduce wardrobe • able to clean house • cleaned out closet • declutters closet space • detoxify wardrobe • sell stuff through consignment • engage in consigning clothes • prefer resale of one-time use clothes • donate the clothes purchased • give away clothing grown out of • give away clothing that lacks fitting • prefer to donate clothes • give away clothes not worn • donate clothes to friends • donate clothes to non-profits • less clutter • save closet space • creates space for other items • smart about utilising space	• Dispose pre-loved and outworn clothing	

• helps to do essential purchases • only purchase staples if renting • purchase only basic clothing items • closet of basic clothing items • closet with purchased staple items	• Engage in only staple purchases	
• allows to keep minimal wardrobe • prefer to spend on capsule collections • maintain capsule wardrobe • closet of items truly loved • capsule collections being not off the runway • capsule collections being utilitarian • capsule collections of brands	• Maintain minimal wardrobe	
• removes guilt of fast fashion purchases • not have buyer's remorse • guilt-free with renting clothes • removes guilt of impacting environment	• Reduce remorse with rentals	• Embrace minimalism by reducing fast fashion purchases
• reduces constant fast fashion purchase • allows to avoid fast fashion purchase • helps to avoid being consumer-oriented • reduces fast fashion purchases • no need to purchase clothing • allows renters to avoid purchase of wear once clothes • reduces reliance on purchase of wear once clothes • less purchase of wear once clothes • contributes negatively to fast fashion • helps to avoid fast fashion • makes fast fashion less credible • reduces sweatshop culture • reduces clothing purchases • impact less with fast fashion avoidance • attenuate fast fashion • trying to change consumption • no need for high consumerism	• Manage to reduce fast fashion purchases	

Figure A.1

Ideograph: Theme 1



Theme 2: Promoting Social-and-Self Interests

Table A.5

Reviving the wear once trend (Sub-category 1, Theme 2)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• to signal status • to show high status • to avoid being looked down upon • keep up with the Joneses mentality • pretension of luxury lifestyle • illusion of luxurious life • illusion of huge closet with different clothes • caters to aspirations for luxury brands • enables trendy lifestyle • show-off new rental items • outfit of the day show-offs	• Create illusions of luxury lifestyle	• Create illusions of luxury lifestyle
• rental outfits project desired image • allows people to get desired look • projecting a fashionable image • to showcase fashion styles for others • to showcase style of dressing up • projecting well-dressed image • projects an image of good appearance	• Project desired self-images	
• allows to pretend as a new character for the night • pretend to be someone through clothes • to dress like luxury consumers • puts one in character for events • escape the everyday self • pick a fantasy version of self to suit the event • to dress the part	• Present ephemeral versions of self	

• enables to enact different personalities • allows to present an ephemeral version of self • fulfills self-presentation needs		
• makes one feel part of elite crowd • allows wearing similar clothes like celebrities • get compared to aspirational figures • helps to identify with luxury purchasers • identify with luxury brands • desire to wear similar clothes like celebrities • take clothing inspirations from celebrities • rental outfits worn by models • fashion industry women rent too • designers rent clothes to celebrities	• Feel part of the elite crowd	
• pretend to own luxury clothes • provides opportunity to show-off wardrobe • renters pretend ownership of clothes • allows to pretend outfit ownership	• Pretend ownership of the rental outfits	
• enables outfit rotations • constantly rotating wardrobe • rotating closet provides easy wardrobe • constantly wear new outfits • rotating wardrobe of new items • provides constant stream of new items • provides a digital closet • provides a virtual closet • access to closet of thousand items • unlimited closet with rental platforms • constant shuffling of countless designers • provides unlimited clothing options • unlimited access to designer clothing • unlimited access to different clothes • unlimited wardrobe • provides access to endless wardrobe	• Experience rotating wardrobe of unlimited clothing	• Experience rotating wardrobe of unlimited clothing

• revolutionises personal wardrobe • supplements wardrobe • revolving wardrobe fascinates people • provides wardrobe for trips • new vacation wardrobe without paying the price • suitable for those who travel a lot • need to travel for work • rental subscriptions offer office wardrobe • fresh assortment of work clothes • provides variety of work clothes		
• brands unsought prior to renting • allows to explore brands • exploratory factor of renting • makes one open to exploration • get to know about new designers • learned about new designers • introduced to unknown emerging designers • interested to learn about new designers • get introduced to designers • looking for new and small designers • love to learn about upcoming designers • seek out designers to check collections • platform introduces to new designers • introduces to plethora of designers • introduces to upcoming new designers • exposes to new and diverse designers • platforms doing designer spotlights • provides sneak peek of new designer items • provides access to new designers • makes designers available to people • learned about rental brands • learned about new brands • introduced to brands via renting	• Explore new and emerging fashion brands	

• exposed to different brands • value access to designer brands • introduces to new and upcoming brands • provides exposure to brands • enables to discover new brands • provides spotlights on new brands • provides access to designer brands • platform promotes popular brands being rented		
• expands the type of luxury clothes • brings difference in clothing choices • always brings in new styles • offers different styles on weekly basis • evolvement of style • allows to access different wardrobe styles • expanded personal clothing styles • platform promotes clothing style being rented • expands clothing choices • alleviates ordinary clothing • introduces to unknown clothing styles • renting allows to be stylish • allows to wear unconventional items • try unusual clothing styles • allows to step outside comfort zone • allows to wear outlandish items • try to venture out in renting • to test the limits • to try different clothing styles • push limits with rental outfits • desire to be seen in unusual items • desire to try different styles • love trying rental outfits • try-on session of rental outfits • mechanical process of rental outfit trials	• Experiment with unusual clothing styles	

• not afraid to dress up differently • rentals of fun items • rent to wear colourful clothes • changing personal style • search brands that stock colourful clothing • wear regular clothes prior to renting • rental of unusual items • decide to try rental outfits • way to test the waters • experiment with rental items • instantly try outfits for events • instantly try rental clothes for meetings • instantly try rental clothes for trips • try outfits to determine event suitability • check whether outfit fits the purpose • not instantly try casual rental outfits • try unfamiliar rental brands • rentals of known brands never tried before • experience the untried known brands • rent outfits from unknown designers • try items from new designers • designer-specific rental outfit selections • allows to try outfits from unknown designers		
• fulfills multi-purpose needs • allows to select suitable outfits • impulsive decisions of rental outfits • be particular about renting outfits • situational needs drive rental item selections	• Fulfill multi-purpose fashion needs	• Fulfill multi-purpose fashion needs
• prefer to rent own wedding dress • prefer to rent bridesmaid dress • people wear rentals in weddings • suitable for wedding wears • rented own wedding dress	• Engage in renting of occasional wears	

• rentals of wedding wears • event-specific rentals • upcoming events drive rental item selections • try renting only for events • rentals for themed events • rent for special occasions • rentals for special fancy items • people use renting for special occasions • rent for occasional use • select items for occasions • suitable for only special occasions • renting only for special occasions • renting for casual occasions • try renting for occasional wear once clothes • select items for upcoming social plans		
• work wear being initial use for renting • rent for job interviews • designer work wardrobe • rentals of work wardrobe • to avoid cheap clothes for professionalism • to match fashion-wise with wealthy clients • rentals of weekend wardrobe • preference for casual clothing • rent items suitable for wearing in daily life • rentals for every week • rentals of basic items • rentals of everyday clothing • casual wears offered by rental platforms • rental outfits for daily wear • rentals of casual wears • allows tailoring clothes to events • allows to dress right for events • allows to wear outfits to events	• Engage in renting work and casual wears	

• suitable for those with social commitments • suitable for event-goers • appeals to event-goers • appeals to people who socialise • allows to customise aesthetics for specific occasions • allows to customise looks for specific occasions • season drives brand selections • select rental items based on climate • rentals of seasonal clothes • need for seasonal clothing		
• remote working changed rental items • above the waist clothes for phone conferences • for above the keyboard dressing • play dress up in remote working • renting for Zoom calls • working from home • rent different items in remote work	• Engage in above-the-waist clothing rentals for remote work	
• dress up for virtual events • small celebrations • clothes for new normal • renting for events only • wear nice clothes at home • renting not limited to work wardrobe • adopt dressing up at home • play dress up in lockdown	• Engage in renting to dress up for virtual events	
• flexibility of ephemeral use • appeal of ephemeral usage • ephemeral use-value • keep rental items for short periods • no rentals for enduring usage • return rentals after use • wear for the moment • higher use-value in renting	• Derive ephemeral use-value from clothing rentals	• Enjoy wardrobe flexibility

• provides wardrobe flexibility • renting provides easy wardrobe • need for wardrobe flexibility • suitable for those with changing body size • adapting to body changes • rent outfits based on weight changes • adjust clothing size with body changes • physical condition changed clothing style • adapting to postpartum body • suitable for pregnant women • caters to maternity body changes • availability of maternity wear • body changes in women with age • body weight struggles with age • body weight fluctuations • appearance consciousness from body shape • conscious about self-appearance • redundant fit for changing weights • body changes restrict multiple wears • need for suitable clothing in pregnancy • temporality supported by body changes • clothing wastage via maternity wear purchases • temporary use of maternity wear	• Adjust clothing size to physical changes	
• not worry about weight changes • can avoid worrying about fitting • importance of sizing for women • not have to worry about clothing sizes • to avoid commitment to a size	• Avoid commitment to clothing size	
• aspirations for designer items • aspire to be part of luxury brands • desire for special items of luxury brands • desire to use luxury brands in daily life • aspirational consumption of luxury brands	• Appreciate rotating wardrobe for fulfilling luxury desires	• Appreciate rotating wardrobe for fulfilling luxury desires

• aspire to wear exclusive items • desire to access designer pieces • desire to access designer styles • desire for expensive items		
• express oneself via dressing up • allows to express oneself • as a tool for self-expression • fulfills self-expression needs • reflective of self-expression • use rental outfits for self-expression • an expression of oneself • use clothes to express oneself • allows creative self-expressions • allows to explore the creative self • allows to reflect oneself in creative environment • provides creative outlet • provides opportunity to be creative • allows creativity for everyone • allows to express eccentric style • enables showing off others' talents • stage rental outfits creatively	• Engage in creative self-expressions	• Enhance appearance to impress others
• need to appear stylish • need for enhanced visual appearance • to keep changing visual appearance • for those who care about appearances • change visual appearance with no downtime • changed the way of dressing up • makes one look fresh • fresh appearance with new clothing pieces • makes one feel glamorous • attract attention through rental outfits • makes one feel stylish • wish to look glamorous	• Enhance visual appearance to impress others	

• need to look fantastic • need to look good • need to look my best • need to uphold fashion reputation • to appear as fashionista • need to look presentable • self-presentation needs • renting enhances appearance • designer clothes enhances appearance • acts as an enhancer • allows to look presentable • enhances personal appearance • enhanced visual appearance in photos • to improve appearance • need to impress people • social pressure of self-presentation • for social impression management • for impressing people		
• guilty pleasure • renting for self • dress up for oneself • not renting for social others • personal splurge • self-indulgence • way to self-indulge	• Consider clothing rentals as a way to self-indulge	• Derive pleasure and excitement from playing dress up
• for the love of dressing up • fun to dress up • get to dress up • desire to dress up • try renting for dressing up • likeness for getting dressed • likeness for the ability to dress up • to play dress up	• Play dress up with clothing rentals	

• love the process of dressing in rental outfits • show people how to dress up • put effort in dressing up • people dress up for photoshoots • playing dress-up in childhood • to get dressed up for fun • allows to play dress-up		
• enables constant shopping • easy shipping and returns • no additional shipping costs • easy return and replacement of outfits • options of rental returns • customer support for reported damage • provides great customer service • accessible customer service • promptness in dealing with outfit issues • reduced worry related to item returns • worry free service • provision of delivery service • check for correct item delivery • delivered to doorstep • home delivery of items • quick turnaround of rental items • access to items in short time • provides instant gratification • makes items available at fingertips	• Highlight instant gratification from constant item swaps	
• excited to dress up • excitement for new items • feel excited without large purchase • fun to rent in lockdown • as a fun activity • enjoy dressing up • helps to have fun	• Derive excitement from playing dress up	

• people like renting for fun • provides boost and excitement		
• makes getting dressed a pleasure • pleasure from constantly wearing new outfits • brings pleasure • acts as a source of joy • joyful to rent • provided happiness	• Derive pleasure from playing dress up	
• no commitment in renting • no commitment of keeping outfits • not committed to one outfit • lack of commitment • lack of obligations with rental platforms • rent than own items • preference for anti-ownership • cannot persuade to own items • to avoid ownership • insignificance of ownership • rentals superior to own possessions • reduces the need to own items • appreciate access without ownership • no qualms about rental outfit non-ownership • lack of ownership obligations in renting • lack of ownership repercussions • provides temporal ownership • provides wardrobe newness without ownership • newness without holding the item forever • lack of purchase commitment • allows outfit trials without purchase expectations • try before buy option • allows outfit trials before investment	• Appreciate the lack of ownership obligations	• Derive joy without pain with fashion rentals
• to avoid lots of clothes in closet • manage hoarding nature	• Reduce the hoarding of clothes with rentals	

• to avoid storing clothes • lack of support for closet full of clothes • allows to avoid hoarding clothes • helps to avoid storing wear once clothes • helps to avoid storing clothes in closet • no more having closet of wear once clothes • no storing obligations • avoid worrying about closet space • no need to make room in closet • reduces need for closet space • reduces clothes in actual closet		
• new arrivals comprise outfits from new designers • rent from new brands • desire to wear new brands • fulfills need for novelty with new arrivals • try new designers for novelty • expands the desire to wear new things • suitable for novelty-seekers • look for variety in rental clothing • look for versatility in rental clothes • new arrivals necessary • need greater style options in renting • new arrivals allow to wear different things • new arrivals provide variety • need different outfit on daily basis • select new arrivals for renting	• Fulfill need for novelty with new arrivals	• Fulfill need for novelty with new arrivals
• need to wear the current trend • people being consumed by trends • people rent to keep up with trends • rentals of trendy items • select rental items that reflect current trend	• Highlight the need to keep up with fashion trends	• Follow the wear once clothing trend
• allows to avoid outfit repetitions • desire for wear once items	• Reduce boredom and pressure of outfit repetitions	

• dream of wear once clothes • rentals of wear once clothes • renting to avoid outfit repetition • not particular about multiple wears of rental outfits • rent items not considered for multiple wears • fresh closet without outfit repetition • freshens wardrobe • reduces boredom • provides the option to wear clothing once • allows the wear once trend • no pressure of repeat usage • prefer wear once for rental outfits • wear items once only • avoid repeat of rentals		
• increases social pressure for different outfits • creates social pressure to rent • increases social pressure to follow trends	• Acknowledge social pressure to follow trends	• Maintain social media appearances
• post rental outfits pictures on social media • to share on social media • to stay prominent on social media • to remain active on social media • to maintain social media presence • enables show-off on social media • used for social media platforms • preference for taking pictures • take pictures of rental outfits • enables to take pictures • people capture rental outfit photos • capture photos in rental outfits • rent for social media needs • increases social media content • to make different content • to keep the content fresh	• Maintain social media appearances	

• to refresh looks • keep up with social media by renting		
• conflicted about renting • rental platforms appropriate rental items • cleaning process of rental platforms • sophisticated dry-cleaning system • swapping means more cleaning • creates carbon footprint • transportation and packaging wastes resources • constant cleaning wastes resources • harmful implications for environment	• Indicate conflict for harmful environmental implications	• Indicate conflict for harmful environmental implications

Table A.6

Supporting social causes (Sub-category 2, Theme 2)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• lack of recognition for women of colour designers • lack of exposure for women-led brands • lack of recognition for black-owned businesses • significant underrepresentation • discrimination in fashion industry • overlapping identities • low visibility for women • less opportunity for women • low advancement for people of colour • limits diversity • lack of inclusion and equity	• Being aware of social issues in fashion	• Being aware of social issues in fashion
• platform responses to social injustice • platforms address social injustice and inequality • social issues of racism and inequality • changed stance of platforms on social issues • helps to address systemic racism • reflects socialism • platforms commit to 15 percent pledge • ensure greater representation • exposure to people of colour • represent more women designers • support emerging and small brands • support marginalised groups • support underrepresented groups • platforms raising voice for black designers • rising awareness of black-owned businesses • promotes people of color designers	• Appreciate platform commitment to social causes	• Endorse rental platforms for diversity and social inequality

• need to dismantle barrier • bring change for betterment of society • make a difference • societal change • patronise platforms • endorse rentals for marginalised groups • increase visibility of black-owned brands • lend support to emerging brands • support women-run small businesses • to support women of colour designers • promotes women of colour designers • raise recognition for women of colour designers • boost for women of colour • to bring recognition to black-owned businesses • gravitate towards black-owned businesses • supporting brands created by people of colour • connect to platforms with social integrity • avoid platforms lacking social image • interested about brands' social contributions • engage with platforms with negative contributions	• Endorse rental platforms that address diversity and social inequality	

Table A.7

Safeguarding livelihood (Sub-category 3, Theme 2)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• creates jobs • positive for society • contribute to economy • significance of sense of security • greater control over life • improve financial well-being	• Appreciate job creation by platforms	• Engage in fashion rentals to ensure livelihood
• others' need for jobs • others' need to earn money • importance of income stability • experience hardships without jobs • concerned about financial well-being • care about the livelihoods • feel sad if people lose income • understand the feeling of job loss • imagine feelings of losing income • helplessness of no income	• Acknowledge importance of jobs and income stability	
• support rental businesses • supporting business extends to employees • renting to keep people employed • ensuring work opportunity • ensure job security • to help others earn • way of helping • sustain jobs	• Ensure jobs and income opportunities	
• acts of kindness • gives positive thoughts • feel happy to help	• Justify rental spending as helping acts	• Justify rental spending as helping acts

• way to give back • positive cycle of helping • considering others' welfare • rewarding act • help others to sustain		

Table A.8

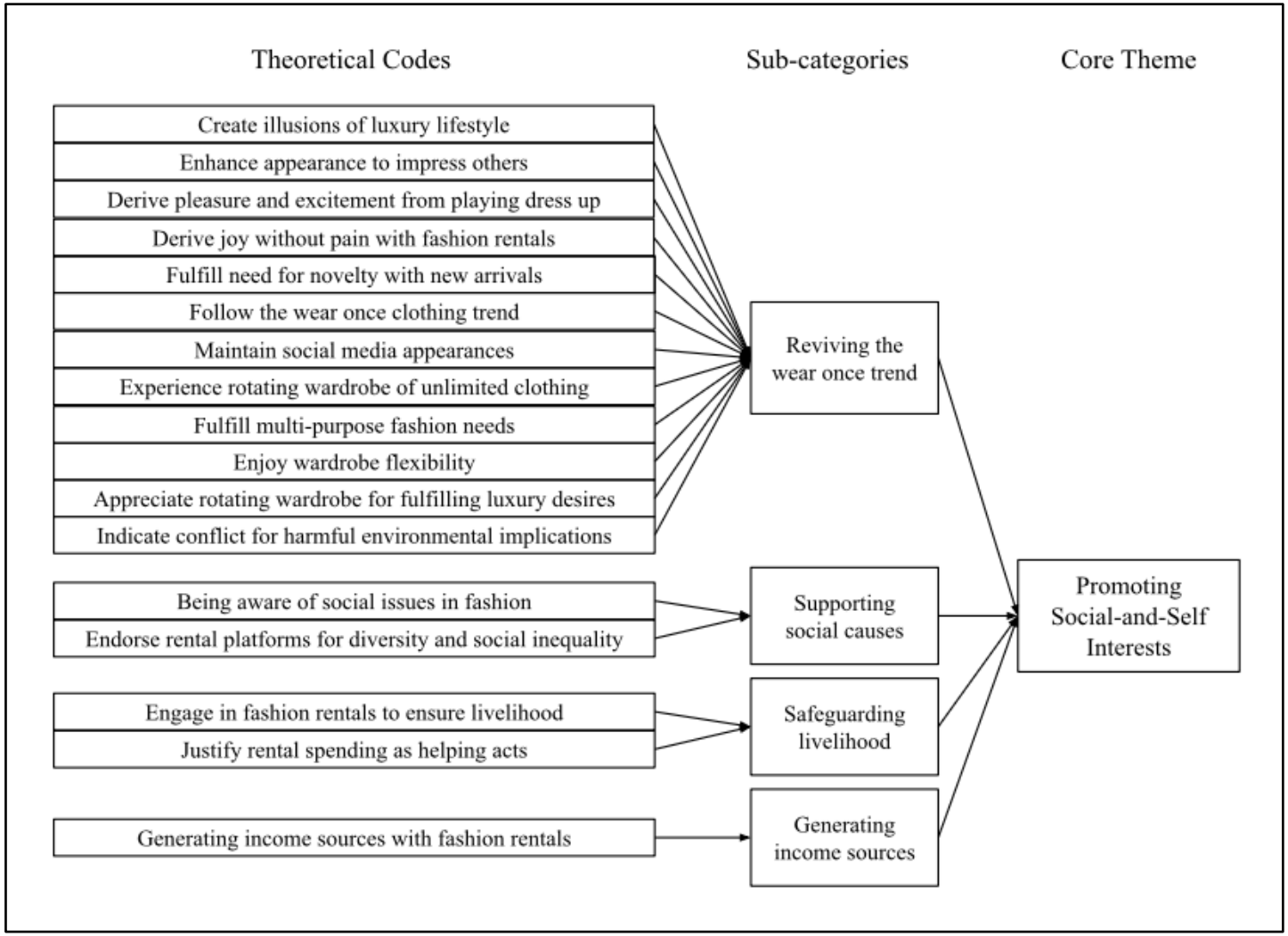
Generating income sources (Sub-category 4, Theme 2)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• small entrepreneurs • low entry barrier • run small business of styling • work as a wardrobe stylist • rent clothes for styling business • stylish and versatile pieces • lucrative opportunity • beyond personal use • daily use of renting for business • rent outfits for business purposes • frequent use of rentals for business • more rental use for business • cost-effective to obtain clothes • low start-up costs • rent to make content • greater use of rentals for content making • cost-effective for content creation • appeals to paid content creators • renting for photoshoots • rent clothes for editorial shoots • helpful for content creators • suitable for fashion bloggers • creates new content for social media • to make fashion content • to create content for travel blogs	• Consider rentals as cost-effective for business and content creation	• Generating income sources with fashion rentals
• stable source of income • financial independence	• Earning money from the use of rentals	

• earn money as stylist • supplementary income • brand collaborative opportunities • income from sponsored content • growth in styling business • attracts more clients • increased income as a stylist		

Figure A.2

Ideograph: Theme 2



Theme 3: Redefining Consumption

Table A.9

Circling back to purchase (Sub-category 1, Theme 3)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• feel like a fraud • cheating the system • deceiving nature of renting • avoid giving false impressions of ownership • does not portray actual self • need to own for showing off • need to show genuine ownership	• Perceive lack of ownership as deceptive	• Perceive lack of ownership as deceptive
• renting being still about consumerism • provides rent-to-buy options • rent to buy practice	• Acknowledge rent-to-buy practices	• Undertake purchases of rental clothing
• consider purchase of rental clothes • purchase rental clothes at discount • add rentals to permanent wardrobe • look for sales on rental websites • rentals of outfits willing to purchase • try outfits to determine purchase • rent to make purchase decisions • purchase of rental clothing • discounted rental clothes make purchase affordable • platforms sell rental clothes at discount • renting induces purchase • creates affordability to purchase clothing	• Undertake discounted purchases of rental clothing	
• pleasure of purchase • thrill of owning the luxury items • pleasure of being the owner	• Derive pleasure from purchase of rental clothing	

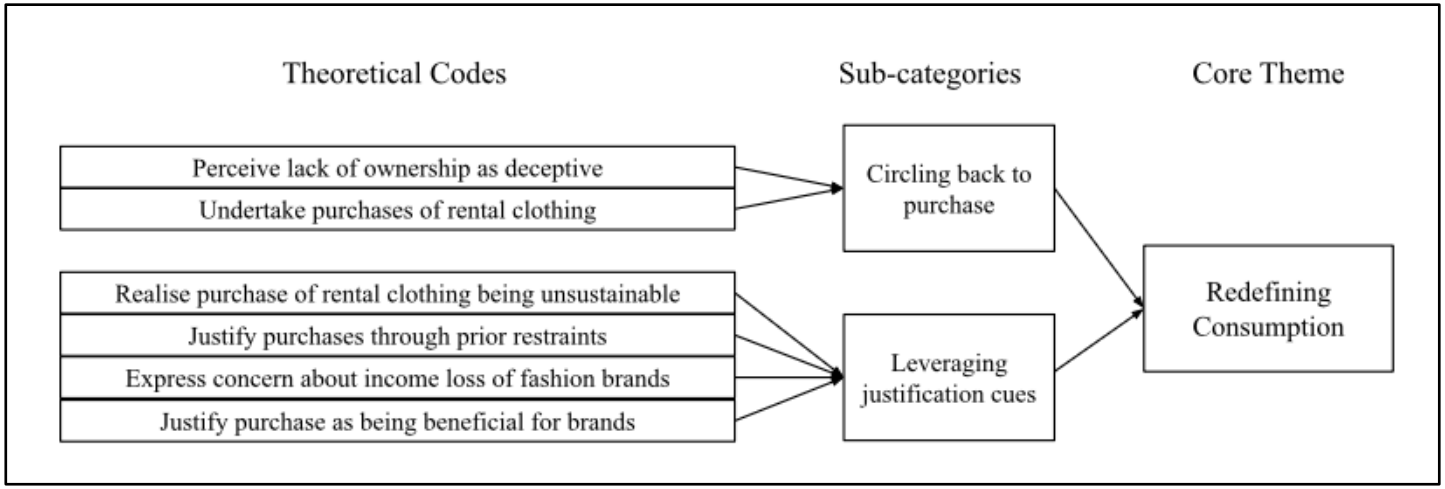
• thrill of purchase		
• presents desired self-image • image of ownership • authentic self • real owner image for others	• Showcase image of owning the luxury items	

Table A.10

Leveraging justification cues (Sub-category 2, Theme 3)

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theoretical Codes
• entangled into repeated purchase • pre-used items so less usage • outworn clothes • throwaway culture • less sustainable • harmful for environment • looking to buy the new item • repeated purchase of luxury	• Realise purchase of rental clothing being unsustainable	• Realise purchase of rental clothing being unsustainable
• clutter-free wardrobe • rebuild wardrobe with luxury • restricted buying for long • not buying fast fashion • did not stop renting • as a reward for less purchase • encouraged by prior restraints	• Justify purchases through prior restraints	• Justify purchases through prior restraints
• challenge for fashion brands • overpowering fashion brands • financial struggle of fashion brands • brands at a disadvantage	• Realise financial struggles of brands	• Express concern about income loss of fashion brands
• concern about lost earnings • slow business for brands • reduced income • fashion brands losing business • downward spiral of brand earnings • brands losing income	• Express concern about brand earnings	
• not a breach to help brands • partly indulgent	• Justify purchase as being beneficial for brands	• Justify purchase as being beneficial for brands

• reconsider purchase to benefit brands • lack of earning for brands motivate purchase • clothing purchases provides earnings • reduce disadvantage • encouraged to spend money • opportunity to purchase for brands • prioritise benefit of brands		

Figure A.3

Ideograph: Theme 3