IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT

PH.D. THESIS

SUSTAINABLE FASHION IN TURKEY: PERSPECTIVES AND INSIGHTS FROM CONSUMERS AND MARKETERS

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THESIS SUPERVISOR
ASSIST. PROF. OMAR KACHKAR

ISTANBUL, 2024

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by
MOHANNAD SHEHNEH

A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management

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APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management.

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This is to confirm that this thesis complies with all the standards set by the School of Graduate Studies of Ibn Haldun University

Date of Submission Seal/Signature

ACADEMIC HONESTY ATTESTATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ÖZ

TÜRKİYE'DE SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİR MODA: TÜKETİCİ VE PAZARLAMACILARIN PERSPEKTİFLERİ VE ANLAYIŞLAR

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Sürdürülebilirlik, son yirmi-otuz yıl içerisinde kirliliği ve dünya kaynaklarının sürekli tükenmesini ele alma konusunda önemli bir endişe kaynağı olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Dünyanın dört bir yanındaki işletmeler, sürdürülebilir ve yeşil prosedürlere yatırım yapma konusunda küresel ve yerel yönetişim baskılarıyla, gündemlerine sürdürülebilir hedefler koymuştur. Gezegen üzerinde en çok olumsuz etkiye sahip olma konusunda petrol endüstrisini ardından ikinci gelen moda endüstrisinin de, bu olumsuz etkilerini azaltmak amacıyla sürdürülebilir uygulamalara geçişi talep edilmektedir. Tekstil üretiminin tüm aşamaları, yüksek düzeyde su tüketimi ve zararlı kimyasalların bertarafı gibi çevresel tehlikelerin kaynağıdır. Öte yandan araştırmalar, tüketime, özellikle de hızlı moda trendlerinin yaygınlaşması ile birlikte ortaya çıkan ve çevresel ve sosyal risklere yol açan ucuz giysilerin tüketim ve imhasının artışına vurgu yapmaktadır. Moda endüstrisinde önemli bir oyuncu olan Türkiye, bu araştırmanın bağlamı olarak seçilmiştir. Sürdürülebilir moda literatürü ve planlı davranış teorisinden yararlanan bu araştırma hem moda markaları hem de tüketicilerden elde edilen kavrayış ile Türkiye'deki sürdürülebilir modanın bir incelemesini sağlamaktadır. Çalışma, keşfedici sıralı bir tasarıma sahip karma yöntem yaklaşımını kullanmaktadır. Ülkede moda alanında uzman kişilerle görüşmeler yapılarak nitel bir aşama kullanılmıştır. Veriler tematik analiz kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Analiz için anket formu ve yapısal eşitlik modellemesi kullanılarak nicel bir aşama izlenmiştir. Bulgular, planlı davranış teorisinin faktörlerinin sürdürülebilir moda satın alma

yönelimi üzerinde önemli bir etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Nitel ve nicel verilerin birleştirilmesi ile araştırma, ülkedeki sürdürülebilir modanın durumu hakkında önemli bilgiler sağlamaktadır. Çalışma, sürdürülebilir modanın markalar ve tüketiciler tarafından anlaşılma şeklindeki bazı yanlış anlamaları ve tutarsızlıkları vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca yeşil aklamayı markalar arasında yaygın bir uygulama olarak tanımlamaktadır. Bilgi eksikliği, yanlış bilgilendirme, yüksek maliyet, güven eksikliği gibi satın alma niyetlerini caydırabilecek bazı önemli zorluklar da tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Algılanan Tüketici Etkinliği, Moda, Planlı Davranış Teorisi, Satın Alma Eğilimi, Sürdürülebilirlik, Tüketim.

ABSTRACT

SUSTAINABLE FASHION IN TURKEY: PERSPECTIVES AND INSIGHTS FROM CONSUMERS AND MARKETERS

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In the last few decades, sustainability has emerged as an essential concern in addressing pollution and the continuous depletion of the earth's resources. Pressured by global and local governance to invest in sustainable and green procedures, businesses worldwide have placed sustainable goals in their agendas. Due to its significant contribution to pollution, which comes second after the oil industry, the fashion industry has been demanded to adhere to sustainable measures to lessen its negative footprint on the planet. All the stages of textile production are sources of environmental hazards, such as high levels of water consumption and harmful chemical disposal. On the other hand, research has called for attention to consumption, especially with the prevalence of fast fashion trends, which have increased the consumption and disposal of cheap clothes, resulting in environmental and social risks. Being a significant player in the fashion industry, Türkiye was chosen as the context of this research. This research investigates sustainable fashion in Türkiye by bringing insights from fashion brands and consumers. It draws on the literature on sustainable fashion and the theory of planned behavior. The study utilizes a mixed-method approach with an exploratory sequential design. A qualitative phase was used by interviews with experts in the country's fashion industry. The data was analyzed using a thematic analysis. A survey questionnaire followed a quantitative phase, and structural equation modeling was conducted for the study. Findings display that the factors of the theory of planned behavior have an essential impact on the intention to

purchase sustainable fashion. By combining qualitative and quantitative data, the research provides significant insights into the sustainable fashion situation in the country. The study highlights misunderstandings and discrepancies in how brands and consumers understand sustainable fashion. It also identifies greenwashing as a common practice among brands. Some significant challenges that may discourage purchase intentions were also identified, such as lack of information, misinformation, high cost, and lack of trust.

Keywords: Consumer Effectiveness, Consumption, Fashion, Perceived, Purchase Intentions, Sustainability, Theory of Planned Behavior.

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Mohannad Shehneh

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ATT	Attiude
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
BC	Behavioral Control
BCI	Better Cotton Initiative
CCS	Customer-Centric Sustainability
CE	Perceived Consumer Effectiveness
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CR	Composite Reliability
CSR	Corporate and Social Responsibility
CV	Construct Validity
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
GOF	Goodness of Fit
GFI	Good of Fitness Index
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
MSV	Maximum Shared Squared Variance
PI	Purchase Intentions
RMR	Root Mean square Residual
RMSEA	Root Mean Square error of Approximation
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SN	Subjective Norms
TBL	Triple Bottom Line
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
ZDHC	Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The following paragraphs will provide a general introduction to the thesis. They start by giving a general background of the topic and a general description of the problem that the research will be dealing with. The introduction will then present Türkiye as the context of the study, followed by the research objectives and questions, along with the motivation of the study, its significance, and its impact. Finally, a section will map the thesis's structure and organization.

1.1. Background

The fashion industry has a significant impact on the environment. In 2018, the sector was responsible for at least 2.1 billion metric tons (4 %) of global greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) (Magnus & Granskog,2020, September 23). These emissions are expected to double the target set by the Paris Agreement for the year 2030 (Magnus & Granskog,2020, September 23). The fashion industry ranks second in terms of its contribution to polluting natural resources, followed only by the oil industry.

Fashion is 4th biggest industry in the world (Vilaça, 2022, February 18). Its impacts are undeniable and significant. It is considered one of the biggest polluters on the earth (Pucker, 2022, January 13). All the stages of the industry have harmful effects on the planet (Shen, Li, Dong, & Perry, 2017). For example, the industry is the world's second-biggest polluter of natural water. About a quarter of the world's chemicals are used in textiles (Conca, 2015, December 3). The industry also consumes high amounts of water and other natural resources during the production process (Desore & Narula, 2017).

The fast fashion trends that emerged in the last decades to provide the public with cheap, higher-end imitated garments come with a price. Because most of these garments are made using non-biodegradable petroleum-based synthetic fabric, they pose an environmental concern (Pucker, 2022, January 13). On the other hand, fast fashion often relies on outsourcing production in third-world countries and compromising environmental and social settings (Wren, 2022). With little or no liability in developing countries, these countries often carry the burden of environmental and health risks of the manufacturing process, such as the pollution of water resources (Bick, Halsey & Ekenga, 2018).

Against this background, the industry has taken various steps to embrace sustainability and reduce its negative impacts as much as possible. For the last ten years, textiles and fashion have been increasingly paying attention to sustainability-related issues (Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez, 2021). The sustainability of fashion represents an approach to both the production and consumption of clothing, which places environmental and social concerns at the center. The central concept of sustainability refers to durability and lasting longer (Glavic & Lukman, 2007). The emphasis on sustainability-related concerns in textiles is triggered by the fact that this industry is ranked high in its contribution to pollution (Boström & Micheletti, 2016). In the textile and fashion sector, sustainability is often approached in relation to the shortage of the resources needed for production (Paulina, 2018). However, a comprehensive approach to sustainability entails working in conditions where workers and the environment are protected and maintaining fair trade and ethical principles (Mukendi, Davies, Glozer & McDonagh, 2020). Moreover, since the harmful effects of textiles exist in both production and consumption stages (Kang, Liu, & Kim, 2013), sustainability in fashion has also called for involving the consumer by recommending mindful consumption, ethical use, and choosing quality over quantity. Thus, the interactions between the problems associated with the fashion industry and sustainability create a rich area for investigation and research, which will unfold in the following chapters.

1.2. Problem Statement

Due to its leading role in polluting the planet, depleting resources, and its potential to be involved in unethical working conditions, as discussed earlier, the industry needs

to seriously invest in sustainable procedures (Unal, Yavas, & Avinc, 2020). This has prompted international organizations, policymakers, and regulators to squeeze the industry to include sustainability in its strategies and to carry out initiatives that target reducing greenhouse gas emissions and wastage. The 8th annual State of Fashion report produced by the Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company in 2023 maintains that "inaction is no longer an option" for fashion companies to go sustainable "since extreme climate events are already placing the lives and livelihoods of fashion workers in danger and could put at risk an estimated $65 billion of apparel exports by 2030" (Amed & Berg, 2023, November 29).

Besides that, increasing awareness among consumers of the negative impact of fashion on the planet has contributed to more pressure on the industry to abide by sustainability. This has made sustainability one of the most critical issues discussed in the agendas of global fashion brands, resulting in innovative approaches to address sustainability from production to disposal, including upgrading its strategies to become more compatible with sustainability (Khandual & Pradhan, 2019). This ranges from the use of recycled fibers, reusing water, and improving workers' conditions (Khandual & Pradhan, 2019; Shirvanimoghaddam, Motamed, Ramakrishna, & Naebe, 2020; Hwang & Zhang, 2020).

However, despite the pro-sustainability efforts and investments claimed by the industry, evidence shows the industry is still far behind in meeting the targets set by regulators (Pucker, 2022, January 13). Pucker (2022, January 13) maintains that sustainability strategies have not been sufficient or have not been adopted seriously by companies. This lack of commitment and insufficient regulations pose an increasing problem, especially in developing countries lacking serious environmental leadership and liability.

Therefore, regarding this problem, this paper's approach is based on building an overall understanding of the situation to understand to what extent the proclaimed sustainability measures are adopted and applied. It is hoped that tangible steps for solutions or improvement can be constructed when such understanding is developed.

On the other hand, considering sustainability from a holistic perspective, consumption is vital in the sustainability project. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal number 12, "Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns," focuses on production and consumption (United Nations, n.d.). Consumers are a part of the equation. If consumers are not engaged in ethical consumption or consumption of sustainable products or are unaware of the high cost of the cheap fast fashion products they buy and dispose of regularly, the effort from the markets and the producers will be incomplete and less fruitful. Consumers' attitudes and actions can determine whether sustainable efforts are successful. Studies show that even when consumers are aware and ready to contribute, several factors can hinder their participation or contribution to the pro-sustainability efforts (D'Astous & Legendre, 2009). Exploring these problematic factors that prevent positive action is essential for the study. Therefore, the study develops within a need to comprehend the whole picture to thoroughly investigate the situation of sustainable fashion from both the brand's and consumers' ends.

Thus, on the one hand, the study is informed by the need to address and analyze the strategies and procedures of fashion brands to ensure sustainable and ethical fashion. This includes studying their motivation, orientation, investments, goals, benchmarks, campaigns, and marketing. An investigation also needs to track the brand's view on the challenges and opportunities they encounter when they apply different sustainability measures.

On the other hand, investigating the other part of the equation, namely the consumers, requires looking into their purchasing patterns, attitudes and awareness of sustainability and sustainable garments, and any factors that encourage or hinder their purchase of sustainable fashion.

The following section will further explain the study's problem, which needs to be addressed by contextualizing it within a specific geographical and cultural context, which provides more dimensions and clarifications.

1.3. Context of the Research: Türkiye

Türkiye was chosen as the context for this research for several reasons. First, the fashion sector is one of the most important sectors contributing to the national economy of Türkiye. Some key figures in this industry come especially from exporting fashion. Türkiye ranks as the fourth exporter of apparel in the world. It has a share reaching (3.3%) in 2020. In addition, Türkiye is also ranked as the seventh largest cotton producer in the world. There is also a growing local market with a turnover from retailers reaching (457%) and households' expenditures on clothing (285%)[1]. Figure 1.1. shows the gradual increase of industrial production related to this industry. In addition, Table 1.2 shows the increase in different areas within the industry over the past ten years. In both tables, figures show that this industry is still in a state of continuous expansion. The statistics also show that the progress in this industry is significant and affects different areas of the Turkish economy.

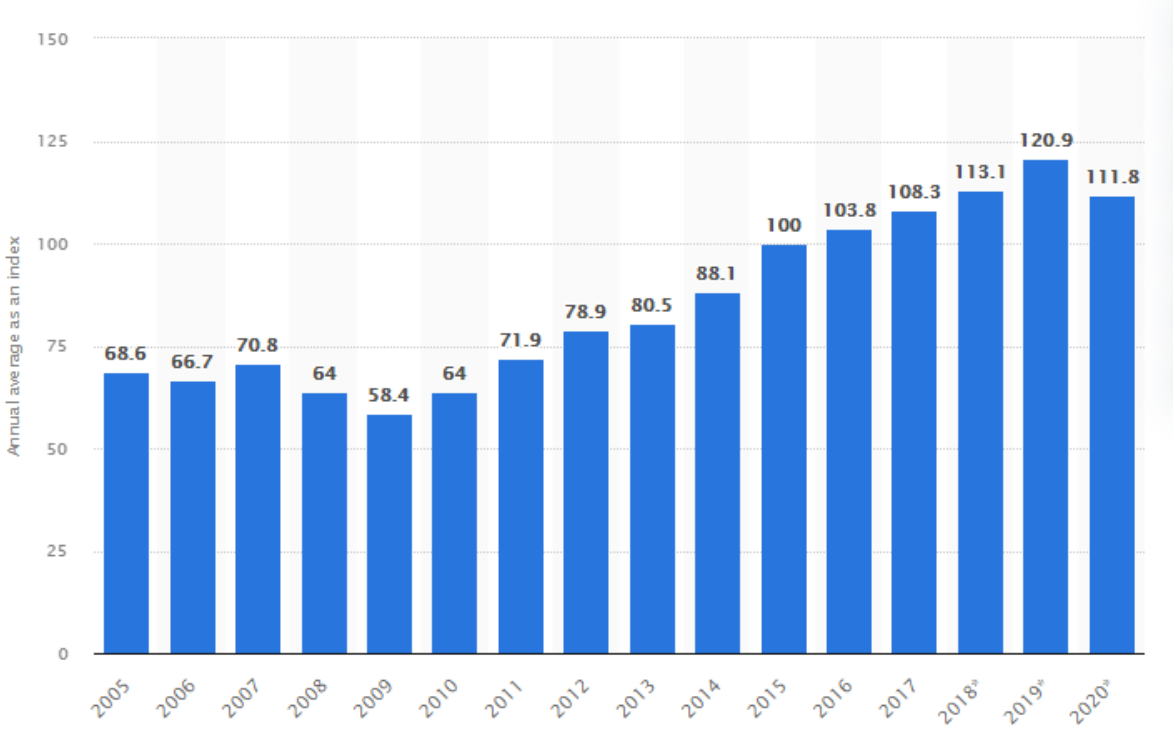

Figure 1.1. Annual Average of Industrial Production Index (IPI) of the Manufacture of Wearing Apparel in Türkiye from 2005 to 2020

Source: Statista.com

[1] Multiple statistics regarding the fashion industry in Türkiye were obtained from statista.com, https://www.statista.com/topics/4844/textiles-and-clothing-industry-in-turkey/#dossierKeyfigures, https://www.statista.com/statistics/882430/household-spending-on-clothes-turkey

Table 1.1. Ten Years of Progress in Different Areas Related to the Fashion Industry

Area of progress	2009	2019	Percentage increase
Value of clothing exported from Türkiye (in million U.S. dollars)	11,556	16,383	41%
Household consumption expenditure on clothing (in thousand Turkish local currency)	1,214,033	4,676,740	285%
Turnover from the retail sale of clothing in specialized stores in Türkiye from 2009 to 2019(in million Turkish local currency)	16318	90966	457%
Number of enterprises in the retail sale of clothing in specialized stores	45719	56057	22%
Number of persons employed in the retail sales of clothing in specialized stores	145409	265513	82%

Source: Statista.com

Moreover, most of the papers that addressed sustainability in fashion-focused mainly on developed countries. Yang, Song & Tong (2017) believe that most research on sustainable fashion has not thoroughly addressed developing countries. To the researcher's knowledge, studies on sustainable fashion have not been sufficiently discussed in Türkiye. The majority of the studies still lack rigorous methodological approaches and theoretical underpinnings. Therefore, Türkiye provides a rich context for investigation, especially given the significance of the fashion industry on the country's economy. It is also an opportunity to bridge gaps existing in research and create spaces for generalization and comparison with other developing countries.

1.4. Research Objectives

The current research aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Exploring and understanding the situation of sustainable fashion in Türkiye from the views of both consumers and marketers.
- Identifying key drivers for buying sustainable fashion products among Turkish consumers.
- Examining the current level of sustainability adaptation by Turkish brands.
- Examining the strategies used by Turkish brands to improve the consumers' attitudes towards sustainable fashion.
- İdentifying some opportunities and challenges faced by Turkish brands in their transition towards sustainability.

1.5. Research Questions

The research unfolds about the following research questions:

- What is the current situation of sustainable fashion in Türkiye from the point of view of both consumers and marketers?
- What are the main drivers for Turkish consumers to purchase sustainable fashion products?
- To what extent are Turkish fashion brands applying sustainable measures?
- How can Turkish companies improve customers' attitudes towards sustainable fashion products?
- What are the current and future challenges and opportunities characterize sustainable fashion in Türkiye?

1.6. Research Motivation

This research was motivated by the researcher's experiences throughout his work in the textile sector over thirteen years. The researcher worked closely with Turkish and international fashion marketers and brands. He witnessed the recent transformation of businesses to pro-sustainable measures in Türkiye and noticed the joy, pain,

uncertainty, and struggle with implementing such procedures. While he was aware of some concerns and struggles, many questions remained unanswered. Moreover, he was curious to learn more about some aspects of sustainable fashion in the country. For example, he was intrigued to know about the motivation of businesses to go sustainable, even though it was sometimes a costly endeavor. He also realized that consumers, as well as fashion experts, had different conceptions of what sustainability was. Hence, he was interested in exploring theories, benchmarks, regulations, conceptions, and measures. Therefore, he embarked on a research journey that aimed to bring perspectives from both the market and the consumers to thoroughly understand the situation.

1.7. Research Significance & Impact

Nowadays, sustainability is considered a solution to many pressing problems around the world, including global warming, pollution, and wastage (Unal, Yavas, & Avinc, 2020). For this reason, this research is significant in its objective to understand sustainability further and explore sustainable measures to spread awareness and impact attitudes and decisions. The study aims to make knowledge on sustainability available to as many stakeholders as possible to change values and attitudes.

The research and its unique mixed-method approach, which combines data from producers and consumers, is hoped to make a difference economically, culturally, and socially by providing essential data capable of transforming production and consumption in a way that sustains life. By combining the data acquired from both consumers and organizations, the research aspires to create a clearer picture of the sustainable fashion situation than other studies that relied only on one part of the equation. Aiming to obtain a realistic and contemporary view of the status of sustainability in the fashion industry in Türkiye, the research is hoped to provide essential insights for the policymakers, regulators, and marketers in their efforts to improve measures and to find the best and most economical plans and to invest in future projections. Data can also provide a base to identify flaws and significant improvement areas. This is hoped to bridge gaps between research and business decision-makers and help organizations create a better framework through which sustainability efforts become more effective and efficient.

The empirical data is hoped to supplement existing research on sustainable fashion and bridge any existing gaps.

1.7.1. Fulfillment of Research Gaps

This thesis aims to address gaps in the literature on sustainable fashion research in Türkiye. First, this thesis attempts to provide original research with a unique methodological approach. While similar mixed-method studies collected quantitative and qualitative data from consumers, this study is distinctive in its approach. The study brings the quantitative data from the consumers and qualitative data from the brands to engage an outsider perspective in interpreting the qualitative data to avoid bias as much as possible. While some research, such as that by (Nguyen, Tran, Nguyen, Luu & Nguyen, 2022), used a mixed method focusing on consumers' behaviors, others have also directed their efforts to investigate brands or organizations that are involved in sustainable fashion (Stefko & Steffek, 2018; Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, & Ghezzi, 2017).

Second, as discussed earlier, researching Türkiye provides an opportunity for state-of-the-art research and data due to the lack of research studies on sustainable fashion in developing countries. Most of the studies conducted in the country on the fashion industry addressed different areas. Some of the common topics that have been studied in Türkiye include supply chain dynamics (Talay, Oxborrow, & Brindley, 2020), examining gender and age differences in terms of sustainable consumption (Bulut, Kökalan ÇıMrin & Doğan, 2017), factors affecting sustainable consumptions in other industries (Aydogdu & Kaya, 2020; Akgüngör, Miran & Abay, 2010; Emekci, 2019), and the role of culture and religion in fostering sustainable consumption (Yuksel & Kaya, 2020; Kılıçbay & Binark, 2002). The current research applies a different approach, which will open the door for other significant extensions in the future. It also aims to address the particular fashion industry, which has not been sufficiently researched in Türkiye.

1.8. Organization of the Thesis

After presenting the research background, problem statement, context, research aims and questions, significance, and motivation in the first chapter, the second chapter presents a review of prominent and relevant literature and key terms and definitions. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework of the study. In Chapter 4, the researcher explains the methodological approach employed in the study. Chapter 5 presents the qualitative phase, and Chapter 6 presents the quantitative phase results. In Chapter 7, the researcher provides a final discussion of the combined findings, the study's implications, limitations, and future research. Chapter 8 presents the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW: DEFINING CONCEPTS AND DIRECTIONS

In this chapter, the researcher clarifies concepts and definitions and gives an overview of relevant arguments in the literature regarding sustainability and fashion. The chapter provides some impacts of the industry and suggests some sustainable alternatives provided in the literature. The chapter concludes by showing how well-known international fast fashion brands have been adjusting their activities to adhere to sustainable fashion requirements.

2.1. Sustainability

Sustainability, as a concept, has been widely discussed and researched since the eighties (Scoones, 2007) and is currently listed as one of the top priorities on the political, economic as well as educational agendas of governments around the world (Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez, 2021). The publication of the Brundtland Report by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987 is considered a defining moment in the history of sustainability as it first introduced the term sustainability and how it can be reached. Responding to concerns over natural resource depletion and global warming, the UN entrusted a group of scientists and experts to explore these issues and the relationship between social, economic, and environmental problems. The report is often cited for its definition of sustainable development as the "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations General Assembly, 1987, p. 54). The report was the foundation that prepared for the Rio Summit in 1992, another defining and essential event that resulted in the establishment of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in 1992.

In recent years, there have been an increasing number of efforts to serve an objective related to sustainable ends (Scoones, 2007). The concept of sustainability was first used in academic literature around 1985 (Portney, 2015). The idea has recently gained prominence due to increasing concerns over the scarcity of the world's resources. In 2015, all United Nations Member States embraced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an effort to deal with global and planetary challenges by 2030.

Sustainability remains a fluid and multidimensional term with many definitions in circulation. Yet, they all share a common vision. General definitions of sustainability refer to its ability to last for a more extended period. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, sustainability is "the quality of being able to continue over some time" or the "quality of causing little or no damage to the environment and therefore able to continue for a long time." (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

Sustainability has also been defined in relation to the interaction between the environment and an artifact in a way that does not end in any harm for either side (Faber, Jorna, & Van Engelen, 2005). Because sustainability has been a critical issue on international agendas, different scholars have been trying to define the concept from various angles (Glavic & Lukman, 2007). The term, however, remains complex, and about three hundred alternative definitions have been attributed to sustainability (Correia, 2019). Recent literature and policy documents address sustainability in three aspects, namely economic, social, and environmental aspects (Presley & Meade, 2018), which in turn include different principles, approaches, systems, sub-systems, and policies relating to these three domains (Glavič & Lukman, 2007).

UN documents consistently explain that sustainable development includes economic development, social development, and environmental protection and that they are highly interdependent (Traer, 2020). The economic dimension focuses on the profit and financial value of the organization, including growth, sales, and its contribution to the economy. The social dimension addresses the impact of an organization on the community, including the safety and well-being of the employees and workers. The environmental dimension focuses on the commitment of the organization to meet ecological concerns and reduce its environmental impact by wise usage of the globe's scarce resources, taking into consideration safeguarding the interests of future

generations (Alhaddi, 2015). This is often referred to as the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model, which has expanded the traditional economically-focused domain of sustainability framework to include the social and environmental dimensions urging organizations to consider the three Ps of People, Planet, and Profit in their efforts to transition to the kind of sustainability that enhances environmental quality and social equity along with economic benefits (Alhaddi, 2015; Correia, 2019).

Regarding the focus of the study, sustainability in fashion is often considered to be the shortage of resources needed to produce fabric (Paulina, 2018). However, the researcher, considering the overall impact of the industry and the TBL, adopts the following definition of sustainable fashion: "The variety of means by which a fashion item or behavior could be perceived to be more sustainable, including (but not limited to) environmental, social, slow fashion, reuse, recycling, cruelty-free and anti-consumption and production practices" (Mukendi, Davies, Glozer, & McDonagh, 2020, p. 2874). This definition allows for some terms, such as ethical fashion, eco-fashion, slow fashion, and green fashion, to be used interchangeably with sustainable fashion (Mukendi, Davies, Glozer, & McDonagh, 2020).

While some research adds more dimensions, such as the ethical factor (John & Narayanamurthy, 2015), this can also be extended to include factors such as accepting accountability, transparency, integration of operations, commitment to stakeholders, and systematic reporting and analysis of performance regarding the three pillars (Goel, 2010). Moreover, the concept of sustainability has also witnessed a transformation from focusing on general themes into addressing matters related to specific topics such as organic, fair trade, and business practices (Shen, Richards, & Liu, 2013).

Inconsistency still exists in the literature regarding the use of the three pillars of sustainability, with most studies focusing more on environmental factors and less on social and economic concerns (Alhaddi, 2015). Generally, the ecological dimension is considered the most important factor, followed by social and economic factors. The argument used here is that, first and foremost, it all depends on the planet's sources and limits (Correia, 2019). Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas (2011) urge a new way of looking at the environmental dimension by redefining it concerning consumers. By this, they try to emphasize the substantial impact of consumption and consumer behaviors on the

environment. This study adopts a holistic approach to sustainability and aims to address the TBL model and to discuss and highlight the role of consumption on the environmental dimension, following the recommendation of Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas (2011).

2.2. Sustainability: Theoretical Background

Developing theories in the realm of sustainability studies is directed mainly toward creating a body of knowledge that decreases the gap that usually exists between theory and practice. In other words, it is perceived that developing a practical model that solves the theory-practice dilemma is highly preferred to creating a general theory of sustainability (Grunwald, 2015). Jahn (2015) suggests that sustainability can be defined based on a few characteristics. For example, he suggests that sustainability can be described as a process, not a stable concept. Grunwald (2015) also supported this. Further, there is an interaction pattern that governs different pillars of sustainability. This means that changes in one pillar will affect the rest.

Ekardt (2015) argues that an integrated comprehension of the concept of sustainability should be introduced with some characteristics. First, a clear definition of sustainability term should be present. Second, the current existing situation with regard to sustainable development should be clearly understood and analyzed. Third, a causal analysis must be present to introduce reasons for success or failure in adapting sustainability measures. Fourth, the logic and the motivations behind the movement toward sustainability should be clarified and explained. Finally, an execution and an implementation pattern of how to put in effect different actions that eventually lead to achieving sustainability goals.

In Table 2.1. the author provides a summary of the main theories that have been used in the literature with regard to sustainability. These theories will be discussed in details later in the thesis.

Table 2.1. Sustainability Theories in Literature

Theory	Main author(s)	Theory's main proposal	Relevancy with study purposes
Stakeholders' theory	Bendheim, Waddock, & Graves, 1998; Gibson, 2012; Wolf, 2013	To categorize the environment as one of the organization's main stakeholders	To understand the strategic importance of sustainability within the plans of fashion brands
Theory of Artificial Entity	Lozano, Carpenter, & Huisingh, 2015	Limited manager power in affecting sustainability	Not used
Theory of aggregate entity	Lozano, Carpenter, & Huisingh, 2015	The possible contradiction between sustainability goals and shareholders' goals	Not used
Theory of real entity	Lozano, Carpenter, & Huisingh, 2015	Role of legal responsibilities in empowering managers' power toward achieving sustainability goals	Not used
Contractual and agency theory	Lozano, Carpenter, & Huisingh, 2015	To include transaction cost in sustainability decisions	To analyze economic motivation and challenges behind the transition into sustainability

Table 2.1. (cont.)

Evolutionary theory	Lozano, Carpenter, & Huisingh, 2015	Proposing a sustainability-oriented organization will drive others out of the market.	Not used
RBV	Lozano, Carpenter, & Huisingh, 2015	Approaching sustainability measures as a company's internal strength	Not used
Corporate and social responsibility	Bowen, 1953	Companies' main goals should be focused on serving the society they operate within rather than achieving profit as the main goal.	Understanding motivations and pressure coming from society
Circular economy	Korhonen, Honkasalo, & Seppälä, 2018). Shirvanimoghaddam, Motamed, Ramakrishna, & Naebe (2020)	Proposing a model for maximizing the utilization of the products by maximizing the time in which the different resources stay in the cycle	To understand the macroeconomic mechanisms behind the sustainability process and link it to fashion brands' strategies.
CCS	Seth et al., 2011	Suggesting that companies moving to sustainability are customer-driven	To analyze the role that customers play in pushing brands to apply sustainability measures.

Source: Developed by the author from multiple sources

2.3. Fashion and Sustainability

As explained in the introduction, the significance of sustainability in the fashion sector comes from the fact that the fashion industry is a significant contributor to non-sustainable measures and lifestyles. Relying on the definition mentioned above of sustainable fashion that was adopted by this study, namely the one used by Mukendi, Davies, Glozer & McDonagh (2020) as "the variety of means by which a fashion item or behavior could be perceived to be more sustainable, including (but not limited to) environmental, social, slow fashion, reuse, recycling, cruelty-free and anti-consumption and production practices," (p. 2874) the study implies that businesses should be conducted in conditions where neither workers nor environment is harmed as a result of their processes while also maintaining fair trade principles. Shen, Richards, & Liu (2013) maintain that sustainable fashion should include elements such as the inclusion of recycled and/or organic raw materials, the use of second-hand clothes, local production, slow fashion, avoiding the use of animal products, and practicing fair trade principles. Blazquez, Henninger, Alexander, & Franquesa (2019) make the distinction between eco-fashion, ethical fashion, and slow fashion. Eco-fashion addresses the effects on the environment. This includes the use of organic and eco-friendly materials and the decrease of CO2 emissions. On the other hand, ethical fashion extends the scope to cover social issues such as working conditions. Finally, slow fashion is perceived to combine both fashion types with the introduction of supply chain elements by focusing on factors such as locally produced inputs and small lot sizes. The slow fashion trend is one of the sustainable tools that is used as a counter to fast fashion orientations (Faber, Jorna, & Van Engelen, 2005). The essential characteristics of slow fashion include higher prices, lower volumes, luxury orientations, and aiming for a longer lifetime (Adıgüzel, 2020). While technological advancements can play an essential role in diminishing the harmful effects of textile production, the role of companies and customers in supporting sustainable patterns is seen to be very critical (Boström & Micheletti, 2016).

Drawing on literature as well as his work experience, the researcher maintains that any consideration of sustainability in fashion should include the whole life cycle of a single garment. Consequently, any discussion about sustainability should also address the stages of this lifecycle, including designing the garment, manufacturing, marketing,

consuming, and disposing. No stage should be ignored or given more priority than another, allowing all the parties and stakeholders involved in each stage to be a part of the sustainability project.

Before addressing the lifecycle of a garment in relation to sustainability, it is essential to introduce the concept of fast fashion, which has transformed the industry and made the impact on the environment more significant. Besides, all the brands included in this research belong to the fast fashion category, which has been under scrutiny and pressure to employ sustainability seriously.

2.3.1. Fast Fashion

Fast fashion is a strategy employed by many of the big fashion brands in the world such as ZARA and H&M. It is based on the technique of continuous introduction of new models and styles to the customers. The strategy is based on immediate response to customers' changing moods towards fashion. As a result, the strategy seeks lower cost and flexible structure (Adıgüzel, 2020).

The emerging fast fashion trends have transformed the way consumers buy clothes with its ability to make available popular styles of higher-end designs at cheap prices. Because of that, fast fashion is sometimes referred to as the "democratization" of fashion since it grants average consumers access to new attractive designs at affordable prices (Bick, Halsey & Ekenga, 2018). Yet, this was at the expense of environmental and social risks.

Fast fashion has caused consumption to rise significantly (De Angelis, Amatulli, & Pinato, 2020). About 80 billion garments are purchased each year (Bick, Halsey & Ekenga, 2018). Low prices often encourage customers to buy more and consequently dispose of more. Because fast fashion is about producing more within the shortest time, clothes made by fast fashion companies are often created in compromising environmental and social settings (Wren, 2022). Fast fashion relies on outsourcing production in developing and poor countries, which endangers the lives of workers and the surrounding environment (Bick, Halsey & Ekenga, 2018). In addition, the need for cheap production often leads to the employment of non-sustainable practices

(Presley & Meade, 2018). The majority of these garments are made using non-biodegradable petroleum-based synthetic clothes, which poses environmental risks (Pucker, 2022, January 13).

Thus, due to the above, regulators often target fast fashion brands the most for their contribution to emissions and waste. In fact, fast fashion seems to be in conflict with sustainability. While sustainability is about durability and less consumption, fast fashion encourages consumerism and quick disposable of garments. The word "fast" refers to "how quickly retailers can move designs from the catwalk to stores, keeping pace with constant demand for more and different styles" (Bick, Halsey & Ekenga, 2018, p. 1). The logic of fast fashion is based on the system of nonstop supplement of new designs as an instant response to customers' changing moods towards fashion, employing low cost and flexible structure (Adıgüzel, Linkowski, & Olson, 2020). This results in impulsive consumption and waste (Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez, 2021; Presley & Meade, 2018).

Therefore, ensuring that fast fashion brands accurately adhere to pro-sustainability principles remains a challenge worldwide since it involves a linear, non-circular model that quickly produces large quantities of less enduring clothes at low prices. Moreover, with inflation and high textile prices on the rise, consumers may be more likely to choose fast fashion products. This again brings the discussion of the consumer and its vital role in the study, which will be discussed later.

2.4. Why Sustainability in Fashion: The Footprint of Fashion

All the stages of the fashion industry have an undeniable and significant impact on the world's overall pollution. In addition, it causes high rates of consumption of natural resources like water and other resources. (Desore & Narula, 2017). In Table 2.1, the researcher summarizes the significant adverse impacts of the industry on different areas.

Table 2.2. Summary of Different Negative Impacts of the Fashion Industry

Area of impact	Examples of Fashion industry-specific impact
Water	250 gr shirt consumes 2700 liter of water One pair of jeans consumes 3625 liters of water Water used by the fashion industry can replace the water supply for around 110 million people.
Energy	Yearly emission produced by the industry is expected to reach 2.8 billion tons by 2030, which is equal to energy consumption by 230 million passengers driving their vehicles for a year.
Chemicals	The cost of health impacts resulting from the usage of different chemicals in the industry, such as fertilizers and other toxic inorganic stuff, is estimated to reach €7 billion by the year 2030.
Waste	Fashion waste is estimated to be 148 million tons by 2030, which accounts for 4% of total human waste.
Social impacts	The fashion industry is the focus of high level of criticism for enforcing low salaries and poor work conditions, especially when investigating supply chains in which big brands are ignoring such practices, mainly in some poor countries.

Source: Hayek, Kenel, & Steiner (2020, February 22).

In the following sections, the researcher will address the different stages of a garment's life cycle and their potential harms. One section will cover the production stages, and the other will address the consumption phase. Along with the discussion, some suggestions for sustainable alternatives will be given.

2.4.1. Production

These main stages of fashion can be divided into fiber and yarn production, garment production, retailing, consumption of the final customer, and disposal (Muthu, 2017). First, it is helpful to understand the basic operations involved in fashion production. The process starts with turning fiber into yarn via spinning processes. Then, the yarn is either weaved or knitted and turned into fabric. Fabric can be subject to different treatments according to the needs of final products. These treatments include dying, printing, or finishing. Finally, this finished fabric is cut and sewed to reach the final garment (Kumar & Joshiba, 2020).

In the production stage, almost every step, from dying, sizing, and finishing the product ranks high in terms of water and energy consumption (Ozturk, Koseoglu, Karaboyaci, Yigit, Yetis, & Kitis, 2016). In addition, the use of chemicals in the production stages produces adverse side effects. The dyeing process, for example, generates several chemicals that can directly impact workers health and their well-being. In addition, the remains of the substances are likely to transfer into natural water sources, which cause non-reversible damage (Kant, 2012).

In the following, further details of the production stages will be discussed in relation to raw materials, fabric processing, and garment processing. It should be mentioned that the scope of this study is limited to impacts specific to the fashion industry. For example, packaging can be seen as a production stage that has its negative consequences as well. However, since this stage is not only specific to the fashion industry, the researcher chooses to dismiss packaging and similar fashion non-specific stages from the analysis.

2.4.1.1. Raw Materials

Fibers used in the textile industry are limited to two major categories: natural and man-made fibers (Lee, 2017). The use of natural fibers has witnessed considerable increases in recent years. These fibers are more sustainable, biodegradable, and recyclable than synthetic fibers. In addition, they provide similar performance and display characteristics. Natural fibers mainly fall into three main categories: cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin (Eyupoglu, 2020). Examples of natural fibers include cotton, organic cotton, wool, Linen, bamboo, and hemp (Lee, 2017). Cotton constitutes around 25% of the total raw materials used in the textile industry. Cotton is sustainable in terms of being clean and eco-friendly fiber. However, two main problems are associated with its growing process. These problems are found in the high usage of pesticides and the large consumption of water (Kumar & Joshiba, 2020). One single cotton T-shirt produces around 2.1 KG of CO2. This amount rises to 107.5 million tons of CO2 per year (Lee, 2017). As for water consumption, cotton is responsible for consuming 2,6% of global resources (Saygılı, Saygılı & Gören Yargı, 2019). Moreover, during the production stage, handling natural raw materials such as cotton requires the use of massive amounts of harmful chemicals and water (Saygılı, Saygılı

& Gören Yargı, 2019). Hemp, bamboo, and flex are natural fibers that can be considered good alternatives to cotton and wool when sustainability concerns are considered. This is due to their high productivity, needing less pesticides, high level of contribution to soil enrichment, and lower consumption of chemicals (Lee, 2017; Shirvanimoghaddam, Motamed, Ramakrishna, & Naebe, 2020).

When polyester is analyzed as one of the man-made fibers, it is observed that around 5.5 kg of CO2 is emitted from the production of a single T-shirt. This amount is equal to the burning of 5.9 lb. of coal. Since 80% of global polyester production belongs to the textile industry, it becomes urgent to address this substantial negative impact. Consequently, the annual emission of Co2 resulting only from using this fiber amounts to 706 billion KG (Lee, 2017), which was around 2% of the overall fuel and industry emissions in 2017[2]. Other unsustainable synthetic fibers include, Acrylic, which is known for high levels of energy consumption (Lee, 2017), Spandex, which is considered a cause of health and environmental hazards (Lee, 2017), and polyvinyl chloride, which causes high levels of greenhouse gasses emissions (Lee, 2017). Recycled polyester is considered a sustainable alternative to traditional polyester, given its ability to consume less energy and produce less CO2 (Lee, 2017).

Organic fibers are cultivated using methods and standards different from those used in growing the mainstream of other fibers. These standards can be different among various countries and associations. Examples of these standards include the use of crop diversification, the use of organic input, the use of natural pesticides and organic feed, and the use of genetic engineering (Lee, 2017). The use of organic cotton resulted in a 90% reduction in water and 60% of energy consumption (Lee, 2017).

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that recycling textiles is beneficial in the production stage as it means less waste and less pollution, thus better protection of natural resources (Rugedhla, Moalosi & Fidzani, 2020). Recycling and upcycling are two critical processes. Upcycling is a process in which raw materials that have remained unused from a particular production process are reused again and re-putted into production. Recycling, on the other hand, refers to the reuse of final product materials

[2] www.statista.com, Retrieved on 10 September 2019.

that cannot be used anymore to produce new products (Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, & Ghezzi, 2017).

2.4.1.2. Fabric Processing

Fabric processing starts with transforming raw materials into raw fabric that can be used later for garment preparation. This transformation from raw materials into cloth goes through several stages. These stages include spinning, weaving, bleaching, finishing, and dying. (Shirvanimoghaddam, Motamed, Ramakrishna, & Naebe, 2020). Each of these processes can be analyzed in terms of its undesirable and unsustainable outcomes.

2.4.1.3. Spinning

Spinning process is recognized to be a production stage that exhausts a large amount of energy (Kumar & Joshiba, 2020). This could be avoided by using sustainable spinning techniques in which less amount of energy is required. New sustainable technologies developed in this area focus on enhancing some factors, such as speed of the machine, the thickness and the type of the yarn, and the rate of energy consumption (Kumar & Joshiba, 2020).

2.4.1.4. Bleaching

Bleaching is a necessary process that is applied to raw fabrics in order to remove different materials that were applied to fabrics in previous stages of production. The most common method in this stage is the use of Chlorine, which is known for its high risks to the environment and health (Lee, 2017). These effects can be revised by using hydrogen peroxide instead (Lee, 2017). Another important sustainable alternative to bleaching is the use of laser technologies that can give similar results without the need to use chemicals or water. In addition, the use of Ozone has also been advocated as an alternative that produces identical outcomes with less use of energy, toxic dyestuff, and water (Lee, 2017).

2.4.1.5. Dying

Dying is an important step that is required for recoloring fabric. This is done by using different ingredients that can be toxic for both humans and nature. This is also combined with the usage of high amounts of water (Lee, 2017). The harmful effects of the dying process in textiles can be identified in several dimensions. First, since the process of dying requires the use of massive amount of energy, air pollution is often a consequence. This process can include the burning of fossil fuels like coal to achieve required targets. Second, water pollution is another unsustainable outcome. On top of the fact that the water used in the process is subject to a vast number of different contaminators and polluters, there is also a high level of water consumption associated with the dying process. Stages, such as washing, cleaning, steam generating, dissolution of chemicals, bleaching, and boiling, include the use of massive amounts of water (Periyasami & Militky, 2020). Natural dying is considered to be the leading solution to deal with the different unsustainable side effects resulting from the current conventional dying process (Lee, 2017; Shirvanimoghaddam, Motamed, Ramakrishna, & Naebe, 2020).

2.4.1.6. Finishing

The finishing stage consumes a large amount of water, leaving a heavy footprint of pollution on the environment (Kumar & Joshiba, 2020). Only 1 kilo gram of textile material consumes between 100 and 150 liters of clean water during the finishing process (Eren, Yigit, Eren, & Avinc, 2020). There have been calls to use sustainable finishing techniques such as bioprocessing, plasma treatments, UV-repellent, and flame-retardant techniques (Gopalakrishnan, Saravanan & Das, 2020). Printing, which is a unique finishing process, results in a massive number of toxic wastes. Each printing process often leaves behind around 1.5 gallons of printing paste, which has the potential to exhaust vast amounts of water and energy with the possibility of transmitting toxins into natural water resources. Digital printing is proposed as a clean and sustainable alternative (Lee, 2017).

2.4.1.7. Garment Processing

Garment processing involves common and similar stages to fabric processing. Namely, processes such as bleaching, dying, and printing are common in both processes. In this section, the focus will be on the assembly process as one dimension of garment processing. The main sustainable task of people who are involved in the garment making process is to avoid wastage costs by mainly focusing on reduction of wastages in the areas of labor, materials, and energy (Lee, 2017).

The methods of zero-waste pattern-making refer to efficient techniques used in design that avoid fabric wastage, which is a common and problematic issue that happens during the design process (McKinney, Cho, Zhang, Eike & Sanders, 2020). Designers can incorporate advanced computer software that helps in the redesigning process by using post-consumer and post-industrial wastes. These methods are helpful in both reducing waste and increasing garment surface efficiency (Hwang & Zhang, 2020). Moreover, designers can consider different techniques in which future garment needs, such as repair and recycling, are taken into consideration (Rathinamoorthy, 2020). Various methods can be used in design to increase the life of the garment. Examples of these techniques include choosing better quality fabrics, making designs that are flexible to size changes, and choosing colors that rarely get out of trend (Rathinamoorthy, 2020). Zero-waste design techniques would save millions of fabric wastages since the conventional process of garment making produces around 15-20% of waste and unused materials (Lee, 2017).

This section has briefly outlined the harmful effects of the fashion industry in the production stage and presented some clean and sustainable alternatives. However, while the industry has managed to reduce emission levels and the amount of water in the production stage, sustainability and climate NGOs warn that such successful achievements can be 'canceled out' because the production is witnessing a significant increase (Wood, 2023, November 6). This is mainly due to rising demand from the consumer and throw-away culture facilitated by the cheap fast fashion trends, which brings the consumer to the center of attention. In the following, the researcher will explain why it is not enough to produce and consume sustainable fashion to achieve sustainability but rather how to consume.

2.4.2. Consumption

A critical aspect of this discussion is distinguishing between sustainable fashion consumption and sustainable consumption. This distinction arises from the standard practices of consumerism and overconsumption that have characterized lifestyles in the last few decades. Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas (2011) note that overconsumption, which is evident, especially in affluent countries such as the U.S. and many European countries, becomes "unproductive and unsustainable" and turns to particularly problematic "when the level of consumption becomes unaffordable or unacceptable because of its environmental or economic consequences and affects negatively personal and collective well-being" (p. 25). Recently, high consumption has also been visible in increasingly booming China, India, and other countries where poverty levels are decreasing. Generally, businesses and marketers have ignored the potential problem of overconsumption. Even when some considerations were made, the attention was not on "the level or scale of consumption" but rather on "the nature of what is used or consumed—meaning, ecologically inefficient products," assuming that "the greening of consumption" or consuming environmentally-friendly product could alleviate the problems of any level of consumption (p. 26). This topic urgently needs more attention because this high level of consumption is concentrated in specific regions of the world. Figures for 2020 show that the market share of apparel demand around the world was focused on Europe, North America, and Asia Pacific, with a percentage of more than 85%, leaving around 14% for the rest of the world[3]. It can be concluded that a clear case of excessive consumption exists since the population of the rest, 14% of the world, exceeds the population of the three regions that were mentioned previously. Moreover, while green consumption has gained desirability and acceptance in the business and consumption sectors, its impact is still not visible due to many obstacles. Even when companies try to direct their strategies towards sustainability, this may not bring the desired result. For example, it seems that garment labels can provide an effective marketing tool that results in higher sales. As a result, the effect of extra consumption cancels out the effect of sustainably producing the products (Adıgüzel, Linkowski, & Olson, 2020). According to Textiles 2030, an NGO in the United Kingdom which supports fashion companies in applying sustainable

[3] WWW.Statista.com

practices, 12 % of the reduction in carbon emission that was achieved by the industry was negated by a 13 % rise in textiles produced and sold (Wood, 2022, November 6). This is often referred to as the rebound effect, which will be discussed later in the study. The director of Textiles 2030 maintains that the other part of the equation, namely consumption, should be emphasized, highlighting the role of responsible shopping. Lee (2017) believes that consumers should be encouraged to take active roles as responsible shoppers and to take part in recycling and donating practices.

The primary outcome of excessive consumption of fashion products is excessive disposal of these products. The disposal of textile products after their usage reflects one of the significant unsustainable practices that is related to consumer behavior. The amount of wastage resulting from the disposal of apparel products is substantial and poses an international concern. İt is estimated that only 15% of products are recycled while the rest goes to waste (Lee, 2017), leaving around 25 billion pounds of textile waste every year, which is estimated to occupy around 5% of the landscape. Each piece of cloth that is thrown away takes around eight years to degrade. When buried in landfills or burnt, these disposed items contribute to the emissions of CO2 (Lee, 2017).

In summary, in Table 2.3, the researcher provides an overview of the impact of the fashion industry in the production and consumption stages.

Table 2.3. Summary of Fashion Industry-Related Impacts

Main matter	**Production /consumption**	**Category**	**Unsustainable outcome**	**Sustainable solution**
Cotton	Production	Raw Material	High consumption of water and pesticides	Natural fibers
Polyester	Production	Raw Material	Increased Co2 emissions	Recycle polyester
Spinning	Production	Fabric processing	High energy consumption, high wastage rates	Higher speed of machines for less energy consumption, recycling
Bleaching	Production	Fabric and garment processing	Toxic effects of Chlorine on the environment	Hydergine peroxide, Laser, Ozon
Dying	Production	Fabric and garment Processing	Toxic effects of dyestuff on environment, high consumption of water, air pollution, the use of fossil fuels	Natural dyeing

Table 2.3. (cont.)

Finishing	Production	Fabric processing	Large water consumption, toxic pollution of the environment, increased level of Co2 emissions	Bioprocessing, plasma treatments, UV-repellent finishes, and flame-retardant finish
Printing	Production	Fabric and garment processing	Toxic remains	Digital printing
Designs	Production	Garment processing	Huge amount of waste	Zero waste pattern making
Fast fashion	Consumption	Marketing	Excessive production and disposal	Slow Fashion
Disposal	Consumption	Consumers	High rates of waste	Post-consumer recycling, donation

Source: developed by the author from different sources

2.5. Sustainable Fashion and Brands

In their research of fashion brands, Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, & Ghezzi (2017) identify several factors that have pushed brands to embrace sustainability. These include:

- Increased consumer awareness that has demanded the brands to align with ethical values;

- The utilization of patterns of circular economy, including recycling and upcycling, and vegan patterns in order to keep all materials in their maximum utility and value;
- Corporate social responsibility, which made companies responsible for abiding by certain sustainable practices such as adapting labor code standards, enforcing supplier transparency, sustainability reporting, and auditing practices;
- Sharing economy and collaborative consumption and the rise of values such as collaboration, donation, sharing, and so on;
- Technological innovation which made it possible for better clothes durability, less waste, and effective use of synthetic fibers to replace natural ones.

On the other hand, research also identifies a number of advantages that companies can earn when applying green measures, including earning profits (Desore & Narulu, 2017), brand building, long term customer relationships, and community support (John & Narayanamurthy, 2015), waste reduction, better efficiency, and better working conditions (Zhuang, Luo, & Riaz, 2021).

In the following, the researcher provides some relevant information from the sustainability reports and applications of two giants in the fast fashion sector of the world, namely Inditex and H&M.

2.5.1. Selected Global Fast Fashion Brands: Review of Sustainability Measures

Realizing the expanding trend of sustainability pushed by regulators and consumers, giant fast fashion brands such as Zara and H&M have made massive investments in the field of sustainability (Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, & Ghezzi, 2017). The researcher selected some aspects and applications of these brands that he found relevant to the current study. The three main aspects that were selected for each brand are environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and supplier auditing. The main goal is to establish some kind of benchmarks that can be used in the data collection and analysis of the Turkish brands that are to be studied in this study. These brands were selected after consulting several fashion experts in the country, including the ones who were later interviewed. According to the experts, these brands represent

the general mainstream of sustainability practices applied in the fashion industry. Table 2.3. provides a comparison between these three brands in terms of the significant categories of sustainability applications.

2.5.1.1. Inditex

Inditex is one of the biggest fashion brands around the world with a size of 5815 stores that are located in 96 countries. The brand headquarter is located in Spain and the group contains 8 sub-brands. This includes, Zara, Pull&Bear, Massimo Dutti, Bershka, Stradivarius, Oysho, Zara Home and Uterqüe. (Inditex, n.d.).
İn terms of environmental sustainability, sustainability report[4] shows that the following applications were made:

i. Raw materials:

- 2023 is set as a target for 100% transformation to the use of sustainable cotton. This is being revised to be two years ahead of the previous planned target of 2025.
- 100% usage of man-made fiber has also been targeted for 2023.
- 100% usage of green packaging.
- 2025 is set as a year target for 100% usage of Linen.
- Increasing use of materials that come from used garments.

ii. Water and Chemicals:

- A 25% reduction in water consumption has been set as a target for 2025.
- Partnership for Cleaner Textile Program (PaCT): an initiative that aims to achieve significant changes in the textile industry in Bangladesh. The most recent outcomes of this program were to achieve yearly savings of 27.6 billion liters of water, 3.2 million MWh of energy, 618,779 tons of Co2, and

[4] Inditex sustainability report (2021). Retrieved May 1, 2024 from https://static.inditex.com/annual_report_2021/en/documents/sustainability-basis-transformation.pdf

23 billion liters of wastewater. This happened along with conducting 416 training sessions that included more than 6000[5] employees.

- The project of Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) is an important initiative by Inditex to put pressure on their suppliers to comply with certain requirements and to provide them with guidance and training on sustainable methods.
- The List: the group has introduced a list of environmentally friendly chemicals that they require their suppliers to use.

Carbon Emissions and Energy:

- Implementing low-carbon technologies in facilities.
- Supporting low-carbon emission processes in the supply chain.
- Designing products that require less energy to produce.
- Promoting more efficient use of the products to customers.
- Promoting recycling for both fibers and garments.
- The use of green building designs: LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and BREEM certificates;
- Reduction of 20% in energy and 40% in water.
- Logistic facilities in Spain are using 100% renewable energy.

In terms of social sustainability, the following were observed in the research:

- The Code of Conduct for Manufacturers and Suppliers to ensure fairness of all workers.
- A collaboration with IndustriAll Global Union to ensure observing suppliers' policies towards local unions.
- Inditex's Apparel and Footwear Supply Chain Transparency Pledge requires its direct and indirect suppliers to reveal information regarding finance, production, and other practices.

[5] Partnership for cleaner textile. Retrieved September 24, 2021 from https://www.textilepact.net/

In terms of supplier auditing, the group conducts strict auditing for all the direct and indirect suppliers it works with. The process even starts before working with the related supplier. An Inditex supplier must achieve the minimum standards of two main auditing processes: Clear to Wear and Safe to Wear. They aim to maintain accountability and create a healthy and safe workplace. [6]

2.5.1.2. H&M

Hennes & Mauritz, known as H&M, is another major fast-fashion group based in Sweden. While the group has 8 sub-brands, H&M is the main and major brand. The group has 4850 stores allocated within 75 countries (H&M, n.d.).
H&M sustainability reports provide detailed information about the group's sustainability efforts.[7] Regarding environmental sustainability, the following data are relevant:

- Raw materials:

  - Continuous increase in the use of recycled materials (from 20% in 2015 to 85% in 2023).
  - Recycled cotton is increased up to 11% in 2023 compared to 2% in 2020. While total sustainable cotton has reached 76%.
  - Establishing Looper Textile as a joint venture that specializes in increasing the useful life of unwanted garments by recycling and reusing them.

- Water and chemicals:

  - 93% of supplier factories apply ZDHC standards in 2023 compared to 75% in 2015.
  - A clear chemical management strategy based on higher traceability and transparency levels.

[6] Inditex sustainability report (2022). Retrieved May 1, 2024 from https://static.inditex.com/annual_report_2022/pdf/Inditex-group-annual-report-2022.pdf
[7] H&M sustainability report (2023). Retrieved May 1, 2024 from https://hmgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/HM-Group-Sustainability-Disclosure-2023.pdf

- Choosing chemicals based on combining performance with sustainability goals to avoid the use of toxic chemicals, using the ZDHC strategy while pushing for a circular pattern and recycling efforts.
- Applying common standards across the value chain is encouraged.

➢ Energy:

- Renewable electricity increased to 94% in 2023 compared to 78% in 2015.
- Decrease in Co2 emission by 22% in 2023.

In terms of social sustainability, the following are observed:

H&M manages a Wage Management System program to ensure that its suppliers apply specific standards regarding the wage system. Providing customers with all necessary information regarding the purchased products to give them assurances about the factories, countries, and standards in which the products were produced.

As for suppliers auditing, H&M suppliers are evaluated using Higg Facility Environmental Module (FEM). The Higg index evaluates factories based on seven criteria. This includes environmental management systems, energy use and greenhouse emissions, water use, wastewater, emissions to air, waste management, and chemical management.[8] Factories that pass a certain Higg score are enrolled within the direct H&M suppliers' list. This is done by assigning routine audits to those factories by specialized third parties. Moreover, suppliers are obliged to sign H&M's Code of Ethics and Sustainability Commitment, which requires them to apply specific social standards.

[8] Retrieved October 17, 2022, from https://www.eurofins.com/assurance/consumer-products/factory-audit/environmental/higg-facility-environmental-module-higg-fem/?gclid=CjwKCAjw7fuJBhBdEiwA2lLMYY9xAJ_ktXtk8spgOxaOtjUXvh1EZD8oh09kZmvDEt2lkcKeGZRWURoCOwwQAvD_BwE

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current study relies on a number of conceptual and theoretical frameworks, which will be discussed in this chapter. With the research questions in mind, the researcher studied extensively through literature and found inspiration and relevance in the following concepts and theories.

3.1. Stakeholder Theory

The term' stakeholder' was first developed by arguing that organizations' responsibilities extend to every party affected by the organization's business (Freeman, 1984; Gibson, 2012). Many efforts have been made to integrate stakeholder theory with sustainability-related literature due to the innovative nature of that theory (Chang, Zuo, ZhaoZillante, Gan, & Soebarto, 2017). The interaction between stakeholder concept and sustainability came from the argument that the environment should be considered one of the stakeholders that should be attended to by companies. This argument stems from the fact that the industry has directly damaged the environment. That damage negatively impacts the industry by decreasing its ability to renew and replace (Bendheim, Waddock, & Graves, 1998). When the stakeholder's theory is analyzed, it seems the main focus is on addressing economic factors. Thus, the theory is limited because it ignores addressing ethical issues (Orts & Strudler, 2002). An essential outcome of considering the environment as a stakeholder is that it directs companies to view the environment from different angles, which results in more lively approaches (Starik, 1995). Alternatively, instead of the general framework in which stakeholders' theory treats sustainability and environmental concerns, Gibson (2012) suggests focusing on human sustainability. Consequently, the focus should be on the usefulness of resource reservation rather than the general approach of aesthetic factors. Evidence shows that the pressure applied by different stakeholders can motivate managers to act in a way that enhances sustainability actions inside the firm (Wolf,

2013). Stakeholder pressure provides important motivation that can push companies to engage in sustainable performance. Strategic goals for companies should be achieved while considering that firms are social agents that have to react to whatever pressure they receive from different stakeholders (Linnenluecke & Griffiths 2013). Moreover, in the conventional stakeholders' view, attention is centered on stakeholders such as regulators, advocates, investors, and the media and less on customers. The study recognizes the need to consider the role of customers. This is because the customer is regarded as an essential stakeholder capable of creating changes in the industry (Seth et al., 2011). Thus, in the current study, the researcher places his argument within a framework of the positive impact of applying stakeholder pressure to reach sustainability goals in fashion and outlines some good practices.

3.2. Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR)

Literature concerning the relationship between business organizations and social involvement returns to the fifties (Lee, 2008). Bowen (1953) highlighted businessmen's responsibilities towards adopting favorable actions in terms of providing advantages to the society they operate within. This view has evolved, addressing the subject from different angles and perspectives. For example, it is argued that companies have obligations beyond traditionally tracking economic benefits toward serving goals related to environmental and social well-being (Davis, 1973). Another perspective is to shape different outcomes of companies' actions according to the expectations of the related society (Carroll, 1979). A company's social responsibilities can be better understood by analyzing the different impacts on the organization's performance resulting from such approaches. Examples include the effect on the company's financial performance (Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003; Horváthová, 2010; King & Lenox, 2011), impacts on business competitiveness (Tan, Ooi, & Goh, 2017; Wagner, Azomahou, & Wehrmeyer, 2002), has implications on productivity and efficiency (Linde, Croland, Bonifant, Esty, Marron, Rivkin, & Siggelkow, 1995).

The understanding of CSR has ranged from the social responsibility of businesses to the need to follow sustainable paths. Defining the term has not been easy because of the complexity involved. Although the concept refers to how companies voluntarily

approach their businesses to ensure a healthy environment and society, which may indicate a lack of legal liability, it does influence public opinion and the legality of the business (Thorisdottir & Johannsdottir, 2020). İn this study; the author utilizes this concept to approach what companies have achieved to advance social and environmental causes.

3.3. Corporate Sustainability

Corporate sustainability focuses on integrating social and environmental issues along with the organization's general business processes (Van Marrewijk, 2003). İt represents a holistic approach to sustainability and is best understood through the Triple Bottom Line model and its three pillars (Chang, Zuo, ZhaoZillante, Gan, & Soebarto, 2017). The TBL model, developed by Elkington (1999), represents an innovative departure from the conventional understanding of sustainable development in business. Sustainability was often understood in terms of the mere effort to accommodate between achieving profits and protecting the environment. Recently, it has been referred to as a more integrated process that aims to achieve economic, environmental, and social justice targets (Elkington, 1999). (Elkington, 1999). The concept uses business best practices to achieve these three goals (Artiach, Lee, Nelson, & Walker, 2010) and targets all stakeholders involved (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002).

3.4. Circular Economy

The circular economy is a model that aims to maximize the utilization of the products that contribute to the economic cycle as well as maximize the time in which the different resources stay in the cycle (Shirvanimoghaddam, Motamed, Ramakrishna, & Naebe, 2020). It is defined as "a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended" (European Parliament, 2022, December the 5th). There are two main types of circular economy. The first type is mainly about renewing old products via repairs and upgrades. The second type, however, focuses on recycling (Stahel, 2016). The concept is sometimes called the "cradle to cradle" approach because, unlike the conventional

linear model with a start and end, it implies an ongoing use and reuse of materials and energy in a circular motion.

The concept of circular economy is a newly emerging concept that has gained support from the governments of the EU, China, and Japan (Korhonen, Honkasalo, & Seppälä, 2018). In a traditional linear economy system, there is a one-way flow of materials and energy, which results in an unsustainable effect on the three main pillars of sustainable development. This results in a "shrinking parent system," as seen in Fig 3.1. In contrast, this system will be diminished if the circular economy approach is adopted. As a result of the reuse and recycling process, less raw materials are exhausted. In addition, rather than immediate disposal, the time raw materials spend in the cycle is maximized, resulting in greater efficiency. As seen in Fig 3.2, the final aftermath will maximize the value and the quality of the product value chain and lifecycle (Korhonen, Honkasalo, & Seppälä, 2018).

In the fashion domain, the circular economy aims to achieve the following:

> Reduced utilization of virgin raw materials, efficiency, recycling, reuse, and remanufacturing, new business thinking, avoiding textile waste, slowing down consumption. It also embraces new business strategies, which include renting, sharing, swapping, and borrowing, while at the same time increasing sustainable fashion consumption (Peleg Mizrachi & Tal, 2022, p. 4).

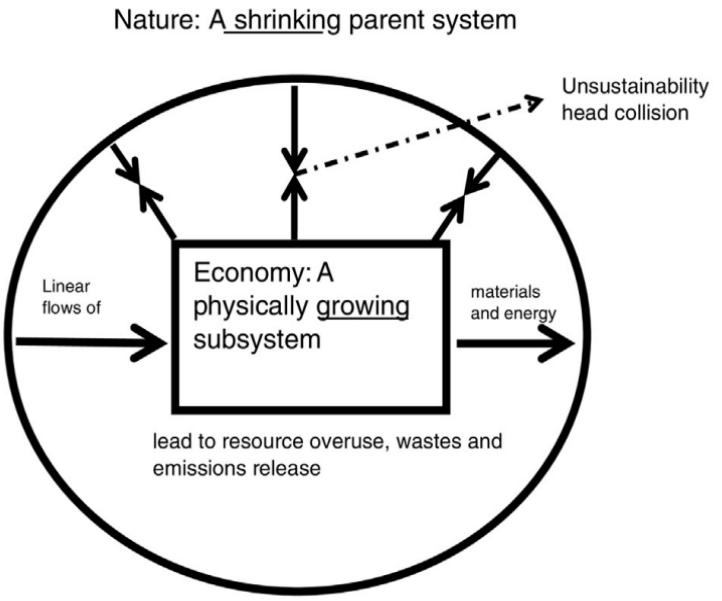

Figure 3.1. Linear Economy Model

Korhonen, Honkasalo, & Seppälä, 2018

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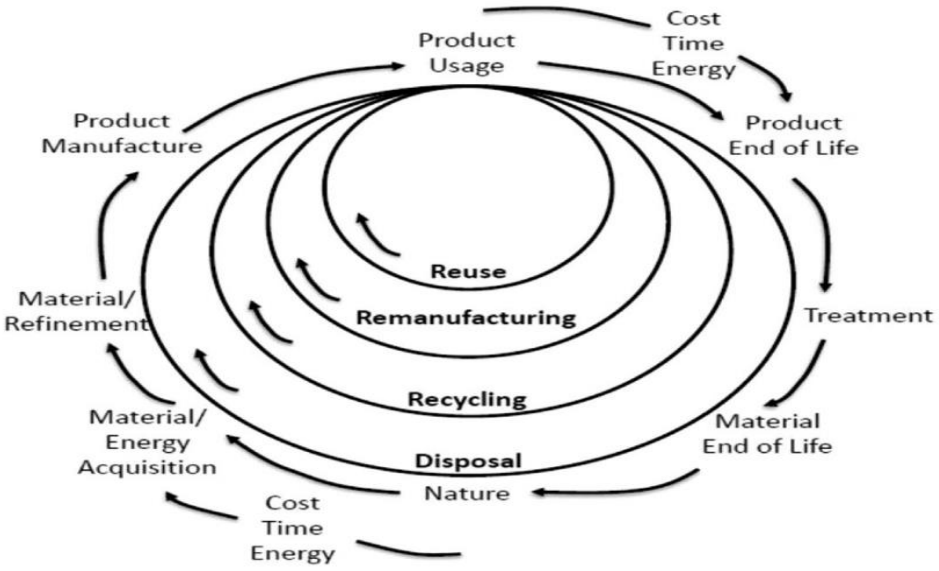

Figure 3.2. Circular Economy Model

Korhonen, Honkasalo, & Seppälä, 2018

Korhonen, Honkasalo & Seppälä (2018) explain circular economy by combining four different angles. First, a circular economy should result in the maximization of the efficiency of both materials and energy. Second, the circular economy model's recycling process for materials and energy is essential. Third, the outcome of the proper application of circular economy should result in parallel improvements on the three main pillars of sustainable development. Finally, the system results in an efficient limitation of the throughput flow.

Although the circular economy model seems to provide value and advantages, it has limitations. Korhonen, Honkasalo & Seppälä (2018) provide an overview of these limitations. For example, recycling, even though it is supposed to help reduce wastages in materials and energy, can also lead to periphery and additional processes that cause more emissions and consumption of resources, such as transportation of these materials. Another pressing issue is what is referred to as the rebound effects, which, if not identified and addressed, could stand in the way of achieving the desired outcomes of the circular economy. Rebound effects happen due to higher efficiency, which decreases costs and stimulates higher levels of production and consumption, which naturally leads to less sustainable outcomes. There is also the problem of path dependency, which may arise when companies are forced to use traditional methods due to the scarcity of sustainable raw materials. This situation can be created by following circular economy standards very strictly. In addition, the circular economy requires a high level of cooperation and integration between different players in the supply chain. Managing this long chain of relations under the umbrella of sustainability seems to be highly challenging. Literature seems to be vague in addressing these challenges. Finally, a certain level of subjectivity exists in the realm of circular economy, which has made it challenging to have a standard and precise definition of circular economy and thus created a lack of agreement on what counts as good practice or activity.

The current study uses the circular economy lens to approach sustainable fashion in the Turkish context and attempts to stress the need to address some of the limitations mentioned above, which could hinder or mask sustainability efforts.

3.5. Customer-Centric Sustainability (CCS)

This study also draws on the concept of customer-centric sustainability (CCS) by Sheth, Sethia & Srinivas (2011), which implies a reconsideration and modification of the three sustainability dimensions (environmental, social, and economic) with a customer-focused approach. The CCS approach to sustainability is "free from the common shortcomings of current sustainability approaches. It is proactive, is necessarily integrated with core business operations, and entails pursuing the three facets of sustainability coherently and holistically." (Sheth, Sethia & Srinivas, 2011, p. 23). Along with their discussion of CCS, the authors introduce the concept of mindful consumption (MC) as the basis of the CCS approach to help businesses and marketers address customer-related issues in sustainability by highlighting the interest of both business and customer interests and addressing the worrying problem of overconsumption. Following the mutual interdependence of business, customers, and policymakers, CCS and MC can help marketers serve the interests of many stakeholders, including customers, communities, regulators, policymakers, and environmental and consumer advocates.

Studies suggest that companies are mainly interested in the area of environmental sustainability. In addition, they are driven by the demand to comply with external pressure rather than genuine strategic internal planning. Other limitations are also evident in how social and economic initiatives are planned and executed through optional programs under the corporate social responsibility (CSR) banner, often not combined with managerial responsibilities and standard business practices. Another limitation of sustainability approaches is that most fail to directly address the customer, a significant stakeholder in the process (Sheth, Sethia & Srinivas, 2011).

Sheth and colleagues (2011) note that "a weak customer focus seriously restricts both the efficiency and the effectiveness of sustainability efforts" (p. 23). In considering the differences in the way companies think and respond to stakeholders, they maintain that in "most sustainability initiatives, the customer is not in the foreground as a stakeholder and that being the case, such initiatives also do not address adequately, much less proactively, customer-centric issues in sustainability" (p. 23). They argue that much attention is directed to other stakeholders, such as regulators, corporate

responsibility advocates, investors, and the media, and less to customers. Their argument also addresses the fact that a customer represents multiple stakeholder identities themselves, which has the potential to create a network of intertwining relations and interests with many other stakeholders. Moreover, some essential sustainability goals, particularly the ones related to mindful consumption, cannot be realized without considering the role of customers.

The general framework of this CCS approach finds its application when companies' strategies are analyzed. According to Zhuang, Luo, & Riaz (2021), companies are motivated to go green mainly due to consumers' demand for such products. As a result, companies use this move to react to this rising trend.

3.6. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The current study finds inspiration in the theory of planned behavior to understand consumers' behavior towards sustainable fashion consumption. The theory was developed by Icek Ajzen in the 1980s in an attempt to understand the underlying causes of peoples' behaviors to predict them. The central assumption of TPB is that all human behaviors result from a proceeding intention to conduct that behavior and the capability of deciding to perform that action (Ham, Jeger, & Ivković, 2015). In summary, the theory claims that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control can predict the intention to conduct a specific action (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude is the level of favorability a person has towards a particular behavior (Beck & Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms are mainly related to a person's motivation to comply with pressure others apply to behave in a particular manner (Chen, 2020). Finally, behavioral control is related to previous experience and perceived potential obstacles associated with performing certain behaviors. These factors result in a certain level of perceived difficulty associated with that behavior (Beck & Ajzen, 1991). Intentions and behavioral control explain a high proportion of the behavior variance (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen argues that the interrelations between attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms cannot be denied. However, exploring the nature of these relations was not resolved by TBA. The primary antecedents of intention mentioned in TPB can be summarized in three basic questions: Do I want to do this behavior?

(attitude), Do others want me to do this behavior? (subjective norms), and am I able to do this behavior? (behavioral control) (Ham, Jeger, & Ivković, 2015).

The theory is described as one of the most compelling theories when analyzing behavioral decisions (Zhuang, Luo, & Riaz, 2021). However, the theory has been criticized for giving so much attention to the consciousness and reasoning of a person when making a decision. However, it remains a leading theory of high validity, and many scholars have applied it in different research areas (Harland, Staats, & Wilke, 1999). In addition, the theory is one of the most prominent models regularly used by researchers to explore sustainability-related behaviors (Jackson, 2005), making it a suitable choice for the current study.

While the model is seen to be effective in predicting different patterns of behavior, this has not prevented different scholars from introducing different versions and extensions of the model in order to get better predictive and thorough outcomes (Chen, 2020). About fashion and sustainability, scholars have extended the three main pillars of the theory to include perceived consumer effectiveness as a fourth factor that is claimed to impact purchase intentions towards sustainable fashion. Likewise, this study will not be restricted to the three main pillars of the theory. By going through literature and studies, the study aims to consider different adaptations and extensions and select what best suits the research question and the context. For example, factors that have played a role in purchasing intentions toward sustainable apparel products will be considered and added. The general model of the theory is seen in Figure 3.3.

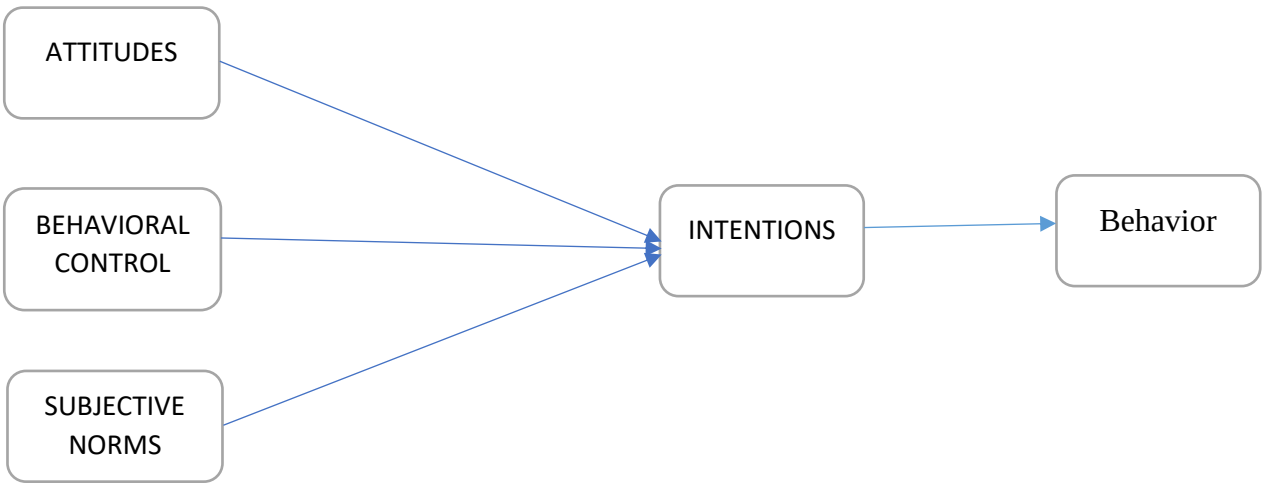

Figure 3.3. Theory of Planned Behavior

Source: (Ajzen, 1991)

This study will utilize four factors: attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and perceived effectiveness. The following sections will transfer the general framework of the theory into more specific domains by presenting the studies that used the theory's main elements in analyzing purchase intentions in general and those related to green and sustainable products. While the results obtained from other industries can be sufficient and generalized to the fashion industry, the author tries to make the analysis more specific by obtaining evidence from the fashion industry in particular. After discussing each element of the theory, the hypothesis will be developed for the data analysis.

3.6.1. Attitudes

Attitude as a concept is recognized for being a significant tool in understanding many different phenomena (Olson & Zanna, 1993). Most scholars agree that the central component of attitude is evaluation (Olson & Zanna, 1993). This significance of the assessment as a component of attitude made it a valuable tool for measuring it. Although it is recognized that the best method of measuring attitudes toward a particular object is by allowing individuals to rate the favorability they perceive (Olson & Zanna, 1993), The intensity of attitude toward specific behavior is determined by how an individual evaluates that behavior. This evaluation is formed due to the expectation a person holds toward the outcome of conducting that behavior (Manning, 2009). Similarly, attitude is connected to the perceived outcome associated with performing a specific behavior. If an individual perceives positive outcomes outweigh negative ones, the behavior will probably be connected to a positive attitude (Ham, Jeger, & Ivković, 2015).

When attitudes towards the environment are considered, environmental attitudes should be clearly distinguished from individual attitudes in the sense that the former is about the persons' attitudes towards environment outcomes resulting from their actions while the latter focuses on personal factors such as convenience and usefulness (Lin & Niu, 2017). The concept of green perceived value is connected to this discussion and is defined as an overall evaluation of individuals' experience regarding a particular product in terms of the net gains received based on sustainability criteria (Chen & Chang, 2012). This perception of green products is highly correlated with

green attitudes, and it can result in higher purchase intentions towards sustainable products (Amoako, Dzogbenuku, & Abubakari, 2020). Specifically, consumers need to perceive their purchasing of a green product as a generator of some self-benefit to consider buying it. This process is facilitated by a positive attitude towards the brand that offers this product (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012).

In general, research shows that consumers consider sustainable fashion to be of high quality. Studies have identified attitude as an essential factor that leads to higher purchase intentions towards green and sustainable products (Huang, Yang, & Wang, 2014). When compared to the other primary variables of TPB, the attitude variable has arguably the highest positive effect on green product purchase intentions (Sreen, Purbey, & Sadarangani, 2018). The significant role of attitude in creating higher levels of purchase intentions towards sustainable products is present in several comparative studies across cultures (Bong Ko & Jin, 2017; Nam et al., 2017; Zheng & Chi, 2014). For example, Chen (2013) provides a study in which essential insights about the rule of attitudes, along with other important factors, can be realized. In a comparative analysis between a collectivistic culture, represented by China, and an individualistic culture, represented by the USA, Chen identifies some differences in the attitudes towards sustainability between these two cultures. Regardless of these differences, attitude's significant role in creating higher purchase intentions towards green products is validated in both cases.

While the relation between consumers' attitudes and green consumption is validated, it can be helpful to investigate the reasons behind creating such a positive attitude in the minds of consumers. In this regard, Zaremohzzabieh, Ismail, Ahrari & Abu Samah (2021) suggest seven factors as positive green attitude generators. Besides behavioral control and subjective norms, the writers also list environment, knowledge, awareness, consciousness, and concerns as factors that result in a positive attitude, eventually leading to a higher purchase intention toward sustainable products. Positive attitudes can also be obtained from organizations or brands involved in the offerings. In this regard, positive attitudes towards green brands have been argued to be a part of the equation that results in higher purchase intentions towards sustainable products. This positive attitude toward brands is related to two critical factors. First, consumers need to be well-informed about the brand and have green brand knowledge. Second, the

brand itself needs to be well-positioned as a green brand. The higher the scores on these two previous factors, the more we will expect to have consumers with positive attitudes and hence higher levels of purchase intentions toward green products (Huang, Yang & Wang, 2014).

Other than the mere direct role of attitude, other studies focused on different approaches. For example, the mediation role of attitude is highlighted by (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). According to these authors, consumers with green concerns are highly motivated to consider purchasing green products offered by a particular brand. However, this motivation is mediated by attitudes towards that brand. Another perspective on the role of attitude toward green consumption is investigated by Phuah, Ow, Sandhu & Kassim (2018). They suggest a moderating role of attitudes rather than the traditional direct positive effect on green purchase intentions. As a result, attitudes moderate the relation between subjective norms and behavioral control along with green purchase intentions.

A positive attitude may not always be translated into actual purchasing behavior (Zaremohzzabieh, Ismail, Ahrari & Abu Samah, 2021). This potential gap between behavior and action was the central interest of many scholars and researchers. One reason for this gap can be associated with the perception of quality and prices. Namely, even when consumers are willing to purchase different green products, they may be held down by different perceptions about sustainable products as being of higher prices or lower quality compared to conventional ones (Ali, Khan, & Ahmed, 2011).

Studies that highlighted attitudes in the sustainable fashion sphere highlighted similar results. Again, the matter is approached from different perspectives. While some studies take a general framework by analyzing the whole fashion sector, few other studies chose to focus on specific sustainable product categories while making this analysis. Examples include sustainable sportswear (Nam, Dong, & Lee, 2017), organic apparel (Varshneya, Pandey, & Das, 2017; Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014), and slow fashion (Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang, 2021). Regardless of the different categories, most of these studies identified attitude as a positive factor for increasing the intention towards buying sustainable fashion, with some studies even identifying

attitude as the most potent factor in this regard (Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014).

On the other hand, many studies identified a mediating role of attitude as they try to focus on attitude generators and come up with different results. For example, Nam, Dong, & Lee (2017) argue that attitudes towards sustainable sportswear are affected by expectations and perceptions, which in turn affect purchase intentions towards these products. Similarly, Zheng & Chi (2014) introduce environmentally friendly apparel (EFA) as a reference for sustainable or green fashion products. When the purchasing intentions of these products were analyzed, the role of attitude towards purchasing EFA was found to be significant. However, this role was found to be enhanced by the knowledge consumers have towards such products. In addition, while studying the consumer behavior of young Vietnamese, Nguyen, Nguyen, & Nguyen (2019) investigate the role of the attitude toward green fashion purchases in detail. The authors attempt to introduce materialism as a part of the equation. Specifically, they find that success and centrality as components of materialism positively affect attitudes toward green apparel purchases, which in turn affects purchase intentions in the same direction. Varshneya, Pandey, & Das (2017) analyze consumers' purchase intentions towards organic apparel and validate the direct positive effect of attitude. They also take one step back and identify a mediating role of attitude by introducing green consumption values as a factor that positively impacts both attitude and purchase intentions. Consumers with such values will have a higher level of realization of the adverse effects resulting from specific practices in this aspect and hence will have a positive attitude towards the purchase of sustainable products and, therefore, will be more inclined to make the actual purchase. Further, it is argued that consumers with higher orientations towards environmental issues have positive attitudes toward purchasing sustainable apparel in the USA. These positive attitudes will probably result in higher intentions to buy such products (Bong Ko & Jin 2017).

Other than the mediating role, few studies try to approach attitudes from different angles. For example, Cowan & Kinley (2014) perceive attitude in a broader framework as they analyze belief factors in general. İn this sense; they validate the positive effect of these factors on the purchase intention of sustainable fashion. Attitude was one of these factors. Other factors were environmental concern and environmental

knowledge. Moreover, Joshi & Srivastava (2019), while confirming the direct influence on purchasing intentions towards green apparel, also recognize an indirect role. As a result, they present customer engagement as a new factor in this equation. Accordingly, a positive attitude toward purchasing green fashion will result in higher customer engagement, resulting in activating customers' cognitive evaluation for understanding how significant sustainable purchasing behavior can be. In addition, while most studies approached attitudes toward purchasing sustainable fashion, Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez (2021) took a different approach. Instead of analyzing attitudes towards sustainable fashion products, they analyzed the role of attitudes towards fashion brands. The result was similar in that positive attitudes towards fashion brands positively affect purchase intentions towards green fashion products. In addition, they identified a mediating role of attitudes by being in the middle of the relation that connects social responsibility with purchase intentions.

The problem of not translating positive attitudes into actual purchases of sustainable fashion, known as the attitude-behavior gap, has its share of literature. Jung, Choi, & Oh (2020) confirmed the existence of this gap in the field of sustainable fashion when they studied Chinese consumers' behavior. They did not only identify the presence of a positive attitude towards sustainable fashion, but they recognized that this favorability is a source of increased intentions toward buying such products. However, no parallel results were found when it comes to actual purchase behavior. Park & Lin (2020) try to apply an even deeper investigation by not limiting themselves to intention but instead investigating purchase behavior itself. This turns us again to the matter of the gap that exists between attitudes and behavior. The authors, while confirming the role of attitudes on purchasing intentions towards sustainable fashion products, extend the analysis to present factors they believe play an essential role in understanding the attitude gap problem. These factors include perceived values, risks, environmental concerns, consumer effectiveness, subjective norms, and demographic variables.

In summary, many studies have validated attitude as an essential factor significantly influencing purchase intentions in general and toward sustainable products in particular. As a result, the following hypothesis can be proposed.

H1: Turkish consumers' positive attitudes toward sustainable fashion significantly affect their purchase intentions toward sustainable fashion products.

3.6.2. Subjective Norms

Subjective norms are a function of the interaction between two factors. The first is related to the beliefs held by the individual surroundings towards the behavior in question. The second is connected to the individual own motivation to actually comply with such beliefs (Manning, 2009). Two types of subjective norms can be distinguished. The first is injunctive norms, which refer to a perception held by an individual about his or her surrounding requirements regarding the behavior of that individual. On the other hand, descriptive norms are an outcome of the pressure related to actual observation of the behavior conducted by others (manning, 2009). Subjective norms can be descriptive as they may result from observing other people's behavior. On the other hand, it can also be social norms stemming from the perception an individual has about potential society's opinion regarding a specific behavior (Ham, Jeger, & Ivković, 2015).

The role of subjective norms towards sustainable products buying intentions is validated by many studies. However, it seems that indirect role takes an extra attention in this regard. For example, Sreen, Purbey, & Sadarangani (2018) believe that consumers who are in a situation surrounded by people who supports sustainability products consumption, will probably have more positive attitudes to purchase such products.

The role of subjective norms in increasing intentions towards buying sustainable fashion finds sufficient support in the literature. This role earns a noticeable prominence in some studies. For example, Nguyen, Nguyen, & Nguyen (2019) found that subjective norms were the most vital factor that affected consumers' intentions towards buying green clothes when compared to the other two main factors of TPB. This agrees with Bong Ko & Jin (2017), who also identified subjective norms as having the highest effect on purchasing intentions toward green apparel in China and the USA. Similarly, Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman (2014) found that consumers' own family and friends' influence seems to be a primary predictor of

consumers' buying intentions towards organic clothes. Social norms power can even be extended to be a variable that leads to actual buying action. Khare (2019) analyzes peer influence on the purchase of sustainable fashion. Accordingly, this effect can lead consumers to purchase green fashion products. This happens by increasing consumers' positive expectations of the positive outcomes that may result from the possible buying action. The author elaborates further on examining the nature of these outcomes, arguing that subjective norms influence mainly comes from psychological benefits.

While many studies identified the direct role of subjective norms, others recognized an indirect one. Zheng & Chi (2014) test the direct relation between subjective norms and purchase intentions towards green apparel. The result of their study refers to the existence of a significant relationship. The indirect role was studied by Nam, Dong, & Lee (2017), who identified a positive effect of subjective norms on purchase intentions towards sustainable products via attitudes. However, in this case, the subject study was related to sportswear.

Subjective norms can also play a discrimination role between green and non-green consumers in the green fashion consumption area. Namely, subjective norms can help to understand the attitude-purchase gap that may exist when the upcycle fashion products are related. This can be explained since social pressure can be more substantial when the products are unique, such as upcycle fashion products (Park & Lin 2020). Joshi & Srivastava (2019) recognize the positive effect of subjective norms of purchasing intentions towards green fashion. They connect this result with the so-called "group effect." In addition, they argue that young generations are probably more vulnerable to such effects than other generations because of their higher level of desirability to comply with their surrounding groups. Varshneya, Pandey, & Das (2017) failed to prove a significant effect of subjective norms on purchase intention when they analyzed consumer behavior toward purchasing organic apparel. They attribute this result to the fact organic fashion products can still be considered to be newly introduced to the market and hence fail yet to gain their position as a mainstream norm among consumers.

From the above discussion, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H2: Subjective norms among Turkish consumers have a significant effect on their purchase intentions toward sustainable fashion products.

3.6.3. Perceived Behavioural Control

Behavioral control can be divided into internal and external control. Internal control is a perception in which an individual believes that he or she can control one's qualities. On the other hand, external control happens when there is a perception that a particular act or behavior can be efficiently conducted without any restrictions from the external environment. The interactions of both internal and external controls with the intent to act on a specific behavior are validated. Literature shows that the chain starts with external control followed by internal control, leading to behavioral intention (Kidwell & Jewell, 2003). Some proceeding factors can define the nature of perceived control. This includes previous experience, monetary restrictions, the feasibility of the behavior, and convenience (Ham, Jeger, & Ivković, 2015). More specifically, people's perceptions of the control they have upon specific behavior can increase when they own a combination of internal personality strengths along with external resources such as money and time (Kidwell & Jewell, 2003).

A general investigation of the literature reveals overall support for the role of perceived behavioral control in enhancing purchase intentions toward sustainable products. In addition, the role of mediation takes extra attention. While Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng (2016) validate the role of behavioral control in enhancing purchase intentions towards sustainable products, they also highlight that both environmental knowledge and environmental concerns can lead to higher levels of behavioral control among consumers. This can be related to the argument that consumers with higher knowledge and concerns may perceive themselves as having higher control over a particular situation. Karatu & Nik Mat (2015) suggested a broader mediating role for behavioral control. Similarly, Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng (2016) validated the mediating role of behavioral control between environmental knowledge and purchase intention. However, they extended this mediating role with purchase intentions to include both green perceived value and green trust.

Other than the direct role of perceived behavioral control on intentions toward purchasing green or sustainable products, a moderating role has also been detected. This is seen in the sense that higher levels of behavioral control can result in a stronger positive relationship between attitude and purchase intentions towards green products. This can be explained in the context of economic constraints. For example, if consumers perceive certain sustainable products as more expensive, they will assume a lower level of control, which can be translated into the term perceived behavioral control. The result can be seen in lower intention to buy this product even if attitudes are assumed to be positive (Kim & Chung, 2011). Sreen, Purbey, & Sadarangani (2018) provide similar results. However, they extend the moderating role into a direct positive effect of behavioral control on attitudes.

Studies in sustainable fashion, however, were not decisive as the literature contains few studies that did not provide sufficient support for the role of perceived behavioral control in increasing purchase intentions towards sustainable fashion. For example, Nam, Dong, & Lee (2017) could not identify a significant effect of behavioral control on purchasing intentions toward sustainable sportswear. They attribute this result to the existence of more decisive factors that affect this behavior than behavioral control factors such as time, money, and capabilities. Similarly, Zheng & Chi (2014) fail to identify a significant relation between behavioral control and purchase intentions toward buying sustainable fashion. However, they identify an important moderating role for behavioral control on attitude. As a result, higher perceived behavioral control among consumers will strengthen the relation between attitudes and purchase intentions towards sustainable fashion products.

On the other hand, plenty of supportive studies are found in the literature. For example, Nguyen, Nguyen, & Nguyen (2019) found a significant effect of behavioral control on green apparel purchase intentions. This effect was even higher than the traditional vital role of attitude, which was identified in different studies. Joshi & Srivastava (2019) confirm the positive impact of behavioral control on purchasing intentions toward sustainable clothing. They conclude that consumers will be more motivated to buy when they are more specific. Bong Ko & Jin (2017) take the discussion of behavioral control to the realm of internal and external components. In general, internal and external behavioral control were significant factors in increasing consumers' intentions

toward buying more sustainable apparel products. The considerable effect of the former is attributed to the fact that consumers with high internal behavioral control will have more confidence, skill, and ability when dealing with sustainable fashion products and, hence, will be more inclined to buy these products. The latter, however, is related to the facilitating circumstances surrounding green fashion products' buying behavior, such as attainable prices. A similar positive effect was also found when the consumption of slow fashion products was analyzed. Specifically, consumers who are confronted with easier access to such products will probably be encouraged to conduct an actual purchase (Chi, Gerard, Yu & Wang, 2021).

In summary, the literature provides more support for the significant role of behavioral control in increasing purchasing intentions toward sustainable fashion compared to unsupportive results. This leads to proposing the following hypothesis:

H3: Perceived behavioral control among Turkish consumers has a significant positive effect on their purchase intentions toward sustainable fashion products.

3.6.4. Consumer Perceived Effectiveness

Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez (2021) define consumer-perceived effectiveness (CE) as calculating consumers' perception of their capability to influence logically related problems. Consumers with high CE scores perceive themselves as having more power to affect the environment and take sustainability-related measures as a result of their consumption acts. The goal of their consumption is not merely limited to the boundaries of satisfying their own needs. Instead, it extends to achieve changes in their surrounding environment (Currás-Pérez, Dolz-Dolz, Miquel-Romero & Sánchez-García, 2018). This is connected to the concept of social responsibility. Namely, socially responsible consumers are the ones who buy the products that they believe will positively affect the environment or who support companies that they feel are keen to provide social improvements (Roberts, 1993). CE is identified as an essential characteristic of socially conscious consumers. Socially conscious consumers consider the outcomes of their consumption in the public interest. Moreover, those consumers seek social improvements due to their consumption patterns (Webster, 1975).

Studies have detected that people who sense that their sustainable behavior influences sustainable causes are highly motivated to act in a sustainable manner (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014). This relationship can also be perceived in the opposite direction, as it is argued that individuals have a higher level of environmental concern when they believe that sustainable consumption behavior will result in a cleaner environment (Kinnear, Taylor, & Ahmed, 1974).

The effect of CE on purchase intention is analyzed differently in different research studies. It is worth noting that earlier studies identified CE as a construct related to attitude. However, more recent studies started to perceive CE as a separate factor (Berger & Corbin, 1992). The effect of CE on purchase intention can be seen as a direct one. When consumers feel the importance of their sustainable purchases, they will be more motivated to conduct more of these purchases (Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez, 2021). However, an indirect effect is also noted in the literature. Namely, CE influences purchasing intention through the mediating effect of attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral control (Kang, Liu, & Kim, 2013). Moreover, the gap that exists between individual concern about the environment and translating this concern into consumption behavior can be attributed to the perceived marketplace influence. Namely, if consumers believe that their actions can affect the behavior of organizations and that of other consumers, a moderation role can emerge in the shape of strengthening the relationship between environmental concerns and sustainable behavior (Leary, Vann, Mittelstaedt, Murphy, & Sherry, 2014). In addition, another type of moderating role of CE was also investigated. In this sense, it is seen that companies that act in a supportive manner towards social initiatives can increase the value of their products in the eyes of their customers. However, this is moderated by the role of CE. Namely, customers with high CE can perceive the products of this company as having higher value. (Currás-Pérez, Dolz-Dolz, Miquel-Romero & Sánchez-García, 2018).

Zheng & Chi (2014) confirm the significance of CE in the sense that it positively affects purchasing intentions in the sustainable fashion area. They conclude that those who feel confident that any individual addition in this area will make a difference will have higher intentions toward buying sustainable apparel. Similarly, Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang (2021) investigated slow fashion consumption as a part of overall sustainable

fashion consumption and identified a positive significant role of CE on slow fashion purchase intentions.

Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez (2021) identified the mediation role of CE in the area of green fashion purchase intention. While the direct role is significantly supported, the mediation role is also supported by the inclusion of the factor of consumers' perception of fashion brands' social responsibility. That is, consumers who have positively perceived particular fashion brands in terms of their social responsibility actions will probably have higher CE scores. Moreover, Park (2015) investigated CE's influence on the consumption of upcycle fashion products. Consequently, the author identified an indirect impact, which can be added to the direct effect on purchase intentions. This is recognized in CE's significant role in increasing consumers' trust in upcycled fashion. This can result in higher purchase intentions towards these products. Finally, CE was identified as a factor explaining the attitude-purchase gap in the case of used fashion products (Park & Lin, 2020). Consequently, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H4: Perceived consumer effectiveness positively influences Turkish consumers' purchase intentions toward sustainable fashion products.
The extended model presented in this study is shown in Figure 3.4.

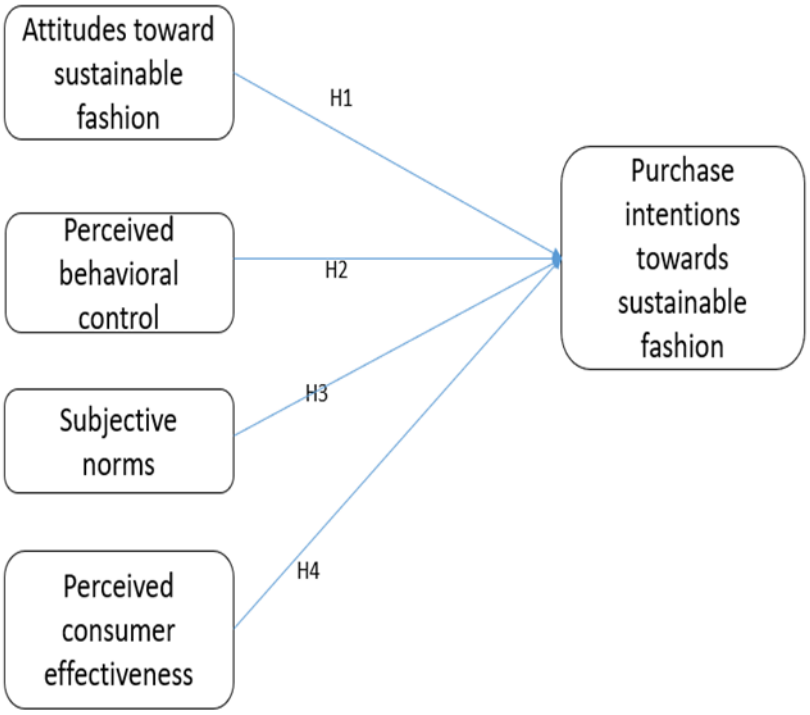

Figure 3.4. An Extended Model of TPB

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology. It starts by introducing the mixed-method approach employed in this study and its justification and design. Then, the qualitative and quantitative phases, with their methods, procedures, and analyses, are presented.

4.1. Mixed Method Research

This research uses a mixed-method approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative approaches and paradigms (Creswell & Clark, 2018). In a mixed-method study, the researcher collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data and combines the two systems of data and their results (Creswell & Clark, 2018).

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John Creswell, a well-known researcher in the area of mixed method and a co-founder of the Journal of Mixed Method Research, refers to this approach as merging "the statistics and the stories of people" to give a complete picture of the research problem more than one approach by itself. In response to current complex social issues, Creswell & Garrett (2008) urge researchers to look for "all types of evidence gained through measurement of precise questions, as well as more general assessment through open-ended questions (p. 321). This approach has been widely used in the social sciences to minimize the limitations of qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2014). For example, while maintaining an unbiased depiction of reality, this research

attempts to understand the insiders' meanings and viewpoints (Creswell, 2013). Mixed methods research MMR is defined as:

> The class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study. Philosophically, it is the 'third wave' or third research movement, a movement that moves past the paradigm wars by offering a logical and practical alternative (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17).

In this review of the "paradigm wars" between the two approaches, Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) insist that researchers need to be fully aware of the characteristics of quantitative and qualitative research to effectively use mixed methods research. The authors also argue that researchers should move beyond quantitative versus qualitative debates and acknowledge both approaches' strengths by pragmatically utilizing mixed-method research as the third research paradigm.

> The goal of mixed methods research is not to replace either of these approaches but rather to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies. If you visualize a continuum with qualitative research anchored at one pole and quantitative research anchored at the other, mixed methods research covers the large set of points in the middle area. If one prefers to think categorically, mixed methods research sits in a new third chair, with qualitative research sitting on the left side and quantitative research sitting on the right side (pp. 14-15).

In the last 20 years, some designs combining the data in MMR have emerged to guide the process. MMR can be conducted concurrently (conducting both parts at about the same time) or sequentially (conducting one part first and then the other second) to address a research question or a set of related questions. Creswell (2013) presents three types of design to guide the process. The first one is the convergent design, which entails collecting qualitative data and analyzing it, as well as collecting quantitative data and analyzing it. Then, a discussion follows to see whether data merges or complements each other. The second one is an explanatory sequential design, which is commonly used in social science. The researchers start by collecting and analyzing the quantitative data. Then, the qualitative phase is generated from the results. The third kind is exploratory sequential design. Researchers start collecting qualitative data, and from the findings, a quantitative phase is created. For example, the findings

can be used to create a new instrument if there has been no instrument available to measure a particular phenomenon. This is especially useful when a researcher is investigating a phenomenon that has not been widely researched.

Collecting and analyzing quantitative (closed-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data in this research aimed to obtain a deeper understanding of sustainable fashion's dynamic and complex phenomenon from the perspectives of both the market and the consumer. The study utilized the approach as a third paradigm (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) and followed an exploratory sequential design (Creswell, 2014). This included gathering and analysis of the qualitative data, followed by a quantitative phase. In the qualitative phase, data were collected mainly from open-ended interviews. Thematic analysis was then used to analyze the data. The themes and insights that emerged in the analysis assisted in the construction of the survey questionnaire employed in the quantitative phase. The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to analyze the quantitative data. The following will present each phase and its procedures.

4.2. The Qualitative Phase

This phase collected open-ended data to investigate the situation of sustainable fashion in Türkiye. İnterviews were the major method of data collection. Some periphery sources were also used, as explained below.

4.2.1. Data Collection

4.2.1.1. Interviews

The primary source of the qualitative data was the qualitative, semi-structured interviews. The interviews used an interview guide or a framework of questions rather than a specific list of fixed questions (Yin, 2011), which allowed for a flexible design and a dynamic procedure. Each interview had its unique identity assisted by the conversational features of the design, allowing interviewees to elaborate on specific themes or to bring in essential perspectives that enriched the data. Six interviews were

conducted with six respondents working in the fields of fashion production, sales, and marketing.

4.2.1.1.1. Sampling and the Participants

The study used a non-probability sampling technique in order to represent a certain group of people. İn this study, experts or professionals working in the field of textile and fashion or those who have been dealing with sustainable fashion campaigns and endeavors were targeted. Since the researcher himself had been working in the fashion field for a long time, he had some contacts that assisted and facilitated finding suitable participants.

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Three respondents were the directors of the sustainability department at three fast fashion brands in Türkiye. The other three respondents were responsible for the sales management of fast fashion brands in the Turkish market. The brands included in the study are LC Waikiki, Defacto, and Koton, which have more than 2000 stores [9] in the country. Each participant was assigned a code to facilitate the research and ensure the interviewees' privacy and anonymity. Table 4.1. provides information about the participants and the manner of the interview.

[9] This number was obtained from the official websites of the brand: https://corporate.lcwaikiki.com/hakkimizda, https://kurumsal.defacto.com.tr/hakkimizda.html, https://www.koton.com/hakkimizda

Table 4.1. Information About the Respondents of the Interview

Respondent code	Position of the respondent	Language of the interview	The manner and date of the interview
R 1	Marketing and Sustainability director in the women's department, Defacto	Turkish	Via Zoom, August 17, 2021
R 2	Marketing and Sustainability director in the denim department, Koton	Turkish	Via Zoom, October 21, 2021
R 3	Marketing and Sustainability director in the denim department, LCW	Turkish	Via Zoom, November 2, 2021
R 4	Marketing and Sales director responsible for Lc Waikiki, JNR	Turkish	Face-to-face, Feb 14, 2022
R 6	Marketing manager of Fourteks	English	Face-to-face, Feb 20, 2022

4.2.1.1.2. Procedure

The interview guide contained significant themes that were covered in each interview. The following themes were included in each interview:

- The rationale and motivation of the brands to go sustainable
- The kinds of pro-sustainability procedures applied by the brands.
- The extent to which these brands see themselves as sustainable

- The perceptions of the brands of the role of the Turkish consumers' behavior regarding sustainable fashion.
- The prospect of sustainable fashion in Türkiye, including opportunities and challenges.

Each theme was targeted using a question to elicit responses. Sometimes, respondents would cover a theme when responding to a different question. Therefore, the researcher listened carefully to the responses and allowed the participants to speak freely. The interviews were conducted between August 2021 and February 2022. The participants were invited to participate by email or a phone call. They all showed interest in participating and gave the impression that such kind of research was needed. Three interviews were conducted using the Zoom software. The other three were face-to-face. Five interviews were conducted in Turkish, and one was conducted in English. Each interview lasted from 40-50 minutes. Each interview was recorded using two devices. Following a clean verbatim transcript method, which left out repeated words or filler words such as (oh, you know, umm, you know, etc), a transcript was developed using Microsoft Word. The Turkish transcribed documents were then translated into English. The English version of the interview scripts had a total length of 13748 words.

4.2.1.2. Periphery Sources of Qualitative Data

Besides the interviews, the study relied on some sources to get further information about sustainable fashion in Türkiye. This included the following:

- Brands advertisements: These include videos or posters that the brands use to promote sustainable fashion.
- Campaigns: To raise awareness among consumers about sustainable fashion.
- The annual reports of the brands: These were available on their websites.
- General information about sustainable procedures and green fashion: These were also available on the brands' websites.

The researcher went through the above sources to either illicit new data or to confirm or elaborate on the data that was already collected via interviews. All the relevant data

were saved in a Word document that was later used in the analysis to help create themes.

4.2.2. The Data Analysis

For the data analysis of the qualitative data, a thematic analysis was employed for "identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The researcher read through the original and translated text several times to find patterns and generate categories. Major themes and subthemes were then generated from the categories. Braun & Clarke (2006) identifies a six-phase thematic analysis in qualitative research. Although they recommend moving from one step to the next, they also encourage going back and forth and not sticking to a strict linear approach, especially when dealing with complex data. The researcher read the original and translated text several times to find patterns and generate categories. Major themes and subthemes were then generated from the categories. The steps of the analysis are included in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. The Six Steps of the Thematic Analysis

Step 1: data familiarization	Transcribing the data and translating when needed Rereading and re-reading the transcripts Writing down notes and ideas Highlighting any significant details in the data
Step 2: Generating initial codes	Coding and organizing the data into separate meaningful parts Generating codes (both inductive and deductive approaches), i.e., moving from theory and research questions to data and the other way around. -Appendix A provides an example of coding the data

Table 4.2.(cont.)

Step 3: Search for themes	Gathering codes and grouping them into possible themes
Step 4: Review themes	The potential themes that had been generated were evaluated here in order to see if they represent the entire data. After the evaluation, some themes were eliminated, others were rendered to be sub-themes, and some new themes were identified.
Step 5: Define themes	Naming the themes (according to Braun & Clarke (2006), each theme should reflect the essence of the related data. Identifying sub-themes
Step 6: Writing and producing the analysis	Writing the analytical report Relating the analysis to the research question and the literature Using extracts from the selected examples

Source: (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

In line with the subjectivity of qualitative research, the researcher tried to pay attention to issues that could impact the data analysis, such as context, power relations, the participant's position, etc. This was further explained in the discussion.

4.2.3. Ethical Consideration

The researcher followed all the required ethical procedures, as informed by the country and educational institution, regarding doing a PhD study.

The research did not involve any vulnerable groups of society, minors, or children, and therefore, no additional procedures were requested in terms of ethical requirements. All of the participants were adults. They were informed about the anonymity of their participation and allowed to withdraw from the interview or to withdraw any recorded information.

4.2.4. Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, validity and reliability differ from those used in quantitative research. In qualitative research, validity implies consistency and stability. This means that reliability does not attempt to measure whether a variable is reliable or not, as in quantitative research, but rather how reliable it is. In other words, it refers to the degree of consistency (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher attempted to increase the study's validity by grounding the research questions in sound and theoretical solid framings, using suitable methods and robust processes, and analyzing the data most consistently and transparently possible. For example, the researcher relied on extensive research and studies in sustainable fashion worldwide and Türkiye to identify essential findings and missing aspects that needed to be addressed in this study. The interview guide was also developed based on a thorough investigation of previous studies and the context under research. During the interviews, the researcher took notes and asked questions to clarify some information and terms, mainly when a foreign language was used. Further, during the transcription, the researcher consulted native speakers to ensure the meaning of some jargon and metaphorical phrases uttered by the participants matched the translation and script. Another critical aspect of the validity of this research is that the researcher was constantly moving between the findings and the original literature, between the aims and research questions of this study to track consistency and reliability.

4.3. The Quantitative Phase

A quantitative survey was administered to measure Turkish consumers' knowledge and purchase intentions regarding sustainable fashion products. This was done to complete the integrated view of the sustainable fashion situation in Türkiye.

4.3.1. Data Collection

4.3.1.1. Research Instrument: Structured Self-Administrated Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire was designed to test whether the relationships between the variables identified in the study were significant. The survey technique is advantageous since it helps the researcher obtain a good amount of data from a

relatively large population. The method is also perceived to produce results that are easy to explain and compare and is considered to have relatively economic advantages compared to other methods (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

The questions of the survey questionnaire were developed from previous research and the data from the qualitative phase. The researcher relied on the guides of the leading developer of the theory. These general guidelines were combined with more recent studies that mainly used the theory of planned behavior to address sustainable fashion issues (Kang, Liu, & Kim, 2013; Lee, 2010; Maichum, Parichatnon, & Peng, 2016.; Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014; Nam & Lee, 2017; Alzubaidi, 2020). By combining the general guidelines of the original source of TPB with studies that are relevant to the current research as well as the qualitative data, the researcher sought to develop an optimal questionnaire that would assist in reaching the appropriate data needed for the study.

A five-point Likert scale was designed as a tool to measure the five main constructs that were used in the model. The scale was designed to measure the level of agreement with a number of statements ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A Likert scale is a tool that is commonly used in social science research. This technique allows the researcher to get closer to specific results. In addition, the measures it provides can be applied to totally different statements (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

The structure of the questionnaire was divided into three main sections. The first section was designed to obtain information regarding the demographic situation of the respondents. The second section was designed to measure some crucial constructs, including respondents' knowledge regarding sustainability. The third and final section focused on measuring the four primary constructs of TPB. The researcher designed the questionnaire using the English language. Then, it was translated into Turkish. The translated version was first tested by five Turkish native speakers who responded and provided feedback on its clarity before it was finalized and distributed.

4.3.1.2. Population of the Sample

The population of the sample mainly contained Turkish individuals living in Istanbul. Data was collected from people in five different shopping malls in Istanbul. Cevahir, Mall of Istanbul, Armonipark, Canpark Avm, and Akaya Park were these shopping malls. Respondents were first informed that their participation in the survey was optional. In addition, they were told that their identity or any information that could identify them would be kept anonymous. Finally, they were informed that their participation in the survey would not be rewarded. All participants identified their residence location in Istanbul. Any respondents under 18 years old were excluded from the beginning. Further, people unfamiliar with sustainable fashion or who did not identify themselves as buyers of sustainable fashion were also excluded from the survey.

4.3.1.3. Sampling Strategy and Technique

For the purpose of this research, the researcher used simple random probability sampling techniques, which are recommended when a number of conditions apply. These include the available sampling frame, the need to use statistical measures, the need for a sample representing the population, the ability to collect data without face-to-face contact, and the absence of relevant strata or clusters (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

4.3.1.4. Sample Size

In general, the choice of the sample size depends on a few factors. First, the researcher's subjective confidence that all the characteristics of the population intended in the study have been covered by the size of the sample. Second, the margin of error the researcher can tolerate must be analyzed. Third, the overall size of the population. Fourth, the type of analysis intended to be employed by the researcher (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Since the study wants to use the structural equation model for the analysis, it is advised that the sample size does not fall beyond 200 subjects (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Kline, 2011). In addition, factor analysis requires a sample size that is eight times the number of variables (Hair, Black, Babin,

& Anderson, 2010). Finally, using TPB models requires a minimum of 148 cases (Rashidian, Miles, Russell, & Russell, 2006). The study's final sample size was 268, which satisfies all three previous conditions.

4.3.2. Data Analysis

4.3.2.1. Data Preparation and Screening

A set of preparation actions is required before the data analysis process starts. Decisions about the choice of these screening actions should be made since they can be time-consuming and not applicable to all types of research (Tabachnick & Fidell 2018). This research will focus on three steps: missing data, outliers, and normality.

4.3.2.1.1. Missing Data

Missing data is a common problem in data analysis that can result from mistakes in data collection or entry or from missing some of the answers of the subjects (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). The impact of these missing data and how to deal with them depends on their pattern, size, and the reasons that lead to such missing data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2018). This study used pairwise exclusion, which requires replacing missing data with estimated data using all cases that have data (Cooper & Schindler, 2008).

4.3.2.1.2. Outliers

An outlier is an observation with a value of one or more of its characteristics that differs hugely from the values of the other observation in the data. It may create suspicion that the related observation was obtained via a different mechanism (Hawkins, 2014). The researcher needs to identify, profile, categorize, and finally decide between retaining or deleting the outlier (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). In general, an outlier can have one of three different types. It can be seen as a single observation different from the others. It can also be a contextual outlier in a specific context. It can also be a collective outlier when a group of observations acts as outliers collectively (Divya & Babu, 2016). There are different opinions among

researchers on how to deal with outliers. Hair and colleagues (2010) recommend the retention of outliers unless there is clear evidence that they are far away from representing the population. Deleting outliers can limit the results' ability to be generalized.

4.3.2.1.3. Normality

Normality refers to a situation in which the mean of the data is clustered symmetrically in a bell-shaped distribution (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). More specifically, the more regular the data is, the more it approaches a normal distribution (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). Checking for normality can be done using different tests. This includes the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and the Shapiro–Wilk test (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012) or skewness and kurtosis tests (Pallant, 2007). This paper focuses on checking for skewness, which measures the asymmetry of the distribution (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010), and the Kurtosis test, which measures the peakedness near the shape's center (Ruppert, 1987).

4.3.2.2. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis refers to "statistically describing, aggregating, and presenting the constructs of interest or associations between these constructs" (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p. 119). The main advantage of descriptive statistics is that they allow the researcher to compare different variables based on their value (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). The main focus of descriptive statistics is to measure central tendency and dispersion. For measuring central tendency, mode, median, and mean are the three main tools used to achieve that purpose. Dispersion can be measured by calculating standard deviation and interquartile range (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). In addition, the use of descriptive analysis can also be necessary to identify frequency values, which presents a summary of the "frequency (or percentages) of individual values or ranges of values for that variable" (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p.121). Descriptive statistics was mainly used to identify some important characteristics related to the demographic status of the sample used in the quantitative part of the study.

4.3.2.3. Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics are techniques that mainly aim to investigate the relations between variables. This can be done by conducting hypothesis tests (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Unlike descriptive statistics, which aims to describe the situation of the sample, inferential statistics' primary purpose is to generalize the results of the sample to the whole population (Allua & Thompson, 2009). Depending on the type of data, inferential statistics can be obtained using different tests such as Mcnemar's test, Chi-squared test, Stuart test, Wilcoxon test, paired and unpaired t-tests, and Mann-Whitney U-test (Marshall & Jonker, 2011). It should be added that the primary tool for conducting descriptive and inferential statistical analysis will be the computer software SPSS.

4.3.2.4. Reliability

The main aim of the reliability test is to ensure the consistency of the findings so that consistent findings can be reached if the research is done again by a different researcher (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). In addition, the set of variables needs to be consistent, given the target it needs to measure (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). This means approximate results must be obtained if the same constructs are repeatedly measured (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Test re-test, internal consistency, and alternative form are the three standard methods used for testing for reliability (Mitchell, 1996). Test re-test is done by checking for any significant difference between two tests that were done at different times (Bhattacherjee, 2012). On the other hand, internal consistency is usually tested by using the Cronbach alpha technique. The value of the Alpha coefficient ranges between 0 and 1. Any value above 0.7 assures that the same constructs are measured by the questions defining a given scale (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). The third method is the alternative form, which "offers some sense of the reliability within your questionnaire through comparing responses to alternative forms of the same question or groups of questions" (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p.374). In addition, and as confirmatory factor analysis is used, related reliability testing techniques can be used. This includes composite reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010).

4.3.2.5. Validity

The scale is identified to be valid when it correctly measures the item it intends to measure (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). For example, a valid measure of compassion should measure compassion and should not measure empathy (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Validity has four categories. This includes content validity, construct validity, face validity, and criterion validity, with each category including sub-categories (Taherdoost, 2016). In this study, the focus will be mainly on both content and construct validities.

4.3.2.5.1. Content Validity

Content validity is an evaluation of the matching between the items of the scale and the content of the construct that is required to be measured (Bhattacherjee, 2012). In questionnaires, the measurement device should sufficiently cover the question under investigation (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). The main tools used to check for content validity include investigating the literature and consulting experts (Taherdoost, 2016). In this study, both steps were applied. First, the literature was carefully examined to understand the types of questionnaires employed when the theory of planned behavior was used. The origin resource of the theory was represented in Azjen. In addition, this was combined with a review of the literature that dealt with TPB in the context of sustainable fashion and the data from the qualitative phase. Moreover, several academic experts in research methods were asked to read the questionnaire and provide feedback. By following these steps, it is believed that the conditions of content validity were met sufficiently.

4.3.2.5.2. Construct Validity

Hair and colleagues (2010) define construct validity as the "extent to which a set of measured variables represent the theoretical latent construct they are designed to measure" (p.543). The importance of checking for construct validity in social science originates mainly from the fact that many of the constructs used in this field are not easy to measure. This results in the researchers being directed to check for such validity to ensure they are measuring the construct itself and not something else

(Bhattacherjee, 2012). In addition, higher rates of construct validity ensure that the score taken from the sample for a given construct is an actual representative of the population (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). In general terms, construct validity consists of two parts: convergent and discriminant validity (Taherdoost, 2016). Convergent validity is defined as the degree to which two measures of construct match given the construct they measure (Carlson & Herdman, 2010). A high level of convergent validity is achieved when there is a high correlation between measurements measuring the same construct (Mohajan, 2017). On the other hand, discriminant validity exists when two construct measures are distinguishable. In addition, the scale should measure the intended construct and should not measure the non-intended ones (Rönkkö & Cho, 2020).

Hair and colleagues (2010) highlight the tools for estimating convergent and discriminant validity with the help of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). This is mainly used by checking the values of both standardized loading estimates of CFA and AVE, as both values are advised not to fall below 0.5. As for discriminant validity, Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson (2010) provide a guideline in which the discriminant validity condition is satisfied when "AVE estimates for two factors (is) greater than the square of the correlation between the two factors" (p. 605).

4.3.2.6. Structural Equation Modeling

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is defined as "multivariate technique combining aspects of factor analysis and multiple regression that enables the researcher to simultaneously examine a series of interrelated dependence relationships among the measured variables and latent constructs (variates) as well as between several latent constructs" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 546).

Hair and colleagues (2010) identify six general steps for applying the SEM technique:

i) Defining individual constructs*:* An excellent theoretical background is needed to define these constructs. This is also followed by conducting the hypothesis tests (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). In other words, in this stage, a model specification process occurs, given that several hypotheses are developed to determine the existence

(or the absence) of relationships between latent variables (Weston & Gore, 2006). This study is based on the theory of planned behavior and its extensions in various studies. As a result, Attitude, Subjective Norms, Behavioral Control, and Consumer Perceived Effectiveness are identified as the primary constructs of the study.

ii)Developing and specifying the measurement model*:* This step includes an estimation of the number of factors, assigning factors to variables, and assessment of the correlation between latent variables and errors (Bowen & Gou, 2002). Specifically, the measured items are identified and assigned to the individual constructs determined in the previous step (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). In the current study, six measured items are assigned to Attitudes, six to Subjective Norms, three to Behavioral Control, three to perceived Consumer Effectiveness, and five to Purchase Intentions.

iii)Designing a study to produce empirical results: In this step, three main subjects must be handled in the research design. First, the type of data to be analyzed should be checked. While researchers can optionally choose between correlations and covariances, Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010) recommend covariances due to their flexibility. Second, missing data are to be controlled. Researchers need to assess the pattern and the extent of the missing data in this area. According to the randomness pattern and the level of factor loadings, they can decide whether to apply remedy techniques. Then, researchers can check the advantages and the disadvantages of each remedy technique to choose the one that suits their research. Finally, the sample size needs to be given some attention. Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010) identify a minimum sample size according to the number of constructs and their corresponding items. The model of this study includes five constructs. Each one contains a minimum of three items. This condition can be satisfied with a minimum sample size of 100 subjects (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

iv)Assessing model validity: At this stage and to assess the model validity, Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010) suggest that researchers need to make sure that the measurement model's level of goodness of fit (GOF) has reached an acceptable level and that the model is valid in terms of construct validity. As for (GOF), this index's primary use is to detect possible inconsistencies among observed values and the values

estimated to be generated from the model (Saboor, Alzzatrah, & Ahmed, 2022). Researchers use different techniques to evaluate a specific model's goodness of fit. The most common indices that measure GOF include χ square, Root mean square residual (RMR), Good of fitness index (GFI), parsimony-adjusted measures, and Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (Natasha & Guo, 2011). Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010) group different indices into three categories. This includes absolute fit indices, which measure the ability of the designed model to reproduce the observed data. Second, incremental fit indices. These depend on a base or a null model with which the developed model is compared. Finally, the parsimony fit indices. The central concept of these indices builds on the assumption that more complex models are expected to fit the data better. Hence, a better model is chosen among various competing models based on its complexity. In addition, construct validity (CV) needs to be measured in this step. In short, CV is meant to test the relations between the constructs of the study and to identify the degree to which latent variables are represented by measured variables (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

v)Specifying structural model*:* Now that all validity, reliability, and model fit tests have proceeded, the structural model needs to be specified. In this step, theory is used to identify the relations between different constructs. Namely, relations are defined between exogenous and endogenous constructs and between endogenous constructs (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

vi)Assessing structural model validity: the task of this final step is similar to the one in the fourth step with some slight differences. Mainly, in this step there is a need to study the estimated parameters in order to test the proposed hypotheses in terms of the relationships that were established in the structural model (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). The indices of chi-square, RMSEA, and GFI are used to apply this step.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION OF THE QUALITATIVE PHASE

This chapter will present the findings and discuss the data obtained from the qualitative phase, mainly via qualitative interviews. Several themes were identified after data collection and data analysis using the thematic analysis. The following major themes emerged in the study:

5.1. Sustainable Fashion in Türkiye: Current State of the Art, Visions and Efforts

Data reveals that fashion brands in the country are "definitely starting to go sustainable" (R5). Yet, this start is still slow and low, as described by respondents, who maintain that the general situation of sustainable fashion in Türkiye is still in its initiation phase with plenty of work that needs to be done. Sustainability concepts and measures were introduced to Turkish brands at the beginning of the 2000s. The efforts are there, but they are still slow, not severe enough, or inefficient. One respondent explains: *"There are investments [of sustainable fashion], but I don't think it's enough. We are at the very beginning. […], there is a lot to do, a lot of work needs to be done" (R3).* The interviewed experts think that when Turkish brands compare themselves with international brands, they believe that Turkish brands are less advanced in sustainability. One explains that *"Europeans are a little bit advanced. Frankly, it goes a little slower in Türkiye" (R5).*

Realizing that they are a bit less advanced compared to other global brands, Turkish brands think it is important to speed up the transition process to higher level of sustainable fashion because *"this will become a necessity in a few years […], we need to contribute to the way brands are doing in terms of sustainability" (R1).*

The data highlights a lack of consistency in how brands conceptualize sustainability. The brands' general understanding focuses on the environmental dimension of sustainability. Data also highlight the lack of research-informed decisions in the Turkish market coupled with a lack of *"innovation studies from Turkish brands"* to cover sustainability (R1).

Moreover, no clear visions or definitions seem to be shared among the brands. This could be due to the country's lack of sustainable leadership capable of unifying visions and goals. However, this is a global concern and not just a Turkish problem. In addition, even when a brand claims to follow sustainability, there is no proof that the suppliers are abiding by it because of the lack or nonexistence of auditing.

The brands differ among themselves in the way they understand sustainability, their approach, and the level of sustainability. They also differ in how much significance and weight they ascribe to sustainability. The initial sample of this research included the largest and most well-known fast fashion brands in Türkiye. This included L.C. Waikiki, Defacto, Kotton, Colins, and Mavi. However, the interviews with the managers from Colins and Mavi were later cancelled because they had no specific department or representative to address sustainable issues. Of the remaining three brands, L.C. Waikiki stands out as the advanced brand in its sustainability approach. Because of the absence of shared characteristics and benchmarking among the brands, the study created a spectrum that consists of three levels of sustainable involvement of Turkish brands (this is shown in Table 5.1). Level three contains the two brands (Mavi and Colin). These brands did not show any readiness to participate in the research because of the lack of relevant infrastructure and knowledge.

Table 5.1. The Three Levels of Sustainability Involvement

Level of sustainable involvement	**1st level**	**2nd level**	**3rd level**
Brands	LC Waikiki	Defacto Koton	Mavi Colins
Indicators	-benchmarking -allocating more funds for sustainability -experimental laboratories -committees for sustainability -suppliers auditing program (nonbinding) -control of the chemicals used in both fabric and garment washing processes -attention to waste and product lifecycle. -clear targets for the future	-attention to raw materials: using recycled and organic fabric, -water and product lifecycle assessment attempts. -initial steps to develop strategies -uncertain outlooks for the future	-non-existence of sustainable infrastructure or strategic plans -inability to collect relevant data from the brands

Source: author

Among the rest of the brands in the study, L.C. Waikiki has taken some serious steps toward sustainability. Therefore, this band is placed in the first level of involvement. Data shows that this brand places sustainability in its core strategy. This better involvement is illustrated by many indicators, such as setting clear targets for upcoming years, active benchmarking, assigning more funds and measures, testing laboratories, and committees for sustainability and suppliers auditing. R1, the

respondent who represented the brand, has emphasized its efforts in the following areas in the last six years:

"[We have been running] an ecology materials program; you can think of it as a sustainable environmental module. There are two main modules here: environmental management and chemical management. We control both inventory tracking and applications here. We control wastewater and also consumption."

"We have collected, in the last six years, what problems arise from waste water, and now among our plans is to calculate carbon trace water in the supply chain. Products life cycle assessment evaluation, for example, we started with lifecycle assessment in denim because there is a serious use of water there, serious chemicals are used, so a life cycle assessment evaluation is done, a carbon water trace is also checked, it is necessary to focus on which area, we have worked so far, we have established a system for our manufacturers, we have established a tracking system."

"For example, we have a laboratory that employs 300 people, so we can do a lot of tests. Now, we have started to do environmental waste tests. We have a huge laboratory. Of course, this is an important investment […]. We did it. I haven't heard of it in the textile market. You haven't heard from another Turkish brand."

Being a representative of the brand, the positionality of this respondent may impact the objectivity of the data above; however, other sources of data and information obtained from the brand's website, as well as some publications and studies on the Turkish market, confirm that this particular brand stands out as a fore-runner among the other fast fashion brands in terms of sustainability efforts and achievements. In addition to the experimental labs, the control of the chemicals used in both fabric and garment washing processes, and attention to waste and product lifecycle, the brand also uses a supplier auditing program to make sure that the linked suppliers are following the benchmarks set by the brand to meet a certain level of sustainability goals.

“This is actually a good example that you can see that there is strategic thinking behind that. I mean why would I bother doing such auditing program? Only for an image? No way. I think they are thinking about the future” (R6).

While this auditing program is considered a unique and advanced feature of this brand in the Turkish market that shows progressive steps and forward strategies, data reveals that such auditing techniques are not obligatory: *"LCW, for example have chemical stuff auditing programs for their suppliers. It is not very obligatory like that of Inditex but still it is there" (R6).*

This means that the brand in question does not cut off links or take accountability steps toward the suppliers that achieve low scores on the brand's sustainability benchmarks. Auditing control is profound in the case of global fast-fashion brands, and brands like Zara may stop working with a supplier when the supplier fails to meet a certain standard. Data thus unveils that if sustainability auditing and control mechanisms do exist in the Turkish market, these mechanisms are of educational orientation only. They are understood as a manner through which the brands teach the suppliers and show them how to apply more sustainable practices only. In other words, sustainable obligation and accountability do not exist in Türkiye, and neither brands nor suppliers are liable if they do not follow sustainable standards. One interviewee expressed his disapproval of the overall lack of sustainable governance and establishing a shared vision and effort in the country, which is reflected in the fashion sector:

“Well, in Türkiye, I think there is no pressure from the government or the opposition or any other associations […]. In the previous year, we had a problem in Türkiye regarding environmental pollution. Many polluters were released in the Bosporus. No reaction has occurred. The one who should react does not react. It is our society. We do not know the target correctly. Everyone knows something according to himself. But now the main thing is that the sea is polluted. This company is the source of this. This kind of filtration was not even made. There is not enough reaction to these. The same applies when dealing with fashion brands” (R4).

The second level of involvement is identified in Defacto and Kotton. In this level, most of the responses seem to provide uncertain data about the strategical approach of these

brands. In this level, initial steps are just starting to be taken: *"Sustainability is a subject we focus on right now. Almost 10% of our fabrics are recycle […] we have reached 10% right now, we have new targets now, let's make a package to save water" (R2).*

One feature that characterizes the sustainable efforts of the brands at this second level is the mere focus on using raw materials such as recycled and organic fabric, the use of BCI[10] cotton, and some water and product lifecycle assessment attempts. It seems that only a narrow range of environmental sustainability is being applied by these brands compared to the application conducted by global brands, which was presented in the second chapter. This focus on raw materials in sustainability was addressed in research as a limitation that should be discussed. Pessôa, Araújo & Arruda (2015) argue that fashion brands usually often start their transition to sustainability by concentrating on the use of raw materials, trusting such practices alone can make them look sustainable.

In general, the orientation of sustainability efforts of all the brands in the study seems to have a limited understanding of sustainability that is focused on environmental sustainability only. The study maintains that Turkish brands need to comprehend the importance of addressing all phases and all pillars and all stakeholders involved if they want to become sustainable. When taking the comprehensive definition of sustainability, the three-bottom line model, and all the stakeholders involved into account, it is clear that the data presents a range of environmentally focused sustainability practices and efforts. Thus, economic and social sustainability do not seem to exist in the standard practices of Turkish brands in general. As a result, three pillars of sustainability (Alhaddi, 2015; Correia, 2019; John & Narayanamurthy, 2015; Goel, 2010) seem to be missing two of its major components. Only one respondent mentions social sustainability as a future plan to be considered: *"Currently, our works are more focused on the raw material at the moment, and of course, in the future, there will be focus on the social side, such as social sustainability" (R2).* Brands seem to be preoccupied with the urge to produce sustainable products and use raw materials. In

[10] BCI stands for Better Cotton Initiative, which is the world's largest cotton sustainability program. https://www.coats.com/en/sustainability/sustainability-certifications/better-cotton-initiative

addition, the fact that excess production and consumption can cancel the benefits of sustainability seems to be absent.

These findings support existing research on sustainability that highlights an inclination to focus on environmental sustainability (Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas, 2011), particularly the use of raw materials. Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas (2011) explain that when social and economic sustainability efforts are mentioned in specific contexts, they are often optional initiatives combined with managerial responsibilities and standard business practices and administered by corporate social responsibility (CSR) committees.

5.2. The Motivation of the Brands to Follow Sustainability in Fashion

When asked about the motivation that triggers the brands to go sustainable, a variety of responses were collected. Some responses admitted that sustainability seemed to provide brands with a better reputation since it is considered the right and desirable thing to do. The majority explained that sustainability programs in Türkiye are "mainly about providing better image" (R6) and that the brands include sustainability strategies in their plans mainly to look more attractive to the customer as well as to the public and international market in general. (R4) thinks that the low rate of sustainable collections in stores is mainly due to the desire to reach a better brand image: *"Lc Waikiki made a collection of 8000-10000 mts, that is, about 6000 products, organic and recycled, this is nothing, this is nothing! This average is five pieces per store […]. This is purely for a show".* The aim for a better image was also reflected by respondent (R5). He uses the example of controlling chemicals used in the washing process by a particular brand. This sustainable measure was highly marketed as a good practice, particularly in the children's clothing department. The aim was mainly to influence potential customers, particularly parents looking for the best options for their loved ones. (R6) maintain that such practices, although positive, are linked to the brand's pragmatic goal and self-interest in promoting itself in the market rather than a sincere ethical procedure or a green step that satisfies potential customers who are interested in sustainability: *"Here I can say it is mainly about providing better image and not to actually satisfying a customer need."*

Following sustainability for reputation and image purposes is a common trend worldwide, and research has highlighted this issue. Wolf (2013) thinks that companies can adopt sustainability-oriented practices to enhance their image in society and be regarded as good contributors.

Data also reflect the peer pressure to follow the trend and imitate the global fast fashion giants in following the demands of sustainable fashion in general. All respondents echoed the discourse that brands would better join the global rail of sustainability to survive and be recognized. They explain that their brands are constantly developing benchmarks in accordance with the global brands and global visions. (R3) states that: *"Zara and global brands are doing this sustainable production, and so we feel like we are forced to start right now."* Therefore, many Turkish brands are following Zara and other well-known global fast fashion brands in their sustainable criteria. This situation reflects the external pressure that Turkish brands experience in their practice to follow global benchmarks, especially with the lack of sustainable leadership in the country to clarify and set standards. Some researchers have reported that companies are driven mainly by the demand to obey global pressure rather than their internal strategic planning from within (Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas, 2011).

This pressure can also be coming from the local customers represented by the young generation who are more educated and passionate about environmental issues. R6 believes in the power of the youth to make a difference:

"I mean look there are many things that are changing now, especially in regard to new generations. They are now educated […] Also, they travel […] So, if the management in these brands are realizing these changes, they may be actually doing this on purpose […]. I think they are thinking about the future" (R6).

However, most responses affirm that it is the external pressure that is driving the way: *"we are mainly directed by foreign brands in this regard, not the end customer" (R2).*

Yet, in spite of the above, one respondent acknowledges the developing sense of responsibility of brands toward the planet. Feeling accountable is starting to develop

toward the limited planet resources, which could, in the long run, negatively affect the business:

"Because we are consuming resources, if the resources are depleted, if you want to protect the world, even if you think about it by the capitalist system logic, if the resources run out, if you can't sell anything to the end consumer, this man's reason for the existence of this system will be disappeared, they are a commercial formation, they make money when there is demand. That is, if one day the water runs out, there will be nothing to do, there will be no production, there will be no sales, or if the cotton productivity drops, if this happens, sources transportation, raw material transportation, if it ends, if we do not consume properly. For example, if we don't care about chemical recycling since access to chemicals decreases, sales will be lost" (R4).

Thus, it can be inferred that there is a sincere will to contribute to international efforts to ethically and conscientiously use the planet's resources. This is triggered by the concern that saving resources and the earth will directly impact the business in the long run. This level of strategic approach can be clearly related to a mindset that considers sustainability as part of the company's main stakeholders. This is because the damage that comes from non-sustainable acts will indirectly affect the company in a negative way. This argument matches the comments of Bendheim, Waddock, & Graves (1998). This seems to be applicable to highly involved Turkish companies. This is because their strategic involvement in sustainability intends to achieve the company's long-term objectives rather than responding to a certain level of outside pressure, which has been identified in this research to be relatively weak in Türkiye. As a result, this conclusion seems to match the scope of stakeholder theory argued by Linnenluecke & Griffiths (2013).

5.3. The Role of Consumer Awareness, Knowledge and Attitudes Toward Sustainability

5.3.1. Lack of Awareness and an Attitude-Behaviour Gap

The vital role of consumption and consumers was one of the consistent findings in the data. All interviewees addressed the need to pay attention to the customer as a

significant stakeholder and influencer in the sustainable fashion projects in Türkiye. Respondents expressed their worry about the lack of knowledge of sustainability among consumers.

"I have never met a customer who said I want this for sustainable reasons, so they have very little or very little awareness […]. İ think Turkish customers' consciousness level at the moment is less than 1 %. We put labels on the products. In other words, we declare that these are sustainable products, and they rarely look at these labels. For example, when we put our first sustainable products in the store, we both put a label on the product and made an advertisement on Instagram. We say that these products save this much water or make that much contribution. The customers are not very aware of it. There are very few of them who are aware of it. I am asking people around me who do not work in the textile sector. They are not aware of it" (R3).

Turkish consumers' awareness of sustainable fashions is generally low. However, young people are considered to have more education, positive attitudes and involvement:

"The new generation is very conscious about this subject. They research this subject more. They are more conscious. They buy the products, and they are aware of them. In other words, I can say that even within a brand, the differences in this ratio vary according to the age groups it addresses, so while the elderly group still does not really pay attention to the products they buy, the younger group, between 15-25 or 30, really started to become a much more conscious consumer" (R5).

While data shows a lack of consumer involvement when it comes to sustainability labels, there is evidence that when consumers are given clear explanations about sustainable fashion and recycling, they show a positive attitude:

"At the same time, our t-shirts are made of recycled polyester, and our t-shirts are completely recycled or offered to the customer with this type of sustainable materials or methods. The customer responded positively to this. For example, researches were carried out at that time. 60% of customers gave importance to this" (R2).

Yet, data also reveals that when consumers do obtain helpful knowledge about sustainability, this knowledge may not necessarily translate into meaningful actions, highlighting an attitude-behavior gap. Customers are likely to associate sustainability with positive and desirable attitudes, yet they don't often translate that into purchasing sustainable products. One reason for the lack of functional awareness might be associated with the disinformation or lack of information they have about what sustainability means. This makes them cast doubts about the quality of a garment with a sustainability tag:

"People see them [recycled products] as garbage or something dirty. In other words, in the research done [name of a brand], for example, nobody wants recycle garment, that is, most people do not want to buy recycle because they act as if a different treatment was done here. They think it's dirty. That is why I believe we should raise awareness about circular economy" (R1).

Interviewees related this lack of awareness or misinformation to the lack of pro-sustainable purchasing actions. The majority of research on sustainable fashion provides similar results on how the lack of knowledge of consumers affects their purchase intentions towards sustainable fashion products (Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014; Zheng and Chi, 2014; Cowan & Kinley, 2014; Ko & Jin, 2017; Chi, Gerard, Yu & Wang, 2021).

When misinformation is coupled with price concerns, there is a high probability the customer will not consider buying a sustainable item:

"Now the customer does not want to pay extra money when we put it in the store, but when we look at it now, when we look at it, many extra costs in terms of fabric, accessories production and washing costs. And they look, there is recycle in it, they think second-hand or thinks it is old, so they need to be educated about its value and contribution. so, the most important issue for customer is prices are very, very important" (R3).

"When the price is the same, everyone tends to use sustainable products. Of course, recycled products should be explained correctly. I mean, it's not like I'm wearing used

products, so maybe the technique needs to be explained. When this is understood, it increases people's orientation. So yes, I will buy it anyway if there is no price difference; of course, I will buy the one that protects the environment, but if there are price differences and like us and most Middle east and more 3rd world countries, the first priority is of course price and the money they spend" (R4).

In a developing country like Türkiye, the average individual has more important priorities than buying a more expensive sustainable garment.

"In such developing countries consumers unfortunately have to struggle with other issues rather than thinking about sustainable product. So, the priorities in these countries are not about buying a sustainable product rather is about staying alive" (R1).

The findings here align with studies that attribute the gap between positive attitudes towards green products and actual purchase behavior to higher prices in which these products are usually priced (Ali, Khan, & Ahmed, 2011). Data shows that there is a small niche market of sustainable fashion in the country, which caters to a small group of educated and wealthy elites. Studies have argued that this contrast between a smaller market for sustainable fashion and the larger market of fast or conventional fashion is what separates the two venues of fashion from each other (Štefko & Steffek, 2018; McNeill & Snowdon, 2019; Jung & Jin, 2016). While the essence of sustainable fashion is about encouraging fashion consumption only when needed (McNeill & Snowdon, 2019), fast fashion is based on a completely different logic. Fast fashion aims to enable customers to buy their products all the time. In addition, it encourages them to follow rapidly changing trends and designs.

"I see that this awareness is being created. But at the same time, I see that this consumption craziness continues by the same people. So let me buy this and that and so on. But if you are going to take it all the time, this site will be incomplete. Awareness is being shaped, but people still do not give up on their habits. There is awareness in the sense that they are aware that they harm the environment and the world and the future of the world" (R4).

5.3.2. The Brands' Efforts to Raise Awareness and Bridge the Gap

The data identifies the desire of Turkish brands to improve their customers' attitudes towards sustainable fashion. Data shows a few tools and outlets the brands use to achieve these goals. The first tool is that of social media:

"There is also the power of social media. Now these brands are always launching their products on social media, they do it on Instagram, they do it on other videos, so we see that these kinds of things have positive effect on people" (R5).

Other than direct marketing tools, respondents revealed other techniques used by brands to increase the knowledge of their customers. For example, one method includes informing and training salesmen and encouraging them to have a conversation about green products with customers.

"Now we are telling our store employees about this because the store is the place where we catch our customers. They go to the store employees; training will be given at work. What is this issue? How do we make sustainable products? We put green stickers. We write respect for life, we need to fill it under it, because there is a circulation, because the store employees constantly come and go since they are the first contact with our customers. Our first aim is to give education to the store employees at the moment" (R2).

Others include using barcodes and investing in creating attractive labels that are easy to understand. Labeling has been actively used by brands to inform customers and shift their mindsets:

"We changed the label we used before. We have changed the style of the label so that it becomes more understandable for customers. Advertisements are planned in a way that is more understandable to the customer. In other words, maybe ten people are aware of this issue today, and more customers will be aware of it tomorrow. We aim to provide customer awareness in this way. With our marketing efforts, we are thinking of putting barcodes on such products. Once you read this code, we will see how the product contributes to the world" (R3).

The effectiveness of social media, store communication with salesmen, and labeling in the communication process with customers have been validated by several studies (Fernandez, Hartmann, & Apaolaza, 2022; Willems, Brengman, & Sanden 2107; Latré, Perko, & Thijssen, 2017). This study provides further validation by showing this influential role in a sustainable fashion. However, as explained by respondents, these efforts will be insufficient in terms of volume and depth if not coupled with a robust political will. Respondents believe that this informative role cannot be their responsibility only and that other parties, such as the government and the schools, should be more involved in educating Turkish people about sustainability and creating positive attitudes toward ethical and green products and lifestyles.

5.3.3. The Consumer's Motivation to Buy Sustainable Fashion

According to the marketer's point of view represented in the data, when consumers buy sustainable products, their purchase is mainly triggered by self-caring concerns, such as one's health, and less by ethical motivation or care for the environment.

For example, several respondents refer to Turkish mothers' interest in buying organic clothes for their children to satisfy their caring instinct as mothers:

"Apart from that, mothers, I am a mother, the biggest thing that mothers care is chemicals. Unfortunately, the chemical content is not written on the product, yes, it is ecological and organic cotton, especially for the new born group, it is very important for the baby group because we try to buy organic when we can, even if the prices are different, we try to buy when we afford it" (R5).

Some think this was one of the outcomes of the pandemic that made people more attentive to their well-being. One respondent refers to how the sales of organic women's underwear drastically increased after COVID-19, encouraged by customers' preoccupation with what was best for their health: *"After the pandemic, especially underwear women prefer organic or sustainable products for their clothes" (R3).*

In this section, the data represented the view of the consumer from the marketers' perspective. The study acknowledges latent biases toward customers in these findings

and the possibility of blaming the customer when the sustainability efforts are not working. Therefore, the quantitative phases and other sources of qualitative data will be used to maintain balance and depth as much as possible.

5.4. Challenges Facing Sustainable Fashion in Türkiye

The following challenges facing sustainability efforts in fashion were highlighted in the data:

5.4.1. The Challenge of High Costs

The high cost of sustainable fashion was highlighted as a significant challenge by all respondents and documents related to the brands studied. The higher costs of sustainable production, which reach up to 10-20% cost difference compared to conventional production costs, are identified by the data as a potential problem that could impact the pace and transition to sustainability in fashion. High costs are capable of driving away customers and influencing their purchasing behaviors, and this is not good news for the brands:

"But when we look at it now, many extra costs arise in terms of fabric, accessories, production, and washing costs. And they look and find recycling in it. They think it is second-hand or they think it is old. So, they need to be educated about its value and contribution. So, the most important issue for customers is price. Now we are looking, yes, we can find recycled fabrics, we can find dyes and chemicals that are helpful in terms of reduction of water consumption, but when you look at it, they are more expensive washing and so on, the prices are almost double because their investments are very new and they add the costs of the investments, but on a customer basis, the customer does not care about it, so the customer buys it for the same price" (R3).

Thus, brands face a significant challenge because it is difficult to convince customers to pay a premium for this extra production cost. As a result, in the long run, brands may be unable to address this imbalance and potential loss. These findings match the ones identified by Stefko & Steffek (2018) in their study of slow fashion. They confirm that higher production costs pose a significant challenge for companies in not less than

three ways. First, long-term markups will not be easily maintained due to higher costs. Second, the balance between attractivity and being commercial will hardly be achieved. Third, it may not be easy to justify the higher prices of the slow fashion to end customers. In general, the source of these high costs related to sustainable fashion mainly comes from higher costs of raw materials (Khandual & Pradhan, 2019), adhering to traceability processes (Moon, Lai, Lam, & Chang, 2014), or from scarcity of resources (Henninger, Alevizou, & Oates, 2016) resulting in weaker competitive power of sustainable fashion compared to traditional methods (Ertekin & Atik, 2020). As a result, if companies fail to sacrifice a significant part of their profit margins (Moon, Lai, Lam, & Chang, 2014), they may find themselves in a position in which they are unable to address the largest segment of their target customers (Khandual & Pradhan, 2019; Henninger, Alevizou, & Oates, 2016).

5.4.2. The Lack of Robust Sustainable Leadership and Support in the Country

Another significant challenge facing the transition to sustainable fashion in Türkiye is the lack of support from different sides of the country and a lack of leadership. Respondents spoke of weak or insufficient support from the government, political parties, or other organizations and associations that could assist the brands in their efforts. Data shows that sustainability goals are not placed as a priority for these influential bodies of society. There is also a lack of knowledge among these bodies about sustainability procedures, which could sometimes hinder sustainable tasks. Therefore, the brands are left alone with extra tasks. They have to struggle to meet the demands and pressure to go sustainable from international organizations and to do the tasks that could be given to other organizations and bodies in the country. As a result, these kinds of extra tasks can create extra burden, cause a significant challenge, and slow down progress in the long run:

"Now, in Türkiye, governments from different parties are far from making this a priority. So, when different governments do not support this issue, we will face obstacles and challenges. For example, now, Türkiye is banning the import of recycled fibers because they see them as garbage. They are afraid that other countries are dumping their garbage in our country. So, now, fabric mills have a shortage of recycled fibers because there is not enough governmental support. This is a big challenge. İt is

all connected to awareness if you can see. Awareness of government, people, society, politicians, and so on. This is our biggest challenge, I think" (R6).

The problem of banning the import of recycled materials has been referred to in the research as a concern that negatively impacts different players in this industry (Sismek, 2021). Studies have recognized the critical role that government can play in supporting sustainable fashion, as shown in studies about the importance of subsidies and sponsorships (Niu, Chen, & Zhang, 2017; Choi & Luo, 2019; Peleg, Mizrachi & Tal, 2022), supporting technologies (Peleg, Mizrachi & Tal, 2022), providing credibility certificates (Peleg, Mizrachi & Tal, 2022; Cho & Lee, 2013), promoting green consumption through sustainability and supporting green education (Boström & Micheletti, 2016; Cheramie, 2018).

The data indicates that this lack of support is going hand in hand with a lack of social and political pressure and accountability in Türkiye to comply with sustainability. Thus, it can be argued that this lack of support and accountability indicate the lack of sustainability leadership in the country that is capable of ensuring benchmarks and liability as well as providing support and guidance.

5.4.3. The Challenge of Availability and Variety

Data has identified a few challenges that could hinder customers from buying sustainable products. In addition to the price issue discussed above, issues related to availability and variety are also affecting consumers' purchase behaviors. In other words, even when consumers are educated and aware and are willing to pay extra for sustainable products, they don't know where to shop or to find a particular model, color, size, or design because of the often-limited assortment or range of sustainable fashion.

"When you want to buy organic products, maybe every store offers 5% of its products as organic, so unfortunately, for example, when you say that you should do all your child's shopping with organic products, there is very little choice. The price is very high. So, the price is negatively affecting the purchase. Most of the people can, for example, buy one organic product. But you can't afford to buy organic blankets, or you

can't find organic flour. In other words, this is still limited in the sense of sustainability. There are some brands you can find. However, they are both difficult to reach and very high in price" (R5).

Research shows that factors such as availability and variety of models play an essential part in encouraging or hindering sustainable fashion purchases (Bong Ko & Jin, 2017). Besides issues of accessibility and limited range of collections, data also reveals that there may be situations in which customers cannot distinguish sustainable from non-sustainable products, making it essential for brands to market their sustainable labels more clearly.

5.4.4. Supply Chain Problems and Concerns

Another important challenge that was identified in the data was the issues and problems affecting supply chain. Some examples include logistic problems, supply chain breaking down, shortage and long lead times. The effect of such issues cannot be ignored as it negatively impacts sustainability progress.

"We saw that chain breakdown, even if it was Inditex, you know the last thing, to be included in JOIN LIFE label you had to have certain criteria such as organic or recycle or Tencel. After that, they said, it doesn't work because there is a price and lead time issue so they said you can have BCI cotton instead" (R6).

These problems are not specific to fashion or sustainable fashion domains, as these issues often impact other industrial spheres globally. Although these problems are common in different industries, addressing supply chain issues in fashion has become an urgent matter when considering the urgency of sustainable fashion. This is due to problems including high use of resources, high competition, and production in settings where sustainability standards are low (de Brito, 2008). Supplier delays are identified as the most noteworthy risk that can face fashion brands in the supply chain area. Brands are often drawn to lower-cost manufacturing by relying on suppliers located in developing countries (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). This usually creates possible delays and makes it difficult for the brands to supervise and coordinate the different settings. There is also the risk of chaos and losing control over sustainability criteria (Henninger, Alevizou, & Oates, 2016). This, in turn, can create trouble ensuring and

delivering sustainability benchmarks to the whole supply chain (Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, & Ghezzi, 2017).

5.5. Prospects and Opportunities for Sustainable Fashion in Türkiye

Along with the challenges facing sustainability in fashion Türkiye, data also provides some evidence that promises a better future for sustainable fashion projects in the country. All respondents reflected a positive prospect toward the future. They all expected that sustainability in the fashion industry in the country would become a habit and norm in the future.

Given that only 10% of current store products can be characterized as sustainable, this rate is estimated to reach 40% shortly as Türkiye will witness a significant increase in the coming five years, as explained by respondent (R5). The prediction is that the growth in sustainable patterns will become an obligation rather than a responsibility. This will be achieved mainly by following the models of global fast fashion brands such as Inditex.

According to the data, there are several reasons for such optimistic outlooks. One primary reason is the increasing awareness of the young generation coupled with activism and educational campaigns. The Turkish youth are getting more educated about sustainability and the impact of industries on the planet. Moreover, thanks to the internet and social media, they are more exposed to the sustainable campaigns issued by global brands. They are joining a worldwide force and realizing the impact young people can make by looking at examples of young influential activists around the world. As the rate of the young generation is increasing compared to older ones, the rate of people who are aware and passionate about sustainability is expected to rise, making it a priority and not just a trend: *"The new generation is very conscious about this subject because they research this subject more, they are more conscious, and they buy the products and, they are aware of them" (R5).*

As informed by the McKenzy report, the young generations are expected to be the main instrument that will change the face of this industry due to an increase of almost 40% every year within the Z generation, born between 1997 and 2012. As consumers'

awareness is increasing regarding fashion production and consumption patterns (Khandual & Pradhan, 2019), the industry will have no choice but to go sustainable and invest in further efforts (Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, & Ghezzi, 2017). Another related issue is the medium of social media used by almost everyone, particularly the youth. Social media is an essential tool that spreads awareness, campaigns, and advertisements. It has the power to change opinions and create new norms: *"I can say that in the past, it had almost no effect, but in recent years, social media, since its usage has increased by everyone, it definitely has an effect" (R5).*

In addition, respondents expect that the higher cost associated with sustainable fashion production will gradually decrease until it becomes equal to conventional production. As respondent (R6) advised, this can be attributed to higher expected production volume, which will automatically reduce unit costs. In addition, over time, professionals will earn more experience and will be able to maintain lower production costs. Therefore, cost problems can be solved, and sustainable products may be offered at the same price. The learning curve model supports the argument that an added experience can improve productivity (Nemet, 2006). However, it is essential to acknowledge the potential adverse risks that may accompany the increase in production, including rebound effects (Korhonen, Honkasalo, & Seppälä, 2018) and other compromises of sustainability goals (Henninger, Alevizou, & Oates, 2016; Ertekin & Atik, 2020).

Based on these optimistic future predictions, respondents identified essential opportunities that can be gained by Turkish brands. As this matter is still in its early stages, brands can enjoy a first-mover advantage because they can be ahead when the pattern of sustainability becomes regular. Interviewees agreed that the change is coming and that to be a winner, a brand should be prepared for the ride of sustainability:

"There are actual needs. So even now, if consumers and governments are not aware of this when real problems come up, they will be aware, and here, the winners are the ones who have prepared for this issue before. So, I see it as a strategic investment. And the real opportunity is that not so many are investing there, so brands have a chance

to have a first-mover advantage, you know. They will also have the know-how, and they will always be ahead of the brands that didn't act or believe in this issue" (R6).

Indeed, a first-mover advantage can help in increasing sales volume (Li & Zhao, 2019), creating a competitive advantage (Rahman & Bhattacharyya, 2003), and reducing costs (Tetrault Sirsly & Lamertz, 2007).

In addition, another strategic opportunity identified by the data is specific to the current context. Respondent (R4) recognizes that Türkiye seems to have two critical strategic advantages that are valuable and relevant for investing in sustainability.

"I think Türkiye is a very valuable tool in terms of using the land and resources. For two reasons, the country is very important for sustainable resource management. We are able to provide this resource management. We have both resources and information power" (R1).

First, the county has a great value in terms of resources. It owns a vast land and an abundant resource of natural materials, including hemp. Second, the country is known for its skilled human power. The human power has expertise and accumulated knowledge in the textile sector. These two essential advantages must be carefully analyzed by brands as this can be an excellent opportunity to turn Türkiye into a textile brand country like Italy. In this sense, the experience gained by human force in Türkiye is critical in developing technological advances in this area. Technological advances are vital in sustainable fashion in areas such as improved durability of the garments, less water consumption, effective use of synthetic fibers (Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, & Ghezzi, 2017), cost reduction (Nayak, 2019), enhancing the models of producing natural garments and improving recycle tools (Binet, Coste-Manière, Decombes, Grasselli, Ouedermi & Ramchandani, 2019).

Generally speaking, there is worldwide optimism, which may be attributed to several reasons, including the ones mentioned above. For example, according to a McKenzy report, an expected increase in sustainable fashion consumption is seen. This increase is not only confined to using sustainable materials, but it also includes a transformative move from the conventional business model to a circular model. Such a model will

consist of reselling, mending, and restoration. Indeed, several factors back the argument of the predicted rise in the future globally. First of all, when the demand of consumers increases, the fashion business will have little option but to comply. Additionally, the emotional dimension of the fashion industry will contribute to making customers devoted and faithful to the more ethical brands. Brands that are seen as ethical by their consumers are estimated to have more profits when trusted by their consumers (Singh, Iglesias & Batista-Foguet, (2012). These issues are also applicable to the Turkish context.

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS, RESULTS & DISCUSSION OF THE QUANTITATIVE STUDY

The researcher analyzes the quantitative data collected using a survey questionnaire in this chapter. Then, he presents the results and discusses them.

6.1. Data Cleaning and Preparation

The data was cleaned by investigating missing data with the help of SPSS software. Accordingly, missing data were handled using pairwise exclusion. In addition, normality was checked. This was done by applying two tests. The first test is the skewness test, which measures the deviation from the symmetric position, while the second is the Kurtosis test, which is used to investigate the peakedness (Ruppert, 1987). According to Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010), the rule of thumb implies that normal distribution is validated when values range between -1 and +1. George & Mallery (2010) consider values between -2 and +2 as acceptable. As seen in Table 6.1, the values show that normal distribution status applies to the data.

Table 6.1. Descriptive Statistics of TPB Survey Items

Item	Mean	Skewness	Kurtosis
AT1	4.04	-.924	.937
AT2	4.08	-.959	1.326
AT3	4.07	-1.033	1.876
AT5	3.85	-.585	.411
AT8	3.78	-.422	.135
AT9	3.90	-.602	.822

Table 6.1. (cont.)

SN3	2.88	.010	-.414
SN4	2.99	-.179	-.449
SN6	3.00	-.008	-.230
SN7	2.87	.094	-.423
SN8	2.95	-.007	-.363
SN10	2.98	-.060	-.351
BC8	3.76	-.515	.266
BC9	3.78	-.397	.325
BC10	3.50	-.274	-.569
CE2	3.75	-.619	.538
CE3	3.58	-.588	.144
CE4	3.91	-.959	1.377
PI1	3.93	-.861	1.960
PI2	3.99	-.982	1.331
PI3	3.91	-.775	1.457
PI4	3.88	-.825	1.575
PI5	3.96	-.938	1.704

6.2. Descriptive Analysis of Survey Items

6.2.1. Demographic Distribution of Respondents

6.2.1.1. Age

Table 6.2 shows the age distribution among respondents. More than 70% of respondents were below 40 years old. While the author acknowledges that this result may not reflect the actual distribution of the Turkish population, the sample still reflects a good balance between different age groups. The main reason for the more significant numbers of younger respondents is merely attributed to the availability of these respondents. As the selection of respondents was random, this distribution reflects that these age groups are easily found within shopping malls and other similar

locations. In addition, it should be noted that respondents who identified as younger than 18 years old were not surveyed from the beginning.

6.2.1.2. Gender

As seen in Table 6.2, the distribution between genders was pretty balanced, with a slight majority for females, 51.5%. Again, a random selection process was followed in this regard. The result showed similar responses between the two genders. The distribution the study obtained was not far away from the Turkish general population, which indicates a percentage of 50.1% for males and 49.9% for females in 2023 (Milliyet, 2023, January 5).

6.2.1.3. Educational Level

Table 6.2. shows that education level was divided into four different categories. Generally, these categories were balanced. University graduates make up the majority, with just less than 44%. Most of the respondents with an education of high school or less were above 30 years old, whereas only 5% had just finished high school and started to apply for university. 10% of university graduates were master's students. While 75% of those with higher degrees had a master's degree, and the rest had PHD and higher.

6.2.1.4. Marital Status and Children

Table 6.2 shows a balanced distribution between married and non-married respondents, while separated cases were just above 6%. For more clarification of marital status categories, it should be noted that married cases are currently married, while non-married cases have never married before. The separated category indicates divorced or cases with diseased spouses. Almost 60% of respondents indicated that they do not have children. Only 21 of the married respondents and 5 of the separated ones were with no children. As for the number of children, 58% of respondents had only one child, while 30 % had two, while the rest 12% had more than two children.

6.2.1.5. Income

The main limitation here is the data collection date. At the time of data collection, the minimum wage in Turkiye was around 5000 Turkish lira. Based on that, the smaller category was identified as 5000 Turkish Lira and less to indicate people with part-time or no job. In order to use this data more effectively, it is better to evaluate these categories as lower and higher incomes rather than considering them based on the actual income values indicated at that time. Accordingly, less than 20% of respondents were gaining less than the minimum wage. 67% of them are university students, whereas the rest are mainly housewives. More than 70% of respondents were identified in the middle categories. The highest income category consisted of 10 males and seven females.

Table 6.2. Distribution of Respondents by Age, Gender, Education, Marital Status, Children, and Income

Demographic Variables	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage (Research sample (n = 268)**
Age		
18-29	112	41.8
30-39	85	31.7
40-49	41	15.3
50-59	26	9.7
60 and more	4	1.5
Gender		
Female	138	41.5
Male	130	48.5
Education		
High school or less	52	19.4
University student	60	22.4
University graduated	117	43.7
High education	39	14.6

Table 6.2. (cont.)

Marital Status		
Married	119	44.4
Not married	132	49.3
Separated	17	6.3
Children		
With children	110	41
Without children	158	59
Income		
Less than 5000	53	19.8
5000-10000	66	24.6
10000-20000	76	28.4
20000-30000	56	20.9
More than 30000	17	6.3

6.2.2. Distribution of Respondents by the Reason of Buying Sustainable Fashion

Respondents were initially asked if they buy sustainable fashion. Those who said they do not purchase sustainable fashion were not asked to complete the survey. In other words, only the answers of respondents who claimed to be familiar with purchasing sustainable fashion were considered in the analysis. A total of 312 responses were initially collected and then reduced to 268. 18 of the 44 deleted responses were because respondents identified that they do not purchase sustainable fashion, and the rest were deleted due to unclear answers or incomplete surveys.

Respondents were given four different potential reasons for purchasing sustainable fashion. A fifth reason (other reason) was also added to the choices. Respondents were allowed to provide more than one reason. For more clarification, each respondent was briefly told about the meaning of each of these choices. Table 6.3. shows the general distribution of responses to this question.

6.2.2.1. Health

This factor means that consumers buy a specific sustainable fashion product because they believe that it provides certain health protection. Almost one-third of respondents identified health as one of their reasons for purchase sustainable fashion. Health was the only answer of 25% of those who identified health as one of their answers. In general, no significant differences were noticed between different demographic categories.

6.2.2.2. Children

Health concerns were also the core of interest for this option. However, the health of children is the point of interest here. As expected, only parents with children interacted with this option. A total of 39 respondents chose this option which means that only 35% of those who have children buy sustainable fashion for reasons related to the health of their children. Children was the sole choice of more than half these respondents with 56%.

6.2.2.3. Environment

Environment choice was the winner of respondents' reasons for purchasing sustainable fashion, with more than 54% and 66 respondents stating that environment was their only answer. Extra attention can be attributed to this option as TPB's factor C.E. can be strongly related to this option. The interviewer explained to respondents that this option meant that protecting the environment was one of their reasons for buying sustainable fashion.

6.2.2.4. Trend

Respondents were told to choose the trend option if they believed that sustainable fashion was trendy enough to motivate them to make this purchase. A total of 57 respondents chose this option, and 21 with trend as their only choice. Almost 70% of those who chose this option were from the youngest age category, which is between 18-29. In addition, females had the edge in making this choice with almost 58%.

6.2.2.5. Other Reasons

Respondents were given the freedom to identify reasons other than those identified by the interviewer. Of the 55 who selected this option, 23 respondents chose other reasons. Only 13 respondents specified these reasons. All of them gave a different answer.

Table 6.3. Distribution of Reasons for Buying Sustainable Fashion

Reason	Frequency	Percentage	Percentage of single response (n=147)
Health	90	34%	9%
Children	39	15%	8%
Environment	146	54%	25%
Trend	57	21%	8%
Others	55	20%	9%

6.2.3. Distribution of Respondents by the Price They are Willing to Pay

This question was added in order to understand the role played by prices in shaping consumers' choices. The question was asked based on analyzing consumers' willingness to accept a specific percentage increase in the price of sustainable fashion products compared to conventional ones. This helped avoid the potential change in the monetary value of the local currency. As this question was not wholly related to the paper's main objectives and in order to simplify the survey for respondents and increase the response rate, this question was not made compulsory. Accordingly, a total of 147 respondents answered this question with a response rate of 55%. Table 8.4. shows respondents' distribution in this regard. The data shows that almost half of the respondents are willing to accept the minor increases suggested by the interviewer, whereas less than one-third refuse any increase. This indicates that although the majority of respondents accept only slight increases, the fact that more than two-thirds accept the concept of increase shows that respondents are aware that the higher prices of sustainable fashion offerings are somehow justified. Table 6.5 also shows the

distribution of price increase willingness to pay. In the same table, the income ranges are added. Regardless of the small size of the sample, the table shows a slight relation with income increase. For example, for those of the lowest incomes, the percentage within the sample that refused to pay any increase for sustainable fashion compared to the larger sample increased from 21% to 34% and decreased to around 17% for different price increase rate acceptance. Similarly, for income ranges between 20000 and 30000, they combine 35% of those who accept a 25% price increase and 12% of those who do not accept any price increase. However, their percentage in the large sample was 22%. As the small size of the sample prevents us from conducting a deeper analysis, these results indicate that higher income may encourage people to accept increases in the price of sustainable fashion.

Table 6.4. Respondents' Distribution According to Price Increase Acceptance Rates (N=147)

Category	**Number**	**Percentage**
Total responses	147	100%
Not willing to accept price increases	41	28%
Up to 5% increase	69	47%
Up to 25% increase	23	16%
Up to 50% increase	11	7%
More than 50% increase	3	2%

Table 6.5. Respondents' Willingness to Pay Compared to Their Incomes

Income range	**Percentage within the sample (N=147)**	**Not willing to accept price increases (N=41)**	**Up to 5% increase (N=69)**	**Up to 25% increase (N=23)**	**Up to 50% increase (N=11)**	**More than 50% increase (N=3)**
Less than 5000	21%	34%	16%	17%	18%	0

Table 6.5. (cont.)

5000-10000	22%	19%	28%	17%	36%	33%
10000-20000	29%	29%	29%	25%	45%	66%
20000-30000	22%	12%	22%	35%	0	0
More than 30000	5%	5%	6%	4%	0	0

6.3. Descriptive Statistics of Survey Items as Predictors of Purchase Intentions Toward Sustainable Fashion

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) was the primary tool used to develop the variable items in the survey questionnaire. Many studies have relied on this theory to measure intentions toward certain ends (Ajzen, 2014). In addition, the research extends the three main items of the theory, including perceived consumer effectiveness, as an extension of the original theory.

Table 6.6. shows the mean score of TPB items that the researcher obtained as a result of the survey. As mentioned before, respondents were presented with five statements with which they needed to show their level of agreement. Each statement was related to one of the items of TPB. The scores ranged from 1 to 5, with 1 implying the lowest level of agreement and 5 indicating the highest level of agreement. Accordingly, the mean scores can give an idea about each TBP item level among respondents. As the main objective of the theory is to understand respondents' purchase intentions towards sustainable fashion, the mean scores of the responses were generally positive in this regard. As seen in Table 6.6, the mean scores of purchase intentions ranged from 3.88 to 3.99, which shows that many respondents showed higher levels of agreement with purchase intention statements. As for the other TPB items, it seems that attitude showed the highest mean score level as it ranged between 3.78 and 4.08, which shows that the sample has a positive attitude toward sustainable fashion. Both BC and C.E. showed mean score numbers more than the average of three, indicating the importance of these factors among Turkish consumers. Only Subjective norms showed mean scores that were slightly less than three, ranging between 2.87 and 3.00.

Table 6.6. The Mean Score of TPB Items

No	Element	Mean
Attitude		
1	I think buying sustainable fashion is a positive	4.04
2	I think it's a good idea to buy sustainable fashion	4.08
3	I think it is safe to buy environmentally friendly products	4.07
5	Buying sustainable clothing is a smart choice	3.85
6	Buying sustainable clothing gives me positive feelings of satisfaction and self-esteem in contributing to the protection and improvement of the environment.	3.78
7	Purchasing sustainable clothing provides many benefits.	3.90
Subjective Norm		
8	Important people in my life want me to buy sustainable clothing.	2.88
9	My interactions with people influence my purchasing of sustainable products	2.99
10	My family thinks I should buy sustainable fashion instead of regular items	3.00
11	I believe most of my friends prefer sustainable fashion products over regular clothing items	2.87
12	I believe most of my friends expect me to choose sustainable clothes instead of regular clothes	2.95
13	People appreciate me more when they see me wearing something sustainable	2.98
Perceived Behavioral Control		
14	High prices prevent me from buying sustainable clothes when I like them	3.83
15	I won't buy sustainable clothing if I can't find the style I need	3.76
16	If I am not certain of the truth of a certain claim, I will not purchase products that are referred to as sustainable clothing.	3.78
17	I won't buy sustainable clothing if the store is far away	3.50
Perceived Consumer Effectiveness		
18	My personal actions are important enough to affect environmental problems	3.75
19	Environmental problems are partly a result of my own consumption choices	3.58
20	It is worth it for the individual consumer to make efforts to protect and improve the environment	3.91
21	When I buy fashion items, I try to think about how my use of them will affect the environment	3.54

Table 6.6. (cont.)

Purchase Intention		
25	I'm thinking of buying sustainable clothing in the future	3.93
26	I will try to buy sustainable clothes in the future	3.99
27	I will make an effort to purchase sustainable clothing in the future	3.91
28	If I see sustainable clothing, I consider buying or purchasing a product.	3.88
29	If I see a sustainable clothing retail store, I will consider visiting the store to purchase an item.	3.96

6.4. Exploratory Factor Analysis

The standard procedures of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were applied on the data in order to evaluate the measurement models. The researcher did not rely solely on the highly acceptance situation of the theory and different tests and measurements were applied.

The first step was to make sure of the sample adequacy. This was done by applying Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (KMO). In addition, and in order to make sure that the correlation between variables was enough, Bartlett's test was also conducted. As seen in Table 6.7. KMO was 91% and a significant result for Bartlett's test was obtained. These results verify the sufficiently of the sample for the factor analysis (Hair, Black, Babin, &Anderson, 2010).

Table 6.7. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.912
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3833.453
df	325	
Sig.	.000	

By the help of SPSS software, factor loadings were calculated using the rotated component matrix technique. Based on the advice of Stevens (1992), loadings of absolute value of more than 0.4 needs to be kept. Table 6.8. shows the loadings in this regard. Except of one factor in C.E., all the factors have satisfied the previous mentioned criteria. For this reason, we removed this factor for the upcoming stages.

Table 6.8. Factors' Loadings

	Description of Item	**Factor Loading**
Attitude	I think buying sustainable fashion is a positive	.849
	I think it's a good idea to buy sustainable fashion	.816
	I think it is safe to buy environmentally friendly products	.701
	Buying sustainable clothing is a smart choice	.692
	Buying sustainable clothing gives me positive feelings of satisfaction and self-esteem in contributing to the protection and improvement of the environment	.457
	Purchasing sustainable clothing provides many benefits	.705
Subjective norms	Important people in my life want me to buy sustainable clothing	.665
	My interactions with people influence my purchasing of sustainable products	.677
	My family thinks I should buy sustainable fashion instead of regular items	.788
	I believe most of my friends prefer sustainable fashion products over regular clothing items	.828
	I believe most of my friends expect me to choose sustainable clothes instead of regular clothes	.810
	People appreciate me more when they see me wearing something sustainable	.734

Table 6.8. (cont.)

Behavioral control	Even if it says it's sustainable clothing, I may have no way of knowing for sure it's actually sustainable	.679
	High prices prevent me from buying sustainable clothes when I like them	.679
	I won't buy sustainable clothing if I can't find the style I need	.831
	If I am an element of the Truth of this claim, I will not purchase products that are referred to as sustainable clothing	.771
	I won't buy sustainable clothing if the store is far away	.733
Consumer perceived effectiveness	My personal actions are important enough to affect environmental problems	.588
	Environmental problems are partly a result of my own consumption choices	.760
	It is worth it for the individual consumer to make efforts to protect and improve the environment	.536
	When I buy fashion items, I try to think about how my use of them will affect the environment	.403
	What I do with my fashion consumption can make a meaningful difference to the environment	.346
Purchase intentions	I'm thinking of buying sustainable clothing in the future.	.759
	I will try to buy sustainable clothes in the future	.739
	I will make an effort to purchase sustainable clothing in the future	.740
	If I see sustainable clothing, I consider buying or purchasing a product.	.708
	If I see a sustainable clothing retail store, I will consider visiting the store to purchase an item.	.653

In addition, Table 6.9. shows the reliability values for the extracted factors for the model. In this table, Cronbach's coefficient alpha method was used. The coefficient was calculated for each TPB item separately and for all aspects. This was done to ensure that the model meets reliability conditions. In both cases, the results satisfy the rule of thumb identified by Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010), which suggests that Cronbach's alpha value needs to be not less than 0.7.

Table 6.9. Reliability Coefficient of the Extracted Factors

Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach's value
Attitude	6	0.890
Subjective Norms	6	0.884
Behavioral control	3	0.729
Consumer effectiveness	3	0.772
Purchase intentions	5	0.923
All variables	23	0.918

6.5. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

6.5.1. Defining the Individual Constructs

To construct our structural equation model, TPB was used as the main theoretical farmwork in this regard with one extension. Consequently, five latent variables are used to build measurement and structural models. The main variables of TPB are used, including attitude towards sustainable fashion (ATT), Subjective norms (S.N.), Perceived behavioral control (B.C.), and Purchase intentions towards sustainable fashion (P.I.). In addition, as mentioned earlier, Perceived consumer effectiveness (C.E.) was also added as an extension to the main variables of TPB.

6.5.2. Development and Specification of the Measurement Model

The primary strategy used by the researcher is to apply a two-step technique in which both measurement and structural paths are applied. As a result, a structural path is

followed after a measurement path is conducted. In this way, potential problems can be detected and corrected in advance.

To achieve previous purpose Amos software was used and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied. The technique of CFA is used when researcher has some previous information about the models' latent variables (Byrne, 2022) and it is recommended by many scholars for many reasons. This includes, achieving early analysis to the model, developing measurement tools, calculating construct validity and factor invariance (Kline, 2011).

In addition, the researcher investigated the models' good to fitness. Following the recommendation of different literature such as Hair, Black, Babin, &Anderson (2010) and Kline (2011), models' good to fitness was measured using various techniques including Chi-square (χ^2), root mean square of error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), and goodness of fit index (GFI).

6.5.2.1. Measurement Model for Attitude

Figure 6.1 shows the confirmatory factor analysis for ATT. When analyzing the values, all loadings seem to have acceptable values above 0.60. However, as seen in Table 6.10, some problems have been detected in the values related to the model fitness. Namely, $\chi 2$ / df indicates a value of 9.405, which is above the recommended value of 5. Moreover, RMSEA has a value of .177, which exceeds the value of 0.1 suggested by Hair, Black, Babin, &Anderson (2010). On the other hand, both CFI and GFI show acceptable values.

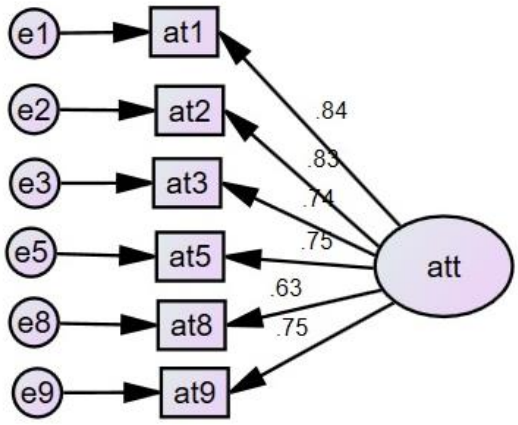

Figure 6.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Attitude

Table 6.10. ATT Model Fit Values

Model fit index name	**Value**
Chi-Square	84.642
DF	9
P	.000
Normed Chi-Square	9.405
GFI	.890
CFI	.914
RMSEA	.177

A high correlation among observed variables has been tracked. As seen in Table 6.11., a relatively high correlation was detected between e1 and e2, e8 and e9, and e5 and e8.

Table 6.11. Modification Indices for ATT

	M.I.Par Change	
e8 <--> e9	20.366	.107
e5 <--> e9	12.520	.075
e5 <--> e8	14.939	.100
e2 <--> e9	13.979	-.068
e2 <--> e8	5.653	-.053
e2 <--> e5	4.724	-.043
e1 <--> e8	16.633	-.096
e1 <--> e5	9.955	-.066
e1 <--> e2	33.989	.104

Based on these high correlations, necessary adjustment was made to the error values, as seen in Figure 6.2. and this was resulted in a much better values for model fit as seen in Table 6.12. all fall within acceptable ranges.

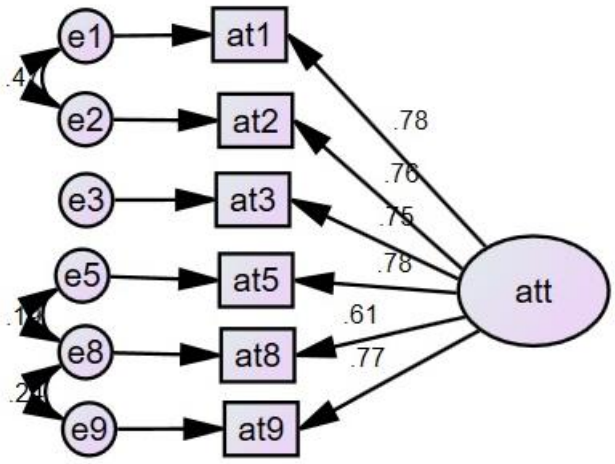

Figure 6.2. Modified CFA for ATT

Table 6.12. Modified Model Fit for ATT

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	17.233
DF	6
p	.008
Normed Chi-Square	2.872
GFI	.979
CFI	.987
RMSEA	.084

6.5.2.2. Measurement Model for Subjective Norms

CFA was applied on the six factors related to S.N. whereas loadings were acceptable, as in ATT, as seen in Table 6.13. model fit has some problems. First normed Chi-Square has a high value of 8.944, much above the accepted 5. In addition, RMSEA also exceeds the threshold of 1. Consequently, some adjustments needed to be taken. For this reason, the correlation between observed variables required to be checked to adjust ones with high values.

Table 6.13. SN Model Fit Values

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	80.500
DF	9
P	.000
Normed Chi-Square	8.944
GFI	.905
CFI	.914
RMSEA	.172

As seen in Table 6.14., three cases needed some attention as they show some higher values of correlation. This includes, e3 and e4, e7 and e3, and e8 and e7.

Table 6.14. Modification Indices for SN

	M.I.	Par Change
e4 <--> e3	33.784	.231
e7 <--> e3	17.297	-.129
e7 <--> e4	5.747	-.080
e7 <--> e6	4.271	.053
e8 <--> e7	16.099	.101
e10 <--> e4	9.193	.118
e10 <--> e7	4.924	-.067

Accordingly, CFA was applied again, and modified values were produced. The modified model fit is shown in Table 6.15. The table shows much more improvement in all of the related values. The previous two problems were mainly solved, as both normed Chi-Square and RMSEA were retained to acceptable ranges.

Table 6.15. Modified Model Fit for SN

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	21.475
DF	6
P	.002
Normed Chi-Square	3.579
GFI	.972
CFI	.981
RMSEA	.098

6.5.2.3. Measurement Model for Behavioral Control

Four factors related to C.E. were tested through applied CFA. As seen in Figure 6.3., loadings are within acceptable ranges. In addition, Table 6.16. shows that model fit values are also acceptable. As a result, unlike ATT and S.N., no modified model was needed.

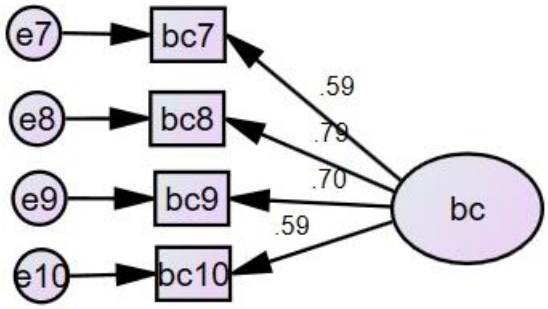

Figure 6.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for BC

Table 6.16. BC Model Fit Values

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	9.000
DF	2
p	.638
Normed Chi-Square	.450
GFI	.998
CFI	1.000
RMSEA	.000

6.5.2.4. Measurement Model for Consumers' Perceived Effectiveness

CFA was applied to the four factors with satisfactory loading. Figure 6.4. shows the initial CFA results.

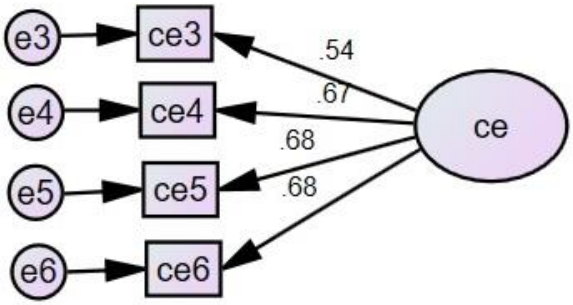

Figure 6.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for CE

In addition, model fit was tested. However, normed Chi-Square and RMSEA were also below the accepted value. This is seen in Table 6.17.

Table 6.17. CE Model Fit Values

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	14.719
DF	2
p	.001
Normed Chi-Square	7.360
GFI	.972
CFI	.944
RMSEA	.154

As done before, modification indices were calculated to track high correlation cases. As seen in Table 6.18. only the case between e4 and e3 were adjusted as relatively high correlation was detected compared to the other two cases.

Table 6.18. Modification Indices for CE

	M.I.Par Change	
e5 <--> e6	4.455	.073
e3 <--> e6	4.876	-.083
e4 <--> e3	8.794	.111

Although the modification was only applied in one case, as seen in Figure 6.5., the modified model shows much improvement, as seen in Table 6.19. Consequently, both normed Chi-Square and RMSEA felt below rejected limits.

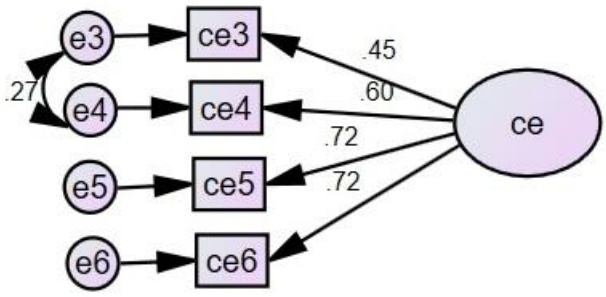

Figure 6.5. Modified CFA for CE

Table 6.19. Modified Model Fit for CE

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	1.580
DF	1
p	.209
Normed Chi-Square	1.580
GFI	.997
CFI	.997
RMSEA	.047

6.5.2.5. Measurement Model for Purchase Intentions

CFA was constructed upon five variables. Figure 6.6. shows CFA applied on P.I. This figure shows relatively high loadings.

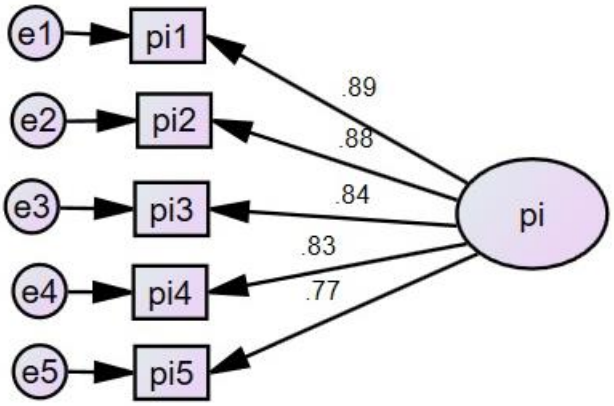

Figure 6.6. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for PI

However, Table 6.20 shows slightly high model fit values, namely in Normed Chi-Square and RMSEA. As a result, necessary adjustments need to be made.

Table 6.20. PI Model Fit Values

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	28.407
DF	5
P	.000
Normed Chi-Square	5.681
GFI	.961
CFI	.976
RMSEA	.132

As seen in Table 6.21, a high correlation value is detected between e5 and e4. Necessary adjustments were made, and a modified CFA was constructed, as shown in Figure 6.7.

Table 6.21. Modification Indices for PI

	M.I.	Par Change
e3 <--> e2	4.343	.024
e4 <--> e2	8.318	-.035
e5 <--> e3	6.350	-.039
e5 <--> e4	16.644	.066

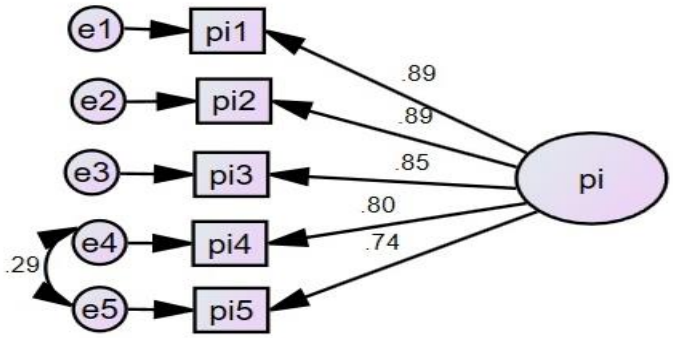

Figure 6.7. Modified CFA for CE

As seen in Table 6.22, normed Chi-Square and RMSEA values have both improved enough to reach the accepted rules of thumb values.

Table 6.22. Modified Model Fit for PI

Model fit index name	**Value**
Chi-Square	10.101
DF	4
P	.039
Normed Chi-Square	2.525
GFI	.986
CFI	.994
RMSEA	.076

Table 6.23. shows summary results of CFA.

Table 6.23. CFA Results

Construct	Model	χ^2	Df	P-value	χ^2/df	CFI	GFI	RMSEA
ATT	Default	84.642	9	.000	9.405	.914	.890	.177
	Modified	17.233	6	.008	2.872	.987	.979	.084
SN	Default	80.500	9	.000	8.944	.914	.905	.172
	Modified	21.475	6	.002	3.579	.981	.972	.098
BC	Default	9.000	2	.638	.450	1.000	.998	.000
CE	Default	14.719	2	.001	7.360	.944	.972	.154
	Modified	1.580	1	.209	1.580	.997	.997	.047
PI	Default	28.407	5	.000	5.681	.976	.961	.132
	Modified	10.101	4	.039	2.525	.994	.986	.076

6.5.2.6. Measurement Model Overall

After each individual construct is tested separately, it is now time to test the overall measurement model in order to investigate the validity and the reliability of the relationships between constructs and their indicators. Consequently, figure 6.8. is constructed. The figure shows five latent constructs and their related items.

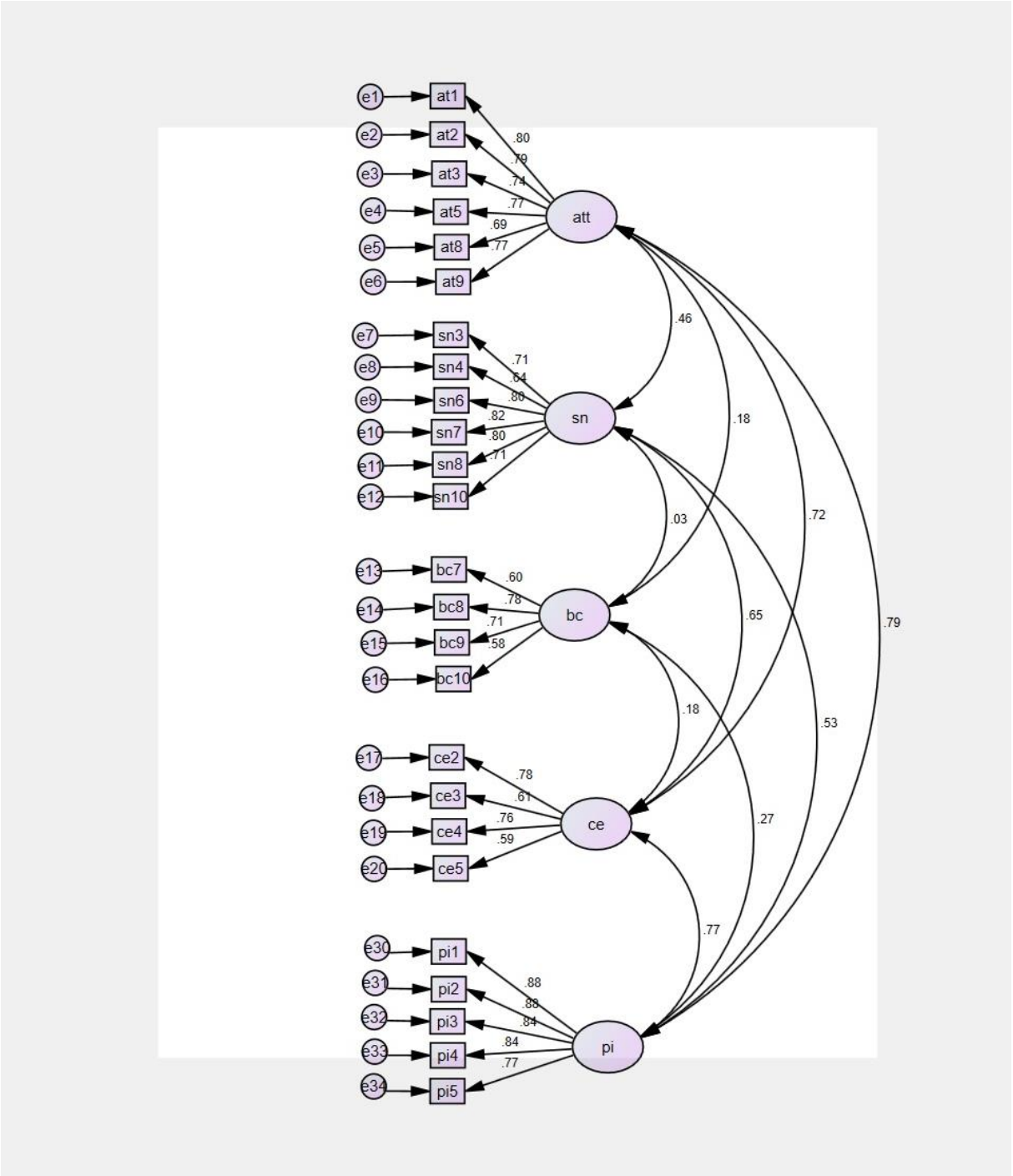

Figure 6.8. Measurement Model Overall (Initial)

In addition, model fit values have been tested. This is shown in Table 6.24. Unlike individual cases, all fit values seem to have achieved acceptable levels even from the initial model. However, some values have not achieved the recommended values. For Example, Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010) recommend that GFI needs to be below 0.9 and RMSEA around 0.05.

Table 6.24. Overall Model Fit Values

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	642.492
DF	265
p	.000
Normed Chi-Square	2.424
GFI	.832
CFI	.904
RMSEA	.073

As there seems to be room for improvement, necessary actions recommended in this regard have been taken. First of all, the loading between observed and latent variables has been checked, and those with relatively low loadings have been removed. Accordingly, BC7 and CE5 were deleted from the model. Second, high-correlation cases were checked, and Table 6.25 was constructed accordingly.

Table 6.25. Modification Indices of Measurement ModeL

	M.I.Par Change	
e6 <--> sn	9.603	.066
e6 <--> e16	9.196	.093
e5 <--> pi	7.928	.046
e5 <--> sn	9.267	.077
e5 <--> att	18.022	-.080
e5 <--> e16	5.180	.083

Table 6.22. (cont.)

e6 <--> sn	9.603	.066
e6 <--> e16	9.196	.093
e5 <--> pi	7.928	.046
e5 <--> sn	9.267	.077
e5 <--> att	18.022	-.080
e5 <--> e16	5.180	.083
e5 <--> e6	7.808	.060
e4 <--> e6	5.588	.047
e4 <--> e5	4.376	.049
e3 <--> sn	7.803	-.064
e3 <--> e16	4.487	-.071
e2 <--> e6	9.309	-.056
e6 <--> sn	9.603	.066
e6 <--> e16	9.196	.093
e5 <--> pi	7.928	.046
e5 <--> sn	9.267	.077
e5 <--> att	18.022	-.080
e5 <--> e16	5.180	.083
e5 <--> e6	7.808	.060
e4 <--> e6	5.588	.047
e4 <--> e5	4.376	.049
e3 <--> sn	7.803	-.064
e3 <--> e16	4.487	-.071
e2 <--> e6	9.309	-.056
e2 <--> e5	10.684	-.072
e30 <--> att	5.383	-.028
e30 <--> e2	6.866	-.037
e32 <--> e6	9.933	-.049
e32 <--> e31	4.718	.025
e33 <--> e6	4.463	.033

Table 6.22. (cont.)

e33 <--> e5	4.820	.041
e33 <--> e31	11.268	-.039
e34 <--> e32	7.661	-.042
e34 <--> e33	12.745	.055
e19 <--> bc	4.817	.061
e19 <--> e6	10.166	-.068
e14 <--> e6	6.027	-.064
e14 <--> e5	4.970	-.069
e14 <--> e2	4.895	.059
e14 <--> e19	4.245	.062
e15 <--> e4	4.845	.062

As a result, the modified measurement model was constructed, as seen in Figure 6.9.

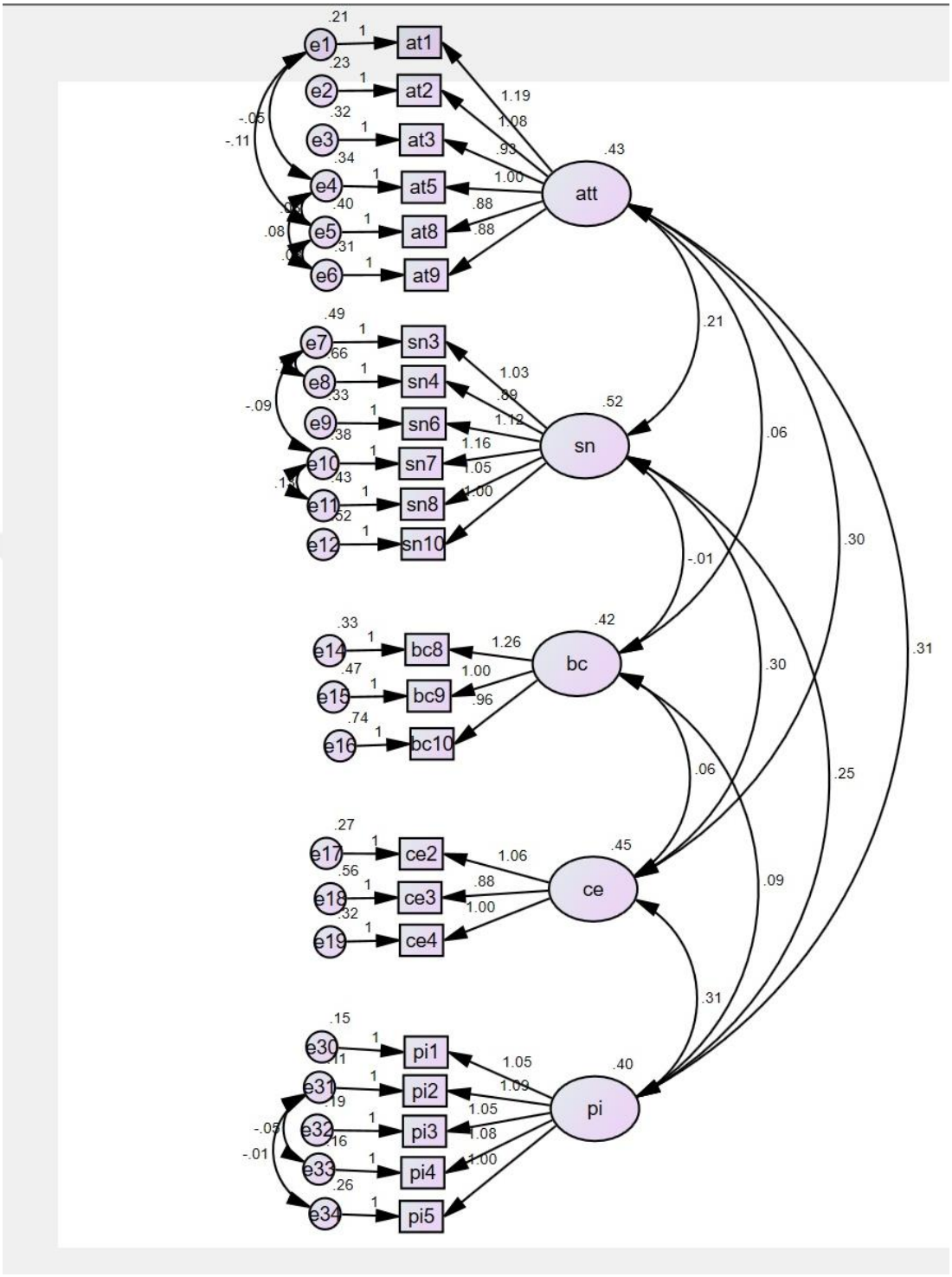

Figure 6.9. Modified Measurement Model

In addition, model fit values showed much more improvements. These improvements are also shown in Table 6.26.

Table 6.26. Modified Overall Model Fit

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	419.838
DF	210
p	.000
Normed Chi-Square	1.999
GFI	.881
CFI	.943
RMSEA	.061

Table 6.27. shows a comparison between default and modified measurement model fit values.

Table 6.27. Goodness-of-Fit Indices for the Overall Measurement Model

Model	χ^2	Df	P-value	χ^2/df	CFI	GFI	RMSEA
Default	642.49	265	.000	2.424	.904	.832	.073
Modified	2419.838	210	.000	1.999	.943	.881	.061

6.5.2.7. Reliability and Validity of the Measurement Model

In the previous section, reliability was measured using Cronbach alpha. Satisfactory results have been reached. However, the study also implied two other indices to measure reliability. This is done by using Composite Reliability (C.R.) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As seen in Table 6.28, the values of C.R. for all constructs are above 0.7, which applies to the rule of thumb suggested by Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010). However, Table 6.27. shows that AVE values include one value slightly below the accepted threshold of 0.5 in the B.C. construct. We can still take this value since the values of the other constructs are more than 0.40, and our C.R. values are relatively high. The previous values of C.R. and AVE show acceptable levels of reliability in this study.

In addition, the study analyses construct validity (CV). This was done by evaluating both convergent validity and discriminant validity, as recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010). Average variance extracted (AVE) is assessed in order to measure convergent validity. Same as reliability and as a rule of thumb advised by Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010), AVE needs to be higher than 0.5 in order to assume acceptable values of convergent validity, which is achieved, as seen in Table 6.27. As for discriminant validity, the study employs the measurements of Maximum Shared Squared Variance (MSV) and (AVE). Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010) apply a rule of thumb that suggests that MSV should be less than AVE. As Table 6.27 shows, the previous rule has been achieved for all constructs, and it is assumed that satisfactory values of discriminant validity have been reached.

Table 6.28. Reliability and Validity of the Measurement Model

	CR	**AVE**	**MSV**	**MaxR(H)**	**CE**	**ATT**	**SN**	**BC**	**PI**
CE	0.777	0.540	0.530	0.796	**0.735**				
ATT	0.892	0.581	0.572	0.930	0.678	**0.763**			
SN	0.880	0.553	0.392	0.955	0.626	0.437	**0.743**		
BC	0.739	0.490	0.046	0.961	0.143	0.137	-0.021	**0.700**	
PI	0.925	0.711	0.572	0.975	0.728	0.756	0.542	0.215	**0.843**

6.5.3. Specification and Assessment of the Structural Model

The next step includes constructing the structural model in order to test the causal relationship among variables presented in the model. Using the TPB framework, the structural model is created, as seen in Figure 6.10.

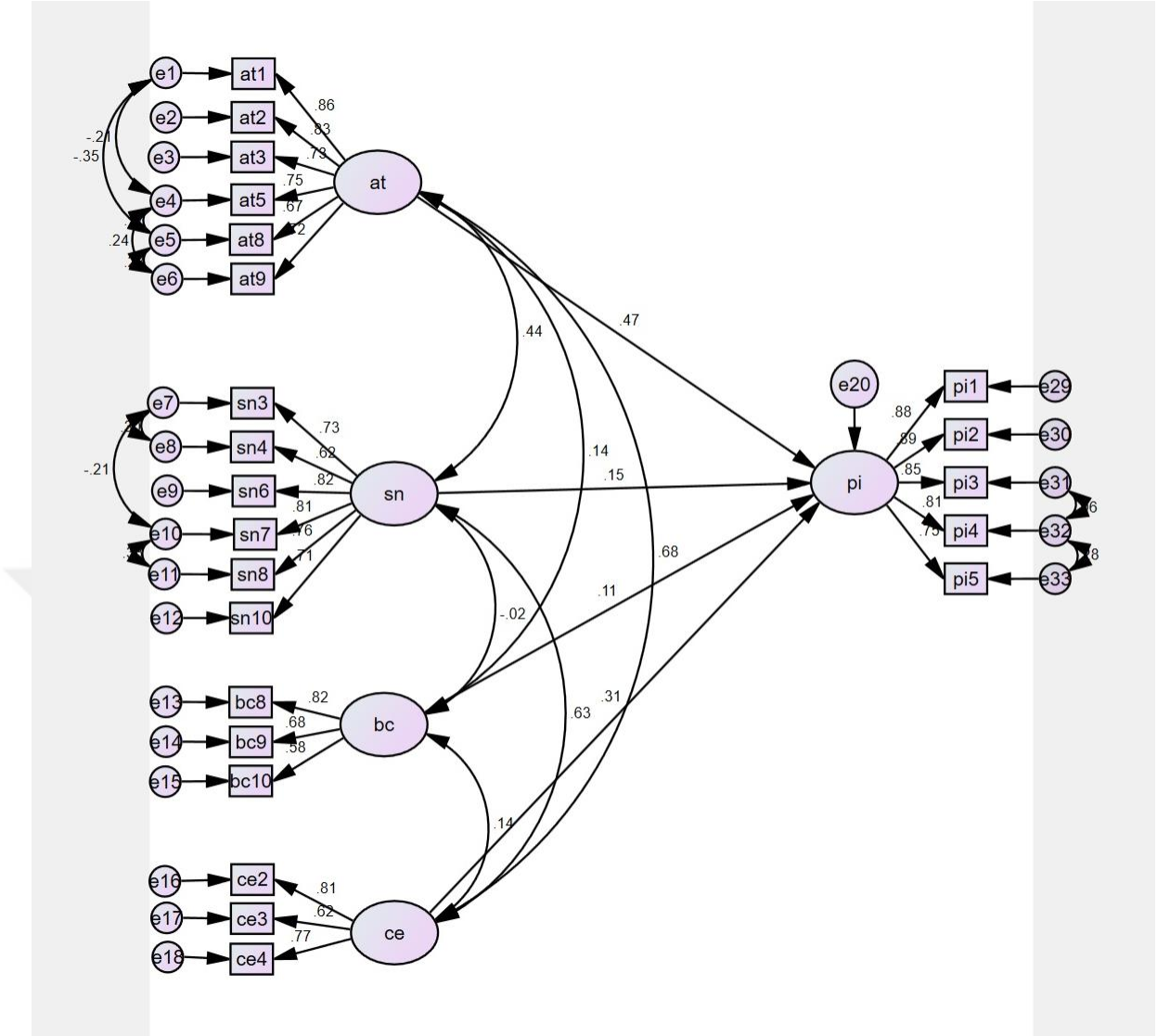

Figure 6.10. Structural Model

The constructed structural model consists of 18 variables with single headed arrows created among the constructs to indicate the casual relationship. This ends with final five key constructs to indicate the relation with P.I.

İn addition, model fit values are shown in Table 6.29. The table shows that all of the indices fall within accepted thresholds that were explained earlier.

Table 6.29. Structural Overall Model Fit

Model fit index name	Value
Chi-Square	421.958
DF	210
P	.000
Normed Chi-Square	2.009
GFI	.881
CFI	.943
RMSEA	.061

6.6. Results of Hypotheses Testing (Correlation Analysis)

In this section, the four hypotheses that have been proposed in Chapter 3 will be tested using the results obtained from structural mode. As shown in Table 6.30, all hypotheses have been proven to be significant at ($p < 0.05$). The following paragraphs will discuss each hypothesis in detail.

Table 6.30. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis		Std. Reg. Weight (b)	S.E.	C.R.	P	Support for hypothesis
H1	Pi <--- Att	.554	.087	6.354*	***	Yes
H2	Pi <--- Sn	.136	.060	2.264*	.024	Yes
H3	Pi <--- Bc	.124	.055	2.260*	.024	Yes
H4	Pi <--- Ce	.311	.090	3.438*	***	Yes

* Significant at $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$

6.6.1. Research Hypothesis 1

Results show that the first hypothesis is significant. Consequently, Turkish consumers' attitudes towards sustainable fashion significantly and positively affect their purchase intentions towards sustainable fashion products. Table 6.30 shows that the standard

coefficient is 0.554, and the t-value or the Critical Ration of regression weight, referred to as C.R., is 6.354. In addition, the p-value falls below 0.01. These numbers imply that when Turkish consumers' attitude towards sustainable fashion increases by 1, it results in a 0.554 increase in the standard deviation of their purchase intention towards sustainable fashion. This result is consistent with TPB's general proposals. When compared to other components, ATT seems to be the most potent factor that affects purchase intentions towards sustainable fashion. Given this importance, any efforts to analyze the actual demand for sustainable fashion in Türkiye should look at Turkish consumers' attitudes as one of the main factors (Bong Ko & Jin, 2017). In that sense, more efforts need to be made in order to understand what actually brings out positive or negative changes in Turkish consumers' attitudes. For example, one of the questions with a higher Likert scale score was related to safety issues. It can be proposed that Turkish consumers perceive sustainable fashion as a choice that can bring our safety and health. This assumption improved their attitudes and resulted in a higher intention to purchase.

The result is consistent with a large number of studies that reached similar results in different contexts and different assumptions. These studies connect higher levels of attitudes with higher levels of purchase intentions toward sustainable fashion. Examples include (Nam, Dong, & Lee, 2017; Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez, 2021; Zheng & Chi, 2014; Nguyen, Nguyen, & Nguyen, 2019; Jung, Choi, & Oh, 2020; Cowan & Kinley, 2014; Joshi & Srivastava, 2019; Varshneya, Pandey, & Das, 2017; Bong Ko & Jin, 2017; Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang, 2021; Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014; Sreen, Purbey, & Sadarangani, 2018; Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012; Chen, 2013; Zaremohzzabieh, Ismail, Ahrari, & Abu Samah, 2021; Ali, Khan, & Ahmed, 2011; Park & Lin, 2020).

6.6.2. Research Hypothesis 2

The results of the structural model indicate that Subjective norms among Turkish consumers have a significant positive effect on their purchase intentions toward sustainable fashion. Table 6.30 shows that the p-value is 0.024, which indicates a substantial relation in this regard. C.R. value is 2.264, whereas the t-value is 0.136. This leads us to conclude that one standard deviation increase in S.N. leads to an

accompanying 0.136 increase in P.I. Even though we can detect a lower impact of S.N. over P.I. compared to the effect of ATT, the significant effect is still apparent. The lower effect can be attributed to the fact that sustainable fashion is still a concept or a consumption pattern that is not widely known in Turkish society. This agrees with Varshneya, Pandey, & Das (2017), who attribute relatively lower impacts of S.N. to the fact that sustainable fashion is a concept that is newly introduced in general.

Factors such as peer effect and social pressure seem to have affected the tendency of Turkish consumers towards sustainable fashion. Many insights can be drawn from this case. For example, consumers can be exposed to positive feedback that comes from peers or role models. The more consumers are exposed to successful experiences from people who feel that they need to comply, the more they will be encouraged to engage in a purchase at some point. Survey results highlight the critical role mainly played first by friends and then by family members in increasing S.N.'s overall scores. In addition, consumers seem also to be encouraged more when they feel appreciated by society when they purchase sustainable fashion products (Kim & Chung, 2011).

As mentioned earlier, there is a general validation in the literature of the positive impact of subjective norms on the purchase intention of purchase behavior. This includes the studies of (Chen, 2020; Manning, 2009; Khare, 2019; Zheng & Chi 2014, Joshi & Srivastava, 2019; Kim & Chung, 2011; Ham, Jeger, & Ivković, 2015; Sreen, Purbey, & Sadarangani, 2018; Phuah, Ow, Sandhu & Kassim 2018; Nguyen, Nguyen, & Nguyen, 2019; Bong Ko & Jin, 2017; Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014; Nam, Dong, & Lee, 2017).

6.6.3. Research Hypothesis 3

The results shown in Table 6.30 support hypothesis 3, which indicates that Turkish consumers' purchase intentions toward sustainable fashion are significantly affected by their perceived behavioral control level. In other words, the more Turkish consumers perceive that they have more power and control over the outcomes of their sustainable fashion purchases, the more they will be motivated to conduct such purchases. Factors such as price, availability, physical distance, quality, time, and trend significantly shape their intentions toward the buying action. Table 6.30. shows

a p-value of 0.24, which is identical to the one obtained with S.N. The Critical ration of regression weight, however, shows a value of 0.055 while the t-value equals 0.124. We can conclude from this t-value that an increase of 1 in the value of the standard deviation of perceived behavioral control can lead to a 0.124 increase in the standard deviation of purchase intentions, confirming the relationship's significance. Hence, our study meets this result with plenty of studies that recognized a significant positive role of B.C. towards P.I. in a sustainable fashion. Examples include, (Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang 2021; Nguyen, Nguyen, & Nguyen, 2019; Joshi & Srivastava, 2019; Karatu & Nik Mat, 2015; Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng, 2016; Kim & Chung, 2011; Sreen, Purbey, & Sadarangani, 2018; Nam, Dong, & Lee, 2017; Zheng & Chi, 2014).

The study also does not fall far away from other studies that did not confirm the significant role of B.C. In other words, even though our results validate this role, the strength of the effect of B.C. seems to be the lowest compared to our model's other three components. Nam, Dong, & Lee (2017) attribute a weaker role of B.C. to the presence of more powerful and important factors such as money, time, and capabilities. In addition, according to Zheng & Chi (2014), this can be attributed to a weaker direct effect of B.C. Instead, a moderating role over the relation between attitude and purchase intention was seen to be more critical.

6.6.4. Research Hypothesis 4

Table 6.30 shows that consumers' perceived effectiveness significantly impacts Turkish consumers' purchase intentions toward sustainable fashion. Compared to the other three constructs, C.E. ranks second after attitude in terms of its effect on P.I., which shows the importance of this factor over even the traditional components of TPB and meets in this regard with the studies that aimed to transform this factor from indirect to direct effect mainly in recent studies (Berger & Corbin, 1992). T-value shows that an increase of 1 standard deviation in the C.E. leads to an accompanying increase of 0.311 in the standard deviation of P.I. In addition, the C.R. value is 3.438, and the p-value falls below 0.01, which confirms a significant strong relationship between C.E. and P.I. Hence, Turkish consumers have a stronger appeal to purchase sustainable fashion when they perceive this purchase as a part of a bigger picture that is related to sustainability issues. For example, many respondents agreed with a

statement that consumption choices are a significant contributor to environmental problems. Given this, Turkish consumers can be categorized as socially responsible (Roberts, 1993) or socially conscious (Webster, 1975). This is because many respondents consider the environment and the public interest when purchasing. As for the effect of C.E. on P.I., this study's results align with many studies conducted in different contexts. Examples include (Antonetti & Maklan, 2013; Kinnear, Taylor, & Ahmed, 1974; Zheng & Chi, 2014; Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang, 2021; Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez, 2021; Kang, Liu, & Kim, 2013; Leary, Vann, Mittelstaedt, Murphy, & Sherry, 2014; Park 2015).

CHAPTER VII

FINAL DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This research conducted a mixed-method study that combined qualitative and quantitative data to thoroughly investigate the phenomenon at hand. Similar mixed method studies such as that by Tran, Nguyen, Tran, Nguyen, Luu & Nguyen (2022) collected both quantitative and qualitative data from consumers to explore the TPB factors in a sustainable fashion. This study, however, provides a unique example in its methodology to collect quantitative data from the consumers and qualitative data from the marketers. The study attempted to employ other perspectives in analyzing the TPB factors to avoid partiality as much as possible. This was done by using different types of target audiences. Yet, the study also declares the potential bias and favoritism when combining data from two different, probably opposing target audiences. To reduce the possibility of this later bias, the researcher constantly examined and inspected the sources of data, the context, the different variables, the positionality of each interviewee, and any power relations involved. The researcher predicted that consumers might be affected by the social desirability effect and choose pro-sustainability responses since they represent the desirable and ethical trend to choose. Therefore, the qualitative phases aimed to elicit data that could provide a more reliable picture of the issues.

In the following, the researcher discusses the combined findings backed by relevant research. After summarizing the discussions, the researcher presents his contribution by providing a framework of action, inclusive of both production and consumption, that he believes can be helpful in the strategic planning of sustainable fashion in the country. Then, the implications and limitations of the study will be presented.

7.1. Discussion of Combined Findings

The researcher will use subheadings to address different discussions separately for organizational purposes. However, all the parts of this discussion are highly

interrelated. The focus of the discussion will be related to the research questions, the hypotheses, the significant findings of the study, and any supporting research.

7.1.1. Riding the Rail of Sustainable Fashion in Türkiye

Overall, the study shows that sustainability orientations are not placed within the strategic targets of Turkish brands. However, some significant indicators show that Türkiye is gradually transforming into sustainability. Marketers and customers had different prospects when discussing sustainable purchases in the country. Survey results show a high positive attitude from Turkish consumers towards sustainable fashion, with an average of 3.74 to 4.08. Similar high scores were also found among the measurement constructs of purchase intentions. The mean scores of the answers ranged between 3.88 to 3.99. This shows that most of the sample agrees with the statement that there is a high possibility of conducting this type of purchase in the future. When asked about their willingness to accept a price increase, around 72% agreed to take it. Even though most of those who accepted said that they could tolerate only a 5% increase, the majority of the sample generally accepted the idea that sustainable fashion can be more expensive than conventional fashion.

Marketers refer to a slowly developing, limited, price-oriented niche sustainable market for the few elites. On the other hand, survey results show that almost 86% of respondents initially approached the survey and claimed that they purchase sustainable fashion. The contradiction of the result may be due to the absence of clear strategic orientation among Turkish brands regarding sustainability, as well as the lack of communication between the brands and consumers. In the absence of deep strategic routes, companies may be driven out from using the necessary tools to help them achieve these strategies (Bendheim, Waddock, & Graves, 1998). Suppose the higher management of the brands does not see sustainability goals as part of their core strategy. In that case, they will not be very interested in understanding how their consumers perceive this matter (Gibson, 2012). In other words, brands need to recognize that integrating customers into sustainability efforts is an essential step (Peleg Mizrachi & Tal, 2022). This is also confirmed by interviewees, who confirm the absence of internal research to tackle these issues. Consequently, it can be assumed that due to that lack of communication, some facts are not clearly displayed to

managers. While the assumptions of managers are focused on a niche market and non-interested consumers, the data shows that there is at least a significant segment that values sustainable fashion and is ready to be involved and learn more. In such cases, the need for a CCS approach (Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas, 2011) becomes essential in this discussion.

The contradiction of the findings mentioned above can also be attributed to the lack of information and the lack of consistency regarding what sustainability is and what it entails. In fact, qualitative data shows that both consumers and brands have misunderstandings of sustainable fashion. According to brands, many consumers believe sustainable garments are made from 'dirty' or 'garbage' materials and, consequently, think they are of low durability and lousy quality. According to research, many studies show that consumers consider sustainable fashion high quality. Yet, a recent survey by Tran, Nguyen, Tran, Nguyen, Luu & Nguyen (2022) in Vietnam is one of few studies that report that customers often associate sustainable clothes with lower quality. Considering that such a study was based in a developing country, such findings could indicate the need for more transparent communication and informative campaigns on sustainable fashion in developing countries still taking immature steps.
On the other hand, even marketers also show signs of misconceptions about what sustainable fashion is. The brands seem to overemphasize the use of organic raw materials in the manufacturing of garments, which represents only a tiny fraction of one aspect of sustainability, namely the environmental aspect of sustainability, without considering the other two pillars of sustainability. The social aspect seems to be missing from the agendas of Turkish brands. Research shows that the social aspect is just as harmful and damaging to the planet and the well-being of humans (Wren, 2022). Therefore, when these brands claim they are sustainable by focusing on a tiny aspect and ignoring the rest, with or without intention, they may be involved in greenwashing. Greenwashing involves the different measures that a company takes to look ethical, sustainable, and environmentally friendly. One way to do it is, for example, to show the positive procedures and outcomes and to hide the negative information or procedures (De Freitas Netto, Sobral, Ribeiro, & Soares, 2020). De Freitas Netto, Sobral, Ribeiro, & Soares (2020) maintain that while there is not one single clear definition of greenwashing due to its multilayered nature, it can be identified by the selective mechanism an organization discloses negative information and disseminates

positive information. This discussion is related to the research question in this study that tries to explore the extent to which these brands claim they are sustainable.

Ecevit (2023) studied the "six sins of greenwashing" criteria developed by TerraChoice to investigate 24 Turkish apparel brands. The sins are "Sins of Hidden Trade-off, Sins of No Proof, Sins of Vagueness, Sins of Irrelevance, Sin of Lesser of Two Evil, and Sin of Fibbing" (pp. 36-7). The study found that only 5 (21%) brands attach importance to sustainability because they have a present sustainability division in the company with employees working on sustainability-related issues. The other brands are either superficially involved in sustainability or exhibit no evidence of any sustainability. After studying these five brands about the sins of greenwashing, he concluded that only one brand (LC Waikiki) does not commit the sins of greenwashing. This brand, as shown in this study, illustrates a relative consistency between its sustainability claims and rhetoric and its actual operations and activities.
Discussing greenwashing is also related to consumption since it produces green skepticism. Green skepticism goes hand in hand with greenwashing, which promoted the green marketing firm TerraChoice to publish a study to help customers identify brands with the seven sins of greenwashing since it can be challenging for customers to trust the credibility of green campaigns (De Freitas Netto, Sobral, Ribeiro, & Soares, 2020).

Turkish brands should realize that green skepticism hinders their marketing efforts. The brands admit that they engage in sustainability just "for the show" and to provide a positive image. In their sustainable market initiatives, they select to promote organic children's garments, which they know will attract caring parents, while they select to disclose information about, for example, the lack of social sustainability that could disrupt the ideal image. According to Wolf (2013), companies choose specific procedures to maintain a positive image regarding sustainability. Other motivations can also include improving the company's financial performance (Orlitzky, Schmidt & Rynes, 2003; Horváthová, 2010; King & Lenox, 2011) and winning in the competitional race of businesses or avoiding legal accountability (Wagner, Azomahou, & Wehrmeyer, 2002). It can be understood from the data that brands can also justify greenwashing by blaming the consumer since Turkish consumers lack the knowledge, awareness, interest, or intention to buy sustainably, as shown in the qualitative data.

All of the above, when combined with the absence of any sustainability-related accountability and strong leadership in the country, has a potential negative impact on the consumers' trust in sustainable products.

On the other hand, in their marketing campaigns, brands are focused on promoting their environmentally friendly products without addressing the consumption side and the need for sustainable consumption. It is probably not in their interest to do so. Some research maintains that the smaller size of the sustainable fashion market compared to fast fashion puts the two sides apart (Štefko & Steffek, 2018; McNeill & Snowdon, 2019; Jung and Jin, 2016). While fast fashion focuses on encouraging continuous purchases and following the changing trends, the essential nature of sustainable fashion is to promote consumption only when needed (McNeill & Snowdon, 2019). This alone poses a significant challenge for fast fashion brands to genuinely adhere to sustainability since it goes against their integral goals. Realizing this ethical struggle, consumers' skepticism in sustainable claims may be understandable.

If greenwashing is about disclosing specific measures, this discussion questions whether genuine ethical intentions matter in sustainability. The consumers' conceptualization of sustainability as something related to better health and well-being is evident in the study. Customers are willing to pay more to protect their well-being, an attitude that became more prominent due to the pandemic. The brands, which seem to have figured out how Turkish consumers are drawn to this kind of attitude, have invested in directing their campaigns toward that emotionally charged aspect of the purchase. The brands also admit that they are driven by the motivation to look good, and if they care about the environment, it is because they worry about the resources. One might argue whether such self-centered and pragmatic means justify the end goal of sustainability. When this subject is approached from an environmental ethics perspective, it can be seen that such attitudes and perceptions of sustainability are linked to what is called an anthropocentric view. This philosophical view maintains that the environment should be saved to secure resources for the human race. In other words, humans protect the environment and follow sustainability because it is helpful for them. Therefore, the attitudes and motives for going sustainable in this study are justified within such a philosophical outlook. However, on the other side of the continuum of environmental ethics stands biocentrism and even ecocentric views,

which believe that other beings, even the non-living, have their own intrinsic values, which are separated from what humans see as valuable or instrumental. Accordingly, humans are all ethically responsible. They are requested to protect the planet and other beings, irrespective of how useful or useless they are to them. This discussion can be further developed by investigating values. However, the study of values is a vast topic and is beyond the scope of this study.

7.1.2. Consumers' Behaviors towards Sustainable Fashion

7.1.2.1. Attitude

Quantitative results validated attitude as an essential factor that increases purchase intentions. In this regard, Turkish consumers are not an exception to similar studies conducted in different countries and cultures (Bong Ko & Jin, 2017; Nam, Dong, & Lee, 2017; Zheng & Chi, 2014). The high connection between attitude and purchase intentions should give marketers essential insights. Namely, they can learn how to achieve progress in this area. From the consumer's side, the mean of the answers of the attitude construct shows that, generally, the sample, regardless of age, has a positive attitude towards sustainable fashion. For example, most sample sees buying sustainable fashion as a good idea. The mean score of the answers to this question was 4.08. The qualitative data maintain that lack of knowledge and misinformation in customers have rendered negative attitudes toward sustainable products and a growing attitude-behavior gap. The young generations are exempted from this judgment since their higher awareness makes them obtain better positive attitudes with more potential purchase behaviors. If this is to be connected to quantitative results, several insights can be discussed. As the action or actual behavior is out of the scope of this study, it will not be addressed. However, assuming that higher knowledge and awareness result in more positive attitudes (Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014; Zheng & Chi, 2014; Cowan & Kinley, 2014; Ko & Jin, 2017; Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang, 2021), then some compatibility occur between qualitative and quantitative results when young generations are considered. For example, the mean score of the answers to the attitude questions of respondents who are below 30 years old is more than four, which is higher than the mean of the whole sample, which is 3.92. As a result, we can see that the answers of younger generations show more positive perceptions towards

sustainable fashion than other age groups. This can be explained in relation to the need for more communication between brands and consumers to address misleading perceptions and misinformation (Peleg, Mizrachi & Tal, 2022).

7.1.2.2. Subjective Norms

Quantitative results did not strongly connect subjective norms and consumer behavior. The results may provide insights about the young generation, who are more prone to be influenced by their peers to follow the common trends in the market (McNeill &Venter, 2019). When respondents were asked about the reasons for them to engage in purchasing sustainable fashion products, 21% attributed this to the need to follow the expected trend. This 21% includes more than 70% of younger people who are less than 30 years old, which is much higher than 40%, which is the distribution of this demography in our sample. Generally, as the effect of similar-age friends is considerable in this regard (Dewanto and Belgiawan, 2020), one can assume the trend usually created by these types of friends is highly related to subjective norms. As a result, peer effect seems to play somehow a higher role among these younger people. Quantitative results show that within the construct of subjective norms, family, friends, and self-appreciation factors show the highest effect on the importance of subjective norms among Turkish consumers. Indeed, other studies show that the influence of family and friends of similar age was found to play a crucial role that extends from affecting intentions to influencing buying behavior towards sustainable fashion (Dewanto & Belgiawan, 2020).

Yet, compared to attitude and other factors of TPB, subjective norms have lower mean scores and lower effects on purchase intentions. Most of the data obtained from interviewees in the qualitative section did not reveal much about the role that can be played by subjective norms in this regard. It can be argued that since sustainability is still a newly introduced phenomenon, subjective norms may not be a strong predictor for the behavior of consumers. Varshneya, Pandey, & Das (2017) did not find a strong effect of subjective norms on purchase intention when they analyzed consumer behavior towards buying organic clothes. They argue that these findings are reached because organic fashion is still novel to society and has not yet established itself as a typical norm. Nevertheless, the results obtained, even though indicating a lower effect,

seem to be in line with many similar studies conducted in this area (Chen, 2020; Manning, 2009; Khare, 2019; Zheng & Chi 2014, Joshi & Srivastava, 2019; Kim & Chung, 2011; Ham, Jeger, & Ivković, 2015; Sreen, Purbey, & Sadarangani, 2018; Phuah, Ow, Sandhu & Kassim 2018; Nguyen, Nguyen, & Nguyen, 2019; Bong Ko & Jin, 2017; Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014., 2014; Nam, Dong, & Lee, 2017).

7.1.2.3. Behavioral Control

Quantitative and qualitative analyses show that BC affects purchase intention. In their study on sustainable consumption, Ayar & Gürbüz (2021) stated that BC influenced intention but not behavior. They attributed that to the consumers' insufficient knowledge about behavior. In this study, the qualitative data further explains the obstacles that could deter purchase intentions.

First of all, one of the obstacles is the lack of knowledge and insufficient and wrong kind of information that reaches the customer. Most of the research on sustainable fashion shows similar outcomes on the influence of the lack of knowledge on consumers' purchase intentions of sustainable products (Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014; Zheng and Chi, 2014; Cowan & Kinley, 2014; Ko & Jin, 2017; Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang, 2021; Tran, Nguyen, Tran, Nguyen, Luu & Nguyen, 2022). The data obtained from the qualitative course highlight that consumers may have knowledge and attitudes about sustainability but do not engage in purchase behaviors due to further obstacles. Turkish consumers do not perceive purchasing sustainable fashion as one of their priorities. Given the daily difficulties that the average consumer is dealing with, survival issues are at the top of their list of interests. The interviewees concluded that if sustainable fashion is priced higher than conventional apparel, the average Turkish consumer will probably not engage in purchasing behavior. Moreover, the lack of accessibility and variety of sustainable products further adds another obstacle. In general, quantitative data is in line with these findings. On the one hand, the BC construct, in general, seems to significantly affect PI, which means that factors that affect the outcome of the purchase behavior, such as prices seem to affect the intention itself (Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang, 2021; Tran, Nguyen, Tran, Nguyen, Luu & Nguyen, 2022) When details are also investigated, a similar conclusion can be

achieved. The mean score of the survey question that deals with prices is 3.85. This shows a high level of agreement. The question dealing with consumers' willingness to pay did not give decisive results. However, since around 75% of the sample seem to be only willing to accept a maximum of 5% increase in the price, one can assume that this result fits with the previous ones.

7.1.2.4. Perceived Effectiveness

Qualitative and quantitative data provide conflicting findings about Turkish consumers' perceived effectiveness. According to experts, Turkish consumers do not believe that they are making a change in the environment when they engage in buying sustainably. On the contrary, they have other priorities to worry about. If they do purchase sustainable products, it is mainly due to self-interest and not at all connected to a genuine with the environment. Quantitative data, however, provides a different picture. Conversely, a significant effect is found within CE on PI. On the other hand, more than 54% of respondents chose environmental protection as one reason to buy sustainable fashion. In addition, 25% of respondents highlighted the environment as the only reason. The quantitative findings are more in line with the studies found in the literature (Antonetti & Maklan, 2013; Kinnear, Taylor, & Ahmed, 1974; Zheng & Chi, 2014; Chi, Gerard, Yu, & Wang, 2021).; Neumann, Martinez, & Martinez, 2021; Kang, Liu, & Kim, 2013; Leary, Vann, Mittelstaedt, Murphy, & Sherry, 2014; Park 2015). The contradiction in this study may be attributed to the bias of the brands toward customers and partially blaming them for not engaging in the sustainability project in the country. Another explanation that could shed light on the disagreement is the typical tendency of individuals to choose what seems to be socially desirable and acceptable; in that sense, saving the environment is the right thing to do. Either way, this also makes it necessary for both sides to have genuine conversations about sustainability and how each side can make a difference.

7.2. Implications and Recommendations

Based on the previous findings and discussions, the author suggests several implications and recommendations that can assist in guiding companies and individuals with sustainable fashion efforts. In terms of managerial implications, the

study offers several important practical implications to help Turkish fashion stakeholders who care about sustainability join forces and develop a more comprehensive strategy to achieve full and inclusive adoption of all sustainability dimensions.

First, the vital role of consumption, by taking into account the consumer as an important stakeholder and change maker (Nayak, 2019), should be recognized. Turkish brands are strongly advised to allocate their efforts to invest in increasing consumers' knowledge and awareness. Sustainable fashion must adopt a consumer-oriented approach to better understand and implement sustainability. This can be achieved by establishing a committee within the sustainable division of each company in charge of communicating with consumers. This committee can also be involved in local and global research studies focusing on consumers' potential role in facilitating the sustainable project. This can accumulate valuable data and provide recommendations on how the market can better understand the customers, the factors influencing purchase intentions, the causes that are contributing to the intention-behavior gap, and the best ways to deal with them. This can be done by focusing on a combination of education and marketing programs. As the role of education programs in this regard is crucial (Kong, Chae, & Mattila, 2016; Das, Herweyers, Moons, & du Bois, 2021), two platforms are considered adequate. First, in-store campaigns and designs where brands can establish separate sections in their stores that mainly address sustainability issues. Such sections with attractive designs can attract customers and urge them to ask questions. Here, the role of educated store salespersons is also critical. The second platform is social media, which should be used with caution when addressing the audience. Shen, Richards, & Liu (2103) suggest that using tragic language in the media can increase consumers' attention toward related issues and affect their purchasing decisions. These sad events can be tightly connected to the adverse effects of unsustainable practices in fashion, both on environmental and social aspects. While the author recommends such a technique to address all consumers, the researcher believes that such a strategy can be very influential among young people if tailored correctly. Actions towards this segment should be designed and customized according to the specific group it addresses (Shen, Richards, & Liu, 2103). It is strongly recommended that such efforts are mainly directed towards younger generations, which has many advantages. On the one hand, since young people are

already aware of this and have some positive attitudes, one can think that any efforts invested here will have positive results. Unlike older generations, where a steady set of minds may bring some challenges, people who are already educated about this matter can be addressed more easily. In addition, from a strategic point of view, targeting young people is a future and a long-term investment. These youth have already acquired some information in this regard. However, some critical details may be missing. For this reason, any training or education plan should address these missing aspects (Saricam, Erdumlu, Silan, Dogan, & Sonmezcan, 2017). For this reason, this type of eco-conscious audience needs to be addressed and educated by designing the correct communication methods (Das, Herweyers, Moons, & du Bois, 2021). Naturally, the tools that need to be used to address the young should attract their intentions, such as social media, which plays a critical role.

The discussion above is echoed in Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas (2011) 's model of customer-focused approach to sustainability, which invites sustainable initiatives to address the customer, who are often ignored in typical sustainable discourse and activities. They argue that "a weak customer focus seriously restricts both the efficiency and the effectiveness of sustainability efforts" (p. 23).

Besides emphasizing the persistence of making urgent sustainable choices among producers and customers, fashion producers and retailers should realize the importance of raising awareness and disseminating and standardizing the right kind of information to combat misinformation and misunderstandings that often deter positive intentions and actions. Circulating and publicizing clear definitions, guidelines, and directions should also be taken care of to help customers identify sustainable products. Customers should have easy access to buying sustainable products and well-defined guidelines and labels on what sustainable items are, where to find them, and how they are helping the planet.

Yet, as discussed earlier, disseminating information is not enough to make an impact and predict actions. The sustainable garments themselves should be addressed in terms of quality, availability, size, design, durability, and cost. This should happen within an honest meeting between customers and producers. Based on their findings, Tran, Nguyen, Tran, Nguyen, Luu & Nguyen (2022) propose that fashion brands invest less

in awareness-raising efforts and more in refining and enhancing the sustainable products themselves because, they argue, that the features of the sustainable product itself has a more predictable influence on customers' behavioral intention.

When addressing the issue of cost, admittedly, any healthy application of sustainability requires considering economic factors so that sustainable companies are able to survive. In general, companies can consider different cost reduction techniques and strategies that can help them to improve this imbalance. Examples include reconsidering design modular strategies (Gwilt, 2013), using hybrid approaches and optimal solutions to help reach the best economic combination of sustainable raw materials (Adriyendi & Melia, 2021), integrating sustainable practices within the whole business model of the organization (Nayak, 2019), the use of energy-efficient technologies (Nayak, 2019), adopting a collaborative approach among fashion organizations (Puspita & Chae, 2021), and government support, (Niu, Chen, & Zhang 2017). Although such techniques can be effective, what is really needed is a change in mindset as an optimal solution that entails taking transformative and brave steps to adopt a circular economy framework. These investments should not aim at cost reduction but rather at achieving maximum efficiency and effectiveness while tracking sustainability goals. The first step in this regard is investments within the company's own infrastructure. For example, a water treatment facility that recycles the water used during production can be established. Such facilities can lead to better outcomes both from economic and environmental points of view. Since brands are not making sustainable production themselves, most of these infrastructures need to be constructed on suppliers' sites. In this regard, international brands are forcing their suppliers to make such investments. In this case, suppliers find themselves under an obligatory force that may compel them to act against their current financial abilities. İn addition, they will be motivated by the need to avoid losing any orders from brands. However, such forced actions can cause these suppliers to lose financial control in the medium run. A more collaborative approach is recommended. Brands should establish partnerships with those suppliers who believe in the exact cause and collaborate with them to develop such sustainable infrastructures. This collaboration could be a direct investment or indirectly through business commitment. The outcomes of such investments are not immediate. Instead, the cost of investment may give opposite

results. However, all sustainability goals should always be analyzed with strategic long-term frames.

In addition, investments in innovation and technologies should always be within the priorities. As the data revealed, Türkiye has significant human and innovative power and has been a pioneer in the fashion industry for a considerable amount of time. Brands should be able to invest in the accumulated experience that has been locally developed throughout the years and transform that into an innovative atmosphere that can help to produce creative solutions that can help companies avoid cost problems within sustainability standards.

Moreover, decision-makers in the fashion industry should start to perceive sustainability as a significant stakeholder that affects and is affected by the activities of their businesses. Hence, sustainability targets can be evaluated more seriously. In addition, the current approach of perceiving sustainability as a marginal issue can be avoided. Therefore, Turkish brands are advised to follow three steps. First, they should demonstrate a genuine commitment to sustainability. This means that rather than following a path that considers sustainability a tool to achieve some commercial ends, sustainability needs to be perceived as a goal. This sincere commitment sometimes requires decisions that may not be profitable for the company, especially in the short run. For example, these fast fashion brands must admit that excessive consumption is a non-sustainable practice. Therefore, the strategy of frequent changes in trends, which results in overconsumption, has at least to be adjusted to fit reasonable sustainability goals. While this requires brave strategic decisions that could lead to losses, such steps will help the brand to obtain sustained and significant gains in the long run (Szmydke-Cacciapalle, 2018). Such gains include transforming all aspects of a company, even its culture and mindset, to fit sustainability goals. This can increase the organization's credibility among employees and final customers, resulting in more employee commitment and customer loyalty.

Second, the three dimensions of sustainability highlighted in the triple bottom line model have to be approached with the same degree of strategic importance. This matter has to start by increasing the organization's awareness of sustainability. As seen in the interviews, almost all respondents perceived sustainability based only on

environmental understanding. However, embracing the three pillars of sustainability helps to transfer the issue into strategic understanding and results in an application that goes beyond simple procedures and formalities. The social aspect is missing in the Turkish market, so more efforts can be made to track the production conditions. Brands should conduct more frequent and severe auditing to ensure that the working conditions their suppliers apply comply with the country's rules and global standards regarding sustainability. With the current pressure of high costs, brands can be pushed to ignore such audits. However, this short-term thinking can seriously damage the brand in the long run, as it ignores the needs of one of its major stakeholders. Consumers should be informed about each company's sustainable auditing and achievements to develop loyalty and avoid green skepticism.

Finally, the brands are recommended to develop standardized policies for sustainability. Hence, a sustainability management system must be established within companies to ensure that sustainability goals and targets are strategically designed and followed. For example, Burke & Gaughran (2007) created a sustainability management model that serves such a purpose. This model includes crucial steps such as establishing awareness sustainability programs for managers and employees, training, developing strategies and policies, setting targets and objectives, implantations, monitoring, auditing, and reviewing. Such comprehensive systems will definitely result in transforming sustainability efforts to strategic levels and hence help companies avoid wasting efforts and resources on ineffective routes. Moreover, sustainable leadership is a must. Governmental and non-governmental sides and stakeholders can provide different kinds of support and guidance to the current and emerging fashion companies to ensure sustainable measures and avoid greenwashing. This leadership is also expected to be in charge of essential matters that are currently missing in the Turkish market, such as setting national and local benchmarking, imposing auditing for sustainability, ensuring accountability and liability, and providing rewards for for-runners and successful initiatives.

Based on the above discussions, arguments, implications, and recommendations, the researcher suggests a framework of action that can help develop strategies and initiate actions, as shown in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1. A Suggested Framework for Sustainable Fashion Action

7.3. Research Limitation and Further Research

The theory of planned behavior utilized in this study to analyze customers' purchase intentions makes the findings context-specific and prone to change from one context to another. This study's focus was limited to examining only the intentions toward sustainable fashion consumption, and the scope could not include further elements. Future research can look into the actual consumption behaviors and analyze whether and how intentions turn into actions to provide a more inclusive overview of sustainable fashion consumption in the country. Future studies can even extend their scope to include the whole range of what sustainable consumption implies. This includes purchase activities, manners and regularity, garment restoration, recycling, clothes discarding, and other activities. Because of the influence of personal values on intentions, future research can build on some studies, such as the study of Manchiraju et al. (2012). Namely, the extended research can investigate TBP and values' role in recognizing sustainable fashion purchase behaviors. Future studies can also explore the role of culture in the Turkish context or compare it with another culture to study the impact of culture on individual attitudes and values and the potential influence on

sustainable consumption and lifestyles. As the study provides further confirmation regarding the ability of TPB to predict intentions, it also makes an essential contribution in providing an overall investigation of the situation in Türkiye, which gives future researchers different aspects for inspection and analysis.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The current study aimed to provide an overview of sustainable fashion in Türkiye by investigating sustainable fashion from both consumers and marketers. The study was set to explore the sustainable measures that Turkish fashion brands employ, to identify the main drivers for sustainable fashion purchase intentions of customers, to present the ways fashion brands attempt to improve customer's attitudes toward sustainable products, and identify the main challenges and prospect of sustainable fashion in the country. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed using a mixed-method approach. Unlike the common practice used in mixed methodology techniques in which the target audience is the same in both qualitative and quantitative courses, the researcher in this study followed a unique path through which suppliers and brands were targeted in the qualitative phase, and consumers were targeted in the quantitative phase. By this method, the researcher aimed to avoid bias as much as possible by complementing and comparing the two phases to obtain a broader and deeper overview of the general situation of the matter under investigation. The quantitative phase used a survey questionnaire to collect data from consumers, whereas the qualitative phase employed interviews and some periphery sources to collect data from three fast fashion brands in the country.

The quantitative phase revealed a significant relation between purchase intentions and the four factors of the theory of planned behavior, which was employed by the study. Namely, the study validated the influence of attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior control, and perceived effectiveness on the intention to buy sustainable products. The qualitative phase revealed an overview of the situation of sustainable fashion in Türkiye characterized by initial immature steps, lack of consistency and clarity regarding sustainability, the different levels of involvement that identified the brands in their efforts to go sustainable, and the absence of sustainability leadership and support to the fashion industry. Qualitative data also showed the different motives

of brands for involving in sustainability, the role of consumers' awareness and attitudes, the brands' efforts to enhance this knowledge and attitudes, and the challenges and prospects that faced sustainability.

While the study showed that the four proposed factors of TPB had a significant role in affecting and predicting consumers' behavioral purchase intentions of sustainable fashion consumption, the final investigation, however, suggested that these factors alone are not sufficient to predict purchase behaviors since there were other factors and obstacles involved that were identified. For example, the study highlighted an attitude-behavior gap among consumers facilitated by misinformation, lack of access and variety, green skepticism, and high costs. The study also identified gaps between consumers' perceptions of sustainable fashion and marketers' perceptions and recommended engaging the consumer as a critical stakeholder in sustainable initiatives.

The study started meaningful discussions about sustainable fashion in Türkiye. It provided a framework of action that could be utilized by brands and consumers, who, as shown in the study, seemed to be passionate about the environment but did not have access to common standards or the correct information. Turkish fashion brands should address the lack of information and involve consumers in discussing sustainable garments' design, quality, and accessibility. There is an excellent prospect in investing in the younger generations to disseminate information and assist in campaigns.

As one respondent stated, fashion brands are now at a critical time in history. Brands can take advantage of the excellent opportunity to invest in sustainability and be a winner shortly. Fashion brands and other industries must realize that sustainability is a successful investment that should not be ignored or put aside due to obstacles. Cost issues are expected to change with the ever-changing technological advances. Supply chain problems should not distract the firm from its focus on the opportunity to uphold sustainability benchmarking. Moreover, with the current lack of leadership in the country, brands can join forces, share knowledge and good practices, and support each other to pave the way for new sustainable governance and leadership.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

An Example of Coding Qualitative Data Using the Thematic Analysis Steps

Phase 2: Coding	**Phases 3: Searching for themes**	**Phase 4: Reviewing the themes**	**Phase 5: Defining the themes**
I think the case there is a bit different. They are working on this issue but they have different motivations.	-different motivation to go sustainable	the themes were evaluated in relation to the rest of the entire data	Turkish brands motivation: brand image
Here I can say mainly it is about providing better image not to actually satisfying a customer need. And also there is no social pressure or from the press. And there is another thing.	-keeping a good image is one important motivation for the brand to follow sustainability		
If you look mainly at fast fashion brands like LC and defacto. They are actually are flowing Inditex very closely. I don't say 100% but they keep close look on what this brand is doing.	-no liability or pressure to follow sustainability in the Turkish market		

APPENDIX B

Survey questions in Turkish language as presented to interviewees

Respondents Demographic Profiling Questions

Cinsiyet	**Yaş**	**Aile**	**Çocuklar**	**Eğitim**	**Aylık Gelir**	**Uyruğu**
Erkek	18'den küçük	Evli	Çocuğum var	Lise veya altı	5.000 ve altı	Türk
Kadın	18-29	Ayrılmış	Çocuğum yok	Üniversite öğrenciyim	5.000-10.000	Türk Değil
	30-39	Daha önce evlenmemiş		Lisans	10.000-20.000	
	40-49			Lisansüstü	20.000-30.000	
	50-59				30.000'den fazla	
	60 ve üzeri					

Survey Questions that Measure Attitude

İfade					
Sürdürülebilir moda ürünü satın almanın olumlu olduğunu düşünüyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Aynı fikirde değilim	Tarafsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
Sürdürülebilir moda ürünü satın almanın iyi bir fikir olduğunu düşünüyorum					
Çevre dostu ürün satın almanın güvenli olduğunu düşünüyorum					

Sürdürülebilir giyim ürünleri satın almak akıllıca bir seçimdir					
Sürdürülebilir giysiler satın almak, çevrenin korunmasına ve geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunma konusunda bana tatmin ve özsaygı gibi olumlu duygular veriyor					
Sürdürülebilir giyim ürünlerinin satın alınması birçok fayda sağlar					

Survey Questions that Meausre Subjective Norms

İfade					
Hayatımdaki önemli insanlar sürdürülebilir giysiler almamı istiyor	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Aynı fikirde değilim	Tarafsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
İnsanlarla olan etkileşimim sürdürülebilir ürünler satın almamı etkiliyor					

Ailem normal ürünler yerine sürdürülebilir moda ürünleri almam gerektiğini düşünüyor					
Çoğu arkadaşımın normal giyim ürünleri yerine sürdürülebilir moda ürünlerini tercih ettiğine inanıyorum					
Çoğu arkadaşımın normal giysiler yerine sürdürülebilir giysiler seçmemi beklediğine inanıyorum					
Sürdürülebilir bir şey giydiğimi gördüklerinde insanlar beni daha çok takdir ediyor					

Survey Questions that Measure Behavioral Control

İfade					
Yüksek fiyatlar, beğendiğimde sürdürülebilir giysiler almamı engelliyor	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Aynı fikirde değilim	Tarafsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
İhtiyacım olan stili bulamazsam sürdürülebilir bir giysi satın almam					
Bu iddianın Gerçekliğinden emin değilsem, sürdürülebilir giyim olarak anılan ürünleri satın almam					
Mağazanın yeri uzaksa sürdürülebilir bir giysi satın almam					

Survey Questions that Measure Consumer's Perceived Effectiveness

İfade					
Kişisel eylemlerim çevre sorunlarını etkilemede yeterince önemlidir	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Aynı fikirde değilim	Tarafsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
Çevre sorunları kısmen kendi tüketim tercihlerimin bir sonucudur					

Bireysel tüketicinin çevreyi korumak ve iyileştirmek için çaba göstermesi buna değer.					
Moda ürünleri satın aldığımda, onları kullanmamın çevreyi nasıl etkileyeceğini düşünmeye çalışırım.					

Questions that Measure Purchase Intentions

İfade					
Gelecekte sürdürülebilir giysiler almayı düşünüyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Aynı fikirde değilim	Tarafsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
Gelecekte sürdürülebilir giysiler almaya çalışacağım					
Gelecekte sürdürülebilir giysiler satın almak için çaba göstereceğim					
Sürdürülebilir giyim görürsem, bir ürün satın almayı veya satın almayı düşünüyorum.					

Sürdürülebilir bir giyim perakende mağazası görürsem, bir ürün satın almak için mağazayı ziyaret etmeyi düşünürüm.					

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