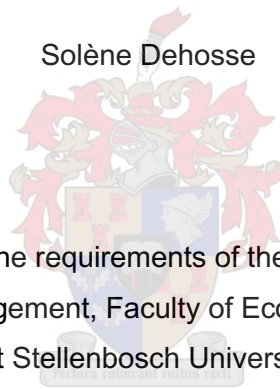# A STUDY OF ETHICAL FASHION CONSUMPTION

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Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Commerce in the Department of Business Management, Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences at Stellenbosch University

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ABSTRACT

The disastrous impacts of the fashion industry on the natural environment and society have come to light in recent years. As a result, some consumers expressly seek out fashion produced with environmental and social considerations in mind, by purchasing ethical fashion. Generally, consumers report favourable attitudes towards ethical fashion. However, actual sales of ethical fashion remain low, despite the evidence which explicates the damage the current fashion model causes the natural environment and societies. Thus, it seems there is a gap between reported attitudes to ethical fashion and actual consumption. Existing research has investigated the factors impacting ethical fashion. However, the results are varied and inconsistent. Thus, the current study used Stern's Framework of environmentally significant behaviour in order to understand the factors impacting purchase intent for ethical fashion in South Africa. The impact of attitude, capability and contextual variables on purchase intent for ethical fashion was investigated.

In-depth interviews were conducted with local ethical fashion industry experts in order to contextualise ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. In addition, broad themes were identified that were utilised in the quantitative research. Subsequently, a PLS-SEM model including attitude, personal capability and contextual variables, was tested. The results indicated that attitude is the only variable that significantly impacts purchase intent for ethical fashion.

The results of the study indicate the ethical fashion brands and organisations should focus on price perceptions, perceived quality and style, perceived consumer effectiveness, concern for the environment and social welfare, ethical fashion understanding and perceived knowledge in order to improve consumer attitudes to ethical fashion in order to stimulate ethical fashion consumption in South Africa, thereby decreasing the consumers' personal impact on the natural environment and society.

OPSOMMING

Die rampspoedige gevolge van die modebedryf op die natuurlike omgewing asook die samelewing het die afgelope jare aan die lig gekom. As gevolg hiervan, soek sommige verbruikers uitdruklik modes wat geproduseer word met die oog op omgewings- en sosiale oorwegings, deur hoofsaaklik etiese modes aan te skaf. Oor die algemeen rapporteer verbruikers gunstige houdings teenoor etiese modes. Die werklike verkope van etiese modes bly egter laag, ondanks bewyse wat die skade wat die huidige modemodel aan die natuurlike omgewing en samelewing veroorsaak, verklaar. Dit wil voorkom asof daar 'n gaping bestaan tussen voorkeure tot etiese modes en werklike verbruik. Bestaande navorsing het die faktore wat etiese mode beïnvloed, ondersoek. Die resultate is egter uiteenlopend en teenstrydig. Dus het die huidige studie Stern's 'Framework of Environmentally Significant Behaviour' gebruik om die faktore wat koopbewustheid vir etiese modes in Suid-Afrika beïnvloed, te verstaan. Die impak van houdings, vermoëns en kontekstuele veranderlikes op koopintensie, gerig op etiese modes, is ondersoek.

In-diepte onderhoude is met plaaslike kundiges in die etiese modebedryf gevoer om etiese modebruik in Suid-Afrika te kontekstualiseer. Daarbenewens is breë temas geïdentifiseer wat in die kwantitatiewe navorsing gebruik is. Daarna is 'n PLS-SEM-model met houding, persoonlike vermoëns en kontekstuele veranderlikes getoets. Die resultate het aangedui dat houding die enigste veranderlike is wat die koopvoorneme op etiese wyse aansienlik beïnvloed.

Die resultate van die studie dui aan dat etiese modehandelsmerke en organisasies moet konsentreer op pryspersepsies, waargenome kwaliteit en styl, waargenome verbruikerseffektiwiteit, omgee vir die omgewing en maatskaplike welsyn, etiese modebegrip, en waargenome kennis ten einde verbruikers se houdings tot etiese modes te verbeter. Dit kan dan etiese modeverbruik in Suid-Afrika stimuleer en sodoende die verbruiker se persoonlike impak op die natuurlike omgewing en die samelewing verminder.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

As the realities of the ecological crisis become more evident, an increasing number of industries are adopting sustainable practices and processes (Mittelstaedt, Shultz, Kilbourne & Peterson, 2014). In turn, some customers purposefully seek out products with sustainable qualities or brands with sustainability values at their core (Worldwatch Institute, 2010). Examples of sustainable purchasing habits are widespread and varied (Sheth, Sethia & Srinivas, 2011). However, the fashion industry is not comparable in this regard. There are very few consumers who expressly seek out fashion brands that adopt sustainable business practices (Cowe & Williams, 2000). This phenomenon is surprising as the fashion industry is notorious for having such a profoundly negative impact on the environment as well as disreputable social concerns. The sheer volume of clothing produced, combined with the drive to manufacture at cheaper costs has had disastrous environmental and societal ramifications (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017).

The adoption of ethical fashion is one way that consumers can affect change and limit the negative impact the fashion industry has on the environment and society (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). Ethical fashion is often used interchangeably with sustainable, green and eco-fashion. However, it extends beyond addressing environmental concerns, and thus includes the consideration of social issues too. Definitions vary, but generally ethical fashion can be defined as the production, consumption and disposal of fashion garments that considers environmental and social issues along its supply chain (Moon, Lai, Lam & Chang, 2014, Lundblad & Davies, 2015, Henninger, 2016; Crane, 2010; Tseelon, 2011). The sourcing and use of sustainable and organic fibres, fabric treatment, safe factory working conditions, fair wages, waste management, and recycling and traceability are all important constituents that should be included in ethical fashion.

However, despite strong ethical attitudes, ethical fashion sales represent only one percent of the total fashion sales (Lundblad & Davies, 2015). Although, an increasing number of fashion retailers are focussing on promoting their sustainable practices and introducing ethical lines, adoption of ethical fashion nonetheless remains low and is manifested in the low sales percentage. Ethical consumer behaviour, or lack thereof, is determined by various factors. However, there is relatively little academic literature on ethical fashion consumption and very few studies that have been conducted in a developing country context like South Africa.

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Previous research has examined sustainable consumption generally (Stern, 200; Ibrahim & Al-Ajlouni, 2018; Cohen, Cohen & Murphy, 2001; Anantharaman, 2018), as well as attitudes towards sustainable consumption (Arbuthnott, 2012; Minton, Spielmann, Kahle, & Kim, 2018; Vainio & Paloniemi, 2014), barriers impeding widespread adoption of sustainable consumption (Vringer, van der Heijden , van Soest, Volleberg & Dietz, 2017; Arbuthnott, 2012; Govindan & Hasanagic, 2018) and personal values influencing sustainable consumption (Sharma & Jha, 2017; Mukherji & Mukherji, 2012; Holt, Shah, Friedland, Wells, Kim & Rojas, 2012). Research has also been conducted that is more specific to consumption behaviour within various industries, such as food (Spendrup, Hunter & Isgren, 2016) and energy (Kasperbauer, 2017).

Although not as numerous, some recent studies have also focussed on ethical or sustainable fashion (Moon *et al.*, 2014; Henninger, Alevizou & Oates, 2016; Bly, Gwozdz & Reisch, 2015; McNeil & Moore, 2015; Bray, Johns & Kilburn, 2010). However, there is very limited literature that concentrates on ethical fashion in developing countries (Huq & Stevnson, 2018). In particular, there is very little research that specifically investigates determining factors of ethical fashion consumption in the South African context (Taljaard, Sonnenberg & Jacobs, 2018; Taljaard & Sonnenberg 2019). As a result, a gap exists. This research study aims to address this gap and contribute to the extant body of literature in this regard. The aim of this study is thus to empirically determine the main contributing factors of ethical fashion consumption in a South African context in order to compile a comprehensive framework that will assist strategic decision-makers in the fashion industry.

Ethical fashion consumption is a behaviour that resulted from environmental and social concerns and is regarded as "fashion with conscience" (Joergens, 2006). It can therefore be regarded as behaviour that significantly influences the environment. Stern (2000) developed the Theory of Environmentally Significant Behaviour in order to build the understanding needed to effectively alter human behaviour that contributes to environmental problems. He defined environmentally significant behaviour by its impact and the intention to change the environment. The impact-oriented definition targets behaviour that can make a difference to the environment and the intent-oriented definition focuses on beliefs and motives in order to understand and change the behaviour. Stern (2000) as part of his theory development, identified the major types of environmentally significant behaviours as well as the causal variables that influence these behaviours. He also concluded that because causal factors may vary across behaviours and individuals it is necessary to theorise each of the different behaviours separately. The causal factors identified by Stern will thus form the basis of this study that will be tested empirically in a South African fashion consumption context as it has not been done before.

It is thus unclear whether these variables are relevant to fashion consumption in South Africa. Therefore, this study will investigate the attitudinal, personal capabilities and contextual factors and its impact on ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. The results of this study could provide the necessary insight into the drivers of ethical consumer behaviour needed in order to bring about the necessary change in the fashion industry and its impact on the environment and society.

The rest of the chapter includes a background to the variables, the problem statement and objectives, as well as an account of the research methodology. Ethical considerations and orientation of the study are also included.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The following section will provide a background to the study. Firstly, the fashion industry and its impact on environment and society will be discussed in order to convey the necessity of ethical fashion consumption. Secondly, ethical fashion will be defined and contextualised. This will be followed by a discussion of the literature concerning ethical fashion consumption. An argument for the gap in academic literature will be made. Subsequently, Stern's (2000) Theory of Environmentally Significant Behaviour, which forms the basis of this study, will be explained. The causal variables, attitudinal, personal capability and contextual factors influencing environmentally significant behaviour are examined. Finally, a revised version of Stern's framework is presented and alterations are justified with the results of previous studies and contributions from industry experts.

1.2.1 The fashion industry

Almost everyone on the planet wears clothing every day, not only for protection against the elements, but also as an expression of personal style and personality. There is no doubt that the clothing industry is a significant force. Worldwide, the global industry is currently valued at R38 trillion (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017), and in South Africa, fashion and textiles account for just under 20 percent of total retail sales (StatsSA, 2017). This industry employs approximately 300 million people globally (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017), and 23 percent of employees in the South African retail industry work for fashion stores (StatsSA, 2015). The magnitude of the fashion industry's impact on the natural environment and society has become more significant in recent years (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). The societal and environmental influences resultant of the fashion industry have been exacerbated by the increase in clothing production over recent years (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). This increase in clothing produced and sold is mainly due to the rise and success of fast fashion (Linden, 2016).

1.2.1.1 Fast fashion

Fast fashion is a business strategy that focusses on producing and selling cheap, stylish clothing quickly (Linden, 2016). Fast fashion retailers keep lead times to a minimum so that they can easily replenish popular styles or stop production on styles that are not selling well (Sull & Turconi, 2008). They are flexible and can react quickly to changes in the market (Sull & Turconi, 2008).

Short lead times also allow fast fashion retailers to regularly introduce new styles, thereby stimulating increased purchasing (Cachon & Swinney, 2011). Customers can visit the same store twice in one week and expect to find new styles available to purchase.

Fast fashion is characterized by low prices (Zimmerman & Shah, 2013). These low prices are another incentive for customers to purchase multiple items at a time and to keep returning to fast fashion stores. The combination of cheap clothing and the constant influx of new styles has emphasized the notion that fast fashion is disposable. Styles go in and out of fashion quickly which customers can replace with new garments that can be bought cheaply. Thus, consumers do not feel guilty about throwing clothes away, even if they've hardly been worn (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). As a result, more than 50 percent of fast fashion items produced are disposed of in the same year (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). These high disposal rates have their own set of environmental implications. Approximately 80 percent of textiles end up in landfills. As most clothing contains some portion of synthetic plastic-based fibres this clothing can take centuries to degrade, and emitting methane whilst doing so, thereby contributing to climate change (Remake, 2018). Concurrently, clothing production has doubled in the last fifteen-year period (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). The average number of times a garment is worn before it is disposed of or stops being worn has decreased by 36 percent in the last fifteen-year period (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). The increase in clothing production in conjunction with low utilization rates and high disposal rates has had disastrous effects on the natural environment and society (Remake, 2017).

1.2.1.2 The impact of the fashion industry on the environment and society: a case for ethical fashion

In its current state the fashion industry is extremely resource intensive. Only one percent of clothing is recycled (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). As a result, new textiles need to be produced constantly to meet clothing production demands. Mostly non-renewable resources are used to produce these textiles, approximately 98 million tonnes per year (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). Textile production also requires a huge amount of water. A total of 93 billion cubic metres of water are used each year, mostly for cotton farming (WWF, 2018).

This large-scale water consumption contributes to worldwide water scarcity issues. However, the sheer volume of resources used is not the only issue. The way in which they are used and disposed of has serious polluting effects (WWF, 2018).

The rise of fast fashion in particular has influenced the way clothing is produced. Fast fashion retailers offer their products at low prices and so they need to produce garments at much lower cost prices in order to make a profit (Zimmerman & Shah, 2013). To achieve this, they outsource production to factories where labour is cheap and regulations are lacking or unenforced, typically in countries like Bangladesh, China and Vietnam (Cachon & Swinney, 2011). In order to manufacture the ordered garments at the prices demanded by retailers, garment factories need to minimise costs which ultimately compromise worker safety and welfare, and the health of the natural environment.

One of the cheapest ways to decrease cost price per garment is to use inexpensive fabric (Manning, 2015). Fabric can be made from various fibre types which are produced and treated in various ways and have different effects on the environment and its people. Cotton and synthetic fibres account for the majority of textiles used to produce clothing (WWF, 2018). Production of these textiles has grown tremendously in correlation with the rise in clothing production (WWF, 2018).

Fibre production is associated with serious environmental and social issues including large-scale use of toxic pesticides and herbicides, the extinction of indigenous plant and insect species, soil quality degradation, pollution of water systems, human health implications, unsustainable water and fossil fuel usage, greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and child labour (WWF, 2018).

Once fibres are manufactured and transformed into textiles, which are then treated and dyed, the ordered garments are ready to be sewn in factories. The success of fast fashion relies on the flexibility of the supply chain, the ability to quickly react to changes in demand and the constant offering of new styles available for purchase at cheap prices (Zimmerman & Shah, 2013). As a result, it is common for garment factories to face unreasonable production targets. These conditions take their toll on garment workers. Reports of exhaustion, malnutrition and collapse amongst garment workers are frequent (What she makes: Power and poverty in the fashion industry, 2017; True Cost Movie, 2015). These extensive working hours are spent in an unpleasant working environment. Investigations carried out by Oxfam, an international organisation with the goal to alleviate global poverty, report appalling working conditions in garment factories. Factory buildings are described as dilapidated, over-crowded and rife with safety hazards (Vaughn-Whitehead, 2011). These risks are carried by the

garment workers, the most vulnerable and the worst paid people in the fashion supply chain. In some cases, garment workers are not even paid the minimum wage, let alone a living wage; the amount needed to cover basic necessities like food, rent, healthcare and education (What she makes: Power and poverty in the fashion industry, 2017).

Due to the fact that fast fashion retailers outsource their work to garment factories, they are technically not directly responsible for ensuring that garment workers earn a living wage. However, as a result of the manner in which fast fashion retail garment prices are reverse engineered to meet consumer demands, extreme pressure is placed on the bottom end of the supply chain.

There are many other societal and environmental implications that are directly linked to clothing production. These will be discussed in more depth in chapter two. However, analysis of the fashion industry in its current state reveals that the environmental and social cost of clothing production is not accounted for at any point along the supply chain. In fact, clothing production continues to grow despite the devastating impact it has on the environment and society. Change is necessary in order to lessen these societal and environmental implications. Ethical fashion consumption is an avenue that consumers could explore in order to directly limit the impact their clothing purchases have on the environment and society (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017).

1.2.2 Ethical fashion

Ethical fashion, often used interchangeably with eco-, green, slow and sustainable fashion, does not have a single industry-wide definition as of yet (Henninger & Oates, 2016). Where sustainable, green and eco-fashion focus on the environmental impacts of clothing production, ethical fashion includes social factors as well (Crane, 2010; Tseelon, 2011). Many studies (Moon *et al.*, 2014, Lundblad & Davies, 2015, Henninger, 2016; Crane, 2010; Tseelon, 2011) define ethical fashion as garments that minimise negative and maximise positive social and environmental effects along its supply chain, including post-purchase lifecycle. These social and environmental effects include various issues, namely; textile selection, production, treatment and dyeing, waste management, factory safety, living wages, reasonable working hours, use of organic materials and general sustainable and ethical responsibility and awareness (Bly *et al.*, 2015). As more research about the environmental and social impact of the current fashion industry norms becomes available, public awareness of the industry's problems becomes more widespread, thereby pressurising ethical fashion purveyors to improve and adapt their practices in order to meet ethical standards. Additionally, increased awareness will enable consumers to make better informed choices about their fashion purchasing habits thus resulting in ethical fashion consumption.

Ethical fashion consumption refers to the purchase, use and disposal of ethical fashion garments (Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014). Globally, ethical fashion consumption contributes one percent to total fashion sales (Lundblad & Davies, 2015). This statistic seems surprisingly low when considering the results from previous studies that focus on ethical attitudes and purchase intentions. Many studies report that the majority of consumers are concerned about ethical issues (Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Hill & Lee, 2015; Joung, 2014; Moon *et al.*, 2014). However, despite strong ethical attitudes very few consumers actually purchase ethically (Defra, 2006; Hughner, 2007). Evidently a words-deeds inconsistency exists. It seems there may be other factors at play that impact ethical consumption. Additional research is necessary in order to identify the determining factors of ethical fashion.

Social desirability biases may affect respondents' answers. Respondents may overstate the strength and positivity of their attitudes towards ethical purchasing because they feel that is what society expects of them and they will be judged if they do not conform (Welsch & Kuhling, 2009; Lee, 2010).

Additionally, there may be extenuating factors that affect ethical fashion consumption that have not been accounted for in previous studies. Whilst attitudes towards ethical consumption may be positive, consumers may be limited by personal capability causal variables such as financial resources and awareness of ethical fashion brands. Although some studies have considered price as a barrier to ethical consumption (Bray *et al.*, 2010; Ferreira, Avlia & Dias di Faria, 2010; Young, Hwang, McDonald & Oates, 2010), a large number of studies have failed to incorporate contextual factors which may also contribute to the prediction and understanding ethical fashion consumption behaviour.

Furthermore, many studies have investigated ethical consumption generally and subsequently applied the results to all kinds of ethical purchasing (Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Papoikonomou, Ryan & Valverde, 2011). Although the results may apply to purchasing behaviour of some kinds of products, like appliances and food, fashion consumption behaviour tends to differ substantially from other purchasing decisions (Cachon & Swinney, 2011). There are certain factors that are very specific to fashion purchasing that would not have been included in a general study about ethical consumption. The perceived stylishness or attractiveness of a garment, for example, is a major influencing factor in conventional fashion buying (Chan & Wong, 2012; Young *et al.*, 2010). Thus, it is expected that garment stylishness will impact ethical fashion consumption too. It seems there is a need for more in-depth studies specifically adapted to ethical consumption of fashion.

Finally, previous studies have been conducted in a select few countries, usually the UK, USA and Korea, with predominantly developed economies and very specific samples. Sample groups tend to be chosen by convenience sampling method and are usually university students who have limited financial freedom and relatively high education levels (Kim, Choo & Yoon, 2012; Hill & Lee, 2015; Byun & Sternquist, 2011; Llundblad & Davies, 2011; Joung, 2014; Moon *et al.*, 2014). Whilst these studies do contribute to the body of knowledge, their results cannot be applied to whole populations, let alone developing countries where circumstances differ greatly. It appears that no ethical fashion consumption studies that have been conducted in South Africa, which has its own unique culture, wealth distribution and education levels that shape environmental and social concerns, awareness of ethical fashion and access to ethical fashion which may influence ethical fashion consumption behaviour. More research is needed in order to determine the driving factors behind South African ethical fashion consumption behaviour.

1.2.3. Towards a coherent theory of environmental significant behaviour

Stern (2000) developed a framework which proposes that certain factors determine environmentally significant behaviour. He defines environmentally significant behaviour in relation to the extent to which actions impact the natural environment, as well as the directness of that impact. His research combined Attitude Behaviour Context theory in conjunction with Value-Belief-Norm theory of environmentalism, Norm Activation theory and New Environmental Paradigm perspective in order to provide a holistic approach to understanding environmentally significant behaviour. This behaviour can be subdivided into various types, namely; environmental activism, nonactivist behaviour in the public sphere, private sphere environmentalism and other behaviours. However, it could be argued that a framework that addresses such a broad range of behaviour types may not be indicative of reality. Although, Stern does make provision for this argument. His paper does specifically put forth that the framework can and should be tailored to measure specific kinds of behaviour using the applicable variables included in the framework.

Ethical fashion consumption can be classified as private sphere activism as it considers the environmental impact of production processes. Furthermore, the framework proposes that environmentally significant behaviour is determined by four causal variables; namely attitudinal, personal capability, contextual and habit and routine factors. Stern emphasises that variables are likely to work in conjunction with each other, and that contextual and personal capabilities may frame attitudes and vice versa.

In addition, Stern does acknowledge that causal variables may differ for different types of environmentally significant behaviours. Many of the variables included in Stern's framework

are aligned with the results of previous ethical consumption studies. Thus, it is posited that Stern's framework can be adjusted, using results from previous studies as well as information from industry experts, to include additional variables in order improve the applicability of the framework to ethical fashion consumption behaviour. In some cases, variable definitions needed to be refined to suit the fashion consumption context. Additionally, variables were excluded as they are irrelevant to the study at hand. The addition and exclusion of certain variables was necessary in order to ensure that the study at hand addresses both environmental and social considerations.

Various researchers (Jung, Kim & Oh, 2016; Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014; Ciasullo, Maione, Torre & Troisi, 2017; Moon *et al.*, 2014; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Connell, 2010) have attempted to understand which factors are significant in determining ethical fashion consumption. As of yet, there is no industry-wide consensus. However, previous studies do contribute valuable insights into ethical consumption that will be used to build a fuller picture of the ethical fashion consumption landscape. Many have approached ethical consumption as a homogenous research field. Whilst the results of these studies may not be completely relevant to fashion, there are certain factors and constructs that will be adapted for the purpose of this study and are discussed in the following sections.

1.2.3.1 Attitudinal variables

Stern (2000), defines attitudinal variables as the norms, beliefs and values which influence an individual's predisposition to act in a pro-environmental manner. Distinction is made between environmental and non-environmental attitudes, both of which can influence environmentally significant behaviour.

a) Concern for the environment and social welfare

Fraj & Martinez (2006) investigated environmental values and lifestyles as determining factors of ecological consumer behaviour. Their results indicated that consumers who value ecological aspects and have strong self-fulfilment values present significantly higher levels of ecological behaviour. In their study the ecological behaviour referred to ecological product purchase and recycling. Ethical fashion consumption could be considered to be a form of an ecological product purchase as ethical fashion is produced with a focus on limiting environmental destruction. Lundblad & Davies (2016) also investigated the role of values behind sustainable fashion consumption. Their results support the notion that consumers who place importance on environmental assets and value social justice are more likely to consume ethical fashion. Furthermore, Joshi & Rahman's (2015) review found environmental concern to be one of two major determinants of green purchase behaviour. However,

presence of environmental concern does not directly translate into ethical consumer behaviour.

A study conducted by Bamberg (2013) explains that environmental and social concern can no longer be considered a direct determinant of environmental behaviour, but only an important indirect determining factor. He proposes that situation-specific, or contextual, factors also play a significant role in dictating ethical behaviour. Moreover, Moon *et al*. (2014) conducted a study in order to investigate the barriers restricting popularisation of sustainable fashion adoption by means of exploratory questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Their results clearly indicated that consumers always prioritise brand and style considerations before environmental concern (Moon *et al.*, 2015). In addition, an exploratory study was executed in order to determine the barriers impeding ethical consumption and found that other factors far outweighed concern for the environment and social welfare, thus impeding ethical consumption (Bray, Johns & Kilburn, 2010). In particular, some consumers felt that their personal consumption would not have any effect on the global environmental and social problems and consequently, they felt it was not worth it to go to any extra effort to purchase ethically as it would have no significant effect (Bray *et al*, 2010).

b) Price perception

Stern includes perceived costs and benefits as a subset of attitude; as a causal variable influencing environmentally significant behaviour. It is posited that in the case of fashion consumption, perceived cost can be specified as perceived price. Indeed, price perceptions seem to be a significant determining factor of ethical fashion consumption. It is important to note that perceived price differs from objective price. Objective price refers to the actual monetary price of a product (Zeithaml, 1988). On the other hand, perceived price is the price encoded by the consumer in a way that is meaningful to them (Zeithaml, 1988). For example, consumers may think of the price being cheap or expensive.

Various studies have examined the relationship between price perceptions and consumption. (Bray *et al.*, 2010; Ferreira, Avlia & Dias di Faria, 2010; Young *et al.*, 2010). In most cases, it appears that consumers perceive ethical product prices as too expensive, thereby decreasing the frequency of, or altogether preventing, ethical consumption (Young *et al.*, 2010). This practice may be particularly prevalent amongst South African consumers who have become increasingly price sensitive as the country experiences economic downturn. The increasing presence of Zara, Cotton On and H&M retail stores in South Africa, in conjunction with the growth of online stores like Superbalist, have given South African consumers larger access to trendy clothing items at affordable prices. As a result, South Africans have become used to paying less for fashionable garments.

Some research has indicated that a higher price always outweighs ethical considerations, thereby widening the gap between ethical attitudes and ethical product purchasing (Joshi & Rahman, 2015). However, a contrasting study suggests consumers are willing to pay up to 20 percent more for ethical fashion items (Ciasullo, Maione, Torre & Troisi, 2017). Nevertheless, this report was carried out in Italy, a country that pioneered the ethical fashion movement. Italian consumers may be more cognisant of the ethical dilemmas inherent to the fashion industry and therefore more willing to engage in ethical fashion consumption, in comparison to South African consumers. This notion is supported by industry experts who report that South African consumers are less informed about the ethics involved in clothing production than their European counterparts. Longden (2019) explains, "they (South Africans) are becoming more and more aware (of ethical fashion)...But we are nowhere near the level of awareness in Europe or the States for example." Pichulik (2019) agrees, "I think we are in the early stages (of awareness)…both of us as makers and consumers haven't been given clear examples (of ethical fashion) in the press and the media or even basic business practices…where you do find that in other cultures, especially Europe."

c) Knowledge

It is proposed that knowledge of environmental and ethical implications may influence ethical fashion consumption. A review of twenty studies conducted by Joshi & Rahman (2015) revealed mixed results. The majority of studies observed a positive correlation between ethical knowledge and ethical purchase behaviour (Chan & Lau, 2000; Eze & Ndubisi, 2013). These findings are supported by Kang *et al.* (2014) who found that greater consumer knowledge resulted in increased environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption. However, some research found no relationship between knowledge and behaviour (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Consumers stated that they did know about social and environmental issues related to the fashion industry but admit that it does not influence their purchasing behaviour whatsoever. Although, researchers do appear to agree that lack of knowledge is negatively correlated with ethical consumption (Connell, 2010; Padel & Foster, 2005). In fact, Connell's study revealed that the majority of consumers are aware of general environmental and social issues related to the fashion industry, but were unable to provide specific examples of the unethical workings of the fashion industry. This finding may be particularly relevant to ethical fashion as it is still considered a fairly new concept, especially in comparison with other ethical purchasing activities. In addition, industry experts report that South African consumers seem to be generally unaware of the full extent to which clothing production impacts the environment and society and claim that this may be one of the factors impeding consumption of ethical fashion. Thus, it seems that significant industry specific knowledge could be a determining factor of ethical fashion consumption.

For the purposes of this study, knowledge will be separated into perceived knowledge and actual knowledge in order to compare what consumers think they know about the fashion industry and what they actually know. Perceived knowledge will form part of the attitude construct. Actual knowledge may act as a moderating variable between attitude and purchase intent. Consumers will form attitudes towards ethical fashion based on perceived knowledge. However, their purchase intention may be affected by their actual knowledge of the workings of the current fashion industry.

d) Perceived consumer effectiveness

Consumers may be unwilling to participate in ethical fashion consumption if they are unsure whether their actions actually make any difference to the environmental and social problems, especially if purchasing ethically requires higher levels of effort or financial commitments (Kang *et al.*, 2014). Thus, perceived consumer effectiveness is an important factor that may influence consumer behaviour. This claim is supported by past research which found evidence of a positive relationship between perceived consumer effectiveness and purchase intention (Wesley *et al.*, 2014; Andorfer & Liebe, 2015; Ghvandize, Velikova, Dodd & Oldewage-Theron, 2016). However, it is unclear whether this will hold true in the South African context, especially given the expected limited awareness of ethical fashion amongst South African consumers.

e) Product attributes: perceived quality and stylishness

Stern (2000) included non-environmental attitudes as one of the causal variables determining environmentally significant behaviour. In addition, he specifies that product attributes are a key part of non-environmental attitudes. If consumers are unsatisfied with certain characteristics of a product, they may be unwilling to purchase it, regardless of the ethical qualities it may or may not contain (Stern, 2000). As with conventional fashion purchasing, product attributes can have a considerable impact on ethical fashion purchasing decisions (Chan & Wong, 2012).

In particular, it is suspected that quality and perceived stylishness may be significant considerations in the ethical fashion context. Kim, Choo & Yoon (2012) conducted a study investigating the motivational drivers of fast fashion avoidance. Whilst fast fashion avoidance is not equivalent to ethical fashion consumption, it does indicate a divergence from conventional, 'unethical' fashion consumption. Their results revealed that poor garment quality and de-individuation, as a result of its mass-produced nature, are the predominant factors motivating some consumers to avoid fast fashion consumption. This indicates that product attributes could play an important role in determining ethical fashion consumption.

Although, McNeill & Moore's research study (2015) revealed that some consumers perceive ethical fashion garments as unstylish and of poor quality. These consumers expressly avoid ethical fashion purchases as they consider them to be unfashionable and poorly made. This sentiment is supported by Kang *et al.* (2014) whose research revealed that some consumers assume that environmentally sustainable apparel is limited in design and style. Thus, actual as well as perceived notions about ethical fashion garment attributes appear to be instrumental factors in determining ethical fashion consumption. Subsequently, it is suggested that non-environmental attitudes be specified as quality and stylishness product attributes for the purpose of this study.

It is predicted that attitude will act as a mediating variable between personal capability and purchase intention for ethical fashion. It is expected that the personal capability to purchase ethical fashion will range from low to high. Individuals should have different financial resources and varying levels of awareness of ethical fashion brands. However, it is unlikely that high personal capability will explain intention to purchase ethical fashion. Attitude could be the mediator that helps explain the relationship between personal capability and purchase intention. Without favourable attitudes individuals may be unlikely to have purchase intention for ethical fashion, despite their personal capability.

This notion is supported by research that indicates that attitudes do not have a direct effect on purchase intention of ethical products, but mediate the relationship between capability and contextual factors and purchase intent for ethical products (Qader & Zainuddin, 2010; Bamberg, 2013; Wulandari, Rahyuda & Yasa, 2015; Chu, 2018).

1.2.3.2 Personal capability variables

Personal capability variables refer to the knowledge and skills necessary in order to complete an action or behaviour. In the ethical fashion context, sufficient financial resources and adequate awareness of ethical fashion brands are required.

a) Financial resources

Financial resources are included in Stern's framework as one of the personal capability causal variables influencing an individual's propensity for environmentally significant behaviour. A consumer's financial resources dictate which products they can and cannot afford. In most cases, consumers choose to buy products priced in correspondence to their available financial resources. In the case of ethical fashion, ethically made garments may be considered too expensive for the majority of South African consumers to afford, considering the high unemployment rate (StatsSA, 2018) as well as high levels of poverty (StatsSA,

2017). According to a 2017 report published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, South Africans earn lower salaries than individuals in Europe, where ethical fashion consumption is more prevalent (Fashion Revolution Consumer Report, 2018). However, it could be argued that if consumers are more mindful of where they buy and buy fewer, but more expensive, better quality ethical garments instead of numerous, cheaper, poor quality fast fashion items they could spend the same amount on clothing purchases. Additionally, they will spend less money replacing poor quality fashion garments because they have spent a bit more on quality items that last longer. However, some consumers are not willing to sacrifice quantity for quality (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Financial resources are typically measured by asking respondents to indicate their financial income by selecting the appropriate income bracket.

b) Awareness of ethical fashion brands

Stern's (2000) original framework included behaviour-specific knowledge and skills as another personal capability variable influencing environmentally significant behaviour. It is suggested that this variable be specified as to ethical brand awareness in order to suit the context of the study. Stern defines behaviour-specific knowledge and skills as the information required in order to complete the given behaviour. In order for consumers to make conscious decisions to purchase ethically, they need to be aware of ethical fashion brands and how and where to purchase their products. Practically, this factor is key in determining ethical fashion consumption. Without this knowledge, consumers are unable to purchase ethical fashion garments and may be forced to default to unethical fashion consumption. It is suspected that South African consumers may not have a considerable knowledge on existing ethical fashion brands and how to access them. This lack of information may act as a barrier to ethical fashion consumption.

1.2.3.3 Contextual variables

Contextual factors include social norms and expectations and accessibility to ethical fashion which may influence individuals to act with more or less pro-environmental and social intent.

a) Social norms and expectations

Various studies indicate that social norms, or general expected behaviour amongst a group of people, play an important role in influencing an individual's behaviour. Subsequently, this factor was included in Stern's (2000) framework. Social norms may be particularly relevant to fashion consumption, especially as social media usage increases. South Africans have become progressively engaged in social media, specifically Facebook and Instagram, and as a result are more exposed to the influencers and celebrities they follow (Social Media Landscape Report, 2018). These celebrity and influencer accounts tend to project a

fashionable image, set trends and are often style icons. They are hardly ever seen wearing the same outfit twice and are constantly promoting their new things, thereby normalising hyper-consumerism. Consumers have become used to trends changing very quickly and styles going in and out of fashion at a rapid pace (Joung, 2014). They are expected to keep up with these trends, and are subsequently expected to keep buying new fashion garments. This kind of behaviour is misaligned with the beliefs and values fundamental to the ethical fashion movement. Indeed, some consider mass consumerism the anti-thesis of sustainability (Henninger *et al.*, 2016). In contrast, society also expects individuals to have pro-social and environmental attitudes. Thus, there is a conflict of interest.

Previous studies examining social norms and ethical consumption have revealed that social norms generally influence increased ethical purchasing (Welsch & Kuhling, 2009; Lee, 2010). However, the majority of these studies were not related to fashion consumption. Consequently, it is unclear how social norms affect ethical fashion consumption. Previous research has measured the influence of social norms by asking respondents how frequently their peers and parents engage with them about certain topics and how often they hear or see something about a given topic or concept in the news and various other media platforms.

b) Accessibility

Stern (2000) includes the available technologies as a part of the contextual variables influencing behaviour. However, the term available technologies is not particularly applicable to the fashion context. It is proposed that this variable be adapted to increase its relevance to the study at hand. In order for consumers to successfully purchase ethical fashion garments they need to have access to ethical brands and their products. Consumers living in rural areas or with limited internet connectivity may not be able to access ethical fashion retailers. In some cases, consumers may be aware of where to purchase ethical fashion garments but do not consider them to be easily accessible. In this case ethical fashion consumption could be negatively affected if consumers perceive accessibility to be inconvenient or requiring higher effort. Previous studies have shown that some consumers who do want to purchase ethically are constrained by limited availability or inconvenience (Young *et al.*, 2010; Padel & Foster, 2005). This may be the case in South Africa as most ethical fashion brands are concentrated in Cape Town city centre or in Johannesburg, and usually not in shopping malls where conventional or fast fashion brands are located. Thus, consumers living outside of these areas may perceive access to ethical fashion to be difficult. In addition, some South African ethical fashion brands are only available online. Online stores selling ethical fashion brands may increase accessibility to South African consumers.

It is predicted that accessibility may moderate the relationship between personal capability and purchase intention. Although individuals may have the personal capability to purchase ethical fashion as well as favourable attitudes towards it, their purchase intent may be limited by their perceived accessibility or lack thereof. It is suspected that South African consumers may perceive access to ethical fashion to be difficult. Preliminarily discussions with industry experts support this notion. Longden (2019) says "I think people are still pulled by the convenience of the big chain stores." She is supported by May (2019), who says, "I think they (ethical fashion brands) are difficult (to access), you know by not being able to find them in a mall, they are hard to find." Rosholt (2019) says, "…people think that it's just not possible to find (ethical fashion) at a reasonable price…(consumers think) South Africans aren't making it (ethical products)… so there are definitely preconceived ideas about accessibility." Previous studies have not specified accessibility as a moderating variable. However, most of the research has been conducted in developed country contexts where the ethical fashion market is more developed and access is not an issue (Kim *et al.*, 2012; Hill & Lee, 2015; Byun & Sternquist, 2011; Llundblad & Davies, 2011; Joung, 2014; Moon *et al.*, 2014). Thus, given the specifics of the South African situation it is posited that accessibility could affect the strength of the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent.

1.2.3.4 Habit and routine

This variable forms part of Stern's (2000) frame work. It is widely acknowledged that habit and past purchase behaviour influence purchase behaviour. Consumers become comfortable in purchasing from brands they are familiar with and may be reluctant to make any extra effort in order to investigate new brands or products. This sentiment was investigated by Bray *et al.* (2015) who found that consumers were reluctant to switch brands even when asked to disregard price, which was initially claimed to be the largest barrier to ethical consumption. However, this study was not focussed on ethical fashion purchasing specifically. This topic has not been widely addressed in fashion studies and the impact on routine and habit on ethical fashion consumption is unknown. Most habit and routine studies are focussed on low involvement purchasing decisions like groceries and cleaning products (Olsen, Tudoran, Brunso & Verbeke, 2013; Hoelzl & Herziger, 2016; Davies & Gutsche, 2016). In contrast, fashion is considered a higher-involvement decision (O'Cass, 2000; Kinley, Josiam & Lockett, 2010; Khare & Rakesh, 2010). Higher-involvement purchase decisions require more time and effort at each phase of the decision-making process and it is unlikely that consumers will resort to habit and routine tendencies in their fashion consumption decisions (Santandreu & Shurden, 2017). Thus, it is posited that habit and routine variables are not relevant to ethical fashion purchasing and therefore will be excluded from the framework for the purposes of the study at hand.

1.2.4.5 Ethical fashion consumption and purchase intent

Stern's (2000) model measures environmentally significant behaviour, which has been constrained to ethical fashion consumption for the purpose of the study at hand. Consumption can be measured in various ways. One approach to ask consumers about their purchase intention for certain products. Purchase intent measures the extent to which consumers are willing to purchase a product (Kang *et al.*, 2014). However, social desirability biases tend to influence responses. Respondents may state they are more willing to purchase certain products than they actually are. Nonetheless, purchase intent may be useful in determining future consumption when respondents are introduced to new topics that they were previously unsure about, or unfamiliar with. This may be the case with ethical fashion in South Africa.

According to preliminary discussions with industry experts, South Africans exhibit relatively low levels of understanding and knowledge about ethical fashion. Thus, it is expected that the majority of South Africans may not be sure if their past fashion purchases are considered ethical or not. Although, there are no published statistics about ethical fashion sales in South Africa and further research is required. Nevertheless, purchase intent could be an appropriate measure of future ethical fashion purchase behaviour once respondents have been introduced to the concept of ethical fashion. Subsequent to an introduction to the ethical fashion concept they may be able to more accurately state whether they intend to purchase ethical fashion garments in the future. Purchase intent is one of the most extensively used measures of consumer behaviour, especially within the sustainable and ethical consumption research domain.

Various studies have investigated ethical consumption and its determinants. However, ethical fashion consumption is not as widely researched and tends to be exploratory in nature and thus cannot be generalised to other populations. Additionally, it appears that none of these studies have been conducted in a South African context. Hence, there is a gap in the literature. Consequently, this study aims to close the gap by contributing to the body of research. This will be executed by assessing the impact that attitudinal, personal capability, contextual and habit and routine factors have on ethical fashion consumption amongst South African consumers.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Recently, there has been increased recognition for the impact that human behaviour has on society and the environment. In some cases, this behaviour is regulated by governing bodies so as to minimise environmental and social impacts. However, as of yet regulations are not applicable to all industries.

This is the case with the fashion industry. Fashion consumption has increased significantly over the past few decades. This increase in demand has influenced the way the way in which clothing is produced, consumed and disposed of. These changes have severe environmental and social impacts that are unsustainable and mostly unregulated. Thus, in order to reduce the environmental and social impact of their clothing consumption, consumers need to be more mindful of what they are buying and where and how it was produced. Ethical fashion is the production, consumption and disposal of clothing that considers the environment and society at all levels across the supply chain. Ethical fashion makes use of sustainable fabrics, produces and treats textiles in an environmentally safe manner, adheres to labour laws, promotes safe and fair working conditions, supports human rights, pays living wages, endorses recycling and generally follows ethical practices.

Although, some fashion businesses are introducing ethical fashion alternatives or ethical lines, consumer adoption tends to be low despite pro-environmental and social attitudes. Thus, there appears to be a gap between attitudes and actual behaviour. In order to close this gap, the determining factors of ethical fashion consumption need to be investigated.

Previous research has investigated ethical consumption generally as well as ethical consumption of fashion particularly. However, the results are not coherent or consistent. In addition, there is no ethical fashion research that has been conducted in the South African context. Thus, there is a major gap in the literature that needs to be filled. Currently, the factors determining ethical fashion consumption amongst South African consumers are unknown. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the determining factors of ethical fashion consumption in South Africa, thereby contributing to the body of research and promoting ethical fashion consumption.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the problem statement, the following research objectives have been formulated. The objectives have been divided into a primary and six secondary objectives.

1.4.1 Primary research objective

The primary objective of this study is to determine the factors impacting ethical fashion consumption

1.4.2 Secondary research objectives

The primary objective can be achieved by addressing the following six secondary objectives:

1. To determine the impact of attitudinal factors on ethical fashion consumption

2. To determine the impact of personal capabilities on ethical fashion consumption

3. To determine the impact of contextual factors on ethical fashion consumption

4. To determine the extent to which attitude mediates the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

5. To determine the extent to which actual knowledge moderates the relationship between attitude and purchase intent

6. To determine the extent to which accessibility moderates the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

The conceptual model is presented in Figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1: Conceptual model
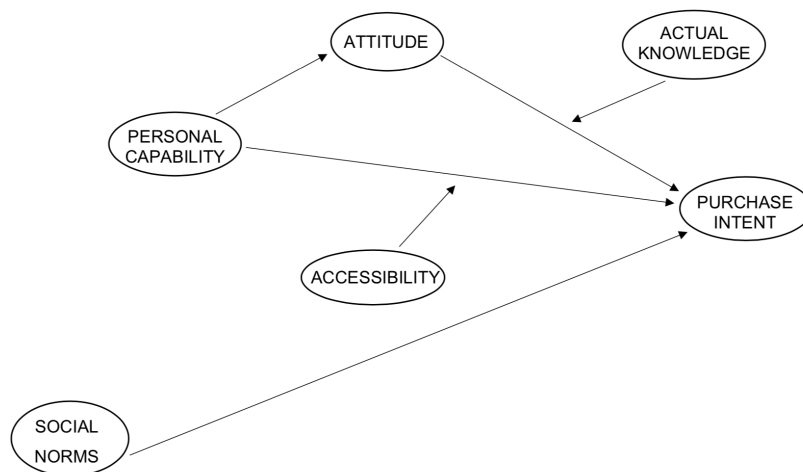
1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Secondary research was conducted in the form of a literature review in order to gain a deeper understanding of the topic and the variables. This was achieved by consulting various sources including academic articles, books, industry reports, news articles and preliminary discussions with industry experts.

In addition to the secondary research, primary research was executed. A mixed-method research approach was utilised, thereby supplementing the secondary research, in order to address the research objectives. A mixed-method approach was chosen as the information acquired from the qualitative method is needed to confirm and strengthen the validity of the quantitative method. First, qualitative research was completed to gain insight from local industry experts. These insights were used to confirm and strengthen the subsequent quantitative research method.

In-depth interviews with industry experts were conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the topic and to gain insight into ethical fashion in the South African context. The industry experts are ethical fashion brand owners and journalists reporting on ethical fashion. They all work in the fashion industry and are well acquainted with South African consumers. Seven industry expert interviews were conducted. Feedback from the interviews was used to make the necessary adjustments to the framework as well as contribute to the research results in order to get a more complete picture of the factors contributing to ethical fashion consumption.

The quantitative research was implemented subsequent to the qualitative interviews in the form of a survey. This technique was selected in order to most effectively question a range of South African consumers about their ethical fashion consumption behaviour. Surveys are capable of representing a large population as they allow for large samples that are more descriptive of the general population. Additionally, surveys ensure that the data collected are standardised and analysable, and can thus be used to test the study's hypotheses.

In particular, online questionnaires were utilised in order to extract the necessary data from the research subjects. This technique was selected as it is conducive to large sample groups, is more convenient for respondents, is cost-effective, less time consuming and allows for automated data gathering and storage (Zikmund & Babin, 2016).

The online questionnaires were used in order to measure the influence of the attitudinal, personal capability and contextual independent variables on the purchase intent dependent variables by means of various questionnaire items.

The population consisted of males and females from Generation Z and Generation Y. Preliminary discussions with ethical fashion experts indicated that amongst South African consumers, those between the ages of twenty and forty are most likely to have an interest in ethical fashion. These estimations are in line with research that suggests Generation Z and Y show deeper concern for environmental and social issues and, in comparison to previous generations, are more likely to align those values with their consumption behaviour (Valentines & Powers, 2013). Thus, for this study, the minimum age was twenty years and the cut-off age was forty years. In order to minimise costs and adhere to time constraints Stellenbosch University staff, students and alumni were utilised. An email was sent to all Stellenbosch University staff, students and alumni with a link to the questionnaire. Individuals aged between twenty and forty were invited to participate in the study. In order to address the research objectives, the data were analysed using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).

1.6 ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

This thesis consists of eight chapters. The orientation of the thesis is as follows:

Chapter one is the introduction to the study. The background to the study, its objectives and problem statement were presented. Additionally, the research methodology was explained in brief.

Chapter two, three and four encompassed the literature review. Chapter two addressed the evolution of the fashion industry. The current fashion model and its impact on the environment and society was explained. Ethical fashion as well as its application in the South African context was also discussed.

Chapter three focussed on ethical, business and consumer theories. The relationship between the environment, society, business and consumption was explained in terms of academic models and frameworks.

Chapter four discussed ethical consumption and behaviour. Specific attention was paid to the determining factors of ethical consumption, particularly within the fashion context.

Chapter five outlined the research methodology in detail. The qualitative and quantitative research methods were discussed. The research instrument development was be explained. Furthermore, the population group, the sampling selection and procedure, as well as the data analyses were discussed.

Chapter six discussed the results of the qualitative and quantitative research. The responses from the in-depth interviews were analysed and linked to the quantitative research. Descriptive and inferential analyses were carried out on the data and presented.

Finally, chapter seven discussed and interpreted the results. Conclusions were made about the determining factors influencing ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Practical implications and recommendations for firms were presented. The limitations of the study were discussed, and finally, suggestions for future research were made.

CHAPTER 2

EVOLUTION OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry is a complex, powerful, global and highly profitable industry. In 2017, the fashion industry was valued at R38 trillion, compared to the gross world product valued at R1.2 quadrillion (State of Fashion, 2017; World bank, 2017). However, the fashion industry is often named as one of the most polluting industries (Measuring Fashion: Environmental impact of the Global Apparel and Footwear Industries Study, 2018). According to Fashion United, one in six people are employed by the global fashion industry (Fashion United, 2019). Yet, only two percent of these millions of people are paid a living wage (Tailored Wages 2019: The State of Pay in the Global Garment Industry, 2019). It is evident that despite its power and success the fashion industry is associated with major environmental and social problems. However, this has not always been the case. The problems inherent to the current fashion industry originated during the industrial revolution as growth of the industry began (Laver, De La Haye & Tucker, 2004).

Currently, a large part of the industry operates as a fast fashion system. Fast fashion is a business strategy that minimises lead time between product design and the final sale of said product (Cachon & Swinney, 2011). Clothing design is trend-driven and offered at cheap prices. In recent years, the fast fashion industry has received criticism for its unsustainable production methods. In order to rectify the disastrous environmental and social problems associated with the current fashion industry, the evolution of the industry must be understood and analysed. Thus, this chapter examines the progression of the fashion industry over time, as well as fashion today and the fast fashion industry. The social and environmental impacts of fast fashion are outlined, the fast fashion consumer is discussed and the reasons for the perpetuation of fast fashion are outlined. Subsequently, the ethical fashion system is introduced as an alternative to fast fashion. Ethical fashion is a branch of the fashion industry that aims to address and minimise the environmental and social impacts of fashion production. This concept is discussed as well as shedding light on the ethical fashion consumer and any barriers inhibiting ethical fashion consumption. Finally, the fashion industry in the South African context is examined.

2.2 A BRIEF HISTORY OF FASHION

The manner in which fashion is produced and consumed has changed dramatically over the last 150 years. Before the Industrial revolution all clothing was handmade, tailored to the wearer and made to last (Laver *et al.*, 2004). Over time, the old production and consumption systems came to change. Presently, fashion is a multibillion-dollar industry with a global

reach. The history of fashion and its evolution is outlined in the following sections in order to provide context to the current fashion system and to highlight how the industry came to have such severe impacts on the environment and society.

2.2.1 Prior to 1850

For the majority of human history, people made their own clothing by hand at home, otherwise the task was entrusted to seamstresses or tailors who made garments according to the requirements and desires of each individual (Laver *et al.*, 2004). This was the norm up until the mid-nineteenth century. Generally, lower income individuals made their own clothes at home, whilst higher-income individuals had their clothing made by tailors.

Making clothing was a time-consuming and expensive endeavour (Laver *et al.*, 2004). Everything was hand-stitched as the sewing machine had not yet been invented (Epstein & Potter, 1945). As such, the majority of individuals owned a small collection of garments which they wore for years on end until the fabric frayed, wore through or the stitching came undone, at which point garments were mended so that they could be re-worn. Clothing was made with wider seams and hems in order to ensure that garments could be adjusted to fit the wearer as they grew.

Natural fibres were used to make textiles for clothing. Cotton, wool, linen, muslin and silk were the predominant options (Brooks, 2015). Textile production was labour intensive and relatively expensive up until the Industrial Revolution. The switch to mechanised production in the 1780s allowed for quicker and cheaper production of textiles, particularly cotton cloth (Brooks, 2015).

Local traditional textile production in colonised countries could not compete with the volume and prices of textiles produced in the west. As a result, they were forced into producing the raw materials needed for textile production in industrialised countries. Finished clothing was exported back to colonial capitals to be worn by colonial elites and their servants. British protectionism and trade policy blocked industrialisation in their colonies (Brooks, 2015).

The Industrial Revolution and colonisation resulted in the availability of affordable textiles which decreased the cost of clothing production. However, these phenomena also established a structured dependency which favoured the industrialised colonial powers and left its subjects trapped in a cycle of poverty still evident today (Laver *et al.*, 2004).

Generally, clothing was made to last. Good quality natural fibres were used that prolonged the durability and lifespan of garments. Except for the very wealthy aristocrats who could

afford to buy new clothes as they desired, most people viewed clothing as valuable items to be used for years on end. This notion would come to change over time.

2.2.2 1850-1900

The invention of the sewing machine by Elias Howe in 1846 had a significant impact on the clothing industry (Epstein and Potter, 1945). Garments could be stitched together considerably faster than before. The emergence of garment factories and department stores also changed the industry. Ready-to-wear garments became available for purchase in department stores (English, 2007). Despite these developments, the majority of clothing were still handmade and tailored for the wearer during this period.

Parisian haute couture emerged around 1858, influencing fashion all over the world (Wilson, 2019). Charles Frederick Worth was the first fashion designer to sew his label into the garments he created and the so-called 'father of haute couture'. He was appointed as the official designer for the hugely influential Princess Eugenie, the Empress of France in the late 19th century. People all over the west wanted to copy the high-end fashions from the Parisian courts. Printed designs from Paris were circulated amongst the middle class and seamstresses would interpret these designs to the best of their abilities (Wilson, 2019). Worth also began creating dresses for famous actress and singers which expanded his audience, further increasing the demand for his clothing. In order to make these haute couture styles more accessible for the general public, department stores in various countries (notably America, Britain and Australia) sent representatives to Paris to copy his designs so that they could be manufactured inhouse at lower costs for middle class consumers (Wilson, 2019). Mass production began to take off.

For the most part, changes from season to season were minimal, with only colours and trimmings changing on a regular basis. The basic silhouette remained the same over a period of thirty years.

2.2.3 Early 1900s

From the end of the 19th to the early 20th century, styles and silhouettes remained mostly unchanged. Parisian haute couture still played a major role in the public's taste in clothing. Fashion magazines, such as Vogue, began to include photographs in their pages which further increased the influence and popularity of the high fashions from Paris (English, 2007). Other fashion designers, such as Jeanne Lanvin, Paquin and Poiret, emerged, extending the international reputation of French couture houses.

Department stores and ready-to-wear clothing with standard sizing sold at fixed prices continued to gain momentum. Department stores produced clothing in-house or contracted local garment factories to manufacture on their behalf. Garment factories and department

stores were particularly prevalent in America. The garment factory industry was most developed in New York where there was an influx of Italian and Jewish immigrants (English, 2007). These immigrants brought with them European tailoring skills which, in combination with new technologies and a rising middle class, drove forward mass production of clothing (English, 2007). Garment factories in New York were generally overcrowded and safety conditions were poor. As a result, the factories were pushed out of the city into more industrial areas. Sweat shop labour arose as manufacturers exploited the cheap immigrant labour. Although working conditions were dangerous and workers were unfairly treated, the clothing production industry grew immensely and became the third largest industry in America in 1915 (Cline, 2012). Clothing, both ready-to-wear and tailored, remained relatively expensive, well-made and of good quality.

2.2.4 1914-1945

World War I brought changes to the fashion industry. As women were obliged to work, they demanded more practical clothing. The elaborate dress styles inspired by the Parisians were abandoned for clothing better suited to working. Fabric rations spurred shortened hemlines and simpler silhouettes (Poulliard, 2013).

The end of WW1 brought social and political changes that influenced the way the clothing was produced and considered. Materials were still in short supply after the war and costs were rising, subsequently tailors and fashion houses found it increasingly difficult to stay in business (Poulliard, 2013). As a result, fashion houses were forced to expand their customer bases to serve larger, lower income groups. Thus, there was a democratisation of fashion. Even low-income groups could wear clothing produced by the big fashion houses that were at one point reserved for the elite. At the same time, improved technologies allowed for better quality mass-produced clothing that more closely resembled couture garments, but for a much cheaper price (Monet, 2018). For the first time individuals across all income levels could afford to access fashionable clothing.

As the middle class continued to rise, conspicuous consumerism emerged. The volume of products purchased, especially fashion items, increased dramatically (Monet, 2018). This was stimulated by increasingly sophisticated advertising. In the 19th century clothing was advertised by promoting a garment's practicality and value for money (Barthes, 1990). In contrast, the advertisements in the Roaring Twenties used psychological and emotional associations to sell products (English, 2007). Many of these advertisements targeted a new group; women, many of whom continued to work after the war and, unlike before, were earning an income. New designers like Coco Chanel were able to perceive and meet the demands of the new working class, especially women. Ideas about gender-specific fashion

norms were relaxed. Informality and 'dressing down' became the new fashion (Brydon and Niessen, 1998). Considering the steadfastness of trends, the high cost of clothing and the slower production methods in the 19th century, the 1920s were a time of transformation for the fashion industry.

In 1929, the Wall Street stock market crashed and the subsequent Great Depression severely influenced the fashion industry. Individuals and businesses suffered. Although the Great Depression stilted the growth of the fashion industry, it did force innovation and experimentation that would come to have many influences. Fashion businesses were forced to find cheaper ways to manufacture clothing (Wilson, 2019). Cheaper materials were invented and replaced more expensive fabrics. Nylon, a synthetic plastic material, was invented during this time and was used by the fashion industry as a replacement for silk (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019). Nylon was the first synthetic fabric to be used in clothing. At the time, it was hugely popular as it was much cheaper than silk as well as more durable. Nylon, as well as the many other plastic based synthetic fibres now used in the fashion industry, have detrimental impacts on the natural environment which were unknown at the time of their conception. These impacts will be discussed in section 2.3.

As the Second World War began, fabric and leather were rationed once again (Poulliard, 2013). The fabric was needed for uniforms for the men and women serving in the military. Access to some materials, like silk which was mainly produced in Japan, was cut off completely. Alternative fabric like nylon and polyester had to be used instead (Chawla, 2016).

People had to make do with repairing the clothes they had, rather than buying new garments. Restrictions were imposed on manufacturers to cut down on the use of fabric. For example, in the US garments were allowed a maximum of one pocket, ruffles, pleats and frills were prohibited and skirt width and length were restricted (Steele, 2005).

In some countries, clothing was rationed and could only be bought from designated establishments using coupons. In these cases, the clothing was very utilitarian and durable. Generally, there was a return to the older ways, namely; sewing garments at home and mending garments that had worn through. This behaviour lasted until the end of the war.

2.2.5 1950s-1970s

As the world began to stabilise after the end of World War Two, rations were lifted and shortages ceased (Steele, 2005). After the utilitarian clothing during the war, there was a demand for extravagance and luxury. New fashion houses and designer labels emerged to

meet this demand. Paris was no longer considered the centre of fashion and designers from other countries came to make a name for themselves, influencing trends and styles. Fashion was for the masses was now considered normal. Clothing was being produced more quickly and in greater quantities than ever before, reducing production costs. As a result, individuals from all income groups had access to fashionable clothing to a greater extent than before (Laver *et al.*, 2004).

The use of synthetic plastic-based fabrics in clothing production continued after the war even though natural fabrics were accessible again. Synthetic materials were still less expensive than the natural alternatives, allowing manufacturers to produce more cheaply and provide customers with affordable prices (Chawla, 2016). Clothing made from synthetic fabric also offered consumers convenience as they did not need to be ironed and dried more quickly.

From the 1950s there was a steady improvement in the global economy (Baten, 2016). With the economy on the rise, individuals could afford to purchase more fashion items. In addition, there was growth of new businesses and expansion of existing businesses. There was a greater variety of products available and people had larger disposable incomes to purchase these goods. Consumerism escalated.

2.2.6 1980s until today

Since the 1980s there has been increasing widespread consolidation of fashion brands into a small number of international conglomerates that are publicly traded on the stock exchange (Fernie & Grant, 2015). There has been a massive shift from individual fashion designers into multinational corporations. This shift was spurred by the onset of globalisation and global trade (Fernie & Grant, 2015). In order to sell clothing at cheaper prices, fashion businesses begun moving their manufacturing operations overseas. For instance, the US went from producing 50 percent of the clothing it sold, to just two percent in 2012 (Cline, 2012). It has become increasingly common for fashion companies to outsource their production to the cheapest garment factories they can find, typically located in China and other Asian countries. China now manufactures over 40 percent of the global total production of clothing (Harney, 2008).

Access to cheap labour and technological advances have made it possible for companies to decrease lead time between the initial design of a product and its final purchase by a customer. In addition, there has been a significant increase in the number of fashion items offered for sale. In the past fashion brands and retailers would release new clothing four times a year in correlation with the seasons. This has changed drastically, to the point where

large retailers, such as Zara and H&M, have 52 micro-seasons per year, bringing new clothes into their stores every week (Cachon & Swinney, 2011).

Currently, the fashion system is worth R38 trillion and employs 70 million people from all over the world (State of Fashion, 2017). The profitability of industry grows as consumers are offered a never-ending supply of new clothing at very low prices, inducing mass consumption. The mass production and subsequent consumption of fashion items has widespread implications for society and the environment which will be discussed in the following section.

2.3 FAST FASHION

The majority of the social and environmental implications related to the fashion industry can be attributed to the very nature of the fast fashion model. In order to understand how this model encourages social and environmental damage, the structure of fast fashion and its role in the fashion industry today must be understood. The fast fashion system has become the most prominent models of fashion retailing, thereby influencing consumer expectations and demands (Sull & Turconi, 2008). The success of fast fashion relies on speed to market, selling high volumes of clothing at low prices and accelerating product obsolescence. Thus, consumers who value fashion at low prices may be resistant to the adoption of ethical fashion. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the fast fashion system. The concept of fast fashion will be defined, followed by an analysis of the social and environmental impacts of this system.

2.3.1 Definition and origin

The fast fashion system emerged in the 1980s as fashion brands began outsourcing their production to garment factories in countries in the global South where labour is significantly cheaper (Brooks, 2015). As fashion production is an extremely labour-intensive industry, this migration of the manufacturing industry allowed fashion brands to significantly decrease their prices. Traditionally, clothing has always been an expensive commodity (Laver et al., 2005). However, the emergence of fast fashion has created a situation where clothing is not only affordable, but a cheap product for the masses.

Fast fashion is a business strategy that focusses on producing and selling cheap, stylish clothing quickly (Linden, 2016). Fast fashion retailers keep lead times to a minimum so that they can easily replenish popular styles or stop production on styles that are not selling well (Sull & Turconi, 2008). They are flexible and can react quickly to changes in the market (Sull & Turconi, 2008).

Short lead times also allow fast fashion retailers to regularly introduce new styles, thereby stimulating increased purchasing (Cachon & Swinney, 2011). Customers can visit the same store twice in one week and expect to find new styles available to purchase.

Fast fashion is characterized by low prices (Zimmerman & Shah, 2013). These low prices are another incentive for customers to purchase multiple items at a time and to keep returning to fast fashion stores. The combination of cheap clothing and the constant influx of new styles has emphasized the notion that fast fashion is disposable. Styles go in and out of fashion quickly, prompting customers to replace 'old' styles with new garments that can be bought cheaply. Thus, consumers may not feel guilty about throwing clothes away, even if they've hardly been worn (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). As a result, more than 50 percent of fast fashion items produced are disposed of in the same year (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). These high disposal rates have their own set of environmental implications. Approximately 80 percent of textiles ends up in landfills. As most clothing contains some portion of synthetic plastic-based fibres this clothing can take centuries to degrade, and emitting methane whilst doing so (Remake, 2018).

Concurrently, clothing production has doubled in the last fifteen-year period (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). The average number of times a garment is worn before it is disposed of or stops being worn has decreased by 36 percent in the last fifteen-year period (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). The increase in clothing production in conjunction with low utilization rates and high disposal rates has had disastrous effects on the natural environment and society (Remake, 2017).

Western consumers have huge amount of choice in the clothing they wear because it is so inexpensive. Cheap prices are possible because the current fashion system is structured in a way that relies on people in developing areas to grow raw materials for fabric, manufacture textiles and stitch garments whilst being paid low wages. The fast fashion system is impossible to maintain without the exploitation of the natural environment and the people producing the clothing. The social and environmental issues arise across the supply chain. The process of providing the consumer with clothing to wear consists of various levels that function interdependently. These levels include the product design, production of fibres and textiles, garment construction, marketing and retail.

2.3.2 Environmental and social impact of fast fashion across the supply chain

The environmental and social impact of the fast fashion industry is demonstrated by examining each level of the process, from the design of a garment until its final purchase.

2.3.2.1 Design

A substantial part of the allure of fast fashion is the trendiness or stylishness of the clothing design (Brooks, 2015). The fast fashion industry is reputed for manufacturing clothing that is as fashionable as luxury garments created for catwalk, except that they are sold for a fraction of the price. It is argued that part of the value of fast fashion lies in its ability to democratise fashion, it provides all income groups access to the trends at an affordable price (Manning, 2018). Sustained consumer interest is created by the constant influx of trendy designs arriving in store. Essentially, consumers can expect to find something new every time they visit a fast fashion store provoking a need to buy the latest clothing so as to 'keep up with the trends.'

The process of producing clothing starts with the design of a garment. Designers for fast fashion retailers typically work in offices located in countries in developed countries in the global north where they are well paid and educated (Huoviala, 2015). This contrasts with the fibre, textile and garment factory workers who are typically located in the global south and are underpaid and unskilled. The design process and the manufacturing process are physically separated.

Often fast fashion designers work closely with trend-spotters who identify trends amongst key groups. This often involves close monitoring of celebrities, especially their social media platforms. Fast fashion retailers are notorious for copying designer outfits that celebrities have worn and having them manufactured and for sale a week later (Zerbo, 2017). For example, after Kylie Jenner posted photos of her 21st birthday outfits on Instagram, exact replicas of the designer outfits she wore were available for purchase a week later at fast fashion retailer, Fashion Nova. This kind of copycat design is inherent to the fast fashion industry and is not limited to celebrity outfits. Many high-end fashion brands, such as Celine, Gucci, Diane von Furstenberg and Yves Saint Laurent, as well as small brands have taken legal action against fast fashion retailers who have copied their designs 'stitch for stitch'. However, in most countries copyright law does not protect the design of 'inherently useful items' (Zerbo, 2017). Clothing falls into this category of useful items and thus fast fashion retailers get away with copying other businesses' designs without any consequences.

After garments are designed, they are sent to garment factories to be manufactured. However, before garments can be sewn together, fibre and subsequently textiles need to be produced.

2.3.2.2 Fibre and textile production

In its current state the fashion industry is extremely resource intensive. Only one percent of clothing is recycled (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). As a result, new textiles need to be produced constantly to meet clothing production demands. Mostly non-renewable resources are used to produce these textiles, approximately 98 million tonnes per year (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). Textile production also requires a huge amount of water. A total of 93 billion cubic metres of water are used each year, mostly for cotton farming (WWF, 2018). This large-scale water consumption contributes to worldwide water scarcity issues. However, the sheer volume of resources used is not the only issue. The way in which they are used and disposed of has serious polluting effects (WWF, 2018).

The rise of fast fashion in particular has influenced the way clothing is produced. Fast fashion retailers offer their products for sale at low prices and they need to produce garments at much lower prices in order to make a profit (Zimmerman & Shah, 2013). To achieve this, they outsource production to factories where labour is cheap and regulations are lacking or unenforced, typically in countries like Bangladesh, China and Vietnam (Cachon & Swinney, 2011).

Fast fashion purveyors approach garment factories with requests to have their designs manufactured into garments at very specific cost prices. In most cases the garment factories do not have much room for negotiation. Competition between garment factories is intense and fast fashion retailers can switch between factories until one accepts their price (True Cost Movie, 2015). In some cases, local governments pressurise garment factories to accept contracts from overseas companies because they are dependent on their contribution for GDP (True Cost Movie, 2015).

Thus, garment factories need to find a way to manufacture the ordered garments quickly and within budget so that they can also make a profit. In most cases this will mean cutting corners that ultimately compromise worker safety and welfare, and the health of the natural environment.

One of the cheapest ways to decrease cost price per garment is to use inexpensive fabric (Manning, 2015). Fabric can be made from various fibre types which are produced and treated in various ways and have different effects on the environment and its people. Cotton and synthetic fibres account for the majority of textiles used to produce clothing (WWF, 2018). Production of these textiles has grown tremendously in correlation with the rise in clothing production (WWF, 2018). As cotton and polyester are the two most commonly used

textiles for fast fashion clothing production today, the production process and environmental and social implications thereof are discussed in the following sections.

a) Cotton

Second to crops for food production, cotton is the most farmed plant on the planet (Cleaner, greener cotton: Impacts and better management practices, 2018). The increased demand for cotton is largely attributed to the increased consumption of cheap clothing. Subsequently, the way cotton is grown has changed. The cotton plant is indigenous to arid regions in America, Africa, Asia and Australia (Steele, 2005). It used to be drought resistant and relatively immune to pests. However, as a result of the ever-increasing demand for cotton, cotton seeds have been re-engineered to grow almost anywhere in the world. The changes made to the seed have weakened the plant; it has become less resistant to insects and diseases. To combat this problem, cotton plants are sprayed with toxic pesticides. Although cotton farming accounts for 2.4 percent of agricultural land usage, 24 percent and 11 percent of total insecticide and pesticide use is attributed to cotton farming (Cleaner, greener cotton: Impacts and better management practices, 2018). These pesticides and herbicides are effective in killing the insects and diseases. However, they also kill the organisms that eat the insects that feed on the plant. These insects become resistant to the pesticides over time and subsequently, stronger, more toxic pesticides are needed and have to be applied more regularly (Gaurav, Halder & Ranganathan, 2018).

Pesticides and herbicides do not only kill the cotton plant pests, they also kill everything else in the area, including indigenous plants, insects, small animals and nutrients in the soil. Soil without organic matter is not conducive to farming of any kind, it lacks nutrients and cannot hold water (The National Wildlife Federation, 2006). Thus, farmers rely on synthetic fertilizers to stimulate growth in the cotton plants. They also need huge volumes of water to nourish these once drought-resistant cotton plants. The run-off is contaminated with the toxic chemicals from the pesticides and pollutes the local water systems, further poisoning indigenous plant and animal species (The National Wildlife Federation, 2006).

Pesticides can harm human health too. Most are classified as either moderately hazardous or highly hazardous by the World Health Organisation and are linked to cancer, birth defects and nervous system disorders (WHO, 2016; Saravanan, 2016). A study of cotton farmers in India revealed that 83.6 percent of individuals experienced mild to severe poisoning as a result of exposure to herbicides and pesticides, with symptoms ranging from skin irritations to neurotoxic effects, brain tumours and lung cancer (The Yavatmal Scandal, 2018). Similarly, pesticide and herbicide use in cotton farming in the US has been linked to an increase of brain tumours amongst cotton farmers (Musico, Sant, Molinari, Filippini, Gatta & Berino,

1998; Zheng, Cantor, Zhang, Keim & Lynch, 2001; Smith-Rooker, Garett, Hodges & Shue, 1992; Almberg, Turyk, Jones, Anderson, Graber, Banda, Waller, Gibson & Stayner, 2014). Currently, only one percent of cotton farming is organic, with the remaining 99 percent requiring the above-mentioned pesticides, herbicides and unrestrained water resources (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017).

The cotton industry has associated with colonial labour abuses and slavery dating back to the 17th century, but even now questionable labour practices exist in cotton farming, notably; reports of child labour on cotton farms in Egypt, India and Uzbekistan (Barrie, 2016; Dirty cotton: a research on child labour, slavery, trafficking and exploitation in cotton and cotton seed farming in India, 2012, Child labour: a briefing, 2016; Child labour in cotton supply chains, 2017). Research by Oxfam, an international organisation with the goal to alleviate global poverty, indicates that demand for cotton is keeping peasants, small holders and agricultural workers in a cycle poverty across global south (Pricing farmers out of cotton, 2007). Relationships of dependency are typically structured against cotton farmers who are vulnerable to rising costs of production, climate change, water shortages, fluctuation of market prices and a complex exploitative supply chain which leaves them with little negotiating power (Barrie, 2016; Commodity briefing: cotton, 2015; Moseley & Gray, 2015). Once cotton has been harvested it needs to be processed. Spinning, weaving and dyeing is required in order to transform the cotton buds into cloth before it is cut and sewn into a garment. This processing requires large amounts of water and chemicals. Water used in these processes is often discharged into surrounding rivers which contaminate the water table and water sources which are used by locals for everyday tasks like bathing and cooking. Investigative reports have documented increased numbers of birth defects in villages with chemically contaminated water sources attributed to textile processing factories (Kant, 2012; Aschengrau, Gallagher, Winter, Butler, Fabian & Vieira, 2018).

b) Polyester

Synthetic fibre production and post-production usage have its own set of issues. Synthetic fibres are manmade, created from chemical substances without the need for plant or animal sources (Steele, 2005). Polyester is one synthetic fibre that has changed the fashion industry. Polyester was invented in the 1970s and since then has become extremely popular. It is durable, wrinkle-free, it dyes easily, it is lightweight and very cheap compared to other alternatives. It currently accounts for over 65 percent of fibres used for apparel production, making it the most used fibre (Preferred Fibre Material Market Report, 2017). In 2017 polyester production amounted to 53.7 million tons, up 90 percent from 1980 (Preferred Fibre Material Market Report, 2017). This dramatic growth is largely attributed to increased demand from the fast fashion industry (State of fashion, 2017).

Many synthetic fibres, like polyester, nylon and spandex, are essentially made from oil-based plastic (Textile School, 2018). Currently, clothing recycling accounts for just one percent of total disposal. Thus, virgin plastic is created every time plastic- based synthetic textiles are needed.

Polyester production is sometimes celebrated for its relatively low environmental impact. Whilst it is true that polyester production does require less water than cotton, there are countless other factors that should also be included when considering total environmental impact.

Polyester is made by inducing a chemical reaction using coal, petroleum, water and air. Both coal and petroleum are non-renewable resources which when burned release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. In 2015, approximately 706 billion kilograms of carbon dioxide were emitted as a by-product of polyester production for the clothing industry (Kirchain, Olivetti, Reed Miller & Greene, 2015). In addition, the large quantities of petroleum, 70 billion barrels a year, needed for polyester production are unsustainable (Kirchain, *et al.*, 2015). The chemical reaction induced to create polyester essentially creates plastic which is then spun into long fibres which are woven into fabric. The plastic-based nature of polyester clothing translates into various environmental issues that become evident after purchase. These issues will be explored in section 2.3.2.5.

Almost all fibre types are dyed or bleached to achieve the desired colours. Toxic chemicals and huge volumes of water are used to do this. Dye houses, predominantly in India, Bangladesh and China, do not have proper, if any, waste water disposal measures in place (Use and effectiveness of effluent treatment plants (ETPs) in the garments industry of Bangladesh: a water sector integrity perspective, 2017). Often, the unfiltered toxic water is simply dumped in nearby rivers (Use and effectiveness of effluent treatment plants (ETPs) in the garments industry of Bangladesh: a water sector integrity perspective, 2017). Local communities rely on the water from these rivers for drinking and bathing. Globally, textile dyeing is the second biggest polluter of clean water (Putting the brakes on fast fashion, 2018). Furthermore, the dumping of wastewater poisons ground water supplies and ruins farming land. The effects of some dyes have an influence on human health even after the garments have been produced and sold. Azo dyes are commonly used for textile dyeing because they are cheap, easy to use and produce strong bright colours, but some have also been deemed carcinogenic and can be absorbed by the body through skin contact (Singh & Chadha, 2015; Rahman, Rahman & Nasirujjaman, 2016; Gupta, Biswas & Agrawal, 2017). They are also known to cause skin allergies. These dyes have been outlawed in the EU.

However, most textile dyeing takes place outside of the EU where regulations are not as strict and rarely enforced.

2.3.2.3 Garment production

Once fibres are manufactured, treated, dyed and transformed into textiles the ordered garments are ready to be sewn in factories (Cline, 2012). The majority of clothing for fast fashion retailers is produced in China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Indonesia and India (World trade statistical review, 2018). Garment workers are typically female, doing static work, cutting fabric according to the pattern and stitching the pieces together, creating the ordered garment. The fashion industry can be considered an example of the global patriarchy. Women in garment factories pay the price for decisions made by men who are predominantly garment factory owners and hold senior management positions in international fashion firms (Cline, 2012). Garment workers have little say in their working hours and conditions. In the past, rebellion to the status quo has been met with violence from factory owners (Cline, 2012).

The success of fast fashion relies on the flexibility of the supply chain, the ability to quickly react to changes in demand and the constant offering of new styles available for purchase at cheap prices (Zimmerman & Shah, 2013). As a result, it is common for garment factories to face unreasonable production targets. These conditions take their toll on garment workers.

In order to complete huge orders in short periods of time, garment workers work extremely long hours. The average garment worker works 96 hours per week, 7 days a week (What she makes: Power and poverty in the fashion industry, 2017). Reports of exhaustion, malnutrition and collapse are frequent (What she makes: Power and poverty in the fashion industry, 2017; True Cost Movie, 2015). These extensive working hours are spent in an unpleasant working environment. Investigations carried out by Oxfam report appalling working conditions in garment factories. Factory buildings are described as dilapidated, over-crowded and rife with safety hazards (Vaughn- Whitehead, 2011). Often windows are barred and a single entrance with armed guards stationed at the door. In the event of a fire there is only one way for factory workers to exit.

These risks are carried by the most vulnerable and the worst paid people in the supply chain. In Bangladesh the minimum wage for garment works has just been raised to 5,300 taka (R960). However, the living wage, the amount needed to cover basic necessities like food, rent, healthcare and education, is 28,620 taka (R5115). Thus, the minimum wage is less than one fifth of the living wage (What she makes: Power and poverty in the fashion industry, 2017). However, sometimes garment workers are not even paid the minimum wage, let alone a living wage.

Researching labour conditions is difficult and varies amongst different countries. Academics and journalists have problems accessing garment factories. Often, national labour policies are not enforced. If robust policies do exist, international fashion firms make a point of finishing their existing contracts and then migrate manufacturing to other countries where regulations are less stringent.

Due to the fact that fast fashion retailers outsource their work to garment factories, they are technically not directly responsible for the provision of adequate safety conditions and the payment of a living wage (Cline, 2012). However, as a result of the manner in which fast fashion retail garment prices are reverse engineered to meet consumer demands, extreme pressure is placed on the bottom end of the supply chain (Cline, 2012).

In 2013 H&M launched 'A roadmap towards a fair living wage'; a pledge to pay a living wage to all 850 000 individuals who produce clothing for H&M. However, six years later this promise is yet to be fulfilled. Research conducted by Nordea, a leading Swedish wealth management firm, showed that if fast fashion giant H&M put up their prices by as little as three percent, they could ensure a living wage for the garment workers that manufacture their clothing. It seems that fast fashion retailers do have opportunities to improve the supply chain which they are a part of, nevertheless it appears that very little progress is being made to address these issues and to find possible solutions.

2.3.2.4 Retail

Once the ordered clothing has been manufactured it is distributed to the various retail branches across the globe. Fast fashion businesses need to ensure that new stock is available for purchase, either in store or online, on a regular and consistent basis. This strategy is integral to the success of the industry. A limited number of units per styles appear in fast fashion stores every week, prompting consumers to buy the new styles while they are available. Automatic stock management systems are key to fast fashion retailers; placing orders for new stock as needed and monitoring trends in order to guarantee optimal inventory levels at all times (Bruce & Daly, 2006; Fernie & Grant, 2015). These systems also ensure that stores are not overstocked, thus reducing the need for promotions and discounts.

Marketing and advertising encourage consumers to purchase clothing at specific fast fashion retailers (Sheridan, Moore & Nobbs, 2006). The marketing and advertisement strategies vary amongst fast fashion brands. Zara is known for doing very little marketing, spending less than 0.3 percent of their sales on advertising, yet they continue to succeed phenomenally (Moreno & Carrasco, 2016). Instead of budgeting for huge advertisement campaigns, Zara

focusses their attention on dealing with customer issues expertly, applying customer feedback to future endeavours and using social media influencers to promote their brand (Mayrhofer & Roederer, 2016). New Instagram features have made it easier for consumers to buy products directly through the application. H&M, on the other hand, dedicates a much larger budget to promotional activities, approximately 3.5 percent of their sales (H&M Group annual report, 2018). H&M implements a more wide-ranging marketing strategy, using print advertisements in magazines, billboards, promoted social media content and collaborations with other designers.

Regardless of their marketing strategies, the success of fast fashion retailers, like Zara and H&M, is their ability to consistently provide their consumers with new trendy styles at very affordable prices. This approach has resulted in mass consumption of fast fashion items which have their own set of environmental issues post purchase.

2.3.2.5 Consumption

After clothing is purchased from fast fashion retailers there continue to be environmental implications. These implications are partly resultant of the manner in which the clothing was manufactured.

In particular, clothing made from plastic-based synthetic textiles, such as polyester, nylon and spandex, have severe impacts. When clothing made from these fibres is washed, tiny particles of plastic, approximately half a million tonnes each year, are released into the water, which ultimately end up in the ocean (De Falco, Gullo, Gentile & Di Pace, 2017). Plankton species eat the microplastic particles, mistaking them for food. Plankton is consumed by other marine species. As this pattern moves up the food chain, the concentration of toxic plastic intensifies in a process called bio-accumulation (National Geographic, 2018). As a result, marine species at the top of the food chain have dangerous levels of toxic plastic in their systems. This is particularly detrimental to marine mammals like dolphin and whale species which drink their mothers' milk during infancy. The milk is poisoned with the toxic chemicals from the concentration of plastic particles. Consequently, these infant marine mammals can die.

This does not only affect the marine mammal populations, but also disrupts the entire balance of marine eco-systems. Preservation of marine eco-systems is essential not only for conservation of the diverse marine species but also for oxygen production. Phytoplankton species are responsible for producing as much as 85 percent of the earth's oxygen supply, without which life on earth would not be possible (Falkowski, 2012).

When individuals no longer want their clothing, they are either sent to the landfill, recycled or donated or sold to the second-hand market. Consumers are discarding clothing at a faster pace than ever before. At least 50 percent of fast fashion items purchased are disposed of in the same year (State of fashion, 2018). Combined with the increasing number of clothing purchases, these behaviours amount to serious disposal issues.

Currently, about one percent of clothing is recycled to produce new textiles. The large majority, approximately 80 percent, is landfilled (State of fashion, 2018). Clothing made from natural fibres will degrade. However, synthetic fabrics take centuries to and emit methane whilst doing so. In some countries landfills are overflowing and to combat space limitations rubbish, including synthetic-based clothing, is burnt. This mass burning pollutes the air, aggravating respiratory health issues and contributing to global warming (Brooks, 2015).

Clothing sold or donated to the second-hand market poses its own problems. Whilst some of the clothing ends up going to those who can't afford to buy their own, a vast quantity ends up in second-hand markets in Africa and South America. Whilst the reuse of clothing has a far lower impact than the creation of new clothing, the sheer quantity of unwanted clothing dumped in third world countries has severely weakened unique local clothing industry and craft (Brooks, 2015).

There is a direct correlation between the mass consumption of cheap fashion and the impacts of its eventual disposal. Fast fashion businesses need to sell large volumes of clothing in order to make a profit (Cachon & Swinney, 2011). However, most of the problems resulting from fast fashion are devastating precisely because of the scale of the industry (Pulse of the fashion industry, 2018).

The clothing manufacturing process is difficult to audit as fibres can be sourced from all over the world, spun and woven into fabric in a different country, and garments sewn in yet another place, all with different currencies and exchange rates and growers, factory workers and seamstresses all receiving different wages. However, analysis of the fashion industry in its current state reveals that the environmental and social cost of clothing production is not accounted for at any point along the supply chain. In fact, clothing production continues to grow despite the devastating impact it has on the environment and society. The economic value of these negative impacts is complex to quantify. However, a recent study, estimated that the overall benefit to the world economy could be about R2.7 quadrillion in 2030 if the fashion industry were to address the current environmental and societal issues inherent to the system (Pulse of the fashion industry, 2018).

2.3.3 Fast fashion and sustainability

As these societal and environmental implications gain more attention in the media, fast fashion retailers have begun to broach the topic of sustainability (H&M website, 2019; Zara website, 2019). Whilst not admitting the entirety of the environmental effect their production, fast fashion giants Zara and H&M have gradually come to implement initiatives aimed at reducing the ecological impact of clothing their production.

In 2015 H&M launched their Conscious Collection, a line of clothing produced with sustainable materials. However, the launch of the collection has been met with scepticism. Of the total number of items listed on H&M's website approximately 9 percent are tagged as Conscious, 68 percent of which is baby and children's clothing, likely not the segment responsible for unchecked consumption. Thus, the Conscious Collection is only a small fragment of their total range. Whilst H&M do not release their production figures it has been estimated that H&M sell at least 1.3 billion clothing items a year. Critics argue that the Conscious Collection is a 'drop in the ocean' and insignificant in comparison to H&M's colossal production figures. H&M are also criticised for the pricing strategy of Conscious Collection items. Conscious Collection garments are priced on par with the rest of H&M's products. Sceptics argue that H&M should have increased prices for Conscious garments in order to signal to consumers that sustainability takes work and that it is simply not possible to create ethical garments at such low price points. However, opposers point out that low prices make it possible for all consumers to buy 'sustainably' and challenges the assumption that sustainable fashion is just for the wealthy.

The actual sustainability of the collection has also been challenged. H&M have not been clear on what exactly their Conscious Collection is and why it's more sustainable than the rest of their clothing. Additionally, in the majority of cases only a percentage of the fabric used to make garments for the Conscious Collection is sustainable, the remainder is conventional unsustainable fabric used in their other collections. As a result, the media have accused H&M of greenwashing and overstating the sustainability of the Conscious Collection. Regulators have also begun to query H&M's sustainability assertions. In particular, the Consumer Authority, a Norwegian independent governing body responsible for enforcing the Marketing Control Act, have started investigations into the validity of H&M's sustainability claims (Brain, 2019). At present no fines or sanctions have been imposed but the public remain cynical.

Fast fashion is often criticised because it generates huge volumes of clothing that end up in landfills, take hundreds of years to biodegrade and release methane whilst doing so (Cline, 2012). In response to this ever-growing problem both Zara and H&M have implemented

clothing recycling programmes. Textile bins are positioned in store where consumers can come drop off unwanted clothing and other textiles. According to their website, H&M implemented their clothing recycling initiative in 2013. Since then they have collected over 57 000 tonnes of used clothing and textiles which are either sold as second hand clothes, reused as something else (like cleaning cloths) or recycled into new textiles and used for non-fashion related purposes (mattress stuffing and insulation). As a reward for dropping of clothes consumers are gifted with H&M vouchers. Whilst incentivising consumers to recycle seems like a good idea, H&M vouchers encourage consumers to buy more clothing which will ultimately need to be recycled, thus further exacerbating the existing problem.

As reported on their website, Zara's recycling programme was launched in 2014 and have collected 34 000 tonnes of clothing which they donate to various charity organisations. However, both Zara and H&M's recycling efforts have received major criticism. Although the idea seems good, the technology is lacking. Presently, the technology only allows for garments made from 100 percent cotton, linen or polyester to be recycled. Thus, garments made from fabrics with blended textiles cannot be recycled into new fabric. In addition, the textiles that are produced from recycling existing cotton, linen and polyester are of a much lower quality and have to be used in combination with virgin textile in order to make the garment more durable. As a result, the majority of the clothing donated to Zara and H&M via their recycling programmes ends up sold as second hand clothing. As mentioned previously, the majority of clothing for second hand sale is shipped to Africa, China and South America and bought by the bale. Often because the clothing is from fast fashion brands they are poor quality and not good enough to be sold and end up dumped in landfills or simply burnt.

Although the intention of these recycling programmes is to prevent clothing from ending up in landfills essentially a lot of it still ends up in landfills, just in third world countries. The sheer volume of clothing and textiles collected is also a problem. International industry experts have done the calculations and have pointed out that it would take H&M up to twelve years to process 1000 tonnes of clothing. Accordingly, at the current rate it would take H&M up to 684 years to process all the textiles they have collected thus far.

The inefficiency of the clothing recycling programmes has led to widespread suspicion of Zara and H&M's motivation behind the implementation of these programmes. Critics argue that it is predominantly a publicity stunt with the added benefit of driving foot traffic into stores where recycling bins are placed. Furthermore, Zara and H&M appear to be more sustainability focussed without having to alter the production models which are seemingly the cause of the masses of clothing that need to be recycled.

Both Zara and H&M have set sustainability goals to be achieved in the next five to ten years. These goals, outlined on their respective websites, focus on expanding their existing recycling programmes, shifting to more sustainable textiles and reducing energy consumption in stores and head offices. Whilst these goals are positive and are likely to make a difference, the root cause of the problem remains the excessive production and consumption of clothing. Unfortunately, the success of the fast fashion system relies on consumers buying new fashion items on a regular basis. Fast fashion brands have not and probably will not address over consumption of fashion because it is inherently in conflict with their success. In this case, can fast fashion ever be ethical?

Despite the consequences of fast fashion production and consumption, the industry continues to succeed, with sales predicted to grow five percent in the next year (State of fashion, 2018). Thus, it seems that the majority of consumers continue to buy from fast fashion retailers. Fast fashion consumers are complicit in the system that exploits the people in its supply chain as well as the environment, compromising the health and well-being of millions of people and the planet. In order to attempt to change consumer behaviour to be more ethical it is important to understand who the fast fashion consumer is and what motivates them to continue purchasing fast fashion. Therefore, the following section will examine the fast fashion consumer.

2.3.4 Fast fashion consumer

Limited research has been conducted with a focus on the fast fashion consumer and their behaviour. However, the existing research does indicate that customers who tend to shop at fast fashion retailers are both male and female and fall into a range of income levels. One study revealed that the frequency of fast fashion purchases decreases as income increases (Saricam & Erdumulu, 2016). However, this is certainly not always the case and more research is required.

As can be seen on their websites, fast fashion retailers sell a range of clothing that caters to babies, children, teenagers, young working professionals and older working professionals, and both men and women. There seems to be no real defining demographic features amongst this group. However, it does appear that many fast fashion brands' marketing campaigns target women more so than men (Shepard, Pookulangara, Kinley & Josiam, 2016). Nevertheless, this is true of all fashion sectors. In addition, different fast fashion retailers target slightly different groups. For instance, H&M and Forever 21 appear to target teenagers and women in their early twenties, whereas Zara focusses on a slightly older group; women in their early twenties to mid-thirties.

The existing studies do indicate that fast fashion consumers tend to be impulse buyers, purchasing fashion items that they don't necessarily need and without much forethought (Watson & Ruoh-Nan, 2012). Thus, fast fashion consumers relish in the low price offering fast fashion retailers provide, allowing consumers to buy multiple items at a time without spending too much money (Gabrielli, Baghi & Codeluppi, 2013). Fast fashion consumers view buyers' remorse, utility, hedonism, satisfaction and clothing disposal in a particular way, especially when compared to ethical fashion consumers (Watson & Ruoh-Nan, 2012). Ethical fashion consumer behaviour will be discussed in section 2.4.3. Many of the fast fashion consumer behaviours are linked to the innate nature of fast fashion products; cheap and of poor quality.

Fast fashion consumers avoid buyers' remorse by purchasing cheap clothing items. The inexpensive nature of the products allows consumers to feel less guilty about buying clothing that they know they may only wear once or twice (Joung, 2014).

Correspondingly, fast fashion consumers derive utility by purchasing large quantities of fashion items for the least amount of money. They value quantity over quality. In a similar vein, fast fashion consumers report to achieving hedonistic pleasure when spending very little money per fashion item so that multiple items can be purchased at a time (McNeill and Moore, 2015).

Once fashion items have been purchased, they are 'consumed' when the owner wears the clothing. Fast fashion consumers tend to feel dissatisfied when consuming fast fashion items (Watson & Ruoh-Nan, 2013). They complain of the poor quality of the garments and their subsequent deterioration after very few uses (Gabrielli *et al.*, 2013). However, fast fashion retailers do report that they expect the quality to be poor and justify this based on the low prices paid (Watson and Ruoh-Nan, 2013; Gabrielli *et al.*, 2013).

Poor quality is one of the reasons fast fashion consumers dispose of clothing (Joung, 2014, Brooks, 2015). However, boredom with the style is another commonly reported reason (Watson & Ruoh-Nan, 2013). Consumers state that they get rid of clothing because they don't feel like wearing those items anymore, not because the item is faulty in any way.

Limited research makes it difficult to provide a generalised profile of fast fashion consumers. Nonetheless, it would appear that fast fashion consumers are attracted to the low prices and the wide range of stylish fashion items (Miller, 2013). Given the poor quality of fast fashion items, it could be posited that fast fashion consumers are unconcerned about quality of

clothing, or else they consider prices low enough to replace items frequently. Additional research is necessary in order to more accurately identify the fashion consumer.

2.3.5 Perpetuation of fast fashion

Increasing attention is being drawn to the negative impacts of fast fashion production and consumption. Yet, fast fashion businesses continue to be successful and consumer demand persists. There are several factors that contribute to the perpetuation of fast fashion.

A large part of why fast fashion continues to thrive is because consumers continue to demand it, even though they may be aware of the social and environmental ramifications. The primary reason consumers may be unwilling to denounce fast fashion is because it is so cheap (Cline, 2012). Consumers from all income levels are able to purchase trendy items with a very limited financial investment required. For many, the cheapness of the products is too tempting to give up. It allows consumers to purchase multiple items rather than one more expensive garment. Subsequently, consumers can create various outfits or 'looks' cheaply. Similarly, shopping has become a form of entertainment, not executed solely because the consumer needs to replace some garment, but as a way of having fun and relaxing with friends (Gabrielli *et al.*, 2013) This is only possible because fast fashion clothing is so inexpensive.

The variety and abundance of style options stocked by fast fashion stores is another reason explaining why consumers continue to demand fast fashion (Miller, 2013). The increasing prevalence and importance of social media and celebrity influencers has affected the way people perceive clothing and fashion (Miller, 2013). Generally, especially among younger generations, there is an expectation to keep up with trends featured on social media, Instagram specifically, and sometimes a pressure to not be seen wearing an outfit more than once. Thus, consumers demand a variety of style options in order to create an expansive wardrobe that allows them to keep up with trends and always having new clothing to wear. Fast fashion meets these demands.

The perpetuation of the fast fashion system is exacerbated by the very nature of the clothing it sells. Fast fashion clothing is typically of a very low quality, poorly constructed and made with cheap fabric (McNeill & Moore, 2016). Thus, these garments do not last long before they need to be repaired or, more typically, discarded and replaced. In conjunction, fast fashion items are designed based on current trends and, as trend cycles speed up, tend to go out of style quickly (Gupta & Gentry, 2016). Therefore, the high disposal rate of fast fashion attributed to poor quality and style expiration encourages purchase of new fast fashion garments to replace the discarded ones. As fast fashion items are so inexpensive consumers

feel less guilt about replacing clothing regularly and the cycle of purchase, disposal and repurchase continues (Watson & Ruoh-Nan, 2013).

The perpetuation of fast fashion can also be attributed to a lack of consumer awareness (Gam, 2011). If consumers are unaware of the social and environmental devastation caused by fast fashion production and consumption, they cannot be expected to change their behaviour and refrain from purchasing fast fashion (Gam, 2011).

The fast fashion industry is powerful. It employs multitudes of people all over the world, creating employment, contributing to local economies and democratising fashion for people of various income levels. These contributions to the world economy carry weight and cannot be ignored. The sheer size and influence of the industry can impede the progress necessary to find solutions to social and environmental issues. Additionally, the fast fashion space is very competitive. Fast fashion retailers may be unwilling to alter their processes to more ethical alternatives, as change will increase costs. Increased prices will impact their ability to compete with other industry players.

In contrast, ethical fashion purveyors are willing to spend more money in order to meet their commitments of reducing or neutralising the environmental and social impact of fashion production and consumption (Watson & Ruoh-Nan, 2013).

2.4 ETHICAL FASHION

In recent years consumers and producers alike have begun to recognise the effects that fast fashion production and consumption have on society and the natural environment. As a result, the ethical fashion movement has gained momentum. This is particularly true in Europe and the United States. Ethical fashion is advocated as a less harmful way of manufacturing and consuming clothing. However, despite growing traction in Europe and the US, South Africa remains behind. The development and definition of ethical fashion need to be explained in order to provide context to ethical fashion consumption before the lack of South African engagement in ethical fashion can be determined.

2.4.1 Definition and origin

The beginnings of the ethical fashion movement emerged in the 1960s in reaction to the mass consumerism of the preceding decade (English, 2007). The hippie movement embraced a slower way of living, rejecting the new synthetic materials that had recently come onto the market in favour for traditional natural fabrics and well-made clothing. This was followed by the punk and gothic movements in the 1970s and 1980s. These groups opposed the consumption-driven fashion industry, instead turning to second-hand and

vintage clothing. Anti-fur protests surfaced in the 1980s and drew attention to animal rights abuse in the fashion industry (Cline, 2012). The 1990s saw the beginnings of the fast fashion industry as we know it today. As manufacturing was moved from local factories to the East, production costs lowered, and clothing became significantly cheaper. At the same time, a few ethical fashion businesses arose, notably; Patagonia (Patagonia, 2005). These brands helped bring attention to the environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry. As the fast fashion industry grew, the headlines were littered with articles reporting on labour and environmental scandals linked to fast fashion brands.

In 2013 the Rana Plaza building in Dhaka, Bangladesh collapsed, killing 1132 garment workers and injuring more than 2000 individuals (The Guardian, 2018). The collapse of the building, housing five garment factories, was attributed to neglected structural damage and poor safety measures. It is reported that several garment workers complained about the state of the building before the collapse took place. However, these complaints fell on deaf ears. This tragic event resulted in incensed public outcry against the fast fashion industry and its disregard for workers' health, safety and well-being (The Guardian, 2018). This spurred the creation of organisations like Fashion Revolution that promote the development of ethical fashion movement (Fashion Revolution, 2013). Since then, the ethical fashion movement has grown tremendously.

Ethical fashion, often used interchangeably with eco-, green, slow and sustainable fashion, does not have a single industry-wide definition as of yet (Henninger and Oates, 2016). In fact, some claim that fashion and sustainability are inherently incompatible since the promotion of hyper-consumerism is intrinsic to the current fashion model (Ethical Trading Initiative, 2016). The premise of fast fashion relies on styles gaining popularity and subsequently becoming less popular, encouraging consumers to keep buying new garments (Zimmerman & Shah, 2013). Although many of the issues resultant of the current fashion model can be attributed to the shortened time between fashion cycles, the predominant problems are the manner in which the garments are manufactured, the quantity of clothing produced, as well as their post-purchase lifecycle (Remake, 2018). Thus, it is argued that ethical fashion is a valid pursuit.

Ethical fashion consumption refers to the purchase, use and disposal of ethical fashion garments (Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014). Globally, ethical fashion consumption contributes one percent to total fashion sales (Lundblad & Davies, 2015). This statistic seems surprisingly low when considering the results from previous studies that focus on ethical attitudes and purchase intentions. Many studies report that the majority of consumers are concerned about ethical issues (Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Hill & Lee, 2015; Joung, 2014; Moon

et al., 2014). However, despite strong ethical attitudes very few consumers actually purchase ethically (Defra, 2006; Hughner, 2007). Evidently a words-deeds inconsistency exists. It seems there may be other factors at play that impact ethical consumption. Additional research is necessary in order to identify the determining factors of ethical fashion. However, exploratory studies have investigated barriers and adoption of ethical fashion which may partially explain the attitude-behaviour gap. These will be discussed in chapter four.

Where sustainable, green and eco-fashion focus on the environmental impacts of clothing production, ethical fashion includes social factors as well (Crane, 2010; Tseelon, 2011). Many studies (Moon *et al.*, 2014, Lundblad & Davies, 2015, Henninger, 2016; Crane, 2010; Tseelon, 2011) define ethical fashion as garments that minimise negative and maximise positive social and environmental effects along its supply chain, including post-purchase lifecycle. These social and environmental effects include various issues, namely; textile selection, production, treatment and dyeing, waste management, factory safety, living wages, reasonable working hours, use of organic materials and general sustainable and ethical responsibility and awareness (Bly *et al.*, 2015). The environmental and social impact of ethical fashion will be discussed in the following section.

2.4.2 Environmental and social impact of ethical fashion

The principal objective behind ethical fashion is to produce clothing in an environmentally sustainable manner whilst ensuring safe and fair working conditions and compensation for the people producing the textiles and clothing (Fletcher & Grose, 2012). Additionally, ethical fashion is concerned with the post-purchase implications of the garment. Ethical fashion businesses vary in size and organisation (Fernie & Grant, 2015). As a result, there is no standardised ethical fashion supply chain that all businesses adhere to. It is difficult to make generalisations about the social and environmental implications of the production and consumption of ethical fashion as the impacts may differ from business to business. However, the intentions of ethical fashion purveyors are the same; to minimise negative social and environmental impacts and maximise positive ones. Albeit, they may go about this in various ways.

Ethical fashion opposes fast fashion ideals by creating high quality clothing that is made to last. Ethical fashion design pays no heed to passing trends and tends to be classic, seasonless and versatile in order to ensure that the consumer will be able to wear the garment for many years. This is partially achieved by using high quality fabrics.

Organic and Fairtrade fabric are used where possible so as to eliminate the use of toxic pesticides and herbicides. Fairtrade certification provides traceability and transparency and

as well as offering fashion brands certainty that the fabric was produced ethically and sustainably (Fletcher & Grose, 2012). Ethical fashion tends to avoid petroleum-based synthetic fabrics that pollute the atmosphere as well as contaminate local water sources when produced (Brooks, 2015). Natural fibres are favoured as they are generally more comfortable on the skin, do not require toxic chemicals for textile production and biodegrade if discarded.

Garment workers should be paid living wages and are not made to work excessive hours (Ethical Fashion Initiative, 2018). Garment factories meet the required safety standards. An effort is made to lift garment workers out of poverty by creating a safe and pleasant work environment where they are fairly rewarded for the work they do.

Garments are sold to consumers who have access to information about how and where the clothing they purchase is from. Ethical fashion garments tend to be more expensive than fast fashion garments. The higher prices result directly from the increased costs necessary to ensure environmental and social wellbeing and excellent garment quality. Ethical fashion garments are made using good quality durable fabrics and sewn with attention to detail in order to produce a piece that will stand the test of time. Thus, ethical fashion garments may be more expensive, but they are made to last for years in order to ensure that the consumer will not need to replace the garment.

The production of ethical fashion is clearly less harmful to society and the environment. However, adoption in South Africa is very limited. In order to understand the determining factors of ethical fashion consumption amongst South Africans it is necessary to discuss the fashion industry in the South African context. Thus, the following section will elaborate on the local fashion landscape that could shape consumption behaviour amongst South Africans.

2.5 FASHION INDUSTRY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

South Africa is a developing country with a population of approximately 57 million individuals. A large percentage of these individuals are unemployed, 29 percent, and an even greater number, roughly 55 percent, are living below the poverty line (StatsSA, 2019). Thus, it is evident that from the outset that the majority of South Africans cannot begin to consider the ethical ramifications of fashion purchases when their only priority is to provide enough food for their families. However, research from The Living Conditions survey conducted by Statistics SA indicates that South Africans spend five percent of their annual income on clothing and footwear, almost double than what is spent on education. Although there is a large group of South Africans who cannot afford new clothing, there is also a substantially sized group that spend a considerable portion of their income on fashion purchases.

South Africans have access to a variety of shops to purchase fashion items from. The options range from budget shops to mid-range priced retailers to high-end luxury boutiques and brands. In recent years South Africa has seen the introduction of international fast fashion retailers into the local market, most notably, Zara, H&M and Cotton On. According to their website Zara launched in South Africa in 2011 and have expanded to 9 stores (Moorad, 2011). In 2015 H&M launched in South Africa and currently have 27 stores with plans for further expansion in South Africa (Brown, 2017). Cotton On opened its first South African store in 2011 and, as reported by their website, currently have 66 branches across various areas of South Africa (Fin24, 2015). The launch of these fast fashion stores was met with excitement and anticipation by South African consumers and it seems that these brands continue to succeed in the local market (Fin24, 2017). Despite poor economic conditions, these international fast fashion retailers continue to expand their presence in South Africa with additional brick-and-mortar store openings and online stores.

In addition to the international brands, South African retailers persist as important players in the local fashion market, in particular; Woolworths, Mr Price, Ackermans, Pep stores and Jet. However, the introduction of the international fast fashion brands in the previous years has heightened competition amongst fashion retailers in South Africa, driving price decreases.

Price decreases can also be attributed to regulation changes. Prior to 2005, the Multi-fibre Arrangement held. This agreement limited the amount of clothing and textiles that could be imported from other countries. These quotas protected the South African textile and clothing industry from cheap imports. With the aim of liberalising trade, the World Trade Organisation dissolved the arrangement at the end of 2004. Without the quotas in place, South African retailers could engage in cheap imports without restraint. The main clothing and textile export player was China because they could produce clothing at a much cheaper cost than factories almost anywhere else (Cline, 2012). As South African retailers shifted their buying from local garment factories to Chinese alternatives, the local textile and garment industry collapsed (van der Westhuizen, 2006). South African clothing and textile imports from China increased from 16.1 percent in 1996 to 60.7 percent in 2008 and over 69 000 local clothing and textile jobs were lost during the six years between 2003 and 2009 (Biacuana, 2009).

In order to develop the South African clothing and textile industry the Department of Trade and Industry established the Clothing and Textiles Competitiveness Programme (CTCP) in 2009. The aim of the programme is to provide retailers with an incentive to use the local industry, foster competitiveness as well as to upgrade the local clothing and textile industry so that it can compete with cheap imports in a sustainable manner. Local retailers are

engaging with this programme. However, international fast fashion retailers fly clothing in from overseas manufactures and do not make use of the local garment industry at all. As a result, South African Clothing and Textiles Workers Union (SACTWU) have publicly confronted H&M, Zara and Cotton On, arguing that they have diminished demand for locally made products and are responsible for contributing to local factory closures and retrenchments. In addition, SACTWU have offered these international brands assistance in finding local suppliers to partner with (Crotty, 2017). As of yet, Zara, H&M and Cotton On continue their use of overseas manufacturers (Crotty, 2017). Thus, fashion retailing in South Africa is a complex endeavour with various social and economic factors at play. Nonetheless, consumer demand for cheap fashionable garments remains consistent.

As the country experiences a challenging economic climate, South African consumers tend to be fairly conscious of prices, especially with regard to purchasing fashion. A recent study conducted by Nielsen ranked South Africa as the second most price sensitive country in the world (Nielsen, 2019). Thus, the success of fashion retailers offering maximum style at affordable styles is likely. Nonetheless, smaller local fashion brands have come to prominence in recent years. The emergence of these brands has been supported by small business subsidies and low barriers to entry. Social media has also had an impact; small fashion businesses are able to use social media platforms, Instagram and Facebook in particular, to market their brand and gain exposure at relatively low costs. In addition, the increasing prevalence of online stores has afforded small businesses the opportunity to sell their products without the substantial investment required to establish a brick-and-mortar store, as well as increasing accessibility to customers who may live in various areas of the country (Haridasan & Fernando, 2018).

The creation of these small businesses has had various positive outcomes; stimulation of the local clothing and textile industry, job creation and tourism. As reported in their article, Adinolfi, Tchaawa & Banda (2018) explain that local fashion brands are important to tourism in South Africa, thereby contributing to the local economy. This can be demonstrated by the establishment of the Watershed, a space at the Waterfront in Cape Town dedicated to showcasing and selling local design. In addition, smaller local fashion businesses tend to be relatively involved in their communities and aware of the environmental impact of their operations. Many small local fashion businesses can be considered ethical fashion retailers, and some market themselves as such, too. These brands take care to ensure the well-being of their employees, paying substantially more than the minimum wage, providing a pleasant and safe working environment, using sustainable fabric options and limiting waste. Small local fashion brands are unable to compete with bigger clothing retailers in terms of price and are not as well-known. However, they do seem to have loyal customers who appreciate the

unique offering that small businesses can provide and are willing to pay higher prices. Thus, garments from smaller ethical brands are not accessible to the majority of the South African population because of the higher price point. Nonetheless, these smaller local businesses still play a part in the South African fashion context.

The South African retail context is influenced by various factors which could shape consumer behaviour. The widespread poverty and unemployment in South Africa is a huge problem. It may be that only a very small percentage of South African consumers have the financial means to consider ethical aspects of their fashion purchases. However, the emergence of smaller local ethical fashion brands does indicate that there is a segment of consumers that engage in ethical fashion consumption. Nonetheless, it is still unclear which factors motivate ethical fashion consumption in South Africa.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Fashion has progressed from tailored garments made for the individual wearer to last for years, to mass produced garments, designed to be thrown away. The fast fashion system has changed the fashion industry significantly. The success of fast fashion relies on consistently selling large quantities of clothing at low prices. Globally, the volume of clothing consumed has increased exponentially and the price of clothing has decreased as production has intensified. Consumer behaviour has changed accordingly. Fast fashion consumers demand fashionable garments that can be bought cheaply. Research indicates that consumers accept low quality products because they were bought inexpensively and can be easily replaced if need be. Thus, generally fashion garments are worn a couple of times before being replaced with a new trendier version of the same product.

The scale of fashion production and consumption, the manner in which textiles and garments are produced as well as their disposal have immense impacts on the environment and society. The fashion industry is associated with widespread labour issues. Employees across the supply chain are often not paid a living wage, made to work in unpleasant or unsafe working environments and sometimes suffer abuse from employers. The environmental implications are also extensive. Problems include greenhouse gas emissions, water pollution in various forms, pesticide and herbicide use with related health risks, elimination of indigenous plant and animal species, excessive water requirements and largescale fossil fuel usage. Ethical fashion arose in response to fast fashion and its social and environmental effects. The ethical fashion movement has gained traction in recent years particularly in Europe and the United States. However, it seems that ethical fashion in South Africa remains underdeveloped. However, there is an emergence of small local ethical fashion brands. Thus, it seems that there could be resistance from consumers. The study aims to determine

the factors influencing ethical fashion in South Africa. Therefore, it was necessary to understand the context of fashion consumption in the modern age as well as in the South African market.

The following chapter will examine the relationship between the natural, business and consumer environments in order to demonstrate the need for business practices that consider social and environmental factors as well as economic success.

CHAPTER 3

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT-, BUSINESS- AND CONSUMER THEORIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two described the development of fashion over time and contextualised fashion consumption in South Africa. The current fashion industry was described, with particular emphasis on the fast fashion model and its influence on the natural environment and society. The impact of the fashion industry on the natural environment was emphasised. Therefore, chapter three highlights the relationship between the natural environment, businesses and consumers. Businesses, especially fashion businesses, need to adopt more responsible practices as a result of the current ecological crisis and there contribution thereto. However, they also require support from consumers in order to make the required changes. Adoption of ethical fashion is not possible without buy-in from consumers. Should fashion businesses wish to adopt more ethical processes it is vital that they have consumers who will support them and their changes. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the factors influencing consumer behaviour related to ethical fashion.

Therefore, this chapter explores the relationship between the natural environment, business environment and consumer behaviour. Chapter three is divided into three sections; the natural environment, businesses and consumers, each of which will examine the relevant literature and theories in order to demonstrate the interdependence of the three systems.

3.2 THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

In recent years there has been increased concern for the declining health and wellbeing of the natural environment. In conjunction, the extent to which human activity is responsible for the deterioration of the natural environment has been under debate. However, presently most scientists can agree that human activity is responsible for a number of problems in the natural environment, constituting an ecological crisis (IPCC, 2014). Problems include climate change, contamination of water sources, acid rain, ozone layer depletion, pollution and severely diminished biodiversity. All living creatures, including humans, across the planet are, or will be, affected by these issues in some way.

The ecological crisis has severe social, political, cultural and economic implications and demands immediate action (IPCC, 2014; Lal, 2005; Choucri, & Bennett, 1972). Therefore, if humans are to attempt to rectify the situation it is essential to understand the systems at work in the natural environment.

3.2.1. Human activity and ecosystems

Ecology can be used to explain how human and business activity impacts and is affected by the natural environment (Ricklefs, 1973). It is important to understand how fashion businesses impact the environment if those impacts are to be minimised. Ecology illustrates the interconnectedness of humans, their business activities and the health of the natural environment.

Ecology is the study of ecosystems; living organisms and their interactions with each other as well as the physical habitats which they inhabit (Ricklefs, 1973). The natural environment consists of many different ecosystems of varying sizes. Each ecosystem is comprised of a different combination of atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and biota, or land, water, air and living organisms (Ricklefs, 1973). These four components are interdependent on each other and a change in one will impact the other three, thus changing the ecosystem as a whole. Figure 3.1 below illustrates the interdependency of ecosystem components.

Figure 3.1: Ecosystem components
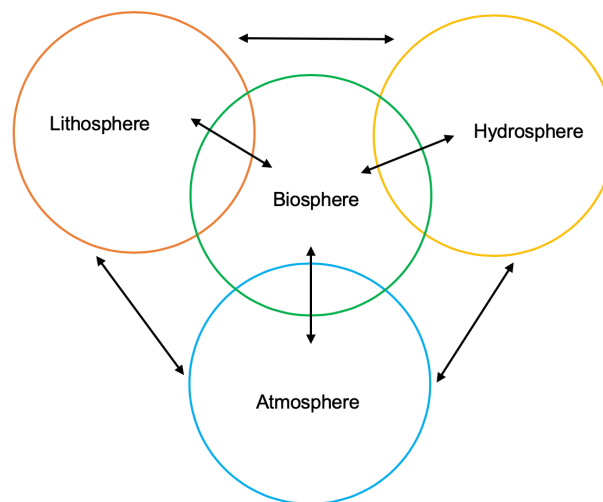
Source: Ricklefs (1973) (Adapted)

Healthy ecosystems are important for a number of reasons. They perform various functions, or ecosystem services, that are necessary for continued life on earth. These crucial functions include climate regulation, maintenance of soil, food provision, air and water purification, nutrient recycling and the provision of raw materials for medicine (Jørgensen & Jørgensen, 2009). The continuation of these activities is not possible without the proper functioning of ecosystems. A more extensive list of ecosystem services is presented in Figure 3.2 below.

Figure 3.2: Ecosystem services
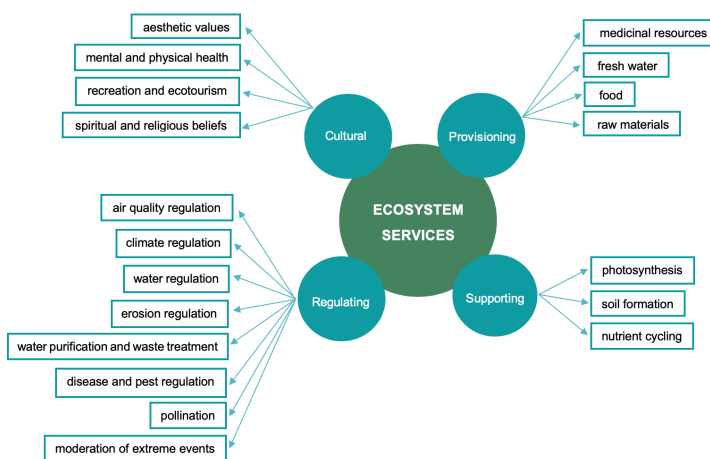
Source: Jørgensen & Jørgensen (2009) (Adapted)

Globally, humans form part of many different ecosystems and subsequently human behaviour cannot be taken out of the context of the natural environment and ecosystem health (Goudie, 2006). As with any other living organism in an ecosystem, actions carried out by humans impact the well-being of eco-systems individually and subsequently the natural environment as a whole. Currently, the human population numbers approximately 7.7 billion individuals, making *homo sapiens* the most numerous mammal species on earth (Roser, Ritchie & Ortiz-Ospina 2019). Figure 3.3 demonstrates the growth of the human population over the past 12 000 years.

Figure 3.3: The size of the population over the last 12 000 years
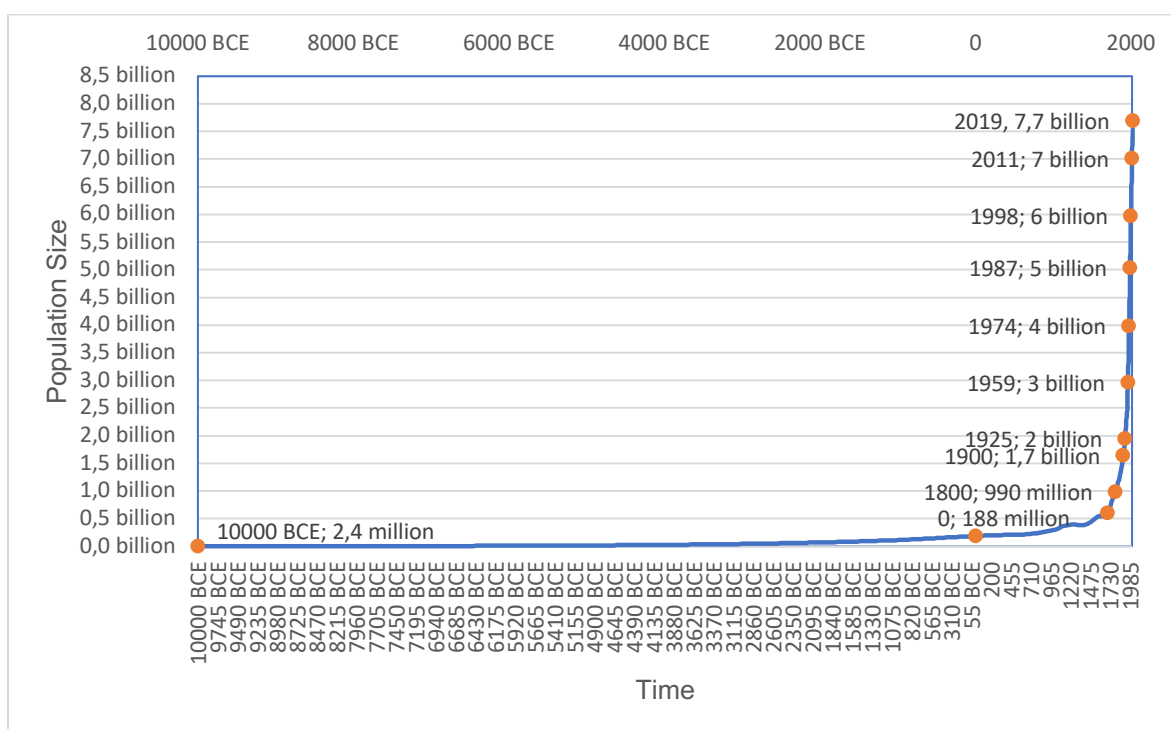
Source: Roser *et al.* (2019) (Adapted)

Thus, human actions can have a profound impact on the ecosystems we inhabit. Population figures have been increasing rapidly since the first century and are projected to keep growing, with an estimated population of 9.7 billion in 2050 (Roser *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, it can be predicted that human impacts on the natural environment will continue to escalate. This includes the impact of businesses activities, including the fashion industry. In its current state, the fashion industry has a notoriously significant impact on the health of the natural environment. If the population continues to grow at the current pace, then it can be assumed that fashion production will increase in line with that growth. Thus, the impact of the fashion industry will continue to intensify. Therefore, it is crucial for fashion businesses to adopt ethical practices now in order to decelerate its effects on the natural environment. However, it seems that as the fast fashion industry continues to grow, their impact on the natural environment is intensifying and individuals are purchasing increasing numbers of clothing. Increased production of clothing though requires more resources. Therefore, if businesses are to change their current supply chain and incorporate ethical practices, they need to have a good understanding of consumer behaviour relating to ethical fashion. It is critical that they are able to effectively sell to consumers. Thus, specific knowledge of ethical fashion consumption is necessary.

As the human population grows there is an increased demand for resources (water, food, space) necessary to sustain the additional people (Goudie, 2006). The ever-increasing clearing of land and resource extraction needed in order to support population growth and human consumption puts unsustainable pressure on various ecosystems and the natural environment (IPCC, 2014). The clearing of land for human habitation, agriculture and development, renders previous inhabitants homeless (National Geographic, 2019). In many cases, plants and animal species are endemic to specific areas that have a unique combination of climate, terrain and other plant and animal species that are crucial to their survival. When these areas are forcibly removed, there is the chance of species extinction. In fact, habit loss driven by human activity is the biggest cause of species extinction in the current era (National Geographic, 2019). If human population growth and the impact of human behaviour are not curtailed, the natural environment and its ecosystems will be damaged beyond repair. As discussed in chapter two, the fashion industry is responsible for many practices that impact the health of the natural environment, and subsequently drive species extinction. As mentioned in the previous section, a healthy natural environment is essential, providing ecosystems services that are crucial for like on earth. Thus, businesses need to adopt more sustainable practices in order to ensure survival on this planet. However, fashion business need buy-in from consumers. It is therefore essential to understand the factors driving ethical fashion consumption behaviour. Therefore, the study at hand will investigate the factors impacting on ethical fashion consumption.

3.2.3. Human activity and climate change

One serious implication of human behaviour, seemingly on the brink of irreparability, is climate change (UNFCCC, 2019). Climate change refers to significant changes in global or regional climate measures such as temperature and precipitation levels over several decades (Splash, 2002). Based on ecology, it is evident that a change in climate has ramifications for the balance and stability of ecosystems. A change in the atmospheric conditions will affect the other three components; lithosphere, hydrosphere and biota (Ricklefs, 1993). Changes in climate can affect ecosystems in various ways. Some plants and animal species are extremely sensitive to specific temperature, rainfall and humidity conditions (IPBES, 2019). When conditions fall outside the ideal range required by those species they may be forced to relocate and inhabit new areas. In addition, food webs are disrupted, lifecycles and migration and breeding patterns change (Jørgensen & Jørgensen, 2009). The changes to ecosystems as a result of climate change drive species endangerment and extinction (IPBES, 2019). When ecosystems are threatened their ability to provide ecosystem services is also weakened. Additionally, healthy ecosystems provide buffers to extreme conditions like flooding, wildfires and drought. (Jørgensen & Jørgensen, 2009) Climate change and human activity disrupt ecosystems and consequently they lose their ability to act as a buffer for these events which are thenceforth likely to happen more frequently.

In the past climate change has always occurred as a result of natural forces and has taken place over the span of many centuries (Jarman, 2007). Thus, living organisms and their ecosystems had time to adapt to new climates or evolve over hundreds of years. The species that were unable to adapt went extinct. However, the present-day global climate change is attributed to human behaviour and is called anthropogenic climate change (Miller, 2009). The main cause of the current climate change is attributed to largescale burning of fossil fuels that began during the Industrial Revolution circa 1850. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirm this statement. Results from the 5th IPCC report indicate that there is a 95 percent likelihood that human activity and greenhouse gas emissions are responsible for global warming (2014). When greenhouse gasses are emitted into the atmosphere, they absorb infrared radiation in the atmosphere, subsequently trapping heat in the atmosphere which results in global warming (Miller, 2009). Carbon dioxide emissions are unequivocally the most concerning and most prevalent greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming (IPCC, 2014). In the last decade, 90 percent of carbon dioxide emissions are attributed to the burning of fossil fuels as a result of human activities (IPCC, 2014). Figure 3.4 illustrates the dramatic increase in carbon emissions over the last century.

The fashion industry has been linked to largescale fossil fuel burning, especially in the production of synthetic materials. Synthetic fibres are used in over 65 percent of clothing produced today, equalling 5.3 million metric tonnes produced worldwide (Statista, 2019). Thus, the fashion industry plays a significant role in contributing to climate change.

Figure 3.4: Annual carbon dioxide emissions
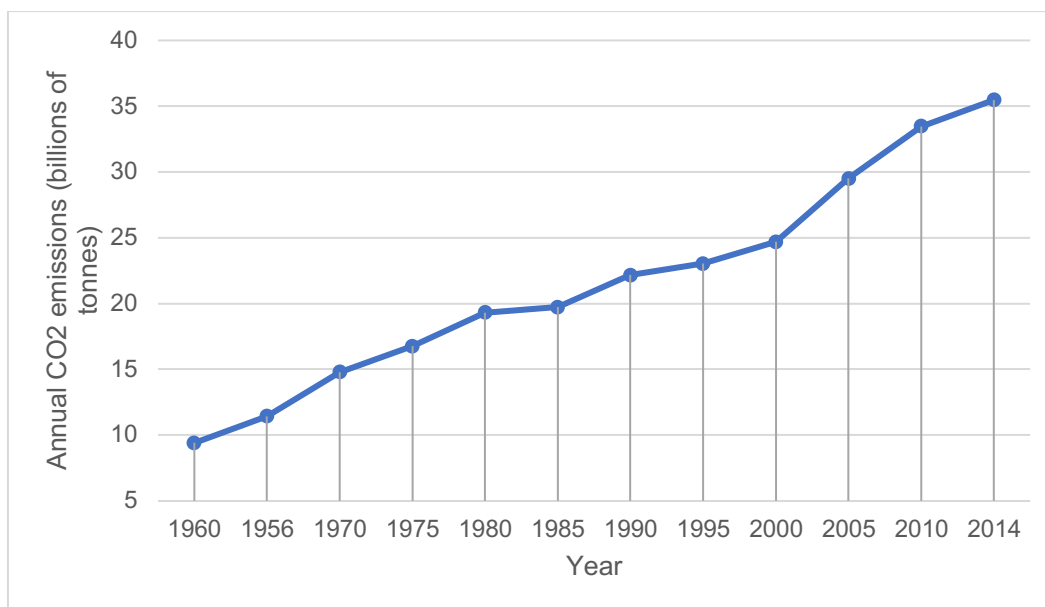
Source: World Bank (2014) (Adapted)

Climate change is considered one of society's largest problems since its impact is global, potential reversal is lengthy and addressing the issue requires unified global agreement, collaboration and action. In comparison to previous instances of global climate change resultant of natural forces, today's anthropogenic climate change is taking place at a much quicker rate; taking place over a hundred years rather than multiple centuries (IPCC, 2014). Thus, in many cases ecosystems are not able to adapt to the new changes quickly enough before species are pushed to extinction, and the changes become irreversible (Bell, Simon, and Stephen Morse, 2008). The severity of these effects is explored in the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services conducted by Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) which demonstrates the declination of biodiversity across the globe. The results of the study indicate that biodiversity loss is the worst it has been in the last 65 million years, with average extinction rates between a hundred and a thousand times higher than at any point in the preceding ten million years. This rapid loss of biodiversity has been solely attributed to human activities, including climate change, habitat loss driven by development, hunting, fishing, pollution, pesticide use (National Geographic, 2019). Biodiversity is a key measure of ecosystem health and subsequently provides an indication of the natural environment's well-being and its ability to recover from ecological disaster (Bell *et al.,* 2008). Thus, the

rapidly diminishing biodiversity reflects a poor state of affairs that demands urgent action. As discussed in detail in chapter 2, the fashion industry, and fast fashion in particular, is responsible for a wide-ranging set of issues that diminish the health of the natural environment. Fast fashion uses resources without restraint, especially non-renewable resources like fossil fuels which contribute to climate change. Thus, the fashion industry needs to limit their contribution to climate change urgently, before the situation cannot be reversed.

Considering the direct link between human activity and the natural environment, it seems evident that humans should take responsibility for their behaviour in order to limit the negative impacts on the natural environment. Without a change in current behaviour the consequences of human actions will continue to manifest, the severity of the ecological crisis will intensify and the ability to recover from the widespread issues will become increasingly difficult (IPCC, 2014). From an ecological point of view, it is clear that changes to the status quo need to be made in order for survival on earth. The adoption of ethical fashion is one way that humans could change the status quo, thereby limiting their negative impact on the natural environment.

A large proportion of the ecological issues present today can be attributed to business operations. According to The Carbon Majors Database (2017), as few as 100 companies are responsible for 71 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions. The fashion industry is responsible for substantial carbon emissions (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). It has been predicted that if it continues to operate as it does now, the fashion industry will require 26 percent of the global carbon budget by 2050 (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017).

In addition to carbon dioxide emissions, businesses require vast amounts of energy, land and other resources to function. However, in many cases businesses do not recognise their reliance on resources from the natural environment. The dependency of businesses on the natural environment can be explained by environmental economics.

3.2.3 Resources and the natural environment

Environmental economics is one approach that demonstrates the importance of ecology when considering business practices in the context of the natural environment. The interrelatedness between human economic activity and the natural environment is incontrovertible. The human economic system is a subsystem of the natural environment and subsequently the economy functions within the ecological constraints of earth's natural resources (Hussen, 2018).

According to traditional economic theory, the natural environment provides humans with various resources that can be extracted for the purpose of economic activity (Robinson, 1989). However, some of the fundamental qualities of natural resources and the natural environment are not accounted for in market prices, resulting in the overuse of natural resources which has various problematic consequences. The supply of natural resources, renewable and non-renewable, is bound by ecological limits which, when used without restraint, causes issues in the natural environment, ultimately resulting in numerous ramifications for humans too (Simmons, 1981). The manner in which resources are extracted, the way in which they are processed for economic use, their consumption, the side effects of their use, their disposal and the waste generated in all these processes affect the natural environment's ability to replenish resource supply and its capacity to recover from changes in the natural environment (Robinson, 1989). These considerations are not included in market prices even though they impact the economy's continued future use of these resources (Hussen, 2018). Figure 3.5 demonstrates the relationship between the natural environment, resources and the economy.

Figure3.5: The relationship between the natural environment and the economy
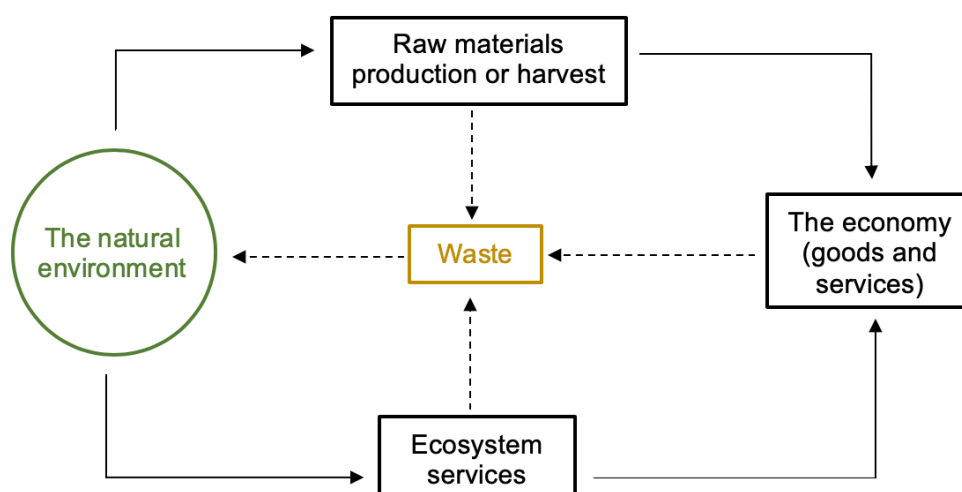
Source: Hussen (2018) (Adapted)

The volume of resources extracted from the natural environment also has implications. The Earth and its resources are finite (Hussen, 2018). There is an upper limit for resource extraction beyond which the earth is unable to regenerate those resources (Hussen, 2018). This can be demonstrated by Earth Overshoot Day; the day when humanity's resource consumption for the year exceeds Earth's ability to regenerate those resources that year. Each year Earth Overshoot Day arrives earlier as demonstrated in Figure 3.6. This suggests that humanity is using an increasing amount of resources each year. In 2019 earth overshoot day fell on the 29th of July which means that, in its current state, humanity requires the

resources from 1.75 planet earths in order to meet production and consumption demands (Global Footprint Network National Footprint Accounts, 2019). Economic market prices do not account for this scarcity. As discussed in chapter two, this practice is particularly prevalent in the fast fashion domain. Prices of fast fashion items are implausibly low and by no means account for the full cost of the exploitation of the natural environment need for production.

Figure 3.6: Earth Overshoot Day
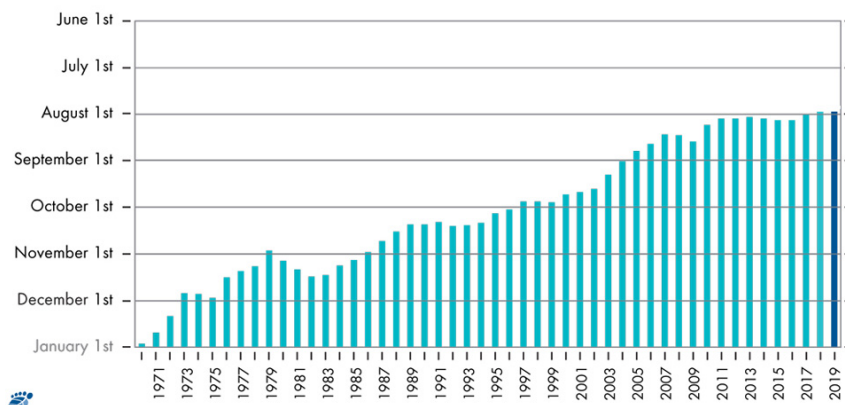
Source: Global Footprint Network National Footprint Accounts (2019)

Thus, natural resources are scarce and the increased production of goods and services for human consumption diminishes the health and productive capacity of the natural environment (Hussen, 2018). It is clear that the economic system, including the current fashion model, treats the natural environment as if it has an endless capacity to regenerate and the ability to continue providing resources infinitely. However, this is not true and market prices do not reflect scarcity and fragility of natural environment. In addition, prices do not account for the negative externalities of extracting and processing resources. Consequently, the unchecked usage of these resources continues. Furthermore, the continued use of natural resources beyond the earths ability for regeneration exacerbates the detrimental repercussions (Global Footprint Network National Footprint Accounts, 2019). Businesses and the economy cannot function without resources from the natural environment. Thus, the economic system needs to be cognisant of the ecological limitations and manage its resource use more responsibly, otherwise continuation of the economic system will not be possible. This applies to fashion businesses too. Fashion businesses need to change in order to secure their future on this planet. Thus, sustainable practices must be adopted, and businesses need to produce ethical fashion. It is important to understand the determining factors of ethical fashion consumption if businesses are to change. They need the support from consumers in order to make sales and stay in business. Therefore, consumer behaviour surrounding ethical fashion needs to be investigated

In contrast to traditional economic theory, environmental economics does factor in ecological limitations and aims to minimise damage to the natural environment. In order to achieve this factor substitutions and technological advances are suggested in order to mitigate the pressure the economy places on the natural environment (Hussen, 2018). However, businesses need to be willing to make the changes in order to operate more sustainably.

3.3 BUSINESS THEORIES

Section 3.2 demonstrated that human behaviour has direct impacts on the health and wellbeing of the natural environment. In addition, businesses and the economy are reliant on the resources sourced from the natural environment in order to carry out economic activity and provide goods and services demanded by consumers. Local and global communities provide businesses with consumers and resources that are necessary for the fulfilment of business objectives. However, corporations have a long history of ignoring the social and environmental impacts of its core activities. Whilst businesses cannot be expected to solve all society's problems, they do have the ability to amend or aggravate the problems they have created. Businesses have a direct unequivocal responsibility for its employees, and the impact of their activities on the lives, livelihood and physical environment of the communities in which they operate. Thus, businesses cannot evade its dependency and subsequent impact on the natural environment and society.

However, neo-classical business theory states that the sole responsibility of a business is to its shareholders (Friedman, 1962). With this approach the aim is to prioritise and maximise company profits and shareholder wealth. This theory was founded by Milton Friedman whose justification for this goal was to align employee incentives with shareholder maximisation in order to reduce agency costs. However, this approach has led to criticism. Often, employees are incentivised with quarterly targets which lead to a short-term focus (Stout, 2013; Marin, 2012). Subsequently, in order to achieve those targets, short cuts are taken that increase profits, but sometimes decrease product quality and often have adverse environmental and social ramifications (Palladino, 2019). These social and environmental implications are often ignored because addressing them would require an outlay of expenses that would decrease profitability and shareholder wealth in the short-term, thereby affecting employee incentives. Shareholder maximisation has been criticised because it may lead managers to making ethically dubious decisions in the pursuit of shareholder value maximisation (Palladino, 2019). For instance, the foundation of the fast fashion industry is built on the production of cheap, poor quality clothing designed for obsolescence. The model succeeds because it sells enormous volumes of clothing in short spaces of time. It is reliant on consumers buying large quantities of clothing at low prices on a regular basis. The clothing can only be produced at such low prices because the natural environment is exploited, and workers are

taken advantage of. Thus, colossal profits are generated, but at the cost of the natural environment and societies.

Friedman's theory (1962) also specifies that social problems should be left to the state. Governments do have the ability to set policies, regulations, taxes, incentives and tender contracts to achieve specific objectives. Consequently, decisions made at government-level could have a significant influence on business, society and the natural environment. However, Friedman's delegation to government is problematic. History shows that states are not capable of dealing with social problems. Currently there is an overwhelming body of evidence that implicates humans as the responsible party for climate change and other major ecological issues that need to be addressed (IPCC, 2014). Yet, governments are still not taking sufficient action. Some governments refuse to acknowledge that there is even a problem despite their contribution to the issues at hand. For instance, the United States, a country with the second largest carbon footprint (World Economic Forum, 2019), is led by Donald Trump who has made statements saying that 'climate change is a hoax'. He has since withdrawn the US's participation in the Paris climate accord, a voluntary agreement instituted with the aim of slowing down climate change. Even when country leaders do acknowledge the existence of climate change and humans' role therein, sufficient action has not been taken. The Kyoto Protocol, initiated in 1997, is a pledge to decrease carbon emissions by industrialised countries in order to limit temperature increase (UNCC, n.d.). The agreement was signed by 37 countries with a pledge to decrease hydrocarbon emissions by 5.2 percent by 2012 (UNCC, n.d.). However, carbon emissions have increased, and global temperatures rose beyond the set target levels (IPCC, 2014). Thus, it is clear that governments are not taking the necessary steps to deal with social and environmental issues. Therefore, businesses need to be responsible for their actions and behaviour in order to deal with the ecological crisis. Specifically, fashion businesses need to operate more ethically and reduce their impact on the natural environment and society.

The Report of Citizen Works Corporate Reform Commission (2004:5) have gone as far to say that, "shareholder primacy is a major design flaw in the corporation and, left unmitigated, means that virtually all large publicly traded corporations present an inherent danger to society because as profit-making machines they know no limits and boundaries: they will continue to grow and expand until they have destroyed everything in their paths." As the social and environmental implications of human behaviour, especially business activity, become increasingly apparent a demand for action has been called.

3.3.1 Corporate social responsibility

Academic theory and practical examples suggest that businesses could adopt a more holistic approach in order to take responsibility for communities and the environment whilst also achieving favourable profits and other benefits (Palladino, 2019; Pedersen, 2015; Horrigan, 2010; Hawkins, 2006). Consideration for the environmental and social implications of business activities is often termed corporate social responsibility (CSR). However, consensus for the exact definition and scope of CSR has not yet been reached. On one end of the scale, CSR is defined as voluntary company activities that consider social and environmental concerns (Horrigan, 2010). On the other hand, CSR can be defined as the responsibility of a business for the totality of its impact whilst embedding society's values and expectations into its core activities and its treatment of society and the natural environment (Pedersen, 2015). CSR is often criticised as being vague and too broad, and the range of definitions contributes to this uncertainty (Horrigan, 2010). Some definitions and academic literature emphasise the voluntary nature of CSR as well as its ability to achieve benefits such as competitive advantages, recognition from customers and advertising opportunities (Khojastehpour & Johns, 2014; Schmitt & Renken, 2012; Aras & Daidj, 2015). However, this framing suggests that CSR is an optional add-on to existing business, a 'nice extra' to have, rather than integral to the business and applicable to the core operations. This is evident in the fashion industry. As discussed in chapter two, fast fashion brands have begun to advertise their sustainability efforts. However, when analysing their actual behaviour in comparison to their claims, it seems these sustainability efforts are tokenistic, and can even be regarded as misleading advertising and greenwashing. On the other hand, ethical fashion businesses include socially responsible practices into every step for their supply chain and aim to minimise their impact on societies and the natural environment.

Horrigan (2010) reports that some businesses spend more money on advertising their CSR efforts than on their actual CSR activities. Thus, in many cases CSR is used as a marketing tool with no significant efforts to back up the claims. Subsequently, CSR is often associated with greenwashing and misleading advertising (Bazillier & Vauday, 2009). These tactics incite scepticism amongst CSR and threaten to undermine the credibility of the entire movement.

Nonetheless, when done right CSR can be powerful. Whilst not required by law, some companies embrace CSR because they can recognise that business, the natural environment and society are interdependent. For example, outdoor apparel company Patagonia have made it their business mission 'to save our home planet'. Every aspect of their business embraces CSR with a particular emphasis on reducing their environmental impact (Annual Benefit Corporation Report, 2018). The business has had remarkable

success which has been reflected in their profits, sustained growth and employee retainment (Beer, 2018; Haid, 2014).

In cases such as Patagonia, CSR is undertaken not just to increase profitability and to unlock other benefits, but because it is considered vital in order to ensure the continuation of business on earth. As with Patagonia, CSR is a way of realising sustainable development, thereby achieving economic, social and environmental goals. The fashion industry could learn from examples such as Patagonia who are able to generate considerable profits whilst minimising their effect on the natural environment and societies.

The concept of CSR arose in the 1950s with the publication of a book called *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*, written by Howard Bowen. Since that time, the focus of CSR has changed, and its meaning and context have changed in relation to the prevalent issues of the times. As the severity and widespread implications of the current ecological crisis become incontrovertible, businesses practising CSR have come to place more emphasis on the impacts of their activities on the natural environment (Hawkins, 2006). Nonetheless, concern for social issues remains an important tenant of CSR, especially in a developing country like South Africa where unemployment and poverty levels are worryingly high. The application of CSR is firm, industry and country specific which makes it challenging to prioritise one CSR activity over another (Hawkins, 2006). Various international organisations, most notably the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, have put forward guidelines that firms can use in order to apply CSR practices to their current business operations. Common themes include recognition and adherence to human rights, the development and advancement of local communities, upholding corporate governance principles, creation of employment and the neutralisation of adverse environmental impacts.

CSR is criticised because its application to actual business can be challenging. However, certain theories have been developed in order to help business apply CSR in a practical way. Carroll's pyramid of CSR (1991) is one such theory that has become widely published, discussed and applied. Carroll's pyramid states that businesses have a hierarchy of responsibilities with regard to social responsibility. Firstly, businesses need to meet economic obligations. Businesses must be profitable in order to be sustainable. The economic rewards of conducting businesses are needed to pay suppliers and employees and to continue producing goods and services demanded by consumers. Specifically, fashion businesses need to generate profits in order to be able to produce textiles, pay fabric suppliers, pay garment workers, advertise their products etc. If fashion businesses are

unable to make these payments, they will have no product to sell resulting in possible bankruptcy.

Secondly businesses should conform to the legal requirements mandated by the countries in which they operate. Laws and regulations are the mandatory conditions businesses must comply with in order to operate. The laws and regulations reflect society's minimum expectations of the way businesses should conduct themselves, they are a codified form of ethics. South Africa's environmental law is extensive and robust. However, implementation is sometimes lacking. Section 24 of South African Constitutional law (1996) specifies that "Everyone has the right to:

- An environment which is not harmful to their health or well-being
- Have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations through reasonable legislative and other measures that:
  - o prevent pollution and ecological degradation,
  - o promote conservation, secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources, while promoting justifiable economic and social development."

Section 24 is governed by the National Environmental Management Act (1998). Furthermore, South African law has several Specific Environmental Management Acts (SEMAs) which pertain to specific environmental issues as indicated in Table 3.1. The Climate Change Bill is currently before parliament. The bill will regulate the level of carbon dioxide emitted by companies in South Africa. This bill could have a major effect on fashion businesses. They may be forced to change their operations to be more sustainable or else have to pay huge fines for nonadherence to regulations. If businesses had to change their operations to be more sustainable or ethical it will be necessary to understand how consumers will react. Therefore, knowledge of ethical fashion consumer behaviour will be essential.

Table 3.1: SEMAs

	Specific Environmental Management Acts	Date of incorporation
1	The Protected Areas Act	2003
2	The Biodiversity Act	2004
3	The Air Quality Act	2004
4	The Integrated Coastal Management Act	2008
5	The Waste Act	2008
6	The National Water Act	1998
7	The Environmental Conservation Act	1989
8	The World Heritage Act	1999

South African Government (1989-2008)

Only once the economic and legal obligations have been met, do ethical, and then philanthropic, activities take priority.

Ethical responsibilities refer to the expectations of society that are not codified. Laws are insufficient. Businesses should be responsible for all the people who work for them, their actions and its effects on society and environment. Ethical considerations include human rights, morals and justice. Businesses should conduct themselves in anticipation of future laws in order to minimise or neutralise their damage to society and the environment. Ethical behaviour includes doing more than just the bare minimum stipulated by law. Ethical fashion businesses subscribe to this position. Ethical fashion is built on the notion that environmental and social considerations are built into every step of the supply chain. Therefore, ethical fashion businesses aim to minimise any negative impacts on the environment and societies. Furthermore, their intention is to neutralise harmful effects and maximise positive impacts, thereby exceeding legal stipulations.

Lastly, philanthropic responsibilities refer to businesses' voluntary or discretionary activities. This includes acting as a corporate citizen and giving back to the community. Philanthropy is not a mandatory ethical practice, but evidence indicates that it has nonetheless come to be expected by society (Horrigan, 2010).

This hierarchy may suggest that under this CSR theory businesses are allowed to forgo social and environmental responsibilities in order to achieve economic success. However, it is important to note that Carroll's theory emphasises that ethical behaviour needs to be integrated at every level of the pyramid and throughout business' core activities (Carroll, 1991). Businesses should not violate ethics in order to achieve additional economic gains. Similarly, businesses cannot practice philanthropy in substitution for the health and wellbeing of employees. Thus, businesses need to address all levels of the pyramid simultaneously in order to act in a socially responsible way.

When executed correctly the adoption of CSR has been linked to various positive outcomes. Businesses that practice CSR raise the standard of social and environmental practices beyond what is mandated by regulations. By setting the example, businesses can encourage the adoption of better social and environmental practices across the industry, inciting other businesses to follow suit (Arevalo & Aravind, 2017). In turn, those which choose not to adopt the more sustainable practices might be perceived as outdated. The potential damage to their reputation could also pressurise companies to implement more sustainable practices even if they do not specifically agree with the underlying motivation.

CSR has also been shown to stimulate growth (Bocquet, Le Bas, Mothe & Poussing, 2017:250), innovation (Arevalo & Aravind, 2017:213) and the creation and sustenance of a competitive advantage generally (Aras & Daidj, 2015; Roy & Karna, 2015; Lee, Lee, Pae &

Park, 2016) and in the apparel industry specifically (Moore, de Silva & Hartmann, 2012; Schmitt & Renken, 2012; Khojastehpour & Johns, 2014). Although difficult to prove, there seems to be a correlation between CSR and improved financial performance (Torugsa, O'Donohue & Hecker, 2012; Salvioni, & Gennari, 2017:41, Oh, Hong & Hwang, 2017). Modern critics argue that many businesses abuse CSR, using it as a marketing tool to attract positive publicity whilst doing very little actual socially responsible work (Bazillier & Vauday, 2009). Additionally, it has noted that some businesses engage in CSR activities that conflict with their everyday operations (Wagner, Lutz & Weitz, 2009). For instance, some fashion businesses pride themselves on ensuring good working conditions and fair pay for their in-house employees, but simultaneously outsource work to factories where workers face horrendous conditions and receive below minimum wage level compensation. This kind of conduct could be viewed as hypocritical behaviour and threatens to discredit companies who make genuine CSR efforts. On the other hand, some criticise businesses for not engaging with CSR enough and emphasise that business cannot continue without more attention to social and environmental issues (Rangan, Chase & Karim, 2015).

Stakeholder theory has been identified as a tool that businesses can use to more thoroughly engage with CSR. The importance of managing stakeholders in a mutually beneficial way was originally theorised by Freeman (1984).

3.3.2 Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory argues that business success can be achieved when businesses prioritise mutually beneficial relationships with their stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). Thus, all stakeholders should be managed, not shareholders exclusively. Freeman defines stakeholders as groups and individuals who have a stake in the business, who are affected by the business's actions or who can impact the business. Stakeholders usually include employees, suppliers, governments and local communities, but may also differ amongst businesses.

Stakeholder theory has gained traction in the business world as concerns of poor corporate governance increase. Stakeholder theory has been described as an instrument that managers can utilise in order to broaden their view of their roles and responsibilities beyond profit maximisation. Additionally, some view stakeholder theory as a tool to be used to manage businesses more sustainably and ethically. However, stakeholder theory receives criticism because the definition of a stakeholder has changed over time, especially in academic writing (Dent, 2008). Thus, critics argue that businesses may interpret and apply the theory in varying ways because of the changes in definition. In addition, it has argued that it is impossible for businesses to consider all stakeholders simultaneously and it is likely

that conflicts of interest will arise at any given time (Dent, 2008). Stakeholder theory does not provide a solution that dictates how these conflicts of interest should be mitigated. Nonetheless, scholars and managers alike commend stakeholder for its practicality and simplicity (Harrison, Freeman & Abreu, 2015). Furthermore, it has been observed that stakeholder theory can be used as a means to achieving CSR (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2015).

Stakeholder theory rests on the premise that long term business survival relies on input from various stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). Thus, stakeholders need to be kept satisfied in order to ensure the continued success of the business. By attending to all stakeholder groups, the business adopts a long-term perspective. The focus shifts from profit creation in the short-term to attention to building strategic, long-lasting mutually beneficial relationships that will allow for continued success in the future. In addition, stakeholder theory assumes that shareholders will automatically benefit as a result of the attention to all stakeholder needs and desires and the subsequent long-term focus. Accordingly, the adoption of stakeholder theory has been linked to various positive outcomes including the provision of a sustainable competitive advantage (Jones, Harrison and Felps, 2018; Sisodia, Sheth and Wolfe, 2014; Harrison, Bosse and Philips, 2010), enhanced and enduring corporate financial performance (Choi and Wang, 2009; Sisoida *et al.*, 2014; Henisz, Dorobantu and Nartey, 2013), improved operational performance (Henisz *et al.*, 2013), enhanced innovation (Harrison *et al*., 2010) and increased employee satisfaction (Ginena and Wicks, 2017; Fonseca, Ramos, Rosa, Braga, Ana Cristina and Sampaio, 2016; Harrison and Wicks, 2013; Bridges and Harrison, 2003). Freeman (1984) argues that companies play an important role in society by creating jobs, innovating, providing goods and services for community members, and subsequently business success should be valued holistically and not based exclusively on the value created for shareholders. Fashion businesses could take note of this. If fashion businesses choose to adopt more ethical behaviour they could be rewarded with various benefits.

3.3.1.2 Stakeholder theory and the natural environment

If stakeholder theory is a tool to be used to create holistic value for companies and communities, then it is assumed that attention to the health and wellbeing of the natural environment should be a critical consideration. However, there has been debate as to whether the environment should or can be considered a stakeholder because it is not a human group or community. Boutilier (2011) raises the issue of theoretical parsimony, arguing that the inclusion of non-human entities in the stakeholder model would make the concept too broad and thus the practical application of stakeholder theory would be too complex. These sentiments are echoed by Philips (2003), Donaldson and Preston (1995) and Greenley and Foxall (1997) who agree that stakeholder theory should be limited to a small group of human stakeholders who have direct involvement in the business. This

perspective, specifying stakeholders as only the direct participants in the business, is often labelled the narrow view of stakeholder definition. Thus, the narrow view does not account for 'silent' stakeholders like the natural environment. However, Freeman's definition of a stakeholder, 'any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives', does allow for a broader view of those that can be considered stakeholders.

One approach that can guide business decisions affecting the natural environment is to contemplate the interests of future generations who will have to live with the implications of business's current actions. However, this approach is problematic because no one can definitively say what future generations will desire. Nonetheless, if one is to consider that business would not be possible without the resources provided by the natural environment, then it seems clear that the natural environment must be considered a stakeholder. This reasoning has been put forth by various researchers including Starik (1995), Driscoll and Starik (2004) and Gauthier (2018) who argue that the natural environment should be considered a stakeholder not for moral reasons, but because the perpetuation of business cannot be taken out of context of the natural environment. In addition, their research has indicated that consideration for the natural environment affords businesses the opportunity for innovation and additional value creation. Furthermore, if businesses act in a way that disregards the health of the natural environment, they impair the planet's ability to continue providing those necessary resources, thereby decreasing the probability of the continuation of business success in the future (Simmons, 1981). Thus, businesses should prioritise the natural environment in order to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship and sustain future business success. Businesses have a responsibility to operate sustainably now in the interest of stability of the future business environment as a whole. This applies to fashion businesses in particular. Their impact on the natural environment is detrimental. The fashion places its own future in jeopardy by continuing with business-as-usual. Therefore, fashion businesses cannot ignore its effect on the natural environment any longer, urgent changes are necessary.

If applied to the context of the fashion industry, fashion businesses should minimise, or ideally neutralise, their impact on the natural environment. In many cases, parts of the fashion production process have direct negative influences on the natural environment surrounding textile and garment factories and farms with subsequent adverse implications for the communities living there. For instance, it is common practice for dye houses to pump untreated wastewater full of toxic chemicals into nearby rivers. These rivers are used by local communities for drinking, bathing and washing clothes. Not only does the use of polluted water pose serious health risks to people, but local fauna, flora, groundwater and soil quality

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is also impacted. Thus, under the principles of stakeholder theory, fashion businesses should mitigate these environmental implications in order to protect the interests of the nearby communities. In addition, it is likely that the employees working in the factories and farms are part of the communities affected by the environmental repercussions.

3.3.1.2 Stakeholder theory and employees

Stakeholder theory, both narrow and broad views, expressly state that employee wellbeing and interests should be one of business's core focuses. Studies indicate that businesses who practice stakeholder theory and attend to employee interests are more successful in attracting skilled employees (Bauman & Skitka, 2012) as well as achieving enhanced employee retention (Bode, Singh and Rogan, 2015), increased productivity (Porter & Kramer, 2002) and employee satisfaction (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2007).

Should fashion businesses wish to reap the benefits associated with the application of stakeholder theory they first need to ensure compliance with labour laws. In addition, businesses need to guarantee basic employee rights. These include the right to fair compensation, a safe and discrimination-free work environment and union representation (United Nation Global compact, n.d.). However, the fashion industry is riddled with labour abuses and controversy. The Solidarity Centre (2019) reports that 80 percent of female garment workers in Bangladesh, the second largest exporter of ready-made garments (World Trade Statistical Review, 2019), have experienced some kind of violence or harassment on the job. Moreover, reports of fires, factory collapses and dangerous working conditions are frequent in garment factories in Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, Pakistan (International Labor Rights Forum, 2015).

Furthermore, there is controversy surrounding the enormous gap between the minimum wage and a living wage paid to garment workers in Asia. A living wage is the income needed to provide a family with food, shelter, healthcare, clothing, education, transport and savings (Fairtrade, n.d.). Earning a living wage is considered a global human right (United Nation Global compact, n.d.). However, research executed by the Clean Clothes Campaign indicates that nineteen of the twenty biggest global fashion businesses could show no evidence of a living wage being paid to is employees in garment factories (Tailored Wages 2019: The state of pay in the global garment industry, 2019). In addition, research shows that that the minimum wage for garment workers in Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Cambodia and Turkey, the top six largest exporters of garments, constitutes as little as 20 percent of living wage estimations (Tailored Wages 2019: The state of pay in the global garment industry, 2019). Garment workers across the globe have attempted to take on human rights violations and demand improvements from management. In many cases

attempts to unionise garment workers have been met with violence and abuse. In other cases, when unionization has been successful demands are simply ignored or stifled by management (ITUC Global Rights Index, 2019).

It seems that fashion businesses still have a long way to go in terms of assuring basic employee rights. These issues need to be addressed if businesses wish to achieve holistic success by means of stakeholder management.

CSR and stakeholder theory should not be used as a way to advertise business or gain a favourable reputation, but as a business strategy that companies need to adopt in order for the continuation of business in the future. Companies are embedded in society and need to act in accordance. However, businesses also need buy in from their customers if they are to survive. Despite the evidence that supports the incorporation of social and environmental considerations into business practices, businesses need consumers that are willing to purchase ethically made products. If consumers do not support ethical companies for any number of reasons, the business will not be successful and might be forced to revert to their conventional ways. Thus, it is important to understand why consumers are or are not drawn to ethical business products. In order to understand the factors influencing ethical consumption consumer theory needs to be investigated.

3.4 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour is the study of how individuals or groups decide to spend their money on various goods and services, the activities associated with the purchase and the consumption and disposal of the good and services purchased (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012). The emotional, mental and behavioural aspects associated with the purchase are also included in this field of study. The research community as well as actual businesses concur that consumers and their behaviour are intrinsic to business success (Evans, Jamal & Foxall, 2006). Firms are dependent on consumers for the purchase of goods and services offered, and thus their purchase decisions and behaviour can ultimately determine the success or failure of the business. In addition, purchase decisions made by consumers impact the demand for resources extracted from the natural environment, waste created by business activities and employment. Consumer behaviour also includes the disposal of products and services purchased which have implications for the natural environment and society.

Consumer behaviour has been theorised and combined with various perspectives and models. Table 3.2 summarises some of the most notable consumer behaviour theory topics.

Table 3.2: Consumer behaviour theory, models and focus areas

Domain	Associated model/theory
Motivations and values	Expectancy theory Materialism Core values Consumer involvement Needs Drive theory
The self	Self-concept Self esteem Real and ideal selves
Sex roles	Gender differences LGBTQI+ consumers Beauty ideals The Western ideal Body image
Personality and lifestyles	Freudian theory Neo-Freudian theories Trait theory Psychographics VALS2 Geodemography
Attitudes	ABC model Cognitive dissonance Attitude-behaviour gap Fishbein model Extended Fishbein model Theory of reasoned action
Decision making	Consumer decision making process Types of consumer decisions Information search Biases Perceived risks Product categorisation Heuristics Brand loyalty Inertia
Buying and disposing	Temporal factors Social and physical surroundings Antecedent states Ecommerce Atmospherics Impulse shopping Post purchase satisfaction Product quality perceptions Recycling
Group influence and opinion leadership	Reference groups Conformity Social comparison Word-of-mouth Virtual communities Viral marketing Social networks Opinion leadership
Household decision making	Family structures

	Family lifecycle
	Decision roles
Income and social class	Income patterns
	Consumer confidence
	Social class
	Social stratification
	Status symbols
Age subcultures	Age and consumer identity
	Perceived age
Culture	Myths and rituals
	Sacred and profane consumption
Global consumer culture	Cultural selection
	Culture production symbols
	Pop culture

Solomon (2006) ; Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard (2012); Schiffman & Kanuk (2010) (Adapted)

As demonstrated in Table 3.2 the theories, perspectives and models associated with consumer theory are wide-ranging. However, the focus of this study is consumer behaviour relating to ethical fashion products. Therefore, it is important to understand the theorised consumer behaviour associated with ethical fashion in order to understand the drivers of ethical fashion consumption. Ethical fashion consumption is often associated with positive attitudes, yet actual consumption of ethical fashion remains low. A study conducted by Fashion Revolution (2018) interviewed over 5000 individuals aged between sixteen and seventy-five years old from the five biggest European markets in order to understand consumers' attitudes to fashion. The results indicate that the approximately 80 percent of consumers think that fashion brands need to address global poverty, climate change, environmental protection and gender inequality. In addition, 38 percent of consumer indicate that they take environmental and social welfare impacts into consideration when buying clothing. The research also indicated that Generation Z and Y consumers are the most considerate of social and ethical concerns when buying clothing. Thus, it seems like consumer attitudes support ethical fashion.

This research is supported by Pollari (2016), Diddi (2014), McNeill and Moore (2015) and Wiederhold and Martinez (2018) whose research indicate that consumer attitudes towards ethical fashion are favourable. However, actual ethical fashion purchases remain low. Although difficult to measure, it has been reported that ethical fashion sales constitute 1 percent of total fashion sales. This inconsistency between attitude and action is termed the attitude-behaviour gap and is typical of ethical or 'eco' products such as househould cleaning products, food and electrical appliances (Johnstone & Tan, 2015; Gleim & Lawson, 2014; Jacobs, Petersen, Hörisch & Battenfeld, 2018). It seems that this phenomenon is applicable to ethical fashion consumption too. A largescale study conducted in the UK indicated that 30 percent of consumers have positive attitudes towards ethical fashion, yet only 3 percent of

consumers purchase fashion ethically. This phenomenon has been termed the 30:3 syndrome (Cowe & Williams, 2000). Understanding the attitude-behaviour gap is essential in order to translate attitudes into purchasing behaviour. Various studies have attempted to understand the attitude-behaviour gap in the ethical fashion context. However, it seems a consensus has not yet been reached. A more holistic comprehension of the factors influencing ethical fashion consumption is necessary. Therefore, the following chapter will discuss and synthesise the extant research pertaining to ethical fashion consumption.

3.5 CONCLUSION

Scientists agree that the planet is currently undergoing an ecological crisis and that humans are the responsible party. Human activity is responsible for serious damage to the natural environment which impairs, or in some cases prevents, its ability to provide ecosystem services which all life on earth is inextricably dependent on. Furthermore, the natural environment provides businesses with resources necessary to maintain the economic system. In turn, businesses' activities impact the ability of the natural environment to regenerate the indispensable resources. Thus, humans and businesses should behave in a way that protects the health and well-being of the natural environment in the interest of safeguarding life on earth, and subsequently business and the economy.

Traditional business theory suggests that businesses need only attend to shareholder interests. However, this approach ignores other entities that are critical to business success. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an alternative approach that advocates the consideration of environmental and social constituents as well as shareholders. The adoption of CSR has been linked to various benefits including employee satisfaction, the creation of a sustainable competitive advantage and financial success. However, in many cases tokenistic CSR efforts are exploited in an attempt to achieve the related benefits, which has resulted in an association between CSR and greenwashing and disingenuity. Nonetheless, when authentically executed, CSR can be a powerful tool to achieve environmental, social and financial success. The stakeholder theory has been credited as means that could be utilised to achieve these successes. By engaging with all stakeholders in an intentional manner, businesses can ensure that all constituents that influence and are influenced by the business are satisfied and are able to productively contribute to the success of the business. In the context of the fashion industry there are two important stakeholders to be considered; the natural environment and employees. The natural environment is a vital asset that businesses require for their operations. In addition, the manner in which businesses operate affects the health and well-being of the environment. Thus, in order to be successful businesses should prioritise the protection of the natural environment. In addition, businesses need to ensure that employees are well-treated, have safe-working conditions and receive fair pay for the

work they do. Consumers are a third stakeholder that are central to any business. Should businesses choose to operate with social and environmental responsibility they still require support from consumers. Without this support business failure is unavoidable. Thus, it is critical to understand consumer behaviour in regard to ethical fashion. Research has indicated that consumers generally have positive attitudes to ethical fashion consumption, although actual purchases remain low. Therefore, the focus of this study is on the consumer and their behaviour relating to ethical fashion.

The following chapter will examine ethical consumption and behaviour in the fashion context specifically. Extant literature on the subject will be examined and discussed in order to formulate the model that will be utilised for the purposes of this study.

CHAPTER 4

ETHICAL FASHION CONSUMPTION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to understand the possible consumer resistance to ethical fashion, it is necessary to explore the existing research that has examined ethical fashion consumption which will guide the formation of the model to be tested in the study at hand. Thus, in chapter four the major studies and theories that contribute to the knowledge of ethical consumption behaviour, and more specifically ethical fashion consumption behaviour are discussed. First, ethical consumption is defined, followed by a more detailed discussion of ethical fashion consumption. Thereafter, the literature pertaining to ethical fashion consumers is reviewed. In addition, the existing research focussed on ethical fashion consumption is analysed. From this discussion Stern's (2000) Theory of Environmentally Significant Behaviour is singled out and explored in further detail. The Framework of environmentally significant behaviour is applied to ethical fashion consumption. Finally, the study's hypotheses are developed.

4.2 ETHICAL CONSUMPTION

Ethical consumption is defined as a form of activism that rests on the premise that when consumers purchase a product, they also buy into the processes used to create the product (Kirchoff, 2016). Thus, consumers support or sanction certain social and environmental practices by choosing to purchase products manufactured using those practices. Ethical consumption has been used to bring about change in various industries including dolphin-free tinned tuna, GMO-free fruit and vegetables and beauty products that have not been tested on animals.

Presently, consumers have more access to information than ever before, and consequently have the power to investigate the social and environmental implications associated with companies and their products. In addition, communication between businesses and consumers is no longer a one-way channel. Consumers have the ability to voice their opinions, dissatisfaction and plea for change more publicly than before. Critics argue that a small group of consumers cannot decide what is in the best interests of the public and therefore should not have the power to influence change on behalf of the general public. However, opponents argue that governments are insufficient in regulating corporate behaviour practices in order to ensure sustainable and ethical behaviour. Subsequently, the responsibility is left to consumers to demand change from companies unwilling to adopt more ethical practices. Consumers who are concerned about the state of society and the natural environment are often advised 'vote with your wallet'. As consumers are embedded in the free capitalist society, it has been argued that the way consumers spend their money sends

signals to companies about their preferences and priorities (Kings & Wild, 2019). Furthermore, legislation can only guide corporate behaviour up to a point. Beyond that, consumer behaviour has the potential to influence corporations.

Corporations have more power now than ever before. Of the 100 largest global economies 69 of them are transnational companies (Lent, 2018). Effectively, those 69 companies have more influence than most governments (Francis, 2016). Consumers grant corporations influence by purchasing their products, thereby supporting the business and their policies.

In the fashion context, a group of consumers have begun to use their consumption behaviour in an attempt to drive change in the fashion industry. Consumers concerned about the environmental and social issues associated with the fashion industry may seek out ethical fashion. Ethical fashion is fashion that is designed, sourced and manufactured with environmental and social considerations in mind. Thus, ethical fashion aims to minimise its negative impact on society and the natural environment. A more detailed definition of ethical fashion was discussed in chapter two.

Ethical fashion consumers seek out fashion products that are characterised by some or all of the above-mentioned considerations. However, ethical fashion sales still constitute a very small proportion of total fashion sales despite seemingly positive attitudes. Thus, there is an inconsistency between consumers' self-proclaimed attitudes towards ethical fashion and their actual behaviour. It is imperative to understand the potential consumer resistance to ethical fashion in order to aid decision makers in the ethical fashion industry, thereby ensuring the continuation of fashion businesses that are more considerate of the natural environment and social issues. Thus, it is essential to investigate the consumer behaviour associated with ethical consumption.

Consumer behaviour is a broad field and many theories have been established that attempt to explain consumer behaviour in the ethical product realm. Research has been conducted that explores ethical consumption generally. These studies focus on various categories within the ethical product domain, including organic good, Fairtrade coffee, energy-saving house appliances, electric cars and cleaning products (Gleim & Lawson, 2014; Bultler, 2013; Barbarossa, De Pelsmacker & Moons, 2017). However, it is posited that the results of these studies cannot necessarily be applied to ethical fashion consumption specifically, as fashion purchasing differs significantly from other types of consumer behaviour. Consumer theory focussing on traditional fashion consumption indicates that certain factors are essential in determining behaviour. These factors would not necessarily have been included in studies concerning consumption of non-fashion products. For instance, specific product attributes

such as stylishness and quality have been identified as key to fashion consumption decisions (Min, Overby & Kun, 2012). Furthermore, social media has come to play an important role in the fashion world, especially amongst Generation Z and Y (Loureiro, Serra & Guerreiro, 2019; Orpha & Vandenbosch, 2017). This would not necessarily have been accounted for in non-fashion related studies. In addition, the extent and nature of the effects that the current fashion industry have on the environment and society are significantly different to other industries with ethical alternatives (Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017). Thus, consumer behaviour may be different when considering ethical fashion products.

4.3 ETHICAL FASHION CONSUMPTION

Research has been conducted that focusses on ethical fashion specifically. Previous studies have concentrated on logistic and supply chain issues related to ethical fashion (Moretto, Macchion, Lion, Caniato, Danese & Vinelli, 2018), branding strategies for ethical fashion brands (Nagurney & Yu, 2012) as well as the plausibility of ethical fashion in developing countries (Khan, 2019). Furthermore, research has been conducted on ethical fashion consumer behaviour. Various aspects of consumer behaviour have been studied, including personal values and motivations (Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014), intention to purchase (Yoo, Divita & Kim, 2018), barriers inhibiting consumption (Moon, Lai, Lam & Chang, 2015) and willingness to pay premium prices for ethical fashion (Shen, Wang, Chris & Shum, 2012). However, much of this research measures consumer behaviour relating to very specific ethical fashion products or behaviours such as organic cotton t-shirts, Fairtrade denim jeans or clothing recycling which are used as a proxy for ethical fashion in general. Furthermore, many of the cited studies measure consumer behaviour for sustainable, green or eco fashion which only include environmental considerations and exclude the social aspects entirely. It is argued that these results may not be applicable to ethical fashion which considers both environmental and social issues. Thus, there is lack of research that measures consumer behaviour of ethical fashion in its true sense.

The majority of the studies have been conducted in developed countries like the USA, South Korea, the UK and Germany where access to and awareness of ethical fashion is more prevalent. According to the Ethical Fashion Forum (2015) approximately 66 percent of ethical fashion brands are located in the UK and the US. It is suspected that the results of these studies cannot necessarily be applied to the South African context as the country has unique education, income and poverty levels that may influence consumer behaviour. The OECD reports that the average net adjusted household income is less than half of most European household incomes. In addition, the ethical fashion movement was pioneered in Europe, thus European consumers may be more aware and educated about ethical fashion. There is very little research that has studied ethical fashion consumption in a developing country context

such as South Africa. Despite the extant research it appears that there is no widespread consensus regarding ethical fashion consumer behaviour. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the major studies that focussed on ethical fashion consumption as well as their respective measures of ethical fashion.

Table 4.1: Studies focussed on ethical fashion consumption

Title	Author and date	Country	Measure of ethical fashion
Sustainable brand extensions of fast fashion retailers	Hill & Lee, 2015	USA	Environmental (organic cotton, biodegradable dye)
Popularisation of sustainable fashion: barriers and solutions	Moon, Lai, lam & Chang, 2014	Korea	Environmental
Green Leather for Ethical Consumers in China and Korea: Facilitating Ethical Consumption with Value–Belief–Attitude Logic	Jung, Kim & Oh, 2016	China and Korea	Environmental (eco-friendly leather)
Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014	US, South Korea and China	Environmental (organic cotton)
Internal and external barriers to eco-conscious apparel acquisition	Connell, 2010	USA	Environmental
Sustainable fashion consumption and the fast fashion conundrum: fashionable consumers and attitudes to sustainability in clothing choice	McNeill & Moore, 2015	New Zealand	Environmental and social
Motivational drivers of fast fashion avoidance	Kim, Choo & Yoon, 2012	South Korea	
The consumption side of sustainable fashion supply chain: Understanding consumer eco-fashion consumption decision	Chan & Wong, 2012	Hong Kong	Environmental
The impact of utilitarian and hedonistic shopping values on sustainable fashion consumption: The moderating role of religiosity	Razzaq, Razzaq, Yousaf & Hong, 2018	Pakistan	Environmental and social
Consumer's purchase intention of ethical fashion	Pollari, 2016	Finland	Environmental and social (but social limited to sweatshop labour)
Understanding ethical consumption decisions: The role of values, attitudes and expectations in the apparel purchasing context	Sonali, 2014	USA	Environmental and social
Young Australian consumers' preferences for fashion apparel attributes	Jegethesan, Sneddon & Soutar, 2012	Australia	Environmental and social (denim jeans)
Predicting consumer intention to purchase clothing products made from sustainable fabrics: Implications for the fast-fashion industry	Yoo, Divita & Kim, 2018	USA	Environmental
Personal values and ethical fashion consumption	Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014	USA	Environmental and social
Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry	Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018	Germany	Environmental
Green thinking but thoughtless buying? An empirical extension of the value-attitude-behaviour hierarchy in sustainable clothing	Jacobs, Petersen, Hörisch & Battenfeld, 2018	Germany	Environmental and social
Style consumption: its drivers and role in sustainable apparel consumption	Cho, Gupta & Kim 2015	USA	Environmental and social
The impact of ethical fashion on consumer purchase behavior	Shen, Wang, Chris & Shum, 2012	Hong Kong	Environmental and social (but social limited to sweatshop labour)
Individual values and motivational complexities in ethical clothing consumption: A means-end approach	Jägel, Keeling, Reppel & Gruber, 2012	UK	Environmental and social
Barriers to socially responsible apparel purchasing behavior: Are consumers right?	Kozar & Hiller Connell, 2017	USA	Environmental and social
Fashion Revolution consumer survey	Fashion Revolution	France, Italy, Germany, UK and Spain	Environmental and social
Socially and environmentally responsible apparel consumption: knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors	Kozar, & Hiller Connell, 2013	USA	Environmental and social
Socially responsible knowledge and behaviors: comparing upper- vs. lower-classmen	Kozar, & Hiller Connell, 2010	USA	Environmental and social
Consumers' perceptions of 'green': Why and how consumers use eco-fashion and green beauty products	Cervellon & Carey, 2011	Monaco and	Environmental

		Canada	
Eco-clothing, consumer identity and ideology	Niinimäki, 2010	Finland	Environmental
The puzzle of the ethical fashion consumer: Implications for the future of the fashion system	Crane, 2016	UK and USA	Environmental and social

4.3.1 Ethical fashion consumer

In theory a true ethical fashion consumer is an individual that evaluates the full environmental and social impact of a product before purchasing it (Crane, 2016). However, practically this is not always the case. Realistically, very few consumers are aware of the full set of ramifications of clothing production and consumption (Pradhan, 2019). Additionally, these social and environmental implications will vary from business to business. Thus, ethical consumers will not always be able to evaluate a product's full total environmental and social impact. They must do the best they can with the information available to them.

The ethical fashion consumer is an individual who is aware of the impact of the fashion industry on the environment and society (Crane, 2016). Subsequently, these consumers attempt to minimise the negative impact their personal fashion consumption has by consciously purchasing fashion items with more consideration for the way these items are produced. They seek out fashion brands that produce their clothing in a more sustainable and ethical way. In addition, they may be more mindful of the quantity of garments they purchase and how they care for the clothing during its lifetime.

Ethical fashion consumers tend to seek out garments that are well-made, compliment their personal style and that they know they will use for years. They prefer to purchase fewer more expensive garments rather than many cheap items. Quality is valued over quantity. Ethical fashion consumers tend to avoid trends, selecting clothing designs that are timeless and classic that can be worn for years (Marchand, de Coninck & Walker, 2005).

Exploratory research indicates that ethical fashion consumers evaluate buyers' remorse, utility, hedonism, satisfaction and clothing disposal in specific ways (Maegan & Yan, 2013). Ethical fashion consumers avoid buyers' remorse by choosing to invest in good quality pieces that will endure over time (Maegan & Yan, 2013; Niinimäki, 2010). Similarly, utility and hedonism are maximised by purchasing high quality items that were produced ethically and that will be worn for years (Maegan & Yan, 2013; Marchand *et al.*, 2005). Ethical fashion consumers tend to be satisfied with their purchases post consumption when the quality holds up over time and allows for frequent wearing. It is expected that ethical fashion garments will last, so when they do consumers are satisfied. Nonetheless, more research is necessary in order to properly define the ethical fashion consumer and their motivations for purchasing ethically.

4.3.2 Ethical fashion consumption

Ethical fashion consumption is often associated with positive attitudes, yet actual consumption of ethical fashion remains low. A study conducted by Fashion Revolution (2018)

interviewed over 5000 individuals aged between sixteen and seventy-five years old from the five biggest European markets in order to understand consumers' attitudes to fashion. The results indicate that the approximately 80 percent of consumers think that fashion brands need to address global poverty, climate change, environmental protection and gender inequality. In addition, 38 percent of consumers indicate that they take environmental and social welfare impacts into consideration when buying clothing. The research also indicated that Generation Z and Y consumers are the most considerate of social and ethical concerns when buying clothing.

This research is supported by Pollari (2016), Diddi (2014), McNeill and Moore (2015) and Wiederhold and Martinez (2018) whose research indicate that consumer attitudes towards ethical fashion are favourable. However, actual ethical fashion purchases remain low. Although difficult to measure, it has been reported that ethical fashion sales constitute 1 percent of total fashion sales. This inconsistency between attitude and action is termed the attitude-behaviour gap and is typical of ethical or 'eco' products (Johnstone & Tan, 2015; Gleim & Lawson, 2014; Jacobs, Petersen, Hörisch & Battenfeld, 2018).

Studies have been conducted that attempt to determine the reason for the gap between attitudes and behaviour. Much of the extant research focusses on personal values (Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014). However, studies investigating barriers to ethical fashion consumption indicate that factors like price and accessibility are critical barriers preventing individuals from purchasing ethical fashion, in spite of their personal values. Thus, a framework that incorporates both contextual and attitudinal factors may be more appropriate in explaining ethical fashion consumption.

The Theory of Environmentally Significant Behaviour is one framework that includes contextual and attitudinal variables. Stern (2000) developed the framework which proposes that certain factors determine environmentally significant behaviour. He defines environmentally significant behaviour in relation to the extent to which actions impact the natural environment, as well as the directness of that impact. The research behind the framework combines Attitude-Behaviour-Context (ABC) theory in conjunction with Value-Belief-Norm theory of environmentalism, Norm Activation theory and New Environmental Paradigm perspective in order to provide a holistic approach to understanding environmentally significant behaviour. Stern divides environmentally significant behaviour in to four subtypes of behaviour, namely; environmental activism, nonactivist behaviour in the public sphere, private sphere environmentalism and other behaviours. However, it could be argued that a framework that addresses such a broad range of behaviour types may not be indicative of reality. Stern, however, does make provision for this argument. His paper

specifies that the framework can and should be tailored to measure specific kinds of behaviour using the applicable variables included in the framework. Thus, the theory of environmentally significant behaviour could be applied to ethical fashion consumption. Previous research that investigated ethical fashion consumption has also utilised Stern's framework (Kozar & Hiller Connell, 2010)

4.4. TOWARDS A COHERENT THEORY OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT BEHAVIOUR

Sterns's framework posits that environmentally significant behaviour is determined by four causal variables; namely attitudinal, personal capability, contextual and habit and routine factors, as indicated in Figure 4.1 Stern emphasises that variables are likely to work in conjunction with each other, and that contextual and personal capabilities may frame attitudes and vice versa.

Figure 4.1: Theory of environmentally significantly behaviour framework
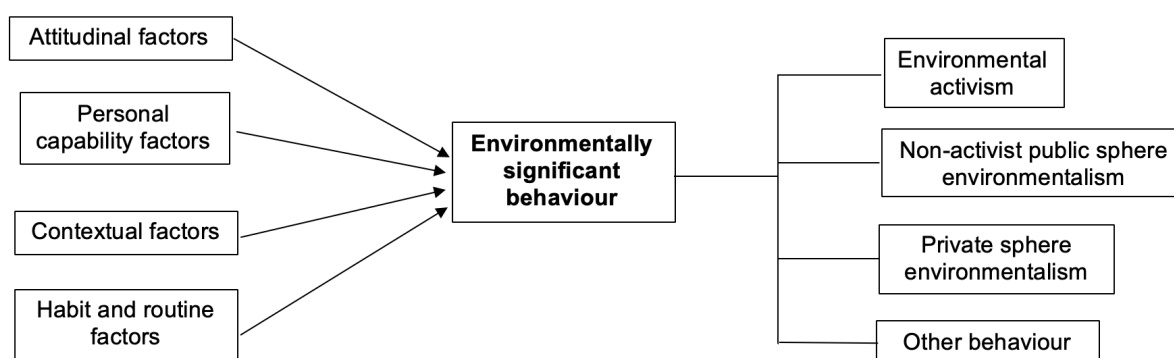
In addition, Stern does acknowledge that causal variables may differ for different types of environmentally significant behaviours. Many of the variables included in Stern's framework are aligned with the results of previous ethical consumption studies. Thus, it is posited that Stern's framework can be adjusted, using results from previous studies as well as information from industry experts, to include additional variables in order improve the applicability of the framework to ethical fashion consumption behaviour. In some cases, variable definitions need to be refined to suit the fashion consumption context. Additionally, variables may need to be excluded as they are irrelevant to the study at hand. The addition and exclusion of certain variables is necessary in order to ensure that the study at hand addresses both environmental and social considerations.

Of the types of environmentally significant behaviour, ethical fashion consumption relates the most to private sphere environmentalism. Private sphere environmentalism includes the purchase, use, and disposal of personal and household products that have environmental impact. Thus, consumers purchasing fashion items that are produced whilst minimizing

social and environmental impacts can be classified as private sphere environmentalism. The focus of the study relates to the purchase of ethical fashion. This is discussed in further detail in section 4.3. A revised version of the framework is indicated in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Revised framework
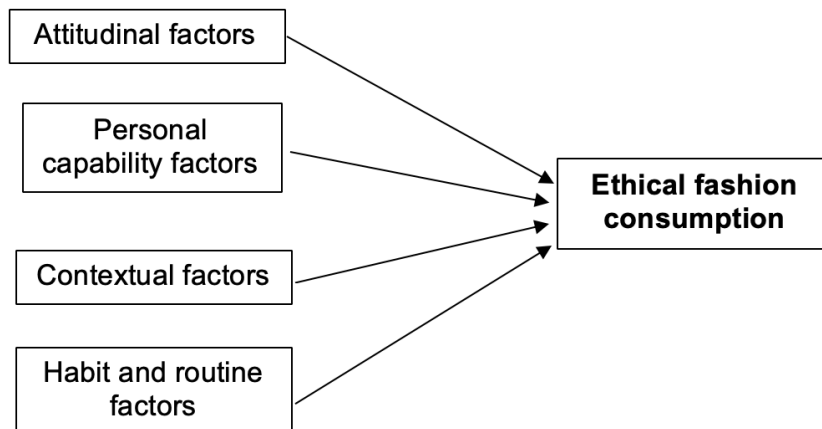
Various researchers (Jung, Kim & Oh, 2016; Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014; Ciasullo, Maione, Torre & Troisi, 2017; Moon, Lai, lam & Chang, 2014; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Connell, 2010) have attempted to understand which factors are significant in determining ethical fashion consumption. As of yet, there is no industry-wide consensus. However, previous studies do contribute valuable insights into ethical consumption that will be used to build a more complete picture of the ethical fashion consumption landscape. Many have approached ethical consumption as a homogenous research field. Whilst the results of these studies may not be completely relevant to fashion, there are certain factors and constructs that will be adapted for the purpose of this study and are discussed in the following sections.

4.4.1 Attitudinal variables

Stern (2000), defines attitudinal variables as the norms, beliefs and values which influence an individual's predisposition to act in a pro-environmental manner. Stern (2000) emphasises that an individual's predisposition to act with pro-environmental intent may be influenced by non-environmental attitudes. Thus, distinction is made between environmental and non-environmental attitudes, both of which can influence environmentally significant behaviour. His inclusion of certain factors is based on Value Belief Norm theory and norm-activation theory.

4.4.1.1 Concern for the environment and social welfare

Since ethical fashion aims to reduce its negative impact on society and the natural environment, individuals that care about the state of the environment and society may be more likely to engage in ethical fashion consumption. Concern for the environment and social

welfare has been investigated in various studies measuring ethical consumer behaviour. In many cases, a strong relationship between concern for the environment and social welfare and ethical consumer behaviour has been observed (Żakowska-Biemans, 2015; Mezghenni & Zouari, 2016; Ellen, Wiener & Cobb-Walgren, 1991, Kozar & Hiller Connell, 2010). Concern for the environment and social welfare have also been measured in the context of ethical fashion consumption. Fraj and Martinez (2006) investigated environmental values and lifestyles as determining factors of ecological consumer behaviour. Their results indicated that consumers who value ecological aspects and have strong self-fulfilment values present significantly higher levels of ecological behaviour. In their study the ecological behaviour referred to ecological product purchase and recycling. Ethical fashion consumption could be considered to be a form of an ecological product purchase as ethical fashion is produced with a focus on limiting environmental destruction. Lundblad and Davies (2016) also investigated the role of values behind sustainable fashion consumption. Their results support the notion that consumers who place importance on environmental assets and value social justice are more likely to consume ethical fashion. Furthermore, Joshi and Rahman's (2015) review found environmental concern to be one of two major determinants of green purchase behaviour. However, presence of environmental concern does not directly translate into ethical consumer behaviour.

A study conducted by Bamberg (2013) explains that environmental and social concern can no longer be considered a direct determinant of environmental behaviour, but only an important indirect determining factor. He proposes that situation-specific, or contextual, factors also play a significant role in dictating ethical behaviour. Moreover, Moon *et al*. (2014) executed a study in order to investigate the barriers restricting popularisation of sustainable fashion adoption by means of exploratory questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Their results clearly indicated that consumers always prioritise brand and style considerations before environmental concern (Moon *et al.*, 2014). In addition, an exploratory study was executed in order to determine the barriers impeding ethical consumption and found that other factors far outweighed concern for the environment and social welfare, thus impeding ethical consumption (Bray, Johns and Kilburn, 2010). In particular, some consumers felt that their personal consumption would not have any effect on the global environmental and social problems and consequently, they felt it was not worth it to go to any extra effort to purchase ethically as it would have no significant effect (Bray *et al.*, 2010). Most studies measure environmental and social concern with five or seven point Likert scales. Although, in the case of exploratory studies focus group discussions and personal interview style questions are more popular. A summary of studies assessing environmental and social welfare concern and their various scales are presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Studies investigating concern for environmental and social welfare

Title	Author and date	Country	Data collection
Environmental values and lifestyles as determining factors of ecological consumer behaviour: an empirical analysis	Fraj & Martinez, 2006	Spain	Questionnaire with scale items: − The current civilisation is destroying nature − I prefer consuming recycled products. − I throw garbage in selective containers − The environment deterioration will be irreversible if the necessary measures are not taken − I participate in environment conservation tasks − I worry about the human activity consequences on the climatic change and act consistently − I belong to a pro-environmental association
Sustainable brand extensions of fast fashion retailers	Hill & Lee, 2015	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − To me, environmental issues are (significant/insignificant; uninteresting/interesting, meaningless/meaningful, superfluous/vital)
Fast fashion consumers' post-purchase behaviours	Joung, 2014	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − Too much emphasis is placed on environmental issues and concerns − Environmental issues are very important to me − I have more important issues to deal with other than environmental issues − I believe everybody should try preserve for future generations
Popularisation of sustainable fashion: barriers and solutions	Moon, Lai, Iam & Chang, 2014	Korea	Questionnaire with scale items: − I will keep using the products I have purchased for as long as possible. − I minimize the purchase of products that are unnecessary or have little use. − I regard the use of second-hand products as a kind of eco-friendly behaviour. − When I dispose of a product, I will pay attention to its reusability or return it for recycling. − I believe every consumer can have a beneficial effect on the environment by purchasing eco- friendly products. − I am willing to pay more for eco-friendly products (i.e. green, organic, or recycled). − I will not buy products that have excessive packaging. − If I understand the potential damage to the environment that some products can cause, I do not purchase them. − I am always aware of news/information related to environmental issues/problems. − I follow all government rules/regulations regarding protection of the environment.
Determinants of Chinese consumers' green purchase behaviour	Chan, 2001	China	Questionnaire with scale items: − It frightens me to think that much of the food I eat is contaminated with pesticides. − It genuinely infuriates me to think that the government doesn't do more to help control pollution of the environment. − I become incensed when I think about the harm being done to plant and animal life by pollution. − When I think of the ways industries are causing pollution, I get frustrated and angry. − The whole pollution issue has never upset me too much since I feel it's somewhat overrated. (R)
Green leather for ethical consumers in China and Korea: Facilitating ethical consumption with Value–Belief–Attitude Logic	Jung, Kim & Oh, 2016	China and Korea	Questionnaire with scale items: − I decide to purchase products by considering the environmental consequence. − We should exercise restraint on spending to save animals that are near extinction nationwide. − I think that we should consume while considering our contribution to the public interest as a member of society.
Ethical consumption and consumers' decision making: the role of moral intuition	Zollo, Yoon, Rialti & Ciappei, 2018	US	Questionnaire with scale items: − Humans are severely abusing the environment − The so-called "ecological crisis" facing humankind has been greatly exaggerated − If things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe
Perceived consumer effectiveness and faith in others	Berger & Corbin, 1992	Canada	Questionnaire with scale items: − We are in serious danger of destroying the world

as moderators of environmentally responsible behaviours			− I expect the environment to continue to deteriorate until it is almost unliveable before enough attention is paid to improve it. − Canada protects the environment much more than most other developed countries. − I feel guilty sometimes about how what I do affects the environment. − Protecting the natural environment should be more important than creating economic growth and employment in poor countries. − I am extremely worried about the state of the world's environment and what it will mean for my future. − Industry causes most environmental problems and should be forced to pay for the clean up and prevention from their profits. − North Americans must accept a lower standard of living to help alleviate environmental problems in the developing world.
How does environmental concern influence specific environmentally related behaviours? A new answer to an old question	Bamberg, 2003	Germany	Questionnaire with scale items: − It is still the case that the major part of the population does not act in an environmentally conscious way − There are limits to economic growth which our industrialized world has crossed or will reach very soon. − Environmental-protection measures should be carried out even if this reduces the number of jobs in the economy − Thinking about the environmental conditions our children and grandchildren have to live under, worries me − When I read newspaper articles about environmental problems or view such TV-reports, I am indignant and angry − If we continue as before, we are approaching an environmental catastrophe − It is still true that politicians do far too little for environmental protection − For the benefit of the environment we should be prepared to restrict our momentary style of living
An exploratory study into the factors impeding ethical consumption	Bray, Johns & Kilburn, 2010	UK	Focus group discussion
Self-control depletion does not diminish attitudes about being prosocial but does diminish prosocial behaviours	Osgood & Muraven, 2015	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − It is important to help someone who needs it − I want to help others − The well-being of others is important − It is important that others are happy − It is important that all people are happy − The needs of others are important
Consumers' environmental and ethical consciousness and the use of the related food products information: The role of perceived consumer effectiveness	Ghvandize, Velikova, Dodd & Oldewage-Theron, 2016	US, UK and Germany	Questionnaire with scale items: − It is important to me that the products I buy come from countries I approve of politically have the country of origin clearly marked − It is important to me that the products I buy are packaged in an environmentally friendly way − It is important to me that the products I buy have been produced in an environmentally friendly way
The role of perceived consumer effectiveness and motivational attitude on socially responsible purchasing behaviour in South Korea	Wesley, Lee & Kim, 2012	South Korea	Questionnaire with scale items: − I try to buy from companies that help the needy. − I try to buy from companies that make donations to medical research. − I make an effort to buy from companies that sponsor food drives. − When given a chance to switch to a brand that gives back to the community, I take it. − When given a chance, I switch to brands where a portion of the price is donated to charity.
Personal values, beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes relating to intentions to purchase apparel from socially responsible businesses	Dickson, 2000	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − I am concerned with issues affecting workers in the US clothing manufacturing businesses − I am concerned with issues affecting workers in foreign clothing manufacturing businesses
The role of perceived consumer effectiveness in motivating environmentally conscious behaviors	Ellen, Wiener & Cobb-Walgren, 1991	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − Environmental problems are not affecting my life personally − Environmental problems are exaggerated, because in the long run things balance out − I have too many obligations to take an active part in an environmental organisation

			− I can think of many things I'd rather do that work toward improving the environment
Socially responsible knowledge and behaviors: comparing upper- vs. lower-classmen	Kozar & Hiller Connell, 2010	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − We are approaching the limit of the number of people the earth can support − Humans have the right to modify the natural environment to suit their needs − When humans interfere with nature if often produces disastrous consequences − Human ingenuity will ensure that we do not make the earth unliveable − If things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe

4.4.1.2 Price perception

Stern includes perceived costs and benefits as one of the subsets of attitudinal factors, as a causal variable influencing environmentally significant behaviour. It is posited that in the case of fashion consumption, perceived cost can be specified as perceived price. Indeed, price perceptions seem to be a hugely significant determining factor of ethical fashion consumption. It is important to note that perceived price differs from objective price. Objective price refers to the actual monetary price of a product (Zeithaml, 1988). On the other hand, perceived price is the price encoded by the consumer in a way that is meaningful to them (Zeithaml, 1988). For example, consumers may think of the price being cheap or expensive.

Various studies have examined the relationship between price perceptions and consumption. (Bray *et al.*, 2010; Ferreira, Avlia & Dias di Faria, 2010; Young, Hwang, McDonald & Oates, 2010; Johnstone & Tan, 2015). Some research suggests that the primary barrier to ethical consumption is perceptions about the price of ethical products (Bray *et al.*, 2010). Consumers perceive ethical products to be overpriced. This may be particularly true in South Africa where the ethical fashion movement is not as advanced as in Europe where consumers are more exposed to ethical fashion brands and familiar with their offerings. Ethical fashion tends to be associated with privilege and high-income individuals and is considered unaffordable for the general public (Bray *et al.*, 2010). Thus, it appears that consumers may perceive ethical fashion prices as too expensive, thereby decreasing the frequency of, or altogether preventing, ethical consumption (Young *et al.*, 2010, Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018). This practice may be particularly prevalent amongst South African consumers who have become increasingly price sensitive as the country experiences economic downturn. The increasing presence of Zara, Cotton On and H&M retail stores in South Africa, in conjunction with the growth of online stores like Superbalist, has given South African consumers larger access to trendy clothing items at affordable prices. As a result, South Africans have become used to paying less for fashionable garments.

Some research has indicated that a higher price always outweighs ethical considerations, thereby widening the gap between ethical attitudes and ethical product purchasing (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). However, Jacobs *et al.* (2018) found that attitudes and personal values were very significant determinants of behaviour and surprisingly price sensitivity had no impact on ethical fashion consumption behaviour. Furthermore, Niinimäki (2010) found that a third of consumers were willing to pay 15 percent more for eco-clothing. In addition, a study conducted by Ciasullo *et al.* (2017) suggests consumers are willing to pay up to 20 percent more for ethical fashion items Nevertheless, this report was carried out in Italy, the country that pioneered the ethical fashion movement. Italian consumers may be more cognisant of

the ethical dilemmas inherent to the fashion industry and therefore more willing to engage in ethical fashion consumption, in comparison to South African consumers. This notion is supported by industry experts who report that South African consumers are less informed about the ethics involved in clothing production than their European counterparts. Longden (2019) explains, 'We are nowhere near the level of awareness in Europe or the States for example.'

In some cases, the effects of perceived price on ethical consumption are measured with self-administered questionnaires with the use of Likert scales (Byun and Sternquist, 2011; Ferreira *et al.*, 2010). However, some researchers argue that in-depth interviews or small focus group discussions are more appropriate when discussing price perceptions as price can be a sensitive subject for some respondents (Young *et al*, 2010; Bray *et al*, 2010). A summary of studies investigating price perceptions in the ethical consumption context is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Studies investigating price perceptions

Title	Author and date	Country	Data collection
Fast fashion and in-store hording: The drivers, moderator and consequences	Byun & Sternquist, 2011	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − It is reasonably priced − It is affordable − It meets my budget for clothing shopping − The price is lower than that comparable fashion stores
Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014	US, South Korea and China	Questionnaire with scale items: Organic cotton apparel might be expensive.
Corporate social responsibility and consumers' perception of price	Ferreira, Avlia & Dias di Faria, 2010	Brazil	Questionnaire with scale items: The price is: − unfair/fair; − unacceptable/acceptable − unsatisfactory/satisfactory − very high/very low
Sustainable consumption: green consumer behaviour when purchasing products	Young, Hwang, McDonald & Oates, 2010	UK	In-depth interviews
Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence	Zeithaml, 1988	USA	Focus group and in-depth interviews
What about sustainability? An empirical analysis of consumers' purchasing behavior in fashion context	Ciasullo, Maione, Torre & Troisi, 2017	Italy	Questionnaires based on Creyer's (1997) model for which scales were not provided
An exploratory study into the factors impeding ethical consumption	Bray, Johns & Kilburn, 2010	UK	Focus group discussion
Factors affecting green purchase behaviour and future research directions	Joshi & Rahman, 2014	Global	Review of 53 articles
Eco-clothing, consumer identity and ideology	Niinimäki, 2010	Finland	Questionnaire with scale items: How much more would you be willing to pay for eco-clothing?
Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry	Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018	Germany	Semi-structured interview
Green thinking but thoughtless buying? An empirical extension of the value-attitude-behaviour hierarchy in sustainable clothing	Jacobs, Petersen, Hörisch & Battenfeld, 2018	Germany	Questionnaire with scale items: Importance rating of price as a product attribute of clothing using a 7-point Likert scale (1 ='very unimportant'; 7='very important')

Exploring the gap between consumers' green rhetoric and purchasing behaviour	Johnstone & Tan, 2015	Australia	Focus groups

4.4.1.3 Knowledge

It is proposed that knowledge of environmental and ethical implications may be a determining factor of ethical fashion consumption. A review of twenty studies conducted by Joshi & Rahman (2015) revealed mixed results. The majority of studies observed a positive correlation between ethical knowledge and ethical purchase behaviour (Chan & Lau, 2000; Eze & Ndubisi, 2013). These findings are supported by Kang *et al.* (2014) who found that greater consumer knowledge resulted in increased environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption. Kozar & Hiller Connell (2010, 2013) also found that knowledge of social and environmental impacts of the fashion industry was a highly significant predictor of ethical fashion consumption. However, some research found no relationship between knowledge and behaviour (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Consumers stated that they did know about social and environmental issues related to the fashion industry but admit that it does not influence their purchasing behaviour whatsoever. Although, researchers do appear to agree that lack of knowledge is negatively correlated with ethical consumption (Connell, 2010; Padel & Foster, 2005). Research conducted by Cervellon and Carey (2011) indicates that consumers are unwilling to engage in ethical consumption because they feel they have insufficient knowledge about the issues related to the production of the products, and are therefore reluctant to purchase ethically labelled fashion items.

Connell's study revealed that the majority of consumers claim to be aware of general environmental and social issues related to the fashion industry, but were unable to provide specific examples of the unethical workings of the fashion industry. Thus, it seems consumers with better, more complete knowledge of the social and environmental issues related to the fashion industry may be able to better distinguish between ethical and conventional fashion products, and subsequently feel more empowered to make ethical fashion purchases.

This variable may be particularly applicable to ethical fashion as it is still considered a relatively new concept, especially in comparison with other ethical purchasing activities. In addition, industry experts report that South African consumers seem to be generally unaware of the full extent to which clothing production impacts the environment and society and claim that this may be one of the factors impeding consumption of ethical fashion. Thus, it seems that significant industry specific knowledge could be a determining factor of ethical fashion consumption.

For the purposes of this study, knowledge will be separated into perceived knowledge and actual knowledge in order to compare what consumer think they know about the fashion industry and what they actually know. Perceived knowledge will form part of the attitude construct. Actual knowledge may act as a moderating variable between attitude and purchase intent. Consumers form attitudes towards ethical fashion based on perceived knowledge. However, their purchase intention may be affected by their actual knowledge of the workings of the current fashion industry. Table 4.4 includes a summary of past research that has addressed knowledge as a factor influencing ethical consumption.

Table 4.4: Studies investigating knowledge

Title	Author and date	Country	Scales
Sustainable brand extensions of fast fashion retailers	Hill & Lee, 2015	USA	Questionnaire with scale items (adapted from Flynn & Goldsmith, 1999): – I know a lot about environmental issues – I feel very knowledgeable about environmental issues – I think I know more about environmental issues than most people – When it comes to environmental issues, I really know a lot
Antecedents of green purchases: a survey in China	Chan, 2000	China	Questionnaire with scale items: – Soil pollution is generally due to: (A) sparse rains, (B) improper farming methods, (C) poisonous metals***; (D) over-fertilization; (E) poor crop rotation. – Most smog in our big cities comes from: (A) automobiles; (B) supersonic jets; (C) industrial plants; (D) large trucks; (E) refuse disposal. – Ecology is best described as the study of: (A) the relationship between man and the environment; (B) the relationship between organisms and the environment; (C) pollution and its control; (D) the environment; (E) recycling of products. – Birds and fish are being poisoned by (A) iron; (B) mercury; (C) silver; (D) lead; (E) magnesium. – All but one of the following decompose in ocean water: (A) sewage; (B) garbage; (C) tin cans; (D) plastic bags; (E) chemical fertilizer.
Perceived consumer effectiveness and faith in others as moderators of environmentally responsible behaviours	Berger & Corbin, 1992	Canada	Questionnaire with scale items: – I don't feel I have enough knowledge to make well-informed decisions on environmental issues.
Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014	US, South Korea and China	Questionnaire with scale items: – I am quite familiar with organic cotton apparel. – I often see organic cotton apparel in shopping places (e.g. department stores, specialty stores, – online shopping malls, etc.). – I have often bought organic cotton apparel. – I have often tried on organic cotton apparel although I did not make purchases. – I know quite a lot about organic cotton apparel. – I have often read articles or news about or have learned about organic cotton apparel
Popularisation of sustainable fashion: barriers and solutions	Moon, Lai, lam & Chang, 2014	Korea	Questionnaire with scale items: – I am always aware of news/information related to environmental issues/problems.
Factors affecting green purchase behaviour and future research directions	Joshi & Rahman, 2014	Global	Review of 53 articles
Green buyer behaviour: evidence from Asian consumers	Eze & Ndubisi, 2013	Malaysia	Questionnaire, scales not provided Adapted from Laroche, Bergeron and Barbaro-Forleo (2001), Lee (2008) and Ng (2009)
Internal and external barriers to eco-conscious apparel acquisition	Connell, 2010	USA	Semi-structured interviews
Sustainable fashion consumption and the fast fashion conundrum: fashionable consumers and attitudes to sustainability in clothing choice	McNeill & Moore, 2015	New Zealand	In-depth interviews
Personal values, beliefs,	Dickson, 2000	USA	Questionnaire with scale items:

knowledge, and attitudes relating to intentions to purchase apparel from socially responsible businesses			− I believe that I am informed about issues in foreign clothing manufacturing businesses − I believe that I am informed about issues in the US clothing manufacturing businesses − I am knowledgeable about socially responsible clothing businesses − Foreign clothing manufacturers generally have their employees work no more than 40 hours per week − Foreign clothing manufacturers generally provide non-hazardous workplaces for their employees − Use of child labour is not general practice among foreign clothing manufactures
Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry	Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018	Germany	Semi-structured interviews
The role of perceived consumer effectiveness in motivating environmentally conscious behaviors	Ellen, Wiener & Cobb-Walgren, 1991	USA	Telephone survey with items: − How would you rate your knowledge of environmental issues? Excellent…poor
Consumers' perceptions of 'green': Why and how consumers use eco-fashion and green beauty products	Cervellon & Carey, 2011	Monaco and Canada	In-depth interviews and focus groups
Socially responsible knowledge and behaviors: comparing upper- vs. lower-classmen	Kozar & Hiller Connell, 2010	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − Use of child labour is generally not a practice among clothing manufacturers − Clothing manufacturers generally pay their employees at least the local wage − Clothing manufacturer generally have their employees work no more than 40 hours per week − Clothing manufacturers generally provide non-hazardous workplaces for their employees − I am knowledgeable about socially responsible clothing businesses − I believe that I am informed about issues in clothing manufacturing − I am concerned with issues affecting workers in clothing manufacturing businesses

4.4.1.4 Perceived consumer effectiveness

Consumer behaviour may be influenced by their perceived consumer effectiveness; the degree of confidence in an individual's ability to make a difference in resolving an issue (Hanss & Doran, 2019). Thus, even if consumers are informed about pressing environmental and ethical issues and are aware of the availability of more ethically produced products, they may not purchase these products because they believe that their efforts to reduce social and environmental impacts will have no impact.

In a study conducted by Johnstone & Tan (2015) consumers expressed a sense of hopelessness when discussing environmentally friendly behaviours. They had concern for the environment and society and wanted to engage in pro-environmental behaviours but felt that their own actions were pointless considering the lack of pro-environmental behaviour demonstrated by other consumers. Wiederhold and Martinez (2018) report that many consumers feel incapable of making a positive difference to the social and environmental problems because the majority of consumers continue to purchase fast fashion. Thus, consumers may be unwilling to participate in ethical fashion consumption if they are unsure whether their actions actually make any difference to the environmental and social problems, especially if purchasing ethically requires higher levels of effort or financial commitments (Kang *et al.*, 2014; Ellen *et al.*, 1991). Therefore, perceived consumer effectiveness is an important factor that may influence consumer behaviour. This claim is supported by past research which found evidence of a positive relationship between perceived consumer effectiveness and purchase intention (Wesley *et al.*, 2014; Andorfer & Liebe, 2015; Ghvandize, Velikova, Dodd & Oldewage-Theron, 2016; Dickson, 2000). However, it is unclear whether this will hold true in the South African context, especially given the expected limited awareness of ethical fashion amongst South African consumers.

In many cases this variable is measured using Likert scales. Previous studies addressing perceived consumer effectiveness are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Studies investigating perceived consumer effectiveness

Title	Author and date	Country	Data collection
Fast fashion consumers' post-purchase behaviours	Joung, 2014	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − I believe my recycling efforts will probably have very limited impact on the environment
Do information, price, or morals influence ethical consumption? A natural field experiment and customer survey on the purchase of Fair Trade coffee	Andorfer & Liebe, 2015	Germany	Field experiment and questionnaire with scale items: − I doubt that the money spent on Fair Trade products actually reaches the small-scale producers and labourers.
Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014	US, South Korea and China	Questionnaire with scale items: − It is worth it for the individual consumer to make efforts to preserve and improve the − environment. − When I buy products, I tend to try to consider how my use of them will affect the environment. − Since each individual can have any effect upon environmental problems, what I do can make meaningful difference. − By purchasing products made in an environmentally friendly way, each consumer's behaviour can have a positive effect on the environment and society
Consumers' environmental and ethical consciousness and the use of the related food products information: The role of perceived consumer effectiveness	Ghvandize, Velikova, Dodd & Oldewage-Theron, 2016	US, UK and Germany	Questionnaire with scale items: − When I have a choice between two equal products, I always purchase the one that is less harmful to other people − I will not buy a product if the company that sells it is socially irresponsible − I have switched products for social reasons − Humans are severely abusing the environment If things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe − Each consumer can have a positive effect on society by purchasing products sold by socially responsible companies
The role of perceived consumer effectiveness and motivational attitude on socially responsible purchasing behaviour in South Korea	Wesley, Lee & Kim, 2012	South Korea	Questionnaire with scale items: − What I purchase as a consumer has an effect on the nation's environmental problems. − Each consumer's behaviour can have an effect on how companies treat their employees. − Since one consumer cannot have any effect on how companies behave toward the community, it does not make any difference what I do. − Each consumer can have a positive effect on society by purchasing products sold by socially responsible companies.
Personal values, beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes relating to intentions to purchase apparel from socially responsible businesses	Dickson, 2000	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: − There is not much that any one individual, like myself, can do about employment conditions in the clothing manufacturing industry − Individual customers who boycott buying clothing from businesses that do not act responsibly toward their employees have little effect on business practices
Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry	Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018	Germany	Semi-structured interviews
The role of perceived consumer effectiveness in motivating environmentally conscious behaviors	Ellen, Wiener & Cobb-Walgren, 1991	USA	Telephone survey with items: − The conservation efforts of one person are useless as long as other people refuse − There is not much that one individual can do about the environment
Exploring the gap between consumers' green rhetoric and purchasing behaviour	Johnstone & Tan, 2015	Australia	Focus groups

4.4.1.5 Product attributes: quality and stylishness

Stern (2000) included non-environmental attitudes as one of the causal variables determining environmentally significant behaviour. In addition, he specifies that product attributes are a key part of non-environmental attitudes. If consumers are unsatisfied with certain characteristics of a product, they may be unwilling to purchase it, regardless of the ethical qualities it may or may not contain (Stern, 2000). As with conventional fashion purchasing, product attributes can have a considerable impact on ethical fashion purchasing decisions (Chan and Wong, 2012).

In particular, it is suspected that quality and perceived stylishness may be significant considerations in the ethical fashion context. Research conducted by Dickon (2000) investigated the impact of attitudes, personal values, knowledge and product attributes on intention to purchase from socially responsible apparel companies. The results indicated that product attributes, namely; comfort, fit, quality and stylishness, was the only predictor of purchase intention. Kim, Choo and Yoon (2012) conducted a study investigating the motivational drivers of fast fashion avoidance. Whilst fast fashion avoidance is not equivalent to ethical fashion consumption, it does indicate a divergence from conventional, 'unethical' fashion consumption. Their results revealed that poor garment quality and de-individuation, as a result of its mass-produced nature, are the predominant factors motivating some consumers to avoid fast fashion consumption. This indicates that product attributes could play an important role in determining ethical fashion consumption. This notion is supported by Niinimäki's study (2010) that quality and aesthetics are extremely important considerations when purchasing fashion, including ethical fashion.

Although, McNeill and Moore's research study (2015) revealed that some consumers perceive ethical fashion garments as unstylish and of poor quality. These consumers expressly avoid ethical fashion purchases as they consider them to be unfashionable and poorly made. This sentiment is supported by Kang *et al* (2014) whose research revealed that some consumers assume that environmentally sustainable apparel is limited in design and style. In addition, Bray *et al.* (2010) reported that there seems to be a belief amongst some groups of consumers that ethical fashion is not stylish or dowdy. Therefore, image conscious consumers may avoid ethical fashion brands. Thus, actual as well as perceived notions about ethical fashion garment attributes appear to be instrumental factors in determining ethical fashion consumption. Subsequently, it is suggested that non-environmental attitudes be specified as quality and stylishness product attributes for the purpose of this study. A summary of product attribute literature is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Studies investigating product attributes: quality and stylishness

Title	Author and date	Country	Data collection
Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014	US, South Korea and China	Questionnaire with scale items: – Organic cotton apparel might have a limited range of design, style, and/or colour.
Sustainable fashion consumption and the fast fashion conundrum: fashionable consumers and attitudes to sustainability in clothing choice	McNeill & Moore, 2015	New Zealand	In-depth interview
Motivational drivers of fast fashion avoidance	Kim, Choo & Yoon 2012	South Korea	Blog analysis
The consumption side of sustainable fashion supply chain: Understanding consumer eco-fashion consumption decision	Chan & Wong, 2012		Questionnaire with scale items: – Please rate the importance of the following product-related attributes in your mind when making consumption purchase decision on eco-fashion. (very unimportant - very important) – Product design – Quality – Price
Personal values, beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes relating to intentions to purchase apparel from socially responsible businesses	Dickson, 2000	USA	Questionnaire with scale items: – Do you agree or disagree that the denim jeans from at least one of these stores/manufacturers listed on the back cover have the following characteristics? (Styles that look good on my body type, jeans that are comfortable to wear, jeans that fit me properly) – Tell me, how desirable each of the characteristics would be to you when buying denim jeans regardless of whether or not you believe the characteristics are currently available in jeans, jeans that are comfortable to wear, fabric that feels good, good quality jeans, colours that are currently fashionable, unique or different styles, well-known brand, unique colours)
Eco-clothing, consumer identity and ideology	Niinimäki, 2010	Finland	Questionnaire with scale items: – What affects the clothing purchasing decision the most? – Fit – Real need – Quality colour – Durability, etc.
Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry	Wiederhold & and Martinez, 2018	Germany	Semi-structured interviews
An exploratory study into the factors impeding ethical consumption	Bray, Johns & Kilburn, 2010	UK	Focus group
Effects of price, brand, and store information on buyers' product evaluations	Dodds, Monroe & Grewal, 1991	USA	Experiment and questionnaire with scale items: – The quality of the product is better than its alternatives – The workmanship of the product should be very good – The product should be of good quality

The attitude construct consists of several variables, including concern for the environment and social welfare, price perceptions, perceived and actual knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived style and quality. However, it is not clear whether attitude has a direct impact on ethical fashion consumption.

It is predicted that attitude will act as a mediating variable between personal capability and purchase intention for ethical fashion. It is expected that the personal capability to purchase ethical fashion will range from low to high. Individuals should have different financial resources and varying levels of awareness of ethical fashion brands. However, it is unlikely that high personal capability will explain intention to purchase ethical fashion. Attitude could be the mediator that helps explain the relationship between personal capability and purchase intention. Without favourable attitudes individuals may be unlikely to have purchase intention for ethical fashion, despite their personal capability.

This notion is supported by research that indicates that attitudes do not have a direct effect on purchase intention of ethical products, but mediate the relationship between capability and contextual factors and purchase intent for ethical products (Qader & Zainuddin, 2010; Bamberg, 2013; Wulandari, Rahyuda & Yasa, 2015; Chu, 2018).

In summation, attitudes towards ethical fashion are comprised of several variables including including concern for the environment and social welfare, price perceptions, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived style and quality. Consumers with positive attitudes towards ethical fashion maybe be more inclined to purchase it. However, it may be that attitude acts as a mediating variable between personal capability and purchase intent. Consumers may have the means to purchase ethically but if their attitudes towards ethical fashion are not positive, it is unlikely that they will have purchase intent for ethical fashion. Furthermore, it is suspected that the relationship between attitudes and purchase intent may be moderated by actual knowledge.

Thus:

H_{01} There is no relationship between attitude and purchase intent

H_{02} The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by attitude

H_{03} The relationship between attitude and purchase intent is unaffected by actual knowledge

H_{04} There is no relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent

The subsequent section describes the personal capability variables associated with ethical fashion consumption. The hypotheses relating to those variables are also delineated.

4.4.2 Personal capability variables

Personal capability variables refer to the knowledge and skills necessary in order to complete an action or behaviour. Thus, these are the required capabilities an individual must possess to act in an environmentally significant manner. In the ethical fashion context, sufficient financial resources and adequate awareness of ethical fashion brands are required.

4.4.2.1 Financial resources

Financial resources are included in Stern's framework as one of the personal capability causal variables influencing an individual's propensity for environmentally significant behaviour. A consumer's financial resources dictate which products they can and cannot afford. In most cases, consumers choose to buy products priced in correspondence to their available financial resources. In the case of ethical fashion, ethically made garments may be considered too expensive for the majority of South African consumers to afford, considering the high unemployment rate (StatsSA, 2018) as well as high levels of poverty (StatsSA, 2017). According to a 2017 report published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, South Africans earn lower salaries than individuals in Europe, where ethical fashion consumption is more prevalent. Wiederhold and Martinez (2018) report that consumers complain that ethical fashion does not meet their budget for clothing shopping as it is too expensive. These sentiments are echoed in Johnstone and Tan's study (2015). However, it could be argued that if consumers are more mindful of where they buy and buy fewer, but more expensive, better quality ethical garments instead of numerous, cheaper, poor quality fast fashion items they could spend the same amount on clothing purchases. Additionally, they will spend less money replacing poor quality fashion garments because they have spent a bit more on quality items that last longer. However, some consumers are not willing to sacrifice quantity for quality (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Financial resources are typically measured by asking respondents to indicate their financial income by selecting the appropriate income bracket.

4.4.2.2 Awareness of ethical fashion brands

Stern's (2000) original framework included behaviour-specific knowledge and skills as another personal capability variable influencing environmentally significant behaviour. It is suggested that this variable be specified as ethical brand awareness in order to suit the context of the study. Stern defines behaviour-specific knowledge and skills as the information required in order to complete the given behaviour. In order for consumers to make conscious decisions to purchase ethically, they need to be aware of ethical fashion brands and how and

where to purchase their products. Research by Wiederhold and Martinez (2018) indicates that ethical fashion consumption is constrained by a lack of consumer awareness of ethical fashion alternatives. This finding is supported by Johnstone and Tan (2015) as well as Cervellon and Carey (2011) whose research indicates that consumers do wish to purchase more ethically but were unsure of the equivalent ethical products. Practically, awareness of ethical alternatives could be key in determining ethical fashion consumption. Without this knowledge, consumers are unable to purchase ethical fashion garments and may be forced to default to unethical fashion consumption. It is suspected that South African consumers may not have a considerable knowledge on existing ethical fashion brands and how to access them. This lack of information may act as a barrier to ethical fashion consumption. Table 4.7 presents the extant studies that have reported on awareness of ethical alternatives and its impact on ethical consumption. Most of the studies have investigated awareness by means of qualitative research, such as focus groups and personal interviews.

Table 4.7: Studies investigating awareness of ethical alternatives

Title	Author and date	Country	Data collection
Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry	Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018	Germany	Semi-structured interviews
Exploring the gap between consumers' green rhetoric and purchasing behaviour	Johnstone & Tan, 2015	Australia	Focus groups
Consumers' perceptions of 'green': Why and how consumers use eco-fashion and green beauty products	Cervellon & Carey, 2011	Monaco and Canada	In-depth interviews and focus groups

Personal capability for consumption of ethical fashion is comprised of financial resources and awareness of ethical fashion brands. Ethical fashion tends to be expensive. Thus, consumers with more disposable income may be more likely to engage in ethical fashion consumption. In addition, awareness of ethical fashion and ethical brands remains limited amongst South African consumers. Thus, consumers may be unable to engage in ethical fashion consumption because they are not sufficiently aware of where to purchase fashion that is ethical.

Thus:

H_{05} There is no relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

The following section describes the contextual variables relevant to ethical fashion consumption. The hypothesised relationship between contextual variables and purchase intent for ethical fashion are presented at the end of the section.

4.2.3 Contextual variables

Contextual factors include social norms and expectations and accessibility to ethical fashion which may influence individuals to act with more or less pro-environmental and social intent.

4.2.3.1 Social norms and expectations

Various studies indicate that social norms, or general expected behaviour amongst a group of people, play an important role in influencing an individual's behaviour. Subsequently, this factor was included in Stern's (2000) framework. Social norms may be particularly relevant to fashion consumption, especially as social media usage increases. South Africans have become progressively engaged in social media, specifically Facebook and Instagram, and as a result are more exposed to the influencers and celebrities they follow (Social Media Landscape Report, 2018). These celebrity and influencer accounts tend to project a fashionable image, set trends and are often style icons. They are hardly ever seen wearing the same outfit twice and are constantly promoting their new things, thereby normalising hyper-consumerism. Consumers have become used to trends changing very quickly and styles going in and out of fashion at a rapid pace (Joung, 2014). They are expected to keep up with these trends, and are subsequently expected to keep buying new fashion garments. This kind of behaviour is misaligned with the beliefs and values fundamental to the ethical fashion movement. Indeed, some consider mass consumerism the anti-thesis of sustainability (Henninger *et al.*, 2016). In contrast, society also expects individuals to have pro-social and environmental attitudes. Thus, there is a conflict of interest.

Previous studies examining social norms and ethical consumption have revealed that social norms generally influence increased ethical purchasing (Welsch & Kuhling, 2009; Lee, 2010). However, the majority of these studies were not related to fashion consumption. Consequently, it is unclear how social norms affect ethical fashion consumption. Previous research has measured the influence of social norms by asking respondents how frequently their peers and parents engage with them about certain topics and how often they hear or see something about a given topic or concept in the news and various other media platforms. Examples of previous studies measuring social norms is included in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Studies investigating social norms

Title	Author and date	Country	Data collection
Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014	US, South Korea and China	Questionnaire with scale items: − Close friends (my peer group). − My parents (family members including brothers/sisters) − My girl/boyfriend, partner, or spouse partake in…
Determinants of pro-environmental consumption: The role of reference groups and routine behaviour	Welsch & Kuhling, 2009	Germany	Questionnaire with scale items: − Do some of your friends, neighbours and relatives use solar thermal systems (yes; no)?"
The green purchase behaviour of Hong Kong young consumers: the role of peer influence, local environmental involvement, and concrete environmental knowledge	Lee, 2010	Hong Kong	Questionnaire with scale items: − How often do you come across environmental topics/ issues on TV? − How often do you come across environmental messages on advertisements? − How often do you come across environmental topics/ issues on radio − How often do you come across environmental topics/ issues on the Internet.? Peers − How much do your friends tell you about things that are related to environmental protection? − How much do you learn from your peers about environment-related subjects? Parental Influence − How much do your parents tell you about things that are related to environmental protection? − How much do you learn from your parents about environment-related subjects?

4.2.3.2 Accessibility

Stern (2000) includes the available technologies as a part of the contextual variables influencing behaviour. However, available technologies is not relevant to the fashion context. It is proposed that this variable be adapted to increase its relevance to the study at hand. In order for consumers to successfully purchase ethical fashion garments they need to have access to ethical brands and their products. Consumers living in rural areas or with limited internet connectivity may not be able to access ethical fashion retailers. In some cases, consumers may be aware of where to purchase ethical fashion garments but do not consider them to be easily accessible. In this case ethical fashion consumption could be negatively affected if consumers perceive accessibility to be inconvenient or requiring higher effort. Previous studies have shown that some consumers who do want to purchase ethically are constrained by limited availability or inconvenience (Young *et al*, 2010; Padel & Foster, 2005; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018). Bray *et al*. reports that consumers feel as if there are limited ethical fashion options and they are not easily accessible. Additionally, men feel like they, especially, are not catered for and are unable to find ethical fashion brands that offer a men's line. This may be the case in South Africa as most ethical fashion brands are concentrated in Cape Town city centre or in Johannesburg, and usually not in shopping malls where

conventional or fast fashion brands are located. Thus, consumers living outside of these areas may perceive access to ethical fashion to be difficult. In addition, some South African ethical fashion brands are only available online. Online stores selling ethical fashion brands may increase accessibility to South African consumers. Research conducted by Jacobs *et al.* (2016) indicates that an affinity for online shopping has a positive influence on purchase behaviour of sustainable fashion.

It is predicted that accessibility may moderate the relationship between personal capability and purchase intention. Although individuals may have the personal capability to purchase ethical fashion as well as favourable attitudes towards it, their purchase intent may be limited by their perceived accessibility or lack thereof. It is suspected that South African consumers may perceive access to ethical fashion to be difficult. Previous studies have not specified accessibility as a moderating variable. However, most of the research has been conducted in developed country contexts where the ethical fashion market is more developed and access is not as difficult (Kim *et al.*, 2012; Hill & Lee, 2015; Byun & Sternquist, 2011; Llundblad & Davies, 2011; Joung, 2014; Moon *et al.*, 2014). Thus, given the specifics of the South African situation it is posited that accessibility could affect the strength of the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent. Information from South African ethical fashion industry experts is required in order to confirm this notion.

This variable can be measured by asking respondents about their perceived ease or difficulty of accessing ethical fashion brands. Table 4.9 presents previous studies that have linked accessibility to ethical fashion consumption.

Table 4.9: Studies investigating accessibility

Title	Author and date	Country	Data collection
Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry	Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018	Germany	Semi-structured interviews
Green thinking but thoughtless buying? An empirical extension of the value-attitude-behaviour hierarchy in sustainable clothing	Jacobs, Petersen, Hörisch & Battenfeld, 2018	Germany	Questionnaire with scale items: − Respondents asked to split up 100% according to the relevance of online, catalogue and retail shopping
An exploratory study into the factors impeding ethical consumption	Bray, Johns & Kilburn, 2010	UK	Focus group

Thus, contextual variables are comprised of social norms and accessibility to ethical fashion businesses. Consumers may be more likely to engage in ethical fashion when their peers and family members engage in ethical fashion. Similarly, social media and traditional media sources could influence consumers to purchase more ethically. Accessibility to ethical fashion might also influence ethical fashion consumption. If consumers feel as if ethical fashion is very difficult to access, they may be less inclined to engage in ethical fashion

consumption. It is suspected that accessibility will have a moderating effect on the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent for ethical fashion.

Thus:

H_{06} There is no relationship between social norms and purchase intent

H_{07} The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by accessibility

H_{08} There is no relationship between accessibility and purchase intent

The proceeding section discusses habit and routine variables that were included in Stern's original framework. Their relevance to ethical fashion consumption is deliberated.

4.2.4 Habit and routine

This variable forms part of Stern's (2000) frame work. It is widely acknowledged that habit and past purchase behaviour influence purchase behaviour. Consumers become comfortable in purchasing from brands they are familiar with and may be reluctant to make any extra effort in order to investigate new brands or products. This sentiment was investigated by Bray *et al.* (2010) who found that consumers were reluctant to switch brands even when asked to disregard price, which was initially claimed to be the largest barrier to ethical consumption. However, this study was not focussed on ethical fashion purchasing specifically. This topic has not been widely addressed in fashion studies and the impact on routine and habit on ethical fashion consumption is unknown. Most habit and routine studies are focussed on low involvement purchasing decisions like groceries and cleaning products (Olsen, Tudoran, Brunso and Verbeke, 2013; Hoelzl and Herziger, 2016; Davies and Gutsche, 2016). In contrast, fashion is considered a higher-involvement decision (O'Cass, 2000; Kinley, Josiam and Lockett, 2010; Khare and Rakesh, 2010). Higher-involvement purchase decisions require more time and effort at each phase of the decision-making process and it is unlikely that consumers will resort to habit and routine tendencies in their fashion consumption decisions (Santandreu and Shurden, 2017). Thus, it is posited that habit and routine variables are not relevant to ethical fashion purchasing and therefore will be excluded from the framework for the purposes of the study at hand.

The revisions made to the original framework are based upon previous literature discussed in the preceding section. A summary of the changes made are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Comparison of original and revised frameworks

Original framework variables	Revised framework variables
Attitudinal variables	
General environmental predisposition	Concern for environment and social welfare Knowledge
Behaviour specific norms and beliefs	Perceived consumer effectiveness
Non-environmental attitudes	Product attributes (perceived quality and stylishness)
Perceived costs and benefits of action	Perceived price
Personal capability variables	
Literacy	(removed)
Social status	(removed)
Financial resources	Financial resources
Behaviour-specific knowledge and skills	Awareness of ethical fashion retailers
Contextual variables	
Material costs and rewards	(removed)
Laws and regulations	(removed)
Available technology	Accessibility
Social norms and beliefs	Social norms and beliefs
Supportive policies	(removed)
Advertising	(removed)
Habit and routine variables	(removed)

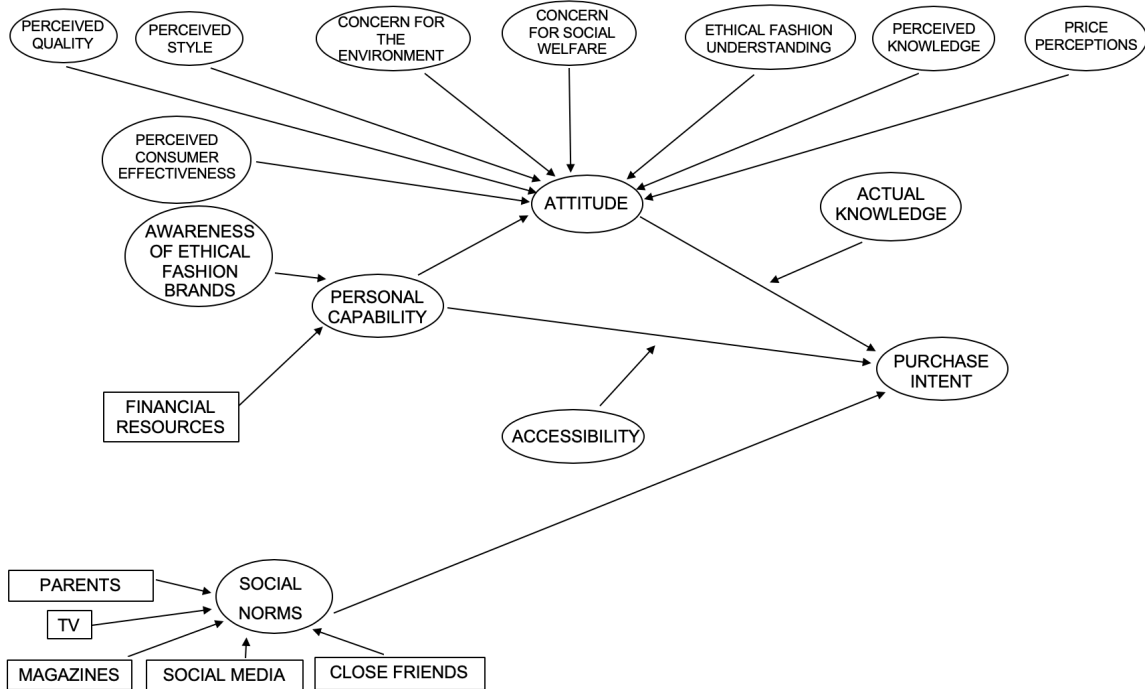## 4.3 ETHICAL FASHION CONSUMPTION AND PURCHASE INTENT

Stern's (2000) model measures environmentally significant behaviour, which has been constrained to ethical fashion consumption for the purpose of the study at hand. Consumption can be measured in various ways. One approach to ask consumers about their purchase intention for certain products. Purchase intent measures the extent to which consumers are willing to purchase a product (Kang *et al.*, 2014). However, social desirability biases tend to influence responses. Respondents may state they are more willing to purchase certain products than they actually are. Nonetheless, purchase intent may be useful in determining future consumption when respondents are introduced to new topics that they were previously unsure about, or unfamiliar with. This may be the case with ethical fashion in South Africa.

According to preliminary discussions with industry experts, South Africans exhibit relatively low levels of understanding and knowledge about ethical fashion. Thus, it is expected that the majority of South Africans may not be sure if their past fashion purchases are considered ethical or not. There are also no published statistics about ethical fashion sales in South Africa and further research is required. Nevertheless, purchase intent could be an appropriate measure of future ethical fashion purchase behaviour once respondents have been introduced to the concept of ethical fashion. Subsequent to an introduction to the ethical fashion concept they may be able to more accurately state whether they intend to purchase ethical fashion garments in the future. Purchase intent is one of the most extensively used measures of consumer behaviour, especially within the sustainable and

ethical consumption research domain. A list of previous studies addressing sustainable and ethical consumption by measuring purchase intent is indicated in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Studies investigating purchase intent

Title	Author and date	Country	Data collection
Popularisation of sustainable fashion: barriers and solutions	Moon, Lai, Iam & Chang, 2014	Korea	Questionnaire with scale items: − If there is green information (such as an eco-index) I would consider this in my purchase decisions − I will buy a fashion product designed with the considerations of environmental protection − I do not mind giving up certain design elements of fashion if its for environmental protection purposes − If there is no difference in style between two garments, I would choose the one with the eco-tag
The impact of utilitarian and hedonistic shopping values on sustainable fashion consumption: The moderating role of religiosity	Razzaq, Razzaq, Yousaf & Hong	Pakistan	Questionnaire with scale items: − I will buy clothing that is durable − I will buy clothing that is made with recycled content − I will buy clothing which can be disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner − I will buy clothing that is safe to the environment − I will limit my use of that clothing which is made of or use scarce resources − will not buy new clothing items, if I already have previous dresses in usable state − I will buy clothing which is produced in an environmentally friendly manner
Determinants of Chinese consumers green purchase behaviour	Chan, 2001	China	Questionnaire with scale items: − Over the next one month I will consider buying products because they are less polluting − Over the next one month I will consider switching to other brands for ecological reasons − Over the next one month I plan to switch to a green version of a product
Antecedents of green purchases: a survey in China	Chan, 2000	China	Questionnaire with scale items: − I consider buying products because they are less polluting − I intend to buy products because they are less polluting − I consider switching to other brands for ecological reasons − I intend to switch to other brand for ecological reasons
Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014	US, South Korea and China	Questionnaire with scale items: − If I see organic cotton apparel, I intend to purchase or consider purchasing a product. − If I see a retail store of organic cotton apparel, I intend to visit the store to purchase a product. − When I find an apparel product that fits my clothing needs, the possibility of my purchasing it will increase if I then find it is made of organic cotton

Figure 4.3: Framework

Various studies have investigated ethical consumption and its determinants. However, ethical fashion consumption is not as widely researched and tends to be exploratory in nature and thus cannot be generalised to other populations. Additionally, it appears that none of these studies have been conducted in a South African context, hence, there is a gap in the literature. Consequently, this study aims to close the gap by contributing to the existing body of research. This will be executed by assessing the impact that attitudinal, personal capability and contextual factors have on ethical fashion consumption amongst South African consumers. The variables included in the study are based on Stern's (2000) Theory of Environmentally Significant Behaviour which has been adjusted to suit the purposes of the study at hand. A summarised version of the framework is presented in Figure 4.3. The following null hypotheses have been formulated in order to empirically test the adapted framework:

H_{01} There is no relationship between attitude and purchase intent

H_{02} The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by attitude

H_{03} The relationship between attitude and purchase intent is unaffected by actual knowledge

H_{04} There is no relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent

H_{05} There is no relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

H_{06} There is no relationship between social norms and purchase intent

H07 The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by accessibility

H08 There is no relationship between accessibility and purchase intent

4.4 CONCLUSION

The ethical fashion movement has taken off in Europe and the US in responses to the detrimental social and environmental impacts of the global fashion industry. Slowly, the movement has begun to permeate South Africa too. However, there seems to be a gap between consumers reported attitudes towards ethical fashion and their actual consumption behaviour. Previous studies have attempted to close the gap. Despite the extant research, no consensus has yet been reached. Additionally, it is unclear what South African consumer behaviour is like in the ethical fashion context. It is imperative to understand the factors that impact ethical fashion consumption, and more specifically intention to purchase ethical fashion, so that businesses have a better understanding of the consumer. This knowledge will be beneficial in engaging consumers more fully in ethical purchases of fashion, thereby decreasing the damaging impact on society and the natural environment.

Thus, the study will attempt to provide a more complete picture of South Africans' ethical fashion consumption behaviour with a specific focus on the purchase aspect of consumption. This will be achieved by examining the relationship between attitude, personal capability and contextual factors and purchase intent.

The following chapter will outline the research methodology. The sample group will be defined, the research method and techniques will be discussed and the data analyses will be presented

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study of ethical fashion consumption is relatively new in comparison to the extant consumer behaviour literature. As such, much of the extant studies have attempted to study ethical fashion consumption by means of an exploratory approach. The results have provided meaningful insights into the behaviour of consumers and contribute to building a fuller picture of the ethical fashion landscape. The study at hand aims to contribute to existing knowledge of ethical fashion consumption but with a focus on the South African context, where the ethical fashion industry is still in its development phase. The research model is built upon the research discussed in the preceding chapters. The problem statement, research objectives, model and hypotheses will be reiterated in the subsequent sections in order to contextualise the research design.

Thus, the purpose of chapter five is to explain and substantiate the research methods chosen in order to execute this study. A discussion of the data required to address the research objectives will be provided. In addition, the research design, instruments and sampling methods will be explained and rationalised. Finally, the data analysis procedure will be presented.

5.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As the reality of the ecological crisis becomes evident, some individuals have become more conscious of their consumption. Groups of consumers avoid products and companies that are associated with detrimental social and environmental implications. In recent years, the fashion industry has been linked with serious environmental and social problems. Some brands focus on producing ethical fashion. Ethical fashion is fashion that is produced with the intention of minimising or neutralising its effect on the natural environment and society. Fair and safe working conditions, ecologically sound textile production, garment quality, human rights, waste management and resource usage are all important constituents of ethical fashion. In turn, some consumers have come to demand ethical fashion. However, ethical fashion sales constitute a very small proportion of total fashion sales, despite research that indicates many consumers demonstrate favourable attitudes towards ethical fashion consumption. Thus, it seems there is a gap between consumer attitudes and actual behaviour. It is important to understand the factors driving ethical fashion in order to close the gap between attitudes and consumption of ethical fashion.

Extant studies have researched ethical fashion consumption. However, upon completion of the literature review it is clear that the results are not consistent. Furthermore, some of these studies measure consumer behaviour related to very specific ethical fashion products which cannot necessarily be applied to ethical fashion generally. In addition, many of these studies have been conducted in developed countries which differ significantly from South Africa. There is a limited number of studies that specifically investigate the factors impacting ethical fashion consumption in the South African context (Taljaard *et al*., 2018; Taljaard & Sonnenberg 2019). Thus, there is a gap in the literature. This study aims to contribute to the existing body of literature by investigating the factors influencing ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Specifically, the impact of attitude, personal capability and contextual variables on ethical fashion consumption will be measured.

5.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the literature review and problem statement the following objectives were formulated. The primary objective was divided into six secondary objectives.

5.3.1 Primary research objective

The primary objective of this study is to determine the factors impacting ethical fashion consumption

5.3.2 Secondary research objectives

The primary objective can be achieved by addressing the following six secondary objectives:

1. To determine the impact of attitudinal factors on purchase intent

2. To determine the impact of personal capabilities on purchase intent

3. To determine the impact of contextual factors on purchase intent

4. To determine the extent to which attitude mediates the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

5. To determine the extent to which actual knowledge moderates the relationship between attitude and purchase intent

6. To determine the extent to which accessibility moderates the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

5.4 RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Figure 5.1 presents the conceptual model that forms the basis for the study. The conceptual model was developed upon completion of an extensive literature review in chapter two, three and four. As indicated in the model, it was proposed that purchase intent for ethical fashion is influenced by various variables. Specifically, the relationship between personal capability and

purchase intent is mediated by attitude. Actual knowledge of social and environmental impacts of the current fashion system moderated the relationship between attitude and purchase intent. In addition, social norms impact purchase intent. Finally, accessibility moderates the relationship between personal capability to purchase ethical fashion and purchase intent thereof.

Figure 5.1: Conceptual model
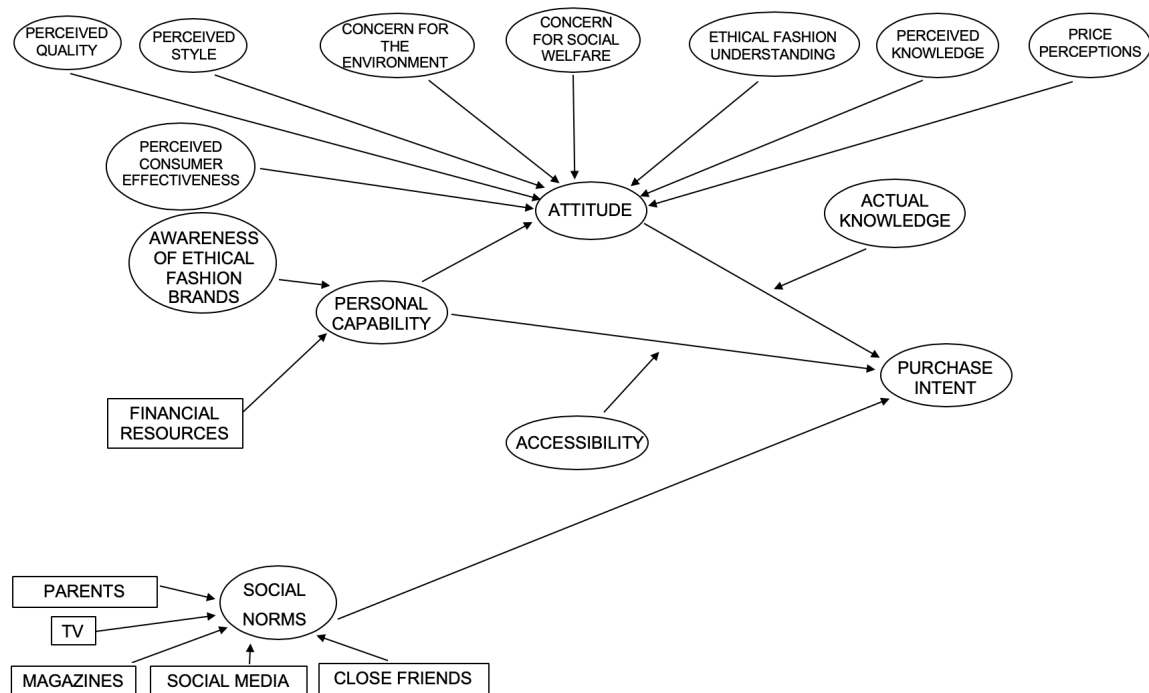
The study at hand aimed to determine whether the relationships between the variables, as indicated in Figure 5.1, are significant. In order to achieve this, various hypotheses were formulated and tested. The formulation of the hypotheses was based on the objectives as outlined in section 5.3.

H_{01} There is no relationship between attitude and purchase intent

H_{a1} There is a relationship between attitude and purchase intent

H_{02} The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by attitude

H_{a2} The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is affected by attitude

H_{03} The relationship between attitude and purchase intent is unaffected by actual knowledge

H_{a3} The relationship between attitude and purchase intent is affected by actual knowledge

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H$_{04}$ There is no relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent

H$_{a4}$ There is a relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent

H$_{05}$ There is no relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

H$_{a5}$ There is a relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

H$_{06}$ There is no relationship between social norms and purchase intent

H$_{a6}$ There is a relationship between social norms and purchase intent

H$_{07}$ The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by accessibility

H$_{a7}$ The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is affected by accessibility

H$_{08}$ There is no relationship between accessibility and purchase intent

H$_{a8}$ There is a relationship between accessibility and purchase intent

5.5. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design acts as guide for the implementation of the study. The method used to achieve the research objectives and test the hypotheses is outlined in this section. First, the secondary research conducted as part of the literature review is discussed. Secondly, this section addresses the primary research executed necessary in order to meet the research objectives. The research paradigm and approach adopted for the study are explained. Subsequently, the research technique is outlined, as well as the qualitative and quantitative methods described. The development of the research instrument is explicated. The target population and sample are defined. Finally, the data analyses performed on the data is described.

5.5.1. Secondary research

According to Zikmund and Babin (2016) secondary research refers to the collection and synthesis of existing research. In this study secondary research was conducted by performing an extensive literature review. The research was obtained by utilising various platforms. Google Scholar and the Stellenbosch University Library website were the two primary platforms utilised. Various key words, such as "ethical fashion", socially responsible fashion", "ethical consumption", "sustainable fashion" and "ethical consumers", were entered into the respective search engines and the results were assessed for appropriateness. The searches produced various results including journal articles, reports, books and news articles

that were relevant to the study at hand. In particular, many journal articles were used from the *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *Sustainable Development*, the *Journal of Cleaner Production* and the *Social Responsibility Journal*.

Information from the relevant sources was used in the literature review. The results and findings from previous studies were contrasted, compared and synthesised in order to gain a deeper understanding of the topic. In addition, it was necessary to distil the extant literature down, in order to identify the variables and constructs to be used in this study. Although very insightful, the existing literature on its own was not sufficient for the study at hand and could not be used to meet the research objectives.

Previous literature has attempted to understand the drivers of ethical fashion consumer behaviour. However, a consensus is yet to be reached in this regard. Furthermore, many studies defined ethical fashion in a very limited sense and subsequently measured consumer behaviour for very specific ethical fashion products. Thus, the results of these studies cannot necessarily be applied to ethical fashion consumer behaviour generally. None of the existing research was able to definitively explain the reason for the attitude behaviour gap in the ethical fashion context. In addition, the majority of the studies examining ethical fashion consumer behaviour were conducted in developed countries where the ethical fashion industry is more developed. As such, it is unlikely that the results of those studies fully apply to South Africa and South African consumers. Subsequently, additional research was necessary. Thus, primary research was undertaken in order to execute the study and test the hypotheses.

5.5. PRIMARY RESEARCH

A mixed-method research approach was undertaken for the purpose of the study at hand. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were utilised, thereby supplementing the secondary research, in order to address the research objectives. A mixed-method approach was chosen as the information acquired from the qualitative method was needed to confirm and strengthen the validity of the quantitative method. First, a qualitative research method was completed so as to gain insight from local industry experts. These insights were used to confirm and strengthen the subsequent quantitative research method.

Thus, an exploratory sequential design strategy was adopted for this study. Exploratory sequential research designs are characterised by an initial qualitative phase of data collection and analysis, proceeded by a quantitative data collection and analysis phase and finally, an integration phase which links the qualitative and quantitative results. Exploratory sequential design was selected as the results of the qualitative research were needed to inform the quantitative research phase. As there was not sufficient literature pertaining to

ethical fashion consumption in South Africa, research was needed that would inform and contextualise the predicted relationships between the independent variables (attitude, personal capability and context constructs) and the dependent variable (purchase intent). Information specific to the South African ethical fashion landscape was necessary to confirm whether the existing literature concerning ethical fashion consumption was relevant to South African consumers. Wisdom and Creswell (2013) confirm that an exploratory sequential design is appropriate when more contextualised measures or instruments are needed.

The qualitative and quantitative research designs are discussed in the ensuing sections (5.5.2 and 5.5.3). First the research paradigm and approach are explained.

5.5.1 Research paradigm and approach

It was necessary to identify the research paradigm that informs the rest of the research design. A research paradigm is a basic belief system and theoretical framework that is comprised of four components; ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods. This study assumes a pragmatic approach. Pragmatism is generally adopted when a research project employs a mixed method approach, as is the case for the study at hand. The pragmatist point of view posits that knowledge results from taking action and learning from the experience. Thus, pragmatism was selected for the study at hand because in order to gain knowledge, the researcher will take action by interviewing industry experts and subsequently using their responses to better formulate the framework that will be tested empirically. Various researchers have supported the use of pragmatism in mixed method studies. Morgan (2014) argues that pragmatism is particularly appropriate for the application to mixed method studies. Johnson and Gray (2010) support this claim, stating that mixed method studies are well-suited to the pragmatism paradigm. Furthermore, the pragmatism approach specifies that a reality is true when it practically aids in solving a problem in a given scenario.

This study was conducted by utilising both qualitative and quantitative methods. The proceeding section will discuss the qualitative method.

5.5.2 Research technique

Surveys were selected for both the qualitative and quantitative sections of the primary research. Kolb (2008) argues that surveys are particularly appropriate for descriptive research. As the current study aimed to describe the characteristics of ethical fashion consumption surveys seemed most appropriate. In addition, surveys are the most common technique used in research to generate primary data and have consequently been used in much of the research that forms the theoretical basis for this study. Furthermore, surveys

afford the researcher the opportunity to explore the relationship between multiple variables, as was necessary in this study. Surveys are capable of representing a large population as they allow for large samples that are more descriptive of the general population. Additionally, surveys ensure that the data collected are standardised and analysable. The study at hand required robust statistical analyses for the purpose of hypothesis testing. Gray (2004) posits that surveys do produce data that can undergo complex analyses.

However, surveys require attention to detail as there are various survey errors that can compromise the reliability and validity of the data. A pre-test was conducted in order to minimise any survey errors. In addition, careful attention was paid to minimise the presence of errors throughout the research design and data collection processes. The mitigation of survey errors will be explained in subsequent sections.

Kolb (2008) explains that surveys can be either longitudinal or cross-sectional. Longitudinal surveys are conducted over an extended period of time in order to investigate behaviour at different points in time. In contrast, cross-sectional surveys are conducted at one point in time and measure a sample's responses once. A cross-sectional approach was deemed appropriate for the purpose of the study at hand. Firstly, the researcher had limited time in which the study could be conducted. The time constraints did not allow for a longitudinal study. Furthermore, it was unnecessary to measure behaviours over a period of time. A once-off investigation was sufficient to meet the stated research objectives.

Thus, the qualitative and quantitative sections of the research employed survey techniques to gather information from the specified samples. The subsequent section describes the qualitative research design. The purpose, sample, procedure and analysis of the qualitative research are discussed.

5.5.3 Qualitative research design

Qualitative research was deemed necessary as much of the existing literature focussed on ethical fashion consumption has been conducted in developed countries where the ethical fashion movement and industry is more advanced than in South Africa. Furthermore, a limited number of studies were found that were conducted in South Africa. Thus, it was deemed essential to get input from local industry experts who were able to fill in missing information about the local state of affairs as well as confirm postulations derived from existing studies.

Thus, in-depth interviews with industry experts were conducted order to gain a deeper understanding of the topic and to gain insight into the ethical fashion industry in South Africa.

Specifically, semi-structured interviews were selected. Although fairly time consuming, this research method was deemed most appropriate for the task at hand. Semi-structured surveys are advantageous because they allowed the researcher the opportunity to stimulate a conversation around certain topics without leading the interviewees to specific answers (Zikmund & Babin, 2016). The aim was to engage the interviewees in a discussion where they felt comfortable to provide answers that felt authentic and unprompted. Furthermore, when necessary, both the interviewee and the researcher were able to ask follow-up questions and ask for clarification in the case of uncertainty. Lastly, semi-structured interviews are effective in producing large volume of information in a relatively short space of time (Zikmund & Babin, 2016). The results of personal interviews can often suffer from various biases. However, care was taken to avoid leading interviewees to suspected answers.

5.5.3.1 Objectives of the qualitative research

The purpose of the interviews was to gather information to finalise the questionnaire items. Additionally, the feedback was used to make any necessary adjustments to the framework before it was tested empirically. Furthermore, the results of the qualitative research contribute to the research results in order to complete a more comprehensive picture of the factors contributing to ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Experts in the local ethical fashion industry were selected for the sample (which will be addressed in more detail in the proceeding section). As these industry experts work with South African consumers regularly, they were able to provide better insight into the determining factors of ethical fashion consumption amongst South Africans, than studies that have been conducted in other countries with vastly different social, economic and cultural contexts.

The industry experts were asked various open-ended questions to provide the researcher with a clearer understanding of the ethical fashion industry as well as South African consumers behaviour as perceived by industry experts. The purpose of the interviews was to (1) define ethical fashion according to those in the industry, (2) determine South African consumers' level of awareness of ethical fashion, (3) determine whether there is a demand for ethical fashion in South Africa, (4) determine whether South African consumers ask about the ethics of their clothing purchases, (5) determine whether the typical ethical fashion consumer can be profiled in terms of demographics, values and motivations, (6) determine whether South Africans are willing to pay premium for ethical fashion, (7) determine whether South African consumers have preconceptions about ethical fashion in terms of styles, price, quality, etc., (8) determine whether there are any barriers to ethical fashion consumption and (9) determine what should be done to encourage more ethical consumption of fashion in South Africa.

In order to achieve these aims the industry experts were asked the following questions:

1. How would you define ethical fashion?
2. In your experience, are South African consumers aware of ethical fashion?
3. In your experience, do South African consumers demand ethical fashion?
4. In your experience, do South African consumers ask questions about how the clothing is made? (Fabric, labour, etc.)
5. Who is the South African ethical fashion consumer? In terms of demographics, values, motivation?
6. Are South African consumers willing to spend more money for ethical fashion garments?
7. In your experience, do South African consumers seem to have any pre-conceived ideas about ethical fashion.
8. Are there any barriers to ethical fashion consumption in South Africa? If so, what are those barriers?
9. What needs to be done in order to encourage the development of ethical fashion consumption in South Africa?
10. General comments or observations about ethical fashion in South Africa

5.5.3.2 Sample

The industry experts were selected by means of a convenience sampling approach as some of them are known to the researcher as a result of her work experience in the industry. Since the sample was selected by means of convenience sampling it is possible that bias could have impacted the results. However, care was taken to approach a range of individuals that own or work for various types of ethical fashion businesses. The sample comprises of individuals such as ethical fashion brand owners and journalists reporting on ethical fashion. They all work in the fashion industry and are well acquainted with South African consumers. The purpose was to conduct interviews with at least eight industry experts or until theoretical saturation was reached. Most of the experts approached are based in the Cape Town area. The prominence of Cape Town-based brands in the sample was not deliberate but occurred incidentally as most South African ethical fashion brands are physically located in Cape Town because the majority of the textile and garment factories are situated in Salt River and Woodstock in Cape Town. Nevertheless, most of the brands sell to consumers across the country even though their production is based in Cape Town. Table 5.1 below provides an overview of the sample for the qualitative research phase.

Table 5.1: Overview of the sample

Name	Position	Business	Nature of the business
Jackie May	Editor and owner	TWYG magazine	Ethical fashion magazine
Margot Molyneux	Founder, owner and manager	Margot Molyneux	Ethical men and womenswear

Katherine Pichulik	Founder, owner and manager	Pichulik	Ethical womenswear
Kimberley Lardner-Burke	Founder, owner and manager	Sama Sama	Ethical men and womenswear
Emma Longden	Founder, owner and manager	Sitting Pretty	Ethical womenswear
Loré Botha	Founder, owner and manager	Hemp Love	Ethical womenswear
Piers Rosholt	Marketing manager	Sealand Gear	Ethical men and womenswear and bags

5.5.3.3 Data collection

The procedure for executing the qualitative research was relatively simple, although time consuming. First, the researcher contacted the various interview candidates via email with an invitation to participate in the research study. The interview candidates were provided with an overview of the purpose for the study, a description of how their involvement would contribute to the study as well as general procedural arrangements and time requirements. It was critical to emphasise that the interview could take place at a time and location convenient to the interview candidate. This was crucial in order to encourage participation in the study. Upon confirmation of participation, a time and date were scheduled that suited both the researcher and the interviewee. The researcher met the interviewee at the scheduled time and place. The interviewee was asked to give their written consent to participate in the study as mandated by Stellenbosch University Ethics Committee. Subsequently, the interview commenced. The Otter's application was utilised in order to automatically transcribe interviews and upload them to Microsoft Word for analysis.

5.5.3.4 Analysis

The interviews were then analysed in order to make sense of the data and identify common themes amongst responses. Analysis of semi-structured interviews can be executed in various ways. For the purposes of this study thematic analysis was employed. Braun & Clarke's (2006) guide was used as a framework for the analysis. Braun & Clarkes (2006) guide was selected as it is widely used, easily applicable and flexible enough to be applied to a range of studies. The framework consists of six steps that guide the conduction of the thematic analysis. First, it was important to become familiar with the data. The interview transcripts were read and reread in order to get acquainted with the body of data. Second, initial codes were generated to make sense of the data and begin to organise it. Third, themes were identified. A theme is an important or interesting pattern that is revealed in the data. Fourth, the themes were reviewed in order to confirm that they were logical and that they were supported by the data. Fifth, the themes were defined and finalised. Finally, the themes were reported on in chapter six.

Results from the analysis were used to confirm the inclusion of the variables in the framework. If the interviews revealed additional variables, they were considered for inclusion in the framework that would be tested empirically. The framework was tested by means of the quantitative research section which is outlined in section 5.5.4.

5.5.4 Quantitative research design

The quantitative research was conducted subsequent to the qualitative interviews. The subsequent sections outline the design of the measurement instrument as well as the sampling procedure and data analysis necessary to obtain the results and make conclusions and recommendations.

5.5.3.1 Measurement instrument

An online questionnaire was designed and utilised in order to extract the necessary data from the research subjects. This technique was selected as it is conducive to large sample groups, which were necessary for this study. Additionally, response rates tend to be higher for online questionnaires as they provide respondents with the most convenience, allowing them to complete the questionnaires at their preferred times and locations. Furthermore, online questionnaires are cost-effective and less time consuming than traditional questionnaires (Zikmund & Babin, 2016). The researcher did not have to approach individuals from the target population to try to persuade them to complete the questionnaire. Furthermore, the sample (which will be described in more detail in section 5.5.4.4) consists of individuals from Generations Z and Y. Research indicates that individuals from these generational groups are comfortable with the internet and using technology as they grew up in the digital age (Valentine & Powers, 2013). Thus, online questionnaires are considered a user-friendly option given the sample group. Finally, online questionnaires allow for automated data gathering and storage, thereby decreasing the possibility of data errors which can occur when dealing with large volumes of data.

A self-administered online questionnaire was developed that consisted of various items that measured the impact of attitudinal, personal capability and contextual variables on purchase intent for ethical fashion. The items were adapted from tested items used in other studies authored by Fraj & Martinez (2006), Kozar & Hiller Connell (2010), Bamberg (2013), Byun & Sternquist (2011), Hill & Lee (2015), Kang *et al*. (2014) and Lee (2010). In many cases the items had to be rephrased or slightly adjusted in order to make them appropriate to the current study. The changes made were primarily to substitute the product used in the original item with ethical fashion. A summary of the changes made to items is presented in Table 5.15.

The online questionnaires were used in order to measure the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables by means of various questionnaire items. This will be discussed in the ensuing section (5.5.4.3). The basic structure of the questionnaire and the sequence of items is presented in Table 5.1. However, the questionnaire items were finalised after the in-depth interviews and literature review have been conducted.

5.5.4.2 Pre-test

Gray (2004) states that the layout, wording and structure of self-administered questionnaires needs to be simple and logical. Additionally, questionnaires should not be too lengthy otherwise respondents may not finish the questionnaire or there is a chance they will not rush their answers which could result in survey errors. As such, it was decided it was necessary to conduct pre-tests prior to the distribution of the questionnaire to respondents. Pre-tests were conducted in order to identify any problems with the survey. It was important to ensure that the questionnaire items were easily understandable, the flow was logical and practical, the length was appropriate and that the technical aspects functioned satisfactorily. Five individuals were asked to complete the questionnaire as if their responses would be used for the results. Subsequently, in-depth interviews were conducted with the individuals in order to obtain detailed feedback on the questionnaire. They were encouraged to point out any discrepancies, mistakes, confusing wording and any other problems. In addition, their responses were studied in order to determine whether the technical aspects, such as branching and response limitations, of the survey programme worked suitably. Pre-test respondents noted that some of the items felt repetitive. However, in many cases it was necessary to have several similar but differently worded items in order to ensure validity. In addition, some minor spelling mistakes were noted. The identified issues were resolved and subsequently the questionnaire was distributed to the sample.

5.5.4.3 Final questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire was to empirically test Stern's (2000) Theory of Environmentally Significant Behaviour in the context of ethical fashion consumption. The framework presented in Stern's literature was slightly adjusted framework according to ethical fashion literature as outlined in chapter four. Thus, the questionnaire measured the impact of attitudinal, personal capability and contextual variables on purchase intent for ethical fashion. The independent and dependent variables were taken from Stern's revised framework and the items utilised in the questionnaire were adapted from existing studies. Slight changes to wording were made where necessary. A copy of the final questionnaire as seen by the respondents is presented in Annexure A.

The independent variables can be segmented into three groups, namely, attitudinal, personal capability and contextual variables. The questionnaire items were finalised after having completed the literature review and in-depth interviews with industry experts. The measurement of the variables is discussed in the following sections.

a) Attitudinal variables

The attitudinal variables were comprised of concern for the environment and social welfare, perceived consumer effectiveness, price perceptions, perceived quality and stylishness and consumer knowledge. These variables were measured using Likert scale items from previous studies that have been slightly adjusted in order to suit the ethical fashion context.

i) Concern for environment and social welfare

Concern for the environment and social welfare was measured with the use of 7-point Likert scales adapted from previous studies (Bamberg, 2013). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with various statements about the environment and society. The scale items used to measure concern for the environment and social welfare are presented in Table 5.2 and 5.3 respectively.

Table 5.2: Scale items for concern for the environment

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	How does environmental concern influence specific environmentally related behaviours? A new answer to an old question (Bamberg, 2013)
EC1	The current civilisation is destroying nature	
EC2	It is still the case that the majority of the population does not act in an environmentally conscious way	
EC3	For the benefit of the environment we should be prepared to restrict our momentary style of living	
EC4	The environment deterioration will be irreversible if the necessary measures are not taken	
EC5	If we continue as before, we are approaching an environmental disaster	
EC6	I worry about the human activity consequences on the climatic change and act consistently	

Table 5.3: Scale items for concern for social welfare

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Self-control depletion does not diminish attitudes about being prosocial but does diminish prosocial behaviours (Osgood & Muraven, 2015)
SC1	It is important to help someone who needs it	
SC2	I want to help others	
SC3	The well-being of others is important	
SC4	The needs of others are important	
SC5	It is important that all people are happy	

ii) Perceived consumer effectiveness

Perceived consumer effectiveness was measured by means of 7-point Likert scales adapted from previous studies (Kang *et al*., 2014). The scale items are indicated in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Scale items for perceived consumer effectiveness

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance (Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014)
PCE1	Each consumer can have a positive effect on society by purchasing products sold by socially responsible companies	
PCE2	It is worth it for the individual consumer to make efforts to preserve and improve the environment	
PCE3	Since each individual can have any effect upon environmental problems, what I do can make meaningful difference	
PCE4	By purchasing products made in an environmentally friendly way, each consumer's behaviour can have a positive effect on the environment and society	

iii) Price perceptions

A set of 7-point Likert scales were used to measure respondents' price perceptions. These scales have been slightly adjusted to suit the study at hand (Byun & Sternquist, 2011). They are indicated in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Scale items for price perceptions

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Fast fashion and in-store hording: The drivers, moderator and consequences (Byun & Sternquist, 2011)
PP1	Ethical fashion is generally reasonably priced	
PP2	Ethical fashion is generally affordable	
PP3	Ethical fashion meets my budget for clothing shopping	
PP4	Ethical fashion prices are lower than from other, 'conventional' fashion stores	
PP5	Ethical fashion is over-priced	

iv) Product attributes

Respondents perceptions of ethical fashion quality and stylishness were measured with 7-point Likert scales as indicated in Table 5.6 and 5.7.

Table 5.6: Scale items for perceived quality

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance (Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014)
Q1	Ethical fashion is generally good quality	
Q2	Ethical fashion lasts longer than conventional alternatives	
Q3	Ethical fashion is made well	

Table 5.7: Scale items for perceived stylishness

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Effects of price, brand, and store information on buyers' product evaluations (Dodds, Monroe & Grewal, 1991)
S1	Ethical fashion might be limited in styles	
S2	Ethical fashion is generally unstylish	
S3	Ethical fashion tends to be unstylish	

v) Knowledge

Consumer knowledge was measured in two ways. Firstly, respondents were asked about their perceived knowledge of environmental and social issues with the use of 7-point Likert scales as indicated in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Scale items for perceived knowledge

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Sustainable brand extensions of fast fashion retailers (Hill & Lee, 2015)
PK1	I know a lot about the fashion industry and its related environmental and social issues	
PK2	I feel very knowledgeable about environmental and social issues related to the fashion industry	
PK3	I think I know more about the environmental and social issues attributed to the fashion industry than most people	
PK4	When it comes to environmental and social issues concerning the fashion industry, I really know a lot	

Secondly, respondents were quizzed on their actual knowledge of ethical issues related to the fashion industry. Their answers provided a clearer picture of their true knowledge of ethical issues. True and false questions were asked. Brady (2016) recommends that a 'not sure', 'non opinion' or 'not applicable' option be provided where appropriate in order to discourage uniformed responses bias. Thus, respondents were also given the option to choose 'unsure' if they did not know the answer to the question. Additionally, guessing was discouraged. The questions asked are indicated in Table 5.9. The items are adapted from Dickson's study (2000).

Table 5.9: Scale items for ethical fashion knowledge

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Consider the following statements and select either true, false, or unsure. Please do not guess. Only select true or false if you are certain.	Personal values, beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes relating to intentions to purchase apparel from socially responsible businesses (Dickson, 2000)
K1	The global fashion industry is environmentally unsustainable	
K2	The fashion industry is the second most polluting industry in the world	
K3	Fashion production produces very little industrial waste	
K4	Garments made with polyester biodegrade within 5 years of disposal	
K5	Washing clothes made from synthetic materials releases microplastic particles into the ocean	
K6	In many cases garment factory workers are not payed a living wage	
K7	Very little water is needed to grow cotton	
K8	Clothing production emits more greenhouse gas emissions than the international shipping and aviation industries combined	
K9	Garment workers are always paid the minimum wage	

b) Personal capability

The personal capability variable consisted of awareness of ethical brands and financial resources.

i) Awareness of ethical fashion brands

Awareness of ethical fashion brands was measured by asking respondents to select the ethical brands from a list including ethical and unethical alternatives. Respondents were not required to answer this question in the case that they did not recognise any ethical brands. An 'other' option was also provided where respondents could enter their own suggestions of ethical fashion brands. An example of the item is presented in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10: Awareness of ethical fashion brands

Which of the following would you consider to be ethical fashion brands? You may select more than one option or none at all.		
Ethical	**Not ethical**	
	✓	H&M
	✓	Zara
✓		Mungo and Jemima
✓		Vintage shops
	✓	Top shop
✓		Sitting Pretty
✓		Margot Molyneux
✓		Pichulik
	✓	Pep
✓		Hannah Lavery
	✓	Nike
	✓	Woolworths
✓		Akina Label

	✓	Fochini
✓		Sealand Gear
✓		Other. Please specify

ii) Financial resources

Financial resources were simply measured by asking respondents to provide their monthly income or allowance. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate their personal yearly expenditure on clothing items. The percentage of income spent on clothing could then be calculated.

c) Contextual

The contextual variable consists of accessibility to ethical fashion and social norms and expectations. These were measured by using 7-point Likert scales.

i) Accessibility

Respondents were asked about their perceived accessibility to ethical fashion brands. An example of the scales that were used are indicated in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11: Scale items for accessibility

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Ethical consumer behaviour in Germany: The attitude-behaviour gap in the green apparel industry (Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018)
A1	Finding ethical fashion brands in South Africa would be easy	
A2	There are plenty of ethical fashion brands in South Africa	
A3	Accessing ethical fashion brands in South Africa wouldn't be difficult	
A4	It would be difficult to find ethical fashion brands in South Africa	

ii) Social norms and expectations

Social norms and expectations were measured by asking respondents about the influence their peers, family and the media have on their consumption. Table 5.12 provides an overview of the scales used.

Table 5.12: Scale items for social norms and expectations

	Scale items	Source
Item code	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Environmentally sustainable textile and apparel consumption: the role of consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived personal relevance (Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014)
SN1	My close friends speak about the environmental and social problems related to the fashion industry	
SN2	My parents buy from ethical brands	
SN3	I often see things on TV about ethical fashion	
SN4	I often see things on social media about ethical fashion	
SN5	I often see things in magazines about ethical fashion	

d) Dependent variable and its measurement

The dependent variable measured was purchase intention. Purchase intention was measured with 7-point Likert scales adapted from previous studies (Moon *et al.*, 2014). An example of the scales that were used are indicated in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13: Scale items for purchase intention

Item code	Scale items	Source
	Please indicate your level of agreement Ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Popularisation of sustainable fashion: barriers and solutions (Moon, Lai, lam & Chang, 2014)
PI1	I will buy clothing that is durable	
PI2	I will not buy new clothing items, if I already have previous dresses in usable state	
PI3	I will buy clothing which is produced in an environmentally friendly manner	
PI4	I will buy clothing that is safe to the environment	
PI5	I will buy clothing which can be disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner	
PI6	If there is green information (such as an eco-index) I would consider this in my purchase decisions	
PI7	If there is no difference in style between two garments, I would choose the one with the eco-tag	
PI8	I will buy a fashion product designed with the considerations of environmental protection	

e) Additional items

Additional items were included in the questionnaire that do not directly relate to the dependent and independent variables. Demographic measures including age and gender were included in the questionnaire. The age measure was important as the specified sample (to be discussed in section 5.5.4.4) included individuals between the ages of 20 and 40 years old. Individuals that did not form part of the specified age range were not permitted to complete the questionnaire. As such, the age measure was the first item, after the consent form, in the survey. Respondents that did not meet the age requirements were automatically directed to the end page of the questionnaire.

The second demographic measure included was gender. Respondents could choose between male, female, gender-variant/non-conforming or prefer not to answer.

Respondents were also asked to specify which shops they most frequently purchased clothing from. A list of local and international brands available in South Africa were provided for respondents to choose from. They were able to select more than one option. This item was included in order to get a sense of where South African consumers choose to purchase their clothing from and the proportion of ethical and unethical brands selected.

Items were included that measured the frequency of respondents' yearly clothing purchases. Respondents were provided with a list of options to choose from, ranging from 0-4 clothing items purchased per year to more than twenty items purchased per year. In a separate question, respondents were asked to provide their average personal expenditure on clothing items per year. Thus, it would be possible to determine the average price per clothing items bought by each respondent. This calculation could provide an indication as to whether consumers purchase large volumes of clothing items at lower prices or on the other end of the spectrum, fewer clothing items that are more expensive. Ethical fashion consumption is associated with better quality, more expensive clothing items that are made to last (Watson & Ruoh-Nan, 2013). Thus, respondents who purchase fewer more expensive items may be

considered to be ethical fashion consumers as they could be spending money on good quality garments that will last longer than conventional fast fashion.

Finally, consumers were asked to estimate the percentage of their closet that consists of ethical fashion clothing items. This item was included in order to gauge whether respondents have previously engaged in ethical fashion consumption and to what extent. The results of this item could subsequently be compared to purchase intent for ethical fashion.

f) Layout

Gray (2004) notes that the flow and layout of the questionnaire are important factors to consider when designing a survey. The questionnaire was designed in a way that maximised the possibility of collecting valid and reliable data. Certain technical functions were programmed on the survey platform that would help prevent non-response bias, respondent error and survey termination. Respondents had to complete all of the items on a page before they were allowed to continue to the next page. This was done to ensure that all items were completed, and non-response bias could be avoided. In addition, this meant that all completed questionnaires were done so in full. Respondents were also prevented from going back and changing their answers. This decision was made in order to prevent respondents from engaging in social desirability bias. Respondents may be tempted to go back to previous pages and change their answers when they discover the survey is focussed on ethical fashion. Studies indicate that social desirability bias is particularly prevalent in studies where respondents have to self-report on ethical conduct (Randall & Fernandes, 1991). Purchase intent for ethical fashion is a form of ethical conduct, thus respondents could feel pressure to overstate their willingness to purchase ethical fashion in order to be viewed more favourably. Furthermore, a progress bar was included at the bottom of each page of the survey. Respondents could check how much of the questionnaire they had completed and how much they still had to do. This was done in the hope of preventing survey termination. Respondents were only allowed to complete the survey once. The questionnaire was structured in a specific way. Demographic questions, which are considered easy to complete, were spread out throughout the questionnaire in order to prevent the questionnaire from becoming too tedious. Respondents who completed the pre-test mentioned that they would prefer it if the items were randomised because it broke up the monotony of the matrix tables included in the questionnaire. The final structure and sequence of the questionnaire was finalised based on these recommendations. The final questionnaire structure and sequence is presented in Table 5.14 below.

Table 5.14: Questionnaire structure and sequence

Page	Items	Variable	Measure
1	Introduction to the study Electronic consent form		
2	Demographic measures		Age
3	Ethical fashion understanding	Independent (attitudinal)	7-point Likert scale
4	Awareness of ethical fashion brands	Independent (personal capability)	Checkboxes
5	Perceived knowledge	Independent (attitudinal)	7-point Likert scale
6	Demographic measures		Gender
7	Actual knowledge	Independent (mediating)	7-point Likert scale
8	Introduction to ethical fashion		
9	A randomised matrix table including items relating to: Concern for the environment Concern for social welfare Perceived quality Perceived style Accessibility Social norms Price perceptions Purchase intent	Independent (attitudinal, contextual) and dependent (purchase intent)	7-point Likert scale
10	Shops bought at		Checkboxes
11	A randomised matrix table including items relating to: Concern for the environment Concern for social welfare Perceived quality Perceived style Accessibility Social norms Price perceptions Purchase intent	Independent (attitudinal, contextual) and dependent (purchase intent)	7-point Likert scale
12	Personal average yearly expenditure on clothing		Checkboxes
13	A randomised matrix table including items relating to: Concern for the environment Concern for social welfare Perceived quality Perceived style Accessibility Social norms Price perceptions Purchase intent	Independent (attitudinal, contextual) and dependent (purchase intent)	7-point Likert scale
14	Monthly income/allowance	Independent (personal capability)	Checkboxes
15	A randomised matrix table including items relating to: Concern for the environment Concern for social welfare Perceived quality Perceived style Accessibility Social norms Price perceptions Purchase intent	Independent (attitudinal, contextual) and dependent (purchase intent)	7-point Likert scale
16	Items of clothing bought per year		Checkboxes
17	A randomised matrix table including items relating to: Concern for the environment Concern for social welfare Perceived quality Perceived style Accessibility Social norms Price perceptions Purchase intent	Independent (attitudinal, contextual) and dependent (purchase intent)	7-point Likert scale
18	Definition of ethical fashion Percentage of closet comprising of ethical fashion		Checkboxes
19	Email address for lucky draw		
20	Conclusion		

As mentioned previously several slight adjustments were made to the items wording in order to make them appropriate to the study at hand. Table 5.15 summarises the changes made to the items as well as justification for the adjustments.

Table 5.15: Summary of adapted items

Item code	Original item	Adapted item	Change	Justification for adaption	Source
PP1	It is reasonably priced.	Ethical fashion is generally reasonably priced	'it' became 'ethical fashion'	Clarity Make relevant to study	Byun & Sternquist, 2011
PP2	It is affordable	Ethical fashion is generally affordable	'it' became 'ethical fashion'	Clarity Make relevant to study	Byun & Sternquist, 2011
PP3	It meets my budget for clothing shopping	Ethical fashion meets my budget for clothing shopping	'it' became 'ethical fashion'	Clarity Make relevant to study	Byun & Sternquist, 2011
PP4	The price is lower than comparable fashion stores	Ethical fashion prices are lower than from other, 'conventional' fashion stores	Added 'ethical fashion'	Clarity Make relevant to study	Byun & Sternquist, 2011
PP5	It is over-priced	Ethical fashion is over-priced	'it' became 'ethical fashion'	Clarity Make relevant to study	Byun & Sternquist, 2011
Q1	The product should be of good quality	Ethical fashion is generally good quality	'the product' became 'ethical fashion' Removed 'should'	Make relevant to study Clarity	Dodds, Monroe & Grewal, 1991
Q2	The quality of the product is better than its alternatives	Ethical fashion lasts longer than conventional alternatives	'the product' became 'ethical fashion' 'alternatives' was specified as 'conventional alternatives'	Make relevant to study Clarity	Dodds, Monroe & Grewal, 1991
Q3	The workmanship of the product should be very good	Ethical fashion is made well	'the product' became 'ethical fashion' Replaced 'workmanship' with 'made well'	Make relevant to the study Make more easily understandable	Dodds, Monroe & Grewal, 1991
S1	Organic apparel might have a limited range of styles	Ethical fashion might be limited in styles	'organic apparel' changed to ethical fashion	Make relevant to the study	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014
S2	Organic apparel is generally unstylish	Ethical fashion is generally unstylish	'organic apparel' changed to ethical fashion	Make relevant to the study	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014
S3	Organic apparel tends to be unstylish	Ethical fashion tends to be unstylish	'organic apparel' changed to ethical fashion	Make relevant to the study	Kang, Liu & Kim, 2014
SN1	How much do your friends tell you about things that are related to environmental protection?	My close friends speak about the environmental and social problems related to the fashion industry	'environmental protection' became 'ethical fashion' Word order changed	Make relevant to study Fit in to matrix tables in questionnaire	Lee, 2010
SN2	How much do your parents tell you about things that are related to environmental protection?	My parents buy from ethical brands	'environmental protection' became 'ethical fashion' Word order changed	Make relevant to study Fit in to matrix tables in questionnaire	Lee, 2010
SN3	How often do you come across environmental topics/ issues on TV?	I often see things on TV about ethical fashion	'environmental protection' became 'ethical	Make relevant to study Fit in to matrix tables in	Lee, 2010

			fashion' Word order changed	questionnaire	
SN4	How often do you come across environmental topics/ issues on social media?	I often see things on social media about ethical fashion	'environmental protection' became 'ethical fashion' Word order changed	Make relevant to study Fit in to matrix tables in questionnaire	Lee, 2010
SN5	How often do you come across environmental topics/ issues in magazines?	I often see things in magazines about ethical fashion	'environmental protection' became 'ethical fashion' Word order changed	Make relevant to study Fit in to matrix tables in questionnaire	Lee, 2010

5.5.4.4 The sampling process

A sample is a group of individuals taken from a population for measurement of some kind (Zikmund & Babin, 2016). A well-chosen sample can improve the applicability of a study. The sampling procedure followed in this study is discussed in the subsequent sections.

a) Population and sampling frame

In order to select an appropriate sample, it is necessary to define the population of interest. In this case, the population consists of males and females from Generation Z and Generation Y living in South Africa. Discussions with ethical fashion experts indicate that amongst South African consumers, those between the ages of twenty and forty are most likely have an interest in ethical fashion. These estimations are in line with research that suggests Generation Z and Y show deeper concern for environmental and social issues and, in comparison to previous generations, are more likely to align those values with their consumption behaviour (Valentine & Powers, 2013). Generation Y includes individuals born between 1981 and 1996 and are aged between 23 and 38 in 2019. Generation Z consists on individuals born from 1997 onwards and are aged between seven and 22 years old in 2019.

It is acknowledged that individuals over the age of forty may have more disposable income than those between the ages of 20 and 40 and therefore may be more able to afford ethical fashion items which tend to be more expensive than conventional fashion. However, research has indicated that Generation Y and Z are the most likely to foster pro-social and environmental attitudes and thus may be more inclined to engage in ethical fashion consumption.

In order to achieve consistency in the measurement instruments as well as reliable and valid results it was necessary to ensure that that all respondents earned either a fixed salary or allowance that they use to pay for their personal clothing purchases. In many cases minors do not necessarily always receive a set monthly allowance and often parents or guardians pay for a child's clothing expenses directly. In addition, obtaining ethical clearance for minors

is challenging. Thus, for this study, the minimum age was twenty years and the cut-off age was forty years.

A sampling frame does not exist and thus could not be used for the purpose of the study at hand. An alternative approach was necessary. In order to minimise costs and adhere to time constraints Stellenbosch University students, alumni and staff were utilised. It was decided to include alumni in the sample as these individuals are out of the university environment and presumably earning salaries. They are also slightly older than the current students, thus diversifying the age distribution of the sample. Discussions with industry experts indicated that consumers in the Western Cape may be more inclinde to purchase ethical fashion as Cape Town has more of a sustainability focus than Gauteng does. May (2019) explains, 'I think it probably mostly is Western Cape. I mean the sustainable movement is much bigger here than it is in Gauteng.' In addition, many ethical fashion brands are based in Cape Town as the majority of the South African textiles and garment industry is located in Woodstock and Salt River, in Cape Town. Thus, consumers living in the Western Cape might have better access to ethical fashion brands.

b) Sample size

According to data from the Statistics South Africa mid-year population estimates for the population of interest consists of 20 551 895 individuals. In order to be able to apply the results of the study to the population, the study aimed to have a minimum sample size of 385 respondents.

c) Sampling techniques

Stellenbosch students and staff were utilised for the purposes of the study. The number of students enrolled at Stellenbosch University 2018 was listed as 31 765. Furthermore, staff employed by the University numbers 3454 individuals. It was suspected that a large portion of the students and staff would fall in the specified age range and subsequently the target sample size would be easily achieved. In addition, Stellenbosch University students were easily accessible to the researcher and garnering participation was fairly simple and time efficient.

However, it was not possible to get the participation of all staff and students in the required age group. A sampling frame did not exist, therefore it was not possible to get a list of all staff and students with their respective personal, details, income levels and demographic information. Thus, probability sampling was not possible. A non-probability convenience sampling technique was implemented in order to gather the required number of respondents for the sample. Non-probability sampling refers to the selection of sample units by means of

judgement or accessibility. Non-probability sampling has been linked to biases as the sample as it is not necessarily always representative of the population. However, given the resources available, non-probability sampling was deemed acceptable for the study. In addition, it was aimed to achieve a large sample size which would compensate for the disadvantages related to the sampling technique.

Convenience sampling was selected as it required little effort from the researcher and minimal resources were required. In addition, the questionnaires were distributed online, and judgement sampling was therefore not possible. The following section describes how the questionnaire was distributed to the respondents.

d) Data collection

As an online questionnaire was selected as the measurement instrument it was unnecessary for fieldworkers to physically distribute the questionnaire. The questionnaires were dispersed amongst students and staff by means of a standardised email. The list of email addresses was provided after obtaining ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee.

An email was sent to all Stellenbosch University students and staff with a link to the questionnaire. Potential respondents were provided with details concerning the time required to complete the survey, legal rights of the respondent as well as information pertaining to a lucky draw. The anonymity of potential respondents was emphasised. It was decided to include a lucky draw in order to encourage participation in the study. The lucky draw prize consisted of R300 cash to be paid into the winner's bank account. Any individual who wished to do so and met the age requirements could participate in the study by clicking on the link that took them to the beginning of the questionnaire. Once questionnaires were completed, they were automatically saved to the survey program's database until the responses were ready to be downloaded to the statistical analysis programs.

5.5.4.6 Data analysis

The following section provides a description of how the data collected from the questionnaire was analysed. Descriptive and inferential analyses were employed. Various statistical software packages, namely; SmartPLS, Statistica and Microsoft Excel were utilised. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that the results of the data analysis were valid and reliable.

a) Descriptive analysis

First, descriptive analyses were performed in order to describe the basic features of the data and the sample. Descriptive analyses were deemed appropriate as they have the ability to

summarise the responses of large sample groups. It was essential to describe the realised sample utilised in the study. The realised sample is the number of individuals who completed the questionnaire in full. Demographic variables were used to describe the realised sample. The age and gender distribution of the sample was described. Medians, means and standard deviations were used for the items measured with Likert scales. Various visual tools such as graphs and diagrams were utilised in order to more effectively illustrate the calculated measures.

b) Inferential analysis

Subsequently, inferential analyses were conducted. The aim of the inferential analyses was to determine whether there were any significant relationships between the variables as predicted in the hypotheses and structural model. Inferential statistics allow for application of the results to the population group.

The data collected from the research instrument is metric, and thus an appropriate data analysis technique had to be selected. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used for the purposes of this study. Specifically, Partial Least Squares SEM (PLS-SEM) rather than covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) was selected. PLS-SEM is deemed more appropriate when the structural model is complex and the study has an exploratory element (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt & Ringle, 2018). This study focussed on ethical fashion consumption in South Africa and has not been widely researched before. Thus, it is unclear whether the existing theory pertaining to ethical fashion consumption generally will also be applicable to the specific South African context. Therefore, the study has an exploratory element. Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt (2011) state that CB-SEM is appropriate when the objective of the research is to test and confirm theory. However, when the aim of the research is to develop theory and predict behaviour, PLS-SEM is the appropriate choice. Therefore, it seemed that PLS-SEM was better suited to the study at hand. In addition, PLS-SEM allows for smaller sample groups than CB-SEM. As the sample was limited to Stellenbosch University students and staff it was predicted that the sample would be quite small. In addition, Hair *et al*. (2011) posit that PLS-SEM holds many advantages over CB-SEM. The required assumptions necessary to use CB-SEM are much more stringent and thus more challenging to fulfil. PLS-SEM, unlike CB-SEM does not require data to be normally distributed, does not require very large sample groups and has the ability to predict rather than confirm structural relationships. Wold (1982) posits that CB-SEM's distributional and informational requirements are unrealistic for empirical research. In addition, Hair *et al*. (2011) suggest that PLS-SEM provides more robust results than CB-SEM. Thus, PLS-SEM offers various practical as well as performance-related benefits over CB-SEM. Therefore, the structural model, as presented in Figure 5.1, was tested using PLS-SEM technique in conjunction with SmartPLS software.

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i) PLS-SEM

The structural model included many variables and predicted relationships between them. PLS-SEM is a multi-variate data analysis method and is capable of testing theoretically grounded complex models as in the case in this study. PLS-SEM functions by means of combining exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. The exploratory factor analysis is used in order to determine the underlying structure of the variables included in the study as well as explain interrelationships amongst variables. A multiple regression analysis is then performed on the data after the exploratory factor analysis. The purpose is to be able to predict ethical fashion consumption based on the independent variables.

There are two sub-models within the structural equation model. The inner model specifies the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous constructs, in this case attitude, actual knowledge, personal capability, social norms (exogenous constructs) and purchase intent (endogenous construct). The outer model specifies the relationship between the latent variables and their indicators. When building the outer model, it is essential to properly define the measurement scales.

ii) Formative and reflective measurement scales

There are two broad types of measurement scales; formative and reflective. A formative measurement scale is appropriate when the indicators cause the latent variable (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2014). Formative indicators are not interchangeable amongst each other. Thus, arrows point from the indicators towards the latent variable.

For reflective models, the observed indicators are caused as a result of the latent variable. Thus, the indicators should be highly correlated and interchangeable. The arrows point from the latent variable to its indicators.

For the study at hand it was necessary to decide whether indicators where formative or reflective. As evident in Figure 5.2 the final model included a mixture of both formative and reflective indicators. Formative models are indicated in blue while reflective models are red.

Figure 5.2: Formative and reflective models
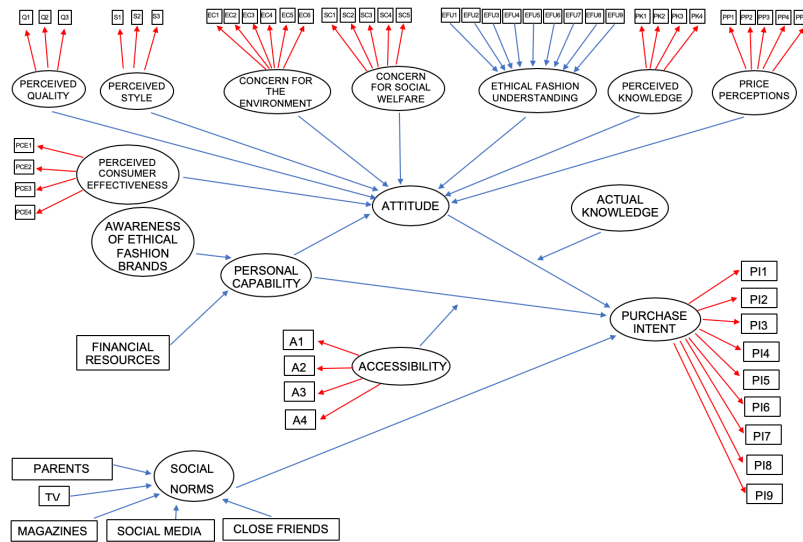
Notes: blue represents formative models and red represents reflective models

Purchase intent, the dependent variable, has reflective indicators. Thus, PI1-8 are caused by purchase intent. Therefore, the indicators PI1-8 should be highly correlated and interchangeable. Similarly, accessibility, perceived consumer effectiveness, perceived quality, perceived style, concern for the environment, concern for social welfare, perceived knowledge and price perceptions all have reflective indicators. Causality flows from the latent variable to the indicators. In the case of all of these variables the indicators are caused by the variable. The remaining indicators, as indicated in blue, are formative. Thus, the indicators cause the variable. The formative versus reflective decisions were based using Hair recommendations. When indicators are highly correlated and interchangeable, they are reflective. However, when indicators are not interchangeable, and each item represents a specific aspect of the constructs domain the measurement model is formative. As the scales used in the questionnaire were directly taken, or in some cases adapted, from existing studies the formative versus reflective decisions were dictated by the pre-existing items.

iii) Determination of the sample size

Maecoulides & Saunders (2006) developed a set of guidelines to be consulted when determining the minimum sample size require for s PLS-SEM analysis. The guidelines are based on various factors including the significance level, statistical power, minimum coefficient of determination (R^2 values) and maximum number of arrows pointing at a latent variable. Taking these factors into account, assuming a significance level of five percent, statistical power of 80 percent, R^2 values of at least 25 percent and seven arrows pointing towards a latent variable, the guidelines suggest that a minimum sample size of 80 respondents be utilised. The study achieved a sample size of more than 700, thus meeting the requirements for using PLS.

iv) Reliability and validity

Before testing whether the relationships between the variables were significant, it was necessary to check the reliability and validity of the data. Reliability refers to the degree to which the research method produced consistent results. The reliability of the data is determined by measuring the internal consistency. This is achieved by calculating Cronbach alpha coefficients. Cronbach's alpha estimates reliability based on the inter-correlations of the indicator variables. Lowry & Gaskin (2014) specify that Cronbach alpha coefficients should be above 0.7 in order for items to be considered reliable. Hair *et al.* (2014) argue that Cronbach's Alpha's test of reliability is limited and may not be accurate. Thus, the composite reliability was also tested. Composite reliability scores between 0.60 and 0.70 are deemed acceptable. The multi-scale items used in this study were all adapted from previous studies which achieved acceptable levels of reliability. Thus, it was expected that the items used in this study would also be reliable.

After assessing the reliability, it was also necessary to evaluate the validity of the data. Validity refers to the ability of a construct's indicators to correctly measure what they are supposed to measure. Validity was assessed by measuring the convergent validity and the discriminant validity of the data. In order to measure the convergent validity Average Variance Extracted (AVE) needs to be calculated. AVE values above 0.50 are considered acceptable. Discriminant validity is measured by calculating the HTMT ratios which compare the square root of each of the AVE scores and the correlations among the latent variables. In order to be acceptable Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios for each variable should be less than 0.90. Once the reliability and validity of the data was confirmed PLS-SEM could be used to address the significance of the relationships between the variables.

v) Assessment of the inner model

Once the reliability and validity were established the inner model could be assessed. Outer loadings, coefficient of determination (R^2), path coefficients and multicollinearity values were calculated in order to evaluate the structural model. The strength and direction of the relationships between variables could be determined.

First, the collinearity of the variables was assessed. Collinearity refers to high correlation between formative indicators. Thus, collinearity between two formative indicators is undesirable as it causes methodological and interpretive problems. Collinearity is measured by calculating the variance inflation factor (VIF). Guidelines indicate that VIF scores should be less than five in order to avoid collinearity issues (Hair *et al*., 2014).

Second, it was necessary to calculate the coefficient of determination. The coefficient of determination is a measure of the model's predictive accuracy. The R^2 value is representative of the percentage of variance that can be explained by the independent variables. R^2 is expressed as a figure between 0 and 1. The level of predictive accuracy of the model increases as the R^2 value escalates. An R^2 value of 0.75 or higher is indicative of a model with strong predictive power. An R^2 value of 0.50 represents a model with moderately predictive ability whilst 0.25 is representative of weak predictive ability.

Third, path coefficients and p-values were determined in order to investigate the paths between variables in the model and the significance of those relationships. Path coefficients are a representation of the estimated connection between latent variables in the model, or the strength of the relationship between variables. Path coefficients are represented as a figure between -1 and 1. Path coefficients close to -1 are indicative of a strong negative relationship between the variables, whilst values close to +1 indicate a strong positive relationship between variables. The closer the path coefficient is to 0, the weaker the relationship is between the two variables. It was also necessary to determine whether the relationships are statistically significant. This is achieved by considering the p-values for the hypothesised relationships. Confidence intervals of 95 percent were assumed and therefore p-values below 0.05 are significant.

Finally, the researcher also tested for moderation and mediation. It was suspected that accessibility to ethical fashion acted as a moderator between personal capability and purchase intent. In addition, it was predicted that actual knowledge moderated the relationship between attitude and purchase intent. PLS-SEM is considered a specifically appropriate statistical analysis technique when the structural model includes moderating variables as in the case of this study. Furthermore, it has been reported that PLS-SEM has the ability to produce robust results when testing for moderation as measurement error is automatically included in the analysis. The moderation effect was tested by evaluating p-values in the same manner as outline in the preceding section. P-values less than 0.05 indicate a statistically significant moderating effect. However, p-values larger than 0.05 indicate that no significant moderating effect is present.

Mediation is tested by following three steps (Hair *et al*., 2014). First, the mediator must be excluded and relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable must be assessed. If there is no direct significant relationship, then no mediating effect is present. However, if there is a direct significant relationship, further analysis is required. The second step is to include the mediator variable in the PLS path model and assess the significance of the relationships between the dependent variable and the mediating variable,

and the mediating variable and the dependent variable. If the effects are insignificant then mediating effect is not present. However, if the effects are significant the variance accounted for (VAF) must be calculated. A VAF score of more than 80 percent indicates full mediation, a VAF score between 20 and 80 percent represents partial mediation and a VAF score of less than 20 percent indicates that no mediation exists. The afore-mentioned process was applied to the attitude as a potential mediator.

vi) SmartPLS

The PLS-SEM was conducted using SmartPLS, a software tool specifically designed for PLS-SEM. Smart-PLS is often chosen above other programmes such as Lisrel or AMOS, because it is more user-friendly, more flexible and has less stringent assumptions that need to be fulfilled (Sander & Lee, 2015). In addition, Smart-PLS allows for reflective and formative measurements unlike Lisrel and AMOS. Ultimately, the decision to use SmartPLS was based on the type of SEM being used. SmartPLS is appropriate for PLS-SEM, whereas Lisrel and AMOS are better suited to CB-SEM.

The inferential data analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Conclusions and recommendations could be made based on the results of the statistical analyses.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Chapter five outlined the methodology used to conduct the primary and secondary research. Secondary research was conducted in the form of an extensive literature review. Primary research was conducted by means of a qualitative and quantitative approach. In-depth interviews with industry experts were conducted. The results of which were utilised to inform and confirm the second phase of the primary research. An online questionnaire was completed by Generation Z and Y South African consumers. Chapter six will present the results of the primary research which will be used to make conclusions and recommendations about ethical fashion consumption in South Africa.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to investigate ethical fashion consumption in South Africa, several research objectives were formulated. The preceding chapter, chapter five outlined the research methodology used to meet the stated research objectives. The procedures delineated in the research design were conducted and subsequently results were obtained. Thus, the purpose of chapter six is to present the results from the qualitative and quantitative analyses. The results of the existing study will be used to contribute to the existing literature focussed on ethical fashion consumption. Thus, the results will be used to form the basis of the conclusions and recommendations to be discussed in chapter seven.

First the qualitative results are reviewed. Subsequently, the results from the quantitative research are presented. Descriptive analyses relating to the realised sample are discussed next, thereafter the results of the reliability analysis are presented and finally the inferential statistics are provided. The chapter concludes by addressing the stated hypotheses and explaining the related decision rules.

6.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH RESULTS

In-depth personal interviews were conducted with ethical fashion industry experts in order to contextualise the extant literature to the South African situation. Most of the existing studies focussed on ethical fashion consumption have been conducted in countries with developed economies and a prevalence of ethical fashion. However, it was suspected that the ethical fashion industry in South Africa is less developed than in Europe and the United States where much of the research was conducted. Thus, South African consumer behaviour towards ethical fashion may differ from the behaviour reported in existing studies.

Seven industry experts were interviewed. Six of the individuals owned, managed or work for South African ethical fashion brands. The other individual interviewed is the editor of a sustainable fashion magazine. Table 6.1 below provides a summary of the individuals interviewed.

Table 6.1: Industry experts

Name	Position	Business	Nature of the business
Jackie May	Editor and owner	TWYG magazine	Ethical fashion magazine
Margot Molyneux	Founder, owner and manager	Margot Molyneux	Ethical men and womenswear
Katherine Pichulik	Founder, owner and manager	Pichulik	Ethical womenswear
Kimberley Lardner-Burke	Founder, owner and manager	Sama Sama	Ethical men and womenswear
Emma Longden	Founder, owner and manager	Sitting Pretty	Ethical womenswear
Loré Botha	Founder, owner and manager	Hemp Love	Ethical womenswear
Piers Rosholt	Marketing manager	Sealand Gear	Ethical men and womenswear and bags

The industry experts were met at a range of convenient locations, in most cases at the interviewees place of business where the researcher was given a tour of the business and was able to see the ethical practices adopted by the business. The interviews typically lasted 40 minutes in which a range of topics related to ethical fashion consumption in South Africa were covered. Specifically, the interviewees were asked about:

- Defining ethical fashion

- Consumer awareness of ethical fashion

- Consumer demand for ethical fashion

- Consumer willingness to find out about the ethics behind the production of garments

- Consumer willingness to pay premium for ethical fashion

- Demographic profile of a typical ethical fashion consumer

- Consumer preconceptions of ethical fashion

- Barriers to ethical fashion

- Strategies for developing ethical fashion consumption in South Africa

The interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed. Once the transcriptions had been edited to remove unnecessary words, the analysis could begin. Broad themes were identified based on the responses to the questions. The broad themes include low awareness, high prices, high financial resources, limited accessibility, limited knowledge and unstylishness. these themes were identified based on the verbatim responses of the interviewees. The relevant findings are then linked to the quantitative research. The aim of the interviews was to gain a better understanding of ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Thus, all findings relevant to ethical consumer behaviour in South Africa were noted. The following sections describe the findings extracted from the interviews as well as the themes identified.

6.2.1 Ethical fashion definition

Most industry experts define ethical fashion in terms of environmental sustainability as well as labour issues. Longden (2019) explains, 'It's quite a broad term, but I think it is a combination of workforce being treated fairly and being paid a fair and living wage, and balancing that sustainability, environmental awareness side… for me, it means paying a fair and living wage and being environmentally aware and using natural fibres'. May (2019) has a similar definition, including both environmental and labour issues into her description of

ethical fashion, 'It (ethical fashion) implies, from a practical perspective, the practice of design, fabrication, the making-process and the lifecycle of that product, so sustainability in terms of resources and materials. And then ethical fashion brings in the labour practices. I mean, it's all ethical. We have to be sustainable. Being sustainable is an ethical practice'. She uses the terms ethical and sustainable interchangeably. This is interesting as, in most cases, when studies refer to sustainable fashion usually the scope is limited to environmental considerations.

Pichulik (2019) also included both environmental and social issues into her definition of ethical fashion, but is more specific about the supply chain, 'I think ethical fashion is a value chain that respects every hand or engagement with a product. So it's being incredible considered from your procurement process, to your supplier relationships, to your assembly and production, to your packaging, to you distribution and your partnerships that you have along the way. You are considering the human value as well as the material value'.

Botha (2019) also emphasises both environmental and labour issues, but touches on the importance of transparency as well, 'Ethical fashion is being really transparent about everything around your product. The whole process needs to be transparent'. This notion is supported by Rosholt (2019) who says, 'I think ethical fashion has to be completely transparent and ethical at every point in the process.'

Thus, it is evident that the definition of ethical fashion from the perspective of South African industry experts correlates with the definitions explicated in the various journal articles. Both emphasise the importance of both environmental and social considerations in the fashion production process. However, it seems as if South African designers place more focus on the social component. It is important to ensure that employees are well looked after and paid above minimum wage levels. Molyneux (2019) specifies, 'It (ethical fashion) is also about the people that made it and the work environment are extremely important, especially to me…so it's about the people behind it, for everyone to have a fair wage and a decent lifestyle.'

Pichulik (2019) agrees and links the discussion to economic conditions in South Africa, 'When you talk about the sustainability and ethics of being able to employ people and create jobs, it's essentially what South Africa needs foremost. Because if you have people living above the poverty line, they start to have free capital to make better consumer decisions. Which from a mass market perspective puts pressure on the real monopolies who are actually causing the biggest damage. If you really want to shift the whole economy, it's about upping people's earing capacity and giving them access to education.'

6.2.2 Consumer awareness and demand for ethical fashion

When discussing consumer awareness of ethical fashion in South Africa, most experts concur that there is limited but growing awareness of ethical fashion amongst consumers. Botha (2019) explains, 'People are pretty aware, but I'd say that the really aware people are a minority. The rest of the people might see it as beautiful fashion but they don't necessarily understand the ins and outs…'

Pichulik (2019) explains, 'As South Africans, I think we are quite early as a consumer market. So I think we're in the early stages of awareness.' Longden (2019) confirms this, saying, 'Consumers are becoming more and more aware, I think we are slowly getting there. She also compares awareness of ethical fashion in South Africa to more developed countries, 'We are nowhere near the level of awareness in Europe or the States for example.'

Many experts relate ethical fashion to socio-demographic issues in South Africa. May (2019) points out that the majority South Africans cannot afford to consider ethical fashion as a priority and thus, consumer awareness is limited to a small group of individuals. "For the most of our market just having new clothes and being able to buy clothes at all is (difficult), there's no concern for the ethical practices of the manufacturers.' These remarks are echoed by Rosholt (2019) who specifies that awareness is growing, but for a small group of South Africans, 'the minority high LSM groups are becoming aware of ethical fashion and they do demand it.'

Pichulik (2019) explains that being able to consider ethical fashion is a privilege in South Africa, 'I think consumer choice, especially from an ethical and sustainable perspective, really sits in the privilege. Because when you just barely live above the poverty line, you're just trying to fulfil your basic needs. So the question of whether it's ethically made is just completely irrelevant'.

 A discussion relating to consumer understanding of ethical fashion also arose. Molyneux (2019) explains that whilst consumers are becoming aware of ethical fashion they do not always consider all aspects, 'They (consumers) are becoming more aware, but like anything that's well marketed certain aspects of it are being better marketed than others. So I don't think that people fully comprehend the background of the people making the garments and how important that could be to our economy. Large international retailers are coming out with garments made from organic cotton which is great and very worthwhile, but there are still other aspects to it that doesn't make it an ethical garment.' It seems that Molyneux (2019) is insinuating that misleading advertising is sometimes associated with ethical fashion. The 'large international retailers' advertise their use of sustainable fabrics. However, their labour

practices remain an issue, which means that the garments are not necessarily ethical. Pichulik (2019) echoes these sentiments regarding misleading advertising, 'I think ethical fashion can be incredibly green washed. So I think it becomes confusing when large fast fashion brands, who have far more airtime in our public space, are pushing a very exclusive fickle ethical narrative. However, I wouldn't say that that is exactly considerate of all things that make up the truest form of ethical fashion.'

Thus, it seems that ethical fashion awareness amongst South Africans is limited to a small group of individuals with financial means. However, their understanding of ethical fashion may be limited, or influenced by green washing. Similarly, it seems that demand for ethical fashion is limited. Botha says, I think we're not quite there yet where South Africans are demanding ethical fashion.' Longden (2019) agrees and again makes a comparison with international markets. When asked if South Africans demand ethical fashion she says, 'Not really. I have really found the international consumer to be more concerned about where it's made, how it's made, what fabrics you're using, than the South African consumer. I think they really don't understand the supply chain. So I think there's a lot of education that needs to happen in terms of ethical fashion in South Africa for it to change.'

Rosholt (2019) also refers to smaller groups of consumers, 'I think there are definitely groups of South Africans who are very ethically inclined and do demand it to a certain degree.' Lardner-Burke (2019), 'I think there is awareness, but there isn't as much action…there is a small minority of people that just purchase solely ethical products, but cost isn't an issue for them.'

6.2.4 Consumer willingness to investigate ethics of fashion

The interviewees were asked whether South African consumers ask any questions about the ethics behind clothing production. The consensus was that there is a very small group of consumers who specifically ask questions about how the clothing was made, where it was made, who was responsible for making it and which fabrics were used. However, this very small proportion could also be influenced by the businesses themselves pre-emptively sharing that information on their respective social media accounts, websites and labels. Thus, consumers may not be asking those kinds of questions as frequently because the information has already been provided to them. Molyneux (2019) explains, 'We have very few people that ask us about the fabrics we use, but not many. It's mainly us trying to explain to them about the fabrics.'

Lardner-Burke (2019) makes a similar comment, 'I don't think there are enough people asking questions. I think there is a small group. For me, a lot of the fabrics that I'll work with,

when I take on a different fabric I'll make these little write ups about that fabric and why it's sustainable and where it came from. And then if I'm selling that garment I will be like: this is what the fabric's about and this is a little bit of the story behind it. But I am the one to strike up the conversation.' She also explains that some customers assume that a brand is sustainable if that's what they claim to be, and then do not ask any further questions because they accept that as the truth. She terms this as a kind of ignorance, especially when considering fast fashion brands with sustainable ranges or products. This could be where green washing and misleading advertising play a role. If consumers do not ask enough questions and demand transparency, businesses will get away with green washing. However, consumers need to have a full understanding of the components included in ethical fashion in order to ask the right questions. However, as discussed in previous sections, it seems South African consumers generally do not have a complete understanding of ethical fashion. Longden says, 'When I use the term ethical fashion, I can see it just actually confuses some people, they actually don't know what it means.' Education could provide a solution to this problem, as recommended by Longden (2019), 'I think they (consumers) really don't understand the supply chain. So I think there's a lot of education that needs to happen in terms of ethical fashion in South Africa for it to change.' Botha (2019) also touches on this, 'People do ask questions, it's just you can see there's still a lot of educational work that needs to be done.'

May (2019) emphasises that the information is being provided to consumers by the producers, 'I see it more from the companies that are producing interestingly enough…and I think that's being led by the producers being in tune with what's happening internationally. They're feeling the trends from consumers internationally, not so much from the response of consumers here.' It seems that the local ethical fashion scene is influenced by the international ethical fashion movement. The international movement developed because of consumer opposition to the unethical workings of the conventional fashion industry and subsequently the demand for more ethical alternatives. However, in South Africa, the movement is being led by the producers more than by the consumers.

Based on the above discussion, it is clear that generally South African consumer awareness, understanding is relatively low. Recognition of these facts was important for the development of the online questionnaire. As a result, a simple clear definition of ethical fashion was included in the questionnaire to ensure that respondents understood the questions.

6.2.5 Profile of the South African ethical fashion consumer

The interviewees were asked whether it was possible to describe the typical South African ethical fashion consumers in terms of any common characteristics. In most cases, the

interviewees agreed that there are not very many shared features amongst ethical fashion consumers in South Africa. However, there does seem to be consensus that those aware of and demanding ethical fashion tend to be younger consumers. Longden (2019) explains, 'I would say it's very mixed. It's definitely younger, definitely twenty somethings. So millennials are definitely interested in ethical fashion, they're buying a lot of ethical fashion… so it's your twenty somethings and early thirties who are interested, but no specific colour or creed…older people have no idea what I'm talking about.'

Lardner-Burke (2019) also mentions age, 'It's generally mid-twenties to early thirties, I think there's a younger group, like 16 to 20 but they can't really afford it yet.'

May (2019) is more specific, 'I think it (the ethical fashion consumer) is a white woman. I think it's quite young. I think it's probably mostly in the Western Cape, I mean the sustainable movement is much bigger here than in Gauteng. I think aged between 24 and 40.'

Rosholt (2019) relates the discussion to financial means. He says, 'I think there's this association that it's (ethical fashion) for rich people. I don't think you can really categorise who the ethical fashion consumer is. I think it's just the people who have the luxury of being ethical consumers, who have the luxury of time and resources to think about that kind of stuff and to research it…I think ethical stuff really goes across all sorts of categories within a certain LSM. Being able to afford it is the only real differentiating factor.'

Thus, it seems younger consumers tend to be more likely to engage in ethical fashion consumption. This summation aligns with extant research that suggests that Generation Z and Y are more ethically inclined and likely to act on their ethical attitudes (Valentine & powers, 2013). These results informed decisions made regarding the target population for the online questionnaire. Based on the above discussion it was decided to limit the questionnaire group to individuals aged between 20 and 40 years old.

6.2.5 Consumer willingness to pay premium prices

The existing research investigating consumers' willingness to pay premium price or ethical fashion is inconclusive. Furthermore, none of the studies were conducted in a South African setting. The industry experts discussed this topic. Similar to the previous discussions, it seems that there are groups of South African consumers willing to pay more for ethical fashion, but these groups comprise of a limited number of individuals.

May (2019) explains that there are some people willing to pay more for ethical fashion. However, for the majority of consumers in South Africa, purchasing more expensive items

which are ethical is not an option, 'Most people can't afford it. And most people are going to be shopping at Mr Price and H&M.'

Molyneux (2019) also says that there is 'a small portion' of consumers who pay more for fashion items that are ethical. She also mentions this group is influenced by the economic situation in South Africa, which ultimately affects ethical fashion businesses. She explains, '…and I think the problem is that the harder times get for people, the first people that would get cut are us (ethical fashion brands) because we're essentially a bit more of a luxury.'

Longden (2019) says there definitely are consumers willing to pay more for ethical fashion and that the group is growing. She links this to her design practices. As consumers will be paying higher prices for ethical fashion, she wants to ensure that it is something that they will be able to wear for a long time. 'So for us, we are really trying to hone our design. With every design we do you've got to question are you going to able to wear this in three, four or five years time? Because that's the consumer we want. They're going to spend a lot of money on a jersey because it's silk and mohair, but it's going to last for years and years and years and it's not going to fall apart.' She also mentions that South Africans are price sensitive, 'South African consumers, I find, are very driven by price. Maybe it's just the state of our economy, but they are very much price driven.'

Botha (2019) also adds that consumers may not understand why ethical fashion is expensive and therefore are not willing to spend more money, 'I think consumers definitely push back and ask why is it so expensive? And how are we supposed to afford this?' Longden (2019) also mentions this, 'The ones who don't know about ethical fashion just see it as expensive and they don't understand why. They just think well Zara's got the same thing. So they just don't understand. So I think it all boils down to awareness. And we really need to create awareness in this country. It's very very important for our economy. Small businesses are the basis of our economy.'

This could be another indication that education is lacking. If consumers understood the full extent to which conventional and fast fashion is detrimental to the environment and society as well as the steps that ethical fashion purveyors take to combat these issues, they may not be as reluctant to spend more money on ethical fashion.

6.2.6 Consumer preconceptions of ethical fashion

Existing research has indicated that consumers hold certain preconceptions about ethical fashion consumption. However, it was not clear whether South African consumers also perceived ethical fashion in specific ways. The industry experts unanimously agree that in

South Africa consumers associate ethical fashion with high prices. 'I think they probably expect it to be expensive,' says Longden (2019). Molyneux concurs, 'I think that a lot of people think that it's going to be expensive.' Pichulik (2019) says, 'I also think the price point does prohibit people from accessing it, especially when you're young.'

The stylishness of ethical fashion was also discussed. Pichulik (2019) explains, 'From a style perspective, I think there is a perception. I think there is a very antiquated idea of it being very hempy. I think it may be prohibitive of the younger audience who is seeing a very particular visual language.' Longden (2019) also mentions this, 'What I've noticed with ethical fashion is its all often very basic ranges. It's basics basics basics, it's black, beige and white and grey. And I get that because you can wear those colours forever, you know it extends the longevity of the product…but I think it can get a bit boring.' May (2019) also points out that ethical fashion might be perceived as boring, 'So on the fashion side I think the general idea about ethical fashion is that it's still boring.' Thus, South African consumers may have preconceived ideas regarding the stylishness of ethical fashion.

The convenience and accessibility are also deliberated, 'I think people are still pulled by the convenience of the big chain stores, there's a definitive ease to it. I think it isn't actually difficult to access ethical fashion, there's just this perception that it's difficult,' says Longden (2019). May (2019) also mentions this, 'I think they are difficult to find by not being able to find them in a mall.' Therefore, consumers may not be as willing to engage in ethical fashion consumption because they consider access challenging or inconvenient.

6.2.7 Barriers to ethical fashion

When discussing barriers to ethical fashion consumption, the majority of interviewees focussed on price and availability. May (2019) clarifies, 'I think it would be cost and availability. And then I think that quite a lot of it is not aspirational. Cost is definitely an issue…and not being able to see a lot of it. So the understanding and not being able to access it.' Pichulik (2019) makes a similar statement, ' I think the barriers are obviously prove points, I think it's exposure. I think it's having sufficient retailers to resell the product.'

Longden (2019) makes a comparable point, 'I think it's the state of our economy and prices. And also education. You know, people just have no idea.' Molyneux (2019) also discusses price, as well as availability and style, 'I guess availability could be argued. Although it's available online, it's not available in malls. Otherwise pricing also. And I guess you could also say style. There are not that many people making it, so perhaps you actually just don't like it (the style)'.

Lardner-Burke (2019) also discusses availability, 'I guess it might not be as attainable. You can't just run down to your local shop and purchase it…I guess if you don't like shopping online, then it can be difficult to get that item of clothing. So I think accessibility is definitely an issue.'

According to the discussions it seems the price, availability, and possibly stylishness and lack of education are the primary barriers preventing South African consumers from purchasing ethical fashion.

6.2.8 Strategies for developing ethical fashion consumption in South Africa

The industry experts were asked to share ideas on how to develop ethical fashion in South Africa, as well as promote ethical fashion consumption. The responses were fairly varied. However, the importance of education and spreading information came up in various discussions.

Longden (2019) says, 'I think we need to get into the schools that's where its going to change…so education I suppose. And I think things like Kamers are great because they really encourage people to buy local and create awareness of why it's important to buy local.'

May (2019) also mentions the potential of disseminating information in order to change consumer behaviour, 'I'm a journalist and I think the spreading of correct information is important. Storytelling is important to make those connections between people, I think that may sway the consumer…'

Following the discussions with the industry experts, it became clear the ethical fashion in South Africa is still in its development phases. Generally, awareness of ethical fashion is limited to a small group of individuals. Similarly demand for ethical fashion is constrained to a minority group who have the financial means to afford ethical fashion. As awareness, is limited it seems many consumers have only a partial understanding of what ethical fashion entails. In addition, it seems that these perceptions are influenced by large international fast fashion retailers that advertise specific aspects of their production that are ethical. Subsequently, consumers have a narrow view of what is constituted by ethical fashion. In discussing price, it became evident that consumers are very prices sensitive, possibly owing to the current state of the economy. Thus, price was considered a major barrier to ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Accessibility was also identified as a significant challenge that could prevent the purchase of ethical fashion.

Interestingly, many of the experts linked ethical fashion to the development of the economy. Emphasis was placed on job creation in the fashion industry and its potential to alleviate poverty and improve the economic situation in South Africa. Thus, links to social benefits of ethical fashion were emphasised more than issues relating to the natural environment. This represents a noticeable deviation from international literature focussed on ethical fashion, which tends to focus more on the environmental impacts of the fashion industry.

The results of the qualitative research provide context to ethical fashion in South Africa. The results were not used to alter any hypotheses, but rather confirmed the inclusion of variables in the model. Specifically, the results of the interviews confirmed the importance of including awareness of ethical fashion in the online questionnaire. The industry experts emphasised the fact that awareness of ethical fashion in South Africa is limited which could influence the adoption of ethical fashion amongst South African consumers. In addition, it was determined that the prices of ethical fashion could limit ethical fashion consumption amongst South Africans. Ethical fashion garments are generally more expensive than conventional or fast fashion. Therefore, the inclusion of price perceptions was confirmed as part of the model. Similarly, ethical fashion consumption was associated with financial privilege. Thus, consumers with greater financial resources could be more likely to engage in ethical fashion. This finding corresponds with the personal capability construct as defined in Stern's (2000) adapted framework of environmentally significant behaviour which species financial resources as an influencing factor on purchase intent for ethical fashion. Furthermore, accessibility to ethical fashion was identified as a significant factor inhibiting ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. As ethical fashion is still in its development stage in South Africa, ethical fashion is not that widely available. Thus, consumers may perceive access to ethical fashion to be challenging, resulting in limited purchase intention for ethical fashion. Industry experts also identified lack of knowledge as a barrier restricting ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Consumers without specific knowledge regarding fashion supply chain issues may be less inclined to engage in ethical fashion. This finding links to the inclusion on actual knowledge as a moderating variable in the model.

A summary of the broad themes identified in the qualitative research is presented in the Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Summary of the broad themes identified in the qualitative research

Themes identified in qualitative research	Link to quantitative research	Role in the model
Low awareness of ethical fashion - People are pretty aware, but I'd say that the really aware people are a minority (Botha, 2019) - As South Africans, I think we are quite early as a consumer market. So I think we're in the early stages of awareness (Pichulik, 2019) - Consumers are becoming more and more aware, I think we are slowly getting there (Longden, 2019) - It all boils down to awareness. And we really need	Included in the adapted version of Stern's framework	Part of the personal capability construct influencing purchase intent for ethical fashion

to create awareness in this country (Longden, 2019)		
High price perceptions - I think they probably expect it to be expensive (Longden, 2019) - I think that a lot of people think that it's going to be expensive (Molyneux, 2019) - 'I also think the price point does prohibit people from accessing it, especially when you're young	Included in the adapted version of Stern's framework	Part of the attitude construct influencing purchase intent for ethical fashion
Unstylish - From a style perspective, I think there is a perception. I think there is a very antiquated idea of it being very hempy (Pichulik, 2019) - I think it can get a bit boring (Longden, 2019) - So on the fashion side I think the general idea about ethical fashion is that it's still boring (May, 2019)	Included in the adapted version of Stern's framework	Part of the attitude construct influencing purchase intent for ethical fashion
High financial resources - Cost is definitely an issue (May, 2019) - I think the barriers are obviously price points (Pichulik, 2019) - I think it's the state of our economy and prices (Longden, 2019) - I think there's this association that it's (ethical fashion) for rich people. I don't think you can really categorise who the ethical fashion consumer is. I think it's just the people who have the luxury of being ethical consumers (Rosholt, 2019)	Included in the adapted version of Stern's framework	Part of the personal capability construct influencing purchase intent for ethical fashion
Limited accessibility - I think it isn't actually difficult to access ethical fashion, there's just this perception that it's difficult (Longden , 2019) - I think they are difficult to find by not being able to find them in a mall (May, 2019) - I guess availability could be argued. Although it's available online, it's not available in malls (Molyneux, 2019) - So I think accessibility is definitely an issue (Larder-Burke, 2019)	Included in the adapted version of Stern's framework	Forms part of the contextual factors influencing purchase intent for ethical fashion
Limited knowledge - And also education. You know, people just have no idea (Longden, 2019) - I think we need to get into the schools that's where its going to change…so education I suppose (Longden, 2019) - So they just don't understand (Longden, 2019) - I think they (consumers) really don't understand the supply chain. So I think there's a lot of education that needs to happen in terms of ethical fashion in South Africa for it to change (Longden, 2019) - People do ask questions, it's just you can see there's still a lot of educational work that needs to be done (Botha, 2019)	Included in the adapted version of Stern's framework	Moderates the relationship between attitude and purchase intent for ethical fashion

The model was tested empirically by means of the inferential analyses. The results of the inferential analyses done as part of the quantitative research, are presented in the subsequent sections. The discussion will commence by presenting the results of the descriptive analyses first, where after the PLS-SEM results are reported on in section 6.4

6.3 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The quantitative research was executed following the completion of the qualitative research. Specifically, online questionnaires were distributed amongst Stellenbosch University students and staff. The descriptive analysis commences with a description of the realised sample achieved after the completion deadline for the online questionnaires. Thereafter, various measures of central tendency, graphs and figures are used to provide a more complete

picture of the responses from the questionnaire. First, the gender distribution of the sample is discussed. This is followed by a summary of the age distribution of the respondents. Thereafter, a discussion of the sample's monthly income distribution is presented. Next, the respondents' expenditure on clothing and preferred shops are reviewed, followed by a discussion of the sample's awareness of ethical fashion brands. Finally, the sample's self-reported ownership of ethical fashion is reviewed. The statistical software tool Statistica was used to perform the descriptive analyses.

6.3.1 Realised sample and demographic profile

A total of 732 online questionnaires were completed after the distribution of the questionnaire via email. Of the 732 respondents, 68 percent identified themselves as women, 28 percent as men and 2 percent chose the gender-variant or non-conforming option. Thus, it is clear that the majority of questionnaires were answered by women. The study did not aim to identify differences between genders, therefore the higher percentage of women in the sample should not affect the results. Figure 6.1 presents an overview of the gender distribution of the sample.

Figure 6.1: Gender distribution
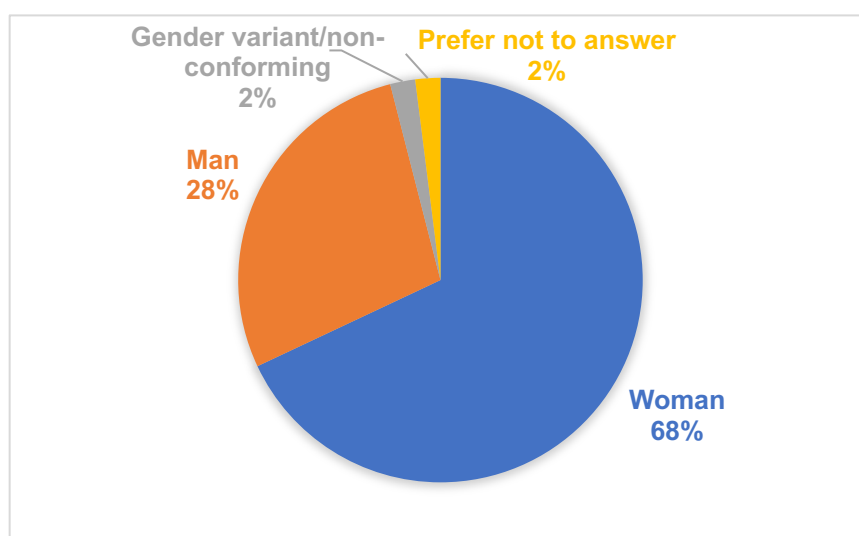
The age range allowed to complete the questionnaire was 20 to 40 years in order to align with the ages of Generation Z and Y. Thus, any respondents who attempted to answer the questionnaire who did not meet the age requirements were automatically directed to the end of the questionnaire. Consequently, the minimum age of respondents who completed the questionnaire was 20 years old and the maximum age was 40 years old. The majority of respondents were aged between 20 and 25. This is not unexpected as the sample consisted of Stellenbosch University students and staff. Thus, the median age was 23 years old. However, approximately 42 percent of respondents were aged between 25 and 40. An overview of the age distribution is presented in Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2: Age distribution
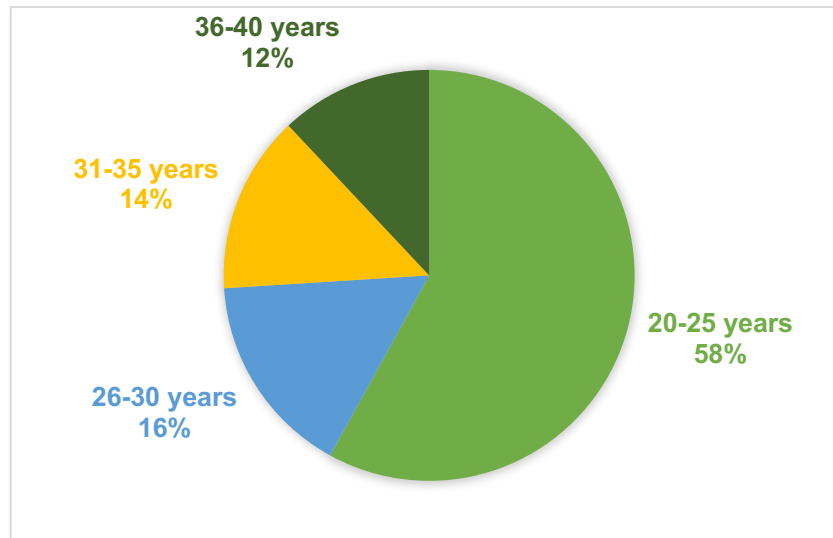
In addition to age and gender, respondents were asked to provide their monthly income or allowance. The options provided ranged from R0-R1000 to R70 000+. As the majority of the sample consisted of students, fairly low figures were expected. Indeed, the majority of the respondents indicated that their income equalled between R1000 and R2000 per month. Furthermore, approximately 56 percent of individuals reported incomes or allowance as less than R5000 a month. However, the results were still fairly spread out with the standard deviation equal to 14 923. Approximately 26 percent of respondents earn incomes exceeding R15 000 per month. It is likely that the majority of these respondents are staff members at Stellenbosch University earning salaries. Approximately 12 percent of respondents earn more than R30 000 a month. These individuals could be considered relatively well off and potentially more able to afford to purchase ethical fashion, which tends to be more expensive than conventional fashion. Figure 6.3 below provides an overview of the monthly income levels for the realised sample.

Figure 6.3: Monthly income/allowance
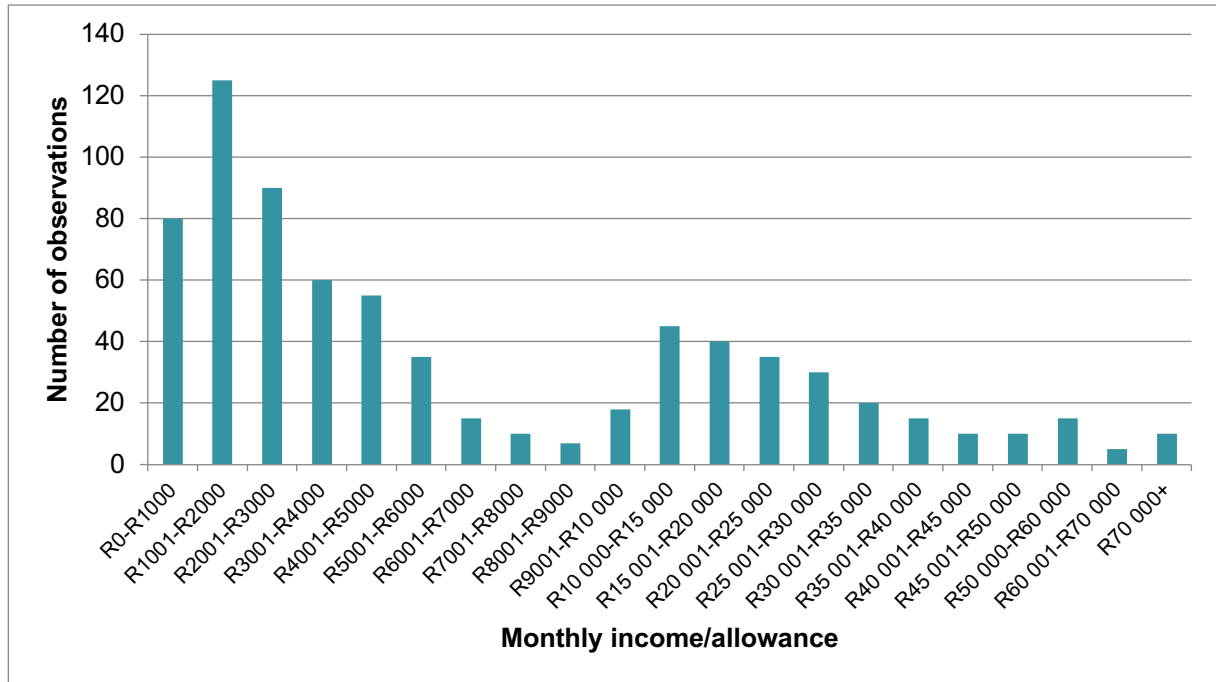
6.3.2 Fashion consumption

Respondents were also asked about the fashion consumption habits. Specifically, respondents were asked to provide their personal annual expenditure on clothing items as well as shops they most frequently purchase clothing from.

The clothing expenditure figures were quite wide ranging as indicated in Figure 6.4. The large majority of respondents indicated that their yearly expenditure on clothing was less than R6000. In addition, the median expenditure equalled R3500. This can be compared to the incomes earned by respondents. The median annual income is equal to R45 000. Therefore, a rough estimate indicates that on average respondents spent 7.7 percent of their income on clothing purchases. According to StatsSA (2019) South African consumers spend approximately five percent of their annual income on clothing and footwear. Thus, the proportion of income spent on clothing in this study is slightly higher the national average.

Figure 6.4: Annual expenditure on clothing purchases
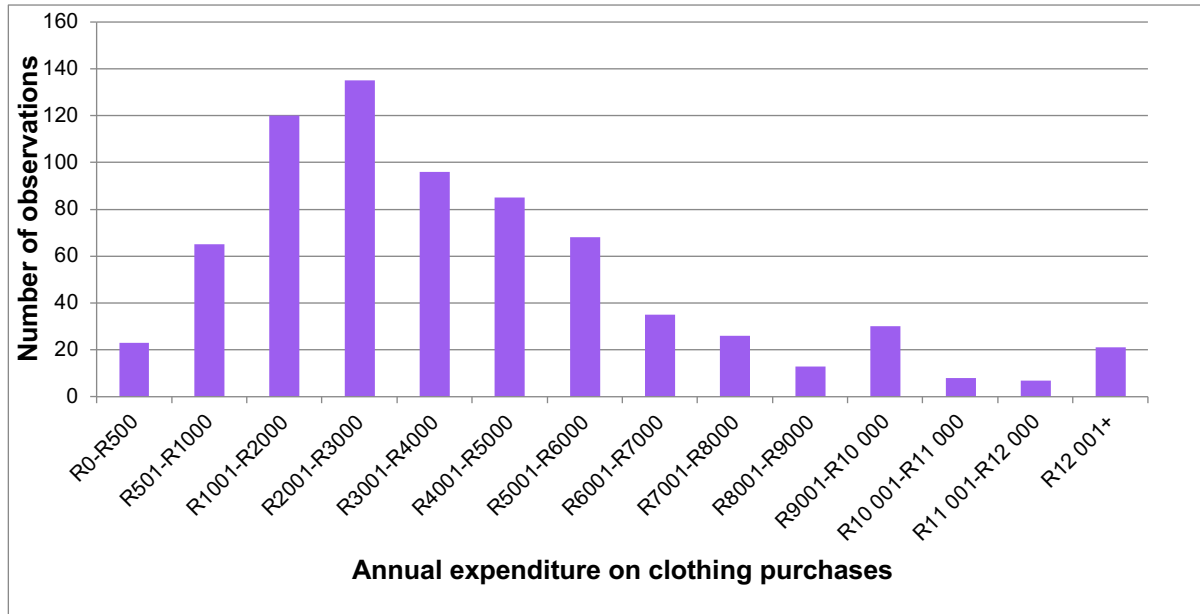
Respondents were also asked to indicate which shops they most frequently purchase clothing from. Certain shops were selected by many of the respondents, notably; Woolworths, Mr Price, Cotton On, Pick 'n Pay and H&M. Surprisingly, approximately 28 percent of respondents indicated that they shop at second hand stores. Clothing from second hand stores are considered to be a very ethical form of fashion as no new products are created. In addition, 17 percent of respondents said they shopped at South African boutiques or small businesses. This statistic is notable because most South African brands boutiques and small businesses are considered fairly ethical. An overview of the shops selected by respondents is provided in Figure 6.5. It is evident that large retailers with fast fashion approaches dominate the narrative.

Figure 6.5: Shops
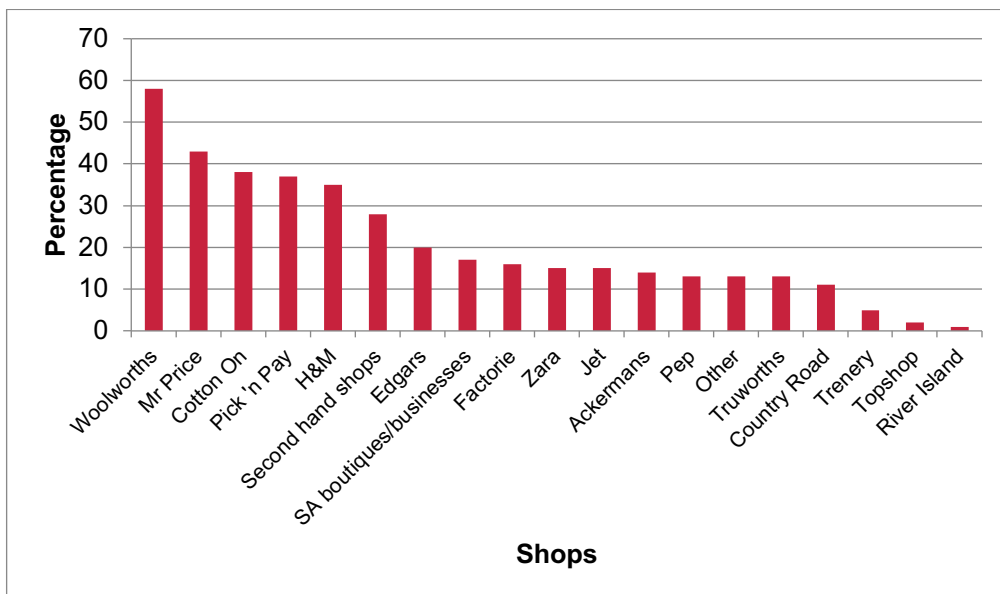
6.3.3 Awareness of ethical fashion brands

Respondents were asked about their awareness of ethical fashion brands. In order to determine whether they were able to correctly distinguish between ethical and unethical brands from a list of provided brands. In addition, this item measured how familiar respondents were with ethical fashion brands in South Africa. Respondents were allocated an 'awareness score' based on their selections. The score was calculated by summing all the correctly identified ethical brands and subtracting all the incorrectly identified brands. The maximum score that could be achieved was 16. However, the mean score equalled 2.35. An overview of the scores is provided in Figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6: Awareness scores
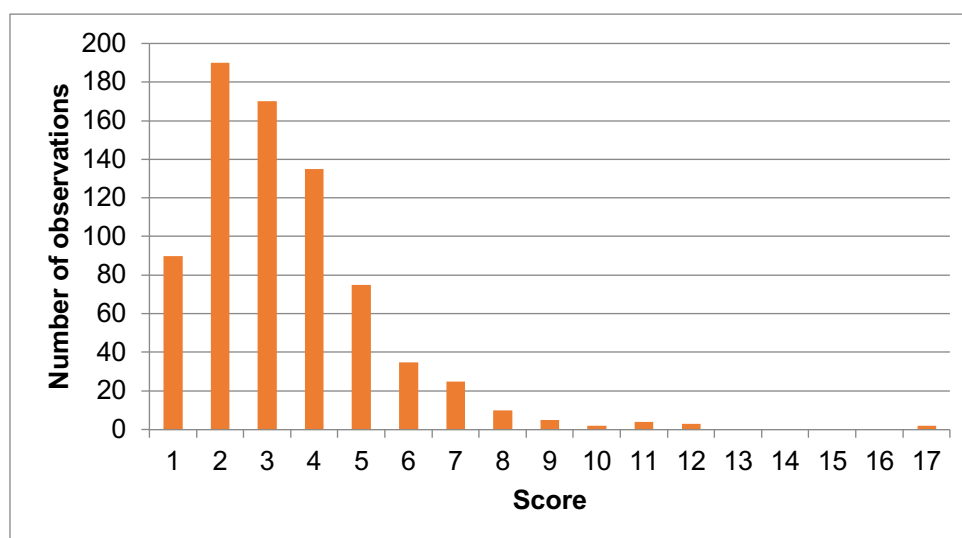
When considering the brands most often selected as 'ethical' it is clear why the scores are so low. Approximately 26 percent and 15 percent of respondents selected H&M and Zara as ethical brands. H&M and Zara are two companies that are arguably criticised the most for their unethical practices. Thus, it seems that there is a lack of understanding of ethical fashion concept amongst South African consumers. In addition, between five and 12 percent of respondents correctly identified the correct fashion brands as ethical. Table 6.3 provides an overview of the brands selected as 'ethical' by respondents.

Table 6.3: Identification of brands as 'ethical'

Brand	Percentage of consumers that selected it as ethical	Ethical
Woolworths	52%	No
Vintage shops	40%	Yes
H&M	26%	No
Zara	15%	No
Foschini	14%	No
Nike	14%	No
Mungo and Jemima	12%	Yes
Sealand gear	11%	Yes
Other	10%	
Sitting Pretty	8%	Yes
Pep	8%	No
Margot Molyneux	6%	Yes
Akina Label	6%	Yes
Hannah Lavery	5%	Yes
Pichulik	5%	Yes
Topshop	3%	No

6.3.4 Self-reported ownership of ethical fashion

Respondents were asked to estimate what percentage of their existing closet consists of ethical fashion items. A definition of ethical fashion was provided to ensure that respondents understood the concept. The aim was to gauge how much ethical fashion the respondents already owned. The results are presented in Figure 6.7 below. The majority of respondents indicated that between one and 30 percent of their closets are comprised of ethical fashion clothing. Approximately 20 percent of respondents indicated that more than half of their closet consists of ethical fashion items. However, it is acknowledged that this measure is a very rough estimation and respondents might have found this item too abstract, especially since awareness of ethical fashion in South Africa is low. Nevertheless, it still provides a very rudimentary indication of ethical fashion ownership amongst the respondents.

Figure 6.7: Percentage of closets consisting of ethical fashion items
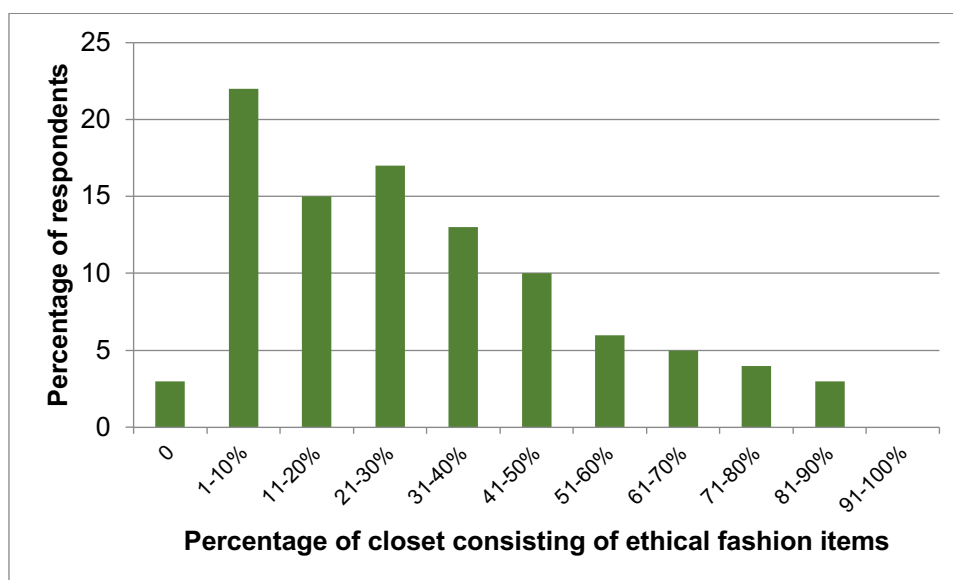
6.4 PLS-SEM RESULTS

PLS-SEM was employed to conduct the inferential analysis. The inferential analyses were necessary in order to evaluate whether any of the hypothesised relationships between variables are significant. Hair *et al.* (2014) describe PLS-SEM as a 'causal modelling approach aimed at maximising the explained variance of the dependent latent constructs.' In order to use PLS-SEM a path model needs to be developed. Variables and relationships between them are connected by arrows. The path model development is based on theory and existing studies as discussed in the literature review chapters. The path model for this study is presented in Figure 6.8.

Figure 6.8: Path model
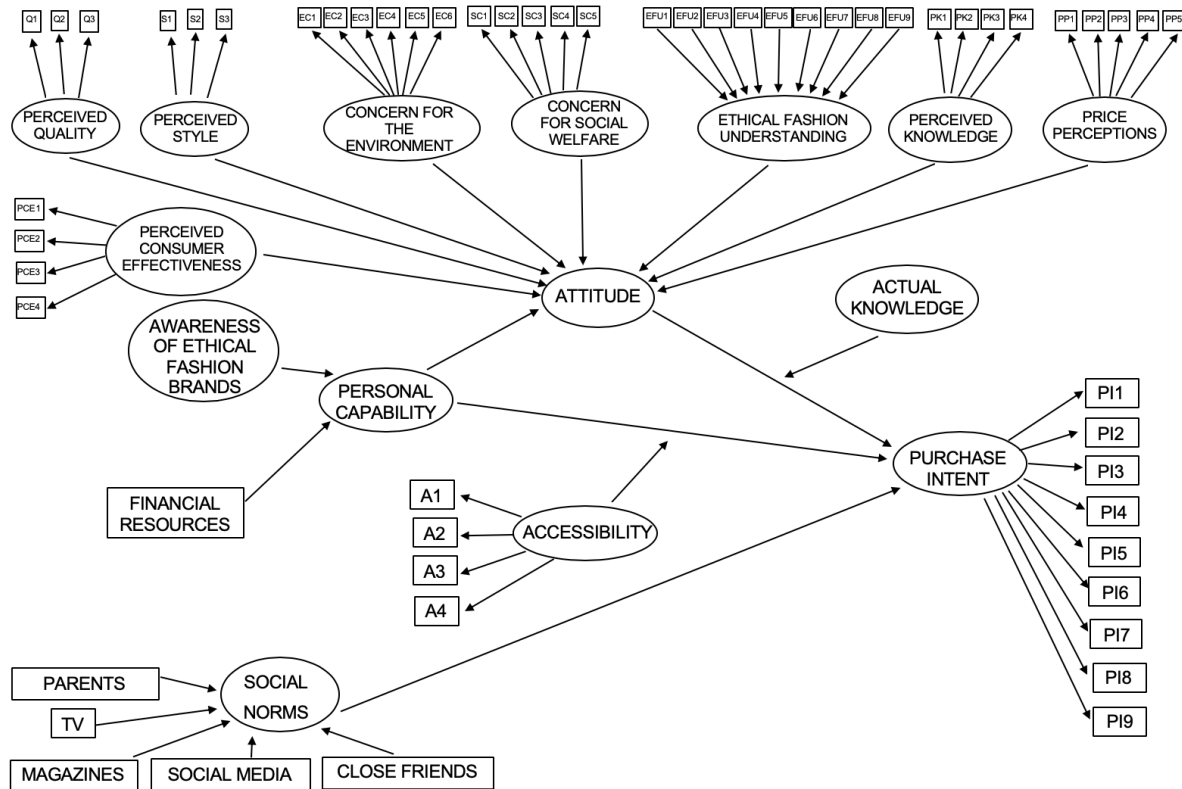
The path model consists of an inner, or structural, model and an outer, or measurement, model. Results from the PLS-SEM generated results for the measurement and structural model, both of which are discussed in the proceeding sections. First, the measurement scales are assessed. The reliability and validity of the measurement model is evaluated in terms of Cronbach's alpha coefficients, internal consistency, convergent validity and discriminant validity in order to assess the relationships between the constructs and their indicator variables. Secondly, the structural model was investigated. Multicollinearity, the coefficient of determination and path coefficients were analysed in order to determine whether the relationships between the variables were significant. The hypotheses were also addressed and, based on the results of the analyses, a decision was made to either reject or not reject each hypothesis.

6.4.1 Measurement model

This section will focus on the outer, or measurement, model. It is essential to ensure that the measurement model is evaluated in order to ensure that the inner model, which includes the hypothesised relationships, can be measured accurately. The measurement model is assessed by evaluating the internal consistency, indicator reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Confirming the reliability of the measurement model was essential. Reliability refers to the degree to which the research method produced consistent results. The reliability of the data is determined by measuring the internal consistency. This is achieved by calculating Cronbach alpha coefficients. Cronbach's alpha estimates reliability based on the inter-correlations of the indicator variables. Lowry & Gaskin (2014) specify that Cronbach alpha coefficients should be above 0.7 in order for items to be considered reliable. Therefore, the items measuring the second order attitude constructs were assessed using Cronbach alpha coefficients. The results of the reliability assessment are present in Table 6.4. All the measurements achieved a Cronbach alpha score of more than 0.7. Thus, the measurements are considered reliable.

Table 6.4: Reliability scores

Variable	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Number of items
Perceived knowledge	0.94	4
Concern for the environment	0.82	6
Concern for social welfare	0.83	5
Purchase intent	0.82	8
Accessibility	0.76	4
Price perceptions	0.83	4
Perceived consumer effectiveness	0.85	4
Perceived quality	0.74	3
Perceived style	0.85	3

Hair *et al.* (2014) argue that Cronbach's Alpha's test of reliability is limited and may not be accurate. Kidd (2019) states that Cronbach alphas are acceptable measures of reliability for sub measurement models as is the case of the second order attitude constructs in Table 6.4. However, the remaining reflective model indicators required a more in-depth assessment of reliability as they are manifested as a direct result of the latent variables. Thus, internal consistency, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the measurement model had to be addressed. The results thereof are discussed in the sections 6.4.1.1 and 6.4.1.2. The reliability and validity tests performed on the outer model are dependent on the type of measurement model, formative or reflective.

A reflective model posits that a latent variable causes the indicator behaviours. Thus, the arrows point from the latent variable to its indicators. Reflective indicators should be highly correlated and interchangeable. The overlap between interchangeable variables should be maximised. A formative model posits that the indictors cause the latent variable behaviour. Consequently, the arrows point from the indicators to the latent variable. Formative indicators should not be too closely correlated as this can cause major issues in the results of the PLS-SEM analysis.

In the case of this study the model included both reflective and formative measurement models. Thus, two different sets of analytical procedures were necessary. A summary of the construct measurement decisions, either reflective or formative, is presented in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 Construct measurement decision

Reflective	Formative
Perceived quality	Attitude
Perceived style	Ethical fashion understanding
Concern for the environment	Social norms
Perceived knowledge	
Price perceptions	
Perceived consumer effectiveness	
Purchase intent	
Accessibility	

The proceeding sections (6.4.1.1 and 6.4.1.2) address the reflective and formative models.

6.4.1.1 Reflective model

Hair et al (2014) specify that in order to assess the reliability and validity of reflective models, several aspects need to be considered, including internal consistency, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

a) Internal consistency

Internal consistency reliability refers to a group of items' ability to measure the same construct. Internal consistency reliability can be assessed with both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated in the preceding section with acceptable results. However, Hair *et al*. (2014) recommend that Jöreskrog's composite reliability also be calculated as Cronbach's alpha has a tendency to underestimate internal consistency reliability. Thus, Jöreskrog's composite reliability is considered a more accurate measure of internal consistency. Composite reliability includes outer loadings of the indicator variables and is expressed as a number between 0 and 1. Hair *et al*. (2014) report that composite reliability scores equal or larger than 0.7 are considered acceptable. However, values larger than 0.95 are considered undesirable as this may indicate that the measures are not valid.

Composite reality scores were calculated using SmartPLS. The results are presented in Table 6.6 All the calculated composite reliability scores met the threshold of 0.7. Accessibility achieved a composite reliability score of 0.82 and purchase intent attained a composite reliability score of 0.88. Both scores exceeded the minimum requirement of 0.7. Thus, the measures can be considered reliable. Although reliability was achieved, validity still needs to be confirmed.

Table 6.6: Internal consistency and validity

Variable		AVE	CR	Outer loading
Accessibility		0.54	0.82	
	A1			0.82
	A2			0.89
	A3			0.73
	A4 (reversed)			0.42
Purchase intent		0.49	0.88	
	PI1			0.61
	PI2			0.32
	PI3			0.79
	PI4			0.74
	PI5			0.76
	PI6			0.75
	PI7			0.69
	PI8			0.83

b) Convergent validity

Convergent validity refers to the extent to which the measures are positively correlated with other measures of the same construct. Ideally, indicators of a reflective model should be highly correlated. Convergent validity is established by assessing the outer loadings and AVE scores. AVE scores are determining by calculating the grand mean value of the squared loadings of the reflective indicators associated with a construct. AVE scores of 0.5 or greater indicate that more than half of the variance of a construct can be explained by its indicators. Thus, 0.5 or greater is considered indicative of acceptable convergent validity. AVE scores were calculated for accessibility and purchase intent as indicated in Table 6.5. Accessibility achieved a score of 0.54. As 0.54 is greater than 0.5 the convergent reliability is considered acceptable. Purchase intent scored 0.49. This AVE result is not greater than 0.5. However, Kidd (2019) confirms that 0.49 is close enough to 0.50 to be considered acceptable, especially considering that the composite reliability score was 0.88.

Outer loadings for the indicators of each construct were also calculated. Outer loading scores are expressed as a number between 0 and 1. High outer loading scores indicate that the indicators have a lot in common. Sufficient convergent validity is achieved if outer loadings are equal or greater than 0.70. The majority of the indicators achieved outer loadings of more than 0.7. However, there were three indicators that did not meet the recommended threshold of 0.7. PI7 (If there is no difference in style between two garments, I would choose the one with the eco-tag) achieved a score of 0.69. However, 0.69 is generally considered close enough to 0.7 to be considered acceptable. This was confirmed by Kidd (2019) and thus, PI7 was not excluded. A4 (It would be difficult to find ethical fashion brands in South Africa) achieved a score of 0.42, which does not meet the threshold level of 0.7 A4 was a negatively phrased item. Kidd (2019) states that in some cases respondents find negatively phrased items confusing or do not read them properly and subsequently results in lower outer loadings. Favourable AVE and composite reliability scores were achieved for accessibility and thus, it was decided not to exclude A4 from the results. The outer loading calculated for

PI2 (I will not buy new clothing items, if I already have previous dresses in usable state) was 0.32 which is lower than 0.7. However, this item was taken directly from existing studies that achieved acceptable reliability and validity levels. Thus, it was decided not to exclude PI2. Considering the results of the AVE, outer loadings and composite reliability scores reasonable convergent validity was achieved. No items were eliminated from the results.

c) Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity is the second subset of validity. Discriminant validity measures the extent to which a construct is distinct from other constructs. Ensuring discriminant validity is essential in order to ensure that constructs are unique and capture phenomena that are not measured by another construct in the model. Discriminant validity is measured by calculating heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratios. HTMT ratio of correlations was proposed by Henseler, Ringle & Starsedt (2015) as a replacement for the Fornell-Larcker criterion due to recent research that indicates that the Fornell-Larcker criterion does not perform as well as HTMT ratios. HTMT ratios are determined by calculating the mean value of the items correlations across constructs and comparing them to the mean of correlations for the item correlations measuring the same construct. Favourable discriminant validity is achieved when HTMT ratios are below 0.9 and upper confidence interval limits are below 1. HTMT ratios were calculated using a confidence interval of 95 percent. As indicated in Table 6.7, all ratios were less than 0.9 and all upper confidence interval limits are less than 1. Thus, satisfactory discriminant validity was achieved.

Table 6.7: Discriminant validity scores

HTMT ratio					
From	To	Ratio	Lower limit (95%)	Upper limit (95%)	Discriminant validity
Actual knowledge	Accessibility	0.1	0.03	0.17	Yes
Attitude*Actual knowledge	Accessibility	0.07	0.02	0.12	Yes
Attitude*Actual knowledge	Actual knowledge	0.03	0	.09	Yes
Purchase intent	Accessibility	0.09	0.05	0.11	Yes
Purchase intent	Actual knowledge	0.3	0.23	0.37	Yes
Purchase intent	Attitude*Actual knowledge	0.05	0.02	0.07	Yes
Social norms	Accessibility	0.31	0.23	0.38	Yes
Social norms	Actual knowledge	0.18	0.11	0.25	Yes
Social norms	Attitude*Actual knowledge	0.02	0	0.08	Yes
Social norms	Purchase intent	0.21	0.14	0.26	Yes
Personal capability*Accessibility	Accessibility	0.11	0.03	0.21	Yes
Personal capability*Accessibility	Actual knowledge	0	0	0	Yes
Personal capability*Accessibility	Attitude*Actual knowledge	0.05	0	0.14	Yes
Personal capability*Accessibility	Purchase intent	0.06	0.02	0.14	Yes
Personal capability*Accessibility	Social norms	0.08	0.01	0.17	Yes

Considering the results of the calculations composite reliability, AVE, outer loadings and HTMT ratio scores acceptable levels of internal consistency, convergent validity and discriminant validity were achieved. Thus, reliability and validity has been reached. As a result, the structural model could be assessed.

6.4.1.2 Formative model

Formative models are assessed differently in comparison to reflective models. Hair *et al* (2014) specify that formative measurement models should be assessed by addressing convergent validity, indicator collinearity, statistical significance and relevance of the outer weights. In order to do this the outer weights of the formative measurement indicators are determined by estimating the weights from the data which provides an indication of how much each of the indicators have on the latent variable. However, Kidd (2019) states that this method is very problematic and leads to imprecise results. Instead he suggests that the outer weights be pre-specified and grounded in theory and existing literature. Therefore, for this study the outer weights formative scales were pre-specified. The formative indicators for attitude (price perceptions, perceived quality and style, perceived knowledge, concern for the environment, concern for social welfare, perceived consumer effectiveness and ethical understanding) were weighted equally. Therefore, the formative indicators are of equal importance in the formulation of attitude. Kidd (2019) argues that this approach provides better results. As the outer weights for the formative indicators for attitude were prespecified there were no reliability and validity analyses to report on.

Similarly, the outer weights for the formative indicators for social norms were also prespecified and equally weighted. Thus, the reliability and validity statistics did not need to be reported on.

6.4.2 Structural model assessment

PLS-SEM was used to assess the structural model and determine whether any significant relationship existed between the latent variables. Furthermore, the strength of the relationship was determined. As discussed in the research methodology, PLS-SEM was selected as the statistical analysis method as it does not require huge sample sizes, is appropriate for exploratory research and does not make any distribution assumptions.

The structural model to be assessed consisted of several independent variables; attitude, personal capability, accessibility, actual knowledge and social norms, and a dependent variable; purchase intent for ethical fashion.

First the collinearity was assessed in order to determine whether any two variables are too closely related. Secondly, the coefficient of determination (R^2), significance and path coefficients were investigated. Finally, a test for moderation was conducted in order to determine whether the moderation effects are present as predicted.

6.4.2.1 Assessment of collinearity

The collinearity of variables was assessed. Collinearity refers to high correlation between formative indicators. Thus, collinearity between two formative indicators is undesirable as it causes methodological and interpretive problems. Collinearity is measured by calculating the variance inflation factor (VIF). Guidelines indicate that VIF scores should be less than five in order to avoid collinearity issues (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Table 6.8 below presents the VIF scores calculated for the formative measures of purchase intent. The VIF scores ranges from 1.012 to 1.269 and therefore comfortably avoided any possible collinearity issues.

Tables 6.8: Collinearity analysis

	VIF
	Purchase intent
Accessibility	1.174
Actual knowledge	1.176
Attitude	1.249.
Attitude*actual knowledge	1.012
Personal capability	1.015
Social norms	1.269
Personal capability*accessibility	1.023

6.4.2.2 Assessment of coefficient of determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination is a measure of the model's predictive accuracy. The R^2 value is representative of the percentage of variance that can be explained by the independent variables. R^2 is expressed as a figure between 0 and 1. The level of predictive accuracy of the model increases as the R^2 value escalates. An R^2 value of 0.75 or higher is indicative of a model with strong predictive power. An R^2 value of 0.50 represents a model with moderately predictive ability whilst 0.25 is representative of weak predictive ability. The R^2 value calculated for purchase intent was equal to 0.49. Thus, the independent variables explain 49 percent of variance in purchase intent for ethical fashion. Therefore, it can be concluded that the model is moderately related to the data. The model has a moderate ability to predict purchase intent with the given dependent variables. It seems there are other variables that could explain purchase intent more fully. This could be assessed in future studies.

6.4.2.3 Assessments of path coefficients

In order to investigate the paths between variables in the model path coefficients were calculated. Path coefficients are a representation of the estimated connection between latent variables in the model, or the strength of the relationship between variables. Path coefficients are represented as a figure between -1 and 1. Path coefficients close to -1 are indicative of a strong negative relationship between the variables, whilst values close to +1 indicate a strong positive relationship between variables. The closer the path coefficient is to 0, the weaker the relationship is between the two variables. The path coefficients are presented in Table 6.9.

Table 6.9: Path coefficients and p-values

			Path coefficient	p-value	Hypothesis decision
H$_{01}$	There is no relationship between attitude and purchase intent	Attitude→Purchase intent	0.69	0*	Reject
H$_{02}$	The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by attitude	Personal capability→Purchase intent	-0.02	0.53	Fail to reject
H$_{03}$	The relationship between attitude and purchase intent is unaffected by actual knowledge	Attitude*Actual knowledge→Purchase intent	0	0.96	Fail to reject
H$_{04}$	There is no relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent	Actual knowledge→Purchase intent	0.06	0.06	Fail to reject
H$_{05}$	There is no relationship between personal capability and purchase intent	Personal capability→Purchase intent	-0.02	0.53	Fail to reject
H$_{06}$	There is no relationship between social norms and purchase intent	Social norms→Purchase intent	-0.05	0.07	Fail to reject
H$_{07}$	The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by accessibility	Personal capability*Accessibility→Purchase intent	0.02	0.34	Fail to reject
H$_{08}$	There is no relationship between accessibility and purchase intent	Accessibility→Purchase intent	0	0.99	Fail to reject

Notes: *Significant at the p<0.05 level

As indicated in Table 6.9, the path coefficient values ranged from -0.05 to 0.69. Notably, the relationship between attitude and purchase intent achieved a path coefficient of 0.69. This result is indicative of a fairly strong relationship between attitude and purchase intent. However, the path coefficients calculated for the other hypothesised relationships were all very close to 0 which indicates that the relationships between variables are very weak, almost non-existent. Surprisingly, the path coefficient between personal capability and purchase intent was equal to -0.02 which reveals that there is virtually no relationship exists between the two variables. Similarly, the path coefficients between actual knowledge, social norms, accessibility and purchase intent were equal to 0.06, -0.05 and 0 respectively. These results signify that practically no relationship exists between actual knowledge, social norms, accessibility and purchase intent.

6.4.2.4 Discussion of hypotheses

It was also necessary to determine whether the relationships are statistically significant. This is achieved by considering the p-values for the hypothesised relationships. Confidence intervals of 95 percent were assumed and therefore p-values below 0.05 are significant. The hypothesis decisions are based on the p-values. Significant p-values are used to reject the null hypotheses. However, in the case of non-significant p-values, null hypotheses fail to be rejected. The p-values and related hypothesis decisions are presented in Table 6.8.

According to the p-values, only one relationship between two variables was significant. The p-value for attitude and purchase intent was equal to 0 which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Thus, H_{01} (There is no relationship between attitude and purchase intent) was rejected. There is a significant relationship between attitude and purchase intent. Furthermore, the path coefficient for attitude and purchase intent was 0.69. This is indicative of a fairly strong positive relationship between attitude and purchase intent.

The rest of the relationships showed no indication of being significant. The p-values exceeded 0.05 and thus the hypotheses could not be rejected. The p-value for the relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent is equal to 0.06. Therefore, the relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent is not statistically significant as the p-value of 0.06 is greater than the significance level of 0.05. H_{04} (There is no relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent) failed to be rejected.

The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent achieved a p-value of 0.53 which exceeds the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, H_{05} (There is no relationship between personal capability and purchase intent) failed to be rejected.

The calculated p-value for the relationship between social norms and purchase intent equalled 0.07. As 0.07 is greater than the significance level of 0.05 there is no significant relationship between social norms and purchase intent. Thus, H_{06} (There is no relationship between social norms and purchase intent) failed to be rejected.

The relationship between accessibility and purchase intent achieved a p-value of 0.99. the p-value of 0.99 exceeds the significance level of 0.05. As a result, H_{08} (There is no relationship between accessibility and purchase intent) failed to be rejected.

6.4.2.5 Moderation and mediation

There were several mediating and moderating relationships that needed to be tested. It was predicted that attitude might mediate the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent. Hair *et al*. (2014) explain that the mediating effect can be tested by following a specific procedure. The first step to be completed in order to determine whether the hypothesised mediating effect is present, is to assess the significance of the direct effect without including the potential mediating variable. If there is no direct effect, then the mediating effect is impossible. This was the case in this study. There was no significant relationship between personal capability and purchase intent, thus attitude could not act as a mediating variable. Consequently, H_{02} (The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by attitude) failed to be rejected.

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The possibility of moderators was also analysed. This was achieved by assessing the p-values. A moderating effect is present if the p-value for the predicted relationship is less than the significance level of 0.05. Two moderating effects were predicted. It was suspected that actual knowledge may moderate the relationship between attitude and purchase intent. The p-value achieved for this relationship equalled 0.96. As 0.96 is greater than the significance level the moderating effect is not statistically significant. Therefore, H_{03} (The relationship between attitude and purchase intent is unaffected by actual knowledge) failed to be rejected.

The second moderating effect specified that the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is moderated by accessibility. However, the calculated p-value for the relationship was equal to 0.34, which far exceeded the threshold level of 0.05. Consequently, H_{07} (The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by accessibility) failed to be rejected.

Figure 6.9 illustrates the structural model assessment. The bold line represents significant relationships. The R^2 value and path coefficients are also provided.

Figure 6.9: Structural model
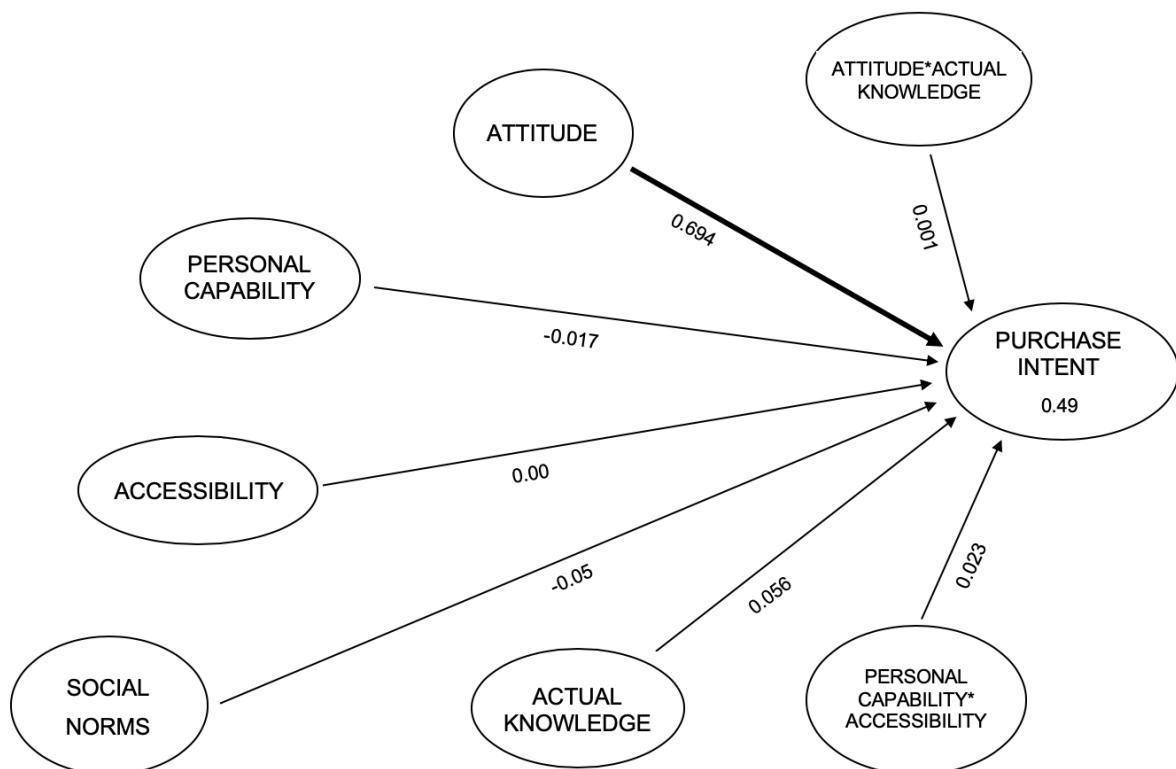
Evidently attitude is the only variable that has a statistically significant relationship with purchase intent. Based on the path coefficient it is clear that the relationship is positive and fairly strong. In addition, the R^2 value is equal to 0.49 which indicates that the dependent variables; attitude, personal capability, accessibility, social norms and actual knowledge, explain 49% of the variance of purchase intent. Therefore, the model has a moderate ability to predict purchase intent with the given dependent variables.

6.6 CONCLUSION

Chapter six addressed the results obtained from the qualitative and quantitative study. The qualitative results were obtained from in-depth interviews with industry experts. Thematic analysis was utilised in order to extract relevant and meaningful information. The qualitative results provide context to ethical fashion consumers and their consumption behaviour in the South African setting.

The results of the quantitative research were also addressed. First, the descriptive analyses were presented and reported on. Characteristics of the realised sample were analysed. Secondly, a reliability analysis was conducted. Finally, the inferential analyses were discussed. Further reliability and validity measures were considered. Subsequently, the measurement model and inner model were assessed. In addition, the hypothesised relationships between the various constructs as illustrated in the path model were tested. The results discussed in chapter six will be used to form the basis of the conclusions and recommendations in chapter seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter six presented the results of the descriptive and inferential analyses which will be used to form the basis of the conclusions and recommendations included in chapter seven. Therefore, chapter seven elaborates on the results of the analyses and subsequently draws conclusions. The chapter is split into several sections. First a summary of the findings is presented. Thereafter, the managerial implications of the results are discussed. Finally, the limitations of the study are outlined and recommendations for future research are made.

7.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results presented in chapter six are reiterated in this section. The results of the interviews with the industry experts are summarised. In addition, the hypothesised relationships between the constructs are discussed.

7.2.1 Summary of the results of the qualitative research

The seven in-depth interviews were conducted with ethical fashion industry experts. The results of the interviews covered a range of topics and assisted in providing context to ethical fashion consumption and related consumer behaviour in South Africa. South African ethical fashion industry experts defined ethical fashion as fashion produced with environmental and social considerations in mind. However, specific reference was made to the social aspects related to ethical fashion in South Africa. By employing people from surrounding communities ethical fashion businesses can be used as a tool to create jobs, provide South Africans with a better standard of living, break the cycle of poverty and contribute to the economy. It seems that South African ethical fashion industry experts place more emphasis on the social components than on the environmental ones. This could be because poverty, unemployment and the depressed economy are such prevalent issues in South Africa.

Industry experts specified that amongst South African consumers awareness of ethical fashion is low, understanding is confused, and demand is limited. Consumers that do know about ethical fashion and demand it are limited to small group of people. Generally, ethical fashion consumption in South Africa is associated with privilege and financial resources. As a large proportion of South Africans live in poverty, the ethical merits of their clothing purchases cannot be deemed a priority.

It seems that consumer understanding of ethical fashion is influenced by misleading advertising and greenwashing disseminated by international fast fashion brands that are trying to capture the ethically oriented consumer.

Generally, it appears that the South African ethical fashion movement is led by the producers more than the consumers, which differs from the international situation. Therefore, South Africa ethical fashion businesses are providing consumers with details of their ethical initiatives, rather than consumers asking questions and investigating the ethical merits of businesses.

Industry experts were unable to provide a specific generalised profile of ethical fashion consumers in South Africa, except that they tend to be quite young; between the ages of 20 and 40. Financial capability was also mentioned. Ethical fashion tends to be more expensive than conventional fashion, thus a certain level of disposable income is necessary to participate. Unless, consumers are purchasing second hand or vintage clothing which is also ethical, but much less expensive than new ethical clothing.

Price seems to play an important role in ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Industry experts report that there are certain groups of consumers willing to pay premium for ethical fashion. However, price is also reported as the biggest barrier to the adoption of ethical fashion in South Africa. Other barriers included limited access to ethical fashion brands and a perceived unstylishness of ethical fashion. Lack of knowledge regarding ethical fashion was also identified as a barrier, but also as a solution necessary in order to encourage the development of ethical fashion in South Africa. It was suggested that education focussed on the environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry across the supply chain could empower consumers to make more informed choices, and subsequently engage in more conscious consumption.

7.2.2 Summary of the results of the quantitative research

Online questionnaires were executed in order to test the hypothesised relationships between attitude, personal capability, contextual variables and purchase intent. The results of the inferential analyses are presented in this section. Table 7.1 provides an overview of the hypotheses and their statistical decisions.

Table 7.1: Hypotheses and statistical decisions

Null hypotheses		Hypothesis decision
H_{01}	There is no relationship between attitude and purchase intent	Reject
H_{02}	The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by attitude	Fail to reject
H_{03}	The relationship between attitude and purchase intent is unaffected by actual knowledge	Fail to reject
H_{04}	There is no relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent	Fail to reject
H_{05}	There is no relationship between personal capability and purchase intent	Fail to reject
H_{06}	There is no relationship between social norms and purchase intent	Fail to reject
H_{07}	The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by accessibility	Fail to reject
H_{08}	There is no relationship between accessibility and purchase intent	Fail to reject

7.2.2.1 The relationship between attitude and purchase intent

It was expected that attitude would act as a mediating variable between personal capability and purchase intent for ethical fashion. Thus, consumers would engage in ethical fashion if they had the capability to do so, but only if they had favourable attitudes to ethical fashion. However, the results provided no evidence of a mediating effect. Thus, H_{02}: The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by attitude, failed to be rejected.

However, the results did indicate that a statistically significant positive relationship exists between attitude and purchase intent. Thus, consumers attitudes towards ethical fashion have a direct impact on their purchase intention for ethical fashion. The more favourable an individual's attitude it, the more likely it is that they will exhibit higher levels of purchase intention for ethical fashion. Therefore H_{01}: There is no relationship between attitude and purchase intent, was rejected.

It was suspected that actual knowledge might mediate the relationship between attitude and purchase intent. Thus, the relationship between attitudes and purchase intent may be strengthened by an individual's actual knowledge of ethical issues in the fashion industry. However, in this study it was not the case. No evidence of a statistically significant moderating effect was found. Thus, H_{03}: The relationship between attitude and purchase intent is unaffected by actual knowledge, failed to be rejected.

In addition, no significant relationship was found between actual knowledge and purchase intent. Therefore, it seems that a consumer's knowledge of ethical fashion does not affect their purchase intent. These findings contrast with the industry experts' assessments. It may be that the scale used for measuring actual knowledge was inappropriate. This will be discussed in more detail in section 7.4. H_{04}: There is no relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent, failed to be rejected.

7.2.2.2 The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent

It was suspected that personal capability would have a significant positive relationship with purchase intent for ethical fashion. Thus, consumers with more financial resources and higher levels of awareness of ethical fashion brands would be more likely to engage in ethical fashion consumption by means of their intent to purchase ethical fashion. However, the results did not support this position. No statistically significant relationship was found between personal capability and purchase intent. Thus, H_{05}: There is no relationship between personal capability and purchase intent, failed to be rejected.

7.2.2.3 The relationship between contextual factors and purchase intent

It was hypothesised that purchase intent would be influenced by contextual variables. Consumers with more conducive contextual circumstances may be more inclined to engage in ethical fashion consumption. It was predicted that consumers whose family and friends purchase ethical fashion are also likely to engage in ethical fashion consumption. In addition, consumers who hear about ethical fashion on various media platforms may be more likely to have higher levels of purchase intent for ethical fashion. Thus, H_{06}: There is no relationship between social norms and purchase intent, was formulated. However, there was no evidence of a statistically significant relationship between social norms and purchase intent. H_{06} therefore failed to be rejected.

It was suspected that accessibility to ethical fashion might moderate the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent. Thus, the link between personal capability and purchase intent might be strengthened by accessibility. Consumers with the capability to buy ethical fashion might be limited by a lack of accessibility to ethical fashion brands. However, the evidence did not support this supposition. H_{07}: The relationship between personal capability and purchase intent is unaffected by accessibility, failed to be rejected. Thus, it seems as if accessibility does not moderate the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent. Furthermore, no statistically significant relationship between accessibility and purchase intent could be found. Therefore, H_{08}: There is no relationship between accessibility and purchase intent, failed to be rejected.

The results of the inferential analyses indicated that only one statistically significant relationship existed. There was support for the relationship between attitude and purchase intent for ethical fashion. Thus, the associated null hypothesis could be rejected. The remaining null hypotheses failed to be rejected as the evidence could not support the hypothesised relationships. The following sections describe the conclusions of the research and managerial implications of the results.

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

One primary objective and six secondary objectives were developed for the study at hand. This section addresses each of the objectives using the results of the study as well as existing literature.

7.3.1 Factors impacting ethical consumption

The primary objective of the study was to determine the factors influencing ethical fashion consumption. Stern's (2000) framework of environmentally significant behaviour was adapted in order apply to ethical fashion and subsequently address the primary objective. After examining the existing literature, it was predicted that attitude, personal capability and contextual variables might impact ethical fashion consumption by means of the purchase intent for ethical fashion. The results indicated that attitude was the only variable to significantly impact purchase intent for ethical fashion. Therefore, personal capability and contextual factors have no impact on ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. These findings are surprising, especially considering the results of the qualitative research which clearly identified financial resources and accessibility as important factors to be addressing when discussing ethical fashion consumption in South Africa.

The results contradict the findings of Moon *et al*. (2014) whose results indicate that a consumer's attitude is not directly linked to their intention to purchase sustainable fashion. Several barriers to sustainable fashion consumption were identified which focussed on access to sustainable fashion which was defined as a contextual variable in this study. However, the results of Moon *et al*. (2014) do indicate that price perceptions, awareness of ethical fashion and preconceptions of ethical fashion stylishness are issues limiting sustainable fashion consumption. These results do correlate with the findings of this study. Results from the qualitative research identified price perceptions, awareness of ethical fashion and perceived style as important variables when considering ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. In addition, these variables were included in the model which was empirically tested.

Chan and Wong's (2012) results also contradict the findings. Their results indicate that although attitudes are relevant in the ethical fashion consumption domain attitudes are rarely applied to ethical fashion purchasing decisions. Their findings indicate that store-related attributes and product related attributes predict consumers' eco-fashion consumption decision.

The results indicating that attitude has a significant impact on ethical fashion consumption are supported by Kozar and Hiller-Connell (2013) whose research found that attitude, in

addition to knowledge, of environmental and social issues were significant predictors of socially and environmentally responsible consumption behaviour.

Furthermore, a study investigating the attitude-behaviour gap associated with sustainable fashion as well as enablers and barriers of sustainable clothing purchase behaviour also found that attitudes impact ethical fashion consumption (Jacobs *et al*., 2018). Specifically, their results indicated that positive attitudes towards social-ecological clothing, biospheric and altruistic values, an affinity to online and catalogue shopping enhanced sustainable clothing purchases. Although affinity for online shopping was not investigated in the study at hand, these results do relate to the ethical fashion industry in South Africa. The qualitative research results revealed that the majority of ethical fashion brands sell their products predominantly, or even exclusively, though online channels. It was suspected that consumers' purchase intent for ethical fashion may be limited by accessibility to ethical fashion brands. However, accessibility was proven not to have a significant impact on purchase intent in the study at hand. Therefore, it could be that South African consumers have a reasonable affinity with online shopping and thus do not perceive accessibility as a barrier to ethical fashion consumption.

Attitude and its impact on ethical fashion consumption is discussed in further detail in the following section.

7.3.2 Attitude

Three secondary objectives addressed attitude. The first secondary objective was to determine the impact of attitudinal factors on ethical fashion consumption. The results indicated that a statistically significant relationship between attitude and purchase intent for ethical fashion did exist. Attitude was comprised of eight second order constructs, namely; concern for the environment, concern for social welfare, price perceptions, perceived quality, perceived style, ethical fashion understanding, perceived consumer effectiveness and perceived knowledge.

Various studies confirm the relevance of these variables in the ethical fashion consumption domain (McNiell & Moore, 2015; Kang *et al*.,2014; Chan & Wong 2012). Concern for the environment and social welfare have been studied fairly extensively. In many cases, their results support the notion that consumers who place importance on environmental assets and value social justice are more likely to consume ethical fashion. Furthermore, Joshi and Rahman's (2015) review found environmental concern to be one of two major determinants of green purchase behaviour. Thus, the results of the study at hand support the inclusion of

concern for the environment and social welfare as important factors influencing ethical fashion consumption by means of purchase intent.

Moon *et al*. (2014) found that there is a general perception that sustainable fashion is not stylish. These findings correlated with the results of the qualitative research. Industry experts specified that there seems to be a connotation between ethical fashion and boring or unfashionable designs. This perception could be rooted in the early beginnings of the ethical fashion movement when hemp and hessian fabric in muted colours were associated with ethical fashion. However, presently there are multitudes of ethical fashion designers each with their own style and approach. In South Africa, many of the ethical fashion designers are relatively young and their designs are targeted at young consumers. As such, their designs range in colour and style. In reality, there is no longer one defining look that covers all ethical fashion brands. The variety and abundance of ethical fashion in South Africa is showcased in shops like Mungo & Jemima that sell clothing from a host of different local ethical designers. The Watershed at the waterfront in Cape Town is another example of a retail space that offers a variety of ethical clothing from different local ethical fashion designers. Therefore, it could be that consumers in South Africa are slowly but surely being exposed to the variety of ethical fashion styles available and do not hold such strong preconceived ideas about the stylishness of ethical fashion. The emergence of social media, especially Instagram, could also facilitate this. Ethical fashion brands have the opportunity to promote their brand without substantial financial investment. Therefore, even smaller ethical fashion brands with unique styles are able to create exposure for their brand and products with relatively easily and effectively. The relevance of style as a factor influencing ethical fashion consumption is supported by McNiell and Moore (2015), Kang *et al*. (2014), Chan and Wong (2012), Wiederhold and Martinez (2018) and Bray *et al*. (2010).

Perceived quality of ethical fashion was also included as a second order construct of attitude. Previous studies indicated that some consumers consider the quality of ethical fashion to be substandard (McNeill & Moore, 2015, Kim *et al.*, 2012). This is surprising considering that fast fashion, which is sold widely and in great volumes, is of very poor quality. Therefore, it could be expected that consumers would consider ethical fashion to be of good quality when compared to fast fashion. However, as this is not the case, it could be that consumers factor in the price of fashion items when judging quality. Thus, when considering quality consumers may partially base their judgment on the price asked for the product. As ethical fashion is generally much more expensive than fast fashion, consumers might judge ethical fashion quality to be average or poor when the price is factored into the consideration, in other words the quality of ethical fashion garments is not good enough to justify the price asked. Therefore, value for money could be a more relevant concept to investigate.

When reviewing price perceptions, it is evident that in the majority of studies consumers expect ethical fashion to be quite expensive (Byun & Sternquist, 2011; Kang *et al*., 2014, Ciasullo, Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018). These conclusions are supported by the results of the qualitative research. Ethical fashion industry experts confirmed that South African consumers do expect ethical fashion garments to be more expensive. However, this expectation is valid. Ethical fashion is generally much more expensive than fast fashion. The higher price can be justified. Adopting practices that minimise environmental and social impacts does cost money. In addition, creating a garment with care and expertise takes a longer time to produce than mass-produced fast fashion items. Furthermore, using quality fabrics and finishes is more expensive. Nevertheless, these added costs result in a quality garment that can be worn for many seasons. Thus, it could be important for ethical fashion brand managers to relate the price of ethical fashion to the value of the garment in terms of quality and lowered environmental and social impacts. Again, the concept of value for money could be an appropriate way to address this.

Perceived consumer effectiveness relates to the level of confidence a consumer feels in their ability to make a difference to a problem or situation. Various studies have investigated perceived consumer effectiveness and its role in ethical fashion consumption (Kang *et al*., 2014; Andorfer & Liebe, 2015; Joung, 2015). Their results indicate the consumers who do not believe that their actions will make a difference on social and environmental issues are less likely to engage in ethical fashion consumption. The social and environmental issues related to the fashion industry are wide reaching and complex. Thus, consumers may feel that they would like to minimise their personal impact on the environment and society but are unsure of if and how their support of ethical fashion will make a difference. This links to perceived knowledge and ethical fashion understanding. As discussed in the qualitative section of the results, it seems like South African consumers may have a very narrow understanding of all the considerations included in ethical fashion. Thus, they may not have a complete picture of the extent to which ethical fashion mitigates the social and environmental harms caused by conventional fashion. Research indicates that lack of perceived knowledge regarding ethical fashion can act as a barrier to ethical fashion consumption (Cervellon & Carey, 2011). In addition, discussion with the industry experts revealed that education is necessary to properly inform consumers of the social and environmental impacts of the fashion industry. Studies conducted indicate that a positive relationship exists between objective consumer knowledge and ethical fashion consumption (Kang *et al*., 2014).

The second secondary objective related to attitude was to determine the extent to which actual knowledge moderates the relationship between attitude and purchase intent. The results indicated that no actual knowledge had no moderating effect between attitude and

purchase intent for ethical fashion. Furthermore, no evidence of a relationship between actual knowledge and purchase intent was found. This result opposes the findings of existing studies which conclude that knowledge of social and environmental impacts of the fashion industry are a highly significant predictor of ethical fashion consumption (Kozar & Hiller Connell, 2010, 2013). The reason for this deviation from the existing literature is unclear. It could be that the knowledge items in the questionnaire were inappropriate or did not fully capture consumer knowledge.

The third secondary objective related to attitude was to determine the extent to which attitude mediates the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent. It was found that attitude had no mediating effect on the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent for ethical fashion. The mediating effect was found insignificant because no relationship existed between personal capability and purchase intent. This finding was surprising considering the discussion with industry experts who indicated that financial resources and awareness of ethical fashion brands were noteworthy factors to consider in the South African ethical fashion consumer behaviour context. Personal capability variables and their effect on purchase intent are discussed further in the proceeding section.

7.3.3 Personal capability

The fourth secondary objective was to determine the impact of personal capabilities on ethical fashion consumption. The results demonstrated that no statistically significant relationship existed between personal capability and purchase intent. As mentioned in the previous section, this result was surprising considering the existing literature as well as the qualitative research results.

Personal capability was defined as a consumer's financial resources available to purchase ethical fashion as well as their awareness of ethical fashion brands. It was predicted that larger financial resources and better awareness of ethical fashion brands would positively influence purchase intent for ethical fashion. However, this was not the case.

Existing literature was inconclusive on the impact of financial resources and ethical fashion consumption. Therefore, the results do not definitively oppose or support a consensus. Existing studies investigating the barriers inhibiting ethical fashion consumption report that consumers complain that ethical fashion does not meet their budget for clothing shopping (Bray *et al*., 2013). However, consider the results of the study it is evident that higher incomes do not translate into higher levels of purchase intent for ethical fashion. It could be that consumers use limited financial resources as an excuse for lack of participation in ethical

fashion consumption and that there are other factors at play that limit their purchase intention levels for ethical fashion.

However, the literature regarding awareness of ethical alternatives and ethical fashion consumption is more succinct. Wiederhold and Martinez (2018) report that ethical fashion consumption is constrained by a lack of consumer awareness of ethical fashion alternatives. This finding is supported by Johnstone and Tan (2015) as well as Cervellon and Carey (2011) whose research indicates that consumers do wish to purchase more ethically but were unsure of the equivalent ethical products. However, these postulations were not supported by the results of this study.

The fifth secondary objective was to determine the extent to which accessibility moderates the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent. The results of the analyses indicated that no significant moderating effect could be observed. Therefore, accessibility does not moderate the relationship between personal capability and purchase intent for ethical fashion. However, this result was achieved because there was no relationship between personal capability and purchase intent.

7.3.4 Contextual factors

The final secondary objective was to determine the impact of contextual factors on ethical fashion consumption. The results indicate that no statistically significant relationship existed between the contextual variables and purchase intent for ethical fashion. The contextual variables included social norms and accessibility to ethical fashion. It was expected that purchase intent levels would increase for respondents that experience conditions more conducive to ethical fashion consumption, thus consumers with better accessibility to ethical fashion would be more inclined to engage in ethical fashion consumption by means of a higher level of purchase intent. Similarly, respondents whose peers and parents spoke regularly about ethical fashion were expected to exhibit higher levels of purchase intent. In addition, it was suspected that the prevalence of ethical fashion related news or stories on media platforms would influence ethical consumption behaviour. However, this was not the case.

Previous studies examining social norms and ethical consumption have revealed that social norms generally influence increased ethical purchasing (Welsch & Kuhling, 2009; Lee, 2010). However, the majority of these studies were not related to fashion consumption. Thus, the impact of social norms on ethical fashion consumption remains unclear.

Previous studies have shown that some consumers who do want to purchase ethically are constrained by limited availability or inconvenience (Young *et al*, 2010; Padel & Foster, 2005; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018). Bray *et al*. reports that consumers feel as if there are limited ethical fashion options and they are not easily accessible. In addition, results of the qualitative research indicated that accessibility ethical fashion could be a significant factor influencing ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. However, it seems that consumers will favourable attitudes to ethical fashion will make the effort to overcome accessibility barriers if they are committed to purchase fashion in a more ethically considerate way.

Given the results of the study as well as the existing literature, various implications and recommendations can be identified. The following section addresses the recommendations and implications of the study for managers in the ethical fashion industry.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This section discusses the implications of the results. Recommendations are made to ethical fashion purveyors, including ethical fashion brands and advocates for the development of ethical fashion.

The aim of the study was to investigate ethical fashion consumption. Based on Stern's (2000) framework for environmentally significant behaviour, it was suspected that attitudinal, personal capability and contextual variables influence purchase intent for ethical fashion. However, the results indicate that attitude is the only variable to share a statistically significant relationship with purchase intent for ethical fashion. This implies that consumers with favourable attitudes towards ethical fashion are likely to engage in ethical fashion consumption. This finding is supported by McNeill & Moore (2015) who also found that attitude influences ethical fashion consumption.

Interestingly, no significant relationships were found between personal capability, contextual variables and purchases intent for ethical fashion. Therefore, it can be assumed that financial resources, awareness of ethical fashion brands, access to ethical fashion brands and social norms do not play a significant role in determining ethical fashion consumption amongst South African consumers.

These results have several implications for business owners and advocates for the development of ethical fashion and are divided into three sections.

7.4.1 Attitude

The results of the study indicate that attitudes do impact purchase intent for ethical fashion. They are not fixed and can be changed. Thus, organisations like Fashion Revolution, Fairtrade, the Clean Clothes Campaign, which advocate for ethical fashion can use this information to their advantage. Generally, the purpose of these organisations is to influence consumers to buy fashion more ethically and demand better ethical practices from fashion businesses in order to rid the industry of its many environmental and social issues. In short, their goal is to encourage ethical fashion consumption. This aligns with ethical fashion businesses which also aim to drive consumption of their ethical fashion products. Therefore, in order to encourage ethical fashion consumption, these organisations and ethical fashion businesses should adopt various strategies to enhance stimulate favourable attitudes for ethical fashion. In the study, attitude was comprised of concern for the environment and social welfare, price perceptions, perceived consumer effectiveness, perceived quality and style and knowledge. Thus, organisations and ethical businesses can focus on these aspects.

Perceived style is an important aspect that retailers and organisations can focus on. Industry experts as well as existing literature (McNeill & Moore, 2015) made it clear that ethical fashion can be perceived as boring as it is often associated with classic basics. Therefore, in order to make ethical fashion more aspirational, fashion show events could be organised which showcase local designers and their unique styles. Fashion shows are associated with style and trendiness, thus an ethical fashion show could help challenge the perception that ethical fashion is boring. In addition, this would allow ethical fashion brands to introduce their products to the public whilst also stimulating a conversation about the importance of ethical fashion.

In addition, ethical fashion brands could consider partnering with local celebrities or influencers. Celebrities and influencers tend to have large followings on social media. Ethical fashion brands could approach influencers and negotiate an endorsement deal to promote the brand and their products. Care should be taken in selecting the right individual for the brand. The influencer needs to align with the brands' personality in order to ensure that the partnership seems authentic. Furthermore, the influencer should have a slightly different following to the brands to ensure that the advertising is not wasted on people who already follow the brand. Ethical fashion brands could use this as an opportunity to display their unique style and challenge the idea that ethical fashion is dull.

Ethical fashion businesses should address perceptions about quality and price. Ethical fashion is perceived as expensive. In most cases, it is more expensive than conventional

fashion. However, the quality is usually excellent. It may be that the quality is overlooked. Thus, ethical fashion businesses need to convince consumers that they get value for money when they purchase ethical fashion garment. This could be achieved by informing consumers about the fabric used in the garments which are more durable and have a more luxurious feel that the synthetics fabrics often used in unethical fashion production. Consumers could be made aware of this by including a description of the fabric and its benefits on the swing tags. Alternatively, in store advertising such as signs or posters could be utilised. Brands can also encourage consumers to think about price per wear. This is equal to the price paid for the garment divided by the number of times the garment will be worn. Fast fashion is often associated with poor quality. Thus, consumers only wear the product a few times before the garment falls apart. However, because ethical fashion garments are excellent quality they can be worn for years before needing to be mended. Thus, although the initial price may seem expensive, the price per wear is low.

In many cases the factor contributing to the higher price point of ethical fashion garments is labour. An important constituent of ethical fashion is ensuring that employees are well looked after and earn a fair and living wage. Thus, ethical fashion brands can communicate their commitment to their employees to consumers in order to substantiate the prices of their products. Sealand Gear is an ethical fashion brand that have shared the background of their employees with consumers and have used it to build a more personal relationship between the brand and customers. Their website has a section dedicated to their team. Each employee is introduced in a little video explaining who they are, what they do and some personal anecdotes. Sealand also adds a label to the inside of each product with the persona's name who was responsible for creating the product. This allows the consumer to associate more closely with the brand and the people about it. The products become more than just a physical item because there is a story and a real persona behind it.

Jane Sews, another ethical fashion brand, took a different approach. They shared the cost breakdown of one of their most popular products on social media. This allowed the brand to explain all that goes into an ethical fashion product. This level of transparency afforded the brand the opportunity to justify their pricing and dismiss the perception that ethical fashion is overpriced.

Therefore, superior quality, personal connections and transparency are strategies that ethical fashion brands can implement in order to justify their pricing, thereby creating more favourable consumer perceptions toward the ethical fashion prices.

Concern for the environment and social welfare are important factors that shape attitude towards ethical fashion. However, it is unlikely that ethical fashion brands will be able to instil this concern in consumers. Several ethical fashion industry experts recommended that more education is necessary in order to encourage ethical fashion consumption. Particular mention was made of the school curriculum. Currently, climate change and the ecological disaster is included in the government school curriculum to some extent (De Villiers, 2019). However, no link is made between the fashion industry and the ecological crisis. Furthermore, the fashion industry is not expressly mentioned as a contributor to climate change. Thus, if the curriculum were to include more specific references to the detrimental impacts of the fashion industry on the natural environment, consumers would have a better understanding of the severity of the situation. Subsequently, they may be more likely to translate their concern into conscious consumption. Presently, fashion schools do include a component relating to ethical practices and the impact of the fashion industry on the natural environment and society (May, 2019). However, the proportion of the population of people who attend fashion school is minimal. Thus, it is argued that government schools should include a module about the fashion industry and its social and environmental implications in the curriculum. A more complete understanding of the fashion industry will also provide consumers with the knowledge of how their behaviour can influence the environment and society. Therefore, consumers may be more empowered to engage in ethical fashion consumption because they understand how their personal purchase behaviour can decrease the impact on the natural environment and society.

7.4.2 Personal capability

The results of the study indicated that personal capability variables, specifically financial resources and awareness of ethical fashion brands, do not impact consumer purchase intention levels for ethical fashion. Although it seems that financial resources do not significantly influence ethical fashion consumption in South Africa, advocate organisations for ethical fashion can inform consumers on how to purchase fashion ethically given varying financial resources or income levels. New ethical fashion garments tend to be more expensive and thus might not be financially accessible to all consumers. However, other ethical fashion alternatives exist. Second hand or vintage clothing is defined as ethical fashion because no new resources are required, and the life of existing products are extended. Thus, second hand and vintage clothing provides consumers with an inexpensive way to purchase fashion with ethical considerations in mind. Another way consumers can add to their ethical wardrobes is by participating in clothing swaps. Clothing swaps have become more prevalent in recent years as the afford consumers the opportunity to acquire new garments without having to spend any money, individuals simply meet up at the designated location and swap clothes amongst each other. Therefore, there are alternative

options available for consumers who want to partake in ethical fashion but may feel limited by their financial resources. Advocating organisations could advertise these alternative options to consumers by means of social media campaigns and organised clothing swaps at universities or schools.

Awareness of ethical fashion brands was not identified as significant factor influencing purchase intent for ethical fashion. However, it is still important for ethical fashion brands to make their company and products known to consumers who do have purchase intent for ethical fashion. In South Africa, ethical fashion brands tend to be small companies. Thus, it is unlikely that they have large advertising budgets. Thus, it is recommended that ethical fashion brands make use of social media platforms to advertise their brand and products. Social media has been demonstrated as an excellent platform for businesses to exploit to market their brand without substantial financial commitment or investment (Alves, Fernandes & Raposo, 2016. Influencer collaborations, Instagram 'promoted content' and brand collaborations are techniques that ethical fashion businesses could adopt in order to increase awareness for their brands.

7.4.3 Contextual factors

The results of the study revealed that contextual variables had no impact on purchase intent for ethical fashion. The contextual factors included in the study were social norms and accessibility. Ethical fashion brands are not able to significantly influence social norms. However, they can ensure that their products are easily accessible to consumers. In many cases, South African ethical fashion brands make use of online channels to sell their products. This retailing decision is logical as the majority of ethical fashion businesses in South Africa are located in Cape Town. Thus, online retail channels afford ethical fashion brands the opportunity to sell to consumers all over the country. However, it if then essential to ensure that the online purchasing experience is smooth and hassle-free process. Ethical fashion brands should ensure that their websites include sizing charts with accurate guidelines to help consumers decide on sizing as they will not have the opportunity to try the clothing on in person. In addition, the return and exchange policy should be clear and easily understandable to consumers who might be concerned about whether they will be able to return products that they have bought. Furthermore, photographs and descriptive of the garments should be as accurate and detailed as possible in order to ensure that consumers are not surprised when they receive their order. Depictions of the product and the actual product should be as similar as possible.

In order to increase accessibility to their brand, ethical fashion businesses could consider selling their products through stores such as Mungo & Jemima and Convoy. These shops

have several brands located in various locations across the country. Both focus on selling local ethical fashion from a range of designers. These shops make shopping for ethical fashion more convenient for the consumer. Consumers can visit one shop selling a range of designers and styles rather than having to visit each businesses boutique or store separately which may be located in varying geographic locations.

7.5 LIMITATIONS FOR THE STUDY

Several limitations to the study exist. It is suggested that these limitations be addressed and explored in future research studies. One major limitation related to the use of convenience sampling. The decision to utilise this sampling method was based on time and financial resource constraints. The sample consisted of 732 individuals who are Stellenbosch University students and staff members. Considering the respondents were all either students or staff members at a University it could be assumed that they are more educated than the remainder of the general population. Therefore, the results may not be fully representative of Generation X and Y's purchase intent for ethical fashion and generalisation to the population might be challenging.

The sample was limited to individuals between the ages of 20 and 40 years old. Whilst this specification is not considered a limitation, the ages of the respondents were not equally distributed across the age range. The majority of the sample was aged between 20 and 25 years. Therefore, the results of the study could have been influenced by the skewed age distribution.

As mentioned previously, the study was conducted amongst Stellenbosch University and staff. Although the students might come from various parts of the country, the entire sample was geographically based in Stellenbosch at the time of the execution of the study. Therefore, the data may be distorted. Ethical fashion industry experts reported that ethical fashion is more prevalent in the Western Cape than in other areas of the country. As Stellenbosch is located in the Western Cape, the respondents may have more exposure to ethical fashion as a result of their geographical base in comparison to the rest of the population. Therefore, the results of the study might be not be fully representative of the population. In addition, non-probability sampling was utilised. Therefore, the results cannot be generalised to the population.

Furthermore, the study was conducted in South Africa which has a unique set of socio-demographic issues and economic landscape which may have influenced respondents' purchase intent for ethical fashion. Therefore, the generalisability of the study might be

limited to South Africa. The results cannot necessarily be applied to countries with developed economies.

The majority of the items used in the online questionnaire were adapted from existing studies. Thus, it could be that the items were not entirely applicable to the study at hand. In particular, the items used to measure concern for social welfare were very general. It might be that the questionnaire items did not fully cover the factors influencing purchase intent for ethical fashion as the items were not specifically designed for the study.

In addition, the study used purchase intent as a measure of ethical fashion consumption. Although, much research supports the use of purchase intent as a measure of behaviour, it has received a fair deal of criticism. It has been argued that purchase intent is not fully representative of actual behaviour, and in most cases, there is a disparity between purchase intent and observed behaviour (Chandon, Morwitz, & Reinartz, 2005). Thus, it could be argued that purchase intent is not the best measure of ethical fashion consumption.

Respondents were required to self-report their responses in the online questionnaire. This aspect of the study could be viewed as a limitation. The self-reporting of attitudes and purchase intent for ethical fashion may have introduced social desirability bias into the results. As discussed in chapter five, social desirability bias occurs when respondents exaggerate or understate their responses in order to seem more socially desirable. This effect is common in studies focussed on the ethical nature of products or behaviour as is the case in this study. Consequently, it is possible that social desirability bias was introduced in the study. However, respondents were ensured of their anonymity in order to dissuade respondents from providing socially desirable answers.

Industry experts were interviewed for the qualitative part of the research. Seven individuals were interviewed, all of whom are based in Cape Town. As discussed in chapter 5, the local textile and apparel industry is predominantly located in Cape Town. Therefore, the prominence of Cape Town-based experts is not surprising. However, their insights might be limited to knowledge of consumers based in the Western Cape and therefore not representative of all ethical fashion consumer behaviour in South Africa.

7.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Considering the limitations as well as the results of the study, several suggestions for future research can be made. As discussed in the preceding section, the results of the study might have been influenced by the convenience sample. Therefore, it is recommended that future research makes use of probability sampling in order to achieve a more diverse sample. In

addition, future studies could extend the study to include respondents with different professions and from other geographic locations.

Furthermore, the sample was limited to individuals between the ages of 20 and 40 years old. It could be interesting to increase the scope of the study to include a larger range of ages, specifically to older respondents who may have more disposable income and spending power. Future research could also compare results across generations in order to determine whether the assumption of the affinity between Generation Z and Y with ethical consumption holds true.

The sample realised for the current study consisted predominantly of women. This was not considered a limitation to the study. However, future research could aim for a more balanced sample in order to investigate the differences between genders for ethical fashion consumption

Ethical fashion consumption was investigated by measuring purchase intent. Although sufficient for the study at hand, additional research could explore ethical fashion by measuring actual purchases in addition to purchase intent. This might provide more accurate picture of the factors driving ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Additionally, future researchers might consider measuring behaviour for consumers who have purchase intent for ethical fashion but do not act on it. This could provide valuable insight into the barriers impeding ethical fashion consumption in South Africa.

The previous section discussed the possibility that items utilised in the online questionnaire may not have been entirely appropriate to the study at hand. Future studies could focus on developing the items and adapting them more specifically to the study in order to generate a clearer understanding of the factors impacting ethical fashion consumption in South Africa. Furthermore, particular effort could be made to improve the concern for social welfare items which were very general. Industry experts reported that the social factors related to ethical fashion in South Africa are especially important in their work. Therefore, future research could develop these items in order to make them more applicable to the unique South African social issues.

The discussions with the industry experts made it clear that South Africans still exhibit relatively little awareness of ethical fashion and struggle to distinguish between ethical and unethical brands. Greenwashing was also mentioned as a contributing factor to this confusion. Thus, future research could investigate the South Africans' understanding of ethical fashion and how advertising and potential greenwashing influence their perceptions.

As greenwashing is a potential issue impacting understanding of ethical fashion, future research could explore the possibility of certification of ethical fashion products similar to organic wine or Karoo lamb. Studies could focus on whether certification would help improve consumers understanding of the true ethical nature of clothing brands and whether in influences their consumption behaviour.

South Africa has a diverse range of income, education and poverty levels. As discussed in the interviews with industry experts, it seems that ethical fashion consumption in South Africa is associated with privilege. Future research could explore this association and its relevance in developed economy countries where income levels are generally higher, poverty levels are lower and the poverty gap is not as wide, compared to developing countries.

The focus of this study was on consumers and their behaviour. Future research could focus specifically on businesses and their orientation towards the natural environment as a stakeholder in order to determine how willing businesses would be to adopt sustainable businesses practices.

Whilst the current study focussed on the factors impacting purchase intent for ethical fashion in South Africa, it seems there are many areas related to ethical fashion that still need to be explored. Consequently, there is huge potential for future research. Additional studies need to be conducted in order to gain a more complete understanding of ethical fashion in South Africa.

7.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter seven addressed the results presented in chapter 6. Subsequently, the implications of the analyses were discussed, and recommendations were made to ethical fashion purveyors. The results of the study indicate that of all the variables included in the model, only attitude has a significant relationship with purchase intent for ethical fashion. Therefore, specific strategies that ethical fashion brands can adopt in order to influence attitudes and subsequently consumer behaviour, were outlined. The limitations of the study were presented and suggestions for future research were made. In conclusion, consumer attitudes towards ethical fashion impacts ethical fashion consumption through the intent to purchase ethical fashion. Thus, strategies need to be adopted that will improve consumer attitudes and therefore encourage ethical fashion consumption through the purchasing of such fashion. The main aim of the study was to investigate ethical fashion consumption. the study successfully addressed the main objective.

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ANNEXURE A: QUESTIONNAIRE AS SEEN BY RESPONDENTS

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Dear prospective participant

My name is Solène Dehosse, a student in the Economic and Management Sciences faculty, and I would like to invite you to take part in a survey, the results of which will contribute to a research project in order to complete my MCom (Masters) degree.

Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part.

The purpose of this study is to understand South Africans' fashion consumption.

The questionnaire will take approximately **10 minutes** to complete and will contain a combination of questions covering your fashion purchasing habits and preferences.

If you choose to complete the questionnaire you may enter **a lucky draw with a chance to win a cash prize of R300**. Should you wish to enter the lucky draw you will be required to enter your email address. Only respondents who complete the questionnaire in full and provide an email address will be entered into the lucky draw. The researcher will be responsible for selecting the lucky draw winner. The selection will take place the day after the questionnaire is taken offline (most likely 15 November 2019) and the winner will be notified via email directly after the selection has taken place.

If you do not wish to enter the lucky draw you do NOT need to provide an email address.

The winner will be chosen by means of a random selection and the researcher will not be able to select any family members or close friends as the winner.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS:

You have the right to decline answering any questions and you can exit the survey at any time without giving a reason. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Mrs Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

Your information and response to the survey will be protected by password protected devices in order to maintain and protect your anonymity. Only the researcher and supervisor will have access to the data. Once the lucky draw winner has been selected all email addresses will be deleted from the data set.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher (Solène Dehosse, 17874580@sun.ac.za) and/or the Supervisor (Dr Ehlers, ehlerslene@sun.ac.za).

To save a copy of this text, click here to download the PDF version

*

☐ I confirm that I have read and understood the information provided for the current study

☐ I agree to take part in the survey

*Please enter your age. If you are older than 40 or younger than 20 years please exit the questionnaire.

*From this point on please consider your answers carefully. Once you have moved on to the next page you will not be able to go back and change them.

Please indicate your level of agreement by clicking the appropriate block.

In order for fashion to be ethical, fashion brands need to:

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Agree	Completely agree
Ensure garment workers are paid a living wage	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Minimise the environmental impact of clothing production	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Use environmentally friendly fabrics	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Use organic fabric alternatives where possible	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dye clothes with natural dyes where possible	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Refrain from using child labour to produce clothing	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ensure the quality of clothing is good	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Use natural fabrics (like cotton, linen, hemp) instead of fabric made from synthetic fibres (like polyester)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ensure safe working conditions for garment workers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Which of the following would you consider to be ethical fashion brands? You may select more than one option or none at all.

- ☐ H&M
- ☐ Zara
- ☐ Mungo and Jemima
- ☐ Vintage shops
- ☐ Top Shop
- ☐ Sitting Pretty
- ☐ Margot Molyneux
- ☐ Pichulik
- ☐ Pep
- ☐ Hannah Lavery
- ☐ Nike
- ☐ Woolworths
- ☐ Akina Label
- ☐ Foschini
- ☐ Sealand gear
- ☐ Other. Please specify:

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*Please indicate your level of agreement by clicking the appropriate block.

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Agree	Completely agree
I know a lot about the fashion industry and its related environmental and social issues	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel very knowledgeable about environmental and social issues related to the fashion industry	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I think I know more about the environmental and social issues attributed to the fashion industry than most people	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When it comes to environmental and social issues concerning the fashion industry, I really know a lot	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

*Please select your preferred gender.

○ Man
○ Woman
○ Gender-variant/non-conforming
○ Prefer not to answer
○ Other. Please specify:

*Consider the following statements and whether they are true or false. Please do not guess if you are unsure.

	True	False	Unsure
The global fashion industry is environmentally unsustainable	○	○	○
The fashion industry is the second most polluting industry in the world	○	○	○
Fashion production produces very little industrial waste	○	○	○
Garments made with polyester biodegrade within 5 years after disposal	○	○	○
Washing clothes made from synthetic materials releases microplastic particles into the ocean	○	○	○
In many cases garment factory workers are not payed a living wage	○	○	○
Very little water is needed to grow cotton	○	○	○
Clothing production emits more greenhouse gas emissions than international shipping and aviation industries combined	○	○	○
Garment workers are always paid the minimum wage	○	○	○

*Ethical fashion items are clothing that are produced with <u>environmental and social considerations</u> in mind.

- Ethical fashion is made with <u>natural fibres</u> (like wool, hemp and linen), <u>recycled textiles</u> or <u>organic</u> fabric .

- <u>Local</u> brands that produce in SA tend to be ethical.

- Ethical fashion is made by people who earn a <u>fair wage</u> .

- Ethical fashion includes <u>secondhand clothing</u>.

- Ethical fashion tries to <u>minimise its negative environmental and social impact</u> .

Please indicate your level of agreement by clicking the appropriate block.

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Agree	Completely agree
It is still the case that the majority of the population does not act in an environmentally friendly way	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It is important that all people are happy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I will buy clothing that is safe for the environment	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I will not buy new clothing items, if I already have previous items that are in usable state	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often see things in magazines about ethical fashion	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The environment deterioration will be irreversible if the necessary measures are not taken	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Accessing ethical fashion brands in South Africa isn't difficult	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion is over-priced	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It is important that others are happy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion meets my budget for clothing shopping	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

*Which shops do you buy most of your clothing at? You may select more than one answer.

- ☐ Zara
- ☐ H&M
- ☐ Topshop
- ☐ Cotton On
- ☐ Woolworths
- ☐ River Island
- ☐ Pick 'n Pay
- ☐ Jet
- ☐ Pep
- ☐ Ackermans
- ☐ Mr Price
- ☐ Edgars
- ☐ Truworths
- ☐ Country Road
- ☐ Trenery
- ☐ Second hand shops
- ☐ South African boutiques/small businesses
- ☐ Factorie
- ☐ Other. Please specify:

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*Please indicate you level of agreement by clicking the appropriate block

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Agree	Completely agree
I will buy clothing that is produced in an environmentally friendly manner	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My close friends speak about the environmental and social problems related to the fashion industry	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If there is green information (such as an eco-index) I would consider this in my purchase decisions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I will buy clothing that is durable	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I want to help others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The needs of others are important	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
For the benefit of the environment we should be prepared to restrict our momentary style of living	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion might be limited in styles	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often see things on TV about ethical fashion	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Finding ethical fashion brands in South Africa is easy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
By purchasing products made in an environmentally friendly way, each consumer's behaviour can have a positive effect on the environment and society	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

*What is your personal average yearly expenditure on clothing items?

- ☐ R0-R500
- ☐ R501-R1000
- ☐ R1001-R2000
- ☐ R2001-R3000
- ☐ R3001-R4000
- ☐ R4001-R5000
- ☐ R5001-R6000
- ☐ R6001-R7000
- ☐ R7001-R8000
- ☐ R8001-R9000
- ☐ R9001-R10 000
- ☐ R10 001-R11 000
- ☐ R11 001-R12 000
- ☐ R12 000+

*Please indicate your level of agreement by clicking the appropriate block.

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Agree	Completely agree
Ethical fashion is reasonably priced	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If we continue as before we are approaching an environmental catastrophe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Since each individual can have an effect on environmental problems, what I can make a meaningful difference	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion is generally affordable	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It is worth it for the individual to make efforts to preserve and improve the environment	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I will buy a fashion product that was designed with considerations of environmental protection in mind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion tends to be unstylish	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

*Please select your monthly income/allowance

- ☐ R0-R1000
- ☐ R1001-R2000
- ☐ R2001-R3000
- ☐ R3001-R4000
- ☐ R4001-R5000
- ☐ R5001-R6000
- ☐ R6001-R7000
- ☐ R7001-R8000
- ☐ R8001-R9000
- ☐ R9001-R10 000
- ☐ R10 001-R15 000
- ☐ R15 001-R20 000
- ☐ R20 001-R25 000
- ☐ R25 001-R30 000
- ☐ R30 001-R35 000
- ☐ R35 001-R40 000
- ☐ R40 001-R45 000
- ☐ R45 001-R50 000
- ☐ R50 001-R60 000
- ☐ R60 001-R70 000
- ☐ R70 001+

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Agree	Completely agree

*Please indicate your level of agreement by clicking the appropriate block.

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Agree	Completely agree
Each consumer can have a positive effect on society by purchasing products sold by socially responsible companies	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The current civilisation is destroying nature	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The well-being of others is important	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion prices are lower than other 'conventional' fashion	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I worry about the consequences of human activity on climate change and act consistently	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often see things on social media about ethical fashion	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion is generally good quality	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It would be difficult to find ethical fashion brands in South Africa	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion is generally unstylish	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

*On average, how many items of clothing do you buy per year?

- ☐ 0-4
- ☐ 5-8
- ☐ 9-12
- ☐ 13-16
- ☐ 17-20
- ☐ 20+

*Please indicate your level of agreement by clicking the appropriate block

	Completely disagree	Disagree somewhat	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Agree	Completely agree
It is important to help someone who needs it	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion lasts longer than conventional alternatives	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My parents have spoken to me about ethical fashion	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
There are plenty of ethical fashion brands in SA	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I will buy clothing that can be disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical fashion is well made	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If there is no difference in style between two garments, I would choose the one with the eco-tag	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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- Local brands that <u>produce in SA</u> tend to be ethical.
- Ethical fashion is made by people who earn a <u>fair wage</u>.
- Ethical fashion includes <u>secondhand</u> clothing.
- Ethical fashion tries to <u>minimise its negative environmental and social impact</u>.
- Ethical fashion garments should be <u>well made</u> so that they <u>last long</u> and do not need to be replaced frequently.

Considering this, approximately what percentage of your existing wardrobe is comprised of ethical fashion clothing?

- ○ 0%
- ○ 1-10%
- ○ 11-20%
- ○ 21-30%
- ○ 31-40%
- ○ 41-50%
- ○ 51-60%
- ○ 61-70%
- ○ 71-80%
- ○ 81-90%
- ○ 91-100%

Please enter your email address should you wish to enter the lucky draw. Please note this is entirely voluntary.

[   ]

Thank you for taking the survey.