



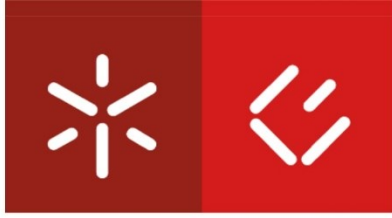
**Universidade do Minho**  
Escola de Economia e Gestão

Farah Khaled Fouad Helmy

**Understanding the Consumption Of Fashion  
as a Communication Medium:  
The Role of Civic Engagement**







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as a Communication Medium:  
The Role of Civic Engagement**

Ph.D. Thesis in Business Administration

Work made under the supervision of  
**Ana Maria dos Santos Costa Soares**

University of Minho

And

**Eiman Negm**

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## **STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY**

I hereby declare having conducted this academic work with integrity. I confirm that I have not used plagiarism or anyform of undue use of information or falsifications of results along the process leading to its elaboration.

I further declare that I have fully acknowledged the code of ethical conduct of the University of Minho.

## **Entendendo o consumo de moda como meio de comunicação: o papel do engajamento cívico**

### **RESUMO**

O objetivo desta pesquisa é investigar os fatores que levam os consumidores a usar a moda para fins de engajamento cívico e como meio de comunicação. Para atingir esse objetivo, foram definidos vários objetivos: (RO1) rever criticamente estudos anteriores para identificar o papel do engajamento da marca, autoconceito e influência dos media no engajamento cívico; (RO2) identificar as causas que os consumidores apoiam por meio do uso da moda; (RO3) compreender as variáveis que influenciam o consumo de moda como meio de comunicação; (RO4) entender o papel do engajamento cívico na promoção das escolhas de moda do consumidor (comunicação).

A revisão da literatura mostra que o engajamento da marca, o autoconceito e a influência dos media contribuem para o engajamento cívico e a comunicação por meio da moda, levando ao desenvolvimento de um modelo de pesquisa envolvendo a relação entre essas variáveis.

Este estudo utilizou uma abordagem mista sequencial. A investigação iniciou-se com pesquisa qualitativa (entrevistas semiestruturadas), seguida de pesquisa quantitativa (questionários administrados online). As entrevistas foram analisadas por meio da análise de conteúdo, com foco nas motivações sobre o engajamento cívico, como os cidadãos comunicam questões sociais por meio da moda. Os resultados dos dados qualitativos foram usados para desenvolver e refinar ainda mais o modelo de pesquisa. Foi desenvolvido uma pesquisa quantitativa para testar o modelo proposto. Os dados foram analisados usando Modelagem de Equações Estruturais (SEM) para testar as hipóteses.

Os resultados mostram que o autoconceito, os media tradicionais e não tradicionais impactam o engajamento cívico dos cidadãos. A personalidade da marca não tem um impacto significativo no engajamento cívico dos cidadãos. Além disso, causas cívicas políticas, sociais e ambientais impactam a moda como meio de comunicação.

Este estudo contribui para o conhecimento ao lançar luz sobre as motivações para usar a moda para comunicar o engajamento cívico. As roupas da moda podem exibir não apenas a essência da identidade de uma pessoa, mas também um significado expressivo para certas questões políticas e sociais.

**Palavras-chave:** Engajamento Cívico, Engajamento da Marca, Autoconceito, Influência dos Media, Moda como Meio de Comunicação

# **Understanding the Consumption Of Fashion As A Communication Medium: The Role of Civic Engagement**

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this research is to investigate the factors that lead consumers to use fashion for civic engagement purposes and as a communication medium. In order to achieve this aim, several objectives were set: (RO1) to critically review prior studies to identify the role of brand engagement, self-concept, and media influence on civic engagement; (RO2) to identify the causes consumers support through the use of fashion; (RO3) to understand the variables that influence the consumption of fashion as a communication medium; (RO4) to understand civic engagement's role in promoting consumer's fashion choices (communication).

The literature review shows that brand engagement, self-concept and media influence contribute to civic engagement and communication through fashion leading to the development of a research model entailing the relationship among these variables.

This study used a sequential mixed approach. The investigation began with qualitative research (semi-structured interviews), followed by quantitative research (online administrated questionnaires). The interviews were analyzed using content analysis, focusing on motivations about civic engagement, how citizens communicate social issues via fashion. The outcomes of the qualitative data were used to further develop and refine the research model. A survey was applied to test the proposed model. Data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the hypotheses.

Results show that self-concept, traditional and non-traditional media influence impact citizens' civic engagement. Brand personality does not have a significant impact in citizens' civic engagement. In addition, political, social and environmental civic causes impact fashion as a communication medium.

This study contributes to knowledge by shedding light on the motivations to use fashion to communicate civic engagement. Fashion garments can display not only one's identity essence, but also as an expressive meaning towards certain political and social matters.

**Keywords:** Civic Engagement, Brand Engagement, Self-Concept, Media Influence, Fashion as a Communication Medium.



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Helmy, F. K, Soares, A., Negm, E. (2022). "Fashion Civic Engagement: Understanding Consumption of Fashion as Self-Expression and Communication Medium". IAPNM 2022, XXI International Congress on Public and Nonprofit Marketing Conference, Braga, Portugal.



## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>CSR</b>	- Corporate Social Responsibility
<b>CRM</b>	- Customer Relationship Management
<b>SEM</b>	- Structural Equation Modeling
<b>AVE</b>	- Average Variance Extracted
<b>AMOS</b>	- Analysis of Moment Structures
<b>SPSS</b>	- Statistical Package for The Social Sciences
<b>AIC</b>	- Akaike Information Criterion
<b>CFI</b>	- Comparative Fit Index
<b>CFA</b>	- Confirmatory Factor Analysis
<b>TLI</b>	- Tucker-Lewis Index
<b>IFI</b>	- Incremental Fit Index
<b>CMIN</b>	- Chi-Square/Degrees of freedom
<b>C.A</b>	- Composite Reliability
<b>NFI</b>	- Normed Fit Index
<b>GFI</b>	- Goodness of Fit Index

# CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

## 1. Research Background

Clothing is a collective phenomenon - a product of civilization (Belfanti, 2009). Since ancient times, it has been an essential feature of everyday life. However, it is a dynamic industry, changing continuously (Nash, 2019; Gazzola et al., 2020). There is an increase in fashion seasons, a sudden change in the supply chain over quality, design, and speed to market more efficiently (Doyle et al., 2006; Han et al., 2017). As a result, it became a 1.3 trillion dollar industry (Gazzola et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2020). The quick fast-fashion approach enabled the industry to update its product ranges constantly (Gazzola et al., 2020; Da Giau et al., 2020). The fast fashion is characterized by shorter life cycle and sales figures increased profit margins, due to rapidly selling merchandise (Gahletia 2021; Gazzola et al., 2020). Furthermore, designers learned to include more stages of trends in one season to urge customers to shop more regularly (Sydney, 2008; Da Giau et al., 2020). Clothing has transformed into a multi-purpose item, with humans using it for various self-expression and communication reasons (Davis, 2020).

Fashion gets the attention of many consumers through various communication media (Nouri, 2018; Kodžoman, 2019; Da Giau et al., 2020). Advertisements filled with models, television shows airing celebrities on the red carpet, photographs in magazines, social media platforms, etc., are drivers of the fashion industry, exposing consumers to the latest trends and influencing them to be more fashion-conscious (Gündüz, 2017; Odiase, 2021). Consumers get attached to fashion trends ideas by looking up to these fashion broadcasting, runways, and shows. Hence, being exposed to fashion trends lead many consumers to buy and demand similar tastes (Bailey, 2001; Gündüz, 2017). This phenomenon has become common worldwide (Tariq, 2021).

People consume clothes as they play many roles, attracting people's attention and communicating their identity and social status (Bohn, 2004; Salem and Salem, 2018). Clothing has the ability to express their level of "civilized or modern" background (Anand and Kaur, 2017). Furthermore, clothes serve the perception of signifying identity and membership of groups an individual belongs to in a society (Anand and Kaur, 2017). Thus, fashion helps to communicate specific characteristics of the individuals, which they want their social network to realize about them (Venkatasamy, 2015; Faschan et al., 2020). Consumers choose brands that have the power to illustrate a specific personality (Kalantari and Khalili, 2017; Faschan et al., 2020).

Fashion's role is a continuous communication approach (Back, 2017). According to Bohn (2004), clothing may express various themes and contextual subjects, such as political viewpoints, health-related

causes, and sports' identities. As a result, Akdemir (2018) implied that wearing garments could be visual indicators, communicating different meanings, depending on the situation and the form of clothing style used. Therefore, according to Welters and Lillethun (2018), fashion is a medium or figure of speech or literacy. Fashion is seen as a language that signals certain meanings about the person wearing the clothes (Venkatasamy, 2015; Akdemir, 2018).

Currently, clothing is seen as an integral part in conveying a person's political viewpoint in the twenty-first century (Molyneux, 2017; Abdou and Skalli, 2018; Genova, 2020). Therefore, fashion can be a form of political communication (Miller, 2005; Linfante, 2021). It has the power to show the level of consumer engagement in politics (Linfante, 2021). Fashion has the power to represent the social and political persona of the consumer wearing the garments with specific fashion statements, political language and political concord (Bohn, 2004; Knox, 2010; Genova, 2020). For example, dress regulations can communicate gender roles, political parties, religious and ethnic groups (Wolin, 2001; Akdemir, 2018; Cham et al., 2018). Clothing has various denotations including: freedom of expression, equality, respect, and citizen action (Kumar et al., 2009; Salem and Salem, 2018; Fouad et al., 2020). Thus, fashion is a stimuli and a means to citizens' proactive roles in the community, which is relevant to a democratic society (Miller, 2005; Fouad et al., 2020).

### **1.1. Research Problem**

Fashion can be an object of activism and stands for many roles and meanings far beyond aesthetics (Miller, 2005; Genova, 2020). With the high usage of media, especially with the rise of social media, consumers are asking brands for support and accountability regarding various societal issues. Accordingly, as brands and fashion industries engage in modern political, social and environmental movements, consumers find new ways to send messages through their clothes (Miller, 2005; Linfante, 2021). Today, fashion is integrated regarding civic engagement acts (Mazzarella et al., 2019; Fouad et al., 2020). It helps people to show what they stand for. Fashion can aid in honoring and illustrating their values and beliefs and other symbolism of people's way of life (Chan et al., 2012; Shephard et al., 2016; Cham et al., 2018).

Several factors can play a role in allowing consumers to use fashion as a means of civic change, beyond the act of purchasing fashionable symbolic objects (Wok et al., 2008; Shephard et al., 2016; Fischer et al., 2017; Cham et al., 2018). According to Motta (2018), different motives for fashion act as a statement of communication. For example, some research highlighted that self-concept seems to play a unique role in fashion buying decisions (Kumar et al., 2009; Hirscher and Niinimaki, 2013; Angerosa,

2014; Motta, 2018). According to Goldsmith and Goldsmith (2012) and Ananda et al., (2019), brand engagement elaborates further underlying motives for fashion purchase decisions. Other research suggested that media influence puts into perspective and affects fashion consumers when mimicking fashion trends that are illustrated in traditional media forms (like TV and magazine or movies) and non-traditional media forms (like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube) (Naik and Raman, 2003; Belleau et al., 2007; Mohr, 2013; De-Lenne and Vandenbosch, 2017; Asif, 2020).

Therefore, the research aims to answer the following research questions; (RQ1) How do brand engagement, self-concept, and media influence lead to civic engagement? (RQ2) Which civic causes do consumers support through the use of fashion? (RQ3) Does civic engagement lead to using fashion as a communication medium?

## **1.2. Research Contribution**

This thesis aims at contributing to existing knowledge of fashion and civic engagement studies. Prior studies have indicated the need to research further the relationship between style and civic engagement (Mazzarella et al., 2019). Therefore, the thesis is essential as it develops insights contributing to consumer's motives to participate in civic engagement and use fashion as a communication medium.

### **1.2.1. Theoretical Contribution**

Prior research found that consumers' fashion styles are linked to political issues (Miller, 2005; Linfante, 2021). However, few scholars tackled communication-related clothing focusing primarily on politics and political statements (Miller, 2005; Warikoo and Thurtell, 2003; Genova, 2020; Linfante, 2021). In addition, the reason underlying the difference is understudied in the literature (Vargas, 2009; Rosholm, 2009; Lin, 2016). Studies in the literature have elaborated on many forms of civic engagement (Finley, 2011; Negm et al., 2012; Molyneux, 2017; Abdou and Skalli, 2018). Yet, there is a dearth of studies about the role of civic engagement through fashion (Venkatasamy, 2015; Mazzarella et al., 2019). The thesis seeks to fill this academic gap, adding to the literature about fashion communication and its association with civic engagement.

Research has shown that fashion is significant in human civilization. Fashion is both for aesthetic and for many functional roles. Yet, more studies are needed to indicate what roles other than its part in dressing people does it play. So, research should think critically about blending civic engagement with fashion on society. Thus, there is an urge to study the role of fashion in civic engagement types (Venkatasamy, 2015; Mazzarella et al., 2019).

The study reflects that consumer use fashion to communicate on several concerns. According to Ahmad et al. (2015), new trends in the fashion industry emphasize the need for more academic insights towards civic duties. Few studies in the research field have tackled the concept of blending civic engagement with fashion (Vargas, 2009; Rosholm, 2009; Lin, 2016). According to Finley, (2011), Negm et al., (2012), Molyneux, (2017), Abdou and Skalli, (2018), the civic engagement variable and its many forms has been investigated many times. Yet, there is a dearth of studies about the role of civic engagement and communicating it through fashion (Venkatasamy, 2015; Mazzarella et al., 2019).

This study contributes to knowledge by adding building upon two theories in order to explain the link between consumers, fashion choices, civic engagement and communication. The first theory that the research seeks to add on in the context of civic engagement is the self-concept theory. This theory entails how fashion consumers reflect their personalities and link them to fashion garments when wearing a public element (McNeill, 2018). The second theory, social learning theory, extends knowledge about consumer's fashion consumption. Social learning theory explains how consumers can mimic each other by watching the role of media influence. As a result, they had an effect on fashion buying (Wok et al., 2008; Shephard et al., 2016; Nash, 2019).

Moreover, the current study focused on the Egyptian context. Ever since the 2011 Arab Spring, Egyptians have been searching for new ways to express their views and communicate their concerns on various governmental, administrative, legislative, and constitutional issues (Abdou and Skalli, 2018). In addition, Egyptians know how to be highly participative in social and community causes. For example, today's prominent organizations in Egypt like Resala and the youth association for population and development are considered non-political civil society acts (Abdou and Skalli, 2018). Nevertheless, few studies have focused on the ways that Egyptians seek civic engagement (Negm et al., 2012; Molyneux, 2017). This study can contribute to how consumers in other emerging countries express their views through fashion.

### **1.2.2. Practical Contribution**

This study has important practical implications for both the government, political, and fashion stakeholders. In what refers to governments and political stakeholders, our results show that they need to be aware of citizens' new tendencies to participate in politics and civic activities. According to Kumar et al., (2009), Angerosa (2014) and Venkatasamy (2015), fashion became an activist guide to consumers, enabling consumers to wear societal expressions that communicate particular standpoints. Also, Ahmad et al. (2015) states that fashion stakeholders need to blend fashion brands with positive civic acts for the

industry's survival.

In addition, designers and marketers can better understand consumer behavior and purchasing intentions towards fashion trends and the main reason fashion is a part of civic engagement (Mazzarella et al., 2019; Amed and Berg, 2019).

This study may have substantial implications considering the current economic climate dealing with COVID-19 situation globally and the political issues regarding the emergence of a third world war (Rubin, 2022). Fashion brands are at risk in this post-recessionary period, dealing with international lockdown, and markets falling (Silvestri, 2020; Sritanakorn and Nuangjamnong, 2021). Accordingly, many consumers are turning to fast fashion brands with civic heart (political, social, or environmental) attribution in order to feel that they are giving a voice to their standpoints. Fashion brands that include societal and emotional issues in its garments can help communicate one's self-concept and their civic engagement ideologies, especially, in the Egyptian society. Furthermore, the research contributes to the fashion industry's available insights as elaborative and creative results that can aid in the upcoming fashion market trends (Mazzarella et al., 2019; Amed and Berg, 2019).

This study is significant for the fashion industry to understand better fashion consumers (Ahmad et al., 2015). The fashion industry needs to update what consumers want and care about before producing and launching new fashion trends in the market. Thus, understanding the consumers' roles, values, attitudes, and behaviors, fashion industries can create garments that are influential on consumers' fashion consumption and decision-making (Ahmad et al., 2015). The fashion industry should know that consumers are becoming active in society, supporting and participating in many civic actions. And today, fashion consumers vividly wear their opinion and ideologies such as "political meaning" in their fashion garments (Vargas, 2009; Genova, 2020). The fashion industry needs to identify the different civic issues that matter to consumers and produce accordingly. Other types of civic problems (political, social, or environmental) trigger fashion consumers to purchase items to wear and portray their self-concept and brand personality (Shephard et al., 2016; Genova, 2020; Maftei and Holman, 2021). This thesis adds additional knowledge that may assist fashion brands, designers, and retailers at this risky period in adapting their offer to the social issues that reflect citizen social interests and concerns.

### **1.3. Methodology**

Research methodology encompasses the specific procedures, techniques, and designs used to identify, select, process, and analyze the research topic. This study followed a sequential mixed research approach to investigate the factors influencing consumers to purchase fashion as civic engagement, which

acts as a form of communication. In addition, a pragmatic view, combining two paradigms, positivism and interpretivism was adopted. The study was cross-sectional. The research collected data during the spring of 2019.

The research began with a qualitative approach (empirical study I) to explore why or how a phenomenon occurs, develop the theory, and describe individuals' experiences. This qualitative research was exploratory, seeking to find out respondents' opinions, thoughts, and feelings regarding the studied topic. The qualitative research contributed to understand the triggers and inspirations for why consumers purchase specific fashion items. This stage helps to understand the variables that influence fashion consumption as a communication medium; recognize the civic causes consumers support through fashion; and understand civic engagement impact in using fashion as communication medium. Hence, the qualitative approach held a total of 16 interviews. the qualitative data was collected and analyzed. The results did contribute to the development of the proposed research model.

The quantitative research approach (empirical study II) was carried out to test the proposed research model. A questionnaire is developed to measure the variables: brand personality, self-concept, media influence (traditional and non-traditional media), civic engagement (political, social or environmental), and fashion as a communication medium. The variables were assessed using five-point semantic and likert scales from prior studies (Tice et al., 1995; Grewal et al. 2004; Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2012; McNeill, 2018). A total of 455 respondents, youth and young adults, did complete the survey during the fall of 2020. Survey data was analyzed using SPSS and AMOS - SEM for descriptive and inferential statistics.

#### **1.4. Organization of Thesis**

This thesis consists of six chapters, and the content of each chapter as follows:

##### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter focuses on providing research background on the topic of fashion and its role in civic engagement. This chapter helps provide insights regarding the research problem, objectives, questions, contribution (both theoretical and practical contribution), and the planned research methodology. The following sections seek to highlight the value of the study. This chapter finally ends with how the research is outlined and how the thesis will be further organized.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter discusses the essential issues which inspire the research study: "Understanding Consumption of Fashion as a Communication Medium: The Role of Civic Engagement." The purpose of the literature is to develop a theoretical base on the understanding of what prior studies have found out regarding consumer behaviors towards fashion, citizens' behavior towards civic engagement, and people's motives for fashion consumption. When reviewing the literature, various concepts, theories, models, and philosophies were highlighted to illustrate that civic engagement is booming among consumers and citizens in democratic societies. Hence, this chapter provides the critical evaluation of the theoretical framework that leads to the hypotheses and the model to be further tested in the study.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter explains the research methodology. Research methodology chapter aims to imply how the study systematically designed the data collected. Once the data was gathered, the study tested the validity and reliability results that addressed the research aims and objectives. This chapter highlights different research method techniques in testing models. After reviewing the different techniques, this study, selected the most suitable technique that is to be used to investigate the current research problem - how to investigate information, obtain the numbers, and analyze the data. This research was a mixed research study, used qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The study includes a detailed description of the research decisions and procedures to help justify the reasons for doing so.

## **Chapter 4: Qualitative Research Data Analysis**

This chapter presents findings and results of the qualitative research. This research used an interview guide to collect the necessary data. Thus, in this chapter, the sections are split according to the questions found in the interview guide and the summary of the discussions that took place among the interviewees. The discussions lead to the conclusions of the main themes that emerged. These themes aid the research to develop further research hypotheses and model to be tested quantitatively. Finally, the results were linked to the previously drawn conclusions found in the literature review.

## **Chapter 5: Quantitative Research Data Analysis**

This chapter presents findings and results of the quantitative research. This research used a questionnaire that was distributed online to collect the necessary data. The collected data was then analyzed using the SPSS and the Amos statistical programs. In this chapter, the research presents the



findings of the assessment of normality, frequency, reliability, validity analysis and the goodness of fit indices. In this study, the research tests the hypotheses using full SEM. Finally, the results are discussed in light of the literature.

### **Chapter 6: Research Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter consists of a summary found among both the qualitative and quantitative research analysis. In this chapter, the research seeks to give meaningful explanations of the findings reached. This chapter, presents the results in light of existing research findings. Moreover, this study illustrates the research implications, recommendations, contribution, limitations, and suggested future research.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2. Literature Review**

This literature review summarizes scholarly sources on the factors and theories that lead to fashion activism, civic engagement, and fashion as a medium of communication in society. The literature review explains how consumers manifest an active voice while stating concerns and opinions through fashion items as a new form of civic engagement between consumers and the market. This chapter provides an overview of current knowledge, allowing this study to identify relevant concepts, theories, and methods to guide the empirical study.

#### **2.1. Fashion Buying Behavior**

Consumers use fashion items and clothing to mirror themselves to the world (Chavan, 2018; Faschan et al., 2020). Accordingly, depending on consumers' personalities, life priorities, and cultural backgrounds, their fashion taste varies (Rocha et al., 2005; Arvanitidou and Gasouka, 2013; Ritch, 2020). The fashion industry offers products that are tailored to the needs and wants of target customers. These products are introduced in the market as quickly as possible for consumer's consumption (Aspers and Godart, 2013; Saran et al., 2016; Motta, 2018). Research shows that consumers purchase fashionable attires that portray a meaningful dialogue between their personal goals, life history, and what interests them (Zanette and Brito, 2018). Thus, individuals buy fashion and brands that decode personal and commercial meaning. Purchases are made based on how others could regard these messages (Rahman et al., 2014; Cham et al., 2018).

The fashion industry and designers should first understand the target consumers before creating the desire for the trend (Chan et al., 2012; Ananda et al., 2019; Sritanakorn and Nuangjamnong, 2021). First, it is not about just having the necessity of the product, but it is about urging individuals to have the desire itself. Hence, fashion is a mean of continuously creating a personal desired image (Zanette and Brito, 2018). According to Chan et al. (2012) and Asif (2020), fashion consumers have three needs: physical, emotional, and psychological conditions that marketers play on. Physical needs refer to an individuals' visual appearance, linked to mirroring fashion beauty ideals; emotional consumption plays on buyers' feelings, pressured by social groups; and psychological needs concern the consumers' need to draw social bonds (Thompson and Haytko, 1997; Asif, 2020).

According to Murray (2002), Ma et al. (2012) and Motta (2018), fashion is an intertextual language,

a code that unfolds into different meanings. Consumers then select the appropriate fashion garments that reflect their cultural values and opinions, which they want to represent in society. However, the fashion industry plays with the momentum of fashion trends. These fashion trends pressure consumers to wear certain meaningful clothes and often consume more than usual (Chan et al., 2012; Da Giau et al., 2020). According to De-Lenne and Vandenbosch, (2017) and Ananda et al. (2019), fashion is a concept that mirrors style and material possessions. In a society, citizens use fashion to flaunt one's status and wealth. In addition, fashion communicates respect to others and allegiance to a group. Therefore, it instantly identifies the person wearing these material possessions because it intends to be there for a short period. Furthermore, ideologies are suppressed in fashion items, meaning the basic process for an individual to dress up to specific trends is associated with a society's cultural and social lifestyle norms (Thompson and Haytko, 1997; Asif, 2020). According to consumer research, consumers' taste in products and services varies over time (Solomon, 2018). To meet this changing preferences, the fashion industry has been introducing different trends, including the concept of fast fashion (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010; Shaikh, 2021; Wijaya and Paramita, 2021). Changes are often made in the fashion cycle to meet consumers' demands quicker (Gabrielli et al., 2013). More recently however, the sustainability of that strategy has been questioned.

## **2.2. Fashion Trends**

Fast fashion refers to the fast-paced launch of fashionable trends, the introduction of several seasons in one year. Studies by Chavan (2018) and Wijaya and Paramita (2021) indicated that fast fashion is a business technique that require the renewal of production to keep customers alert and interested. This development of fast-produced garments has contributed to a closer relationship between supplier and buyer (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010; Shaikh, 2020). Hence, consumption increased, making consumers constantly aware of the new fashion trends, wanting to buy more (Michaela et al., 2015; Gazzola et al., 2020).

Fast fashion companies, like Zara, H&M, Top fashion, and GAP, produce their fashion lines on two strategy approaches: firstly, ensuring a short time gap between production and distribution; secondly, making trendy products universally grounded but affordable (De-Lenne and Vandenbosch, 2017; Gazzola et al., 2020). Hence, the fast-fashion model does not demand fashion consumers to stick with the old fashion habits. On the contrary, the model urges consumers to be more flexible in expressing their lifestyle through the adoption of new fashion trends. This fast-paced strategy represents a higher profitability range for stores and a shorter life cycle for fashion trends (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010; Shaikh, 2020).

Fast fashion came about due to consumers becoming more fashion-conscious. Consumers now are aware of different fashion tastes and trends. Their awareness is due to various socio-cultural factors and the media. Fashion information and trends can come from celebrities or the media channels. These influencers drive fast fashion globally (Chavan, 2018; Melody, 2018). Rapid fashion cycles enable consumers to be more aware and savvy in choosing the clothing preference they desire. Fast fashion is linked to socio-cultural changes as consumers shift their lifestyle habits, their taste changes (Gabrielli et al., 2013; Tariq, 2021).

Fast fashion cycles are more critical to generation Y than to baby boomers in representing the concept of throw-away, low quality, and to have much more trendy clothes concepts (Barnes and Lea-Greenwood, 2006; Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010). The young generation is all about style, smartness, and flair; this requires their fashion purchases to be frequent as to reduce duplication of an outfit to their networks (Faschan et al., 2020). On the contrary, the older generation are more thoughtful in their purchases. Nowadays, the mature consumers are beginning to view fast fashion as a harmful strategy to the environment.

Furthermore, there is a growing awareness that fast fashion trends encourage the purchase of unnecessary items and the quick disposal of them. Nowadays, consumers are becoming more aware of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Chavan, 2018). According to Mazzarella et al. (2019), the fashion industry encounters unsustainability, social inequality, environmental stewardship in today's market. Thus, some segments of consumers are refusing to participate in fast fashion and demand companies to become sustainable and environment-friendly or support society's development and less fortunate citizens. Hence, those consumers turn away from fashion fads and seek sustainable fashion (Da Giau et al., 2020).

Sustainable fashion business strategies aim to help consumers and the environment by promoting a slow-motion approach for the fashion industry chain. According to Hirscher (2013), critics of the fashion industry express some concerns regarding the ethical production of fashion. Thus, critics feel that the industry is abusing the psychological and belonging need for individuals to fit in society by purchasing certain fashionable items in today's trends, making sustainable fashion a demand among consumers that are activists (Hirscher and Niinimäki, 2013; Chavan, 2018).

Fast fashion encourages consumers to shop more items, leading to the destruction of the environment (Hirscher and Niinimäki, 2013). Therefore, when consumers become more cautious in their purchases, they refuse this practice. Instead, they seek to demand sustainable fashion, a process "That requires a changed infrastructure and a reduced thought put of goods, to call for slow fashion in the

fashion industry" (Fletcher and Grose, 2012, p.128). Sustainable fashion is an approach that calls for actions that can save and discover new ideas to support new sustainable systems and business strategies (Fuad-Luke, 2009; Da Giau et al., 2020).

Furthermore, integrating sustainable fashion ideas can change the designers' role and the consumers' perspective in their buying habits to improve the current practices of the fashion industry. According to Hirscher and Niinimäki (2013), appropriate actions are needed for the design and fashion activism. Moreover, sustainable fashion also contributes to promote fashion activism (Mazzarella et al., 2019). As a result, fashion and design activism is gaining popularity in today's fashion industry. Fashion activism is a new way to understand better social, cultural practices, and related material objects (Fletcher and Grose, 2012; Mazzarella et al., 2019). According to Fuad-luke (2009, p.52) "Design activism is basically thinking, imagining and applying knowingly and unknowingly counter-narrative strategies aimed at generating a positive social, environmental and economic change". Fashion helps consumers communicate their identity and priorities in life. Fashion promotes consumers' feelings in society and self-concept (Angerosa, 2014; Cham et al., 2018; Zanette and Brito, 2018).

### **2.3. Fashion as a Communication Medium**

According to Barnard (2011) expression is a metaphor for conveying or transmitting a meaning to people. Thus, fashion items can be an expression to transfer meaning: clothing portrays vital information about the self, from a social and individual perspective, expressing a particular language between consumers (Motta, 2018; Linfante, 2021). Thus, clothes have a non-verbal and external sign value (Murray, 2002; Akdemir, 2018). Consumers can self-express their personality within a confident symbolic statement via clothing (Murray, 2002, Lewis and Moital, 2016). According to McCracken (1988), the Meaning Transfer Theory suggests that consumers decide whether to adopt specific fashion trends or not depending on the specific symbolic value of certain fashion discourses. Thompson and Haytko (1997) and Asif (2020) explain how clothes and fashion items form sign experimentations where consumers portray their inner feelings. These inner feelings demonstrate cultural values and social movement ideologies (Zanette and Brito, 2018).

Clothing carries external non-verbal meanings, enabling consumers to forge identities in portraying a specific image to society (Murray, 2002; Arvanitidou and Gasouka, 2013; Smith and Collins, 2009; Angerosa, 2014). Some studies have shown that fashion is a medium of societal communication, as the figure of speech or literacy (Angerosa, 2014 and McNeill, 2018). Fashion is regarded as a language that communicates messages about the individuals wearing it, whether they belong to a particular societal

level, a group, or are judged based on the clothing lifestyle chosen (Inglessis, 2008). According to Bohn (2004), fashion items are a central element in a consumer's culture. Fashion is a vital self-expression medium that portrays creativity about oneself and the body (Zanette and Brito, 2018). Therefore, clothing constitutes a crucial medium to communicate about society's surroundings. Garments have the potential of reaching audiences quicker than any other media. Hence, clothes consist of non-verbal characteristics visible without verbally communicating the intention to others (Angerosa, 2014; Akdemir, 2018).

Consumption of fashion items can reflect people's social and economic status in specific countries. People can dress chic, street fashion, dress up or down to express some meanings (Rosenfeld and Plax, 1977; Barnard, 2011; Kodzoman, 2019). Fashion garments and items perform the idea of sending out specific statements about the person wearing them (Barnard, 2011). The meaning behind fashion communication as an expression notes a significant explanation of one's dressing style. Fashion styles reflect an individual's internal character or intention (Zanette and Brito, 2018).

Fashion can communicate and foster democratic practices (Miller, 2005; Linfante, 2021). As such, fashion can be a form of civic engagement (Zanette and Brito, 2018; Fouad et al., 2020). This fashion communication is currently a popular trend (McNeill, 2018). According to Miller (2005), fashion can be a form of: "Protest, either explicitly, by wearing a political button, or implicitly, by expressing dissent from dominant styles that themselves symbolize mainstream ideas. Fashion can unite members of alternative political movements" (p.1).

#### **2.4. Civic Engagement**

Consumers today are becoming civically participative. It is part of self-expression and a particular lifestyle. According to Zhong (2014), Ahmad et al. (2015), and Garcia and Mirra, (2021), citizens intervene in public life under the civic engagement concept, including voting, boycotts, and online expressions. Hence, civic engagement can be expressed through many forms, from individualism voluntarism, to organizational involvement, to electoral participation (Finley, 2011; Garcia and Mirra, 2021). Young adults also seem to enjoy partaking in helping others in society, pro-environmental behavior and charitable giving associations (Fernandes et al., 2021). These activities help promote quality of life through political and non-political processes (Negm et al., 2012; Abdou and Skalli, 2018). Civic engagement also includes charitable giving, associational membership, political participation, artistic expression, or community service events (Berger, 2009; Fernandes et al., 2021). According to Abdou and Skalli (2018), civic engagement refers to individual and collective action in society to offer better chances for the community's common good.

Citizenship represents an individual's beliefs, actions, and knowledge of a person linked to his community and affiliations (Negm et al., 2012). A society's level of civic engagement is measured by how citizens mentally participate in the community; it also indicates the status of an individual's political interest, media consumption, and political knowledge. Engaging in civic duties can result from many factors such as; age, socio-economic status, education, civic training, and sense of community. Further, in the 21st century, the concept grew, more activities under civic engagement emerged (Molyneux, 2017; Baskin-Sommers et al., 2021).

According to Molyneux (2017), civic duty is a broad term that designs, tackles, and identifies issues that help solve what is concerned by the public. Individuals in societies show more civic duty concerns due to the increased informational media consumption (Molyneux, 2017; Baskin-Sommers et al., 2021). Hence, the better informed an individual is, the more capable and willing he is to act. Transferring news information from the media platform to the individual's cognition equips the idea of participating in political and non-political activities (Neuman et al., 2011). Civic engagement activities help keep politics and opinion front and center, encouraging political, social, and economic (Abdou and Skalli, 2018; Fernandes et al., 2021). Thus, civic engagement leads and mobilizes more significant segments of citizenship within society towards these vital matters. Three main dimensions of civic engagement: political, social and environmental, have been identified in the literature.

#### **2.4.1. Political Civic Engagement**

According to Kitanova (2020), there is an exciting notion that younger demographics are actively participative and disperse their opinion in political and legal matters in society, unlike the older demographics of the more aging generation. This increase in younger demographic's participative notion explains how citizenship is back nowadays in being actively integrated into many political forms: participating in activities, signing petitions, contacting politicians, and protesting (Bourne, 2010; Baskin-Sommers et al., 2021).

New forms of political participation have emerged, insisting younger generations taking a stance on these new political activities. Studies have shown that whenever the involvement in politics is not traditional, more participation from the youth is shown (Norris, 2003; Slone, 2012; Garcia and Mirra, 2021; Fernandes et al., 2021). Specifically, studies highlighted that youth demonstrated the notion of not disengaging from political and civic duties, showing, on the contrary, high efforts to establish political and non-political engagement in their society (Abdou and Skalli, 2018). Political consumption is a lifestyle that addresses exploitation issues in a consumer society (Cherrier, 2008; Baskin-Sommers et al., 2021).

Furthermore, according to Ahmad et al. (2015), fashion companies do their best to promote and blend their products with a favorable political and civic image.

#### **2.4.2. Social Civic Engagement**

Civic culture constitutes the notion of democratic citizenship (Pavone, 2014; Reichert and Print, 2018). Social civic engagement reflects that citizens are becoming more humanitarian (Khakee, 2020). Various entities in the market are now highly concerned with the less fortunate individuals in the community. For example, poverty, unemployment, unequal opportunity, racism, and malnutrition are examples of social problems communities are trying to fix and promote its importance to act upon (Abdou and Skalli, 2018; Khakee, 2020). According to Negm et al. (2012), people today are taking a stance on supporting basic human needs, such as substandard housing, employment discrimination, and child abuse and neglect. Crime and substance abuse are also social problems that a community address (Abdou and Skalli, 2018).

Civic participation and open communication among citizens about these matters allow for further contact and interaction among citizens. Furthermore, these actions create awareness among participants in sharing joint problems that enable opportunities for involvement and participation in activities that improve society and citizen's wellbeing. Hence, interpersonal communication plays an essential role in encouraging social and civic participation (Bourne, 2010; Garcia and Mirra, 2021).

#### **2.4.3. Environmental Civic Engagement**

Consumers are gradually leaning to become civically engaged towards more environment-friendly behaviors. People are increasingly aware that environmental resources are scarce (water, land, and food); environmental sustainability is essential for future generations (Abdou and Skalli, 2018). Through citizens' socialization, the development of acceptable ecological values in a community emerges (Settle et al., 2011; Lemberg-Pedersen and Haioty, 2020). Citizens are seeking to participate in sustainable activities, taking responsibility for global sustainable development (Micheletti and Stolle, 2012; Kotler, 2020).

Citizens know the importance of having responsibilities towards the environment and society. Due to the rising concern on environmental degradation and global warming, citizens are being aware and seek to share their opinions in a globalized fashion (Achabou et al., 2020). The notion of sustainable citizenship has been identified (Micheletti and Stolle, 2012; Wijaya and Paramita, 2021) to refer to activities promoting the concepts of citizenship sustainability, aiding in the development of the community. Individuals showing critical self-awareness have reflected on their intentions to contribute more effectively



to civic duties. Hence, sustainable citizenship and more social change activities are taking the lead nowadays (Abdou and Skalli, 2018; Achabou et al., 2020).

This sustainable awareness drives brands to consider this notion to satisfy the increased consumers' concern with nature. Brands and consumers that do less harm to the environment are the new mindset guiding practice (Wijaya and Paramita, 2021). These sustainable actions are the new pathways for a safer environment. For example, sustainable fashion is currently a megatrend as part of environmental civic engagement. This phenomena has been raising fashion consumers' awareness against fast fashion brands and towards slow fashion consumption- sustainable fashion (Henninger et al., 2016; Da Giau et al., 2020). This movement emerged as a response to the rapid production cycles of the fashion industry; this appreciates ethical conduct, reduced consumption of fashion products, and purchasing quality over quantity (Fletcher, 2010; Gahletia, 2021). Furthermore, this notion fosters a closer relationship between fashion brands and consumers to appreciate environment-friendly ideas, known as fashion activism (Hirscher, 2013; Henninger et al., 2016; Chung and Yim, 2020). This sustainable citizenship and the new politics of consumption notion are qualities of consumers today (Micheletti and Stolle, 2012; Schlosberg, 2019). This illustrates the change from post materialism to sustainable materialism.

## **2.5. Civic Engagement and Fashion**

Fashion has always been a vehicle for civic engagement acts, including encouraging antiracism or promoting feminism. Nowadays, in this age of media domination, its potential to influence civic rights is more powerful than ever (Hirscher, 2013; Henninger et al., 2016). Social and political tensions globally have re-asserted the role of fashion as a vehicle for civic engagement. Scandals and conflicts in Hollywood, religious institutions, and governments have shaken beliefs and provoked a visible reaction. Thus, the concept of fashion activism in the fashion industry is increasingly important (Hirscher, 2013; Mazzarella et al., 2019).

### **2.5.1. Fashion Activism**

Fashion activism refers to thinking, imagining, practicing, and designing counter-narrative tools to generate balanced positive social, institutional, economic and environmental change (Fuad-Luke, 2009). Hirscher (2013) defined fashion activism as a practice in which consumers are encouraged to work with designers to customize fashion products to build a strong relationship between the brand and the customer. The idea is to mobilize customers' opinions and preferences to fulfill their personal needs via

clothes and fashionable items (Mazzarella et al., 2019). In addition, stylish items have the power to communicate and support political, social, and environmental issues in society. This activism process triggers a particular awareness, activation, and communication with fashion consumers to reach individuals for a positive change in their lifestyle and community (Fuad Luke, 2009). Fashion activism is based on the idea that fashion items can communicate sustainable, social, and politically aware viewpoints in linking fashion activism with political and participatory values (Hirscher, 2013; Han et al., 2017).

The idea of fashion activism is that brands give citizens a chance to help others in need through fashion consumption (Kipp and Hawkins, 2018). Some popular brands that promote fashion activism are: The brand TOMS encourage consumers to purchase a product so that the business entity can buy the same product for needy children in developing countries (Bachnik et al., 2013; Roncha and Radclyffe, 2015; Kipp and Hawkins, 2018). Lacoste made a new campaign called "Save our species." The brand encourages consumer to save threatened species among the general public. This campaign transfers funding from consumer purchases to help various endangered species to survive (Cervellon, 2013; Guibert, 2019). Tiffany managed to encourage consumers to buy certain jewelry to support elephant species from being endangered and invested in carbon offsets and other activities that help change and look after the business in a clean environment (Tiffany and CO, 2017; Potsavee, 2021).

#### **2.5.1.1. Fashion Activism Approaches**

According to Hirscher (2013) and Chung and Yim (2020), fashion activism integrates several strategies created by young designers to enhance the selling argument and reflect on today's issues. Techniques like fashion hacking, co-design, and craftsmanship can help achieve fashion activism's objectives in integrating designer's creation and consumer's preferences.

Fashion hacktivism refers to the idea of blending political ideologies with new style ideas to be potentially worn within the community. Co-design effectively challenges the fashion industry's current structure in giving consumers the freedom to design, empower, and be less dominant from the industry's designers towards creating limited subjective trends, reducing unfair labor in sweatshops. Craftsmanship is the strategy that uses handcrafting to achieve a political activism stance. Designers craft techniques to involve consumers with materials and do it yourself acts. Yarn bombing and guerrilla knitting are examples of craftsmanship; yarn bombing uses the urban environment to draw attention to certain places or social statements . These designs on fashionable items are examples of craftsmanship tools to achieve social statements of specific issues (Fuad Luke, 2009; Murzyn-Kupisz and Hołuj, 2021).

### **2.5.1.2. Global Examples of Fashion Activism**

The process of fashion activism contributes to consumers' desire to cause a positive change to their society, "political, social, or environmental" (Hirscher, 2013; Mazzarella et al., 2019; Chung and Yim, 2020). Thus, the current study addresses the potential notion that consumers want to purchase clothing items to make a stand or support a specific cause. Clothing can act as a medium, a symbol, which withholds civic engagement meaning. Fashion in today's sphere appears to show various examples of how garments can communicate multiple messages. The following are some examples of clothing and their significance and supported issues.

- The knitted mittens: a knitting pattern that went viral to be consumed in clothes garments to reflect a particular ideology of how many soldiers have died in the Iraq war (Von-Busch, 2008; Hirscher, 2013).
- The pink pussy hat: an icecap worn by citizens to illustrate the rage against anti-feminism talks and comments made by several leaders, including former president Donald Trump (Delgado, 2018).
- The Black Panther Party Suit: It is a soldier jumpsuit worn by political activists during 1970 (Miller, 2005; Vargas, 2009; Garcia and Mirra, 2021). During the 2016 Superball game, celebrity icon Beyoncé wore this garment to recapitulate and tell viewers that racism still existed and needed to be stopped. Since her appearance on the stage with this suit, individuals began to wear this fashion statement to protest against police brutality, black racism and shootings. This appearance mimics the black panther party using fashion statements through communicating political affiliation (Vargas, 2009; Garcia and Mirra, 2021; Baskin-Sommers et al., 2021).
- The Black Stance: During the January 2011 revolution in Egypt, protestors, before it broke out as a massive revolution, wore black to communicate mourning after the death of a young adult. The group members also stood with their backs to the street :“ We are all Khaled Said” (Abdulla et al., 2018).
- The Piggy T-shirts: The use of shirts, caps, and other clothing with pictures of pigs, resembling President Donald Trump's public behaviors. The citizens who wore these items wanted to communicate that the president is ill-mannered (Delgado, 2018; Moore, 2018).

When consumers get dressed, they choose which identity to present to the world. Fashion denotes social rank, status, or political and class affiliations and aspirations. In consumer behavior, various theories explain the consumers purchasing choices and behaviors (McNeill, 2018). According to Valaei and Nikhashemi (2017), consumers select their fashion based on personal decisions and media influences.

## **2.6. Theories Supporting Consumers Fashion Behavior in the Context of Civic Engagement**

This thesis builds upon two main theories to explain fashion behavior: self-concept and social learning theory. The main idea of the self-concept theory is that consumers seek to purchase products that represent what they stand for and who they are (McNeill, 2018). Furthermore, due to the media and social influences found in society, people realize, acquire and gather insights into their behavior, including purchasing behavior. Therefore, consumer's buying decisions are influenced by what they get exposed to. Thus, the social learning theory contributes to understand how consumers adopt and purchase certain fashion styles to support a specific cause and participate in fashion activism (Wok et al., 2008). The following sections present the literature review concerning these two theories.

### **2.6.1. Self-Concept Theory**

Self-concept refers to how individuals think and regard the sense of being surrounding them (Cham et al., 2018; McNeill, 2018). According to Cavusoglu et al. (2019), self-concept theory explains how consumers think, feel, decide, act and behave with the surrounding environment around them. An individual's self-concept aids in the examination of their behaviors (Lin and Hsu, 2015). Therefore, depending on their personal belief of who they are, they act accordingly (Cavusoglu et al., 2019). Studies have shown that self-concept reflects one's self-efficacy (one's belief to initiate motivation, cognition, and action to successfully finish specific tasks), self-esteem (an individual's assessment of their significance, capability, significance, and worth), self-monitoring (ability to modify or adapt one's behavior to coping with the behaviors of others) (Deeter-Schmelz and Ramsey, 2010; Cham et al., 2018; Cavusoglu et al., 2019; McNeill and Venter, 2019).

Lin and Hsu (2015) state that today's consumption behavior is entirely related to individuals' personality. People seek to purchase products that communicate their identity; and aids them with benefits of their lifestyle. Fashion adoption is an essential part of human lives. Fashionable clothes play a significant role in people's lifestyle choices. It also creates an identity reflection of oneself and the culture

one lives around (Inglessis, 2008; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013; McNeill, 2018). Accordingly, fashion garments portray status and identity to others, increasing self-esteem (Badaoui et al., 2016). Consumers adopt fashion trends to display their social status, gender, power, and prestige images (Kawamura, 2005; Armstrong et al., 2015). This process helps judge others based on their fashionable items, clothes selection, and affiliation levels of being regarded as influential individuals (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010; McNeill and Venter, 2019). According to O'cass (2004) and Armstrong et al. (2015), consumers seem to purchase specific garments to signal their identity to others. Therefore, clothing is significant in communicating one's self-concept (McNeill and Venter, 2019). This research outcome indicates that practitioners in the fashion industry should invest to understand consumers' character, individuality, nature, and persona in order to produce products relevant to their needs and tastes (Cham et al., 2018).

### **2.6.2. Social Learning Theory**

Social learning theory holds that consumers acquire and imitate particular behavior that leads them to buy a specific fashion item, product, or service in the end (Wok et al., 2008). Consumers tend to learn and benefit from observation. Therefore, social learning theory is a fundamental theory in developing this research. According to the social learning theory, people learn about what to buy and not buy according to the help of reference groups (Bandura, 2001). Reference groups have the ability to influence fashion consumers when it comes to fashion behavior and consumption (Apupianti et al., 2019). Therefore, research confirms that people mimic the consumption of other people's tendencies. When it comes to reference group influence, research shows that the media has a powerful role in inspiring people's taste and behaviors (Sornapudi and Srivastava, 2021).

Consumers learn about various brands, behaviors, products, services through multiple media channels. The social learning theory supports the media influence in consumers' purchasing behavior and self-identity development. Wok et al. (2008) stated that media influences play a significant role in consumers' interaction and perception of brands. Based on research, the media is an important variable that causes consumer learning (Shepard et al., 2016; Sornapudi and Srivastava, 2021). According to Shepard et al. (2016) and Sornapudi and Srivastava (2021), media forms (traditional and non-traditional) affect consumers' purchasing tendencies. Thus, different media forms are essential elements for purchasing various clothing items.

Traditional media are media channels that spread information to the general mass audiences. Different media channels have aggressively changed through time, starting with print media and magazine types to later stages of radio and television. Furthermore, given the internet as a constant information-

giving source, consumers' purchase intention has also changed over time as internet media significantly influence their audiences in connecting the media figures, celebrities, and consumers to develop a relationship (Woo et al., 2015; Sudha and Sheena, 2020). Thus, consumers' exposition to traditional media leads them to desire certain fashion products (Martin and Bush, 2000; Hoffner and Buchanan, 2005; Wok et al., 2008; Stefanone et al., 2010). Furthermore, media have a significant influence in putting images in consumer's cognition to already have an idea based on what fashion items they want to buy before going to shop, forming fashion-conscious patterns (Shephard et al., 2016, Sudha and Sheena, 2020).

### **2.6.3. Media Influence in Fashion**

Media influence triggers consumers to socialize and learn about fashion. In addition, media influence helps consumers select the character and personality they admire (Woo et al., 2015). Media influence is considered a mechanism of the society, meaning consumers are generally affected by the social environment they live in, by textual and visual cues observed that affect behavior in the end (Bandura, 2001; Wiederhold, and Martinez, 2018).

Different types of media forms can impact the process of fashion adoption. Although media influence takes various conditions, they can influence consumers through personal or mass reach (Shephard et al., 2016; Nash, 2019). Nowadays, consumers face a wide variety of media, traditional and non-traditional. Each medium impacts consumers' purchasing behaviors differently. Media influences consumers through dispersing information about fashion lifestyle magazines, movies, television programs, the internet, observation of others, store display, and celebrities (Belleau et al., 2007).

#### **2.6.3.1. Traditional Media**

Traditional media includes various media forms, such as television, newspapers, radio, and magazines. These media play a significant role in forming and directing opinions among consumers about various topics deemed popular in society. So, it is important to study mass media's impact on consumer's shopping behavior (Naik and Raman, 2003; Lim and Kim, 2017; Ananda et al., 2019).

When it comes to the context of fashion, the media direct consumers to desire specific fashion brands and influence their consumption behavior (Wok et al., 2008; Lim and Kim, 2017). For example, consumers purchase fashion trends after being exposed to their idols on television or observing model figures on magazine prints (López-Guimerà et al., 2010). Hence, media channels cultivate individual's mindsets. For example, Wok et al. (2008) show how older demographics have certain tendencies to mimic

entertainers and celebrities wearing specific fashion trends through television programs and print magazines.

According to Levine and Murnen (2009) and Stefeanone et al. (2010), a company can increase its sales by advertising messages in television and print media. Television and print media are considered the most influential media channel tool that can trigger fashion consumers to adopt trendy items frequently. Fashion adoption deals with how consumers accept or reject a specific fashion trend into the system, whether the fashion concept took or not by the medium exposed messages (Rahman et al., 2014). Therefore, the motivation to purchase these fashion items comes from brand promotion a brand via celebrities and advertising messages, among other factors.

A study by Lim and Kim (2017) stated that the most influential types of mass media that affect individuals' purchasing behavior are television exposure and store display. Television is an important medium that may lead consumers to shop more, and its effect impacts a large audience, making consumers passive to advertising messages, leading to shopping intentions. In addition, consumers use television as a source of entertainment, news, and information source in their daily lives.

Shoppers use media channels to buy and compensate for social deficiency, social isolation, emotional insecurity, loneliness, and social discomfort (Lim and Kim, 2017). As a result, consumers tend to be in a state called telepresence, in which a viewer is in a form wholly absorbed and engaged in a passive way (Woo et al., 2015). Therefore, TV consumption effectively impacts consumers in a telepresence state to ultimately want to shop for a specific look or a particular lifestyle idea. Nelson et al. (2016) also explained that consumers' telepresence state is wholly absorbed into another environment, leaving their current environment. It is as if the TV hypnotizes the consumer, encouraging them to shop more (Woo et al., 2015).

Shephard et al. (2016) stated that television exposure and advertising were critical to influencing younger generations and other elder demographics. Mass media encourages the purchase of fashion trends effectively. Mass media leads consumers to observe and mimic certain attitudes, behaviors, and styles. Consumer's buying decisions are linked to their lifestyle and identity desired (Rahman et al., 2014). This process of exposure leads to fashion adoption, in which consumers now are in the method of wanting to buy and viewing the style options they have.

### **2.6.3.2. Non-Traditional Media**

Non-traditional media is a new approach to media communication, based on digital technology and the internet. Usually, the research considers non-traditional media as personal media (Yu and Code,

2009; Nash, 2019). Social media is a powerful communication tool that is under the non-traditional media. It has played a significant role as an information source to consumers about various topics (Mohr, 2013). Social media include Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, and Pinterest, among other social network platforms. These social media platforms help fashion brands and businesses reach consumers that seek and purchase fashion items (Mohr, 2013; Ahmad et al., 2015).

Social media not only connect consumers daily but also provide information about new fashion trends. It integrates word of mouth (WOM) strategies into spreading news around the internet (Mohr, 2013). According to a study done by Saxena and Khanna (2013), consumers use these social media sites as a source of information and as a medium to communicate their opinions and share them widely with others about issues. In addition, internet advertising on these social websites appears to be a source of information quicker and broader in terms of space and time (Michaela et al., 2015; Rathnayaka, 2018). Social media are a platform for self-expression (Ahmad et al., 2015; Ananda et al., 2019).

Social media provide consumers with engaging experiences about fashion. Social media help fashion brands to promote what fashion trends viewers should purchase and voice opinions (Linfante, 2021). However, fashion consumption is influenced mainly by images and symbols to mirror self-identities and what consumers want to communicate to others by imitating what they viewed from information channels (Ananda et al., 2019).

Fashion as an industry revolves around media. Traditional, and non-traditional (social) media allow fashion consumers to be highly involved in their shopping behavior towards fashion trends (Shephard et al., 2016; Rathnayaka, 2018). These highly accessible platforms help consumers keep up with the latest trends, hacks, and clever shopping ideas. According to Belleau et al. (2007) and López-Guimerà et al., (2010), mass media is a type of media platform that impacts young consumers by exposing audiences to television, store window and in-store displays, advertising billboards, fashion shows, and internet capabilities. Even celebrities displaying certain products in movies (product placement) are considered a vital element in impacting the purchase intention of consumer's fashion tastes (Stefeanone et al., 2010; Rathnayaka, 2018).

With the help of the media, both traditional and non-traditional, fashion and fashion brands can connect with consumers and convince them of their item's relevance to their identity and roles in the community (Geissinger and Laurell, 2016). What consumers want; fashion brands should deliver to maintain an engaging relationship.



## **2.7. Brand Engagement and Brand Personality**

Webster (1992, p.14 ) states that “Businesses will be defined by its customers and not by its factories, products or offices.” So maintaining a good customer relationship management (CRM) is vital for businesses to profit. CRM ensures the relationship between customers and brands stay for long and the purchasing behavior increases regularly (Monshi and Kingdom, 2020). Brand engagement suggests that businesses should put effort to provide consumers with an interactive experience, leading to the development of consumers-brand bonding (Samala and Singh, 2019). Brand engagement tries to consider learning, sharing information, advocating, socializing and co-developing among consumers (Brodie et al., 2013). Engagement is how much the consumer are drawn physically, cognitively and emotionally in the relationship with organizations (Brodie et al., 2013). Hollebeek (2011b, p.6) identifies brand engagement as “how much the customer’s state of mind is integrated with... and towards the brand’s activities”. Brand engagement is meant to create perceived value experience among consumers, which leads to buying intentions (Hollebeek, 2011b; Brodie et al., 2013; Geissinger and Laurell, 2016).

The fashion industry have recognized the concept of brand engagement and is applying it among consumers to encourage and integrate civic engagement (Thompson, 2019). For example, in 2018, the Dutch fashion designer “Schueller De Waal” presented a new way of social wellness event to engage with her fashion consumers. The new fashion collection presented with a wellness center to provide massages, yoga and meditation programs for laughter and a hypnotherapy film in place during Paris fashion week (Thompson, 2018). These are approaches for brands to engage with its customers and encourage civic engagement with fashion options (Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel, 2013; Rathnayaka, 2018).

In order for consumers to consider supporting or using a specific brand in civic engagement, the brand engagement should highlight their main personality and values that the brand stands for. Accordingly, consumers are known to click and purchase brands that resemble their same values and characteristics (Ahmad et al., 2020). Therefore, brand engagement reflects the brand personality, which consumers use to develop attraction and emotional bonds with the brand (Lee et al., 2018). Brand personality plays a vital role in the products or the behaviors that consumers choose to partake in (Lin, 2010).

For consumers to buy a particular product or service, the brand's personality is a vital element in the selection to connect with customer's personas of what they want to share with the public and themselves (Romero and Gomez, 2015; Semaan et al., 2019). Thus, consumers tend to purchase based on the preferences of specific brand images. Consumers like to establish relationships and bonds with brands that have common characteristics with their personas (Lin, 2010; Khazaei Pool et al., 2018).

These brands reflect a consumer's self-identity to the self and others. Thus, brand personality in fashion plays a vital role in making consumers' personalities resemble what they wear (Ananda et al., 2019). Therefore, designing a unique brand image allow consumers to recall and favor brands that connect with their self- identity (Romero and Gomez, 2015).

A brand personality is constructed based on characteristics set to the product's function and those unrelated. According to Romero et al. (2015), brand personality product traits include price, packaging, attributes to the product itself, and even the perceived socio-economic level where the person links to the product trait image, they find fit. On the other hand, what is unrelated to brand personality characteristics includes: advertising styles, symbols, time in the market, and country of origin. Each good experience with the brand reinforces a particular image to manage a good relationship between customers and brand personality, leading to more product purchases in the end (Lin, 2010).

Lin (2010) explains that brand personality is a set of human characteristics associated to a brand. Brands create strong bonds with consumers. Furthermore, the brand is selected if the brand's image is aligned and meets consumers' attributes. Marketers create the designed brand in three stages: the first is by the association consumers have with this brand; the second is how the company tries to make a unique image for itself and its products: thirdly, is by the product's attributes. Hence, these elements assist in the creation of a brand's contribution to self-symbolization and self-expression identity (Khazaei Pool et al., 2018).

A brand personality is also consistent and long-lasting, not changeable and dynamic in its implication and meaning (Ross and Harradine, 2011). Customers seek to maintain a relationship between their persona and a brand. Therefore objects and brands can sometimes spread to the social realm (Aggarwal and McGill, 2012). Consequently, they seek an emotional connection with brands and their corporate entity (Aggarwal and McGill, 2012; Semaan et al., 2018). A brand personality is an overall characteristic that a human can relate to one's character. Creating brand personality allows consumers to interlink their persona with the brand's social construction to enable brand owners to engage in a dream of high status and link to a privileged acceptance membership (Semaan et al., 2018). Consumers tend to search for some key characteristics that connect with their trait dimension associated with the brand itself. Therefore, brand personality is an essential influence in consumers' buying intentions (Aggarwal and McGill, 2012).

In conclusion, brands develop an identity in order to position themselves and attract consumers to purchase the items. Brand personality understands consumer's identities in which they want to communicate in their society (Ross and Harradine, 2011). Thus, marketers use various communication

and promotional tools to engage consumers with the brand and position it as being suitable for reflecting consumers' self-concept (Lin, 2010). Brands should select the specific type of media that makes sense with the desired target audiences to motivate shopping experiences (Woo et al., 2015).

## **2.8. Fashion as a Medium of Communication**

Fashion consumers are interested highly in fashion and are aware of new fashion fads (Shephard et al., 2016). Conscious consumers are currently using fashion as a medium to communicate and help support consumer's citizenship behavior in civic causes (Vargas, 2009; Gam, 2011; Slone, 2012; Linfante, 2021). Various designers are beginning to be aware of this phenomenon, and therefore, are creating clothing that express this concept.

Some designers create fashionable garments inspired by the environment's surroundings to encourage consumers to purchase the items and communicate this stand to their community. Further designers support various causes, seeking self-reflection on how to be a "good citizen". This clothing acts as a fashion statement, consumers are now seeking brands that show their persona. Marketers and fashion designers have begun to develop their brand personalities to meet the changing consumer characteristics and mindset, encouraging fashion communication to reflect their civic engagement. This revolution in fashion uses civic causes to reach and communicate in a society (Slone, 2012; Fouad et al., 2020).

The current fashion industry contains several designers who create items that express and communicate the environmental concerns, the political injustice, or the social instability in contemporary society. These designers point to society's problems which are reflected indirectly in the fashion trends produced—for example, the designer Alexander McQueen, tribute to evolution, biodiversity themes without directly referencing them. Thus, the designs of Alexander McQueen communicate messages non-verbally through his methods: "McQueen's designs are works of art in themselves...From gazelle horned jackets to bird of prey ball gowns." (Slone, 2012, p.3). In other words, Alexander McQueen immerses nature to share his thoughts. Slone (2012) demonstrated proofs of Alexander's work in further detail. Mimetics were illustrated from the heart in the spring-summer collection in 2008 named "La Dame Bleue." This spring- summer collection explicitly communicated to a very dear friend "Isabella Blow," whom he lost. The inspiration of his designs grew from nature addressing her soul (Hoffner and Buchanan, 2005; Slone, 2012).

Another example of fashion supporting a social cause is the brand TOMS. The real reason the brand TOMS is in the business is to help change lives (Roncha and Radclyffe, 2015; Kipp and Hawkins,

2018). TOM'S business model relies on one offer, meaning buy one pair of shoes the other will be for a child who cannot afford a pair of shoes. The fashion brand TOMS's consistent writing relies on designing and selling shoes and eyewear products (Bachnik et al., 2013; Kipp and Hawkins, 2018). The idea of the brand TOMS came to life, where the owners wanted to protect the feet of the needy people in developing countries who can't afford a shoe.

Fashion is a creative industry that tries to divert its strategies when change is needed (political, social, and eco factors), not forgetting its motto, selling more desirable images. This initiation from designers contributed to how civic duties can result from many forms other than protesting and voting. Through colorful designs of the fashion garments, consumers can disperse their true beliefs and values to others, encouraging them to participate in civic obligations and support. Thus, fashion links to civic engagement matters.

## **2.9. Concluding The Literature Review**

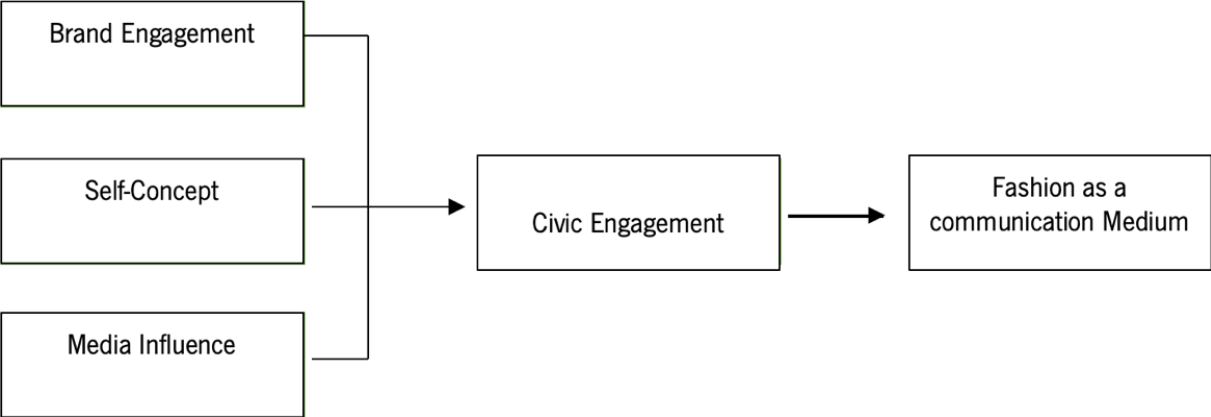
This research will study civic engagement and how it leads to fashion choices as a communication medium. This study investigates the assumption that self-concept and social learning theory contribute to explaining how consumers are led to support civic engagement. Consumers choose fashion items as a tool to communicate various information and realities to others (political, social, and environmental concerns). Through fashion, they support, express and communicate their beliefs.

Fashionable garments and objects have civic significance. Wearing items that carry political, social, or environmental meanings affects the relationships among citizens. Several prominent researchers studied civic engagement and its effect in using fashion as a communication medium (Miller, 2005; Rosholm, 2009; Venkatasamy, 2015; Von-Busch, 2018; Mazzarella et al., 2019; Lifante, 2021). According to Miller (2005), fashion can be a tool to provoke dialogue about social and political matters, leading to civic engagement. According to Rosholm (2009) and Fouad et al. (2020), physical appearance is an essential non-verbal communicator for public officials. As a result, wearing certain fashion items can affect their political activity. Political figures can perform their political roles through their fashion garments and accessories.

According to Mazzarella et al. (2019), the fashion industry encounters unsustainability, social inequality, environmental stewardship in today's market. Designers are leading an activist role that helps facilitate co-designing with consumers to change the fashion system to a better one. According to Venkatasamy (2015), fashion communication has undergone a 180-degree shift. Fashion items have shifted from mirroring self-identity to how consumers are feeling emotionally about the world. Fashion

garments and items express fundamental social and economic pressures of the time. Based on this literature review, a preliminary research model is proposed (Figure 2.1). This provides an overall framework to guide the next stage of research.

**Figure 1 - Preliminary Research Model**



## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the research design used in the empirical studies of this thesis. Specifically, this chapter highlights the procedures needed to: answer the research questions, achieve the study's objectives; and test the hypotheses and further develop the conceptual model. The following part will firstly describe the the research design. Subsequently, the detailed description of the two empirical studies, (first qualitative research and second quantitative research) are presented, including the instruments and process of data collection, and methods used to analyze data in each study.

### **3.2. Choice of Theoretical Perspective: Pragmatic Approach**

A fundamental decision in conducting research is the philosophy adopted for the study. The research philosophy outlines the source, nature, and development of knowledge. It identifies the needed tactics in the data collection and analysis. Philosophical assumptions are fundamental beliefs the investigator uses for direction, they function as roadmaps to help direct the study's data collection and the process of analysis (Creswell, 2003; Lincoln et al., 2011).

According to Creswell (2003) and Kaushik and Walsh (2019), there are four types of worldviews that research can select to approach the investigation: Post Positivism, social constructivism, advocacy/participatory, and finally, pragmatism. Post positivism is the traditional view towards knowledge that is found among quantitative studies. Post positivism worldview claims that the data gathered regarding behaviors and actions of humans will always be accurate (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). The best aspect of this paradigm is allowing the study to share results and assess the foundations objectively with factual statements that impact the outcomes. Hence, theories and models must be quantifiable and tested (Creswell, 2003; Phillips and Burbules, 2000; Fox, 2008). Post positivism usually tests theories against data collected to verify or falsify results to enhance and build an improved theoretical model (Morgan, 2007; Fox, 2008; Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). Studies criticize post positivism as the methodological tool that rules out the possibility of understanding the world better from other elements such as human experience, reasoning, or interpretation (Fox, 2008; Kaushik and Walsh, 2019).

Social constructivism is also known as the interpretivism view. Social constructivism recognizes that phenomena have a subjective meaning (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). Social constructivism depends mainly on the researcher's point of view and experience (Creswell et al., 2011; Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). Social constructivism allows the study to observe, define the purpose of an individual's work and living

habits in the current state (Creswell, 2003). The approach puts into consideration the history and cultural aspects of the research. Social constructivism requires the research to participate in the field to discover firsthand insights on individuals' behaviors in the context of the study (Adams, 2006; Creswell et al., 2011). Social constructivism can be criticized as it lacks formal instructions in the research process (Alanazi, 2016; Alanazi, 2019).

The advocacy/participatory worldview is also known as the transformative paradigm (Romm, 2015). This worldview acknowledges that research consists of concepts with politics and political agenda. Advocacy/participatory view builds a study that enhances on bringing change eventually (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). Action agenda results from this kind of paradigm, linking the result of the survey "social inquiry" to embrace a solution and act upon it (Romm, 2015). The advocacy/participatory worldview concentrates on the specific context of issues that can be highlighted, such as inequality, empowerment, domination, oppression, etc. Therefore, the advocacy/participatory paradigm study social problems that need refinement and change (Creswell, 2003; Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). The advocacy/participatory paradigm is different from post-positivism and constructivism as it creates insights that are formed on relating personally to the participants of the survey (Romm, 2015). The advocacy/participatory view can be criticized as having the study follow unorthodox ways to do research that may compromise the authority and ability of that person under investigation (Creswell et al., 2011).

Finally, some studies combine philosophical views of research. This act is considered the pragmatic worldview of research. A pragmatic worldview refers to problem-solving and action-oriented process of apprehending knowledge that serves commitment and progress to solving the research problem and questions. Pragmatism consists of choosing the appropriate method to learn from the wide range of qualitative and quantitative research methods (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). The researcher creates practical knowledge that serves a purpose of action intention towards making a significant difference in reality (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). In other words, pragmatism is not limited to a worldview philosophy (Collins, 2017). Research criticized the pragmatic worldview is lacking philosophy and theory, but instead focuses on practical results. This approach can be undercut based on unrealistic hypotheses, considering limited context and data that might not be widely applicable to social practices (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019).

After reviewing all the philosophical views, this study follows a pragmatic view. This study assumes that there can be multiple realities that are open to empirical questioning. In other words, when studying a phenomenon, a research can provide an objective fact that exists apart from a human experience.

However, this reality is grounded within the environment and can only be encountered through

human experience (Morgan, 2007).

Thus, this approach considers how complex the social phenomena is, enabling the role of values and other interpretative meanings to be studied and measured (Brierley, 2017).

### **3.3. Research Purpose**

Research can serve a variety of purposes. The goal of collecting data can be either descriptive, exploratory, or explanatory (Creswell, 2003). Descriptive research is a theory-based design method that conducts a study to describe the situation or case under investigation. Descriptive research design is created by gathering, analyzing, and presenting collected data to provide insights into the why and how of a given phenomenon. The descriptive research offers an examination of the situation, event, or person at hand about how other variables fit together, explaining the variable significance in the studied context (Blumberg et al., 2005). Exploratory research recognizes ideas and insights that help the study achieve possible explanation and meaning for understudied situations that lack enough information about a phenomenon or an unknown problem. The exploratory type aims to help clarify a vague problem statement into specific hypotheses (Bryman, 2012). Explanatory research aims at establishing a relationship between the cause and effect of a situation. It is a causal design where one observes the impact caused by the independent variable on the dependent variable. In this type of research, the independent variable is manipulated and monitored with changes to see its effect on the dependent variable (Creswell, 2003; Grey, 2009).

This study conducts two empirical studies. The first empirical research seeks an exploratory purpose, uncovering underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations about civic engagement; and how fashion communicates social issues to the community. The first empirical study seeks to identify the factors that lead individuals to fashion activism, analyzing fashion behavior in what concerns brand engagement, self- concept, and media influence. The second empirical study has a descriptive purpose and seeks to test the developed research model and hypotheses. The study seeks to explain, portray, and label the relationships between the variables found in the model to further develop the theories in the literature.

### **3.4. Choice of Methodology**

The research methodology helps plan the research's strategies, from general hypotheses to data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2003). Specifically, research methodology helps determine the best type of data collection, analysis, and interpretation for a study. An investigation can be conducted either



through a qualitative research approach, a quantitative research approach, or a mixed research approach (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007).

Qualitative research methods seek to explore individual's or the behavior of groups under a particular social or a human issue. Qualitative methods are based on building theory inductively. Qualitative methods start with emerging questions used in narrative research, phenomenology, ethnographic, grounded theory, or a case study form. The qualitative research approach allows the study to interpret the data meaning after collecting and observing a phenomenon. Thus, qualitative methods aid in giving sense to the present data in the research study (Creswell, 2003).

Quantitative research methods seek to examine relationships between variables, to confirm the studies that have objective theories. Quantitative methods use statistical instruments to develop and analyze numbered data (Creswell, 2003). Quantitative methods are based on deductive thoughts, building on prior theories. Experimental and non-experimental designs such as surveys are forms of quantitative method tools (Creswell, 2003). The quantitative approach helps test the study's assumptions; also, it is easy to generalize and replicate the findings at the end of the data analysis process (Bryman, 2012).

Some studies implement both approaches (qualitative and quantitative) to achieve the research objectives. Mixed research approach can follow a sequential (one research approach after another) or concurrent approach (conducting both research methods simultaneously, for different purposes and motives of data collection). The purpose of the mixed research method is to gain and provide the study with a lens that delivers a rich and insightful framework of data collection, outcomes, or changes that could emerge (Creswell, 2003). Mixed methods help strengthen and complete the study's findings (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Creswell, 2003).

This current study follows a sequential mixed research approach. The study is based on two empirical research phases. The first empirical study is the qualitative research. The aim of the qualitative research is to help explore new insights that were not studied before. The qualitative phase was needed because of the fact that this is an understudied topic. Few studies were conducted that identify fashion's role in civic engagement (Venkatasamy, 2015; Mazzarella et al., 2019). According to Ahmad et al. (2015), new trends in the fashion industry were stressing the need for more academic insights towards civic duties. With the qualitative outcomes, the research developed the conceptual framework and hypotheses for further testing. Subsequently, the second empirical study was conducted, the quantitative research. The quantitative research aimed to collect objective data to support and answer the research questions. The quantitative research developed empirical evidence, explaining the role of brand personality, self-concept, and media influence on civic engagement, and identifying the leading causes consumer's

support through fashion.

### **3.5. Research Design Overview**

Before beginning any investigation, the study must examine the research design options. Research design is the overall practice strategy that constitutes the blue print of collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data gathered in research studies (Creswell, 2003; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.58). Obtaining relevance of the research problem requires specifying the types of evidence needed to test a theory or describe a phenomenon accurately (Creswell, 2003). Research design is a framework of research methods and techniques chosen by the study. The design allows studies to select the needed research methods that are suitable for the topic under investigation. The research design is identified depending on the research approach.

Sekaran (2003) has identified six elements of research design: (1) Purpose of the study (2) Type of investigation (3) Extent of researcher interference (4) Study setting (5) Unit of analysis (6) The time horizon. In addition, Sekaran (2003, p.3) emphasized: “The researcher would determine the appropriate decisions made in the study design based on the problem definition, the research objectives, the extent of rigor desired, and cost considerations.”Therefore, the following table, table 3.1 illustrates how the investigation implements these elements. The following sections in this chapter explains each point in data.

**Table 1 - The Research Design**

<b>Phase One: Qualitative Research Approach “Empirical Study I”</b>		<b>Phase Two: Quantitative Research Approach “Empirical Study II”</b>	
<b>Items</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Justification</b>
Research Design	The purpose of phase I is exploratory - to discover how youth and young adults in Egypt use fashion to communicate civic engagement. We seek to understand the role of style for consumers, identify the factors influencing civic engagement and use of fashion, and consider the critical political, social, and environmental issues they support.	Research Design	The purpose of phase II is descriptive -to describe the characteristics concerning the variables under the brand personality, self-concept, and media influence on consumer's attitude that impacts to adopt civic intentions in fashion buying choices. Furthermore, the research aimed to describe the relationship among the variables and identify the participants' socio-demographic traits.
Data Collection Method:	Semi- structured interviews.	Data Collection Method:	Administrated questionnaires online.
Sample size:	Interviews were conducted until data saturation was met - data becomes repetitive and no more new insights emerge (Bowen, 2008).	Sample size:	The goal is 384 respondents. Krejice and Morgan (1970) explained that this number of questionnaires was used if the population is infinity
Sampling	Purposive sampling is referred to be a judgmental sampling (Etikan and Bala, 2017). Purposive sampling is a non-random technique that requires a selection of relevant participants that are willing to help provide information suitable for the study (Bernard, 2002).	Sampling	Convenient sampling is a useful sampling choice that is regarded as inexpensive and have an easy access to the studied sample. This sampling requires the research to approach individuals that fit the studied population (Taherdoost, 2016) and are accessible and approachable.
Time Horizon	May and June 2019 Cross sectional (The data gained was gathered just one time, over a period of months).	Time Horizon	April and May 2020 Cross sectional (The data was gathered just one time).
Population	The study was carried out in Egypt. This choice was due to obvious convenience reasons since the researcher is based in this country but also on the relevance of the topic given Egypt's recent history, the Arab 2011 spring. Egyptian youth and young adults (university students) who live in Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt, and purchase fashion on a monthly basis were the population of focus.		

## **3.6. Empirical Study 1**

### **3.6.1. Qualitative Research Approach**

The qualitative research approach aims to understand the in-depth of a phenomenon. The qualitative process captures the insight from observing or interacting with the examined participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Hence, the best outcome from the qualitative approach comes from exploring and explaining the situation in the natural setting during the study. The vital aspect of qualitative studies relies on the general wealth of information provided by the respondents; focusing upon the “how” and “why” of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007).

A qualitative study was carried out to understand how youth and university students communicate through their fashion items within the Egyptian context regarding whether they intentionally communicate civic engagement messages. This study enables a new insight on civic engagement and fashion as a communication medium. It combines a new theoretical approach to fashion buying choices. This research study considers civically communicating important societal messages to the community. In addition, the specific conditions that allowed this communication with fashion experience to emerge are explored. Therefore, an interpretative and exploratory analysis were considered (Creswell, 2003). This study used semi-structured interviews to obtain relevant qualitative data (Harris and Brown, 2010). The starting point of the study was, therefore, the following research questions:

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Q1: How do brand engagement, self-concept, and media influence lead to civic engagement?

Q2: Which civic causes do consumers support through the use of fashion?

Q3: Does civic engagement lead to using fashion as a communication medium?

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### **3.6.2. Method of Data Collection; Semi-Structured Interviews**

Qualitative research can be done with multiple tools. According to Creswell (2003), qualitative data collection methods can be documents, observations, interviews, and audio-visual materials. In this study, the semi-structured interviews were the tool selected to collect the qualitative data.

As a qualitative data collection method, interviews can be conducted through face-to-face, telephone, or e-mail (Creswell, 2003). Interviews are one-to-one discussions between the researcher and the participant(s). Interviews can take three forms: structured (consisting of fixed questions to be asked in a specific order), unstructured (based on random questions that can vary from one interview into another), or semi-structured interviews (has particular questions). In conducting interviews, there can be

two main setbacks as participants might feel hesitant to speak freely in front of a researcher, and the participants may exaggerate some aspects of the discussion. In this study, semi-structured interviews were carried out, providing the researcher with specifically in-depth insights regarding the studied participants' particular attitudes, thoughts, and actions towards civic engagement (Gill et al., 2008 and Harris and Brown, 2010). A semi-structured interview engaged with the participant in a formal interview format, but the questions asked by the study were pre-determined.

In order to conduct a semi-structured interview, an interview guide is needed. Interview guides are the planned agenda concerning the set of questions the researcher intends to ask during the interview (Adams, 2015). The interview guide provides a set of questions or topics in an arranged order to allow the respondent to continue dialogue freely without constraints (Harris and Brown, 2010 and Malhotra et al., 2013). In this study, the interview guide contained broad questions about fashion behavior, civic engagement, and fashion as a communication medium. All of the questions created focused on these main topics. The list of questions was divided into six main groupings (key areas): introduction, brand personality, self-concept, brand engagement, media influence, civic engagement, and fashion as a communication medium. Table 3.2 illustrates the questions that are asked in the semi-structured interviews.

The interview guide was pilot tested to assure the relevance and clarity of the questions. A pilot test is a small-scale preliminary study conducted to evaluate the feasibility, the question order, and the clarity of the questions to improve the study's design before performing full-scale research. In this study, a pilot test was conducted with five students. The interviews have been in person, and carried out in English. The interview's duration was about 30 minutes approximately per interview.

**Table 2 - Interview Guide**

<b>Key area</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you think people in general use fashion to reflect certain messages to others? How?</li> <li>2. Do the items that you purchase are meant to reflect a certain message to others? (Your status, personality, political stand) Explain.</li> </ol>	<p>Self-identity</p> <p>Fashion as a communication medium</p>
Brand Engagement/Personality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is your favorite fashion brand? Why? Does it reflect your personality?</li> <li>2. Do your favorite brands perform customer relationship management? Give examples</li> </ol>	<p>Brand preference</p> <p>Brand Personality</p> <p>Brand Engagement</p>
Self-Concept	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How would you describe yourself? Explain</li> <li>2. What inspires you to dress in a certain way? Explain</li> <li>3. Do you seek the latest fashion trends? or items that reflect your personality? Explain your choice.</li> <li>4. If fashion is meant to communicate a certain message about you, what would it be? Do you actually seek this? Explain</li> </ol>	<p>Taste in style Fashion reflection</p> <p>Fashion as self-expression</p>
Media Influence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you get inspired by media when it comes to fashion? Which media inspires you the most? Why?</li> <li>2. Does the media influence you to change your fashion style from time to time? How so?</li> <li>3. What blogs/Instagram/Facebook accounts related to fashion do you follow? Why?</li> </ol>	<p>Media as a learning tool of fashion</p> <p>Media influence</p>
Civic Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did you ever participate in various civic engagement activities? Explain.</li> <li>2. Do you consider yourself an activist? If so, which issues are important to support (environmental, social, or political)? Why or why not.</li> <li>3. Have you ever purchased fashion items to communicate a societal problem? If so which problem and why this specific issue.</li> </ol>	<p>Civic engagement</p> <p>Issues supported</p> <p>Civic engagement</p>
Fashion as a Communication Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can fashion be a good means of communicating a societal problem? Why</li> <li>2. Can you give me an example in which you used fashion to communicate environmental, social, and political issue? explain.</li> <li>3. Do you believe fashion makes a difference? Will you continue using fashion as a means to communicate social problems?  Why or why not</li> </ol>	<p>Fashion as a communication</p> <p>Fashion behavior</p>

### **3.6.3. Ethical Issues**

In qualitative research approach studies, ethical considerations are essential in gathering data and reporting the data process (Creswell, 2003). The commitment allows the investigation to consider the rights, needs, values, and desires of the participants under the study (Spradley, 1980; Creswell, 2003). Therefore, this study needs to address some points to help protect the interviewee's rights during the data collection method.

In this study, the research followed the ethical guidelines and standards of the University of Minho. Therefore, before conducting the interviews, the researcher formally and verbally explained the purpose of the study, what was requested from the interviewee, illustrated the confidential conditions that would be taken into consideration, and stressed at any time the participant felt uncomfortable, the interview could end. In addition, a written consent form was given to the interviewee to read and sign as shown in (appendix c), showing that they agreed to participate in the study and knew what was required of them.

### **3.6.4. Population and Sampling**

This study focused on Cairo and Alexandria population. The market structure in these two capitals contains the highest number of international fashion brand companies that have opened successfully (Ramzy *et al.*, 2011; AbuElEnain and Yahia, 2017). The large numbers of shopping malls allow consumers to purchase fashion items frequently (Gamal El Din and El Sahn, 2013; Gafi.Gov. Eg,2015). AbuElEnain and Yahia (2017) stated that the Egyptian market is the largest in the Arab world. This region has been visible to managing great prosperity in the retail and fashion sector. The Egyptian market grew in sales of about 75% of consumption in the fashion retail industry. Therefore, Egypt has a potential consumption behavior towards the retail.

The population of focus in this study were: private university students between the ages of 20- to 39 years old. According to Abdou and Skalli (2018), this population segment is deemed the most appropriate to buy and consume fashion; this finding is also supported by Egyptian governmental statistics (Gafi.Gov.Eg, 2015). The age of 20-39 hold the most expenditures to consume fashion products regularly (Gafi.Gov.Eg,2015; Abdou and Skalli, 2018). This segment was chosen for its purchasing power. Moreover, this age group is found to be active citizens that find new and unorthodox ways to communicate their voices to the government. Today, in Egypt youth participate in various unconventional political and civic activities (Negm *et al.*, 2012). Research showed that this young age segment is interested in exploring fashion consumption behavior and civic engagement issues communicated through fashion items. According to Dorio *et al.* (2017), students from various opinion appear to be reflecting the outside

politics of their country, sharing it among their social networks. During the January 2011-2013 revolution in Egypt, college students were highly active in political and economic participation (Abdou and Skalli, 2018).

Sampling refers to units from a population to be studied and then generalize the results for a more extensive population set (Creswell, 2003). Etikan and Bala (2017) stated that the sampling techniques have two different types: probability or non-probability sampling. Probability sampling allows each participant to have an equal chance of being chosen and integrated into the study (Fink, 1995). Probability sampling requires a sampling frame, ie a list of everyone in the population. However, in some studies, it is difficult to obtain such a list. Therefore, the non-probability approach was used. The non- probability sampling requires the researcher to select the people to be studied based on meaningful criteria. Hence, the non-probability selection is not concerned with giving an equal chance in units of the population under study.

In qualitative research "*The intent is not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon*" (Creswell, 2005, p.203). This process is achieved best by using a purposeful sampling strategy. So, this qualitative study will follow purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling (Etikan and Bala, 2017). Purposive sampling is a non-random technique that requires the research to identify the adequate participants who can provide the information for what types. For example, Patton (2002) the population.

needs to be studied (Bernard, 2002). Purposive sampling is shown increasingly in qualitative research mentioned that it helps collect rich insights from the best sample of the number of participants in the qualitative research was not set beforehand. The theoretical saturation criteria was used to set the sample size of the interviews. Saturation level refers to conducting interviews until a certain point, in which no more new topics emerge from the interviews (Bowen, 2008 and Saunders *et al.*, 2017).

### **3.6.5. Data Analysis**

The collected data was analyzed through content analysis. Content analysis is a technique used to examine and interpret data in qualitative studies and allows a more profound understanding of the investigation, describing the phenomenon (Elo *et al.*, 2014; Kolbe and Burnett, 1991; Jadhav and Khanna, 2016).

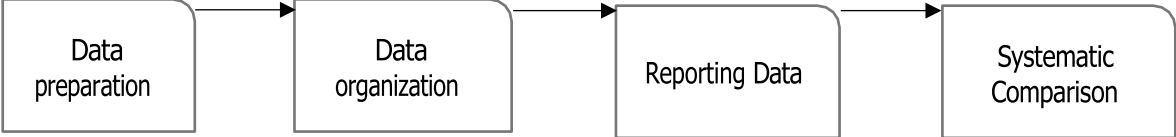
Content analysis has four main phases as shown in Figure 3.1: preparation, organization, and reporting of results and systematic comparing (Elo *et al.*, 2014). Preparation requires the transcription of the interviews. Next, the transcriptions were organised, consisting of combining the interviews together



for classification and comparisons of the data; making sense of the data, and selecting the unit of analysis. Once the organization of data is over, the research described the results on the content categories, illustrating the main ideas that emerged in each question so themes can emerge. Once the theme emerge, the researcher refers back to the literature review to interlink between the emerged themes and what has been already established in prior studies (Aronson, 1995; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018).

Hence, after conducting the interviews, the data collected was fully transcribed to capture all the insights provided by the interviewees. After the textual transcription of the data, a reading was conducted to pinpoint the main ideas carefully extracted from the topics explored. At the same time, the main ideas were captured and organized according to the previous set of categories. Then, the analysis led to refining the main themes, which translate the contents of the discussion that took place.

**Figure 2 - Data Coding and Analysis**



Source: Elaborated by the author

The qualitative phase (Empirical study I) provided the additional information to develop the proposed conceptual framework and hypotheses to be tested in the quantitative phase (Empirical study II).

**3.7. Empirical Study II**

**3.7.1. Quantitative Research Approach**

In this stage, empirical study II was conducted to test the proposed research model (qualitative research). The quantitative analysis seeks to answer the research questions and measure the new insights discovered in the first explorative study. The quantitative research was conducted to identify the impact of brand personality, self-concept, and media influence on civic engagement and fashion as a communication medium.

**3.7.2. Data Collection Method**

Quantitative data is usually collected through a structured questionnaire with predetermined responses.

A self-administrated questionnaire was used. According to Js *et al.* (2014), a self-administrated questionnaire is preferred in quantitative studies. Self-administrated questionnaires are survey questions explicitly designed to allow the participant to respond without the investigator being involved (Creswell, 2003; De Leeuw, 2012). A self-administrated questionnaire enables the research to ask questions and gather information concerning a specific topic of interest (Malhotra *et al.*, 2013). Self-administrated questionnaires can be either distributed in person or via electronic means (Creswell, 2003) and have advantages, such as being a low-cost method of data collection and allowing for the collection of data from an extensive geographic reach (Js *et al.*, 2014). In addition, they are strong in collecting a wide range of data including sensitive topics like sexual behaviors or drugs (Bowling, 2005; Bowling, 2009; Js *et al.*, 2014).

Due to the 2020/2021 pandemic, many citizens globally were forced to quarantine and maintain social distancing. Therefore, the study had to conduct data collection online. In this study, the questionnaire was placed on a google form. The link was positioned on social media platforms and popular fan pages of fashion and civic engagement, such as Hadia Ghaleb, Basic, Brantu fashion. These pages have more than 10,000 followers. In addition, the link was given to various university professors in different private entities to send the link to their college students.

The research chose electronic surveys as it allows the study to collect large-scale data (Malhotra *et al.*, 2004). The technology provides an inexpensive mechanism for conducting surveys online (Weible and Wallace, 1998; Sheehan and Hoy, 2000). The electronic survey is relatively cheap and increases significantly the sample size (Watt, 1999). Electronic surveys are becoming increasingly common (Lazar *et al.*, 1999). Research show and confirm that electronic survey content results may be no different than convenient sampling approaches to content results, yet provide substantial advantages of speedy distribution and response cycles (Yun and Trumbo, 2000; Malhotra *et al.*, 2004).

### **3.7.3. Research Variables and Measurements**

The proposed conceptual framework contains three antecedent variables (brand personality, self-concept, and media influence), one independent variable (civic engagement) comprising three sub-variables (political, social, and environmental) and one dependent variable (fashion as a communication medium). The following sections illustrate the conceptual and operational definitions of the variables found in this study.

### 3.7.3.1. Conceptual Definition of The Research Variables

The conceptual definitions of the variables in this study are presented below (table 3.3). The abstract definition refers to the meaning of the intended variable under study. It illustrates the concept meanings, explaining how they are related to other constructs.

**Table 3 - Conceptual Definitions**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Conceptual Definitions</b>
Brand Engagement	Brand engagement creates an emotional driver to maintain a special bond between the brand and it's customers (Rahman <i>et al.</i> , 2014). Thus, brand engagement is engaging constantly with their customers in a continuous relationship to highlight brand activities, and keep close customer interactions.
Brand Personality	Brand personality refers to a brand having specific human characteristics that can resemble consumer's characters over time (Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2012).
Self-Concept	Self-concept is the specific characteristic of people's identity and self-presentation that individuals wish to control and portray to others (McNeill, 2018).
Media Influence	Media influence spreads information to the general mass audiences (Naik and Raman, 2003). There are different media channels, starting with print media and magazine types to later stages of radio and television (Wok <i>et al.</i> , 2008). Today, consumers face a wide variety of media; personal, mass media, and social media (Shephard <i>et al.</i> , 2016).
Civic Engagement	Civic engagement is the notion that an individual and collective action in society offers better changes for the community's common good (Abdou and Skalli, 2018).
Fashion as a Medium of Communication	Clothes communicate messages with different meanings. Clothing represents vital information about the self, social, individual and confirming a specific language between consumers (Motta, 2018).

### 3.7.3.2. Operationalization of The Research Variables

The variables in this study were measured using validated scales from prior studies. The scales were adapted by modifying the statements to the topic of the study. The scales used in this study were either 5-point Likert scales or 5-point semantic differential scales. Tables 3.4 to 3.8 clarify the used scales. According to Harzing, (2006) and Nasreddine *et al.* (2014), in the Middle East, it is preferred to use five point interval scales instead of seven points as participants in this culture do not distinguish between strongly agree, slightly agree, consent and vice versa.

### 3.7.3.3. Brand Personality

Brand personality reflects the human characteristics that can resemble consumers' personalities over time (Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2012). Consumers purchase brands that self-reflect their persona. The research used the brand personality from Becker-Olson and Karen (2003). The brand personality

measures the degree to which participants engage with brands and view a company as representative of a particular industry. Two opposites (the scale item) are given for the consumer to compare the brand personality with their character. The two opposites (the scale item) are in between a scale of 1 to 5. The aim is to let the respondent identify the type of brand persona they will select and how it matches their personality types. Table 3.4 illustrates the measurement.

**Table 4 - Brand Personality**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Items adapted from</b> Becker and Karen (2003).
Brand Personality	1. Similar/Dissimilar 2. Consistent/Inconsistent 3. Typical/Atypical 4. Representative/Unrepresentative 5. Complementary/Not complementary 6. Lowfit/High fit 7. Make sense/Does not make sense

**3.7.3.4. Self-Concept**

Self-concept theory concentrates on how individuals self-present themselves and their identity to society (Tice *et al.*, 1995 and McNeill, 2018). Hence, self-presentation is a process that identify consumers with their social groups, to portray a certain perception about an individual’s characteristics (Peluchette *et al.*, 2006 and McNeill, 2018). The research used self-concept from the scale proposed by Grewal *et al.*, (2004). This scale is a five-point Likert scale type, including six statements. Respondent’s answers are between 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. Table 3.5 illustrates the measurement.

**Table 5 - Self-Concept**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Items adapted</b> from Grewal <i>et al.</i> , (2004)
Self-Concept	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Clothing style reflect the kind of person I see myself to be.</li><li>2. My clothing style in wearing items helps ascertain my self-identity.</li><li>3. My clothing style makes me feel good about myself.</li><li>4. My clothing style is an instrument of my self-expression.</li><li>5. My clothing style plays a critical role in defining my self-concept.</li><li>6. My clothing style helps me to establish the kind of person I see myself to be.</li></ol>

### **3.7.3.5. Media Influence**

According to prior studies, media influence participants to dress in a certain way (Wok et al., 2008; Shephard et al., 2016; Valaei and Nikhashemi, 2017). Two types of media are considered; traditional and non-traditional media. This section represents scales developed by Russell, Norman, and Heckler (2004). The original scale contains 15 statements to measure the specific effects of traditional and non-traditional media influence. This scale is a five-point likert scale. Respondent's answers are between 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". Table 3.6 shows the scale items used.

**Table 6 - Media Influence**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Traditional Media:</b> Items adapted from Russell, Norman, and Heckler, 2004)	<b>Non-Traditional media:</b> Items adapted from Russell, Norman, and Heckler, 2004)
Media Influence	1. Traditional Media is an escape for me.	1. Non-traditional media is an escape for me.
	2. Traditional Media help me forget about the day's problems.	2. Non-traditional media help me forget about the day's problems.
	3. If I am in a bad mood, watching traditional media puts me in a better mood.	3. If I am in a bad mood, watching non-traditional media puts me in a better mood.
	4. I like the clothes seen on the traditional media.	4. I like the clothes seen on the non-traditional media.
	5. I like the hairstyles portrayed on the traditional media.	5. I like the hairstyles portrayed on non-traditional media.
	6. I often buy clothing styles that I've seen on traditional media.	6. I often buy clothing styles that I've seen on non-traditional media.
	7. I imitate the gestures and facial expressions from the characters seen on the traditional media.	7. I imitate the gestures and facial expressions from the characters seen on the non-traditional media.
	8. I find myself saying phrases heard on the traditional media when I interact with other people.	8. I find myself saying phrases heard on the non-traditional media when I interact with other people.
	9. I try to speak like the characters observed in traditional media.	9. I try to speak like the characters observed in non-traditional media.
	10. I learn how to handle real life situations by watching traditional media.	10. I learn how to handle real life situations by watching non-traditional media.
	11. I get ideas from the traditional media about how to interact in my own life.	11. I get ideas from the non-traditional media about how to interact in my own life.
	12. I relate what happens in the traditional media to my own life.	12. I relate what happens in the non-traditional media to my own life.
	13. I would love to be an actor in the traditional media	13. I would love to be an actor in the non-traditional media
	14. I would love to meet the characters on the traditional media.	14. I would love to meet the characters on the non-traditional media.
	15. I have items that relate to what I have observed on the traditional media.	15. I have items that relate to what I have observed on the non-traditional media.

**3.7.3.6. Civic Engagement**

Civic engagement in a society involves diverse political, social and environmental (Finley, 2011) and can assume many forms: charitable giving, associational membership, political participation, artistic expression, and community service events (Berger, 2009). Therefore, the study adapts the scale “civic engagement’ from Laroche *et al*/(2005). This scale is a five point Likert scale. Respondent’s answers are between 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. This scale is used three times to measure the different civic engagement types: political, social and environmental issues. Table 3.7 shows the operational definition.

**Table 7 - Civic Engagement**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Items adapted from Laroche <i>et al.</i>, (2005)</b>
Civic Engagement	1. It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to political matters in society.
	2. I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with political matters in society.
	3. It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of political issues in society.
	4. It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to social matters in society.
	5. I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with social matters in society.
	6. It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of social issues in society.
	7. It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to environmental matters in society.
	8. I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with environmental matters in society.
	9. It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of environmental issues in society.

### **3.7.3.7. Fashion as a Communication Medium**

Fashion can become a tool to communicate several meanings about oneself, identity to others, and their social level (Arvanitidou and Gasouka, 2013; Angerosa, 2014; Motta, 2018). Clothing can illustrate central arguments about the self, social and individual, confirming a specific language between people (Motta, 2018). Hausman's (2004) scale was used to measure this construct. The scale contains six items and It assesses the degree to which the participant describes their interaction style by a two-way flow of information. The scale is a 5 point likert scale. Respondent's answers are between 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree"(Table 3.8).

**Table 8 - Fashion as a Communication Medium**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Items adapted from (Hausman, 2004)</b>
Fashion as a Communication Medium	1. Using fashion trends as a medium of communication is excellent.
	2. My fashion trends share relevant information.
	3. There is little communication between my fashion usage and what I want to portray to the world (R).
	4. My fashion trends is a source of information.
	5. The direction of information I want to communicate to the public is usually shown in my selection of fashion.
	6. There is few opportunities to use fashion as a medium of communication (R).

### **3.7.4. Population and Sampling**

The population of focus in empirical study II is the same as the empirical study I. This empirical study II focuses on the population of high-middle income youth and young adults in Egypt, specifically Cairo and Alexandria. This population was selected as they use fashion as a civic engagement approach. The conclusion is established in past research, stating that:

- Private university students have a high average monthly household income to go fashion shopping on a regular bases (Gafi.Gov.Eg,2015; Abdou and Skalli, 2018).
- Private university students are interested in civic engagement, and buying fashionable styles to communicate various messages to society and being active and participative in civic activities (Miller, 2005).
- Youth and young adults, specifically college students, are aware of the latest fashion trends and enjoy shopping (Negm *et al.*, 2012; Abdou and skalli, 2018; Bawa *et al.*, 2019).
- Youth and young adults seek new and unorthodox ways to communicate their voices to the government. Youth today participate in various unconventional civic activities (Negm *et al.*, 2012; Abdou and Skalli, 2018).
- Youth and young adults are active democratic citizens (Dorio *et al.*, 2017; Abdou and Skalli, 2018).
- Private university students seek to politically communicate their opinions to officials (Dorio *et al.*, 2017)

The sampling method is also similar to empirical research I. It also uses the non-probability sampling technique. When it comes to quantitative research, there are various approaches to non-probability sampling. According to Creswell (2003), the most popular non-probability methods are three types: convenient sampling (approaching individuals that are near and available to the research); snowball (asking respondents to help recruiting other respondents), and quota sampling (sampling individuals using pre-determined fundamental characteristics of the population). These sampling techniques are used in both qualitative and quantitative studies (Etikan and Bala, 2017).

This study used convenience sampling. According to Taherdoost (2016), convenient sampling is a practical sampling choice that is inexpensive and readily available for the studied sample. Convenient sampling is considered a process of collecting data from respondents that fit the study's objectives. Certain elements are accessible for the study to reach respondents near geographical proximity,



availability, and willingness to participate in the study at hand (Mackey and Gass, 2005). Also, convenient sampling can have some weak points, the study can be biased (Mackey and Gass, 2005).

### **3.7.5. Data Collection**

In this study, the questionnaire is titled: "survey about use of fashion" The questionnaire consists of eight sections (as shown in the appendix A). Section one of the questionnaire began by an introduction about the purpose of the study and filtered questions related to consumers' fashion purchasing and civic engagement. Four initial qualifying questions were asked: "Do you have an interest in clothing?" "How often do you go shopping?" "Do you believe your fashion items communicate who you are?" "Have you ever purchased an item to communicate a message related to any political, social or environmental problems? (Example: a pin supporting cancer patients)".

Section two of the questionnaire referred to the research variables. This section contained instructions related to how the scale works in measuring the following variables: introduction questions about fashion behaviors, identity, brand personality, traditional media influence, non-traditional media influence, civic engagement, fashion as a communication medium. These scales helped assess the variables in this study.

Section three focused on the demographic questions. This section sought to ask questions related to the participant's socio-demographic traits: age, level of education completed, gender, city of residence, marital status, number of children, current job status, and average monthly household income.

The questionnaire was available in either English or Arabic, depending on the participant's preference to fill out the questions. First, a two-way-back translation was conducted to ensure that both questionnaire versions contained the same content and query meaning. This approach reassures that both versions of the questionnaire are equivalent. The two-way-back translation was completed by taking the original English version of the questionnaire and translating it into Arabic (Brislin, 1970). Then, another translator took the Arabic questionnaire and converted it into English. Next, the two versions were compared to ensure that there were no meaningful differences.

Once the final draft of the questionnaire was finished, a pilot study was conducted to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire. Pilot studies are minor scale versions or trial runs that help the study try out a particular research instrument (Van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002). The pilot test aims to discover any mistakes and errors that provide some sort of bias. The pre-test in the questionnaire development aids in knowing the order of questions, the range of answers, and the wordings chosen to be tested and adjusted if it needs any change (Van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002). An online pre-test is performed with

20 questionnaires. Based on the pilot test, some minor adjustments were made to the wording of some of the questions. The final version of the questionnaire took about fifteen minutes to answer.

### **3.7.6. Ethical Issues**

Research ethics requires the study to align its objectives with the investigation (Creswell, 2003; Agwor and Osho, 2017). Respondents were informed of the purpose of this study, the conditions of participation, the confirmation that the individual's identity is kept confidential, and the data collected would be used for academic purposes only encouraging students to express their opinion and to be open. Consequently, the survey explained that participants' participation is voluntary, and the respondents are free to choose anonymity (in what refers to study I, the questionnaire was anonymous). The privacy of interviewees is crucial in studies addressing topics of such high sensitivity.

### **3.7.7. Data Analysis**

Regarding the data analysis in empirical study II, data analysis used two different programs, AMOS and SPSS version 20. With these programs, several analysis were conducted: assessment of normality and outliers, factor analysis, multiple regression analysis, frequency analysis, reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, validity analysis, incremental fit indices, goodness of fit indices, average variance extracted and structural equation modeling.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a statistical technique used in research studies combining factors and multiple regression analysis (Hair *et al.*, 2006). SEM is a system of equations that helps determine noticeable or unnoticeable relationships between variables under quantitative studies (Mcquitty and Wolf, 2013). This method deals with estimating parameters for systems of simultaneous equations directly or indirectly (Dastgeer *et al.*, 2012).

SEM's most basic usage relates to theory testing, by assessing connections between variables under investigation. The process of SEM effectively consists of path analysis, factor analysis, and regression modeling (Hair *et al.*, 2010; Mcquitty and Wolf, 2013). SEM analysis includes multiple steps. The first step is to create a conceptual model, summarizing the study's constructs being examined. The second step includes another model with the observed and unobserved relationship constructs. The third step is testing the data after the model construction.

SEM models have two characteristics. First, SEM models help the study estimate multiple and interrelated dependence. Secondly, they allow more understanding of the unobserved constructs in the study. Therefore, SEM creates a model to help elaborate the relationships understudied (Hair *et al.*,

2010). Studies can draw theoretical constructs by a graphical path diagram that visualizes the relationship between variables in a much more manageable construct. A path diagram consists of boxes and circles connected by arrows which represent causal relationships.

### **3.8. Summary**

In conclusion, this chapter reports the usage of a mixed research approach. In this approach, two empirical studies were conducted. In empirical study I, a qualitative research approach - through the use of semi-structured interviews, the data was analyzed using content analysis. The qualitative research outcomes highlighted vital insights regarding the investigation of fashion consumption and combining civic engagement concerns via fashion items. With these insights, the developed model was adjusted to be further investigated in empirical study II. Empirical study II sought to examine the model and the emerging research hypotheses that focused on testing the impact of brand personality, self-concept, media influence, on civic engagement and the impact of civic engagement on fashion as a communication medium. The following chapters illustrate the outcomes of both the qualitative and quantitative research phases.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: EMPIRICAL STUDY I - FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews was analyzed to identify the key concepts or themes of the study using content analysis. The qualitative data analysis aids the study in understanding how youth and university students communicate through their fashion items within the Egyptian context regarding whether they are motivated by civic engagement to do so. In addition, this study also aids in understanding how fashion buying choices can be a way for civically sharing important societal messages to the community. When conducting this study, the following research questions are of focus:

Q1: How do brand engagement, self-concept, and media influence lead to civic engagement?

Q2: Which civic causes do consumers support through the use of fashion?

Q3: Does civic engagement lead to using fashion as a communication medium?

### **4.2. Sample Profile**

16 interviews were conducted with youth and young adults in private universities from different socio- demographic backgrounds. Table 4.1 illustrates the interviewee's traits and the interview duration.

**Table 9 - Description of The Interviewee's Profile**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Duration</b>
1	Respondent A	20	Female	German University in Cairo (GUC)	Marketing	Cairo	35 mins
2	Respondent B	21	Female	Arab Academy for Science and Technology (AAST)	Media	Alexandria	28 mins
3	Respondent C	21	Female	Arab Academy for Science and Technology (AAST)	Media	Alexandria	19 mins
4	Respondent D	22	Female	American University Cairo (AUC)	Mass Com	Cairo	30 mins
5	Respondent E	22	Female	German University in Cairo (GUC)	Finance	Cairo	20 mins
6	Respondent F	21	Female	Arab Academy for Science and Technology (AAST)	Media	Alexandria	37 mins
7	Respondent G	23	Male	British University in Cairo (BUC)	Marketing	Cairo	40 mins
8	Respondent H	22	Female	Arab Academy for Science and Technology (AAST)	Engineering	Alexandria	24 mins
9	Respondent I	21	Female	American University Cairo (AUC)	Pharmacy	Cairo	42 mins
10	Respondent J	20	Female	Arab Academy for Science and Technology (AAST)	Media	Alexandria	25 mins
11	Respondent K	22	Male	American University Cairo (AUC)	Architecture	Cairo	45 mins
12	Respondent L	23	Male	Arab Academy for Science and Technology (AAST)	Media	Alexandria	39 mins
13	Respondent M	19	Female	Pharos University (PUA)	Pharmacy	Alexandria	25 mins
14	Respondent N	22	Female	British University In Egypt (BUE)	Marketing	Cairo	29 mins
15	Respondent O	20	Female	Arab Academy for Science and Technology (AAST)	Finance	Cairo	40 mins
16	Respondent P	21	Male	British University in Cairo (BUE)	Marketing	Cairo	42 mins

The data collected in the interviews was organized in several themes. Therefore, the data in this chapter is presented according to the key areas found in the interview guide: (1) fashion usage (2) brand engagement and brand personality (3) self-concept (4) media influence (5) civic engagement.

#### **4.3. Fashion Usage**

This key area collects insights regarding fashion in general and whether it communicates messages or not. In this part, it is essential to explore two main criterias: a) whether people generally use fashion to reflect specific messages to others and b) do the items purchased transfer messages to others (status, personality, and political stance)? Two themes appeared: (1)

fashion communicates and (2) fashion reflects individuality in (figure 4.1) illustrates fashion as a communication medium theme.

The majority of interviewees acknowledged that fashion reflects some sort of meaning showing that fashion communicates messages to others of various topics. Fashion is a tool that indicates personal information about individual's characteristics, profession, country, ethnic background, and social class. Fashion does not only express personal details or the seasonal ambiance, it depicts deeper reflection, such as an individual's mood. Consumer's clothing selection is determined by whether one's feeling is happy and bright or feeling emotionally distressed. Thus, the coding of the first theme is "fashion communicates". This finding is supported by various quotes indicated by the interviewees, such as:

*"In the summer, I like to wear bright colors so it can reflect freshness with the weather"*  
(Respondent A).

*"I do believe that fashion shows class, employment, regionality and these are all political aspects in my opinion"* (Respondent K).

*"My fashion expresses my mood and what I want people to understand about me"*  
(Respondent E). *"People like to show off their social standards through wearing brands and big labels; this reflects a certain message about whether they have money or not"*  
(Respondent N). "

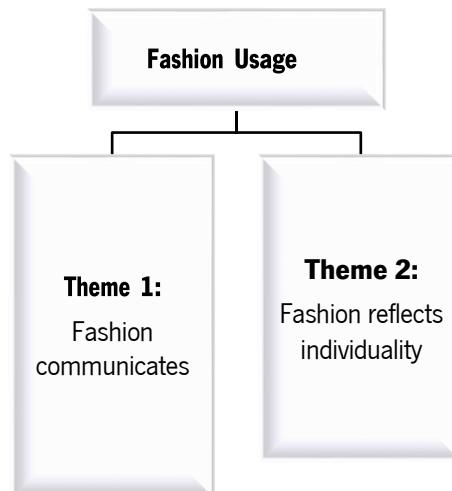
*If fashion is based on going for a meeting, then I wear formal so people can perceive me as professional and serious, but if I am going to the club, I would wear casual or sportswear attire"* (Respondent J).

People choose fashion according to their specific situations and roles in life. The interviews show that fashion is used differently on various occasions among university students. For this reason, the second theme identified is "fashion reflects individuality". This conclusion is supported by multiple quotes from the interviewees, such as:

*"I like to look smart chic, comfortable when I am at work"* (Respondent A). *"Fashion reflects my identity and status."* (Respondent F).

*"My fashion expresses the things I care for; I do consider my fashion to be an investment to show off my personality and my personal preferences"* (Respondent K).

**Figure 3 - Fashion Usage**



#### **4.4. Brand Personality**

In this key area, we seek to understand if the respondents have favorite brands that reflect their personality; and whether their favorite brands perform customer relationship management (CRM). Based on the analysis, two main themes emerged in (Figure 4.2) brand personality themes: (3) Different brands are preferred for different purposes (4) Brands today practice CRM.

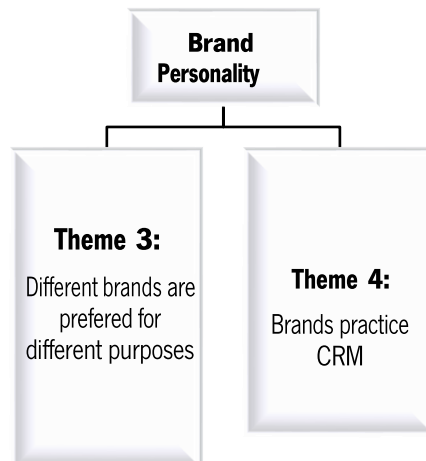
As the interviewees explained, different brands exist in the market. As a result, it is difficult to choose one specific favorite brand. Each brand chosen promotes a distinctive appearance and a distinctive role that they play in the community. There is not a particular brand that sells all fashion pieces in one label.

Participants indicated that many of their preferred brands carry out various marketing communications - sending texts and emails. The discussion revealed that respondents received several messages and notifications from their preferred fashion brands (Respondent A, D, F, G, O, and P). Their favourite brands are strong supporters of customer relationship management. Thus, the code for the fourth theme is brands practice CRM activities. Some supporting quotes;

*"I receive messages and emails to alert me on their new collection." (Respondent D).*

*"Luxury brands that I purchase from communicating with me in a more personalized manner- they send me greetings and texts for my birthday which I love." (Respondent G).*

**Figure 4 - Brand Personality**



#### **4.5. Self-Concept**

This key area collects insights regarding self-concept. This section explores the answers to several questions: how would you describe yourself?; how do you describe your fashion choices?; how do you like to dress?; what inspires you to dress in a certain way?; do you seek the latest fashion trends? As a result, several themes emerged: (5) extroverts seek fashion trends (6) one's self-concept depends on the external environment (7) Fashion communicates standpoints. (8) fashion illustrates one's values (Figure 4.3) illustrates the self-concept themes.

Most interviewees described themselves as extroverts; other interviewees stated that they are mixed introverts and extroverts (Respondents E, G, I, M, N, and P). Many interviewees enjoy experiencing new things and being open to sharing ideas, fashion styles, and outings. Being an extrovert or something in between can help these university students be aware of various global fashion. Their personality is not restricted in playing things safely.

Regarding fashion knowledge and the reasons behind wearing a particular fashion style, interviewees stated that inspiration comes from many sources. The inspiration can come from external or internal motivations. Students often respond that fashion guidance is strongly linked to what they see in the media and community (Respondents B, D, H, I, J, L, M, N, and P). Personal inspiration mainly comes from the media. Accordingly, attractive celebrities, models, or successful individuals wearing certain styles has an impact on how consumers dress. Therefore, people learn who they want to be based on external influences, a finding that is in line with the social learning theory.

Individuals consume fashion for different self-expression motives. The interviews illustrated different angles about the respondent's selection towards fashion. Many interviewees stated that flashy colors, prints, cuts, designs, etc. capture their attention (Respondents B, D, H, I, J, L, M, N, and P). Other



interviewees stated that their jobs dictate what they wear (Respondents A, M, D and P). Other interviewees seek to dress brands that represent their values and way of living (Respondents B, C, F, and P). Accordingly, the findings illustrate that people wear according to their personalities and their role in society.

Most respondents think that their fashion sense declares a particular image about themselves. They claim that their clothing style illustrates messages, beliefs, and values that they hold in different situations and what they look up to in other areas, such as work, everyday attire in the street, or heading to work out in the gym. Some interviewees try to be perceived as pro-sustainable consumers when buying fashion items nowadays since they are now self-cautious about sustainability. Supporting quotes are:

*"I would say that my taste in fashion is always simple yet crazy. I like to wear the new hot stuff"* (Respondent E).

*"I dress mainly depending on the motto that I live with, which is, dress in whatever you like, but my taste is normally spontaneous"* (Respondent F).

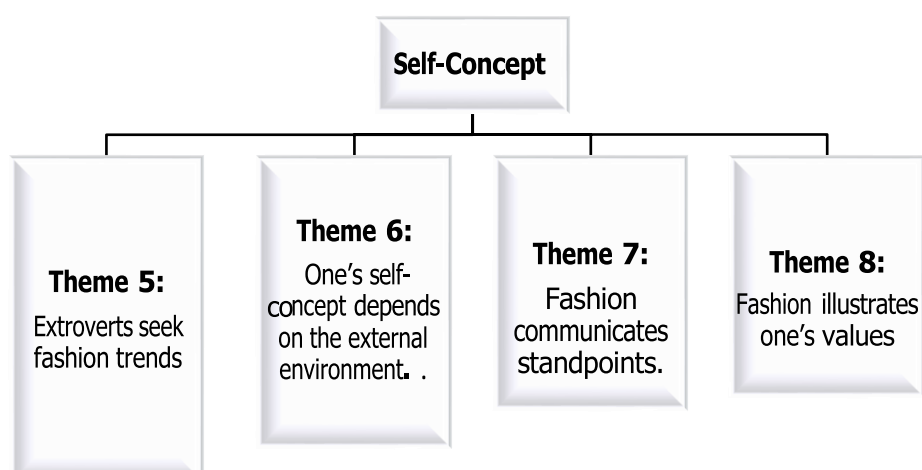
*"I am a multi persona. I dress based on my mood and music. Sometimes I wear punk rock, other times black other times smart casual with skinny jeans or leather pants for a guy, which is totally bizarre in Egypt"* (Respondent L).

*"I would like people to see what I care about in my fashion choices. I prefer sustainable and recycled fashion that doesn't harm the environment. I can wear second hand clothes, but of good quality"* (Respondent K).

*"Sure, fashion communicates messages. I actually seek that my attire at work, because I am a woman and pro-feminist. I like to wear clothes that resembles my professionalism, so guys take me seriously"* (Respondent A).

*"Yes, I seek elegant and chic style in my everyday outfits. I like to look good because first impression is everything"* (Respondent B).

**Figure 5 - Self-Concept**



#### **4.7. Media Influence**

This key area intends to collect insights regarding media as a learning tool for fashion trends. Many replies illustrated how media influence interviewees to buy specific fashion trends. At the same time, the study wanted to know which type of media channel respondents mainly use and the most influential tool for fashion buyers. In this section, three main questions were asked: do you get inspired by media when it comes to fashion; which media encourages you the most; does the media influence you to change your fashion style from time to time; what blogs/Instagram/Facebook accounts related to fashion do you follow. The following themes emerged: (9) traditional and non-traditional media inspires (10) media is influential (11) non-traditional media is popular in fashion knowledge, (Figure 4.4) illustrate the media influence themes.

Discussions revealed that traditional and social media channels have an inspirational effect on what fashion items consumers tend to buy. Television series, Magazines, Movies, and Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest act as a reference source in how one should appear. The discussion illustrated that social media play a significant role along with with traditional media when learning about styles, trends, and fads.

To complete the previous observation, from the responses mentioned above, it is evident that media and its various platforms spread fashion awareness. Some people have the resources and capabilities to imitate, while others just admire. It can be noticeable how media affects their subconscious styles when shopping for fashionable items or dressing in a certain way like the celebrities they observed. So, when trends come and go in the media, this indicates consumer's change in fashion behavior. However, media is a strong trigger for businesses to promote fashion to consumers.

Supporting quotes mentioned are:

*“Yes, Instagram, Tv, and Movies give me ideas. I like watching Television for its visuals, and when I watch a movie, I get inspired by the character’s actions and their personalities, so I want to wear like them.”* (Respondent B).

*“Yes, social media intrigues me. I can dress like the actors. Still, it has to fit my personality.”* (Respondent F).

*“Yes, social media like Instagram affect my fashion outfits. Also, I am affected by Tv and Netflix, when I am deeply connected to the actors, I go buying the same outfits.”* (Respondent G).

*“I guess the media tells the fashion brand what to put like, for example, the puffy shoulders in tops”* (Respondent A).

*“Not me personally, but I know a lot of people who are affected by the media, such as following Kardashian”* (Respondent I).

*“I believe that consumers look at different fashion styles in the media mainly now and then to change their sense of fashion awareness”* (Respondent F).

*“Media in general influences consumers to try to change their monotonic sense of fashion. Media can influence consumers directly or the business itself. For example, the media shows the direction of fashion in which the stores should display”* (Respondent A).

The discussions showed that every interviewee used the internet to seek fashion in various social media accounts. The interviewees illustrated:

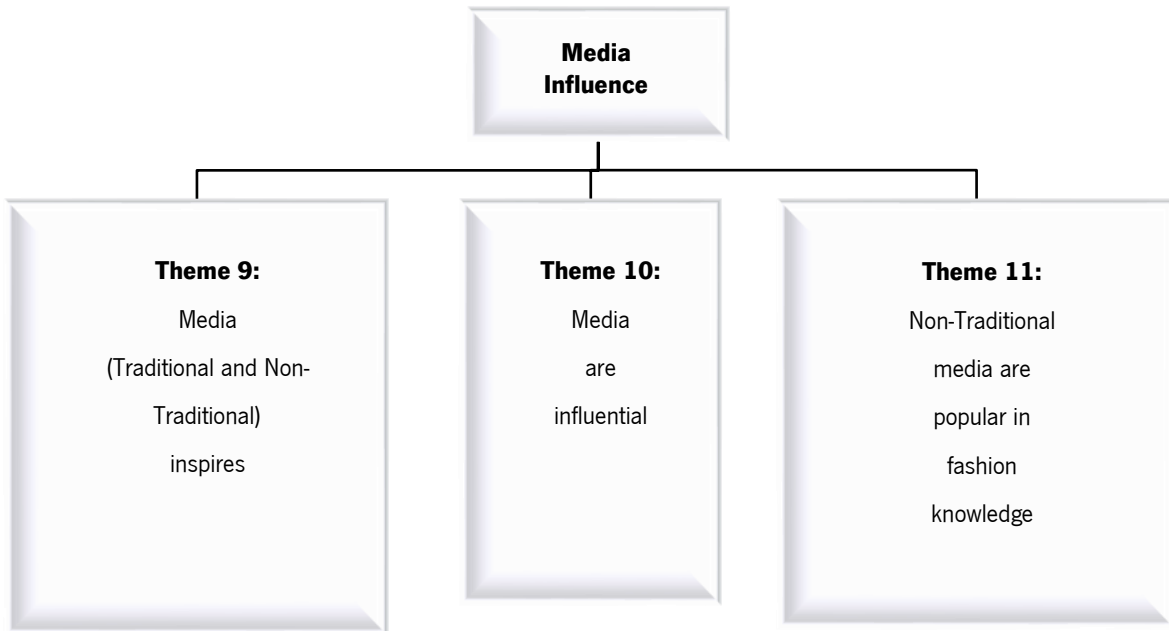
*“Instagram mainly. I follow the Oscars, Golden globe, H&M, and Zara to stay updated with fashion and celebrities”* (Respondent A).

*“I follow celebrities like Selena Gomez for her style on her social media “*(Respondent J).

*“Nayla Garana, the fashion influencer, is my preferred go-to when I need fashion advice”* (Respondent E).

*“I go to websites such as; Harrold’s, Bloomingdales, Elissa and Ellie Saab for his beautiful designs in dresses”* (Respondent I).

**Figure 6 - Media Influence**



#### **4.8. Civic Engagement**

This key area collects insight about civic engagement and reports answers to the question of whether participants know civic engagement activities and whether they have potentially engaged in such acts to help serve and give back to the community. This section aims to explore: did you ever participate in various civic engagement activities; do you consider yourself an activist- which issues are important to support? have you ever purchased a fashion item to communicate a societal problem? Accordingly, three themes emerged: (12) civic engagement is popular among youth (13) fashion activism is trending (14) fashion activism supports political, social and environmental issues (Figure 4.5) Civic engagement illustrates the themes.

According to the discussions, civic engagement has become an essential behavior among the youth. Young adults believe that it is part of their role as democratic citizens. Moreover, youth believe that civic participation was necessary to have made the 2011 revolution a success. Based on the interviewee's comments, they worked on several activities to make a difference in the community. Nowadays, due to their experiences lived during the 2011 Arab spring, they have developed civic awareness, knowledge, skills, values, and motivation. They want to be citizens that make a difference. Many youth participate in civic engagement. They indicated that fashion activism is a popular activity among democratic youth. They commonly use fashion as a medium and communication tool to cause social and environmental changes in their community. Some supporting quotes are:

*"No, I do not consider myself an activist. I am not very loud. However, I will support issues*

*that interest me like animal abuse and discrimination. But will not initiate something”* (Respondent A). *“ Yes, I like to support causes that interest me”* (Respondent K).

*“I do support environmental issues, because our planet is dying”* (Respondent B).

*“I like to support the pink breast cancer event; I have a lot of my friends that suffer from cancer.*

*So, on that day I like to wear the pink pin to show my support to them”* (Respondent D).

*“In the 2013 revolution, I was protesting in the street against president Morsi”* (Respondent F).

*“ Yes, I joined the youth convention to help save the environment against marine life with plastic”* (Respondent I).

During the discussions, interviewees explain important topics that citizens should be aware of and take proactive behavior. They believe that this assertive behavior contributes to a better society. Young adults believe that fashion activism can educate and aid people in developing the knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to participate in civic life. This act of humanity supports the community conditions for themselves, others and helps shape the future—fashion aids in building knowledge and education about the impact of positive human behaviors needed to increase sustainability. The interviewees were highly supportive of political, social, and environmental issues when it came to fashion activism. Some supporting quotes:

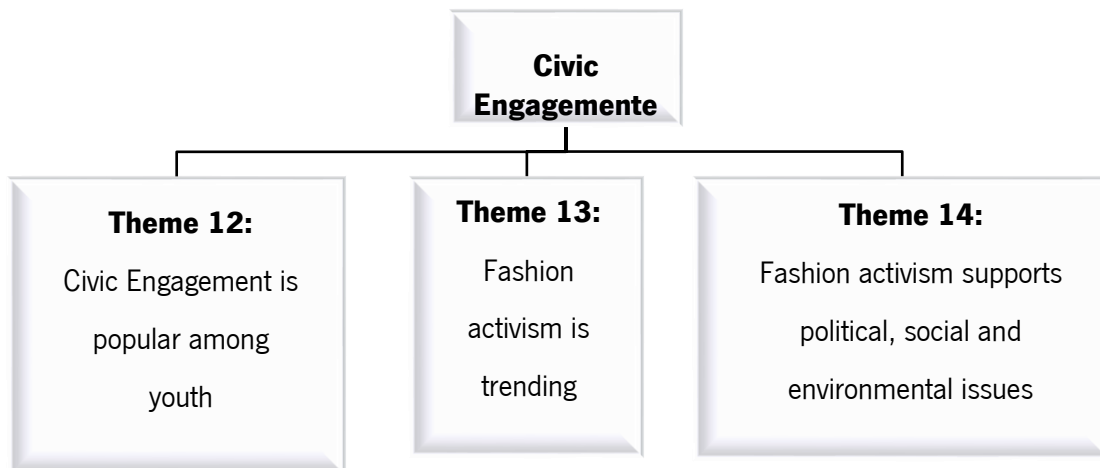
*“We need to support environmental engagement to heighten awareness about environmental problems in order to reduce as much as possible the end of the world”* (Respondent H).

*“During a conference against animal abuse in Sharm el sheikh in 2018. This conference helped youth to maintain knowledge about animal abuse and environmental issues.”*

(Respondent E). *“I buy t-shirts with slogans that say “girl power as a pro-feminist energy”* (Respondent K); *“I wore something to show off environmental support. Two years ago, I participated in an environmental conference in Sharm el sheikh, we wore clothes out of harmless materials”* (Respondent L). *“During the Egyptian revolution I used to buy t-shirts of the Egyptian flag colors and statements like “We want a safe regime” In Arabic”* (Respondent B).

*“I supported the Palestinian cause, so I used to wear t-shirts in Arabic and English stating “you will have your land back” because this is a susceptible topic to me”* (Respondent F).

**Figure 4.5: Civic Engagement**



**4.9. Concluding The Qualitative Analysis**

Empirical Study I analysis contributes to understand if fashion can be seen as a communication in general and as a tool to self-exploit civic engagement issues out to the community and identify the critical civic engagement matters. The data collected was fully transcribed to capture all the insights provided by the interviewees. The main ideas were carefully extracted from the topics explored during the discussions. Hence, this chapter set categories of the main themes that emerged during the interviews. Table 4.2 demonstrates each question asked and the idea that occurred.

**Table 10 - Illustrates Questions and Themes**

Key area	Question:	Theme:
Introduction to fashion as a communication medium	Question 1: Do you think people in general use fashion to reflect certain messages to others? How?	Theme 1: Fashion communicates
	Question 2: Are the items you purchased meant to reflect certain messages to others? (Status, personality and political stance)? Explain.	Theme 2: Fashion reflects individuality
Brand Engagement/ Personality	Question 3: What is your favorite brand? Does it reflect your personality?	Theme 3: Different brands are preferred for different purposes
	Question 4: Does your favorite fashion brand perform CRM? Give examples.	Theme 4: Brands today practice CRM
Self-Concept	Question 5: How would you describe yourself? Explain.	Theme 5: Extroverts seek fashion trends
	Question 6: What inspires you to dress in a certain way? Explain.	Theme 6: One's self-concept Depends on the external environment
	Question 7: Do you seek the latest fashion trends? Or items that reflect your personality? Explain your choice.	Theme 7: Fashion communicates standpoints
	Question 8: If fashion is meant to communicate certain messages about you? What would it be?	Theme 8: Fashion illustrates one's value
Media Influence	Question 9: Do you get inspired by media when it comes to fashion? Which media inspires you the most? Why?	Theme 9: Traditional/non- traditional media inspire
	Question 10: does the media influence you to change your fashion style from time to time? How so?	Theme 10: Media are influential
	Question 11: What blogs, Instagram, Facebook accounts related to fashion do you follow?	Theme 11: Non-traditional media are popular in fashion knowledge
Civic Engagement	Question 12: Did you ever participate in civic engagement activities? explain	Theme 12: Civic engagement is popular among youth
	Question 13: Do you consider yourself an activist? If so, which issues are important to support?	Theme 13: Fashion activism is trending
	Question 14: Have you ever purchased a fashion item to communicate societal problems if so which problem? Why this specific issue?	Theme 14: Fashion activism supports political, social and environmental issues.

#### **4.10. Comparison of Qualitative Findings with Prior Study**

The study conducted interviews to gain empirical evidence to support the theories found in the literature review. The literature review suggested that the self-concept theory reflects an individual's self-presentation (Tice *et al.*, 1995; McNeill, 2018). When it comes fashion and the self-concept theory explains how individual's self-present themselves to society. Therefore, the self-concept theory is vital in determining consumers' social groups (McNeill, 2018). When it comes to fashion and the self-concept theory, the interviews show that clothes and fashion items are a mechanism to reflect an individual's self-identity symbolically. Through selective fashion, consumers illustrate to others their pursued persona.

The interviews provided empirical evidence that fashion buyers are individuals who decide first on the specific look, then buy the fashion item depending on how it depicts their self-image publicly (Peluchette *et al.*, 2006). Interviewees explained how the self-concept element is a vital element when shopping for fashion. Furthermore, most respondents declared that they would buy fashion items depending on whether they described their personality characteristics. Therefore, results show that youth and young adults search for fashion elements and brands that match their personalities. For this reason, these results provide additional support for considering self-concept, as an antecedent in the research model.

Based on the literature, the social learning theory explains how consumers learn about various brands, behavior, products, and services through different media channels. Media influences consumer's behavior to shop different styles that they have watched previously through media exposure (Wok *et al.*, 2008). According to the interviews, consumers learn fashion through various media channels. Consumers tend to learn and benefit from the observation of images found on television or social media.

Results highlight that most respondents agreed that different media channels watched tend to affect their fashion styles and identities. The respondents mentioned that the red carpet events and the Grammy's inspire how they dress, influencers stimulate their daily appearances, social networks (such as Pinterest and Instagram) educate and provide fashion information. Therefore, media influences fashion consumers to change their fashion styles from time to time, but only if they complement part of their personality traits. Thus, the findings support that both traditional media and non-traditional media influence behaviors. Therefore, they were also considered as antecedents in the research model.

Accordingly, media helps promote various brands to consumers. Thus, media are a source of knowledge to express brand personality (Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2012). According to the self-concept theory, brand personality plays a vital role in consumers' behaviors in considering products (Lin, 2010). Brand Personality is all about clicking the consumer's character to the brand's style and products (Ananda

*et al.*, 2019). According to Goldsmith and Goldsmith (2012), brand scholars argue that brand personality is of great significance for generating brand engagement with consumers. It represents a crucial element for a brand name to survive in the market (Ananda *et al.*, 2019).

The study uncovered that brands need to reflect an individual's personality to consider purchasing the product according to the interviews. According to the insights that emerged, consumers did not experience enough engagement with the brand. CRM was not the main source of fashion consumption. The knowledge and brand preference were through the media, which communicated what the brand personality was about. Primarily, fashion is worn to express the personality wearing the selected fashion; to make the society understand more about the character wearing; to illustrate the certain occasions that the character is participating in. Consequently, the results model in the Egyptian context rather than brand engagement. Hence, the final antecedent in the research model was brand personality.

Based on prior studies, civic engagement encourages citizens to participate in activities that can create a difference in their civic life in their communities. Civic engagement includes various forms, it can be individualism voluntarism or organizational involvement to electoral participation (Finley, 2011; Garcia and Mirra, 2021; Fernandes *et al.*, 2021). There is not a clear, definite act to promote an important societal issue. According to Fuad-Luke (2009), fashion activism falls under civic engagement. Fashion activism refers to individuals that think, imagine, practice, and design counter-narrative tools to generate balanced positive social, institutional, economic and environmental change (Hirscher, 2013).

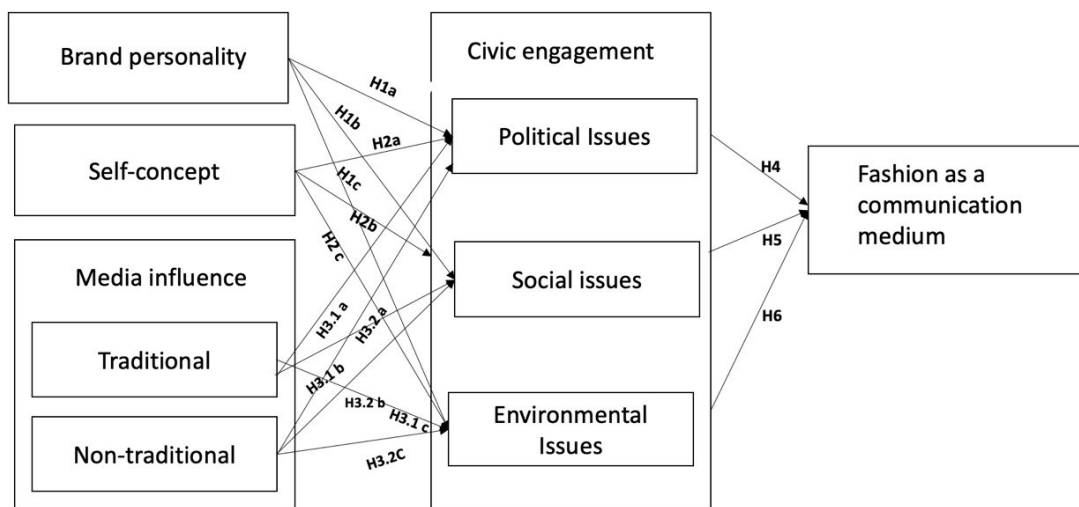
The idea of using civic engagement is to sketch their own opinions and preferences to fulfill their social needs via clothes and fashionable items (Hirscher, 2013). Based on the interviews, the study highlighted that people could use fashion to communicate and act as democratic citizens. The interviewees confirmed their participation with fashion to improve and support problems that reflect a vital issue they see as essential to better their community. These fashion items are used to express societal issues, such as, political, social and environmental. Therefore, these results strongly support including civic engagement in the research model. Civic engagement can be used to support (1) social causes, (2) political causes (3) environmental causes.

Based on the empirical evidence, various societal problems lead consumers to use fashion as an expressive tool. Fashion as a communication medium is about consumers purchasing fashion garments and items in order to wear it in their community so as to send out specific messages to the society. So, fashion communication represents an internal opinion or individual intention to be externalized by fashion items. Furthermore, the research noticed that consumers use fashion in order to make a statement to the public.



Based on prior studies and literature as well as the qualitative research (Empirical Study I), some adjustments to the proposed initial research model (shown in chapter two) occurred. The outcome of empirical study I is a significant factor than brand engagement. In They illustrated that fashion activism is used to communicate social, illustrates that brand personality addition, youth and young adults in Egypt use fashion to communicate various matters about the society. Environmental, and political issues (chapter four details the outcomes of empirical study I). The newly adjusted model is shown in (Figure 4.6). The modified proposed model contains six main hypotheses. This model is to be further tested in empirical study II.

**Figure 7 - Research Model**



**H1a:** Brand Personality has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding political issues

**H1b:** Brand Personality has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding social issues

**H1c:** Brand Personality has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues

**H2a:** Self-Concept has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding political issues

**H2b:** Self-Concept has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding social issues

**H2c:** Self-Concept has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues

**H3.1a:** Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding political issues

**H3.1b:** Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding social issues

**H3.1c:** Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues

**H3.2a:** Non-Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding political issues

**H3.2b:** Non-Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding social issues

**H3.2c:** Non-Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues

**H4:** Civic Engagement regarding political issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication Medium

**H5:** Civic Engagement regarding social issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication Medium

**H6:** Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication Medium

## **CHAPTER FIVE: EMPIRICAL STUDY II - FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This section aims to present the findings of empirical study II. According to google forms, 506 individuals opened the link to the questionnaire that has been placed on various social media fan-pages regarding fashion consumption. However, only 455 questionnaires were completed. This chapter presents the data analysis, including the descriptive analysis (central tendency, dispersion, percentiles, etc), reliability analysis, validity analysis, and the test of hypotheses using structural equation modeling (SEM).

### **5.2. Sample Characteristics**

In this study, the population was youth and young adults from different socio-demographic backgrounds - age, gender, occupation, and city. Table 5.1 illustrates the frequency analysis of the sample characteristics. According to the descriptive statistics, the 73.4% of the respondents are female and 26.6% are male, that are residents in Alexandria (70.3%) and Cairo (25.5 %). Most of the respondents are between the ages of 20 and 35 (65.9%). Subsequently, the age group that followed are: participants that are under 20 years of age (29.5%); participants that are between the ages of 35 and 50 (4.6%).

In addition, the majority of the participants in this study are educated. The participants are either graduates of high school (36.7%), college (28.8 %), graduate degree (22.0%), postgraduate degree (12.1%), or other institutes (0.4%). When it comes to employment, most of the participants in this study are still students who do not work (70.3%). The remaining participants work different jobs as shown in table 5.1 The participants studied in private universities in Egypt. Hence, the participants' income are above 10,000 L.E Egyptian pounds (L.E.) per month in the household. Subsequently, the participant's family household income is either: 5,000 L.E.– less than 10,000 L.E. (29.9%), 2,000 – less than 5,000 L.E. (23.1%), or the income is less than 2,000 L.E. (9.7%).

In what refers to marital status, the majority of the participants are single and not in a relationship (87.2%). Only 10.2% of the participants are married and 2.6% of the sample are divorced, separated, or widowed. Since most of the participants in this study are single, most of them have no children (93.2%).

**Table 11 - The Respondent's Socio-Demographic Characteristics**

<b>Variables</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Age</b>	Under 20	134	29.5 %
	20 - less than 35	300	65.9 %
	35 - less than 50	21	4.6 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>
<b>Highest completed level of education</b>	Elementary school	7	1.5 %
	High school	160	35.2 %
	College degree	131	28.8 %
	Graduate degree	100	22.0%
	Postgraduate degree	55	12.1 %
	Other	2	0.4 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>
<b>City of residence</b>	Cairo	116	25.5 %
	Alexandria	320	70.3 %
	Other	19	4.2 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Females	334	73.4 %
	Males	121	26.6 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	394	87.2 %
	Married	46	10.2 %
	Divorced or separated	11	2.4 %
	Widowed	1	0.2 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>
<b>Number of Children</b>	None	424	93.2 %
	One	14	3.1 %
	Two	11	2.4 %
	More than two	6	1.3 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>
<b>Current job status</b>	Manager	11	2.4 %
	Clerks/ cashier related position	13	2.9 %
	Professionals in the field of their study	65	14.3 %
	Academics (students)	320	70.3 %
	Self employed	30	6.6 %
	Laborers/ Technicians	5	0.11%
	Other	11	2.4 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>
<b>Average monthly household income in Egyptian pounds</b>	Less than 2,000	44	9.7 %
	2,000 – less than 5,000	105	23.1 %
	5,000 – less than 10,000	136	29.9 %
	Over 10,000	170	37.3 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### 5.3. Assessment of Normality and Outliers

We started the analysis by checking if the database contained errors or missing data. Subsequently, normality tests were conducted to determine whether the data followed a normal distribution (Kock, 2016). Several types of normality tests were conducted: (1) Kolmogorov–Smirnov (K-S), (2) Kurtosis (3) Skewness. These tests were used on each of the variables in this study: brand personality, self-concept and media influence (traditional and non-traditional), civic engagement, and fashion as a communication medium. Table 5.2 shows the normality outcomes. The following paragraphs explain each test.

**Kolmogorov – Smirnov:** Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test is a non-parametric statistic to compare two empirical distributions together. The K-S test derives the absolute difference between levels of disagreement. The K-S test reports the maximum difference between the two cumulative distributions and calculates a P-value and the sample sizes (Öztuna *et al.*, 2006).

**Kurtosis:** Kurtosis is the second type of normality testing that helps reveal the distribution tails and the deviation levels from normality (Ghasemi and Zahediasl, 2012; Blanca *et al.*, 2013). If the data shows light tailed measures, this highlights that the distribution of data lacks outliers. A positive value in kurtosis means that data is more peaked. Kurtosis showed negative values, then the information is flatter than average (Ghasemi and Zahediasl, 2012; Blanca *et al.*, 2013). According to George and Mallery (2010), we considered the absolute value for Kurtosis  $-2/2$  acceptable to indicate normal univariate distribution.

**Skewness:** Skewness is a type of normality test that helps characterize data in the study with the degree of asymmetry observed in the probability distribution (Blanca *et al.*, 2013). In the preliminary analysis, we screened individuals' responses to determine any substantial deviations. According to George and Mallery (2010), data is usually distributed if the absolute value for skewness is 1.5 or lower.

Based on table 5.2, brand personality and self-concept are moderately negatively skewed as skewness values for these dimensions vary between -0.5 and -1. Other tails are fairly symmetrical as the values of skewness for these dimensions vary between -0.5 and 0.5. These dimensions also have heavier tails as the values of Kurtosis are more significant than 1. In other words, these dimensions contain extreme values. All the five constructs are not normal according to Kolmogorov – Smirnov test where  $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 12 - Assessment of Normality**

Dimension	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis	K-S value	p-value	Normality
Brand Personality	1	5	0.595261	0.001712	0.113	0.0001	Not normal
Self-Concept	1	5	-0.807617	0.224687	0.114	0.0001	Not normal
Media Influence	1	5	0.213107	-0.386732	0.067	0.0001	Not normal
Civic Engagement	1	5	0.063426	-0.568550	0.077	0.0001	Not normal
Fashion as a Communication Medium	1	5	-0.057273	-0.184061	0.077	0.0001	Not normal

#### 5.4. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics is used in research to summarize data in an organized method. Descriptive statistics helps the study explain the relationship between variables of a sample studied population in a simpler fashion (Blanca *et al.*, 2013). Descriptive statistics include frequency, central tendencies, dispersion, variation analysis. In this section, we present the descriptive statistics of the introductory questions related to the participant's fashion consumption and all the studied variables.

##### 5.4.1. Introductory Questions

The preliminary questions about the participant's fashion and civic engagement behaviors are: (1) do you have interest in clothing; (2) how often do you go shopping; (3) do you believe fashion items communicate who you are; (4) have you ever purchased an item to communicate a message related to political, social or environmental problems? Table 5.3 shows the results.

Results show that 91.9% of participants strongly agree that they have interest in clothing. Most participants shop every month (41.5%); others shop occasionally (26.2%); others shop weekly (22.4%); and others shop daily (9.9%). Most participants believe that fashion items illustrate who they are (78.3%). 47% of the participants purchase a fashion item that communicates a political, social, or environmental message.

**Table 13 - Frequency Table For Introductory Questions**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Do you have interest in clothing?</b>	Yes	418	91.9%
	No	37	8.1%
	Total	455	100.0%
<b>How often do you go shopping?</b>	Daily	45	9.9%
	Weekly	102	22.4%
	Monthly	189	41.5%
	Occasionally	119	26.2%
	Total	455	100.0%
<b>Do you believe your fashion items communicate who you are?</b>	Yes	356	78.3%
	No	99	21.7%
	Total	455	100.0%
<b>Have you ever purchased an item to communicate a message related to any political, social or environmental problems?</b>	Yes	213	46.8%
	No	242	53.2%
	Total	455	100.0%

#### **5.4.2. Brand Personality**

The brand personality scale was adapted from Becker-Olsen and Karen (2003). The scale is a five -point semantic differential scale stating two opposites for each item. Table 5.4 illustrates the frequency analysis, the mean, and the standard deviation (SD) for each item in the scale.

Based on the analysis, the lowest standard deviation (SD) item is “The brand is low fit to me”. Here the SD is 0.99 and the mean of 3.59. The second lowest SD item was in “The brand is typical to me”, participants agree around this statement, an SD of 1.06 and a mean of 3.13. The third lowest SD is shown in item “The brand is similar to me” and “The brand is consistent to me”. Both items represent an SD of 1.18 and a high mean of 2.92 and 3.02. Thus, data in this section describes how participants agree towards buying and wearing fashion brands that fit, typical, similar and consistent to their personality types.

**Table 14 - Statistics and Frequency Analysis for Brand Personality Question Items**

Scale: Brand Personality		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD	Mean
The Brand is Similar to me	N	52	81	159	103	60	1.18	2.92
	%	11.4%	17.8%	35.0%	22.6%	13.2%		
The Brand is Consistent to me	N	66	71	173	94	51	1.18	3.02
	%	14.5%	15.6%	38.0%	20.7%	11.2%		
The Brand Typical to me	N	34	72	205	89	55	1.06	3.13
	%	7.5%	15.8%	45.0%	19.6%	12.1%		
The Brand Representative to me	N	121	99	119	68	48	1.31	2.61
	%	26.6%	21.8%	25.2%	14.9%	10.5%		
The Brand Complementary to me	N	79	113	159	55	49	1.96	2.74
	%	17.4%	24.8%	34.9%	12.1%	10.8%		
The Brand Low fit to me	N	14	30	180	136	95	0.99	3.59
	%	3.1%	6.6%	39.5%	29.9%	20.9%		
The Brand Makes sense to me	N	113	111	117	51	63	1.34	2.65
	%	24.8%	24.4%	25.7%	11.2%	13.9%		

### 5.4.3. Self-Concept

The self-concept scale was adapted from Grewal *et al.*, (2004). The scale is a Likert scale consisting of 6 statements regarding self-concept. The participants are to select where they stand in opinion between a scale of 1 to 5. Table 5.5 illustrates the frequency analysis, the mean, and the standard deviation for each item in the scale. Results show that the item “My clothing style makes me feel good about myself” has the lowest SD 0.98 and a mean of 4.35. The second lowest SD item is “My clothing style in wearing items helps ascertain my self-identity” having an SD of 0.99 and a high mean of 4.09. The SD ranges in this scale are from 0.98 till 1.19, most item scales in the variable self-concept are relatively low SD ranges which indicates that data are clustered around the mean.



**Table 15 - Statistics and Frequency Analysis For Self-Concept Question Items**

Scale: Self-Concept Question Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD	Mean
<b>Clothing style reflect the kind of person I see myself to be</b>	N	14	28	87	131	195	1.07	4.02
	%	3.1%	6.2%	19.1%	28.8%	42.8%		
<b>My clothing style in wearing items helps ascertain my self-identity</b>	N	7	28	82	145	193	0.99	4.09
	%	1.5%	6.2%	18.0%	31.9%	42.4%		
<b>My clothing style makes me feel good about myself</b>	N	10	16	57	92	280	0.98	4.35
	%	2.2%	3.5%	12.5%	20.2%	61.6%		
<b>My clothing style is an instrument of my self-expression</b>	N	11	16	102	133	193	1.00	4.06
	%	2.4%	3.5%	22.4%	29.3%	42.4%		
<b>My clothing style plays a critical role in defining my self-concept</b>	N	29	39	112	125	150	1.19	3.72
	%	6.4%	8.6%	24.6%	27.4%	33.0%		
<b>My clothing style helps me to establish the kind of person I see myself to be</b>	N	10	36	115	131	163	1.06	3.88
	%	2.2%	7.9%	25.3%	28.8%	35.8%		

#### **5.4.4. Media Influence**

The media influence scale items are adapted from Russell *et al.* (2004). The scale is a five-point Likert scale and it consists of 15 statements about how media influences fashion choices. This scale was used twice to assess traditional and non-traditional media influence. Table 5.6 illustrates the frequency analysis, the mean, and the standard deviation for each item in the scale.

Results show that participants have a neutral opinion regarding media influence towards fashion consumption (the traditional and the non-traditional). The lowest SD ranges are 1.06 in two items of the non-traditional media, “I like the hairstyles portrayed on the non-traditional media” and item two, “I often buy clothing styles that I’ve seen on non-traditional media”, showing that data is more clustered around the mean in these two item scales, suggesting less variation in these two items about how non-traditional media influences their hair styles, and their intention towards certain fashion styles are as a result of some non-traditional channels. However, results show that the scale item in the traditional media “I would love to be an actor in the traditional media” shows a higher dispersion, with a high SD range 1.40 and a low mean value of 2.93. This clearly suggests more variance regarding wishing to mimic celebrities on traditional media and disregard actions, styles and behavior given in the traditional media channels these days. However, a high SD of 1.85 is observed in the item “I have items that relate to what I have observed

on the non- traditional media” and a mean of 3.25. These results suggest that participants show more agreement towards using non-traditional media channels and how they identify with their hairstyles and clothing selection.

**Table 16 - Statistics and Frequency Analysis For Media Influence Question Items**

<b>Scale: Traditional and Non-Traditional Media Influence</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>Traditional Media is an escape for me</b>	N	48	76	145	95	91	1.24	3.23
	%	10.5%	16.7%	31.9%	20.9%	20.0%		
<b>Non-Traditional Media is an escape for me</b>	N	34	52	137	127	105	1.18	3.48
	%	7.5%	11.4%	30.1%	27.9%	23.1%		
<b>Traditional Media helps me forget about the day’s problems</b>	N	63	75	121	108	88	1.30	3.18
	%	13.9%	16.5%	26.6%	23.7%	19.3%		
<b>Non-Traditional Media helps me forget about the day’s problems</b>	N	51	66	148	106	84	1.23	3.23
	%	11.2%	14.5%	32.5%	23.3%	18.5%		
<b>If I am in a bad mood, watching traditional media puts me in a better mood</b>	N	54	82	110	127	82	1.27	3.22
	%	11.9%	18.0%	24.2%	27.9%	18.0%		
<b>If I am in a bad mood, watching non-traditional media puts me in a better mood</b>	N	37	70	148	112	88	1.18	3.32
	%	8.1%	15.4%	32.5%	24.6%	19.4%		
<b>I like the clothes seen on the traditional media</b>	N	27	50	153	119	106	1.14	3.50
	%	5.9%	11.0%	33.6%	26.2%	23.3%		
<b>I like the clothes seen on the non- traditional media</b>	N	26	62	152	114	101	1.14	3.44
	%	5.7%	13.6%	33.4%	25.1%	22.2%		
<b>I like the hairstyles portrayed on the traditional media</b>	N	23	54	161	100	117	1.14	3.51
	%	5.1%	11.9%	35.4%	21.9%	25.7%		
<b>I like the hairstyles portrayed on the non-traditional media</b>	N	21	42	177	122	93	1.06	3.49
	%	4.6%	9.2%	38.9%	26.8%	20.5%		
<b>I often buy clothing styles that I’ve seen on traditional media</b>	N	47	78	142	94	94	1.25	3.24
	%	10.3%	17.1%	31.2%	20.7%	20.7%		
<b>I often buy clothing styles that I’ve seen on non-traditional media</b>	N	18	70	184	102	81	1.06	3.35
	%	4.0%	15.4%	40.4%	22.4%	17.8%		
<b>I imitate the gestures and facial expressions from the characters seen on the traditional media</b>	N	93	88	135	82	57	1.29	2.83
	%	20.4%	19.4%	29.7%	18.0%	12.5%		
<b>I imitate the gestures and facial expressions from the characters seen on the non-traditional media</b>	N	79	82	153	81	60	1.26	2.91
	%	17.4%	18.0%	33.6%	17.8%	13.2%		
<b>I find myself saying phrases heard on the traditional media when I interact with other people</b>	N	55	57	134	125	84	1.24	3.28
	%	12.1%	12.5%	29.4%	27.5%	18.5%		
<b>I find myself saying phrases heard on the non-traditional media when I interact with other people</b>	N	52	90	151	81	81	1.24	3.11
	%	11.4%	19.8%	33.2%	17.8%	17.8%		

<b>I try to speak like the characters observed in traditional media</b>	N	118	83	119	70	65	1.37	2.74
	%	25.9%	18.2%	26.2%	15.4%	14.3%		
<b>I try to speak like the characters observed in non-traditional media</b>	N	84	108	126	72	65	1.30	2.84
	%	18.5%	23.7%	27.7%	15.8%	14.3%		
<b>I learn how to handle real life situations by watching traditional media</b>	N	78	95	138	86	58	1.26	2.89
	%	17.2%	20.9%	30.3%	18.9%	12.7%		
<b>I learn how to handle real life situations by watching non-traditional media</b>	N	60	82	152	87	74	1.24	3.07
	%	13.2%	18.0%	33.4%	19.1%	16.3%		
<b>I get ideas from the traditional media about how to interact in my own life</b>	N	54	58	150	117	76	1.22	3.23
	%	11.9%	12.7%	33.0%	25.7%	16.7%		
<b>I get ideas from the non-traditional media about how to interact in my own life</b>	N	46	63	183	95	68	1.15	3.17
	%	10.1%	13.9%	40.2%	20.8%	15.0%		
<b>I relate what happens in the traditional media to my own life</b>	N	65	82	125	121	62	1.25	3.07
	%	14.3%	18.0%	27.5%	26.6%	13.6%		
<b>I relate what happens in the non- traditional media to my own life</b>	N	49	87	158	101	60	1.17	3.08
	%	10.8%	19.1%	34.7%	22.2%	13.2%		
<b>I would love to be an actor in the traditional media</b>	N	108	71	100	101	75	1.40	2.93
	%	23.7%	15.6%	22.0%	22.2%	16.5%		
<b>I would love to be an actor in the non-traditional media</b>	N	76	72	130	99	78	1.31	3.07
	%	16.7%	15.8%	28.6%	21.8%	17.1%		
<b>I would love to meet the characters on the traditional media</b>	N	47	60	130	96	122	1.29	3.41
	%	10.3%	13.2%	28.6%	21.1%	26.8%		
<b>I would love to meet the characters on the non-traditional media</b>	N	54	61	142	101	97	1.27	3.28
	%	11.9%	13.4%	31.2%	22.2%	21.3%		
<b>I have items that relate to what I have observed on the traditional media</b>	N	44	91	134	122	64	1.18	3.16
	%	9.7%	20.0%	29.5%	26.8%	14.0%		
<b>I have items that relate to what I have observed on the non- traditional media</b>	N	45	82	149	101	78	1.85	3.25
	%	9.9%	18.0%	32.8%	22.2%	17.1%		

### 5.4.5. Civic Engagement

The civic engagement scale is adapted from Laroche *et al.* (2005). The scale is three items five-point Likert scale. The statements are given to the consumer to reveal their opinions regarding how they use fashion in supporting various civic causes (buying fashion items that can entail messages concerning societal issues). The study uses the scale three times to measure different motives of civic engagement: political, social, and environmental issues. Table 5.7 illustrates the frequency analysis, the mean, and the standard deviation for each statement.

The item “It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to social matters in society” has the lowest dispersion which is 1.00 and, with a high mean of 3.80. This result shows that participants agree that fashion items can be worn to clearly portray certain ideologies and messages. The civic engagement variable shows SD ranges between 1.00 to 1.17 and means range between 3.57 and 3.80. Results show tendencies towards agreeing with engaging with social, environmental and political issues in the society and how participants seem to care about it.

**Table 17 - Statistics and Frequency Analysis For Civic Engagement Question Items**

<b>Scale: Civic Engagement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>		<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to political matters in society</b>	N	25	50	128	120	132	1.17	3.62	
	%	5.5%	11.0%	28.1%	26.4%	29.0%			
<b>I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with political matters in society</b>	N	25	41	148	103	138	1.16	3.63	
	%	5.5%	9.0%	32.5%	22.7%	30.3%			
<b>It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of political issues in society</b>	N	17	63	142	108	125	1.14	3.57	
	%	3.7%	13.9%	31.2%	23.7%	27.5%			
<b>It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to environmental matters in society</b>	N	11	41	139	127	137	1.06	3.74	
	%	2.4%	9.0%	30.6%	27.9%	30.1%			
<b>I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with environmental matters in society</b>	N	11	35	156	108	145	1.06	3.75	
	%	2.4%	7.7%	34.3%	23.7%	31.9%			
<b>It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of environmental issues in society</b>	N	9	40	162	122	122	1.03	3.68	
	%	2.0%	8.8%	35.6%	26.8%	26.8%			

<b>It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of social issues in society</b>	N	10	39	148	130	128	1.03	3.72
	%	2.2%	8.6%	32.5%	28.6%	28.1%		
<b>It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to social matters in society</b>	N	6	31	151	127	140	1.00	3.80
	%	1.3%	6.8%	33.2%	27.9%	30.8%		
<b>I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with social matters in society</b>	N	11	37	164	118	125	1.04	3.68
	%	2.4%	8.1%	36.0%	26.0%	27.5%		

#### 5.4.6. Fashion as a Communication Medium

Fashion as a communication medium scale is adapted from Hausman (2004). The scale is a six-items point Likert scale including statements regarding consumers' fashion usage as a communication approach. Table 5.8 illustrates the frequency analysis, the mean, and standard deviation for each statement. "Using fashion trends as a medium of communication is excellent" has the lowest dispersion, with an SD of 1.00 and a high mean of 3.71. Results show a SD range between 1.00 to 1.24 and a high mean ranging from 3.36 to 3.71. This means that, in general the respondents agree with the statements that fashion styles can be a mean of communication. Thus, the majority of participants are convinced that fashion trends can be an opportunity to communicate noteworthy information.

**Table 18 - Statistics and Frequency Analysis For Fashion as a Communication Medium Question Items**

<b>Scale: Fashion as a Communication Medium</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>Using fashion trends as a medium of communication is excellent</b>	N	10	33	150	146	116	1.00	3.71
	%	2.2%	7.2%	33.0%	32.1%	25.5%		
<b>My fashion trends share relevant information</b>	N	31	56	168	102	98	1.15	3.40
	%	6.8%	12.3%	36.9%	22.4%	21.6%		
<b>There is little communication between my fashion usage and what I want to portray to the world (r)</b>	N	34	62	142	112	105	1.20	3.42
	%	7.5%	13.6%	31.2%	24.6%	23.1%		
<b>My fashion trend is a source of information</b>	N	41	61	134	116	99	1.24	3.36
	%	9.9%	13.4%	29.5%	25.5%	21.7%		
<b>The direction of information I want to communicate to the public is usually shown in my selection of fashion</b>	N	40	57	126	126	106	1.22	3.44
	%	8.8%	12.5%	27.7%	27.7%	23.3%		
<b>There are few opportunities to use fashion as a medium of communication (R)</b>	N	25	61	144	135	90	1.12	3.45
	%	5.5%	13.4%	31.6%	29.7%	19.8%		

### 5.5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Reliability and Validity

The reliability analysis is vital in reducing and presenting minimum measurement errors (Bryman, 2012). According to Hair *et al.* (2014), reliability refers to the internal consistency of a measure. The reliability analysis tests the consistency of the measurement items in the study to ensure that these measures are inter-related. In this study, the reliability analysis is through the Cronbach alpha. For a scale to be reliable, the Cronbach alpha must be higher than 0.70 (Creswell, 2003; Mcquitty and Wolf, 2013). Table

5.9 shows the reliability coefficient analysis of the variables in the study. In addition, **composite reliability** (C.R.) was checked. A value of C.R. > 0.6 is mandatory to achieve C.R. (Hair *et al.*, 2014). The following table 5.9 also illustrates the results for the C.R. for the variables studied. The C.R. shows that the variables have met the recommended values.

**Table 19 - Reliability Coefficients Assessment**

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha (a)	Composite Reliability
<b>Brand Personality</b>	6	0.850	.893
<b>Self-Concept</b>	7	0.868	.902
<b>Media Influence: Traditional</b>	15	0.859	.895
<b>Media Influence: Non-Traditional</b>	15	0.876	.907
<b>Civic Engagement: Political</b>	3	0.810	.888
<b>Civic Engagement: Social</b>	3	0.788	.877
<b>Civic Engagement: Environmental</b>	3	0.834	.900
<b>Fashion as a Communication Medium</b>	6	0.794	.865

Next step, we assessed the validity. The validity analysis is essential as it refers to whether the defining scales accurately represent the concept understudied or not (Hair *et al.*, 2014). The validity analysis is shown in table 5.10. In order to provide evidence that a scale measure what it intended to, a factor analysis must be conducted to produce the factor loadings. Factor Loadings can be scaled from 0 to 1 and are essentially coefficients that shows how strong the relationship is between the variable and the items in the scale. Based on the analysis, the factor loading of the variables' scales is sufficient.

The study refined these following measures using other validity analyses. For example, model of fit was examined by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), using the average variance extracted (AVE), which is considered convergent validity. AVE helps qualify as an indicator of convergence of the item's scales. The cut-off point for AVE is 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Based on the analysis of this study, not all the scales held an acceptable AVE. The study had to remove certain statements, in order for the AVE to

hold acceptable values. After the adjustments, the new AVE values varied from 0.588 to 0.751, exceeding the minimum value required of 0.5, confirming the convergent validity of each latent construct. Table 5.10 illustrates the validity assessment.

**Table 20 - Validity Assessment**

Dimension		Factor Loading	Error variance	R <sup>2</sup>	AVE	Items Removed
<b>Brand Personality</b>	BP1	.762	.551	.449	0.626	BP3 and BP6
	BP2	.709	.627	.373		
	BP3	.416	.827	.173		
	BP4	.830	.379	.621		
	BP5	.798	.428	.572		
	BP6	.038	.999	.001		
	BP7	.848	.341	.659		
<b>Self-Concept</b>	SC1	.780	.473	.527	0.605	
	SC2	.767	.494	.506		
	SC3	.764	.494	.506		
	SC4	.837	.344	.656		
	SC5	.781	.474	.526		
	SC6	.737	.554	.446		
<b>Traditional Media influence</b>	TM1	.685	.624	.376	0.588	TM2, TM4, TM5, TM6, TM8, TM12, TM13, TM14 and TM15
	TM2	.571	.674	.326		
	TM3	.732	.592	.408		
	TM4	.441	.806	.194		
	TM5	.438	.808	.192		
	TM6	.564	.682	.318		
	TM7	.775	.479	.521		
	TM8	.623	.612	.388		
	TM9	.802	.409	.591		
	TM10	.816	.415	.585		
	TM11	.781	.466	.534		
	TM12	.669	.552	.448		
	TM13	.582	.661	.339		
	TM14	.535	.714	.286		
	TM15	.539	.709	.291		
<b>Non-Traditional Media Influence</b>	NTM1	.525	.724	.276	0.619	NTM1, NTM2, NTM3, NTM4, NTM5, NMT6, NTM13, NTM14 and NTM15
	NTM2	.607	.632	.368		
	NTM3	.609	.629	.371		
	NTM4	.550	.698	.303		
	NTM5	.482	.768	.232		
	NTM6	.539	.709	.291		
	NTM7	.688	.527	.473		
	NTM8	.727	.471	.529		
	NTM9	.717	.486	.514		
	NTM10	.730	.467	.533		
	NTM11	.711	.494	.506		
	NTM12	.695	.517	.483		
	NTM13	.592	.650	.350		
	NTM14	.623	.612	.388		
	NTM15	.440	.806	.194		

<b>Civic Engagement – Political Issues</b>	CEP1	.874	.357	.643	0.725	
	CEP2	.877	.296	.704		
	CEP3	.802	.574	.426		
<b>Civic Engagement – Social Issues</b>	CES1	.819	.521	.479	0.751	
	CES2	.864	.321	.679		
	CES3	.832	.489	.511		
<b>Civic Engagement– Environmental Issues</b>	CEE1	.885	.299	.701	0.703	
	CEE2	.878	.326	.674		
	CEE3	.836	.487	.513		
<b>Fashion as a Communication Medium</b>	FC1	.595	.666	.334	0.620	FCM3 and FCM6
	FC2	.822	.494	.506		
	FC3	.471	.778	.222		
	FC4	.872	.206	.794		
	FC5	.830	.523	.477		
	FC6	.324	.895	.105		

Construct validity is another type of validity, which assesses how well the translated ideas or theories is in the actual measures. The construct validity aims to help researchers measure latent items and make the results accurate that represent the actual population size sample understudied (Hu and Bentler, 1999). To measure construct validity, the goodness of fit indices is assessed; the fitness indexes types must be tested in the process, such as **the incremental fit using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI)**, **Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)**, and **Normed Fit Index (NFI)**. These validity tests should hold a level of acceptance  $>0.90$  for all three indexes (Bentler and Bonett, 1980; Bentler, 1990; Hu and Bentler, 1999).

Based on the analyses, the results indicates an acceptable model fit, multiple purification attempts were made by theoretical considerations and diagnostic indications to reach the results below. The analyses shows the goodness of fit indices:  $\chi^2 = 1272.957$ ,  $df = 541$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.353$ ,  $CFI = 0.915$ ,  $TLI = 0.901$ ,  $IFI = 0.915$ ,  $RMR = 0.026$ ,  $SRMR = 0.0542$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.055$  ( $CI = 0.051; 0.058$ ). Considering the cut off values proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999), these values show a good model fit. The study conducted further exploration to support the validity analysis, such as **parsimonious fit (Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom)**. **The parsimonious fit using Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom** ( $Chisq/df$ ) is called chi-square in Amos software (Yaslioglu and Yaslioglu, 2020). All items here show a good fit indication, since the results correspond to the cut-off values as shown in table 5.11.

**Table 21 - The Goodness of Fit Indices**

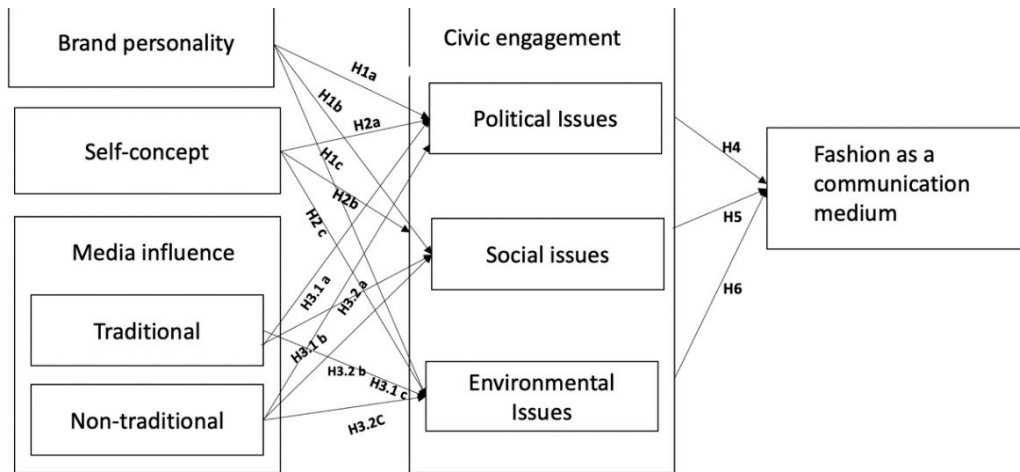
	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	CFI	TLI	IFI	RMR	SRMR	RMSEA	CI
<b>Default model</b>	1272.957	541	2.353	.915	.901	.915	0.026	0.0542	0.055	0.051-0.058



## 5.6. Structural Equation Modeling: (SEM:Hypotheses-Testing)

The aim of the quantitative research is to test the following hypotheses as shown in Figure 5.1

**Figure 8 - Research Model**



The study uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the hypotheses. SEM is one of the most well-known statistical tools used to collaborate in testing relationships proposed in a hypothesized model (Cheng, 2001; Kline, 2015). According to Hair *et al.* (2014), SEM can help study a series of dependence relationships concurrently; SEM runs tests on interrelationships between complex variables simultaneously. SEM is a multivariate technique which contains factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. In this study, the SEM is used to test the research hypotheses through the conduction of path model. The **Path Coefficient** describes the direct effect between two variables estimated from correlations (Drikvand *et al.*, 2005). Table 5.12 illustrates the path coefficient analysis.

Based on the analysis, self-concept, traditional and non-traditional media impact significantly civic engagement, as the significance values are 0 (less than 0.05). Brand personality does not impact civic engagement as the significance value is 0.1. Civic engagement– political, social and environmental issues have a significant effect on fashion as a communication medium, as the significance values are 0 (less than 0.05).

**Table 22 - Paths Coefficients**

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P value	Result
BP→ CE(P)	0.002	0.058	0.04	0.968	Not Supported
BP → CE(S)	0.076	0.045	1.683	0.092	Not Supported
BP → CE(E)	0.084	0.053	1.588	0.112	Not Supported
S-C → CE(P)	0.308	0.049	6.295	**	Supported
S-C → CE(S)	0.302	0.04	7.569	**	Supported
S-C → CE(E)	0.343	0.045	7.579	**	Supported
TMI → CE(P)	-1.333	0.173	-7.728	**	Supported
TMI → CE(S)	-1.343	0.167	-8.054	**	Supported
TMI → CE(E)	-1.782	0.211	-8.441	**	Supported
NTMI→ CE(P)	0.721	0.071	10.184	**	Supported
NTMI→ CE(S)	0.613	0.058	10.536	**	Supported
NTMI→ CE(E)	0.748	0.066	11.331	**	Supported
CEP→ FCM	1.161	0.284	4.087	**	Supported
CES→ FCM	4.784	2.386	2.005	*	Supported
CEE→ FCM	-4.421	1.993	-2.219	*	Supported

### 5.7. Concluding Empirical Study II

After collecting the needed quantitative data, the study undertook several analysis using the SPSS and Amos program. Participants in this study are from different socio-demographic backgrounds (gender, income, city, and marital status) based. Participants are all youth and young adults. According to the preliminary questions, the participants enjoy shopping on a weekly and monthly basis. Furthermore, they have purchased before clothing that reflect civic engagement ideas. They believe that clothing represents their identity and values.

The research used scales from prior studies. Therefore, before beginning any analysis, we checked if the scales used to measure the variables are reliable and valid. Based on the Cronbach alpha analysis, the scales are reliable with a Cronbach alpha above 0.7. The study conducted validity analysis by using a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on all latent constructs. This step in the research is set before modeling their interrelationship in a structural equation model (SEM). According to (Awang 2014; Hair *et al.*, 2014), two types of validity are essential for each measurement model: Convergent and Construct validity. Both analyses support that the scales in this study are valid. Accordingly, the investigation moved on to test the hypotheses.

In this study, the research tests the hypotheses using SEM. Based on the hypotheses testing, self- concept, traditional and non-traditional media influence significantly affect civic engagement. However, brand personality did not show a significant effect on civic engagement. In addition civic engagement – political, social and environmental issues have a significant effect on fashion as a

communication medium. Table 5.13 illustrates the results of the research hypotheses testing. The next chapter will discuss the outcomes of this study further in detail.

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Result of Hypotheses Testing</b>
● <b>H1a:</b> Brand Personality has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding political issues	Not Supported
● <b>H1b:</b> Brand Personality has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding social issues	Not Supported
● <b>H1c:</b> Brand Personality has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues	Not Supported
● <b>H2a:</b> Self-Concept has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding political issues	Supported
● <b>H2b:</b> Self-Concept has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding social issues	Supported
● <b>H2c:</b> Self-Concept has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues	Supported
● <b>H3.1a:</b> Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding political issues	Supported
● <b>H3.1b:</b> Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding social issues	Supported
● <b>H3.1c:</b> Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues	Supported
● <b>H3.2a:</b> Non-traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding political issues	Supported
● <b>H3.2b:</b> Non-traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding social issues	Supported
● <b>H3.2c:</b> Non-traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding environmental issues	Supported
● <b>H4:</b> Civic Engagement regarding Political issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication medium.	Supported
● <b>H5:</b> Civic Engagement regarding Social issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication medium.	Supported
● <b>H6:</b> Civic Engagement regarding Environmental issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication medium.	Supported

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This study sought to understand consumption of fashion: civic engagement and use of fashion as a communication medium. This study focus on the impact of brand personality, self-concept and media influence on civic engagement in the communication of consumers' stance on various public matters, such as political, social, and environmental issues through fashion. To achieve this aim, this study used a mixed method approach, dividing the research into two empirical studies. The first empirical study is the qualitative research (semi-structured interviews), which explored new insights to develop the conceptual framework and hypotheses for further testing. The second empirical study, quantitative research (administrated questionnaires), sought to collect objective data to answer the research questions and test the proposed hypotheses.

We conducted interviews to gain empirical evidence to support the theories found in the literature review and streamline the research model. The literature review suggested that the self-concept theory is relevant to understand an individual's self-presentation; the social learning theory explains how consumers learn about various brands, behavior, products, and services through different branding activities found on media channels (Tice *et al.*, 1995; McNeill, 2018). Accordingly, the interviews that were conducted to further understand consumers' use of fashion, indicate that clothes and fashion items reflect an individual's self-identity; through selective fashion choices, consumers illustrate to others their persona; brands encourage consumers to purchase specific items to represent a specific image and/or personality; various media influence consumer's behavior to shop styles that trend among the community.

Based on the literature, civic engagement encourages citizens to participate in activities to communicate to society the necessity of improving civic life in their communities; civic engagement can have many forms, citizens can perform individualism voluntarism to being involved in organizational groups and having a voice in electoral participation (Garcia and Mirra, 2021). The interviews that were conducted suggest that civic engagement is a motivation for fashion choices, civic engagement leads to manifest their own opinions and preferences to fulfill their social needs via clothes. Based on the interviews, the study highlighted that people use fashion to communicate and support (1) social causes, (2) political causes (3) environmental causes. The interviews confirm that fashion is a strong tool of communication.

Based on the literature review and the empirical study I, the study developed the final research model and hypotheses to be tested in empirical study II, the quantitative research. This chapter discusses

the outcomes of the empirical study II. It seeks to discuss the hypotheses testing and comparing with prior results, research conclusions, research implications, research recommendations, research limitations, and suggestions for future studies.

## **6.2. Discussion**

The aim of the quantitative research was to test the hypotheses that emerged after the conduction of the literature review and the qualitative research. The following paragraphs discuss the the current results and compare the findings with previous literature and studies.

### **(H1) Brand Personality has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding (a) Political, (b) Social and (c) Environmental Issues.**

Our results illustrate that brand personality does not have a significant impact on civic engagement. Accordingly, this finding suggest that consumers do not think of brand positioning and its personality when purchasing fashionable items that will be used for civic engagement. Consumers actually prefer to purchase fashionable garments that entail civic acts and are ready to state action, than look for what the brand first represents. Ananda *et al.* (2019) concluded that consumers seek specific brands that suit their personality types, goals, and ambitions in their culture. Brand personality is important when consumers shop for their representation of their roles in society (Semaan *et al.*, 2019). Nevertheless, when it comes to the context of civic engagement, Malar *et al.* (2011) explain that consumers purchase fashion products that help them communicate to society what they want to express to others about the civic issues. According to Goldsmith and Goldsmith (2012), the garment itself is of value for generating engagement activities in society, not the company's representation. Rahman *et al.* (2014) added that people use fashion as a symbolic connection regarding matters in the surrounding environment.

### **(H2) Self-Concept has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding (a) Political, (b) Social and (c) Environmental Issues.**

Based on the research outcomes, results show that self-concept significantly impacts civic engagement. This finding suggest that consumers use fashion as a means of self-reflection to the community in which they interact in. With fashion, citizens believe they can participate in civic engagement, sharing fashion political, thoughts, opinions, and civic stance. This study is in line with findings from previous research. This conclusion has been stated earlier among McNeill and Venter (2019), that clothing styles highlights one's self-concept to the society. Lin and Hsu (2015), highlighted

that nowadays consumption is totally relatable to an individual's personality. This agrees also with Cham *et al.* (2018) stating that consumers' character and individuality is important to be understood by fashion brands, in order to produce relevant and likable tastes. Fashion adoption is essential in human lives. Individuals like to purchase garments that click with their style preferences and personas. This helps in complementing their identity and displaying one's social status, power and radical views to the surrounding environment (Cavusoglu *et al.*, 2019). This explains as well that fashion is used by activists to become walking billboards as it is considered a significant tool to capture people's attention (McNeill, 2018).

### **(H3.1) Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding (a) Political, (b) Social and (c) Environmental Issues.**

Results show traditional media significantly impacts civic engagement. This finding suggests that consumers mimic fashion styles and behavior when regarding what they see on Television, billboards or fashionable magazines. This study supports previous research. Mass media have a significant impact on consumers' buying behavior by dispersing information to the general public (Shepard *et al.*, 2016). Wok *et al.*, (2008) explain that traditional forms can impact consumers directly in diverse social context, which then influences the purchasing of a particular fashion item. Therefore, consumers are effected immensely about which trendy fashion piece they should buy and wear this season, depending on what was previously stressed by their favorite celebrities, designers or even brands on traditional platforms.

### **(H3.2) Non-Traditional Media has a positive impact on Civic Engagement regarding (a) Political, (b) Social and (c) Environmental Issues.**

Results show that non-traditional media significantly impacts civic engagement. This finding suggests that various non-traditional media forms such as: social media paltforms; Instagram, Facebook, Youtube and TikTok encourage the concept of civic engagement, expecially fashion as a civic commitment. Based on Shephard *et al.* (2016), different media forms can influence consumers' fashion buying choices. Hence, Wok *et al.* (2008) explain that social media channels can sway consumers differently in diverse social context, which later influences the purchasing of a particular fashion item. In addition, Woo *et al.* (2015) highlight that non-traditional media channels trigger consumers to socialize and learn about fashion events, trend, styles and civic commitment. Rathnayaka (2018) clarified that non-traditional media channels have been a standard tool that young people use as information resources and a self- expression method when it comes to engagement in their communities.

**(H4) Civic Engagement regarding Political Issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication Medium.**

Results show that civic engagement regarding political issues significantly impacts fashion as a communication medium. This finding suggest that political civic engagement issues can be manifested in fashion items and be communicated loudly to others in a society. Citizens are using fashion to highlight various matters related to politics, governmental policies, legislation and other democratic activities (boycotting, voting, political marketing, etc.). This outcome supports previous studies. Mazzarella *et al.* (2019) focused on how fashion can facilitate the democratic ideal of communication and illustrate statements in a widely distributed power. Furthermore, Rosholm (2009) affirmed that fashion is a physical appearance state that allows citizens to show political viability. For instance, political figures can perform their political roles through their fashion garments and items used.

**(H5) Civic Engagement regarding Social Issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication Medium.**

Results show that civic engagement regarding social issues significantly impacts fashion as a communication medium. This finding indicates that supporting social causes that matters to consumers, such as feminism, gender equity, hunger, war, cancer, etc is a driver of use of fashion. This outcome is in line with several previous studies: Ahmad *et al.* (2015) state that fashion companies started to blend in fashion garments with societal civic engagement issues that are rising in societies today. These issues are even taking not only a political direction but as well as important social matters to highlight about in fashion items. Slone (2012) mentioned that today fashion brands are becoming activists, encouraging consumers to support various social issues that are problematic to society and requires people's attention to take a stand. Moreover, Roncha and Radclyffe (2015) mention that a fashion brands (like the brand TOMS) participate in blending fashion with real social causes as the brand encourage citizens to buy fashion in support for various humanitarian causes.

**(H6) Civic Engagement regarding Environmental Issues has a positive impact on Fashion as a Communication Medium.**

Results show that civic engagement regarding environmental issues significantly impacts fashion as a communication medium. This outcome indicates that environmental sustainability is a strong driver used when purchasing fashion and using fashion to communicate to others about its conditions; citizens actively participate in fashion as a communication medium towards environmental issues. This outcome

supports several previous studies: Fuad-Luke (2009) highlighted that civic engagement intentions regarding environmental issues are in favor to consumers when it comes to expressing opinions via fashion garments. Delli Carpini (2000) and Brien *et al.* (2018) mentioned that a direction has been made to tackle the engagement levels of youths around the world towards environmental issues in specific. Globally, environmental issues (global warming, animal extinction, etc.) are important topics to tackle as they relate to the future of world communities (Earl *et al.*, 2017).

### **6.3. Research Conclusion**

This research aims to investigate the impact of brand personality, self-concept, and media influence in adopting civic engagement and communicating it through fashion items. In order for the study to explore this topic, several research objectives emerged. This thesis contained four main goals. These objectives were: (RO1) to critically review prior studies to identify the role of brand personality, self-concept, and media influence on civic engagement; (RO2) to identify the causes consumers might support through the use of fashion; (RO3) to understand the variables that influence the consumption of fashion as a communication medium; (RO4) to understand civic engagement role in promoting consumer's fashion choices (communication).

The study's first objective was to critically review prior studies to identify the role of brand engagement, self-concept and media influence on civic engagement. To achieve this objective, the research had to investigate this question "How does the role of brand engagement, self-concept and media influence civic engagement?". Samala and Singh (2019) suggested that brand engagement helps businesses to keep up and bond with its customers to maintain an on going interactive experience. Thompson (2019) indicated that the fashion industry is starting to recognize how brand engagement can encourage civic engagement acts among consumers. This creates a strong relationship between the brand and its customers. According to Brodie *et al.* (2013), brand engagement is a process that puts an effort to learn, share information, socialize and co-develop more with their consumers. When brands do that, consumers become closely drawn physically, emotionally and cognitively in a deeper relationship, this helps assist brands to know well their customers' needs, wants and tastes (Geissinger and Laurell, 2016).

However, following the exploratory study, we focused on brand personality. Goldsmith and Goldsmith (2012) claimed that, the brand personality concept is vital in aiding fashion consumers to select the right brand that fits their current personalities. For this reason, fashion brands are starting to create human characteristics when establishing brand identity to provide meanings that fit targeted



consumers. Based on the semi-structured interviews and the content analysis completed, the participants did not regard the brand engagement variable in their relationship with the fashion brand itself. Hence the study focused on how brand personality is more crucial to participants in selecting the suitable fashion garment.

Self-concept theory primarily focuses on individual's self-presenting themselves and their personality aspects to society. This theory explains how a person's self-presentation to others is necessary. Hence, self-presentation is a process that helps consumers click with their social groups, to portray a particular perception about an one's characteristics (Lin and Hsu, 2015; McNeill, 2018). These semi-structured interviews show that participants agreed on fashion items being a self-expressive tool that helps create a dialogue of an individual's inner thoughts.

According to Wok *et al.* (2008) and Stefanone *et al.* (2010), the social learning theory highlights the efficiency of traditional and non-traditional media channels, leading consumers to purchase specific fashion trends and styles in today's fashion markets (Shephard *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, the three antecedents; brand personality, self-concept, and media influence (traditional and non-traditional), have strong relations with civic engagement issues.

The second objective focused on identifying the civic causes consumers might support through fashion items. To investigate this objective, the study had to examine the research question, "Which civic causes do consumers support through the use of civic engagement?". Some individuals already revealed that they purchased and used fashion items to reflect some political, social and environmental issues that they want to discuss at a certain age.

The third objective of this research is to understand the significant factors that influence the consumption of fashion as a communication medium; To achieve this objective, the study had to answer the research question "Does civic engagement lead to using fashion as a communication medium?". The outcome of this research question had emerged after conducting the quantitative research approach. According to the hypotheses tested, the study's results illustrate that not all suggested hypotheses are supported. However, the outcome of the research indicates that participants agreed that there is a significant impact between self-concept, and traditional and non-traditional media variables on civic engagement. Hence, the outcomes did not support brand personality aspect in impacting civic engagement.

The fourth objective was to understand civic engagement's role in promoting consumer fashion communication. To achieve this objective, the study had to answer the following question, "Does civic engagement lead to using fashion as a communication medium?". The outcome of this research question

had emerged also after conducting the results in chapter five (quantitative research approach). According to the hypotheses tested, results revealed that youth are interested in civic participation acts. In addition, the younger generation is particularly focused in political, social and environmental issues regarding fashion as a communication medium.

#### **6.4. Implications For Theory**

This paper contributes to the literature in several ways. First and foremost, it provides empirical evidence supporting the theories of self-concept and social learning theory in the context of civic engagement and fashion as a communication medium. The literature and past studies explained that the self-concept theory refers to an individual's way of thinking in many attributes such as; feeling, decision making, acting behaviors with the surrounding environment (Cavusoglu *et al.*, 2019). This study adds on to the theory, stating that fashion reflects one's self-image and can be used as a way to communicate one's political, social, and environmental ideologies to the surrounding environment without verbally expressing out any word. Today, fashion statements are being used globally as a unified coding "symbolic dressing" or "political dressing" to blend in their cultural thoughts and events. Protesters are wearing political outlooks that contain: all stripes, feminists, social justice advocates and nationalists are outfitting themselves to match their democratic mindsets.

In addition, further empirical evidence is added to support the social learning theory. Social learning theory explains that the learning process direct consumers to new behaviors and information about trendy products of what to buy with the help of reference groups (Schiffman, 2007). According to Apupianti *et al.*, (2019) and Sornapudi and Srivastava (2021), reference groups have the capacity to influence fashion consumers by mimicking the consumption of other people's purchasing behavior through media channels in the context of civic engagement. Consumers use non-traditional media as a mechanism to learn how to become active members in civic engagement with the use of fashion. During recent events, celebrities and designers channeled their political mindsets at social concerns for example: when Dior popped up the Black Panther uniforms 2017-2018 collection. While, the famous musician Rihanna portrayed her black panther suit attending Dior's fashion event in Paris 2017 to demonstrate how powerful women should dress, in having a strong voice, and acting against anti-racism violence (Carlos, 2017; Delgado, 2018). Accordingly, this study adds to the theory, stating that youth and young adults wear fashion in the civic context that they have learned about through media publicity. What is aired encourages younger generation to participate in civic engagement actions; they seek fashion as non-verbal signals, but holds the power of stating a thousand words.

When reviewing prior studies, various gaps were identified, which motivated the conduction of this study. The first gap that was identified is fashion as a tool that can be used in the civic engagement. Few studies have tackled this topic. Many studies have confirmed that fashion is a communication medium that tells various personal information about the consumer such as, social status, religion, mood; rare studies illustrated that fashion can be a means of communication to illustrate one's political, social and environmental views (Miller, 2005; Ahmad *et al.*, 2015; Mazzarella *et al.*, 2019; Amed and Berg, 2019). Therefore, this research contributes an empirical evidence, showing that youth and young adults seek to participate in civic engagement; nevertheless, they do it in unconventional manners. This study shows that youth and young adults use fashion as a form of civic engagement. This study adds to the literature, by showing that fashion can be used as a communication medium to express one's standpoints, views, thoughts, opinions and support towards various civic matters.

The second academic gap that was found in the literature related to the identification of the significant civic engagement issues that matter to youth and young adults. Prior studies rarely have focused on citizen's motives to participate in civic engagement. In addition, some academic articles on civic engagement have focused on general matters, not a specific issue or cause (Miller, 2005; Vargas, 2009; Genova, 2020). This research develops empirical evidence confirming that young adults are willing to use fashion garments and items to communicate specific civic issues regarded highly in society. Citizens support primarily social, environmental, and political civic engagement matters. Therefore, the study confirms that the youth and young adults support fashion activism; they are willing to adopt fashionable trends that could communicate and serve civic participation in the supported matters mentioned above.

The next academic gap that was found in the literature was the identification of why people's seek to use fashion as form of civic engagement and as a communication medium. Prior studies have showed rare explanations of brand activism as commercial drivers that lead to civic engagement (Miller, 2005; Ahmad *et al.*, 2015; Amed and Berg, 2019). Existing research noticed a shortage of empirical research on why citizens participate civically with the usage of fashion (Venkatasamy, 2015; Mazzarella *et al.*, 2019).

Therefore, this study contributes academically by identifying the variables that lead to citizen's wanting to participate in civic engagement and using fashion as a communication medium. Based on the outcomes of this study, it concludes that citizens participate in civic engagement because self-concept and media influence (traditional and non-traditional media).

Some studies related to civic engagement has been conducted in western nations (Miller, 2005; Vargas, 2009; Genova, 2020). Only, few studies took place in the Middle East. According to Negm *et al.* (2012), research that is conducted in the Middle East focused on the Arab spring of 2011 context. Therefore, this study contributes academically by developing empirical evidence related to citizens' civic engagement outside the Arab Spring. It shows that youth and young adults are active in civic engagement, but through unconventional matters, such as the usage of fashion as a communication medium.

This study measured and examined the impact of brand personality, self-concept, and media influence, in adopting civic engagement and communicating through fashion items. Hence, the study took the variables from prior studies. For instance, the brand personality scale is from Becker and Karen (2003); self-concept from Grewal *et al.* (2004); the media influence from Russell, Norman, and Heckler (2004); civic engagement from Laroche *et al.* (2005); fashion as a communication medium scale from Hausman (2004). Thus, this study took these scales and used them to assess the Egyptian context variables. For this reason, this study contributes academically by validating these scale in another country.

## **6.5. Implications For Practice**

This research study aims to investigate the impact of brand personality, self-concept, and media influence in adopting civic engagement and communicating it through fashion items. Being civically active takes many forms; and today, fashion as civic engagement and communication medium has become popular (Cristobal *et al.*, 2022; Vredenburg *et al.*, 2020). Youth and young adults are beginning to prefer expressing their civic, social, and political matter out in public through fashionable garments (Miller, 2005). Hence, this study's conclusion shows that practitioners should consider likely fashion activism trends and designs that help consumers in showing their views rather than oppressing them. Civic engagement and fashion activism helps spread and communicate specific issues that younger generations widely believe, accept, and want to highlight. Whether political, social or environmental matters that help members of society. Based on the emerged empirical evidence several recommendations for practitioners in fashion, marketing, and civic engagement are developed. These recommendations are based on the research results and indicate the specific measures or directions that the following practitioners can take.

### **6.5.1. Implications for Marketing Practitioners**

Today, fashion designers and brands are experiencing significant pressures from increased levels of competition. Fast fashion is all about rapidly refreshing products and retailers in market requirements,

technical advancement, shorter clothes life-cycles, and the importance of meeting the needs of increasingly sophisticated customers (Warikoo and Thurtell, 2003; Mazzarella *et al.*, 2019). Based on the study's outcomes, the empirical evidence practically contributes to fashion and marketing practitioners. Overall, the outcomes highlight that consumer prefer to support fashion companies who perform corporate social responsibility (CSR). Therefore, this study highly advises fashion companies, designers, and fashion brands to switch fashion designs that entail civic issues that matter to society. Today, consumers feel obligated to have a voice and feel free to share their civic engagement opinions through fashion t-shirts, hats, or dresses. In addition, this research highlights that even young adults prefer to choose and buy from responsible fashion brands that help give back to society and help those in need. Thus, the fashion industry should consider how the new young generation of consumers think and act when purchasing fashion trends.

The research findings recommend that marketers of fashion brands need to focus on creating pieces for consumers to purchase so to support **various civic issues (political, social and environmental)**. Nowadays, during times of stress and turmoil, consumers are more humanistic. Therefore, they demand that brands also illustrate their humanistic nature and effort to support others in time of distress. The study recommends marketers of the fashion industry to encourage **corporate social responsibility (CSR)**. Marketers can advise companies to initiate campaigns that aid in developing and improving the quality of life, create products that have a positive impact on society, and have an ethical responsibility towards the customers and society at large (Hopkins, 2018). By adopting CSR these fashion companies, with their products, can mark a difference in the world. They can use recyclable materials, use part of their revenues to support social causes; they can design garments with messages. Several multinationals have begun specific fashion activism as corporate social responsibility.

Another important recommendation is that marketers of the fashion industry use **traditional and non-traditional media in their marketing campaigns**. For example, marketers can advise fashion companies to market using different outlets to help fashion brands connect with their customers, enhance brand awareness to the market and urge customers to buy and boost sales. Media platforms are multiple channels; for example, a different search engine can be accessible online; Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube, Twitter, etc.; Mass Media, such as Television, magazines, billboards, radio, and news paper.

Based on our findings it is recommended that marketers of the fashion industry to **use influencers (of various forms) as a tool to communicate their fashion image, participation,**

**and role in enhancing the community.** Since social media is popular among youth and young adults, marketers should promote their efforts and fashion identity through the help of social media influencers. Social media influencers in Egypt, especially on Instagram, are Hadia Ghaleb, Nourhan Eissa, and Farah Emara, one of Egypt's top fashion influencers and bloggers (Staff Writer, March 8, 2017; Ezzat, 2020). When it comes to fashion, the popular social media influencers are Samer Ahmed, Nada Fouda, and Hoda Rashed (Ezzat, 2020). Marketers can make these high-profile people speak about various civic issues and how they play a role in supporting important matters when purchasing this specific brand. As a result, this action will create a desire that affects fashion consumers to buy and mimic them.

Another implication derived from our results is that marketers of the fashion industry **to promote its brand personality with the use of brand activism strategies.** Marketing campaigns that show brand concern to civic problems can capture consumers' attention and make the brand stand out from the competitors in the market. Consumers today are becoming political consumers. **Political consumerism** is when an individual refuses or deliberately purchases certain products and services, relying on political reasons. According to Stole and Micheletti (2013, *p.39*), consumers are partaking in political purchasing behaviors and using the market as an arena for political statements. This act of civic engagement and action from the companies' perspective is appreciated by consumer's ethical, social or political viewpoints. This study shows that consumers have high interest in blending civic engagement and fashion; they seek to participate in various activities with the goal of improving society. Therefore, this study recommends that brands become proactive to take stance in brand activism, taking actions towards socio-political issues to fulfill consumers' needs to participate in democratic activities. Brand activism signifies a company's effort to promote direct change (social, political, economic, or environmental nature) that aligns with the brand's core values (Cristobal *et al.*, 2022 ; Vredenburg *et al.*, 2020).

The study recommends fashion businesses **to start blending styles that create personalities for civically active consumers that hold independent thoughts within their garments.** The findings indicate that younger adults express their personalities more independently, with individual freedom towards matters that concern citizens in society and critical issues that are vital to be heard. Therefore, fashion brands should start blending styles that fulfill the needs of these new consumers' habits. In addition, fashion brands should incorporate new ideas involving participative styles and wordings in fashion pieces to highlight specific thoughts and issues that concern society at large.

The study also recommends that the fashion industry focuses on brand **fashion activism.** For example, some fashion activism that businesses can consider are:

- **Fashion activism Strategy: fashion hacking:** collaborates with the idea of hacktivism in integrating political ideologies and hacking new ideas from existing items to wear within the community potentially.
- **Fashion activism Strategy: Co-design affectively:** challenges the current structure of the fashion industry in giving freedom to consumers to design, empower, and be less dominant from the industry's designers towards creating limited subjective trends, reducing unfair labor in sweatshops.
- **Fashion activism Strategy: Craftsmanship:** Businesses should use handcrafting to achieve a political activism stance. Here, designers integrate fashion consumers with crafting techniques to involve consumers with materials and do it yourself.

### **6.5.2. Implications for Public administrations, Politicians, and Partakers**

Fashion consumers integrate into civic duties and express concerns about environmental sustainability, social, and political problems (Molyneux, 2017). Based on the study's outcomes, several recommendations can be made enlightening practitioners (public administrations, politicians, and partakers) that consumers are participating in civic engagement but through fashion, not solely through traditional approaches. Therefore, fashion can provide vitality, differentiation and enhance consumers' interests in civic duties. Furthermore, the study stresses that young adults reflect an increased urge to civically participate in their social issues, whether they share their political, social and environmental opinions. So, practically, fashion trends that deal with expressing participants' views regarding political problems, government oppression, or even political ideas can encourage shopping schemes and purchase these items. Furthermore, social matters such as helping developing countries and giving back to society are highly regarded by young adults. Therefore, youth and younger generations are motivated to help those in need potentially.

Political practitioners should be alerted that fashion can be a new form of communication regarding being civically active and expressing one's views. Findings show that fashion items could elaborate, support, and excite the younger generation to participate in issues that tackle society. This study shows that citizens are using fashion as a tool to communicate their position in societal issues. Thus, fashion can act as a political statement, it is a new movement for civic engagement and communication. Thus, fashion garments and styles can strongly reflect specific movements between this younger generation and act as a peaceful demonstration towards a democratic voice. Fashion items have inner and complex meanings other than sending one's inner personality to society. So, public

administrations, politicians, and partakers may create various fashion items to distribute among their supporters when it comes to political events, such as elections, or parliamentary decisions, governmental festivals, rallies and social events. Hats, shirts, scarves, pins, shoes, etc., when worn by supporters, can capture other citizens' attention and increase awareness about the political matters, incidents, and events. etc., they should allow supporters to use fashion as a rallying, supportive and applauding element.

Based on this study, it is recommended that public administrations, politicians, and partakers **use traditional and non-traditional media as a campaign to edify citizens in participating in civic engagement.** Online platforms are a great tool and source to showcase political issues that need to be trending. In this study, during the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaire survey, citizens are alert and active on traditional and social media. This helps citizens learn and be aware about various topics through watching television, billboards or print magazine or whether it's online. When political, social and environmental matters that occur within the society are trending, a reaction must be made to the case - they are attracted and feel sensitive towards the issue. The 2011 Arab Spring is a perfect example to showcase the power of non-traditional media in moving citizens (Abdulla *et al.*, 2018). For instance, in the current year:

- **Trending #Free Palestine:** A political activism movement that fully encourages citizens worldwide to support Palestinians socially and humanly in the Gaza strip.
- **Trending #BlackLivesMatter:** A protest that encourages citizens to create a social movement against police brutality for racial violence against black-colored citizens.

## **6.6. Limitations of the Current Work**

The present research focuses on certain theories (self-concept and social learning theory) to explain citizen's motives for civic engagement and blending it through fashion. Thus, this research study neglects other theories that could add an input to why citizens purchase fashion and how fashion can be used as a form of civic engagement. So, the development of the model uses certain variables and deserted others that could have aided in explaining this phenomenon.

The current study focuses on the Egyptian context. For this reason, this study cannot be generalized to other countries. Furthermore, this study focuses on youth and young adults. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to different age groups. Moreover, the research study focuses on university students, neglecting the uneducated citizens. Hence, the outcomes might not be reflecting the same motives for civic engagement and using fashion activism among the illiterate. Finally, the study focuses on private universities in Cairo and Alexandria, neglecting the public university sector and other cities in



Egypt. This can limit the findings to be generalized to all higher education institutions and towns of Egypt.

The current research used mixed-methods. The first phase of the investigation used semi-structured interviews. Interviews contain certain disadvantages compared to other qualitative approaches such as observation. These disadvantages are the fact that they are time-consuming, need extensive efforts, interviewers need to have a sense of patience and smartness to allow the space for a respondent to answer freely, and unfortunately, most of the time, respondents won't feel at ease. They sometimes may not be completely frank in front of the interviewer under some specific questions (Newcomer *et al.*, 2015).

The second half of the study collected data using a questionnaire. Due to social distancing caused by Covid 19, online distribution was performed. However, online administration contains certain disadvantages compared to physical distribution. These disadvantages are time-consuming, costly for some researchers, discomfort for using computer for respondents, and some respondents do not like the idea of being surveyed in a non-social manner, therefore sometimes respondents' answers may not be accurate (Nayak and K A, 2019).

Due to time restrictions, the study has recruited many students during university hours throughout their offline period on campus before the Covid 19 situation. So, there is a limited number of interviewees that took place.

The study used non-probability sampling when conducting the distributed questionnaires because the sampling frame was not available. This subjective sampling helps the analysis approach select participants who fit the information needed to the research problem (Bernard, 2002). As a result, this act is considered convenience sampling. Since convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique, using convenience techniques can result in a sample that may not represent the actual population (Taherdoost, 2016). In addition, non-probability sampling attributes can obtain specific errors in judgment by the research. Participants can show a high bias to particular questions and not reveal the truth. Also, with purposive, non-probability sampling, the research findings cannot be generalized.

Time was a limitation aspect. The data is collected during a cross-sectional time (once) at each interval, during weekdays of students between gap times in private university timings. Therefore, it was hard for the study to gather more data from students as it was the peak period. In addition, the class hours had shorter time period to fit the schedule during Covid 19 measures. In addition, due to the questionnaire being online, some responses gathered have been missing the survey for potential research purposes. Thus, it took more time to collect the data necessary with a suitable number of participants.

## **6.7. Suggestions for Future Research**

Since this research has certain limitations, future investigation can take several direction to improve on the research findings. Firstly, the study pinpoints on some theories such as (self-concept and social learning theory) which guided the investigation in researching citizens' motives for blending civic engagement and fashion as a communication medium. Thus, future academics can add on other constructs that could explain why citizens purchase fashion and how fashion can be used as a form of civic engagement. For example, future studies can investigate additional motives because Egyptian youth population did not share a notion about brand personality and civic engagement and try to investigate consumer's reasons behind not turning to civic engagement garments with the company's representation. Future studies can add on the construct of congruence theories that could explain further insights about consumer's positive perceptions to certain brand's images and whether these preferred fashion brands are congruent and true to consumer's thoughts and opinions, this would impact purchase intentions and attitudes towards brands that act on civic engagement (political, social and environmental). Also, future studies could examine congruent impacts with brand personality variable on consumer's self values and thoughts and how could it be aligned with their favorite brands. Finally, future research could stress which type of non-traditional media channels help impact civic engagement participation through fashion and youth's consumer behavior in fashion.

This study focused on supporting political, social, and environmental civic questions. Future studies can conduct specific case studies on certain issues and/or events. This study focused on fashion usage in general to be used in civic engagement. Future studies can assess specific brands and their role in encouraging civic engagement and fashion as a communication medium among individuals. For example, brand TOMS or Lacoste or Zara as a case study to be investigated and assessed so to learn about their achievement and strategies.

The current research study focuses on Egyptian youth and young adults who live in Cairo and Alexandria (the two biggest cities in Egypt) enrolled in private universities. However, future studies can examine this model in other nations. For instance: future studies can compare a study between Western countries and the Middle East. Also, future researchers can focus on other age groups. In addition, future studies can focus on public university students or undergraduates of different educational backgrounds, or uneducated students.

Moreover, future research can focus on the public university sector or the relationship between private and public universities across Egypt. In addition, future studies can test this model on different cities in Egypt or as a country as a whole. Hence, performing this previous recommendation will help

develop a better-detailed perspective on other cultural context countries and subcultures of Egypt.

This research study uses online distribution for applying the questionnaire due to social distancing caused by covid 19. In addition, data was collected cross-sectionally time (once). Due to time restrictions, the study recruited a limited number of students. Future studies could have more flexible time and allow a more significant number of participants to study and partake in understanding the impact of brand personality, self-concept, and media influence in the adoption of civic engagement and thus, presenting fashion as a communicating medium.

Future studies can seek to find a sampling frame to conduct probability sampling. Probability sampling is adequate to generalize results for a larger population scale. Thus, a probability sample helps the study be more generalized in its results and implications. In addition, another positive element is with probability sampling larger scale of respondents can have an equal chance of being selected.

This study focused on the perspective of consumers. Future studies can look at the perspective of companies, and study brand strategies and brand activism issues. In a world in which so many issues that call for action and coherence with important values, companies need to understand their responsibilities and to what extent they can or should make their positions public and act accordingly. The war in Ukraine, among other events, unfortunately, has provided a serious test to companies in this regard, with some companies choosing to leave Russia immediately or soon after the invasion. Therefore, future studies are suggested to focus on the benefits of creating a brand activism plan. Brand activism is an important topic as it can help encourage companies and its employees to be more productive among social and moral issues while also promoting positive brand awareness; It is beneficial in building trust with both employees and consumers while also improving the chance of positive brand credibility. Brand activism promotes in directing change (social, political, economic, or environmental nature), this aligns with the brand's core values and customer's beliefs, values and thought.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A - Questionnaire – English Version

Dear participants,

This questionnaire aims to assess the elements of civic engagement and to understand consumption of fashion as a communication medium. The study focuses on consumers' point of views of the civic engagement types and its relationship to fashion consumption in reflecting communication. Consumption of fashion as a communication. The information you provide will help the researcher better identify, explore and measure various variables associated in the study. Since you are the one who can give the correct information, the researcher requests that you respond to the questions frankly and honestly. Your identity will not be exposed and confidentiality will be taken into consideration. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. The researcher greatly appreciates your help.

The Researcher

#### **Part One: Introduction Questions Fashion Behaviors**

**Question 1:** Do you have interest in clothing?

- Yes
- No

**Question 2:** How often do you go shopping?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Occasionally

**Question 3:** Do you believe your fashion items communicate who you are?

- Yes
- No

**Question 4:** Have you ever purchased an item to communicate a message related to any political, social or environmental problems? (Example: a pin supporting cancer patients)

- Yes
  - No
  - If yes, what item? \_\_\_\_\_
-

**Part Two: This section assesses how clothing reflects your identity and what inspires your fashion choices.**

**Question Five:** The following questions assess the *elements of self-concept*. The statements focus on whether fashion (what they wear) communicates who you are. Please from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), circle your opinion about the statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Clothing style reflect the kind of person I see myself to be.	1	2	3	4	5
My clothing style in wearing items helps ascertain (illustrates) my self-identity.	1	2	3	4	5
My clothing style makes me feel good about myself.	1	2	3	4	5
My clothing style is an instrument of my self-expression.	1	2	3	4	5
My clothing style plays a critical role in defining my self-concept.	1	2	3	4	5
My clothing style helps me to establish the kind of person I see myself to be.	1	2	3	4	5

**Question Six:** The following questions assess **brand personality**. This means that you choose brands that have a persona that matches your personality. **Please from a scale of 1 (brand personality is similar to mine) to 5 (brand personality is not similar to mine).** **Circle the number that best suits your opinion.**

Similar	1	2	3	4	5	dissimilar
consistent	1	2	3	4	5	inconsistent
typical	1	2	3	4	5	Atypical
representative	1	2	3	4	5	unrepresentative
complementary	1	2	3	4	5	Not complementary
Low fit	1	2	3	4	5	High fit
Makes sense	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't make sense

**Question Seven:** The following questions assess the *Impact of Traditional Media Influence on consumers (television, radio, magazine, newspapers & billboards)*. Please from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), circle your opinion about the statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Traditional Media is an escape for me.	1	2	3	4	5
Traditional Media helps me forget about the day's problems.	1	2	3	4	5
If I am in a bad mood, watching traditional media puts me in a better mood.	1	2	3	4	5
I like the clothes seen on the traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I like the hairstyles portrayed on the traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I often buy clothing styles that I've seen on traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I imitate the gestures and facial expressions from the characters seen on the traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5

I find myself saying phrases heard on the traditional media when I interact with other people.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to speak like the characters observed in traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I learn how to handle real life situations by watching traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I get ideas from the traditional media about how to interact in my own life.	1	2	3	4	5
I relate what happens in the traditional media to my own life.	1	2	3	4	5
I would love to be an actor in the traditional media	1	2	3	4	5
I would love to meet the characters on the traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I have items that relate to what I have observed on the traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5

**Question Eight:** The following questions assess the Impact of **Non-Traditional Media Influence on consumers (social media such as: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, & Brand websites)**. Please from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), circle your opinion about the statements.

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Non-Traditional Media is an escape for me.	1	2	3	4	5
Non-Traditional Media helps me forget about the day's problems.	1	2	3	4	5
If I am in a bad mood, watching non-traditional media puts me in a better mood.	1	2	3	4	5
I like the clothes seen on the non-traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I like the hairstyles portrayed on the traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I often buy clothing styles that I've seen on non-traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I imitate the gestures and facial expressions from the characters seen on the non-traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I find myself saying phrases heard on the non-traditional media when I interact with other people.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to speak like the characters observed in non-traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I learn how to handle real life situations by watching non-traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I get ideas from the non-traditional media about how to interact in my own life.	1	2	3	4	5
I relate what happens in the non-traditional media to my own life.	1	2	3	4	5
I would love to be an actor in the non-traditional media	1	2	3	4	5
I would love to meet the characters on the non-traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5
I have items that relate to what I have observed on the non-traditional media.	1	2	3	4	5

**Question Nine:** The following scale illustrates if fashion can be used as a **civic engagement tool** to transfer awareness about various **political, social** and **environmental matters** to the public. Please from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), circle your opinion about the statements.

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to political matters in society.	1	2	3	4	5
I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with political matters in society.	1	2	3	4	5
It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of political issues in society.	1	2	3	4	5
It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to environmental matters in society.	1	2	3	4	5
I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with environmental matters in society.	1	2	3	4	5
It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of environmental issues in society.	1	2	3	4	5
It is easy to use fashion as a means to transfer awareness and describe portrayals related to social matters in society.	1	2	3	4	5
I could easily use fashion to transfer awareness and explain many features and descriptions associated with social matters in society.	1	2	3	4	5
It is not difficult to use fashion to transfer awareness and to give a precise description of social issues in society.	1	2	3	4	5

**Question Ten:** The following questions assess **Fashion as a Communication Medium**. The statements focus on consumers' **opinions** regarding **how fashion** can be used to **communicate various matters** to the public. Please from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), circle your opinion about the statements.

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Using fashion trends as a medium of communication is excellent	1	2	3	4	5
My fashion trends share relevant information.	1	2	3	4	5
There is little communication between my fashion usage and what I want to portray to the world (r).	1	2	3	4	5
My fashion trends are a source of information.	1	2	3	4	5

The direction of information I want to communicate to the public is usually shown in my selection of fashion.	1	2	3	4	5
There are few opportunities to use fashion as a medium of communication (r).	1	2	3	4	5

<p><b>Q12. Age:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Under 20</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 20 – less than 35</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 35 – less than 50</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 50 – less than 65</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 65 and above</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q13. Highest Completed Level of Education:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Elementary School</li> <li><input type="radio"/> High School</li> <li><input type="radio"/> College Degree</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Graduate Degree</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Postgraduate Degree</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other: _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q14. City of residence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Cairo</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Alexandria</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other: _____</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q15. Gender:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Female</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Male</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q16. Marital Status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Single</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Married</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Divorced or Separated</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Widowed</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q17. Number of Children:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> None</li> <li><input type="radio"/> One</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Two</li> <li><input type="radio"/> More than two children</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q14. Current job status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Manager/Executives</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Clerks</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Professionals</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Academics</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Self Employed</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Laborers</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Technician</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other: _____</li> <li><input type="radio"/></li> </ul>	<p><b>Q15. Average Monthly Household income in Egyptian Pounds:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Less than 2,000</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 2,000 – less than 5,000</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 5,000 – less than 10,000</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Over 10,000</li> </ul>



## Appendix B - Questionnaire – Arabic Version

أعزائي المشاركون،  
يهدف هذا الاستبيان إلى تقييم عناصر المشاركة المدنية وتفهم طريقة استخدام الموضة بصفته تعبيراً  
عن الذات ووسيلة تواصل، حيث تركز الدراسة على وجهات نظر المستهلكين حول أنواع المشاركة  
المدنية وعلاقتها باستهلاك الموضة في عكس التواصل، أي استخدام الموضة في التواصل ونية الشراء.  
هذا وستساعد المعلومات التي تقدمها للباحث على تحديد المتغيرات المختلفة المرتبطة بالدراسة  
تحديداً أفضل واستكشافها وقياسها. وحيث إنك الوحيد القادر على تقديم المعلومات الصحيحة، سيطلب  
منك الباحث الإجابة على الأسئلة بصراحة وأمانة، ولن يتم الكشف عن هويتك ومراعاة السرية. شكراً  
جزيلاً علي وقتكم وحسن تعاونكم. يقدر الباحثون مساعدتكم كثيراً.

الباحثون

### الجزء الأول: أسئلة المقدمة: سلوكيات الموضة

**السؤال الأول:** هل تهتم بالملابس؟

- نعم  
 لا

**السؤال 2:** كم مرة تذهب للتسوق؟

- يوميًا  
 أسبوعيًا  
 شهريًا  
 أحياناً

**السؤال 3:** هل تعتقد أن قطع الأزياء الخاصة بك تعبر عن هويتك؟

- نعم  
 لا

**السؤال 4:** هل سبق لك شراء شيء لإيصال رسالة تتعلق بأي مشاكل سياسية أو  
اجتماعية أو بيئية؟ (مثال: دبوس يدعم مرضى السرطان)

- نعم  
 لا

إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم، ما العنصر؟ -----

**للأزياء، الجزء الثاني: يقيم هذا القسم طريقة تعبير الملابس عن هويتك وما يلهمك عند  
اختيارك**

**السؤال الخامس:** تقيم الأسئلة التالية **عناصر مفهوم الذات**. تركز العبارات على ما إذا كانت الموضة (ما يرتدونه) تعبر عن هويتك. يرجى وضع دائرة من مقياس من 1 (أرفض بشدة) إلى 5 (أوافق بشدة)، حول رأيك على العبارات.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	محايد	لا أوافق	أرفض بشدة	
5	4	3	2	1	يعبر نمط الملابس عن نوع الشخص الذي أرى نفسي فيه .
5	4	3	2	1	يساعد أسلوب ملابسني في ارتداء الأشياء على توضيح هويتي الذاتية.
5	4	3	2	1	أسلوب ملابسني يجعلني أشعر بالرضا عن نفسي.
5	4	3	2	1	أسلوب ملابسني هو أداة للتعبير عن نفسي.
5	4	3	2	1	يؤدي أسلوب ملابسني دورًا مهمًا في تحديد مفهومي الذاتي.
5	4	3	2	1	يساعدني أسلوب ملابسني على تحديد نوع الشخص الذي أرى نفسي عليه.

**السؤال السادس:** تقيم الأسئلة التالية سمات **ماركات الموضة**، وهذا ما يعني أنك تختار العلامات التجارية التي تتمتع بشخصية تتناسب مع شخصيتك. يرجى وضع دائرة من مقياس من 1 (شخصية العلامة التجارية / تشبه شخصيتي) إلى 5 (شخصية العلامة التجارية لا تشبهني) حول الرقم الذي يناسب رأيك.

تشابه	1	2	3	4	5	لا تشابه
ثابتة	1	2	3	4	5	تعارض
عادية	1	2	3	4	5	نموذجي
تمثيلية	1	2	3	4	5	غير تمثيلية
مكتملة	1	2	3	4	5	غير مكتملة
تناسب قليلاً	1	2	3	4	5	تناسب كثيراً
لها معنى	1	2	3	4	5	لا معنى لها

**السؤال السابع:** تقيم الأسئلة التالية **أثر وسائل الإعلام التقليدية على المستهلكين (التلفزيون والراديو والمجلات والصحف واللوحات الإعلانية)**. يرجى وضع دائرة من مقياس من 1 (لا أوافق بشدة) إلى 5 (أوافق بشدة)، حول رأيك على العبارات.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	محايد	لا أوافق	أرفض بشدة	
5	4	3	2	1	وسائل الإعلام التقليدية هي ملاذي .
5	4	3	2	1	تساعدني وسائل الإعلام التقليدية على نسيان مشاكل اليوم.
5	4	3	2	1	إذا كنت في حالة مزاجية سيئة، فإن مشاهدة الوسائط التقليدية تجعلني في حالة مزاجية أفضل.
5	4	3	2	1	أحب الملابس التي تظهر على وسائل الإعلام التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أحب تسريحات الشعر المصورة على وسائل الإعلام التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	غالبًا ما أشتري أنماط الملابس التي رأيتها على وسائل الإعلام التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أقلد الإيماءات وتعبيرات وجه الشخصيات التي تظهر على الوسائط التقليدية.

5	4	3	2	1	أجد نفسي أردد عبارات قيلت على وسائل الإعلام التقليدية عندما أتفاعل مع أشخاص آخرين.
5	4	3	2	1	أحاول التحدث مثل الشخصيات التي شوهدت في وسائل الإعلام التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أتعلم كيفية التعامل مع الحياة الواقعية من خلال مشاهدة الوسائط التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	تراودني أفكار من وسائل الإعلام التقليدية حول كيفية التفاعل في حياتي الخاصة.
5	4	3	2	1	أربط ما يحدث في وسائل الإعلام التقليدية بحياتي الخاصة.
5	4	3	2	1	أحب أن أكون ممثلاً في وسائل الإعلام التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أحب أن أقابل الشخصيات على وسائل الإعلام التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	لدي أشياء تتعلق بما لاحظته على وسائل الإعلام التقليدية.

**السؤال الثامن: تقيم الأسئلة التالية تأثير وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية على المستهلكين (وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مثل: Instagram و Facebook و Twitter والمواقع الإلكترونية للعلامة التجارية). يرجى وضع دائرة من مقياس من 1 (لا أوافق بشدة) إلى 5 (أوافق بشدة)، حول رأيك على العبارات.**

موافق بشدة	أوافق	محايد	لا أوافق	أرفض بشدة	
5	4	3	2	1	وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية هي ملاذي.
5	4	3	2	1	تساعدني وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية على نسيان مشاكل اليوم.
5	4	3	2	1	إذا كنت في حالة مزاجية سيئة، فإن مشاهدة الوسائط غير التقليدية تجعلني في حالة مزاجية أفضل.
5	4	3	2	1	أحب الملابس التي تظهر على وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أحب تسريحات الشعر المصورة على وسائل الإعلام التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	غالبًا ما أشتري أنماط الملابس التي رأيته على الوسائط غير التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أفقد الإيماءات وتعبيرات وجه الشخصيات التي تظهر على الوسائط غير التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أجد نفسي أردد عبارات قيلت في وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية عندما أتفاعل مع أشخاص آخرين.
5	4	3	2	1	أحاول التحدث مثل الشخصيات التي شوهدت في وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أتعلم كيفية التعامل مع الحياة الواقعية من خلال مشاهدة الوسائط غير التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	تراودني أفكار من وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية حول كيفية التفاعل في حياتي الخاصة.
5	4	3	2	1	أربط ما يحدث في وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية بحياتي الخاصة.
5	4	3	2	1	أحب أن أكون ممثلاً في وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية.
5	4	3	2	1	أحب أن أقابل الشخصيات على وسائل الإعلام غير التقليدية.

5	4	3	2	1	لدي أشياء تتعلق بما لاحظته على الوسائط غير التقليدية.
<p><b>السؤال التاسع:</b> يوضح المقياس التالي ما إذا أمكن استخدام الموضحة على أنها أداة للمشاركة المدنية لنقل الوعي حول مختلف الأمور السياسية والاجتماعية والبيئية للجمهور. يرجى وضع دائرة من مقياس من 1 (لا أوافق بشدة) إلى 5 (أوافق بشدة)، حول رأيك على العبارات.</p>					
	<b>أوافق بشدة</b>	<b>أوافق</b>	<b>محايد</b>	<b>لا أوافق</b>	<b>أرفض بشدة</b>
5	4	3	2	1	يسهل استخدام الموضحة على أنها وسيلة لنقل الوعي ووصف التصورات المتعلقة بالأمور السياسية في المجتمع.
5	4	3	2	1	يمكنني بسهولة استخدام الموضحة لنقل الوعي وشرح العديد من الميزات والأوصاف المرتبطة بالأمور السياسية في المجتمع.
5	4	3	2	1	ليس من الصعب استخدام الموضحة لنقل الوعي وتقديم وصفًا دقيقًا عن القضايا السياسية في المجتمع.
5	4	3	2	1	من السهل استخدام الموضحة على أنها وسيلة لنقل الوعي ووصف التصورات المتعلقة بالمسائل البيئية في المجتمع.
5	4	3	2	1	يمكنني بسهولة استخدام الموضحة لنقل الوعي وشرح العديد من الميزات والأوصاف المرتبطة بالمسائل البيئية في المجتمع.
5	4	3	2	1	ليس من الصعب استخدام الموضحة لنقل الوعي وتقديم وصفًا دقيقًا عن القضايا البيئية في المجتمع.
5	4	3	2	1	من السهل استخدام الموضحة على أنها وسيلة لنقل الوعي ووصف التصورات المتعلقة بالمسائل الاجتماعية في المجتمع.
5	4	3	2	1	يمكنني بسهولة استخدام الموضحة لنقل الوعي وشرح العديد من الميزات والأوصاف المرتبطة بالمسائل الاجتماعية في المجتمع.
5	4	3	2	1	ليس من الصعب استخدام الموضحة لنقل الوعي وتقديم وصفًا دقيقًا عن القضايا الاجتماعية في المجتمع.

**السؤال العاشر: تقيم الأسئلة التالية الموضحة على أنها وسيلة تواصل. كما** تركز البيانات على آراء المستهلكين فيما يتعلق بكيفية استخدام الموضحة لتوصيل الأمور المختلفة للجمهور. يرجى وضع دائرة من مقياس من 1 (لا أوافق بشدة) إلى 5 (أوافق بشدة)، حول رأيك على العبارات.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	محايد	لا أوافق	أرفض بشدة	
5	4	3	2	1	من الرائع استخدام صيحات الموضحة بصفقتها وسيلة للتواصل
5	4	3	2	1	صيحات الموضحة الخاصة بي تشارك المعلومات ذات الصلة.
5	4	3	2	1	هناك القليل من التواصل بين استخدامي للأزياء وما أريد تصويره للعالم (ص).
5	4	3	2	1	صيحات الموضحة الخاصة بي هي مصدر للمعلومات.
5	4	3	2	1	عادة ما يظهر اتجاه المعلومات التي أرغب في توصيلها للجمهور في اختيار الأزياء الخاص بي.
5	4	3	2	1	هناك القليل من الفرص لاستخدام الموضحة بصفقتها وسيلة للتواصل (r).

<p><b>س 12. العمر:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> تحت 20</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 20 - أقل من 35</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 35 - أقل من 50</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 50 - أقل من 65</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 65 فيما فوق</li> </ul>	<p><b>س 13. أعلى مستوى تحصيل من التعليم :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> مدرسة ابتدائية</li> <li><input type="radio"/> المدرسة الثانوية</li> <li><input type="radio"/> شهادة جامعيه</li> <li><input type="radio"/> درجة التخرج</li> <li><input type="radio"/> شهادة عليا</li> <li><input type="radio"/> آخر: _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>س 14. مدينة الإقامة:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> القاهرة</li> <li><input type="radio"/> الإسكندرية</li> <li><input type="radio"/> أخرى: _____</li> </ul>	<p><b>س 15. الجنس:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> أنثى</li> <li><input type="radio"/> ذكر</li> </ul>
<p><b>س 16. الحالة الإجتماعية:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> أعزب</li> <li><input type="radio"/> متزوج</li> <li><input type="radio"/> مطلق أو منفصل</li> <li><input type="radio"/> أرمل</li> </ul>	<p><b>س 17. عدد الاطفال:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> لا يوجد</li> <li><input type="radio"/> واحد</li> <li><input type="radio"/> اثنين</li> <li><input type="radio"/> أكثر من طفلين</li> </ul>
<p><b>س 14. الوظيفة الحالية:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> المدير / التنفيذيون</li> <li><input type="radio"/> كتبة</li> <li><input type="radio"/> مهنيون</li> <li><input type="radio"/> أكاديميون</li> <li><input type="radio"/> العاملون لحسابهم الخاص</li> <li><input type="radio"/> عمال</li> <li><input type="radio"/> فنيون</li> <li><input type="radio"/> أخرى: _____</li> </ul>	<p><b>س 15. متوسط دخل الأسرة الشهري بالجنيه المصري:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> أقل من 2000</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 2000 - أقل من 5000</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 5000 - أقل من 10000</li> <li><input type="radio"/> أكثر من 10000</li> </ul>

## Appendix C - Interview Consent Form



Universidade do Minho  
Escola de Economia e Gestão

**Research project title:** Understanding Consumption of Fashion as a Communication Medium: The Role of Civic Engagement

**Research investigator:** Ms. Farah Khaled

**Research Participants name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Whenever there's a positive change in society, we can thank advocates or activists participating in civic engagement. Civic engagement involves citizens trying to work to make a difference in the civic life of their community or of the world as a whole. Citizens today, in democratic nations, work on issues like racial injustice, gender discrimination, feminism, sustainability, and other countless social issues related to the current and future generations of human rights. You can find citizens that are advocates or activists lobbying their governments, calling for corporate accountability, and campaigning for equality. Visions and specific goals vary, but citizens want a better world. To be effective, citizens participate in various civic engagements; a currently common strategy is fashion as civic engagement. Today, citizens are using fashion as a medium for social, political, and environmental change. Fashion can be used as a form of protest, whether communicating and expressing dissent or support of the civic matter. ***This is the subject matter of the current research in which this interview will be about and that requires your participation.***

This interview would like to take your opinion on the concept and practice of purchasing fashion and civic engagement. The interview will take an average of 45 minutes. We don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time. Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project. Ethical procedures for academic research require that interviewees explicitly agree to be interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used.

This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you therefore read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- The interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced
- You will be sent the transcript and given the opportunity to correct any factual errors
- The transcript of the interview will be analyzed by the researcher
- Access to the interview transcript will be limited to academic colleagues and researchers with whom he might collaborate as part of the research process
- Any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed

**By signing this form, I agree that:**

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time.
2. I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
3. I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
4. I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
5. The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above research topic
6. I have read the Information sheet
7. I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted
8. I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation
9. I can request a copy of the transcript of my interview and may make edits I feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality
10. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future

If you have any questions concerning the procedure or need some clarification regarding the consent form, please feel free to contact Ms. Farah Khaled Fouad Helmy, Mobile number (002) (0100191151), email address: [farah.khaled92@gmail.com](mailto:farah.khaled92@gmail.com)

Your participation and your feedback is very important to us and it would be greatly appreciated. We hope that you are willing to contribute to this academic study. Please confirm your voluntary participation intention by filling in and signing this consent form. Once you have signed this form, the interview will begin immediately.

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your contribution is very much appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation.

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