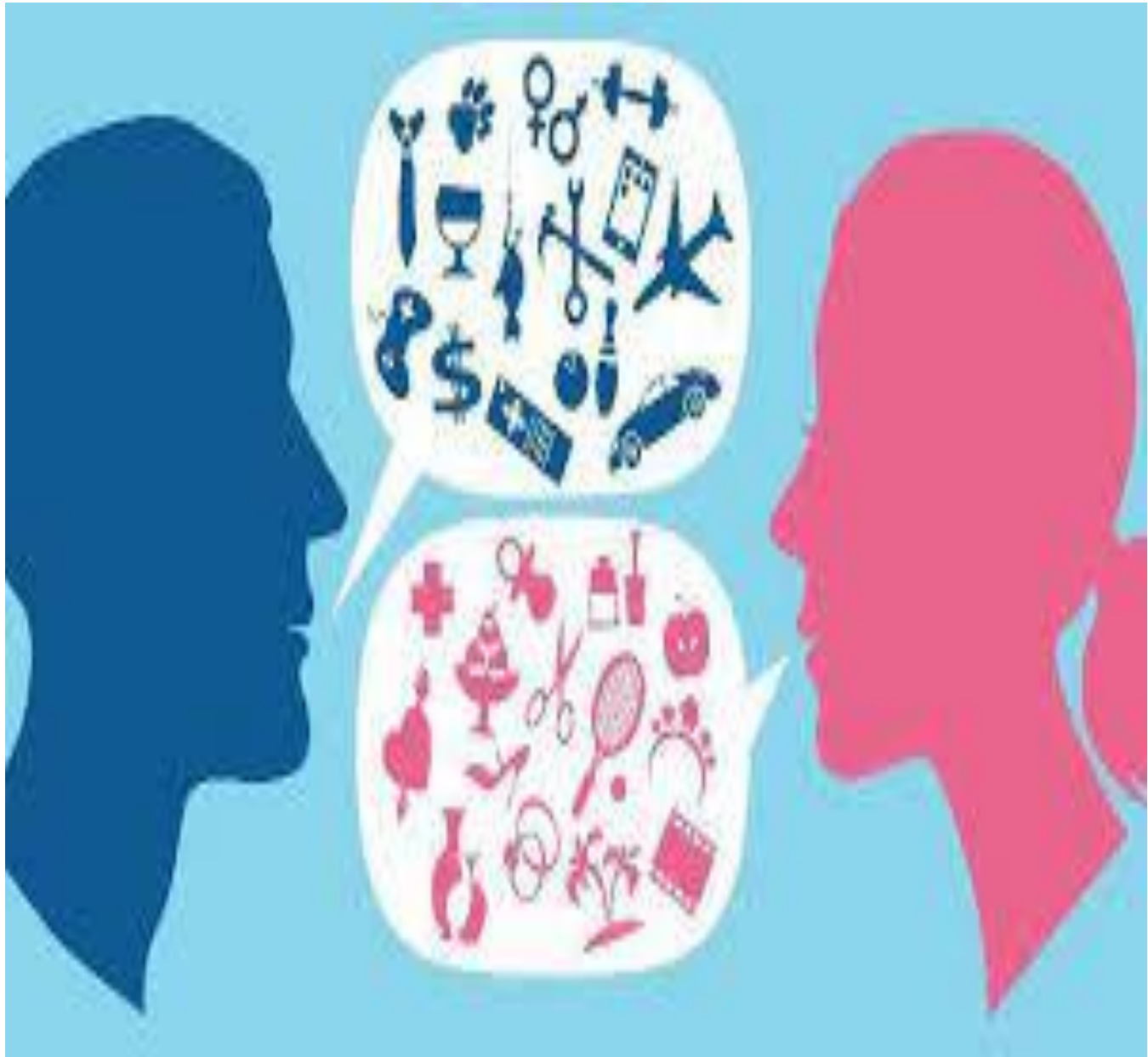


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Globalisation and Fashion Consumer Culture

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This study examines the relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture through a qualitative analysis of secondary data. Drawing on Consumer Culture Theory, globalisation theory, and symbolic interactionism, the research explores how global economic integration, digital transformation, and cultural exchange influence fashion consumption practices and identity construction. The findings reveal a dynamic interplay between cultural homogenization and heterogenization, where global fashion trends coexist with localised adaptations and hybrid identities. The study highlights the transformative impact of fast fashion in accelerating consumption cycles and promoting a culture of disposability, while also acknowledging its role in democratizing fashion access. Furthermore, the research underscores the growing significance of digital platforms in shaping participatory consumer culture, enabling consumers to actively engage in the creation and dissemination of fashion meanings. Despite increasing awareness of ethical and sustainability issues, a persistent gap remains between consumer attitudes and actual behaviour. The study also identifies the rising influence of emerging markets in redefining global fashion narratives. Overall, the research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of how globalisation reshapes fashion consumer culture, offering theoretical insights and practical implications for stakeholders in the fashion industry.

Keywords: globalisation, fashion consumer culture, consumer culture theory, fast fashion, digital media, cultural hybridity, sustainable consumption

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon of globalisation has profoundly transformed the cultural, economic, and social landscapes of contemporary societies, with the fashion industry emerging as one of the most dynamic arenas through which these transformations are both expressed and contested. Globalisation, broadly defined as the intensification of cross-border flows of goods, services, capital, information, and people, has enabled the rapid dissemination of fashion trends, symbols, and consumption practices across diverse cultural contexts (Appadurai, 1996; Giddens, 2002). Within this context, fashion consumer culture has evolved into a complex, multi-layered system shaped by global interconnectivity, technological advancements, and shifting socio-cultural values.

Fashion, as both a material and symbolic domain, plays a central role in the construction of identity, social differentiation, and cultural expression. The global expansion of fashion markets has led to the emergence of a homogenised consumer culture characterised by shared aesthetics, brand consciousness, and aspirational lifestyles (Crane, 2012). However, this process is not unidirectional. Rather, it involves continuous negotiation between global influences and local traditions, resulting in hybridised forms of consumption and identity (Pieterse, 2015). Thus, fashion consumer culture under globalisation is marked by a tension between standardisation and differentiation, convergence and diversity.

One of the most significant drivers of this transformation is the proliferation of global fashion brands and multinational corporations. These entities have leveraged global supply chains, digital marketing strategies, and mass media to establish a pervasive presence across international markets (Tokatli, 2008). The rise of fast fashion, exemplified by brands such as Zara and H&M, has accelerated the production-consumption cycle, enabling consumers to access the latest trends at affordable prices (Joy et al., 2012). This model has not only reshaped consumer expectations but also contributed to the democratisation of fashion, making it accessible to a broader demographic.

Simultaneously, the digital revolution has amplified the impact of globalisation on fashion consumer culture. Social media platforms, e-commerce, and influencer marketing have redefined how consumers engage with fashion, blurring the boundaries between producers and consumers (McQuarrie, Miller, & Phillips, 2013). Consumers are no longer passive recipients of fashion trends; they actively participate in the creation and dissemination of fashion narratives. This participatory culture has fostered a sense of global connectedness while also enabling localised reinterpretations of global trends.

Despite these transformative developments, globalisation has also generated critical concerns regarding cultural homogenization, ethical consumption, and sustainability. The dominance of Western fashion paradigms has raised questions about cultural imperialism and the marginalisation of indigenous fashion

practices (Kawamura, 2005). Moreover, the environmental and social implications of fast fashion-such as resource depletion, labour exploitation, and waste generation-have prompted growing scrutiny from consumers, scholars, and policymakers (Fletcher, 2014). These challenges underscore the need for a more nuanced understanding of fashion consumer culture within a globalised framework.

From a theoretical perspective, the study of globalisation and fashion consumer culture draws upon interdisciplinary approaches, including sociology, cultural studies, and marketing. Concepts such as consumer culture theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), symbolic interactionism, and postmodern identity formation provide valuable insights into how consumers navigate the complexities of global fashion systems. These frameworks highlight the role of consumption as a means of self-expression, social positioning, and cultural negotiation.

This research aims to explore the intricate relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture through a qualitative analysis of secondary data. By examining existing literature, industry reports, and case studies, the study seeks to identify key patterns, drivers, and implications of this relationship. Specifically, it addresses the following research questions: How has globalisation influenced fashion consumer behaviour and preferences? In what ways do global and local dynamics interact within fashion consumption? And what are the socio-cultural and ethical implications of globalised fashion consumer culture?

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the growing body of knowledge on globalisation and consumer culture, particularly within the context of the fashion industry. By integrating theoretical perspectives with empirical insights, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how global forces shape consumer practices and cultural meanings. Furthermore, it offers practical implications for fashion brands, policymakers, and consumers seeking to navigate the challenges and opportunities of a globalised fashion landscape.

In conclusion, globalisation has fundamentally reconfigured the nature of fashion consumer culture, creating a dynamic interplay between global integration and local differentiation. As the fashion industry continues to evolve in response to technological innovations and socio-cultural shifts, it is imperative to critically examine the implications of these changes for consumers and society at large. This study serves as a step toward such an examination, laying the foundation for further research and discourse in this field.

2. Literature Review

The relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture has been extensively examined across multiple academic disciplines, reflecting its complexity and significance. This section synthesises key theoretical and empirical contributions to the literature, focusing on globalisation processes, consumer culture theory, identity construction, fast fashion

dynamics, digital transformation, and ethical considerations.

2.1 Globalisation and Cultural Dynamics

Globalisation has been conceptualised as a multidimensional process involving economic integration, cultural exchange, and technological advancement (Giddens, 2002). Appadurai (1996) introduced the notion of “global cultural flows,” emphasising the movement of people, media, technologies, finances, and ideologies across borders. These flows have facilitated the diffusion of fashion trends and consumer practices, contributing to the emergence of a global fashion system.

However, scholars have debated the extent to which globalisation leads to cultural homogenization versus heterogenization. While some argue that global brands promote standardised consumption patterns (Ritzer, 2011), others highlight the role of local adaptation and hybridisation (Pieterse, 2015). In the context of fashion, this debate is reflected in the coexistence of global trends and localised styles, where consumers selectively appropriate and reinterpret global influences.

2.2 Consumer Culture Theory and Fashion Consumption

Consumer culture theory (CCT) provides a foundational framework for understanding fashion consumption as a socio-cultural practice. Arnould and Thompson (2005) define CCT as an interdisciplinary field that examines the relationships between consumers, markets, and cultural meanings. Within this framework, consumption is

viewed not merely as a functional activity but as a symbolic process through which individuals construct identities and social relationships.

Fashion, in particular, serves as a powerful medium for self-expression and identity formation. Belk (1988) introduced the concept of the “extended self,” suggesting that possessions, including clothing, become integral to one’s sense of identity. Similarly, McCracken (1986) emphasised the role of cultural meaning transfer, whereby fashion items acquire symbolic significance through advertising, media, and social interactions.

Postmodern perspectives further complicate this understanding by highlighting the fluid and fragmented nature of identity in contemporary consumer culture (Featherstone, 2007). Consumers are seen as engaging in “identity play,” using fashion to experiment with different personas and social roles. This is particularly evident in globalised contexts, where exposure to diverse cultural influences expands the repertoire of available identities.

2.3 Global Fashion Systems and Fast Fashion

The globalisation of the fashion industry has been driven by the expansion of global supply chains and the rise of fast fashion. Tokatli (2008) examined how multinational retailers have restructured production and distribution processes to achieve speed and efficiency. Fast fashion brands operate on a model of rapid design, production, and turnover, enabling them to respond quickly to changing consumer preferences.

Joy et al. (2012) argued that fast fashion has reshaped consumer behaviour by promoting a culture of disposability and instant gratification. Consumers are encouraged to purchase frequently and discard items after short periods of use, contributing to a cycle of overconsumption. This model has been criticised for its environmental and social impacts, including resource depletion, pollution, and labour exploitation (Fletcher, 2014).

Despite these criticisms, fast fashion remains highly popular due to its affordability and accessibility. This paradox highlights the complex interplay between consumer desires, economic constraints, and ethical considerations in globalised fashion consumption.

2.4 Digital Media and the Transformation of Fashion Consumption

The digital revolution has significantly altered the landscape of fashion consumer culture. Social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have become key sites for the dissemination of fashion trends and the construction of consumer identities (McQuarrie et al., 2013). Influencers and content creators play a crucial role in shaping consumer preferences, often blurring the boundaries between marketing and personal expression.

E-commerce has further facilitated the globalisation of fashion by enabling consumers to access products from around the world. This has expanded the range of available choices while also intensifying competition among brands. According to

Kim and Ko (2012), digital marketing strategies that emphasise interactivity, personalisation, and engagement are particularly effective in influencing consumer behaviour.

Moreover, digital technologies have empowered consumers to become active participants in the fashion system. Through practices such as blogging, vlogging, and user-generated content, consumers contribute to the creation and circulation of fashion meanings. This participatory culture reflects a shift from top-down to more decentralised forms of influence.

2.5 Identity, Globalisation, and Cultural Hybridity

The interplay between globalisation and identity is a central theme in the literature on fashion consumer culture. Hall (1992) argued that globalisation has led to the fragmentation of traditional identities, creating new forms of cultural hybridity. In the context of fashion, this is evident in the blending of global and local elements, resulting in diverse and dynamic styles.

Kawamura (2005) emphasised that fashion is not only a product but also a system of institutions, practices, and discourses that shape cultural meanings. Consumers navigate this system by negotiating between global trends and local values, often creating unique expressions of identity. This process underscores the agency of consumers in shaping fashion culture, even within the constraints of global markets.

2.6 Ethical and Sustainable Fashion Consumption

In recent years, there has been growing interest in the ethical and environmental implications of fashion consumption. Fletcher (2014) highlighted the need for sustainable practices in the fashion industry, including the use of eco-friendly materials, fair labour conditions, and reduced waste. Consumers are increasingly aware of these issues, leading to the emergence of ethical consumption movements.

However, the adoption of sustainable fashion practices remains limited due to factors such as higher costs, lack of information, and entrenched consumption habits (Joy et al., 2012). This gap between awareness and action presents a significant challenge for the industry and underscores the need for systemic change.

2.7 Research Gaps

Despite the extensive literature on globalisation and fashion consumer culture, several gaps remain. First, there is a need for more integrative studies that combine theoretical and empirical perspectives. Second, the role of emerging markets, particularly in the Global South, has been underexplored. Third, the impact of digital technologies on cultural identity and ethical consumption requires further investigation.

3. Theoretical Framework

Understanding globalisation and fashion consumer culture requires a robust theoretical foundation that integrates perspectives from sociology, cultural studies, and consumer

research. This study draws upon three interrelated theoretical lenses: Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), theories of globalisation and cultural hybridity, and symbolic interactionism. Together, these frameworks provide a comprehensive approach to analysing how global forces shape fashion consumption practices and the meanings attached to them.

3.1 Consumer Culture Theory (CCT)

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) serves as the primary analytical framework for this study. As articulated by Arnould and Thompson (2005), CCT examines the dynamic relationships between consumers, marketplaces, and cultural meanings. Rather than viewing consumers as rational decision-makers, CCT conceptualises them as cultural agents who actively interpret, negotiate, and construct meanings through consumption practices.

In the context of fashion, CCT highlights how clothing and accessories function as symbolic resources that individuals use to construct and communicate identity. Fashion consumption is thus understood as a form of cultural production, where meanings are continuously created, contested, and transformed (McCracken, 1986). Globalisation intensifies this process by expanding the range of available symbolic resources, exposing consumers to diverse styles, aesthetics, and narratives.

CCT also emphasises the role of marketplace ideologies and socio-historic patterning in shaping consumer behaviour (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Global fashion brands,

advertising campaigns, and digital platforms disseminate dominant ideologies related to beauty, status, and lifestyle. Consumers engage with these ideologies in complex ways, sometimes adopting them, sometimes resisting them, and often adapting them to local contexts.

3.2 Globalisation and Cultural Hybridity

The second theoretical pillar of this study is grounded in theories of globalisation and cultural hybridity. Globalisation is not merely a technological process; it is also a cultural phenomenon that reshapes identities, values, and practices (Appadurai, 1996; Giddens, 2002). Appadurai's (1996) framework of global cultural flows, comprising ethnoscapescapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes, provides a useful lens for understanding how fashion trends circulate globally.

Within this framework, fashion can be seen as part of the "mediascape," where images, narratives, and symbols are disseminated through media channels, influencing consumer perceptions and desires. However, these flows are not uniform or deterministic. Instead, they interact with local cultural contexts, resulting in processes of hybridisation (Pieterse, 2015).

Cultural hybridity refers to the blending of global and local elements to create new, hybrid forms of expression. In fashion, this is evident in the incorporation of traditional motifs into contemporary designs or the adaptation of global trends to local tastes. Consumers play an active role in this process by selectively appropriating and

reinterpreting global influences (Hall, 1992). This perspective challenges the notion of cultural homogenization and underscores the diversity of fashion consumer culture in a globalised world.

3.3 Symbolic Interactionism and Identity Construction

Symbolic interactionism provides a micro-level perspective on how individuals use fashion as a means of communication and identity construction. Rooted in the work of Blumer (1969), this theoretical approach posits that meanings are created and negotiated through social interaction. Individuals interpret symbols—such as clothing, brands, and styles—and use them to convey meanings about themselves and others.

In fashion consumer culture, symbolic interactionism highlights the role of social contexts in shaping consumption practices. For example, individuals may choose specific styles to align with particular social groups, signal status, or express personal values. The meaning of fashion items is not fixed but is continuously negotiated through interactions with peers, media, and broader cultural discourses (Belk, 1988).

Globalisation adds another layer of complexity to this process by introducing a wider array of symbols and meanings. Consumers are exposed to diverse cultural references, which they incorporate into their identity narratives. This can lead to the formation of multiple, fluid identities that reflect the interconnected nature of global society (Featherstone, 2007).

3.4 Integration of Theoretical Perspectives

The integration of CCT, globalisation theory, and symbolic interactionism allows for a multi-dimensional analysis of fashion consumer culture. CCT provides a macro-level understanding of the cultural and market structures that shape consumption, while globalisation theory situates these structures within broader global processes. Symbolic interactionism, in turn, offers insights into the micro-level interactions through which meanings are constructed and negotiated.

This integrated framework is particularly useful for examining the interplay between global and local dynamics in fashion consumption. It acknowledges the influence of global forces while also recognising the agency of consumers in shaping their own cultural practices. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of context, meaning, and identity in understanding fashion consumer behaviour.

3.5 Conceptual Model

Based on the above theoretical perspectives, this study conceptualises globalisation as a driving force that influences fashion consumer culture through multiple pathways, including media, markets, and technology. These influences interact with local cultural contexts and individual identity processes, resulting in diverse consumption practices. The framework also considers the role of ethical and sustainability concerns as emerging dimensions of fashion consumer culture.

In summary, the theoretical framework of this study provides a comprehensive lens for analysing the complex relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture. By integrating multiple perspectives, it captures the dynamic and multi-layered nature of this relationship, offering a solid foundation for the subsequent empirical analysis.

4. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design based on secondary data analysis to explore the relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture. The choice of methodology is informed by the exploratory nature of the research questions and the need to synthesise existing knowledge from diverse sources.

4.1 Research Design

A qualitative research approach is particularly suitable for examining complex social phenomena such as fashion consumer culture, which involves subjective meanings, cultural practices, and contextual influences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Unlike quantitative methods, which focus on measurement and statistical analysis, qualitative research emphasises interpretation and understanding.

The study employs a secondary data analysis design, drawing on existing academic literature, industry reports, policy documents, and case studies. This approach allows for a comprehensive examination of the topic by integrating insights from multiple sources. Secondary data analysis is also advantageous in terms of time and resource efficiency, as it

utilises already available data (Johnston, 2017).

4.2 Data Sources

The data for this study are derived from a wide range of secondary sources, including:

- Peer-reviewed journal articles in fields such as sociology, marketing, and cultural studies
- Books and academic monographs on globalisation and fashion
- Industry reports from organisations such as McKinsey & Company and the Business of Fashion
- Reports from international organisations addressing sustainability and ethical issues in fashion
- Case studies of global and local fashion brands

These sources were selected based on their relevance, credibility, and contribution to the research topic. Emphasis was placed on recent publications to ensure that the analysis reflects current trends and developments.

4.3 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process involved a systematic review of literature using academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Keywords used in the search included “globalisation,” “fashion consumer culture,” “fast fashion,” “digital fashion,” and “sustainable fashion.”

Inclusion criteria were established to ensure the quality and relevance of the data. Only sources published in English, peer-reviewed journals, or reputable institutions were included. Studies focusing on unrelated

industries or lacking theoretical or empirical rigour were excluded.

The selected sources were organised thematically to facilitate analysis. This involved categorising the literature into key themes such as globalisation processes, consumer behaviour, identity, digital transformation, and sustainability.

4.4 Data Analysis Technique

The study employs thematic analysis as the primary method of data analysis. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative technique that involves identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The analysis was conducted in several stages:

- **Familiarisation:** Reading and re-reading the selected sources to gain an overall understanding of the content.
- **Coding:** Identifying relevant concepts, ideas, and patterns in the data.
- **Theme Development:** Grouping codes into broader themes that capture key aspects of the research topic.
- **Interpretation:** Analysing the themes in relation to the theoretical framework and research questions.

This process enabled the identification of recurring patterns and relationships, providing insights into how globalisation influences fashion consumer culture.

4.5 Validity and Reliability

Ensuring the validity and reliability of qualitative research is essential for producing credible and trustworthy findings. In this study, several strategies were employed to enhance rigour:

- **Triangulation:** Using multiple data sources to cross-validate findings and reduce bias (Denzin, 1978).
- **Transparency:** Clearly documenting the data collection and analysis procedures to enable replication.
- **Critical Evaluation:** Assessing the credibility and limitations of each source.

These measures help to ensure that the findings are robust and grounded in reliable evidence.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

As the study relies on secondary data, it does not involve direct interaction with human participants. However, ethical considerations remain important. All sources are properly cited in accordance with APA (7th Edition) guidelines to acknowledge the original authors and avoid plagiarism.

Additionally, the study critically engages with the data, avoiding misrepresentation or selective interpretation (Mannan & Farhana, 2026). This ensures that the analysis is conducted with integrity and respect for the original research.

4.7 Limitations of the Methodology

Despite its advantages, the use of secondary data has certain limitations. First, the study is dependent on the availability and quality of

existing literature, which may not fully address all aspects of the research questions. Second, the interpretation of data is subject to the researcher's perspective, which may introduce bias.

Furthermore, secondary data analysis does not allow for the collection of primary, context-specific data, which could provide deeper insights into consumer behaviour. Future research could address these limitations by incorporating primary data methods such as interviews or surveys.

In summary, this study employs a qualitative research design based on secondary data analysis to explore the complex relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture. Through systematic data collection and thematic analysis, the methodology provides a rigorous and comprehensive approach to understanding the topic. While acknowledging its limitations, the study offers valuable insights that contribute to both academic research and practical applications.

5. Findings and Analysis

This section presents the key findings derived from the thematic analysis of secondary data, focusing on how globalisation shapes fashion consumer culture. The findings are organised into six major themes: homogenization versus heterogenization, the acceleration of consumption through fast fashion, digitalisation and participatory consumer culture, identity construction and symbolic consumption, the globalisation of ethical consciousness, and the growing influence of emerging markets.

5.1 Homogenization versus Heterogenization in Fashion Consumption

One of the most prominent findings concerns the dual and often contradictory processes of cultural homogenization and heterogenization. Globalisation has facilitated the widespread diffusion of fashion trends, largely driven by multinational corporations, global media, and digital platforms. As a result, consumers across geographically distant regions increasingly exhibit similar preferences for styles, brands, and aesthetics (Ritzer, 2011). The global visibility of brands and fashion influencers contributes to the standardisation of taste, creating a shared global fashion culture.

However, the analysis also reveals that this homogenising tendency is counterbalanced by processes of localisation and cultural adaptation. Consumers do not passively adopt global trends; rather, they reinterpret them within their own socio-cultural contexts. This aligns with Pieterse's (2015) concept of cultural hybridity, which emphasises the blending of global and local elements. For example, traditional clothing styles are often integrated with contemporary designs, resulting in unique hybrid expressions that reflect both global influences and local identities.

This finding suggests that globalisation does not lead to a uniform global culture but rather to a dynamic interplay between convergence and diversity. The coexistence of standardised global trends and localised adaptations underscores the complexity of

fashion consumer culture in a globalised world.

5.2 Fast Fashion and the Acceleration of Consumer Culture

Another key theme is the transformative impact of fast fashion on consumer behaviour. The globalisation of supply chains and advances in production technologies have enabled fashion brands to drastically reduce the time between design and retail, leading to an accelerated consumption cycle (Tokatli, 2008). Consumers are now exposed to constantly changing collections, which encourages frequent purchasing and short product lifespans.

The analysis indicates that fast fashion has normalised a culture of immediacy and disposability. Consumers are increasingly driven by the desire for novelty and trend alignment, often prioritising quantity over quality (Joy et al., 2012). This shift is closely linked to the broader dynamics of consumer culture, where identity is constructed through continuous consumption and renewal.

At the same time, the accessibility and affordability of fast fashion have democratized fashion consumption, allowing a wider range of consumers to participate in global fashion trends. This inclusivity, however, comes at the cost of environmental degradation and labour exploitation, highlighting the ethical contradictions embedded in global fashion systems (Fletcher, 2014).

5.3 Digitalisation and Participatory Consumer Culture

The findings underscore the central role of digital technologies in reshaping fashion consumer culture. Social media platforms, online retail, and digital marketing have transformed how consumers interact with fashion. Consumers are no longer passive recipients of trends but active participants in their creation and dissemination (McQuarrie et al., 2013).

The rise of influencers and user-generated content has decentralised the production of fashion meanings. Individuals with large online followings can shape trends, influence purchasing decisions, and redefine aesthetic standards. This participatory culture aligns with the principles of consumer culture theory, which emphasises the active role of consumers in meaning-making (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

Moreover, digital platforms have facilitated the globalisation of fashion by providing consumers with access to international brands and styles. E-commerce has eliminated geographical barriers, enabling consumers to engage with global fashion markets in real time. This increased accessibility has expanded consumer choice while also intensifying competition among brands.

5.4 Identity Construction and Symbolic Consumption

Fashion consumption is deeply intertwined with identity construction, and this relationship is further intensified by globalisation. The findings indicate that consumers use fashion as a means of

expressing individuality, social status, and cultural affiliation. Clothing and accessories function as symbolic resources that convey meanings about the self and one's position in society (Belk, 1988).

Globalisation expands the repertoire of available symbols, allowing consumers to experiment with diverse styles and identities. This is particularly evident in the context of postmodern consumer culture, where identities are fluid, fragmented, and continuously reconstructed (Featherstone, 2007). Consumers engage in "identity play," adopting different styles to reflect various aspects of their personalities and social roles.

At the same time, the analysis reveals that identity construction is influenced by global cultural narratives and marketplace ideologies. Media representations of beauty, success, and lifestyle shape consumer aspirations and preferences. However, consumers also exercise agency by selectively adopting and adapting these narratives to fit their own contexts (Hall, 1992).

5.5 Ethical Consciousness and Sustainable Fashion

A significant finding is the growing awareness of ethical and environmental issues in fashion consumption. Concerns about sustainability, labour conditions, and resource use have gained prominence in both academic discourse and consumer consciousness (Fletcher, 2014). This has led to the emergence of ethical consumption practices, such as purchasing eco-friendly products, supporting fair trade brands, and reducing consumption.

However, the analysis highlights a persistent gap between awareness and action. While many consumers express concern about sustainability, their purchasing behaviour often remains influenced by factors such as price, convenience, and trend appeal (Joy et al., 2012). This inconsistency reflects the structural constraints of the global fashion system, which prioritises speed and affordability over sustainability.

The findings suggest that addressing this gap requires systemic changes, including improved transparency, consumer education, and regulatory interventions. The role of brands and policymakers is crucial in promoting sustainable practices and aligning consumer behaviour with ethical values.

5.6 The Role of Emerging Markets in Global Fashion Culture

The analysis also reveals the increasing significance of emerging markets in shaping global fashion consumer culture. Countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are not only major production hubs but also rapidly growing consumer markets. This shift reflects broader changes in the global economy, where economic growth and rising incomes are expanding consumer bases in these regions.

Consumers in emerging markets often exhibit unique consumption patterns that blend global aspirations with local traditions. This further reinforces the concept of cultural hybridity and challenges the dominance of Western-centric fashion narratives. Global brands are increasingly adapting their strategies to cater to these diverse markets,

incorporating local elements into their designs and marketing campaigns.

This finding underscores the importance of adopting a more inclusive and diversified perspective on global fashion consumer culture, recognising the contributions of multiple regions and cultural contexts.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the complex relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture. This section interprets these findings in relation to the theoretical framework and existing literature, highlighting their implications for theory, practice, and future research.

6.1 Reinterpreting Consumer Culture in a Globalised Context

The findings reinforce the central tenets of consumer culture theory (CCT), particularly the notion that consumption is a culturally embedded and meaning-driven practice (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). However, globalisation adds new dimensions to this framework by expanding the scope and scale of cultural interactions. Consumers are no longer confined to local cultural contexts; they are embedded in a global network of influences that shape their preferences and identities.

This global context intensifies the role of consumption as a site of identity construction. As individuals navigate multiple cultural influences, they use fashion to negotiate and express their identities. This supports the postmodern perspective of

identity as fluid and fragmented (Featherstone, 2007), while also highlighting the importance of agency in shaping consumption practices.

6.2 The Paradox of Homogenization and Diversity

One of the most significant contributions of this study is its examination of the paradoxical relationship between homogenization and diversity in global fashion culture. While globalisation promotes the standardisation of trends and aesthetics, it simultaneously enables the proliferation of diverse and hybrid forms of expression.

This finding aligns with Pieterse's (2015) concept of global *mélange*, which emphasises the coexistence of convergence and heterogeneity. It challenges deterministic views of globalisation as a homogenising force and underscores the importance of local agency in shaping cultural outcomes.

From a theoretical perspective, this paradox highlights the need for more nuanced models of globalisation that account for both structural forces and individual agency. It also suggests that future research should focus on the micro-level processes through which consumers interpret and adapt global influences.

6.3 Digitalisation and the Democratisation of Fashion

The role of digital technologies in transforming fashion consumer culture cannot be overstated. The findings demonstrate that digital platforms have democratized access to fashion, enabling

consumers to participate in global markets and cultural exchanges. This aligns with McQuarrie et al.'s (2013) concept of the “megaphone effect,” where ordinary consumers gain influence through social media.

However, this democratisation is not without its challenges. The proliferation of digital content can lead to information overload, unrealistic beauty standards, and increased pressure to conform to trends. Moreover, the commercialisation of influencer culture raises questions about authenticity and transparency.

These issues highlight the need for critical engagement with digital media, both by consumers and researchers. Understanding the dynamics of digital fashion culture is essential for addressing its opportunities and challenges.

6.4 Ethical Implications and the Sustainability Challenge

The findings underscore the ethical dilemmas inherent in global fashion consumer culture. The popularity of fast fashion reflects a tension between consumer desires for affordability and novelty and the need for sustainable practices. This tension is a key challenge for the industry and society as a whole.

The gap between ethical awareness and actual behaviour suggests that individual-level solutions are insufficient. Structural changes are needed to align economic incentives with sustainability goals. This includes promoting circular economy models, improving supply chain

transparency, and implementing regulatory frameworks.

From a theoretical standpoint, this issue calls for the integration of ethical considerations into consumer culture theory. Understanding how moral values influence consumption decisions is crucial for developing more sustainable consumption patterns.

6.5 Emerging Markets and the Decentering of Fashion Narratives

The growing influence of emerging markets represents a significant shift in the global fashion landscape. This development challenges the traditional dominance of Western fashion systems and highlights the need for more inclusive perspectives.

The findings suggest that consumers in emerging markets are not merely passive recipients of global trends but active contributors to global fashion culture. Their unique consumption practices and cultural expressions enrich the diversity of the global fashion system.

This has important implications for both theory and practice. Researchers must expand their focus to include diverse cultural contexts, while brands must adopt more culturally sensitive and inclusive strategies.

6.6 Implications for Future Research

The study identifies several avenues for future research. First, there is a need for more empirical studies that examine consumer behaviour in specific cultural contexts. Second, the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality, on fashion consumer culture warrants

further investigation. Third, interdisciplinary approaches that integrate insights from sociology, marketing, and environmental studies can provide a more holistic understanding of the field.

In conclusion, the relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture is characterised by complexity, dynamism, and contradiction. Globalisation has expanded the possibilities for consumption and identity construction while also introducing new challenges related to sustainability, ethics, and cultural diversity.

By integrating theoretical perspectives with empirical findings, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of these dynamics. It highlights the need for critical and nuanced approaches to studying fashion consumer culture in a globalised world.

7. Conclusion

This study has critically examined the multifaceted relationship between globalisation and fashion consumer culture, demonstrating that contemporary fashion consumption is deeply embedded within global economic, cultural, and technological processes. By integrating theoretical perspectives from Consumer Culture Theory, globalisation studies, and symbolic interactionism, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how global forces shape consumer behaviour, identity construction, and cultural meanings in the fashion domain.

The findings reveal that globalisation has significantly expanded the scope of fashion consumption, enabling the rapid

dissemination of trends and the emergence of a shared global fashion culture. However, this process is not characterised by uniformity alone. Instead, it involves continuous negotiation between global influences and local cultural contexts, resulting in hybrid forms of consumption and identity. This highlights the active role of consumers in interpreting and adapting global fashion narratives, rather than passively adopting them.

The study also underscores the transformative impact of fast fashion and digital technologies. While fast fashion has democratized access to fashion and accelerated consumption cycles, it has also raised critical concerns regarding sustainability and ethical practices. Similarly, digital platforms have redefined consumer engagement, fostering participatory culture and expanding the influence of consumers in shaping fashion trends. These developments illustrate both the opportunities and challenges associated with globalisation in the fashion industry.

Moreover, the research draws attention to the growing importance of ethical and sustainable consumption. Although awareness of these issues is increasing, the gap between consumer attitudes and behaviour remains a significant challenge. Addressing this gap requires coordinated efforts from industry stakeholders, policymakers, and consumers to promote more responsible consumption practices.

Finally, the rising influence of emerging markets signals a shift toward a more diversified and inclusive global fashion landscape. This development challenges

traditional Western-centric models and emphasises the need for culturally sensitive and context-specific approaches.

In conclusion, globalisation has fundamentally redefined fashion consumer culture, creating a complex and dynamic system characterised by interconnectivity, diversity, and contradiction. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, particularly in relation to technological innovation and sustainability, to better understand the evolving nature of global fashion consumption.

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