

The Impact of the Current Trends in Consumer Behaviours on the Malaysian Apparel Industry

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1.0 Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

The Malaysian apparel industry is undergoing several changes in response to current trends in consumer behaviour. One significant trend is an increased demand for sustainable and ethical fashion products (Ali *et al.* 2020). Consumers are becoming more aware of the environmental and social impact of the fashion industry and seeking out products that are made using eco-friendly materials and ethical production practices. Another trend is the shift towards online shopping. With the growth of e-commerce platforms and the increasing convenience of online shopping, more consumers are turning to online retailers for their apparel needs (Hasbullah *et al.* 2022). This has prompted many traditional brick-and-mortar retailers to establish their online presence to stay competitive. Additionally, consumers are also seeking more personalised experiences and products. This has resulted in a rise in the industry's custom-made apparel and made-to-order services. Many retailers offer bespoke clothing and customisation services to cater to their customer's preferences. However, the major trends identified in this research include thrift fashion, fast fashion, eco-friendly clothing and digital innovation (Yeo *et al.* 2022).

1.2 Problem statement

The proliferation of large shopping centres selling well-known international fashion brands, such as the Pavilion in the Kuala Lumpur area and the Johore Premium Outlet in Johor, indicates that Malaysian customers are eager to spend their money on recognisable brands. Foreigners and locals alike have taken notice of Malaysia's thriving fashion retail industry. The "ethnically fragmented consumer markets" that define the domestic market in Malaysia are partly the result of the cultural distinctions between the country's many ethnic groupings (Mohd. Salleh *et al.* 1998).

1.3 Significance of the study

This study is secondary as it can be used as a secondary source by other researchers. Companies operating in Malaysia's apparel industry will also be benefited since they will be able to understand the changes in consumer behaviour and take respective measures to meet the new demands of the customers. Their sales and profit will increase through this.

1.4 Definition of terms

Thrift fashion- Thrift fashion, also known as second hand fashion or vintage clothing, refers to purchasing used clothing and accessories as an alternative to buying new items (Seo and Kim, 2019).

Fast fashion- According to Niinimäki et al. (2020), the phrase "fast fashion" refers to the business strategy utilised by corporations in the fashion sector to rapidly develop, mass-produce, and retail fashionable, low-priced apparel.

Eco-friendly clothing- Eco-friendly clothing, also known as sustainable or ethical clothing, is made from environmentally friendly materials and produced using ethical and sustainable production methods (Hasan *et al.* 2022).

Digital innovation- Digital innovation refers to developing and implementing new technologies and digital solutions that transform existing processes or create new products and services (Di Vaio *et al.* 2021).

1.5 Summary of Chapters

A total of five chapters make up the dissertation. The researcher addressed the subject and outlined the goals and objectives of the research in this first chapter. The researcher has analysed the literature in the literature review chapter. The research methodology chapter will detail the researchers' specific approaches to interviewing participants and archiving their data. The data collected via various ways was analysed and interpreted in the chapter on data analysis. The research was summed up, and some suggestions were made in the last chapter.

2.0 Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The current trends have greatly influenced the Malaysian apparel industry in terms of consumer behaviours. With the rise of e-commerce and social media, consumers have become more informed and discerning, leading to a shift in their purchasing behaviour. Consumers are now more focused on sustainability, ethical practices, and personalisation, which has forced the apparel industry to adapt to these changing preferences. The trend of sustainability has become increasingly important to consumers, as they are now more aware of the impact of their purchasing decisions on the environment. This has led to a rise in demand for sustainable and eco-friendly clothing options, as well as an increased focus on reducing waste and promoting recycling.

Moreover, consumers are also looking for clothing that is made using ethical practices, with a focus on fair labour and responsible sourcing of materials. Brands that prioritise ethical practices and transparency are gaining popularity among consumers, who are increasingly seeking out such options. Finally, the trend of personalisation has also impacted the Malaysian apparel industry, with consumers looking for clothing that is tailored to their specific preferences and needs. This has led to an increase in demand for customisation and made-to-measure options, as well as a shift towards a more individualistic approach to fashion. The current trends in consumer behaviours have had a significant impact on the Malaysian apparel industry, forcing brands to adapt to changing preferences and needs. Fast fashion, thrift fashion, digital innovation and eco-friendly clothing have become increasingly important to consumers, and brands that prioritise these factors are more likely to succeed in the current market.

2.2 Dependent variable (DV): Malaysian Apparel industry

The garment business in Malaysia has expanded rapidly in recent years, and it now plays a considerable role in the country's economy (Azahari & Osman, 2019). During the previous five years, the Malaysian textile and apparel sector has risen at an annualised rate of 5%, as reported by the Malaysian Textile and Apparel Centre (MATAC) (MATRADE, 2020). Its expansion has been sustained by the industry's strategic position, which allows for easy access to important markets like China, India, and the ASEAN area, and by the quality and affordability of the clothes produced there (PwC, 2018).

Low-cost manufacturing nations like China, Vietnam, and Bangladesh pose a threat to Malaysia's garment sector (Azahari & Osman, 2019). Because of their reduced labour costs and economies of scale, these nations have been able to create clothing at a cheaper cost. The Malaysian clothing sector has been investing in technology and automation to better compete with international brands (MATRADE, 2020).

In addition, shifting customer demands, especially in the area of sustainability, provide a problem for Malaysia's textile and clothing sector (Rajkumar *et al*, 2020). Sustainable and ethical clothing is in high demand as consumers become more aware of the consequences their purchasing decisions have on future generations. In order to provide this growing market, the Malaysian clothing industry has been working to improve its sustainability policies, such as the use of more environmentally friendly materials and more equitable treatment of its workers (Rajkumar *et al*, 2020).

The garment sector in Malaysia has been able to benefit from the country's advantageous location and its participation in free trade agreements like the ASEAN Free Trade Area and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) (The Star, 2021). New markets in the US, Japan, and Australia have been made possible thanks to these pacts, expanding Malaysia's garment export industry.

However, despite facing problems, Malaysia's garment sector has continued to develop and remain competitive. The sector is in good shape to maintain its growth and economic contribution because of investments in technology, enhanced environmental standards, and the use of trade agreements.

2.3 Independent variable 1 (IV1): Digital innovation

Digital innovation during the pandemic was driven by the need to quickly expand internet capacity and facilitate the merging of the real and digital worlds (Baek *et al.* 2022). Innovative retailers have invested heavily in state-of-the-art digital shopping, automated order-fulfilment systems, and cutting-edge customer care capabilities (e.g. live streaming, customer service video chat). Retailers will have to enhance their digital offers as a consequence of the outbreak (Noris *et al.* 2021). The retail garment industry must survive in a time when retailers want more sophisticated digital relationships, which means optimising online capabilities and always finding new ways to fascinate customers.

One example is the use of augmented reality (AR), while another is the development of cutting-edge mobile apps that track inventory and enable self-checkout (Baek *et al.* 2022). While online purchasing is still in its infancy in the fashion industry, several retailers have already begun to test the waters. For instance, in 2021, Nike partnered with Roblox to build "Nikeland," a virtual world that has sports fields, arenas, and showrooms selling Nike merchandise, as well as the opportunity to earn "superpowers" and explore the future of virtual sports (Scuotto *et al.* 2019).

Retailers need to move beyond incremental changes when it comes to digital transformation and instead concentrate on creating a connected engagement via the deliberate use of technology (Pantano and Vannucci, 2019). Putting the customer first, being flexible and inventive, making good use of data, and introducing new value propositions are merely a few of the aspects of transformation. It's also about maximising efficiency and decreasing waste

across the whole buying process. In the current world, channels are used for more than just monetary transactions. They expand a company's digital touchpoints and act as hubs for the customer experience (Pinto *et al.* 2022). Several companies are now investing heavily in state-of-the-art digital technologies to be used in their stores in an effort to enhance the customer's overall shopping experience.

Retailers are undergoing a digital transformation in-store when they offer personalised experiences to customers using a combination of different systems, such as the analysis of consumer desires using behavioural analytics, the detection of customer sites in-store, and the delivery of context-aware, personalised advertisements on portable devices (De Oliveira *et al.* 2020). Self-service technology, including kiosks and digital displays, may also be used to assist customers in making a choice and have a positive impact on their shopping experience. Retailers must offer their sales force-assisted selling and advising technologies that provide them access to comprehensive consumer data and observations in order to reduce revenue loss from showrooming and boost repeat business and loyalty from current customers (Gillpatrick *et al.* 2019).

2.3.1 Sub-Independent variable 1 (SIV1): Fast fashion

Limited predictability, high impulsive purchasing, shorter life cycles, and substantial volatility in market demand are just a few of the characteristics that marketers have highlighted as unique to the fashion business (Ferne and Sparks, 2004). Fashion retailers must thus employ a "speed to market" strategy to capitalise on trends that their competitors do not carry in order to survive. Market responsiveness and the ability to swiftly incorporate client wants and needs into the product development process have both been shown to increase a company's bottom line. As researchers examine the history of fashion, they can observe that runways and fashion shows had the most impact on the industry.

In addition, these trend exhibitions were primarily targeted towards executives in the fashion industry, including fashion designers, marketers, and buyers. But, starting in 1999, catwalks and fashion shows became a public phenomenon, with photographs from previous events surfacing in print and online media, dispelling much of the mystery surrounding the fashion business (Sydneylovesfashion.com, 2020). Unique designs that drew influence from the catwalks were therefore offered to consumers with a sense of style. Retailers such as New Look, Zara, H&M, Top Shop, and Mango quickly adapted these designs to entice shoppers, delivering their own versions of the runway looks to stores within three to five weeks.

Fast fashion enables regular consumers to get the most recent and most popular trends or designs without spending a fortune. The growth in disposable manufacturing, especially among the young, let them purchase the newest styles as soon as they hit shops (Nguyen *et al.* 2020). As a result, fast fashion gained popularity. The major clothing firms' tradition of delivering new collections and lines in a regular seasonal schedule is therefore threatened by fast fashion.

Fast-fashion retailers must continuously introduce new products to stay current with trends. Retailers in the fast fashion business are changing their supply chain management (SCM) practices (Centobelli *et al.* 2022). The objective is to quickly produce the necessary quantities of inexpensive clothing in response to (or in anticipation of) unpredictable consumer demand. Fast fashion works in this manner in accordance with the tenets of category management, which seek to create win-win scenarios for both makers and customers.

2.4 Independent variable (IV2): Eco-friendly clothing

By donating a percentage of the proceeds from the sale of environmentally friendly clothing, brands are helping to safeguard the environment (Hyun *et al.* 2021). The term "ecosystem" refers to a group of people who work in the construction industry. The use of biodegradable materials and fabric recycling may help achieve this goal. In 2022, businesses wanted to see

an increase in the textile industry's use of organic and plant-based products (Memon *et al.* 2019). Sustainable fashion is the way of the future, and it's heartening to see people all around the world taking action to protect the industry. The focus of industry activities in 2022 will still be sustainable fashion. A safer and healthier environment to live in might be the end outcome of this little effort from all industries, including the fashion industry (Shen and Kim, 2022).

2.4.1 Sub-Independent variable 2 (SIV2): Thrift fashion

Thrift fashion, also known as the purchase of previously owned clothing, has gained appeal in an effort to cut down on clothing waste (Seo *et al.* 2019). Several well-known people, celebrities, wealthy socialites, and people who live in rich areas are notorious for purchasing pricey articles of clothing that they only wear a few times before discarding them. The practice of thrifting is now publicly supported by sustainable fashion advocates, who disagree that purchasing used garments is a sign of low social standing. People are going to thrift stores in greater numbers, and this trend is expected to continue until 2022 (Sari, 2022). The days of stocking up on a large number of garments that one would only wear seldom or never are past. The majority of these garments will ultimately end up in landfills. A larger cultural change away from excessive consumption is reflected in the trend towards more minimal clothing.

As a consequence, the fashion industry and clothing manufacturers are making fewer garments overall and using more muted tones when creating clothing (Park *et al.* 2020). Millennials prefer to purchase used clothing, according to the sales report of the online resale portal THREDUP (Turner, 2017). Those between the ages of 18 and 24 made up the biggest single cohort for resales in 2017, accounting for around 40% of all millennials who visited thrift stores (Turner, 2017). In line with this, the THREDUP survey found that they "are most

inclined to switch to thrift because of environmental considerations," with a staggering 35% more likely to do so than the average thrift buyer.

According to the research, millennials are the most impulsive purchasers, tossing out clothing after just one to five washes. Many channels place emphasis on the clothing of previously owned garments as an important part of retail distribution. These places have a history of functioning as donation hubs and second-hand shops. Furthermore, thrift shops will buy items from private sellers, accept them for a commission, and then resell them. These establishments often position themselves as vintage boutiques and utilise vintage images in their marketing to attract customers interested in vintage clothing. It has recently come to light that this kind of business offers both new and worn garments. To take increasing degrees of extended producer responsibility, several big fashion labels have recently started to embrace the clothing of previously worn things. The company's clothing is used and resold via the same or comparable distribution channels.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

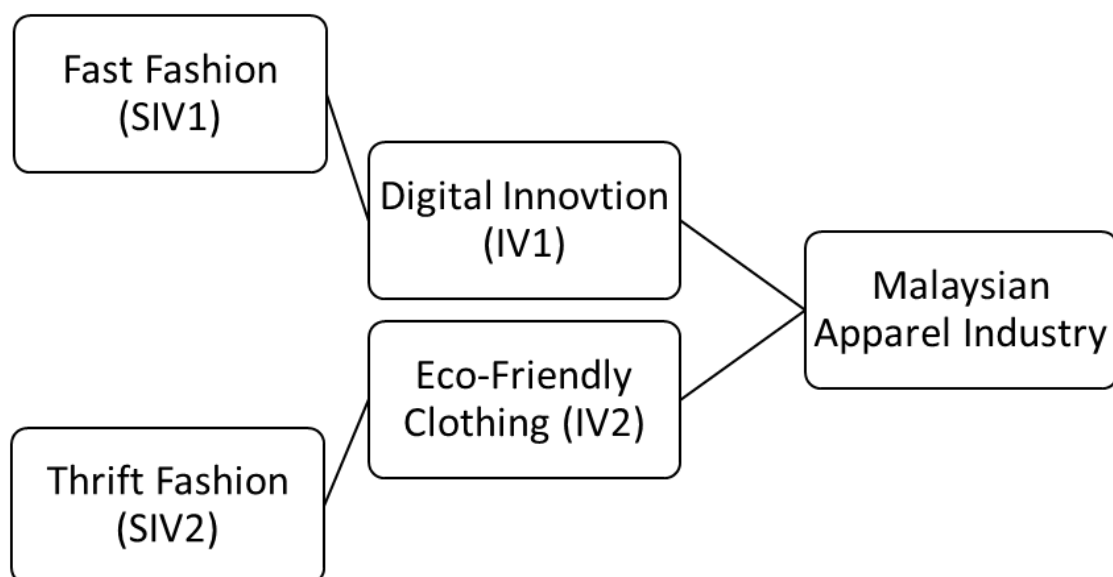


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

(Source: Author)

H1: The fast fashion trend has increased due to digital innovation and has a significant impact on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.

H2: The thrift fashion trend has increased due to eco-friendly clothing preference of consumers and has a significant impact on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.

2.8 Summary

The fashion industry in Malaysia is currently being impacted by various factors such as fast fashion, thrift fashion, digital innovation, and eco-friendly clothing. Fast fashion has been popular in Malaysia for many years, offering consumers trendy and affordable clothing at a fast pace. However, the production process of fast fashion has raised environmental and ethical concerns, leading to a shift towards more sustainable and ethical practices. Fast fashion has become increasingly popular in Malaysia due to its affordability and accessibility. It has impacted the local fashion industry by creating a culture of disposable clothing. Consumers buy and discard clothing items frequently, leading to environmental problems such as waste and pollution.

Thrift fashion has also gained popularity in recent years, with more consumers opting for pre-owned and vintage clothing to reduce their carbon footprint. This trend has led to the growth of thrift stores and online platforms, making second-hand shopping more accessible to consumers. Digital innovation has played a significant role in the Malaysian fashion industry, with the rise of e-commerce platforms and social media influencing consumer behaviour. Online shopping has become more popular, and brands are investing in creating digital experiences for consumers to engage with their products. Eco-friendly clothing has also gained momentum in Malaysia, with brands incorporating sustainable materials and ethical practices into their production process. This trend has led to the rise of eco-friendly fashion brands and sustainable fashion events, promoting awareness of sustainable fashion practices.

Overall, the impact of fast fashion, thrift fashion, digital innovation, and eco-friendly clothing has transformed the Malaysian fashion industry, with consumers becoming more conscious about their purchasing behaviour and brands adopting sustainable and ethical practices.

3.0 Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The chapter provides a clear outline of the research methodology applied for the research. All the various sections of the research will be discussed in the chapter, which includes a detailed explanation of research design and sampling technique utilised in the research. The chapter also provides a detailed explanation of the chosen analysis model and data collection technique. Research methodology is the most acceptable technique for assessing how a research process should be undertaken to guarantee that the whole research procedure provides valid answers for the research questions.

There has been a significant change in consumer behaviour, and with the rising trend of e-commerce and social media has focused the apparel industry in Malaysia to adapt to the changing trends in consumer purchase behaviour (MATRADE, 2020). Hence, it becomes utmost necessary to examine and understand what factors influence the Malaysian Apparel industry.

The findings from the literature review shows that Digital innovation (IV1) and Eco-friendly clothing (IV2) and their sub-variables Fast fashion (SIV1) and Thrift fashion (SIV2) has a significant influence on the Malaysian Apparel Industry (Noris *et al.* 2021; Nguyen *et al.* 2020; Memon *et al.* 2019; Sari, 2022). According to the statements made by Park *et al.* (2020) and De Oliveira *et al.* (2020), it can be stated that there is positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables; IV1 - SIV1, IV2 - SIV2 and its influence on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.

Hence, the research has aimed to analyse the two independent variables IV1 and IV2 and its impact on the Malaysia Apparel Industry. The research has utilised questionnaire surveys to determine the impact of the research variables on the industry. The research provides apparel

retailers adaptation with valuable insight on the changing trend of consumer purchase behaviour and the factors that have influenced the change in the consumer behaviour.

3.2 Research Design

Theoretical frameworks, research questions, and potential methods for achieving study aims are all laid out in a research design. (Zangirolami-Raimundo et al. 2018). To successfully address the research issue and attain the research aim, it includes the complete strategy, which includes the techniques and procedures for discovering, gathering, and analysing data. (Mohajan, 2018).

Saunders et al.'s (2007) research onion, which includes research philosophies, methodologies, approaches, strategic road maps, time spans, and techniques and procedures, served as inspiration for the framework structure. For a study to be successful, its design must ensure that the researcher is able to answer the research questions and accomplish the study's goals in a way that is consistent with the technique and research paradigm chosen (Rinjit, 2020). According to Mishra and Alok (2022), the research design is the strategy, framework, and plan developed to collect data of value while keeping experimental variables constant.

Step 1

To identify research variables, the researcher thoroughly reviewed prior studies on Malaysian Apparel Industry. Several databases were explored thoroughly to discover relevant and recent articles. Databases such as Google Scholar, ProQuest, Academia, Emerald Insight, Researchgate and ScienceDirect were used to discover and develop the variables for the research. During literature review, the researcher whittled down the findings using article title, abstracts, subtopic, and key factor filters which included 'digital innovation in retail fashion', 'fast fashion in Malaysia', 'eco-friendly fashion', 'sustainable fashion', 'thrift fashion culture', 'fashion trends', 'changing consumer behaviour in Malaysia'.

Step 2

Several articles on the factors that influence the Malaysia Apparel industry and perspective of consumers were identified using the literature review matrix. The researcher followed the research criteria to categorise and summarise the selected articles. Among the selected articles, two independent variables along with two sub-variables were identified; Digital innovation (IV1) and Eco-friendly clothing (IV2) and their sub-variables Fast fashion (SIV1) and Thrift fashion (SIV2), respectively.

Step 3

The findings from the articles were summarised in the literature review. The researcher is particularly concerned about preventing bias in selection and an absence of comprehensiveness in the review, since reviews may give misleading evidence of the study questions. It is also difficult to write and present a quality literature review. While working full-time and attending school full-time, the researcher assessed massive volumes of material. Therefore, efficient use of time, careful organisation, and setting of priorities are essential for triumphing over these obstacles. Using TAM, the study confirmed that IV1 and IV2 were the primary driving forces in the Malaysian apparel industry. Therefore, the theoretical foundation of the study included consideration of these two concepts.

Step 4

The next step was to create a questionnaire, which led to the discovery of two variables that have an influence on the Malaysian apparel industry. Respondents were contacted through email, Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp to fill out an online survey built using Google Form. The questionnaire was broken down into its four constituent parts (demographics, dependent variable, two independent variables). After surveying the existing literature, the researcher came up with 23 questions.

Step 5

The population of this study focuses on all Malaysian consumers who have used fast fashion apparels, used digital technologies to purchase apparels and consumers who prefer eco-friendly products and purchase from thrift shops. Before the pilot survey, the questionnaire was presented to the research supervisor for confirmation. Ten samples were taken for reliability testing as a pilot study. Fifty people were polled using a Google Form survey sent out over WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and email.

Step 6

The data collected from the surveys were examined by using IBM Social Science Statistical Package (SPSS) version 27.0. The data was saved in Microsoft Excel before being exported for cross-checking. A reliability test was performed to see whether the items used to measure the constructs were internally consistent. Following the pilot test, descriptive analysis was performed to assess the data, test the hypotheses, and use Cronbach's Alpha to determine the reliability of the complete scale's conformity. In addition, Pearson Correlation is also used to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables (George & Mallery, 2021).

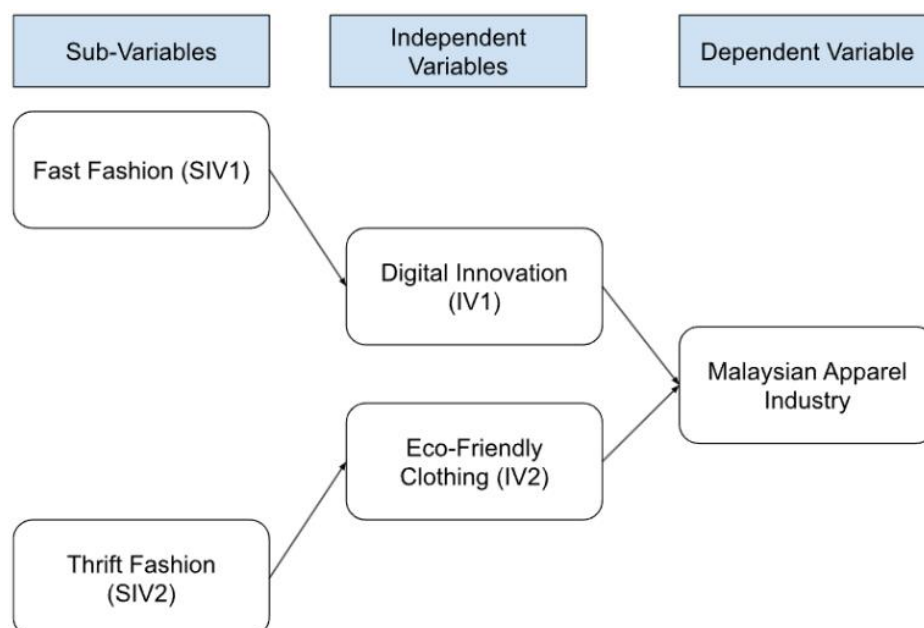


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework
(Author)

The conceptual framework of this research is shown visually in Figure 2. While the prior studies did an excellent job of providing factual data on the variables driving the Malaysian Apparel Industry, however further investigation is required. Furthermore, characteristics useful in Malaysian settings are emphasised.

The research methodology includes the development of an explanatory theory and subsequent rigorous testing to investigate the nature of the link between independent and dependent variables, such as the impact of the variables on the Malaysian apparel industry.

Research Objective 1	To investigate the impact of digital innovation and fast fashion on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.
Research Objective 2	To investigate the impact of eco-friendly clothing and thrift clothing on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.

Research Question 1	How does digital innovation and fast fashion impact the Malaysian Apparel Industry?
Research Question 2	How does eco-friendly clothing and thrift clothing impact the Malaysian Apparel Industry?

Hypothesis 1 (H1)	The fast fashion trend has increased due to digital innovation and has a significant impact on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.
Hypothesis 2 (H2)	The thrift fashion trend has increased due to eco-friendly clothing preference of consumers and has a significant impact on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.

3.3 Population of the Study

Target populations make up individuals or matters (including inquiries, judgements, and abstract qualities) that stand in for individuals or occurrences that are relevant to the researcher (Cr, 2020). Pandey and Pandey (2021) stated that the primary goal of having targeted respondents is to zero in on certain aspects of the population of interest, since this is more likely to provide trustworthy results. All residents of Malaysia who have made

purchases from retailers or manufacturers within the Malaysian Apparel Industry are eligible to participate in the survey.

Time and money restrictions led the researcher to send 50 Malaysian respondents an online Google Form survey through email, Facebook Messenger, and WhatsApp. Responding to the online survey is completely voluntary. When the data collection phase is complete, the Google Form is saved and answers are imported to an Excel file.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The difference between probability sampling and non-probability sampling is laid out in the table below. As described by Al-Ababneh (2020) what constitutes probability sampling is that all populations possess a comparable possibility of being sampled. Each item in a non-probability sample has a different likelihood of being selected according to the researcher's subjective criteria and preferences. (Babii, 2020).

Probability Sampling	Non-Probability Sampling
• Simple random • Stratified random • Systematic sampling • Cluster sampling • Multi-stage sampling	• Convenience sampling • Purposive or judgemental sampling • Snowball sampling • Quota sampling

Table 1: Sampling techniques
(Source: Patel and Patel, 2019)

This research employs a non-probability sampling approach based on the finding that purposive sampling is the most effective method for rapidly collecting replies (Patel and Patel, 2019). Purposive sampling, according to Gupta and Gupta (2022), also enables researchers to determine what data is needed and approach people who are in a position to supply it because of their expertise or background. Purposive sampling has been used in several previous studies on the Malaysian apparel industry, including those by Park *et al.* (2020) and Seo *et al.* (2020).

In addition, purposive samples are chosen on the basis of fundamental traits or qualities to guarantee the validity and reliability of the evaluation, as proposed by Säfsten and Gustavsson (2020). Thus, the respondent selection criteria are in line with other studies in that they require respondents to be Malaysian consumers who have purchased apparel from the Malaysian Apparel Industry at least once (Park *et al.* (2020); Seo *et al.* (2020).

3.5 Method and Procedure(s) for Data Collection

Online survey questionnaires are often used to collect data from a large number of people about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with a certain subject (Dwigo & Dwigo-Barosz, 2018; Newman and Gough, 2020). The online questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool for the research.

A self-executed, structured questionnaire was used to gather information for this study's data collection and hypothesis testing. The questionnaire was devised and intended to ease the gathering of superior data and was founded on an adaptive technique taken from past empirical research and ideas. The online questionnaire served as the primary source of information for this investigation. (refer to Appendix 1).

Both the dependent and the independent variables were rated on a Likert scale with five possible responses (from 1 - Strongly Disagree to 5 - Strongly Agree). Previous research served as inspiration for the use of five-point Likert scales (Zawacki-Richter *et al.* 2020; Greening, 2019). There are a total of 23 questions, split into four groups. The respondent's demographic information (such as age, gender, education, and income) is gathered in Section A. The dependent variable questions in Section B, while the independent variables are the focus of Sections C and D.

3.6 Validation of the Questionnaire

The research's quality of questionnaire underwent both face and content validity testing. The face and content validity was inspired by the work of binti Daud (2021) and Lund *et al.* (2014).

- **Face validity**, often called logical validity, a test simply has to appear on the outside to test the intended constructs.
- **Content validity** pertains to the extent to which an evaluation tool accurately measures and represents the intended construct it is designed to assess. It involves ensuring that the assessment instrument is pertinent and reflective of the construct it is intended to measure.

The researcher conducted a 10-sample pilot survey which started on March 2, 2023, before the actual test. Following the completion of the questionnaire, Sileyew (2019) suggests doing a pilot test to identify issues that need to be rectified. The pilot study helped evaluate the questionnaire's performance. (Pearson *et al.* 2020). When developing questionnaires for qualitative research, pilot tests are often performed to ensure their validity and reliability (Snyder, 2019). Many questions on the questionnaire have a high degree of ambiguity, thus the questionnaire's difficulty had to be modified depending on the pilot test results.

No.	Variables	No. of Questions	Sample Size	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Overall	23	10	0.954
2	DV	6	10	0.946
3	IV1	6	10	0.933
4	IV2	6	10	0.929

Table 2: Pilot Test Reliability Statistics
(Source: Author)

3.7 Research Ethics

The Research Excellence Framework was followed in order to make research ethics a priority in the research. (Mukherjee, 2019). Given certain contentious themes and surveys, several ethical considerations have been explored and examined before creating the topic to limit intrinsic ethical concerns (Bairagi and Munot, 2019). The research's questions were created in response to problems of varying severity and scope that were experienced by professionals working in different fields.

Respondents will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that any data they submit will be used only for research purposes. The gathered evidence has been processed cautiously to protect the participants' privileges, security, honour, and well-being.

The survey was performed in an ethical manner by obtaining consent from participants while protecting their privacy and identity. It is possible that different points of view do not pose an actual danger to the population at large, to institutions, or to businesses. Multiple tasks have been performed to assure objectivity, honesty, and integrity.

3.8 Summary

Data collection and analysis processes were described in detail in the Methodology chapter of the study on the effects of recent consumer behaviour shifts on the Malaysian apparel industry. Positivism was the guiding research philosophy, and a descriptive design was used for data collection. A self-administered questionnaire was used to gather data, and 50 respondents were selected at random. Descriptive statistics and frequency analysis were used to process the data in SPSS. Ethical factors including informed consent, confidentiality, data protection, minimising of damage, and ethical approval were all taken into account in this study. Preliminary testing of the questionnaire confirmed the reliability of the data, and the research question and available resources supported the use of a sample size of 50.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the summarised findings of the analysed data. The chapter highlights a deep understanding and interpretation of the findings. The results of the findings are presented using SPSS, which include reliability analysis, demographic profile analysis, descriptive analysis and correlation analysis.

The population consists of individuals in Malaysia who have adopted fast and thrift fashion due to digital innovation and eco-friendly clothing preference, respectively. Online questionnaire was distributed to a total of 70 participants out of which responses of 50 participants were selected, as the remaining responses were incomplete. The data obtained from the 50 participants were used for the analysis. The total of 23 questions in the questionnaire was deemed sufficient to conduct the analysis and assess the research hypothesis.

<i>Hypothesis 1 (H1)</i>	The fast fashion trend has increased due to digital innovation and has a significant impact on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.
<i>Hypothesis 2 (H2)</i>	The thrift fashion trend has increased due to eco-friendly clothing preference of consumers and has a significant impact on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.

Several regression processes were utilised to evaluate the research hypothesis and derive the relationship between the dependent and independent variable. Schaeffer *et al.* (2020) mentioned that a questionnaire is a useful tool for gathering data from a large number of respondents. It also helps to reduce bias in data collection. By using standardised questions and procedures, researchers can ensure that all respondents are treated equally and that their responses are not influenced by the interviewer's opinions or biases.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

Testing for reliability assures that the measurements or equipment used for this research provide stable findings over time. This ensures that the study results are correct and reliable while also reducing the likelihood of human mistake. Validity of the study results was guaranteed by conducting reliability tests. Teixeira *et al.* (2021) argues that if the measurements or instruments employed are unreliable, then the study cannot be trusted.

It is usual practice in reliability testing to calculate a statistic called Cronbach's alpha to examine how well a scale or questionnaire measures internal consistency. When talking about a scale or questionnaire, "internal consistency" refers to how well all of the items measure the same thing. Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient ranging from 0 to 1 that is derived by averaging the correlations across all pairs of items on the scale. A high degree of internal consistency is indicated by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or above.

No.	Reliability Statistics	No. of Questions	Sample Size	Cronbach's Alpha Standard	Cronbach's Alpha	Findings
1	DV + IV1 + IV2 (Overall)	23	50	0.7	0.954	Reliable
2	DV (Malaysian Apparel Industry)	23	50	0.7	0.946	Reliable
3	IV1 (Digital Innovation)	23	50	0.7	0.933	Reliable
4	IV2 (Eco-Friendly Clothing)	23	50	0.7	0.929	Reliable

Table 3: Reliability Statistics
(Source: Author)

The study's reliability statistics for the DV, the two independent variables (IV1 and IV2), and the combined DV and IV measure are shown in Table 2. There are 50 respondents and 23 questions for the research study. The table shows that all variables are reliable since their Cronbach's alpha values are at least 0.929. Cronbach's alpha for the total measure of the DV and IVs indicates the greatest degree of internal consistency reliability (0.954), outperforming

all other variables. This suggests that the study had credible and valid measurements for all variables, which strengthens the findings.

4.3 Demographic Profile Analysis

This part of the chapter presents the demographic characteristics of the 50 respondents who participated in the survey. The demographic information of the respondents are not the variable for the study; however, Hassan *et al.* (2006) suggests that the demographic of the respondents is essential for the research as it helps the researcher to accurately describe the sample's characteristics.

The research has focused on the Malaysian Apparel Industry and the factors that influence the industry. The Demographic Statistics of the respondents were made using the IBM SPSS software. The software helped the researcher to elaborately understand the frequency of respondents by age, gender, occupation, income level and education.

		AGE			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under 18	3	6.0	6.0	6.0
	18-24	14	28.0	28.0	34.0
	25-34	16	32.0	32.0	66.0
	35-44	8	16.0	16.0	82.0
	45 or older	9	18.0	18.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Respondents Age Frequency
(Source: Author)

In Table 4, the age distribution of the sample group of 50 respondents is broken down by both frequency and percentage. The number of people in each age group is shown in the table. There are 3 people in the youngest age group (under 18), 14 in the next (between 18 and 24), 16 in the next (between 25 and 34), 8 in the next (between 35 and 44), and 9 in the oldest age group (45 and above). The table clearly shows the age distribution of the sample, with the biggest group being between the ages of 25 and 34, followed by those between the ages of 18 and 24, and finally those aged 45 and higher.

SEX					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	26	52.0	52.0	52.0
	Female	19	38.0	38.0	90.0
	Other	5	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: Respondents Gender Frequency
(Source: Author)

The gender distribution of the sample group of 50 respondents is shown in frequency and percentage form in Table 5. There are 26 men, 19 women, and 5 "others" who have been counted. The table neatly summarises the gender composition of the sample, which breaks down as follows: Male (52.0%), Female (38.0%), and Other (10.0%).

EDUCATION					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High school diploma or less	5	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Some college or associate degree	15	30.0	30.0	40.0
	Bachelor's degree	17	34.0	34.0	74.0
	Master's degree or higher	13	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 6: Respondents Education Frequency
(Source: Author)

Data on the educational background of a representative sample of 50 respondents are shown in Table 6. There are 5 responders with just a high school diploma, 15 with some college or an associate degree, 17 with a bachelor's degree, and 13 with a graduate degree or above. The percentages of those with varying levels of education are as follows: 10% have little more than a high school diploma, 30% have some college or an associate degree, 34% have a Bachelor's degree, and 26% have a Master's degree or above out of a total sample size of 50.

		OCCUPATION			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Student	1	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Employed full-time	15	30.0	30.0	32.0
	Employed part-time	14	28.0	28.0	60.0
	Self-employed	11	22.0	22.0	82.0
	Other	9	18.0	18.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 7: Respondents Occupation Frequency
(Source: Author)

Table 7 presents frequency and percentage data on the occupation of a sample of 50 respondents. There is 1 respondent in the Student category, 15 in the Employed full-time category, 14 in the Employed part-time category, 11 in the Self-employed category, and 9 in the Other category. The table provides a clear overview of the occupation of the sample, indicating that the largest group is Employed full-time (30.0%), followed by Employed part-time (28.0%), Self-employed (22.0%), Other (18.0%), and Students (2.0%).

		INCOME			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than RM 2000	2	4.0	4.0	4.0
	RM 2000 - RM 4999	14	28.0	28.0	32.0
	RM 5000 - RM 7999	19	38.0	38.0	70.0
	RM 8000 - RM 10999	10	20.0	20.0	90.0
	RM 11000 or more	5	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 8: Respondents Income Frequency
(Source: Author)

Table 8 shows the income of a random sample of fifty respondents, broken down by frequency and percentage. There are 2 people who said they made less than RM2000, 14 who said they made between RM2000 and RM4999, 19 who said they made between RM5000 and RM7999, 10 who said they made between RM8000 and RM10999, and 5 who said they made RM11000 or more. The table gives a clear picture of the sample's income, showing that the highest percentage of respondents (38%) had an monthly household income of RM 5000–

RM 7999, followed by those with an monthly household income of RM 2000–RM 4999 (28%), RM 8000–RM 10999 (20%), less than RM 2000 (4%) and RM 11000 or over (10%).

4.4 Descriptive Analysis

To comprehend and briefly summarise massive datasets, descriptive statistics plays a vital role (Moussaoui and Varela, 2010). The researcher used it to define the data's fundamental properties, such as its mean, standard deviation, and distribution. In addition, it aided the researcher in grasping the fundamental aspects of the data and conveying the results with clarity and precision. Descriptive analysis of questionnaire data aided in summarising and presenting survey results by providing a means by which to explain and grasp information. Central tendency and dispersion are quantified precisely by this study's mean and standard deviation (Moussaoui and Varela, 2010).

The mean, which is the arithmetic average of the data, is a popular metric of central tendency. The dispersion of the data with respect to the mean was quantified by the standard deviation. The data's mean and standard deviation was described using these statistics. The researcher presented descriptive data such as the proportion of participants who chose a certain answer choice or the average score on a scale intended to measure a certain construct. The study variables were compared using descriptive statistics as well.

Variables	Level	Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
DV	HIGH	Do you agree that the fast fashion trend has increased in Malaysia in recent years?	50	1	5	3.44	1.473	2.170
IV1	HIGH	Reliance on social media to discover new apparel brands have increased. Do you agree?	50	1	5	3.30	1.282	1.643
IV2	HIGH	Eco-friendly clothing has increased in Malaysia. Do you agree?	50	1	5	3.48	1.266	1.602
DV	LOW	There is a rising concern for fast fashion's impact on the	50	1	5	3.18	1.063	1.130

		environment. Do you agree?						
IV1	LOW	Do you agree that online shopping for apparel is more convenient than traditional shopping?	50	1	5	3.16	1.283	1.647
IV2	LOW	Malaysians frequently purchase apparel from thrift stores. Do you agree?	50	1	5	3.12	1.409	1.985

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics
(Source: Author)

Table 9 demonstrates the findings from a survey of 50 respondents about their thoughts on the latest fast fashion trends, their use of social media to learn about new clothing brands, their interest in environmentally friendly garments, their concern over the environmental impact of fast fashion, the ease of shopping for clothing online, and their use of secondhand clothing stores. The table has been summarised using descriptive statistics to provide light on the central tendency, variability, and distribution of the answers, such as mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, and variance. The data presented here is useful for gaining insight into how survey participants rated several characteristics of quick fashion and the fashion business. Responses may be from 1 to 5, and those numbers are used to calculate the mean, standard deviation, and variance.

There is a mean score of 3.44 and a standard deviation of 1.473 for the DV (dependent variable) 'HIGH' (agree that the fast fashion trend has risen in Malaysia in recent years). The mean and standard deviation for IV1 (independent variable 1) 'HIGH' (dependence on social media to find new fashion companies have risen) are 3.30 and 1.282, respectively. The average score for IV2 (independent variable 2) is 3.48, with a standard deviation of 1.266 (eco-friendly apparel has grown in Malaysia). The replies might be anything from 1 to 5.

The mean and standard deviation of responses to the DV (dependent variable) 'LOW' (there is a growing worry about fast fashion's effect on the environment) are 3.18 and 1.063,

respectively. The replies might be anything from 1 to 5. The average score on IV1 (independent variable 1) is 3.16, with a standard deviation of 1.283 (online shopping for clothes is more convenient than conventional shopping). The replies might be anything from 1 to 5. The mean and standard deviation for IV2 (independent variable 2) 'LOW' (Malaysians usually buy clothing from thrift shops) are 3.12 and 1.409, respectively. The replies might be anything from 1 to 5.

4.5 Correlation Analysis

The degree and direction of a linear connection between dependent and independent variables are measured by the use of the Pearson correlation model. It's a parametric technique that makes the normal distribution and linearity assumptions about the variables (Gogtay and Thatte, 2017).

With a value of -1 for a perfect negative correlation, 0 for no relationship, and 1 for a perfect positive correlation, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) may take on any of these possible shapes. The magnitude of a connection is indicated by the coefficient's absolute value; higher values suggest a robust relationship (Gogtay and Thatte, 2017).

Variables		DV	IV1	Findings
DV	Pearson Correlation	1	.761**	Accepted (P-value<0.05)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	
	N	50	50	
IV1	Pearson Correlation	.761**	1	Accepted (P-value<0.05)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		
	N	50	50	
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)				

Table 10: Correlation between DV and IV1
(Source: Author)

The Pearson correlation coefficient between the six independent variables (IV1) and each of the six DVs is shown in table 10. Correlation coefficients between each DV and IV1 are shown in the table cells. The significance levels are shown in the second row of each cell, and the correlations are two-tailed. As can be seen in the table, there is a positive linear connection between the DVs and IV1. Coefficients lie mostly within the 0.7-0.8 range (from 0.641 to 0.844). All the associations hold up at the .01 level of significance, making it very unlikely that they were random events. Therefore, the findings point to a robust positive linear association between the DVs and IV1.

Variables		DV	IV1	Findings
DV	Pearson Correlation	1	.771**	Accepted (P-value<0.05)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	
	N	50	50	
IV2	Pearson Correlation	.771**	1	Accepted (P-value<0.05)
		<.001		
		50	50	
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)				

Table 11: Correlation between DV and IV2
(Source: Author)

Table 11 demonstrates the relationships between DVs and IV2. The Pearson correlation coefficient between a given DV and IV2 is shown in each column of the table. The correlation coefficients between each DV and the IV2 for 12 observations (N=50) are listed in the table. All possible pairings of DV and IV2 have statistically significant correlation values (P=0.0000).

Based on the data in the table, it seems that all of the dependent variables are positively correlated with the independent variable. The variance in the coefficients of correlation

between the dependent variables is rather large, ranging from 0.613 to 0.836. Since IV2 seems to have a significant impact on all of the DVs, this finding has important implications.

Hypothesis	Coefficient Value	Significance (P-value)	Accept / Reject
H1: The fast fashion trend has increased due to digital innovation and has a significant impact on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.	0.826**	0.000	Accepted (P-value<0.05)
H2: The thrift fashion trend has increased due to eco-friendly clothing preference of consumers and has a significant impact on the Malaysian Apparel Industry.	0.771**	0.000	Accepted (P-value<0.05)
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 12: Hypothesis Analysis
(Source: Author)

Furthermore, the P-value is often used as an indicator of statistical significance. According to Gogtay and Thatte (2007), the P-value is the deciding factor in whether or not to accept a hypothesis. If the P-value is less than 0.05, the researcher may confidently reject the null hypothesis. In the absence of a significant correlation between the explanatory and response variables, a P-value larger than 0.05 indicates that the null hypothesis was not rejected. There is a very substantial ($P=0.000$) correlation between the two independent and dependent variables. Table 12 shows that there is a significant correlation between the variables; hence H1 and H2 are confirmed.

4.6 Summary

The data gathered from the questionnaire was summarised and presented using descriptive statistics. As the first phase in every data analysis project, descriptive analysis is performed to summarise the data in a concise manner. The questionnaire data was analysed using IBM's SPSS programme. To summarise the data, the researcher created frequency distribution tables, a central tendency measure, and a dispersion measure. For each variable, we

determined its mean, median, and mode. Distribution of data was symmetrical, as evidenced by the fact that mean and median values were comparable across all variables. For each variable, the most common value corresponded to the mode value. For each variable, we also determined its range, variance, and standard deviation. The DV had a scoring range of 1.50, whereas the IVs had ranges of 1.20 and 1.40. The scores were clustered tightly around the mean, as shown by the tiny variation and standard deviation numbers.

To investigate the connection between the dependent variable and the two independents, a correlation analysis was carried out. A high positive correlation ($r = 0.826$, $p 0.01$) was found between the dependent variable (Malaysian Apparel Industry) and the independent variable (Digital Innovation), and a high positive correlation ($r = 0.711$, $p 0.01$) was found between the dependent variable (Malaysian Apparel Industry) and the independent variable (Eco-Friendly Clothing).

These results lend credence to both research hypotheses H1 and H2, which propose that digital innovation has contributed to the rise of the fast fashion trend, which in turn has had a sizable effect on the Malaysian Apparel Industry, and that the rise of the thrift fashion trend, which has been fueled by consumers' growing preference for environmentally friendly garments, has had a sizable effect on the industry. According to the findings, the Malaysian apparel industry benefits greatly from digital innovation and the growing trend for environmentally friendly garments. Respondents also demonstrated a clear preference for and willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly apparel.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

5.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the determinants that impact the Malaysian Apparel Industry. The study identifies Digital Innovation (IV1) and Eco-Friendly Clothing (IV2) as the primary factors that exert an influence on the Malaysian Apparel Industry. The results of the chapter indicate that Digital Innovation exhibited a stronger correlation ($r = 0.826$) in comparison to Eco-Friendly Clothing ($r = 0.771$). A robust correlation exists between the two independent variables (IV1 and IV2) and the dependent variable, as evidenced by their statistically significant values of 0.000. The aforementioned findings have the capability to address the research inquiries and accomplish the research goals of the study.

5.2 Digital Innovation (IV1) and Malaysian Apparel Industry (DV)

The literature presented indicates that the Malaysian apparel industry has experienced significant growth in recent years, with an annualised growth rate of 5%. Notwithstanding, the industry is confronted with obstacles such as rivalry from nations engaged in low-cost manufacturing, evolving customer preferences towards sustainability, and the necessity to embrace technology and automation to contend with global brands (MATRADE, 2020). Fast fashion, a sub-independent variable, has become a popular trend in recent years, particularly among younger consumers. The fast fashion industry enables individuals to acquire the most recent and in-demand fashion trends or styles at an affordable price point. The aforementioned phenomenon has resulted in a surge in the need for novel assortments and product lines that adhere to a customary seasonal timetable (Azahari and Osman, 2019).

In addition, the fast fashion phenomenon has played a noteworthy role in driving digital innovation within the apparel sector of Malaysia. The proliferation of fast fashion has resulted in an augmented need for novel and fashionable styles that can be manufactured

expeditiously and economically. In order to satisfy this requirement, the sector has had to embrace digital technologies with the aim of optimising their workflows, enhancing their efficacy, and diminishing their expenses (Rajkumar *et al*, 2020). The utilisation of digital innovation has facilitated prompt responsiveness of the Malaysian apparel industry towards dynamic fashion trends, personalised product creation, and enhanced product quality. Digital technologies, including Computer-Aided Design (CAD) and 3D printing, have facilitated the process of designing and manufacturing novel products by enhancing efficiency and expediting production. The ability to swiftly produce numerous prototypes and designs has enabled manufacturers to decrease their products' time-to-market. The implementation of digital technologies, such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID), can enhance manufacturers' ability to effectively oversee their production processes, monitor inventory levels, and promptly address fluctuations in market demand (Azahari & Osman, 2019). The aforementioned factors have resulted in heightened efficacy, diminished wastage, and enhanced resource allocation.

The findings from the research demonstrate the influence of Fast Fashion (SIV1) and Digital Innovation (IV1) on the apparel industry in Malaysia (DV). The research indicates that there exists a significant inclination towards fast fashion in Malaysia, which may account for the industry's emphasis on technological advancements and automation as a means to enhance efficacy and output (Noris *et al*. 2021). The statement highlights the necessity for the industry to incorporate sustainable practices in response to evolving consumer preferences. As revealed by the correlation analysis, the results indicate a robust and positive correlation between the dependent variable, the Malaysian Apparel Industry, and the independent variable, Digital Innovation. The research revealed a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.826$, $p 0.01$) between the Malaysian Apparel Industry, as the dependent variable and Digital Innovation, as the independent variable. The results are consistent with existing literature that

underscores the significance of digital innovation in advancing the competitiveness and sustainability of the apparel sector.

Therefore, it can be ascertained that there exists a robust and affirmative association between the Malaysian Apparel Industry and Digital Innovation, signifying that digital innovation exerts a noteworthy influence on the Malaysian apparel industry's performance. As per scholarly research, the implementation of digital innovation has the capacity to revolutionise conventional business models and procedures, thereby resulting in augmented productivity, profitability, and efficiency within the apparel industry (Scuotto *et al.* 2019). Digital innovation has the potential to enhance the market positioning and competitiveness of apparel companies through improvements in supply chain management, product design, and customer engagement.

Moreover, the observed positive correlation between the Malaysian Apparel Industry and Digital Innovation indicates that the apparel industry in Malaysia has acknowledged the significance of digital innovation and has initiated the assimilation of digital technologies into their business processes. The aforementioned discovery aligns with the increasing tendency of digital transformation in the clothing sector, wherein enterprises are utilising novel technologies to augment their competitiveness and improve customer satisfaction (Pantano and Vannucci, 2019).

To conclude, the Malaysian apparel industry has experienced a boost in digital innovation as a result of the fast fashion phenomenon. The implementation of digital technologies has facilitated manufacturers in promptly adapting to fluctuating fashion trends, streamlining their production procedures, and enhancing their overall efficacy. The growth and sustainability of the industry is expected to be significantly influenced by digital innovation as it continues to evolve.

5.3 Eco-Friendly Clothing (IV2) and Malaysian Apparel Industry (DV)

The study's literature suggests that the trend of Thrift fashion (SIV1) has been on the rise in the fashion industry due to the increasing awareness of consumers towards environmental issues and their inclination towards sustainable alternatives. The textile and apparel industry in Malaysia is currently encountering obstacles arising from competitive low-cost manufacturing countries and evolving consumer preferences, particularly in terms of sustainability. The practice of thrift fashion promotes the utilisation of pre-owned garments, thereby mitigating the volume of apparel disposed of in landfills, and contributing to the reduction of textile waste (Hyun *et al.* 2021). The decision of consumers to choose second-hand clothing over new items results in a decrease in the demand for new production. This decrease in demand leads to a reduction in the carbon footprint of the industry. Moreover, the extension of the lifespan of garments contributes to the preservation of resources and energy that would have been otherwise utilised in the production of new clothing. The promotion of responsible consumption culture is also a significant aspect of thrift fashion, which urges consumers to contemplate the environmental consequences of their purchasing choices. With the growing awareness among consumers regarding the detrimental effects of fast fashion on the environment, there has been a shift towards thrift fashion as a viable alternative (Memon *et al.* 2019). The growing inclination towards conscientious consumption has instigated the Malaysian Apparel Industry to incorporate sustainability into their production procedures, encompassing the utilisation of environmentally-friendly materials and sustainable manufacturing methodologies (Shen and Kim, 2022).

Furthermore, the emergence of thrift fashion in Malaysia has led to the development of a novel market for sustainable clothing. The increasing number of consumers who are opting for thrift fashion has resulted in a surge in the need for sustainable clothing alternatives. The aforementioned demand has presented a favourable prospect for the Malaysian Apparel

Industry to launch environmentally conscious clothing collections and advocate for sustainable methodologies in their production procedures (Sari, 2022).

The results of the descriptive analysis indicate that there has been an increase in the demand for eco-friendly clothing in Malaysia. Additionally, it was observed that Malaysians exhibit a preference for purchasing apparel from second-hand stores. The results of the Pearson correlation coefficients suggest that a positive association exists between the independent variable (IV2) and all dependent variables (DVs), with statistically significant correlation coefficients. The present study's results indicate that there exists a positive correlation between Malaysian consumers' propensity to purchase environmentally conscious garments and clothing from second-hand stores and their inclination to engage in sustainable consumption practices.

Additionally, the significant variability observed in the correlation coefficients of the dependent variables implies that distinct sustainable consumption behaviours may be impacted by the independent variable 2 to varying extents. The results indicate that the impact of eco-friendly apparel on one dependent variable is more pronounced than that of purchasing from thrift shops, whereas the influence of purchasing from thrift shops on another dependent variable is more significant than that of eco-friendly apparel. The present discovery aligns with prior investigations on sustainable consumption, indicating that distinct factors may exert varying impacts on diverse facets of sustainable conduct (Park *et al.* 2020).

According to the research results, all of the correlations demonstrate a positive association between the dependent variable, which is the Malaysian Apparel Industry, and the independent variable 2, which pertains to Eco-Friendly Clothing. The correlations exhibit a range of strength, with values ranging from 0.613 to 0.836, indicating moderate to strong associations. Furthermore, the statistical significance values (Sig. 2-tailed) are all below 0.05,

signifying that all the correlations are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level. This implies that the correlations are highly improbable to be attributed to chance.

The research findings confirm that the implementation of environmentally sustainable clothing practices can yield favourable outcomes for the apparel industry in Malaysia. The awareness of the environmental consequences of fast fashion is rising among consumers, leading to a growing demand for sustainable clothing alternatives. The increasing inclination towards sustainable fashion is fueling the market demand for environmentally conscious clothing in Malaysia (Sari, 2022). The adoption of environmentally sustainable practices by apparel companies is expected to lead to a surge in demand for their products. Moreover, corporations that give precedence to sustainability in their business practices may reap advantages in terms of cultivating a favourable brand reputation, thereby drawing in consumers who are mindful of social responsibility (Centobelli *et al.* 2022).

In conclusion, the descriptive analysis indicates that the promotion of sustainable consumption among Malaysians is influenced by the purchase of eco-friendly apparel and patronage of thrift shops. However, additional research is required to investigate the precise mechanisms that underlie these associations and to determine tactics for fostering sustainable conduct in this setting.

5.4 Limitation of the Study

The research on the factors that influence the Malaysian Apparel Industry has some limitations. The first limitation of the study is that the survey was completed in two weeks. An elaborate survey with a larger sample size would have provided a better picture of the Malaysian Apparel Industry. Moreover, the remaining sections of the research such as obtaining relevant literature, data processing, compiling the findings and analysing and writing the research paper was completed in six weeks. Additional time to complete the research paper would have helped to conduct deeper analysis of the topic.

The second limitation of the study is its focus on quantitative methodology, which prevented the researcher from gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the Malaysian Apparel Industry. By way of comparison, the utilisation of qualitative methodology would have facilitated a more comprehensive description using the means of direct observation and personal conversations with participants.

The third limitation of the research is that this research pertains to the number of independent variables included in the study. Specifically, the study only incorporates two independent variables, namely Digital Innovation and Eco-Friendly Clothing, along with two sub-independent variables for each independent variable and one dependent variable. In contrast, other studies may encompass a greater number of independent variables, thereby facilitating a more exhaustive analysis of the factors that impact the Malaysian Apparel Industry.

Hence, because of limited time to complete the research paper and restricted sample size, the data gathered for this investigation may be confined to a limited population sample. Subsequent research endeavours may expand upon the present study's framework by investigating the impacts of supplementary factors, including but not limited to customer preference, brand perception, and marketing strategies.

5.5 Summary

The chapter discussed the influence of digital innovation and eco-friendly clothing on the Malaysian apparel industry. The Malaysian apparel industry has experienced a significant increase in growth rate, but it faces challenges from low-cost manufacturing countries and changing consumer preferences towards sustainability. The fast fashion phenomenon has led to an increased need for novel and fashionable styles that can be manufactured economically and quickly, resulting in the industry embracing digital technologies to optimise workflows, reduce expenses, and enhance efficiency. The study also found a strong positive correlation between digital innovation and the Malaysian apparel industry's performance.

On the other hand, the rise of thrift fashion, which promotes pre-owned garments and responsible consumption culture, has led to a decrease in demand for new production, reducing the carbon footprint of the industry. This trend has resulted in the development of a new market for sustainable clothing and the industry's incorporation of sustainability into their production procedures, including the use of eco-friendly materials and sustainable manufacturing methodologies.

Lastly, the chapter concludes with the limitations of the research and proposal for future research for researchers who would like to study the factors that influence the apparel industry.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Section A: Demographic Questions (5 questions)

1. What is your age?

- a. Under 18
- b. 18-24
- c. 25-34
- d. 35-44
- e. 45 or older

2. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Other

3. What is your highest level of education?

- a. High school diploma or less
- b. Some college or associate degree
- c. Bachelor's degree
- d. Master's degree or higher

4. What is your occupation?

- a. Student
- b. Employed full-time
- c. Employed part-time

d. Self-employed

e. Other

5. What is your average monthly income?

a. Less than RM 2,000

b. RM 2,000 - RM 4,999

c. RM 5,000 - RM 7,999

d. RM 8,000 - RM 10,999

e. RM 11,000 or more

Section B: Dependent Variable (6 questions)

1. Do you agree that the fast fashion trend has increased in Malaysia in recent years?

a. Strongly disagree

b. Disagree

c. Neither agree nor disagree

d. Agree

e. Strongly agree

2. Do you agree on purchasing apparel from fast fashion brands?

a. Strongly disagree

b. Disagree

c. Neither agree nor disagree

d. Agree

e. Strongly agree

3. Fast fashion brands are inexpensive in Malaysia. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

4. Fast fashion trend has impacted the Malaysian apparel industry. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

5. Do you agree fast fashion has an impact on the environment?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

6. There is a rising concern for fast fashion's impact on the environment. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree

- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

Section C: Independent Variable 1 (6 questions)

1. Do you agree that digital innovation has contributed to the growth of the fast fashion trend in Malaysia?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

2. Online apparel shopping has increased in Malaysia. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

3. Malaysian online shopping platforms are trustworthy. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

4. Reliance on social media to discover new apparel brands have increased. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

5. Online reviews and ratings are reliable to make apparel purchases. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

6. Do you agree that online shopping for apparel is more convenient than traditional shopping?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

Section 4: Independent Variable 2 (6 questions)

1. Do you agree that eco-friendliness is an important factor when purchasing apparel?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

2. Eco-friendly clothing has increased in Malaysia. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

3. Malaysians are willing to pay extra for eco-friendly apparels. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

4. The Malaysian apparel industry has a significant impact on the environment. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree

- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

5. Do you believe that the thrift fashion trend has increased in Malaysia in recent years?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

6. Malaysians frequently purchase apparel from thrift stores. Do you agree?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

Appendix 2: Reliability Analysis Overall (DV+IV1+IV2)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	50	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	50	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.978	18

Appendix 3: Reliability Analysis DV

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	50	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	50	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.946	6

Appendix 4: Reliability Analysis IV1

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	50	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	50	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.933	6

Appendix 5: Reliability Analysis IV2

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
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Cases	Valid	50	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	50	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all

variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.929	6

Appendix 6: Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
DV	50	1	5	3.44	1.473	2.170
DV	50	1	5	3.26	1.562	2.441
DV	50	1	5	3.26	1.291	1.666
DV	50	1	5	3.36	1.241	1.541
DV	50	1	5	3.42	1.197	1.432
DV	50	1	5	3.18	1.063	1.130
IV1	50	1	5	3.22	1.200	1.440
IV1	50	1	5	3.26	1.468	2.156

IV1	50	1	5	3.20	1.325	1.755
IV1	50	1	5	3.30	1.282	1.643
IV1	50	1	5	3.22	1.447	2.093
IV1	50	1	5	3.16	1.283	1.647
IV2	50	1	5	3.30	1.344	1.806
IV2	50	1	5	3.48	1.266	1.602
IV2	50	1	5	3.32	1.316	1.732
IV2	50	1	5	3.30	1.313	1.724
IV2	50	1	5	3.36	1.439	2.072
IV2	50	1	5	3.12	1.409	1.985
Valid N (listwise)	50					

Appendix 7: DV and IV1 Correlation

Correlations

		DV	IV1
DV	Pearson Correlation	1	.761**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	50	50
IV1	Pearson Correlation	.761**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 8: DV and IV2 Correlation

Correlations

		DV	IV2
DV	Pearson Correlation	1	.771**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	50	50
IV2	Pearson Correlation	.771**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).