

# Investigating consumers' brand desirability for upcycled luxury brands

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## Abstract

This paper investigates consumers' values on attitude and brand desirability for upcycled luxury designer shirts. Consumer values in the present study's context consist of terminal and instrumental values. Findings show that terminal values do not strongly influence the attitude towards the Burberry previous collection shirts nor brand desirability for the Burberry leftover fabric shirts and the Burberry previous collection shirts compared to Burberry generic shirts. Instrumental values do not strongly influence the attitude towards the Burberry leftover fabric shirts. Still, a stronger influence on brand desirability for the Burberry previous collection shirts than Burberry generic shirts. Managerial and strategic implications should focus on instrumental values to evoke favorable luxury brand desirability.

## JEL CLASSIFICATION

M13, M30

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Due to the enormous amount of trash produced by the fashion sector, there has been significant environmental contamination (Ütebay et al., 2020). For instance, the New York Times reports that almost three-fifths of apparel are discarded within a year of production (Radin, 2019). This situation has forced the fashion industry to implement more environmentally friendly practices, with many fashion labels emphasizing fashion upcycling (Radin, 2019). Designing repurposed fashion goods may enhance sustainability performance in modern fashion marketplaces, where sustainable company operations are becoming increasingly important. Many high-end fashion labels aim towards sustainable business practices. For instance, Positive Luxury's mark of approval, which attests to sustainable business practices, was given to Louis Vuitton and Givenchy. Therefore, upcycling helps fashion firms emphasize their significant efforts to improve sustainability by sending a strong statement. More and more generic fashion companies are using repurposed fashion items to organize their

inventories. Sustainable menswear labels such as E.Tautz, Vinti Andrews, Studio ALCH, and Bethany Williams, for example, showcased their repurposed collections during London Fashion Week Men's January 2020 (Shurvell, 2020).

Recently, many luxury fashion brands have started considering creating a balance between preserving brand desirability and contributing to environmental sustainability. This approach has led to integrating the sustainability factor into their business models by emphasizing fashion upcycling (Pencarelli et al., 2019; Radin, 2019) and is often regarded as one of the most sustainable circular solutions in the waste hierarchy (Cuc & Tripa, 2018), fashion upcycling aids the recovery of materials and components from waste streams rather than using new resources for apparel production. Recently, luxury brands have demonstrated that they can be fashion-oriented within the luxury space and still focus on sustainability (Parker, 2020). Therefore, upcycling has served as an avenue for fashion brands like M Missoni, Germanier, and CALLA, to emphasize their sustainability efforts while enabling desirability.

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From the standpoint of luxury fashion, using residual fabric materials from prior collections has enabled luxury fashion manufacturers to produce recycled luxury fashion. British designer Adam Jones creates basic, non-seasonal, and ready-to-wear unisex attire by upcycling antique tea towels and blankets. Vin and Omi are also recognized for reusing old clothes to make new ones. The designers molded vinyl film posters into dresses and jackets for their Autumn/Winter 2020 collection (Shurvell, 2020).

Luxury fashion firms have been able to promote sustainability while also increasing attractiveness through greater patronage from upcycled luxury fashion consumers through the adoption of fashion upcycling and the creation of upcycled fashion goods (Bhatt et al., 2019; Radin, 2019). According to the findings of a McKinsey and Company study, sustainable luxury items accounted for an average of 23% of purchases, and this figure is predicted to climb to 40% within the next 5 years (Muret, 2019). Nevertheless, certain challenges are encountered by all fashion brand stakeholders in scaling up upcycled fashion. First, sourcing materials for fashion upcycling remains challenging for many fashion brands. Second, because few excellent repurposed fashion goods are available, merchants and customers have difficulty locating them. Third, merchants and customers have unfavorable opinions on repurposed fashion items. Therefore, to scale up fashion upcycling, policies to encourage consumers to buy upcycled fashion items, cash benefits for fashion upcycling, skill development to enhance the quality of upcycled fashion products, and education to alter customer perception are all necessary.

### 1.1 | Justification of the study

Currently, there is a lack of research on upcycled and sustainable luxury fashion products. A large body of the research literature concentrates on upcycled generic fashion products, such as research on purchase intention and purchase experience in recycled and upcycled fashion products and consumers' perceived values on intention to purchase upcycled products (Yu & Lee, 2019). To the researchers, the literature has failed to investigate either sustainable versus apparent luxury fashion purchase intention or upcycled luxury fashion products.

Environmental awareness, innovation, and fashion sensitivity are often the driving forces behind customers' purchasing repurposed fashion items (Bhatt et al., 2019). In contrast, there is a lack of comprehension of these motives in the market for luxury clothing. Millennials choose luxury fashion firms committed to sustainability and value premium goods made from recycled materials (Rolling & Sadachar, 2018). In contrast, a survey revealed that millennials do not associate luxury with sustainability (Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2020). Upcycled and recycled clothing must be considered separately in the studies on sustainable fashion. Due to the unpredictability of the materials' quality and quantity, sample manufacturing for upcycled luxury clothes is severely constrained (Phau et al., 2022). Luxury fashion items that have been upcycled may appeal to shoppers looking for inventive and distinctive fashion items. However, a study found that customers do not see the value of the labor-intensive

process of fashion upcycling. This shows that education is needed to get consumers to know the value (Janigo et al., 2017). Previous studies have focused on generic fashion, and findings may differ within a luxury fashion market context. The inconsistencies resulting from studies on consumers' attitudes towards sustainable luxury can be resolved by considering the major consumer values influencing their attitude and level of desirability for upcycled luxury fashion.

Based on a literature review, consumers' motivation to purchase upcycled luxury fashion products hinges on their existing consumer values. In this research context, consumer values consist of terminal and instrumental values. Consequently, there is a need to understand better consumers' attitudes towards sustainable luxury fashion, especially upcycled luxury fashion, and their brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion. To address this literature gap, the study will aim to achieve the following:

1. We are examining consumers' attitudes and brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion based on consumer values.
2. Based on consumer values, we are comparing consumers' attitudes and brand desirability for generic luxury and upcycled fashion in the form of leftover materials and previous collections.

## 2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 | Upcycled luxury fashion

The need for companies to reduce waste, improve revenue, and gain a positive corporate image as ethical companies have resulted in the common trend of upcycling (Phau et al., 2022). Upcycling is further considered the greener version of recycling. Upcycling is to create higher quality and value-added products through a redesigning process of discarded raw materials or objects (Sung, 2015). The potential for upcycled products to be transformed from superfluous materials into something valuable and attractive (Phau et al., 2022) has led to mass sales of upcycled products by numerous evolving firms of impending evolution in the context of sustainability innovation (McDonough & Braungart, 2002). The scope of products created through upcycling has varied across different categories, such as rugs from fabric scraps, refashioned clothes or bags; soaps and fertilizers from organic waste, artistic objects from scrap metal; or even an entire building from reused deconstruction components (Sung, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2019).

The idea of upcycling is not wholly new in the fashion industry. For instance, in 1997, Italian designer Orsola de Castro worked on upcycling apparel (Fragments, 2014). Recycling is a degradation process that progressively lowers the value of a product, whereas upcycling is an upgrade procedure (Koch, 2019). In an artisanal method, designers disassemble portions of old clothing to prepare materials for upcycled fashion creations so that the materials are not harmed throughout the upcycling process. Conversely, designers prepare materials for recycled fashion goods by bleaching and disintegrating the fabric of old clothing, causing the materials to be harmed throughout the recycling process.

Upcycling has recently become a common trend in the fashion industry. Luxury brands such as Chanel, Rolex, Louis Vuitton, and Stella McCartney (Tuschman, 2020) have also been part of the upcycling sustainability movement. In the framework of this study, premium fashion upcycling is carried out utilizing surplus fabric resources and prior collection goods (Han et al., 2017).

Leftover fabric materials are leftover raw materials discarded throughout the textile manufacturing process, otherwise referred to as clean waste. The leftover material might be fabric and garment samples, overstock, or materials discarded before they are suitable for consumer usage due to being cut away as fabric remnants. According to industry data, an average of 15% of garment materials are abandoned by manufacturers and designers in the fashion business en route to manufacturing (Eco Fashion Talk, 2014). These waste products might include discarded or unusable fiber, unpicked cotton, textile overages, damaged completed garments, or waste materials from weaving and knitting faults.

Leftover fabric materials are upcycled by combining two or more waste items to create a new product or by different patchworking fabrics or scrap fabric to create a new product. Beyond Retro, for example, collects redesigned waste materials based on future fashion trend projections. Good Karma also upcycles waste fabric materials by purchasing old remnants from local warehouses and repurposing them to create new designs (Pandit et al., 2020).

On the other hand, previous collections may be considered vintage apparel, which runs counter to the concept of “rapid fashion.” As a result of the dynamic nature of the fashion industry, clothing apparels swiftly fall out of style. When consumer desire for newness is considered, outdated clothes and apparel are immediately discarded by customers. Previously, vintage clothes could only be acquired at exclusive auctions; currently, numerous clothing businesses deal in vintage clothing (Moorhouse, 2020). Celebrities, fashion influencers, and designers have all embraced the retro trend that has helped to bring vintage fashion into the mainstream (Ryding et al., 2018). As a result of this market development, luxury fashion shoppers regard vintage clothes as more timeless and appealing than generic luxury fashion items due to their exceptionality, as opposed to the homogeneity of mass-market manufacture (Moorhouse, 2020).

Previous collections are upcycled through reconstruction, the process of making new clothes from previously worn apparel. For instance, Re/Done is a brand that focuses mainly on denim. It takes vintage denim apart at the seams and repurposes the material into new jeans, consistent with the modern style while preserving its originality (Pandit et al., 2020).

## 2.2 | Attitude towards upcycling

Attitude is regarded as one of the critical determinants of behavioral intention, which refers to how people feel towards a certain behavior (Ajzen et al., 2007; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975). According to Bohner and Dickel (2011), attitude consists of subjective assessments of things, including both tangible things and abstract ideas. Therefore, customers judge fashion goods, and the judgments shape their views about such

goods. Consumers often have favorable opinions about sustainable fashion items (Akintimehin et al., 2022; Kong & Ko, 2017) and specifically towards upcycled fashion products that can be attributed to perceived uniqueness. Han et al. (2017) and Paras and Curteza's (2018) research reinforce the notion that repurposed clothing is distinctive. The connotations of prestige, power, and authority sent by luxury goods encourage customers to see luxury goods, especially luxury fashion goods, favorably (Yim et al., 2014). Consumers may also regard upcycled luxury apparel as having more degrees of conspicuousness, self-expression, and hedonism than generic luxury fashion. It may be stated that customers may have more favorable views towards upcycled luxury fashion (past collections and leftover materials) than towards generic luxury fashion since conspicuousness, self-expression, and hedonism are likely to affect consumers' positive attitudes.

In the context of this research study, consumers' attitude towards upcycled luxury fashion is influenced by their values, and the evaluation of whether the consumption of upcycled luxury fashion is consistent with their values; consumers are more likely to have more positive attitudes towards upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections and leftover materials) compared to generic luxury fashion (Amatulli et al., 2018; Kumar & Noble, 2016; Lundblad & Davies, 2016).

## 2.3 | Consumer values

Values are defined as a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, influencing their course of action (Kluckhohn, 1951, p. 395). According to Rokeach (1968), values are dominant forces that direct or influence individual actions in all walks of life. These values can serve as standards that guide consumer choices, beliefs, attitudes, and actions. Rokeach (1973) categorized human values into terminal values and instrumental values. Terminal values are beliefs about desired results such as freedom, social recognition, pleasure, and exciting life. On the other hand, instrumental values are described as beliefs about desirable modes of conduct and motivators to reach end-states of existence. These terminal and instrumental values have been progressively used for market segmentation and to predict consumer behavior (Kamakura & Novak, 1992; Kautish & Sharma, 2018; Scott & Lamont, 1973).

## 2.4 | Terminal values

Terminal-value customers are primarily motivated by a social or individualized desire to meet a certain need (Krystallis et al., 2008). A product's state of existence represents terminal value to gain symbolic and expressive rewards rather than by its functions or performance (Allen et al., 2002). According to research, terminal values can be classified as social, emotional, aesthetic, or self-expressive (Kahle, 1996; Kautish & Sharma, 2018; Yu & Lee, 2019). Consequently, customers would choose to consume recycled luxury fashion over generic luxury fashion owing to the greater aesthetic, self-expression, and social advantages that upcycled luxury fashion provides.

The restoration of materials through upcycling is a unique notion, and changing the recycled product into something more appealing is a secondary goal (Yu & Lee, 2019). Upcycled luxury apparel is deemed superiorly attractive since it is reborn into high-value-added products by applying creativity to recycled or discarded components. Furthermore, fashion upcycling necessitates artistry and invention because the materials used for upcycling vary in size, color, and pattern (Paras & Curteza, 2018) and are seen as more self-expressive than generic luxury fashion. Surprisingly, the motivations for purchasing antique or retro things and upcycled products are considered an aesthetic change (McColl et al., 2013; Wei & Jung, 2017). Upcycled luxury fashion promotes self-expression and social worth via product design, recognized as eco-labeled or made from recycled materials (Yu & Lee, 2019). Furthermore, buyers interested in a one-of-a-kind fashion for self-expression may acquire recycled fashion goods since each upcycled fashion piece is one-of-a-kind owing to restricted materials (Han et al., 2017; Wilson, 2016).

Accordingly, this rationale suggests consumers perceive more terminal values from upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections and leftover materials) than generic luxury fashion. Therefore, the following hypotheses are presented.

**H1a.** *Terminal value strongly influences the attitude towards upcycled luxury fashion (leftover materials) compared to generic luxury fashion.*

**H1b.** *Terminal value strongly influences the attitude towards upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections) compared to generic luxury fashion.*

**H3a.** *Terminal value strongly influences the brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion (leftover materials) compared to generic luxury fashion.*

**H3b.** *Terminal value strongly influences the brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections) compared to generic luxury fashion.*

## 2.5 | Instrumental values

Instrumental-value-oriented consumption is goal-driven, primarily motivated by the desire to make an effective judgment (Kautish & Sharma, 2018). A product's intrinsic qualities symbolize instrumental value, a means to an end, or performance. As a result, instrumental-value-oriented consumers emphasize a product's utilitarian meaning (Allen et al., 2002). Instrumental values are further described as beliefs about the desired mode of action, such as being independent, ambitious, honest, and responsible. They are regarded as motivators to achieve goals or desirable end-states of existence (Eibel-Spanyi & Hofmeister-Toth, 2013). Research has further stated that instrumental values are strongly related to functional, economic, and green values (Allen et al., 2002; Kahle, 1996; Yu & Lee, 2019).

Upcycling luxury fashion reduces material and energy consumption to protect natural resources and the environment (Wilson, 2016) through sustainable production and consumption (Sung, 2015). Environmental-conscious and sustainability-oriented consumers would therefore have a preference for upcycled luxury fashion. Upcycled luxury fashion could also meet the functional needs of consumers by ensuring efficiency, ease of use, sturdiness, safety, and multifunctionality (Kumar & Noble, 2016) while minimizing environmental harm (Bridgens et al., 2018). Upcycled luxury fashion is more cost-effective and robust than generic luxury fashion because, through several cycles (Bridgens et al., 2018; Wilson, 2016), items are made with quality materials that would have otherwise been discarded. Household upcycling can also be economically valuable for consumers by fulfilling needs with fewer financial resources while still having the potential for income opportunities (Sung et al., 2014).

Accordingly, this standpoint suggests that consumers perceive more instrumental values from upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections and leftover materials) than generic luxury fashion. Therefore, the following hypotheses are presented.

**H2a.** *Instrumental value strongly influences the attitude towards upcycled luxury fashion (leftover materials) compared to generic luxury fashion.*

**H2b.** *Instrumental value strongly influences the attitude towards upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections) compared to generic luxury fashion.*

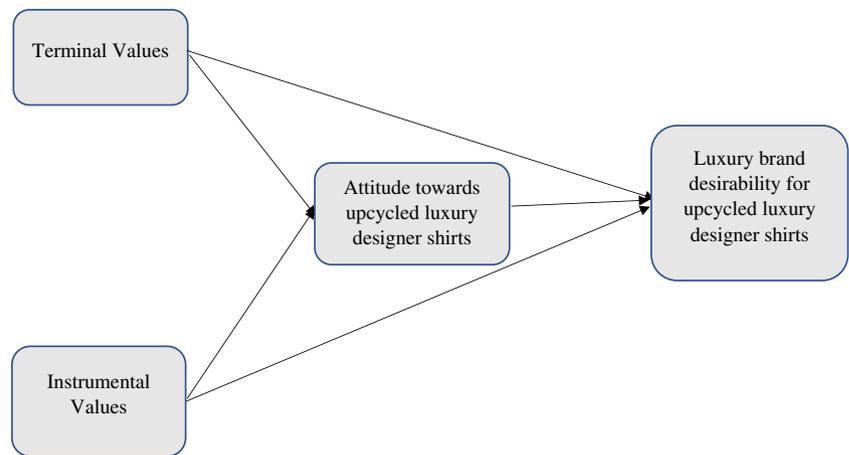
**H4a.** *Instrumental value strongly influences the brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion (leftover materials) than generic luxury fashion.*

**H4b.** *Instrumental value has a stronger influence on the brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections) than generic luxury fashion.*

## 2.6 | Brand desirability

Desirability is evoked when a brand is considered predominantly attractive by a certain category of customers. Luxury brand desirability refers to luxury consumption's personal motives that go far beyond perceived rarity and exclusivity (Pham et al., 2018). Luxury brand desirability is further defined as the degree to which a brand possesses good qualities worth owning (Pham et al., 2018). Brand desirability is majorly developed in the presence of a good value fit. This outcome implies that when consumers' values are closely matched with those of the brand, consumers would desire to associate with or own such brands. In the context of luxury fashion, consumers would desire upcycled luxury fashion as such products are perceived as being more unique compared to mass-produced fashion products. This uniqueness can be attributed to designers sourcing materials from leftover fabric materials and previous collections before the design stage of development to produce upcycled fashion products (Han et al., 2017). Furthermore, consumers who desire self-expression

**FIGURE 1** Research model [Color figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](http://wileyonlinelibrary.com)]



purchase upcycled luxury products providing them with conspicuous power (Truong et al., 2008).

Accordingly, these findings suggest consumers may have more brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections and remnant materials) than generic luxury fashion. Therefore, the following hypotheses are presented.

**H5a.** *Attitude towards upcycled luxury fashion (leftover materials) strongly influences brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion (leftover materials) compared to generic luxury fashion.*

**H5b.** *Attitude towards upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections) strongly influences brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections) compared to generic luxury fashion.*

All stated hypotheses are depicted in Figure 1 below.

### 3 | METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 | Data collection

Through an online panel involving participants from Australia, quantitative data was gathered. An online questionnaire that was self-administered was used to obtain the data. It was optional to participate. Participants were informed about the research before responding to questions, and the information was gathered for 7 days. A screening question, “have you ever purchased luxury fashion products?” was asked to verify that participants were truly luxury consumers. Only participants who answered “yes” to the above question had their survey responses processed for data analysis. Three hundred ninety replies were kept after the data filtering procedure for this study's analysis. During the limited period of the research, an online panel was useful for collecting quantitative data since it allowed data to be collected with a significantly faster response rate (QuestionPro, 2020).

#### 3.2 | Survey instrument

The four major variables in this survey instrument were terminal value, instrumental value, attitudes, and brand desirability. Pre-existing scales were chosen for their recognized reliability and relevance. Each terminal and instrumental value had five components adopted from Beatty et al. (1985), Kamakura and Mazzon (1991), Kautish and Sharma (2018), and Munson and McQuarrie (1988). Attitudes were made up of three items adapted from Martin and Stewart (2001). Brand desirability was scored on a 7-point Likert scale from non-desirable to desirable with the question “having viewed the goods, how appealing are Burberry's items to you?” Stimuli for the three conditions, upcycled luxury fashion (previous collections and leftover materials), and generic luxury fashion were created using Burberry shirts, which were randomly shown to each participant.

### 4 | ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Three hundred ninety data responses were analyzed using SmartPLS 3. The sample distribution is shown in Table 1.

Data analysis was first implemented through the partial least square of the structural equation model (PLS-SEM). This analysis was applied to test the significance levels for all Burberry products. The multi-group analysis (PLS-MGA) was further used to test the significant differences between consumers' attitudes and brand desirability for generic luxury and upcycled fashion, in the form of leftover materials and previous collections, based on their consumer values.

#### 4.1 | Test of hypotheses

##### 4.1.1 | Influence of terminal value on the brand attitude for Burberry

As shown in Table 2, there is existence of positive and significant relationships between terminal value and brand attitude towards the Burberry

**TABLE 1** Descriptive statistics

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	166	42.6
Female	224	57.4
Total	390	100
<b>Age</b>		
18–31 years	57	14.6
32–45 years	83	21.3
45 years and above	250	64.2
Total	390	100
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	131	33.6
In a relationship	39	10
Married	203	52.1
Others	17	4.4
Total	390	100
<b>Educational qualification</b>		
Certificate	118	30.3
Bachelor's degree	94	24.1
Advanced diploma or diploma	45	11.5
Graduate diploma	50	12.8
Postgraduate degree	57	14.6
Others	26	6.7
Total	390	100
<b>Annual income (\$AUD)</b>		
Under \$50,000	177	45.4
\$50,000–\$99,999	139	35.6
Above \$100,000	74	19
Total	390	100

Generic Shirts ( $t$ -value = 4.080;  $p$ -value = .000), the Burberry Leftover Fabric Shirts ( $t$ -value = 7.014;  $p$ -value = .000) and the Burberry Previous Collection Shirts ( $t$ -value = 3.846;  $p$ -value = .000). However, the relationship is most significant for the Burberry Leftover Fabric Shirts, followed by the Burberry Generic Shirts and the Burberry Previous Collection Shirts. Therefore, in the context of the Burberry shirts,  $H_{1a}$  is accepted, but  $H_{1b}$  is rejected.

#### 4.1.2 | Influence of instrumental value on the brand attitude for Burberry

There are no significant relationships between instrumental value and brand attitude towards the Burberry Generic Shirts ( $t$ -value = .827;  $p$ -value = .408), the Burberry Leftover Shirts ( $t$ -value = .844;  $p$ -value = .399) and the Burberry Previous Collection Shirts ( $t$ -value = 1.506;  $p$ -value = .133). Therefore, in the context of the Burberry shirts,  $H_{2a}$  and  $H_{2b}$  are rejected.

**TABLE 2** Comparison of Burberry shirts Burberry generic shirt (BGS) versus Burberry remnant shirt (BRES) versus Burberry previous collection shirt (BPCS)

	Path coefficients BGS	Path coefficients BLOS	Path coefficients BPCS	Mean BGS	Mean BLOS	Mean BPCS	SD BGS	SD BLOS	SD BPCS	$t$ -Value BGS	$t$ -Value BLOS	$t$ -Value BPCS	$p$ -Value BGS	$p$ -Value BLOS	$p$ -Value BPCS
TV > ATT	.689	.790	.628	.690	.788	.627	.169	.113	.163	4.080	7.014	3.846	.000	.000	.000
IV > ATT	.172	.103	.245	.171	.105	.246	.208	.123	.163	.827	.844	1.506	.408	.399	.133
TV > BD	.133	.247	-.182	.129	.230	-.211	.242	.228	.208	.551	1.087	.875	.582	.277	.382
IV > BD	.431	.013	.501	.438	.026	.528	.194	.176	.201	2.221	.075	2.497	.027	.941	.013
ATT > BD	.310	.494	.585	.307	.503	.584	.157	.166	.141	1.971	2.976	4.138	.049	.003	.000

#### 4.1.3 | Influence of terminal value on the brand desirability for Burberry

There are no significant relationships between terminal value and brand desirability for the Burberry Generic Shirts ( $t$ -value = .551;  $p$ -value = .582), the Burberry Leftover Shirts ( $t$ -value = 1.087;  $p$ -value = .277) and the Burberry Previous Collection Shirts ( $t$ -value = .875;  $p$ -value = .382). Therefore, in the context of the Burberry shirts,  $H_{3a}$  and  $H_{3b}$  are rejected.

#### 4.1.4 | Influence of instrumental value on the brand desirability for Burberry

There is an existence of positive and significant relationships between instrumental value and brand desirability for the Burberry Generic Shirts ( $t$ -value = 2.221;  $p$ -value = .027) and the Burberry Previous Collection Shirts ( $t$ -value = 2.497;  $p$ -value = .013). However, there is no significant relationship between instrumental value and brand desirability for the Burberry Leftover Fabric Shirts ( $t$ -value = .075;  $p$ -value = .941). Therefore, in the context of the Burberry shirts,  $H_{4a}$  is rejected, but  $H_{4b}$  is accepted.

#### 4.1.5 | Influence of brand attitude on the brand desirability for Burberry

There is existence of a positive and significant relationship between brand attitude and brand desirability for the Burberry Generic Shirts ( $t$ -value = 1.971;  $p$ -value = .049), Burberry Leftover Fabric Shirts ( $t$ -value = 2.976;  $p$ -value = .003) and the Burberry Previous Collection Shirts ( $t$ -value = 4.138;  $p$ -value = .000). However, the relationship is most significant for the Burberry Previous Collection Fabric Shirts, followed by the Burberry Leftover Fabric Shirts and Burberry Generic Shirts. Therefore, in the context of the Burberry shirts,  $H_{5a}$  and  $H_{5b}$  are accepted.

## 5 | DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The research study identified three important findings with theoretical and practical implications.

First, the findings depict that terminal value does not have a stronger influence on the attitude towards the Burberry previous collection shirts when compared to the Burberry generic shirt. These findings demonstrate a lack of empirical support for  $H_{1b}$  in the context of the Burberry shirts and are inconsistent with Han et al. (2017) and Wilson (2016).

However, terminal value has a stronger influence on the attitude towards the Burberry leftover fabric shirts when compared to generic Burberry shirts, thus providing empirical support for  $H_{1a}$ .

The study also found that terminal value does not have a stronger influence on brand desirability for the Burberry leftover fabric shirts

and the Burberry previous collection shirts when compared to Burberry generic shirts. These findings show a lack of empirical support for  $H_{3a}$  and  $H_{3b}$  and are inconsistent with Wei and Jung (2017) and Truong et al. (2008).

The absence of a stronger influence of terminal values on the attitude towards and brand desirability for the Burberry previous collection shirts, when compared to Burberry generic shirts, shows that consumers in this study do not have a positive attitude towards the Burberry shirts made from previous collections. This outcome suggests that respondents do not perceive Burberry's previous collection of shirts as providing superior aesthetic or self-expressive benefits compared to the generic Burberry shirts. Furthermore, the finding implies that participants perceive the generic Burberry shirts as aesthetically more attractive and manifest a stronger social and emotional benefit.

Second, there are no significant associations between terminal value and brand desirability for the Burberry Generic Shirts, Leftover Fabric Shirts and Previous Collection Shirts. This finding shows that the consumers in this research do not desire to associate with or own the generic and upcycled Burberry shirts, even though they have a positive attitude towards the Burberry Generic Shirts and the Burberry Leftover Fabric shirts. This observation could be linked to the possible existence of an attitude-behavior gap (Zollo et al., 2018), which depicts that a consumer could have a positive attitude towards a certain product brand but not necessary desire to possess that brand (Baek et al., 2015; Sudbury-Riley & Kohlbacher, 2016). This phenomenon can be attributed to various factors such as cost or inconvenience.

As such, the findings suggest that using terminal values as a form of communication may not be very effective in promoting upcycling fashion products either through leftover materials or from previous collections. Significantly, luxury brand desirability is not evoked, which defeats the prime purpose of this initiative.

Third, instrumental value does not have a stronger influence on the attitude towards the Burberry leftover fabric shirts when compared to Burberry generic shirts. This finding shows a lack of empirical support for  $H_{4a}$  in the context of the Burberry shirts and is inconsistent with Sung (2015), Sung et al. (2014), and Yu and Lee (2019). However, instrumental value has a stronger influence on brand desirability for the Burberry previous collection shirts when compared to Burberry generic shirts, thus providing empirical support for  $H_{4b}$ .

The absence of a stronger influence of instrumental values on the attitude and brand desirability for the upcycled Burberry shirts, when compared to generic Burberry shirts, shows that consumers in this study do not perceive the Burberry shirts made from upcycled leftover fabric materials and upcycled previous collections to provide superior instrumental values through economic benefits or safety. Respondents do not have a superior positive attitude and brand desirability for the upcycled Burberry shirts compared to the generic Burberry shirts. Adding to the preceding suggestions, marketers may consider communicating instrumental values in their upcycling initiatives to evoke luxury brand desirability, particularly for upcycling shirts from the previous collections.

Finally, the research findings depict that the influence of attitude on brand desirability is strongest for the Burberry leftover fabric shirts, followed by Burberry's previous collection shirts and Burberry generic shirts. These findings show strong empirical support for H<sub>5a</sub> and H<sub>5b</sub> in the context of the Burberry shirts and are consistent with Amatulli et al. (2018) and Kumar and Noble (2016).

## 6 | LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Although this research study provides a valuable contribution to the literature investigating perceptions of upcycled luxury fashion, limitations are evident that have implications for future research.

Future studies may replicate this study in countries where consumers are more sensitive to fashion trends. A cross-country study will be able to compare the effects of cultural differences on consumer perceptions of upcycled luxury fashion.

While this study collectively compared consumers' attitudes and brand desirability for upcycled luxury fashion (leftover fabric materials and previous collections) with generic luxury fashion, future research can provide a clear distinction to compare consumers' attitudes and brand desirability for leftover fabric materials and previous collection categories.

This research study was based on Burberry's single luxury brand due to its intense involvement in the sustainable luxury movement. While other luxury brands such as Chanel, Rolex, Louis Vuitton, and Stella McCartney (Pittany, 2020; Tuschman, 2020) are part of this sustainability movement, future research can adopt more than one luxury brand to generalize research findings.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Open access publishing facilitated by Curtin University, as part of the Wiley - Curtin University agreement via the Council of Australian University Librarians.

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**How to cite this article:** Phau, I., Akintimehin, O. O., & Lee, S. (2022). Investigating consumers' brand desirability for upcycled luxury brands. *Strategic Change*, 31(5), 523–531. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jsc.2523>