



**Investigating Consumers' Brand Desirability of "Upcycled"
Luxury:
The Many Faces of Designer Facemasks**

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3 **Investigating Consumers' Brand Desirability of "Upcycled" Luxury:**
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5 **The Many Faces of Designer Facemasks**
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10 **STRUCTURED ABSTRACT**
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13 **Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of terminal and instrumental values
14 on the attitude and brand desirability for upcycled luxury designer facemasks, in relation with
15 generic luxury designer facemasks.
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20 **Design/Methodology/Approach:** A quantitative approach was adopted in this study, data was
21 collected via an online consumer panel from 390 Australian luxury consumers, aged 18 and above.
22 Stimuli that represented the two upcycling conditions (remnants and past collections) and a control
23 condition (generic product) from an actual Burberry branded facemask was designed for the study.
24 The collected data were analysed using the least partial square and multi-group analysis (MGA)
25 of the structural equation model (SEM).
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34 **Findings:** The findings indicate that consumer do not perceive Burberry facemasks made from
35 upcycled remnant materials and previous collections have superior aesthetic or self-expressive
36 benefits to them when compared to the generic Burberry masks. In the same vein, both upcycled
37 categories do not provide superior instrumental values through economic benefits or safety when
38 compared to the generic Burberry masks. Hence, terminal, and instrumental values had no
39 influence on the attitude and brand desirability for upcycled luxury designer facemasks, in relation
40 with generic luxury designer facemasks.
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50 **Practical Implications:** Our results indicate that strategies will have to be better designed to have
51 a balance between safety features (as opposed to fashion) and luxury desirability of the brand to
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3 better capture the market for difference consumer values for the facemasks. As this is a relatively
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5 low involvement product, the pricing strategies must be re-evaluated.
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8 **Originality/Value:** This study offers empirical support for the proposition that different upcycling
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10 methods in the name of sustainable practices may have different functions for different consumer
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12 values in luxury marketing implementations. For the choice of facemasks during the COVID-19
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14 pandemic, it provides empirical evidence for consumer choice for the different types and how it
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16 can be used to elevate luxury brand desirability.
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19 **Key words:** terminal values, instrumental values, attitudes, brand desirability, upcycling
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BACKGROUND

Facemasks have become our new normal following the COVID-19 outbreak as most countries have made wearing a facemask in public spaces mandatory (Spellings, 2021). The fashion industry including luxury brand houses such as Dior and Chanel have made facemasks as a mainstream fashion accessory together with all the other fast fashion products (Carter, 2021). Undoubtedly, fashion has been proven by research findings to harm the environment (Moorhouse, 2020; Pencarelli et al., 2019). The fashion industry is reportedly the second-largest polluting industry (Chow and Li, 2018). A reported 85% of textile waste ends up in landfills (Ütebay, Çelik, and Çay, 2020), in addition to an estimated 92 million tonnes of textile disposed of per year annually (Niinimaki et al., 2020). Hence, as the COVID-19 pandemic still escalating, the production and usage of disposable face masks has also significantly increased and added to the million tons of plastic wastes to the environment (Selvaranjan et al., 2021).

However, luxury fashions brands have started considering the creation of a balance between preserving brand desirability and contributing to environmental sustainability (Parker, 2020). This consideration has led to the integration of the sustainability factor into their business models, through an emphasis on fashion upcycling (Radin, 2019; Pencarelli et al., 2019). Often regarded as one of the most sustainable circular solutions in the waste hierarchy (Cuc and Tripa, 2018), fashion upcycling aids the recovery of materials and components from waste streams, rather than using new resources for apparel production (Sung et al., 2017). For instance, sustainable menswear fashion brands like E.Tautz, Bethany Williams, Studio ALCH, Vinti Andrews, and Patrick McDowell participated in the 2020 edition of the London men's fashion week, with their upcycled collections (Shurvell, 2020).

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3 From the luxury fashion perspective, the production of upcycled luxury fashion by luxury fashion
4 brands has been made possible through the usage of remnant fabric materials and previous
5 collections. British designer, Adam Jones produces simple, non-seasonal, and ready-to-wear
6 unisex apparel by upcycling vintage tea towels and blankets. Vin + Omi is also known for using
7 waste materials to create new apparel. For their Autumn/Winter 2020 collection, they reshaped
8 large vinyl film posters into dresses and coats (Shurvell, 2020). Through the adoption of fashion
9 upcycling and creativity of upcycled fashion products, luxury fashion brands have been able to
10 enhance sustainability while still enhancing desirability through increased patronage from
11 upcycled luxury fashion consumers (Bhatt, Silverman, and Dickson, 2019; Radin, 2019).
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24 Findings from research done by McKinsey and Company across 90 luxury consumers in 25
26 countries, showed that sustainable luxury products accounted for an average of 23% purchase rate,
27 and it is further expected to rise to 40% within the next five years (Muret, 2019). Nevertheless,
28 there are certain challenges encountered by all fashion brand stakeholders, in scaling up upcycled
29 fashion (Sung et al., 2020). Therefore, education to change consumers' attitudes, financial
30 incentives for fashion upcycling, skills development to improve the quality of upcycled fashion
31 products, and policies to encourage consumers to purchase upcycled fashion products are required
32 to scale up fashion upcycling (Sung et al. 2020).
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44 Despite the existing strategies that have already been implemented, there is an apparent dearth of
45 research on sustainable luxury fashion products and an even greater lack of studies on upcycling
46 in luxury, particularly in this COVID-19 era. The bulk of studies on upcycling have focused mainly
47 on the upcycling of household waste products (Bridgens et al., 2018; Cuc and Tripa, 2018). In the
48 fashion industry, research on upcycled products have primarily been conducted on comparing
49 attitudes towards recycled and upcycled fashion products (e.g., Adiguzel and Donato, 2021; Park
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3 and Lin 2020; Park and Lin, 2018) and their perceived terminal and instrumental values (e.g., Yu
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5 and Lee 2019; Le and Kieu, 2019).

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9 Hence, there is a need for an empirical focus on the brand desirability for the various dimensions
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11 of upcycled luxury fashion products, specifically designer facemasks (Kamble & Behera, 2022).
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13 From a consumer culture and cultural marketing perspective (Visconti, Penaloza & Toulouse,
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15 2020), facemasks represent the significance of the pandemic reality (Silchenko & Visconti, 2021).
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17 Their roles have evolved from merely functional to symbolic. They not only serve the function of
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19 protection from the COVID-19 spread, but also represent a means for individual identity
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21 expression and lifestyle choice (Wang, Feng & Ho, 2021).
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26 Even despite the positive public health impact of facemask production and usage, the adverse
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28 sustainability impact of their production is quite evident. For instance, disposable masks, made
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30 from plastics that take hundreds of years to decompose (Levy, 2022). Also, fabric-made
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32 facemasks, though reusable, can hardly be removed from the ecologically detrimental impact of
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34 the fast-fashion global apparel production supply chain (Levy, 2022). Therefore, luxury consumers
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36 are beginning to assess the sustainability of their facemask brands, just like they did and still do
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38 with clothing brands.
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43 Against this backdrop, the relevance of this research is validated. Therefore, this study would
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45 investigate the influence of terminal and instrumental values on consumers' attitudes towards
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47 upcycled luxury designer facemasks and the flow-over effect on brand desirability. Upcycled
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49 luxury designer facemasks will be evaluated from two categories, namely those made from
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51 materials from remnants and materials from previous collections.
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RELEVANT LITERATURE

Upcycled Luxury Designer Facemasks

As serious waste disposal complications threaten mankind, there is a growing wave of social awareness on the need for resource conservation as well as the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and landfills, caused by the ever-increasing use and disposal of facemasks more so with the COVID 19 situation (Selvaranjan et al., 2021). Efforts to eliminate waste have driven a small but growing number of establishments into planning for a product's potential recycling or reuse at the end of its shelf life even before it is made, through the process called "*designing out waste*" (Yu & Lee, 2019; Osmani, Glass and Price, 2008). Wasting less is expected to give a brand a positive corporate image as an ethical company, and to improve their profits. This need has established the prevalent trend of upcycling, which is considered a greener version of recycling (Wang, 2019).

Upcycling is the process of utilizing used or waste materials, components, and products to create a new product of higher quality than the compositional elements (Sung et al. 2017). Upcycling is generally regarded as an umbrella concept encompassing artistic forms of overhaul, reprocess, renovation, upgrade, remanufacture, and recycling (Sung, Cooper & Kettley, 2018). Through upcycling, material efficiency is enhanced, while solid waste and industrial energy consumption are also reduced (Sung et al., 2017; Zhuo and Levendis, 2014). The upcycled market is reported to be worth 150 million dollars (Yu and Lee, 2019) and has the potential to be financially sustainable (Han et al. 2017) through the creation of job opportunities, especially for disadvantaged people. Upcycling requires minimal skills such as the simple revamp of clothing items (Cumming,

2016), rather than high-level skills, such as the utilization of modern technology for advanced production (Sung et al. 2020).

Upcycling has recently become a common trend in the fashion industry. Top fashion brands are jumping on the sustainability trend through the creation of different ways to upcycle old goods into luxury designer facemasks (Petro, 2019). For instance, Burberry have since launched their upcycled designer N95 facemasks, made from repurposed waste and deadstock materials (Marriott, 2020), with other brands luxury brands like Chanel, Gucci and Louis Vuitton set to follow suit.

The scope of products created through upcycling have 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 (Yu & Lee, 2019; Sung, 2017). In the context of this research, upcycling of luxury designer facemasks is implemented using remnant fabric materials (Triple Pundit 2014) and previous collection products (Han et al. 2017).

Remnants of fabric materials are unwanted raw materials that are recycled after the manufacturing process and are also considered to be safe waste (Mistry, 2020). They may be in the form of examples of fabric and clothing, excess inventory, or materials that are recycled until the buyer fits them for use, so they have been cut off as unused bits of fabric. On average, 15% of apparel products are estimated to be dumped by producers and designers in the fashion world on the way to completion (Eco Fashion Talk, 2014). This debris may be discarded or unwanted fibres, unfarmed yarn, textile overlays, broken finished clothing, or waste materials arising from weaving

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3 and weaving errors. The remaining cloth materials are recycled by combining two or more
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5 discarded items, or by patching various textiles or scrap fabrics into an upcycled facemask. For
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7 instance, a Miami-based non-profit organization transformed 7,000 incorrectly printed heavy
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9 cotton T-shirts into over 1,200 upcycled facemasks (Lockwood, 2020).
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14 Previous collections on the other hand could be regarded as vintage clothing, which is in direct
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16 disparity to the whole idea of “fast fashion”. The dynamic nature of the fashion sector has enabled
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18 the creation of clothing apparel that quickly goes out of trend and when consumer appetite for
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20 newness is brought into consideration, these outdated clothing apparels are quickly discarded by
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22 consumers. Before now, vintage apparel used to be purchased at an exclusive auction, now many
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24 clothing retailers trade in vintage apparel (Moorhouse, 2020). Celebrities, fashion influencers, and
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26 designers have all subscribed to the vintage trend, thereby making it a very desirable used and pre-
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28 loved merchandise (Ryding, Henninger & Cano, 2018). The effect of this is that luxury fashion
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30 consumers perceive vintage clothing to be timeless and more desirable than generic luxury fashion
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32 products due to its exceptionality, as against standardization of the mass-market produce
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34 (Moorhouse, 2020).
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42 Previous collections are upcycled through reconstruction, which is described as the process of
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44 making upcycled facemasks from previously worn apparel (Redress, 2013). For instance, Etsy
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46 brand focus on the production of upcycled retro style facemasks, by using 100% cotton exclusive
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48 fabrics from earlier centuries (Etsy, 2020). Carly Scheck also used vintage quilts sourced from
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50 house clearances to eBay, to make upcycled facemasks (Cochrane, 2020).
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Attitude towards Upcycled Luxury Designer Facemasks

Attitudes refer to subjective evaluations of both tangible objects (e.g., household goods and fashion products) and intangible concepts (e.g., political beliefs or behaviours) (Bohner & Dickel 2011). Accordingly, consumers' evaluation of fashion products results in the formation of enduring attitudes towards these products, which often extend to their attitudes toward the brand itself (Han, Yu & Kim, 2019). The extant literature supports those consumers generally have positive attitudes towards sustainable fashion products (Kong & Ko 2017), such as upcycled facemasks.

Studies have generally found that consumers perceive upcycled facemasks in high esteem (e.g., Park & Lin, 2020). Even in the luxury fashion industry which is often characterized as more hedonically driven (Fashan, Chailan & Huaman-Ramirez, 2020), studies have reported that consumers demonstrated more positive attitudes towards sustainable facemasks (Kong & Ko, 2017). Studies have shown that sustainability and the ethical issues it encompasses have increased in importance amongst luxury consumers today (Moorhouse, 2020). This personal agenda to consume sustainable goods has resulted in increased attitudes towards these products, greater intention to purchase, and higher willingness to pay (Amatulli et al. 2018; Lundblad & Davies, 2016). To justify this fact, Etsy reported sold USD\$12 million worth of upcycled fabric facemasks in the year 2020 (Foussianes, 2021).

Yet at the very core of luxury consumption, messages of status, power, and authority still dominate the desire for luxury fashion products (Yim et al. 2014). Conspicuousness, stronger self-expression, and more hedonism have been reported to be strong drivers of positive attitudes towards the upcycled facemasks in this pandemic era (Wang, Feng & Ho, 2021). For instance,

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3 given the feel-good effect that consuming upcycled luxury facemasks and the inherent social
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5 benefits of consuming luxury products, it is reasonable to argue that there are potentially less than
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7 altruistic reasons that seemingly drive positive attitudes.
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12 In the luxury context, it is increasingly becoming a debate on whether sustainable consumption of
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14 sustainable luxury products is driven by principles or the need for status (Davies & Gutsche, 2016).
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16 However, it is also plausible that the ‘patrician’ and the ‘poseur’ may exist in all of us, albeit in
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18 varying degrees, and dependent on the context. To do so, it is crucial, to understand how consumer
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20 values can drive the consumption of upcycled luxury designer facemasks.
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28 **Terminal Values**

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30 Terminal values drive an individual to seek social or individualistic benefits (Krystallis et al.,
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32 2008). In a consumption context, terminal values motivate individuals to consume products that
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34 offer them symbolic and expressive benefits, undermining functional or performance benefits
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36 (Allen et al., 2002). Research has further stated that terminal values are all categorized under
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38 social, emotional, aesthetic, and self-expressive values (Yu & Lee, 2019; Kautish & Sharma, 2018;
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40 Kahle, 1996), which are often cited as key drivers of luxury products (Kim et al. 2019). In the
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42 context of upcycled luxury fashion, it can be argued that upcycled luxury facemasks would offer
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44 superior aesthetic, self-expressiveness, and social benefits compared to generic luxury facemasks
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46 or the more commonly worn surgical facemasks.
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54 The careful imagination and transformation of materials into novel upcycled facemasks renders
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56 them more appealing (Foussianes, 2021). The reincarnation of recycled or waste items into high-
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3 value-added facemasks offers the satisfaction of personifying the 'woke' consumer. Moreover,
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5 fashion upcycling requires craftsmanship and innovation as materials that are used for upcycling
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7 have different sizes, colours, and patterns (Paras & Curteza 2018), creating novel and unique
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9 products. Further, the uniqueness of combining materials from previous collections is akin to
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11 cobranding with synergies created from the positive equity from the various collections that make
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13 up the hybrid upcycled facemask. The upcycled luxury facemasks therefore allows for self-
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15 expression and social value through its product design, which enhances its attractiveness to the
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17 consumer (Foussianes, 2021; Han et al. 2017; Wilson, 2016). Accordingly, it can be argued that
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19 consumers perceive more terminal values from upcycled luxury designer facemasks compared to
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21 generic luxury designer facemasks. Therefore, the following hypotheses are presented.
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29 H_{1a}: Terminal value has a stronger influence on the attitude towards upcycled luxury designer
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31 facemasks (remnant materials) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.
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34 H_{1b}: Terminal value has a stronger influence on the attitude towards upcycled luxury designer
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36 facemasks (previous collections) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.
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39 H_{3a}: Terminal value has a stronger influence on the brand desirability for upcycled luxury designer
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41 facemasks (remnant materials) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.
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44 H_{3b}: Terminal value has a stronger influence on the brand desirability for upcycled luxury designer
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46 facemasks (previous collections) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.
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Instrumental Values

In contrast, instrumental value is goal-driven, and primarily motivated by the desire to make an effective judgment (Kautish & Sharma, 2018). Instrumental value is symbolized by a product's intrinsic qualities, means to an end, or performance. As a result, an instrumental-value-oriented consumer values a product's utilitarian benefits compared to hedonic (Allen et al., 2002). These individuals have strong principles that drive their consumption and are often characterized as independent, ambitious, honest, responsible, and motivated to achieve desirable end-states of existence (Eibel-Spanyi & Hofmeister-Toth, 2013). Instrumental values have also been associated with functional, economic, and green values (Yu & Lee, 2019; Allen et al., 2002; Kahle, 1996).

The key benefit of upcycling is the reduction of material and energy consumption through sustainable production and consumption (Sung, 2015) and the environmental and moral statements they make (Wilson, 2016). Due to the negative impact of the environmental pollution caused by the mass and continuous production of disposable facemasks, sustainable solutions have become imperative to reduce these environmental impacts, while meeting the facemask production demand. Hence, the importance of creating upcycled reusable luxury facemasks from previous collection and remnant materials is important.

Hence, environmental-conscious, and sustainability-oriented consumers tap into this benefit by using upcycled luxury facemasks. These upcycled luxury facemasks also meets the utilitarian needs of luxury consumers by ensuring superior efficiency, durability, safety, and protection from exposure to the COVID virus, when compared to the disposable facemask which compounds environmental pollution (Selvaranjan et al., 2021) or generic facemasks that are made from, or contribute to fast fashion (Levy, 2022).

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3 In comparison with generic luxury facemasks, the upcycled luxury facemasks are perceived as
4 more cost-effective as they go through several manufacturing cycles (Bridgens et al., 2018;
5 Wilson, 2016; Zink et al. 2014), and are made with quality materials, which would have otherwise
6 been discarded into landfills. Accordingly, it can be argued that consumers would perceive more
7 instrumental value from upcycled luxury designer facemasks compared to generic luxury designer
8 facemasks.
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18 Therefore, the following hypotheses are presented.

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20 H_{2a}: Instrumental value has a stronger influence on the attitude towards upcycled luxury designer
21 facemasks (remnant materials) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.
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25 H_{2b}: Instrumental value has a stronger influence on the attitude towards upcycled luxury designer
26 facemasks (previous collections) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.
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30 H_{4a}: Instrumental value has a stronger influence on the brand desirability for upcycled luxury
31 designer facemasks (remnant materials) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.
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35 H_{4b}: Instrumental value has a stronger influence on the brand desirability for upcycled luxury
36 designer facemasks (previous collections) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.
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43 **Brand Desirability**

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45 Luxury brand desirability further refers to the personal motives surrounding luxury consumption
46 which goes far beyond perceived rarity and exclusivity (Pham, Valette-Florence & Vigneron,
47 2018; Phau and Prendergast, 2000; Wang, Sung and Phau, 2021). It is further defined as the degree
48 to which a brand possesses good qualities, worth owning (Pham, Valette-Florence & Vigneron,
49 2018). Brand desirability is majorly developed in the presence of a good value fit. This implies
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3 that when the values of consumers are closely matched with those of the brand, the consumers
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5 would desire to associate with or own such brands.
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10 In the context of luxury fashion, consumers have strong desirability for luxury brands that
11 practiced sustainability, especially in this pandemic era. This is due to the unprecedented
12 challenges initially caused by COVID-19, thereby resulting to declining consumer spending
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14 (Ricchetti & De Palma, 2020). The incorporation of sustainability into the business practices of
15 luxury brands has been predicted to drive sustainable advantage for them (Danziger, 2020). For
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17 instance, British luxury fashion brand, Burberry have continued to provide various forms of aid to
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19 fight against the coronavirus through their donations to vaccine research and food bank charities,
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21 repurposing one of its factory to manufacture non-surgical gowns for medical and care workers,
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23 and most notably, creating its own version of reusable upcycled fashion masks, and donating a
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25 portion of each mask sales to communities that have been most hit by the pandemic (Haugnaess,
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27 2020). Hence, after an initial drop in sales in the final quarter of 2020, they have achieved recent
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29 recovery and enjoyed increase demand from younger luxury consumers (Bourke, 2020).
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40 Generally, upcycled luxury designer facemasks are more desirable as they can be seen as more
41 unique compared to mass-produced generic designer facemasks. This is because designers source
42 materials from remnant fabric materials and previous collections before they implement market
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44 research and design products to produce upcycled fashion products (Han et al. 2017).
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49 Hence, it can be argued that consumers have more brand desirability for upcycled luxury designer
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51 facemasks compared to the generic luxury designer facemasks.
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54 Therefore, the following hypotheses are presented.
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H_{5a}: Attitude toward upcycled luxury designer facemasks (remnant materials) has a stronger influence on the brand desirability for upcycled luxury designer facemasks (remnant materials) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.

H_{5b}: Attitude toward upcycled luxury designer facemasks (previous collections) have a stronger influence on the brand desirability for upcycled luxury designer facemasks (previous collections) compared to generic luxury designer facemasks.

All stated hypotheses are depicted in figure 1 below.

<Insert Figure 1>

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

Data collection was collected using an online panel with participants completing a self-administered questionnaire. The online panel was deemed appropriate as it allowed the researchers to ensure the screening criteria and obtain higher and faster response rates (QuestionPro 2020). Western Australians nationals aged 18 and above, who are existing luxury consumers were engaged in the survey process. The Western Australian region had one of the strictest COVID-19 restriction measures. Most notably, the very stringent rule which indigenes to wear facemasks always has become a new normal (Chang, Contreras & Handel, 2022). Relatively, Australia is home to several independent luxury designers who place utmost importance on sustainability and ethics (De Klert, 2021), and due to the need for effortless elegance that characterizes most of their citizens/indigenes, their selection as a study population is justified.

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3 Three separate questionnaires were prepared with different stimuli that represented the two
4 upcycling facemasks conditions (remnant and past collections) and a control condition (generic
5 facemask). Respondents were first provided with a clear definition of upcycling and the relevant
6 form of upcycling (remnant vs past collection vs no description) before commencing the survey.
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8 Data was collected over a 7-day consecutive period. 498 responses were received and during the
9 data screening process, 390 responses were retained to be analysed for this study.
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21 **Survey Instrument**

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23 This survey instrument consisted of four key variables: terminal value, instrumental value,
24 attitudes, and brand desirability. These sections comprised established scales that were chosen due
25 to their known reliability and relevance to this study. Terminal value and instrumental value
26 comprised five items each adapted from Kautish & Sharma (2018); Munson and McQuarrie (1988)
27 and Beatty et al. (1985). Attitudes comprised three items adapted from Martin and Stewart (2001).
28 Brand desirability comprised a single item and was measured with the question “*having seen the*
29 *product, how desirable are (brand’s) products to you?*” on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from
30 non-desirable to desirable.
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44 Stimuli of the three conditions that are upcycled luxury designer facemasks (previous collections
45 and remnant materials) and generic luxury designer facemasks were prepared using the low-
46 involvement product, in form of facemasks. Burberry was selected as a stimulus brand in this study
47 due to its existing involvement in the sustainable luxury movement (Knight, 2020). They have also
48 become the first and only luxury brand so far to launch their authentic £90 upcycled luxury
49 designer facemasks (Marriott, 2020), which is quite cheap and affordable.
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3 Respondents with previous experience purchasing these facemasks were also screened out to
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5 ensure an unbiased perception of first-time consumers. Before administration of the survey, a pre-
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7 test was conducted to confirm that the facemasks are considered low involvement products.
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14 RESULTS AND ANALYSES

16 Using SmartPLS 3, 390 (three hundred and ninety) data replies were analysed. The distribution of
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18 the survey of research respondents is shown in Table 1 below. Majority of the respondents were
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20 female (57.4%), were over 60 years of age (41.3%), diploma holders (30.3%) with an income of
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22 between \$15,000 and \$49,999. (38.2%).
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26 <Insert Table 1>
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29 Convergent validity was obtained for the four variables namely attitude ($\alpha=0.970$), terminal value
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31 ($\alpha=0.970$), and instrumental value ($\alpha=0.936$), and brand desirability, as the values of their
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33 composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and Cronbach alpha coefficient all
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35 surpassed 0.70. This is presented in Table 2. Their discriminant validity values also surpassed 0.75,
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37 demonstrating discriminant validity (Table 3).
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43 <Insert Table 3>
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45 Data analysis was initially carried out using the least partial square of the structural equation model
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47 (PLS-SEM). This was used mostly to measure the importance thresholds for all Burberry brands
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49 individually. In addition to that, the multi-group analyses (PLS-MGA) were used to assess for their
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51 market appeal the major variations between the attitudes of buyers and the brand desirability of
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53 generic luxury designer facemasks and upcycled luxury designer facemasks.
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Test of Hypotheses

Influence of terminal value on the brand attitude towards Burberry Designer Facemasks

As shown in Table 4, there is existence of positive and significant relationships between terminal value and brand attitude towards the Burberry Generic Masks (t-value= 4.206; p-value= 0.000) and the Burberry Previous Collection Masks (t-value= 3.653; p-value= 0.000). However, the relationship is no significant relationship between terminal value and brand attitude towards the Burberry Remnant Masks (t-value= 1.396; p-value= 0.163). Therefore, in this context, H_{1a} and H_{1b} are rejected.

Influence of terminal value on the brand desirability for Burberry Designer Facemasks

As shown in Table 4, there are no relationships between terminal value and brand desirability for the Burberry Generic Masks (t-value= 0.285; p-value= 0.776), the Burberry Remnant Masks (t-value= 1.586; p-value= 0.113) and the Burberry Previous Collection Masks (t-value= 1.022; p-value= 0.307). Therefore, in the context of the Burberry masks, H_{3a} and H_{3b} are rejected.

Influence of instrumental value on the brand attitude towards Burberry Designer Facemasks

As shown in Table 4, there is an existence of a positive and significant relationship between instrumental value and brand attitude towards the Burberry Remnant Masks (t-value= 2.283; p-value= 0.023). However, there are no significant relationships between instrumental value and brand attitude towards the Burberry Generic Masks (t-value= 1.602; p-value= 0.110) and the Burberry Previous Collection Masks (t-value= 0.968; p-value= 0.334). Therefore, in this context, H_{2a} is accepted, but H_{2b} is rejected.

Influence of instrumental value on the brand desirability for Burberry Designer Facemasks

As shown in Table 4, there are no significant relationships between instrumental value and brand desirability for the Burberry Generic Masks (t-value= 0.422; p-value= 0.673), the Burberry Remnant Masks (t-value= 0.040; p-value= 0.968) and the Burberry Previous Collection Masks (t-value= 0.743; p-value= 0.458). Therefore, H_{4a} and H_{4b} are rejected.

Influence of brand attitude on the brand desirability for Burberry Designer Facemasks

As shown in Table 4, there is existence of a positive and significant relationship between brand attitude and brand desirability for the Burberry Generic Masks (t-value= 7.438; p-value= 0.000) and the Burberry Remnant Masks (t-value= 3.392; p-value= 0.001). However, there is no significant relationship between brand attitude and brand desirability for and the Burberry Previous Collection Masks (t-value= 1.181; p-value= 0.283). Therefore, H_{5a} and H_{5b} are rejected.

<Insert Table 4>

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Results show that terminal value does not have a stronger influence on the attitude and brand desirability for the upcycled Burberry facemasks made from remnant materials and previous collection materials, when compared to the generic Burberry facemasks. These findings are therefore inconsistent with that of Han et al. (2017) and Wilson (2016), which suggested that the upcycled luxury facemasks made from remnant materials and previous collection offered superior terminal value than the generic luxury facemasks in form of self-expression and social value through its product design, which enhances its attractiveness to the consumer. The validity of this finding is based on the idea that the Burberry facemask is by far first a safety low-involvement product before it is a fashionable product. Hence, consumers might not be so particular about the

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3 aesthetic significance of the upcycled facemask when compared to the generic facemask (Sung et
4 al. 2020). Also, because the upcycled and generic facemasks look very much alike with little
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6 differentiating them outwardly, consumers might not be able to attribute a superior aesthetic value
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8 over one against the other.
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14 Secondly, research findings reported that instrumental value does not have a stronger influence on
15 the attitude and brand desirability for the upcycled Burberry facemasks made from previous
16 collection materials, when compared to generic luxury facemasks. Also, instrumental value does
17 not have a stronger influence on the brand desirability for the upcycled Burberry facemasks made
18 from remnant materials, when compared to generic luxury facemasks. However, instrumental
19 value has a stronger influence on the attitude towards the upcycled Burberry facemasks made from
20 remnant materials, when compared to generic luxury facemasks.
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34 These findings are therefore inconsistent with those of Yu and Lee (2019); Bridgens et al. (2018);
35 and Wilson (2016), which suggested that the upcycled luxury facemasks made from remnant
36 materials and previous collection offered superior instrumental value than the generic luxury
37 facemasks in form of superior efficiency, durability, safety, and protection from exposure to the
38 COVID virus. Consumers might perceive the upcycled luxury facemasks to be of inferior quality
39 when compared with the generic luxury facemasks. They believe that a luxury facemask made
40 from previous collection/vintage or remnant materials are of lower quality than the generic luxury
41 facemask made from new textile material (Sung et al. 2020). Also, these consumers are most likely
42 unaware of the negative environmental impact of the current mass production of generic and
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3 surgical facemasks which contribute significantly to fast fashion and environmental pollution
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5 (Levy, 2022; Selvaranjan et al., 2021).
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10 Lastly, findings reported that attitude do not have a stronger influence on brand desirability for the
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12 upcycled Burberry facemasks made from remnant and previous collection materials, when
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14 compared to the generic luxury facemasks. These findings are further inconsistent with that of
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16 Park & Lin (2020); Amatulli et al. (2018); Kong & Ko (2017), and Lundblad & Davies (2016),
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18 whose research suggests that consumers generally demonstrated more positive attitudes and brand
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20 desirability for upcycled luxury facemasks, when compared to the generic luxury facemasks.
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26 **CONTRIBUTIONS**

27 **Conceptual**

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30 Despite the existing strategies that have already been implemented, there had been an apparent
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32 dearth of research on sustainable luxury fashion products and an even greater lack of studies on
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34 upcycling in luxury, particularly in this COVID-19 era. The bulk of studies on upcycling had
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36 focused mainly on the upcycling of household waste products (Bridgens et al., 2018; Cuc and
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38 Tripa, 2018). In the fashion industry, research on upcycled products had primarily been conducted
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40 on comparing attitudes towards recycled and upcycled fashion products (e.g., Adiguzel and
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42 Donato, 2021; Park and Lin 2020; Park and Lin, 2018) and their perceived terminal and
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44 instrumental values (e.g., Yu and Lee 2019; Le and Kieu, 2019). This research therefore
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46 contributed to existing knowledge by empirically focusing on the brand desirability for the various
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48 dimensions of upcycled luxury fashion products, specifically designer facemasks (Kamble &
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50 Behera, 2022).
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Managerial

This research has investigated the influence of terminal and instrumental values on the attitude and brand desirability for upcycled luxury facemasks made from remnant and previous collection materials, in comparison with generic luxury facemasks. The findings revealed the non-existence of significant influences of the consumers' terminal and instrumental values on the attitude and brand desirability for the upcycled luxury facemasks, when compared with the generic luxury facemasks. They therefore have certain inferences for corporate policy formulations and implementations.

It is important to note that the success factors that enables and encourages consumers to find the upcycled luxury facemasks more desirable than the generic luxury facemasks depend largely on their awareness and understanding of these products. Hence, their lack of perceived superior terminal and instrumental value for the upcycled facemasks is most likely attributed to unawareness of the aesthetic and environmental benefits of using these facemasks.

For instance, due to the identical similarity between the appearance of an upcycled luxury facemask and a generic luxury facemask, retailers must educate their terminal value conscious-consumers on the significant aesthetic differences between the three facemask categories (previous collection, remnant materials and generic) with emphasis on core narratives (Sung et al. 2020), such as the production process, historic relevance of previous collection and remnant materials used, and the rarity of these materials. Most importantly, consumers must be made aware of the fact that the upcycled luxury facemasks are not in any way inferior to the generic facemasks but are rather a unique kind of luxury.

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3 For instrumental value conscious-consumers, they must also be educated on the certain key
4 sustainability benefits of purchasing the upcycled luxury facemasks over the generic luxury
5 facemasks. For instance, Burberry have pledged 20% of each upcycled luxury facemask sale to
6 the Burberry Foundation COVID-19 Community Fund, to provide essential support for local
7 communities around the world, negatively impacted by the pandemic (Grazia, 2021). If retailers,
8 emphasize the long-term effects of their purchase of these facemasks, the consumers would have
9 the mindset that they are not only eliminating environmental waste, but they are also indirectly
10 improving the livelihoods of those affected by the pandemic globally.
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24 **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

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26 While this study has added to the literature on upcycled luxury fashion with insightful results, it
27 has shortcomings that future research will need to overcome. Hence, based on the findings of this
28 study, the following recommendations for future studies are made.
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37 This research targeted Australian consumers for justifiable reasons as stated in the methodology
38 section, with findings showing that these consumers do not perceive superior terminal and
39 instrumental values from their usage of upcycled luxury facemasks, and hence, do not find them
40 more desirable, when compared with the generic luxury facemasks. Future research could focus
41 on consumers of other nationals or perform a cross-national study, to compare customer
42 expectations of upcycled luxury apparel based on consumer values, as well as brand attitude and
43 brand desirability. Countries like the United States, Mainland China, and Japan, with the most
44 personal luxury goods spending (Statista, 2020), would serve as appropriate study populations.
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3 Owing to its extensive presence in the sustainable luxury trend in this pandemic era, and the fact
4 that they have also become the first and only luxury brand to have launched their authentic
5 upcycled luxury designer facemasks, this research has focused on Burberry. Although other luxury
6 brands are expected to be part of this sustainability trend, future research should therefore compare
7 born and bred sustainable luxury brands such as Stella McCartney and traditional luxury such as
8 Gucci, which caught up with the sustainability trend only in the last 15 years.
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19 Lastly, the stimulus luxury facemask adopted in this research is a relatively low involvement
20 product. Hence there was no significant influence of the consumers' terminal and instrumental
21 values on the attitude and brand desirability for the upcycled luxury facemasks, when compared
22 with the generic luxury facemasks. However, this might not be the case for high-involvement
23 luxury fashion products like clothes, shoes, bags, etc. Future studies should therefore consider this.
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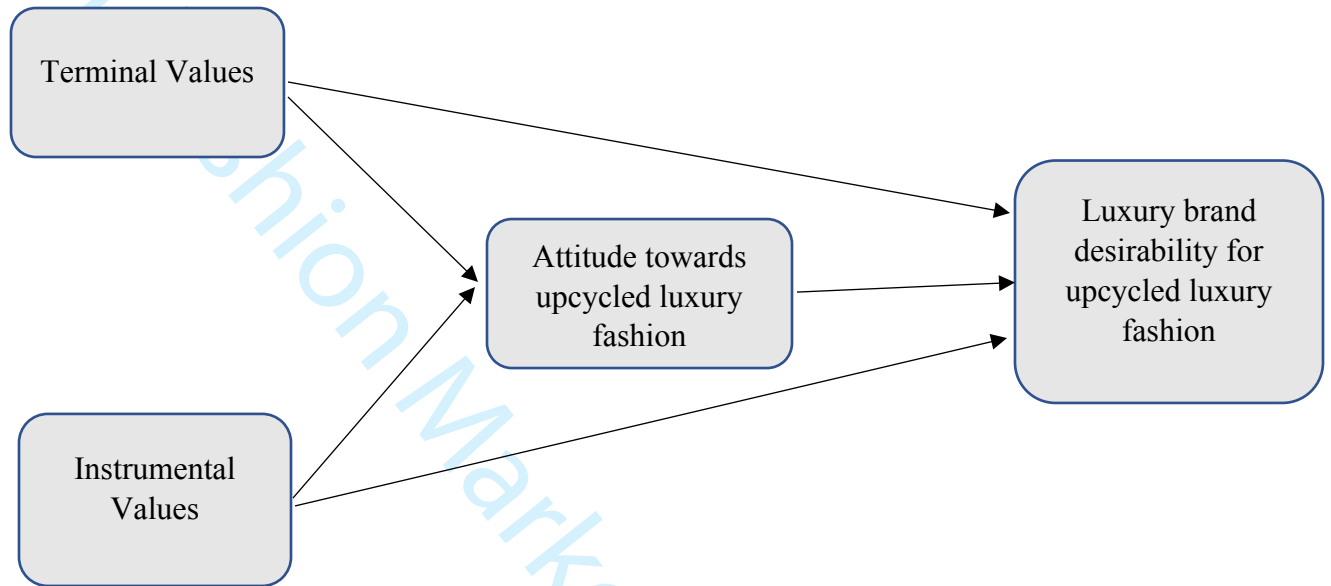
Figure 1: Research Model1
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Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	166	42.6
Female	224	57.4
Total	390	100
Age		
18-31years	57	14.6
32-45years	83	21.3
46-59years	89	22.9
Over 60years	161	41.3
Total	390	100
Marital Status		
Single	131	33.6
In a relationship	39	10
Married	203	52.1
Others	17	4.4
Total	390	100
Educational Qualification		
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
Annual Income (\$AUD)		
Under \$50,000	177	45.4
\$50,000 - \$99,999	139	35.6
Above \$100,000	74	19
Total	390	100

Table 2 Measurement Reliability Model

Constructs		Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
ATTITUDE	Indicate your attitude towards this product from unfavourable to favourable	0.968	0.970	0.980	0.943
	Indicate your attitude towards this product from unlikeable to likeable	0.974			
	Indicate your attitude towards this product from unpleasing to pleasing	0.972			
TERMINAL VALUE	Buying this product makes me feel good for my life	0.926	0.970	0.977	0.894
	Buying this product is easy, comfortable and suits to my style	0.942			
	For me, this product is always pleasant and satisfactory	0.955			
	Buying this product makes me happy for myself	0.965			
	Though the price of this product is higher still I like to have it for myself	0.938			
INSTRUMENTAL VALUE	For me, this product is always a pragmatic option to purchase	0.852	0.936	0.951	0.797
	For me, this product is always logical and reasonable	0.928			
	For me, this product is not a waste of money	0.873			
	For me, this product is convenient to fit and good in appearance	0.924			
	For me, this product quality is always very good to wear and style	0.883			
BRAND DESIRABILITY	Having seen the products, how desirable are Burberry's products to you?	-	-	-	-

Table 3 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Values

	ATTITUDE	BRAND DESIRABILITY	TERMINAL VALUE	INSTRUMENTAL VALUE
ATTITUDE	0.971			
BRAND DESIRABILITY	0.797	1.000		
TERMINAL VALUE	0.818	0.766	0.893	
INSTRUMENTAL VALUE	0.850	0.775	0.916	0.945

Table 4 Comparison of Burberry Masks

Burberry Generic Mask (BGM) vs Burberry Remnant Mask (BREM) VS Burberry Previous Collection Mask (BPCM)

	Path Coeff. BGM	Path Coeff. BLOM	Path Coeff. BPCM	Mean BGM	Mean BREM	Mean BPCM	SD BGM	SD BREM	SD BPCM	t-Value BGM	t-Value BREM	t-Value BPCM	p-Value BGM	p-Value BREM	p-Value BPCM
ATT > ATT	0.639	0.338	0.675	0.615	0.339	0.666	0.152	0.242	0.185	4.206	1.396	3.653	0.000***	0.163	0.000***
ATT > ATT	0.244	0.550	0.192	0.271	0.550	0.201	0.152	0.241	0.198	1.602	2.283	0.968	0.110	0.023**	0.334
ATT > BD	0.063	0.373	0.374	0.085	0.395	0.398	0.221	0.236	0.366	0.285	1.586	1.022	0.776	0.113	0.307
ATT > BD	0.098	-0.008	0.288	0.079	-0.005	0.247	0.232	0.211	0.388	0.422	0.040	0.743	0.673	0.968	0.458
ATT > BD	0.759	0.502	0.178	0.755	0.475	0.201	0.102	0.148	0.151	7.438	3.392	1.181	0.000***	0.001**	0.238

***: $p < 0.001$; **: $p < 0.01$; *: $p < 0.05$