"Give Sustainability a chance": A digital ethnography of fashion YouTubers

Student Name: Cheyu Hsu

Student Number: 526557

Supervisor: Dr. Christian Simon Ritter

Media & Creative Industry

Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Master's Thesis, 24 June 2021

Word counts: 18,991

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research project is twofold. Firstly, this research aims to gain a better understanding of the interactions within a slow fashion community on YouTube and the ways fashion content creators engage with their audiences to expand the scale of their channels. Secondly, their approach to promote sustainable fashion brands through eWOM videos is studied to capture collaborations between influencers and fashion brands through marketing endorsement. To achieve the objective, a mix-method approach, including digital ethnography and computational network analysis, was applied. Based on 30 days of digital ethnography, the online interactions between the slow fashion content creators and their audiences were studied. On the other hand, quantitative results were gained through the data retrieval based on the queries of 'declutter wardrobe', 'ethical fashion', and for three interviewed YouTube accounts to comprehend the overall interaction and popularity of the slow fashion communities active on YouTube. Based on the results, slow fashion YouTubers are found to engage actively both with the audience and other YouTubers through post-video discussions. Moreover, they tend to create genuine and honest contents while managing social media channels to increase the number of subscribers. Networking with YouTubers dedicating to similar values is also essential to make cross-channel promotions possible and grow their followings. Furthermore, the identities of slow fashion YouTubers range widely from casual content creator to independent solo entrepreneur and entrepreneurs depending on multiple other businesses. Simultaneously, they engage in social activism against injustice and raise awareness for mental health to develop the persona in the online sphere. To promote sustainable fashion products, a series of research and selection are done priorly to generate sponsored eWOM aligning ethical and sustainable values. Such findings provide an academic understanding of the sustainable fashion community on social media. Through the parasocial interaction with the virtual community and the genuine content depictions, fashion influencers are able to promote slow fashion in the online sphere to gain the awareness of sustainable alternative of fashion. It also offers insight into marketing strategies for fashion industries to promote sustainable products. Future research into fashion influencers can focus more intensively on the perspectives of their audiences.

Keywords: sustainability, fashion influencer, YouTube, marketing endorsement, vlog

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

1. Introduction

Following the development of Web 2.0 technologies and the platformization of Internet communication, the audience is no longer a passive receiver but is empowered to be a content generator, commenter, and engager through online sites (Helmond 2015; O'Reilly, 2005). Under such transition, the arrival of social media has led to the rise of influencers owning a great number of followers and having a significant influence on specific groups of people (Tait, 2020). This phenomenon has changed the landscape of marketing and branding strategies, and product endorsements with social media influencers are prevalent in the past decade (Irmas, 2021). Meanwhile, the promotion through electronic word of mouth (eWOM) of influencers has been reported to be significantly effective in the growth of product demand (Mohammad, 2020). In addition, with the increase of sustainable and ethical consciousness, fast fashion is regarded as one of the pollutive industry responsible for a huge number of landfills, pollutions, greenhouse emission, 20% of worldwide water waste, and exploiting cheap labors despite significant economic growth in the past few decades (Garner, 2021; Le, 2020). In this regard, the advocation for a more sustainable lifestyle emerged aiming to change the landscape of fashion industry. Under such a circumstance, slow fashion is believed to be an effective solution to environmental pollution and climate change while advocation of sustainable fashion through the online sphere is expected to arouse more people to engage in sustainability (Cernansky, 2020). Thus, social media content creators are considered an important intermediator acknowledging the evolution of the fashion industry towards a slow and sustainable business model as the industrial solution to cope with the environmental damage.

This phenomenon can be explained by fashion influencers' persuasive discourse of particular product experience which are perceived to be authentic and trustworthy among their audiences (Chapple & Cownie, 2017; Elmhirst, 2019). The spread of those eWOM indicates the messages presented by fashion influencers can significantly affect audience perception of the introduced products (Stoldt et al., 2019). In addition, the recommendation of influencers is reported to increase the sales of particular products due to the sharing of realistic experiences (Irmas, 2021; Zhang et al., 2018). Thus, more brands are willing to collaborate with influencers from Instagram or YouTube to promote sales (Silva et al., 2020). Despite the success of influencer marketing, understandings of the most influential slow fashion YouTubers and their

eWOMs of sustainable fashion endorsement on the YouTube videos remain limited and further research is much needed.

Additionally, the increasing awareness of sustainable lifestyle and fashion has been actively addressed by pro-environmental influencers on social media (Kong, et al., 2020; Rodrigues, 2020). However little research has been conducted to study the vernacular components, such as oral expression and visual representation of sustainable products incorporated in fashion influencer's social media. Furthermore, considering cultural and social difference found in the regions highly associated with the ecology of content creators, this research, thus, focuses on YouTubers who create content on sustainable fashion and are located in the United States of America to investigate a community of slow fashion and their approach towards the promotion of slow fashion.

Given that studies focusing on digital promotion of sustainable fashion generated by fashion influencers and the existing slow fashion YouTubers and communities on YouTube are lacking, I raise a few questions about slow fashion content creators in the USA: How do they promote sustainable products on YouTube through their sustainable-focused community and their presented identities? This main question is complemented by two sub-questions: Who are the most influential YouTubers creating content on the themes 'ethical fashion' and 'declutter wardrobe'? How do they select products endorsement and sponsorship for eWOM content creation?

This study aims to reveal the collective ways of promoting sustainable fashion on YouTube. Furthermore, this research identifies the most influential content creators producing videos relating to sustainable fashion and their relevant communities on YouTube. Thus, an overall understanding of the researched community of slow fashion will be provided in this investigation.

1.1. Scientific relevance

Due to little academic research that has been conducted regarding slow fashion and its online community in the past, this research aims to gain a deeper understanding of the current fashion marketing exposure generated by the sustainable content creators on social media. Since the awareness of the solution to fast fashion has raised considerably in the past decades from both the academic field and the society (Jarin, 2021), the objective of this research is designed to

dive into the representation of eWOM and content creators' perspective of promoting slow fashion to realize the operation of this niche within the creative industry. In addition, along with the emergence of social activism in cyberspace, user-generated contents have played significant roles in influencing public perception towards social issues (Jabor, 2021). In this regard, cultural labors from YouTube and other social media have become integral opinion leaders in cultivating social agendas, such as sustainability and slow fashion revolution. This generally involves educational, informative, and commercial values while generating contents (Boxman-Shabtai, 2019). Therefore, it is important to learn the approach of creative promotion presented by slow fashion YouTubers and the process of incorporating the business commission with fashion brands to enhance the limited understanding of marketing strategies for sustainable fashion industry in the academic filed. Consequently, this research helps to broaden the academic understanding of the recent eWOM and sustainable product promotion conveyed by the influencer community on YouTube to understand the relationship between this creative niche and the influential community on social media.

1.2. Social relevance

Furthermore, since the public awareness of eco-friendly solution to environmental pollution and climate change has increased significantly in recent years, people determined to engage in sustainable lifestyles including plant-based diets and sustainable fashion consumption have boosted noticeably (Jones, 2021). Considering the reflection of exploitation toward the environment and human rights resulted from fast fashion and other industry appeared during the pandemic, more people are reported to embark on green lifestyle with the concern of environment and human wellbeing (Poh & Seligson, 2021). Under such a circumstance, the communities focusing on sustainability has expanded dramatically which makes more brands commit the social responsibility through transiting the business position into the eco-friendlier model to appeal to more consumers. However, since existing research has rarely concentrated on the marketing strategies of sustainability business promotion through collaboration with microcelebrities in the digital sphere, this research aims to provide a primary understanding of the landscape of the slow fashion community and the commercial approach of integrating sustainable fashion brands into contents. This helps develop a scheme of digital marketing and partnership strategy for the creative industry positioning sustainable model to promote

sustainable items through eWOM presented by YouTubers. Moreover, the findings of this research enable the audience to learn the process of content creation proposed by the slow fashion influencers to understand the role of content creators in advocating sustainable lifestyles in the digital space. In this regard, both the society and relevant brands can capture a more thorough understanding of the slow fashion community on social media and the strategies of collaborating with sustainable brands in this community. Therefore, this research aims to arouse the social awareness of the slow fashion community and the corresponding forms of eWOM shared by the influential figures in the niche to increase the future engagement among creative brands, mediators, and the audiences.

1.3. Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 demonstrates the existed theories based on previous studies to build an academic paradigm for this research to analyze accordingly. It will be clustered into the following three themes: 1) slow fashion and sustainability, 2) online microcelebrity and product recommendation, 3) YouTube as an eWOM format, 4) mental support on social media, 5) online social activism, 6) sustainable fashion promotion, and 7) product endorsement through eWOM. The first one will define the term of slow fashion and the related concepts. Category 2 to 4 address the role of microcelebrities occurred from the online space while introduce the ways of developing the individual image, ranging from eWOM creations, mental health disclosure, to participation of social movements on social media. The last sections focus on the marketing approach adopted by slow and sustainable fashion brands and the issues of sponsorship disclosure.

In Chapter 3, the mix method approach chosen to conduct for this study is justified and elaborated. In essence, general explanation of both the qualitative and quantitative method, data collection, and data analysis are discussed. The finding of the analysis will be stressed in chapter 4. Based on a grounded theory analysis of the qualitative data, the results are segmented into several categories to demonstrate the detailed findings and answer the research questions. The categories of this section are: 1) slow fashion community development, 2) individual growth strategies and audience engagement, 3) identity of microcelebrities, and 4) slow fashion promotion and eWOM creation. In Chapter 5, conclusion of this research is mentioned to give the answers to the research questions. Furthermore, the relation to the previous studies is

discussed. In the end, the social and academic implication along with limitation and the suggestion for future study are pointed out.

2. Theoretical framework

This section elaborates existing research and theories address by previous scholars as an academic paradigm for this study. It is clustered into 7 segments to explain the relevant theories: 1) slow fashion and sustainability, 2) online microcelebrity and product recommendation, 3) online social activism, 4) mental health support on social media, 5) sustainable fashion promotion, 6) YouTube videos as eWOM formats, 7) product endorsement through eWOM. With this basis, the researcher is able to analyze the data and the findings according to the theoretical support.

2.1. Slow fashion and sustainability

Aiming for continuous and stable economic growth, the fashion industry develops an efficient production model of fast fashion to meet the enormous need of the global market (Fletcher, 2010). This business approach is generally operated under economic dominance and the utilization of prosperity and the global supply chain leading to the success of fast fashion. In this regard, fast fashion is characterized as rapid-changing, mass production, homogeneous design, trendy, constant replacement, and accessible price which is contributed to a great economic growth (Fletcher, 2010). However, this low-cost and quick-responding production model is built upon the exploitation of cheap materials and labor. As a result, some environmental and social impact has arrived as the expansion of fast fashion industry (Mukherjee, 2015). The environmental hazard resulted from this fashion model ranges from chemical pollutions towards land and water, high carbon emission, to a great number of landfills. Since cheap materials are demanded during fast fashion production, a significant amount of toxic chemicals is used to produce the fabrics leading to pollution upon the land. Secondly, to decrease the production cost, the supply chain is segmented into global sectors, thus the greenhouse emission is ascended dramatically through the transportation and garments production. Additionally, Shen (2014) has found that although some fast fashion has claimed to commit to sustainable transition in terms of garment production, the factories and main supply chain still located in the countries with a lower degree of wellbeing and wages whereas the majority of inventory is arranged to the countries with a higher degree of human wellbeing. In essence, the laborers of the fast fashion factories are found to work overtime in a less hygienic and unsafe

environment with little payment which is seen as a negative social impact (Fletcher, 2010; Mukherjee, 2015).

Considering those serious influence caused by the fast fashion industry, the arrival of slow fashion has shed light to transform the fashion industry with the adoption of a more sustainable model in terms of business and production facet (Fletcher, 2010). Unlike the ambition of efficiency in broadening economic scale claimed by fast fashion firms, slow fashion companies emphasize a counter business model involving a localized supply chain with the advocation of durable products. To demonstrate the sustainable adoption applied by slow fashion, a framework is introduced to present this radical fashion revolution (Haug & Busch, 2016). To ensure slow fashion has devoted to low impact production process, transparency is the primary value to showcase the environmental-friendly supply chain and materials while the employees are treated fairly with proper payment and working conditions. Furthermore, the source is preferred to use localized, organic, or recycled fabrics with certification to design timeless garments with high quality (Štefko & Steffe, 2018). In addition, slow fashion aims to provide inclusive clothing options for various consumers, thus, it normally offers either inclusive size options or personalized service to meet the versatile demands of customers. Lastly, against the concept of overconsumption promoted by fast fashion, slow fashion is known for producing limited quantity to reduce excessive waste while arousing a sense of exclusiveness among the consumers.

However, since the scale of the slow fashion firms is generally smaller than fast fashon corporations, the public information about slow fashion remains inadequate that resources of sustainable fashion is hard to access by consumers (Pookulangara, S., & Shephard). Meanwhile, because some companies claiming to produce slow fashion garments lack transparent information about production, the doubt of greenwashing has increased affecting the purchase intention among the consumers (Štefko & Steffe, 2018). Consequently, the informational gap between the retailers and consumers occurs. Moreover, it is found the value of purchasing sustainable garments ranges widely from the social concern to the emotional attachment (Jung & Jin, 2016). In other words, except for legitimate quality and accessible price, the concern of social impact and emotional achievement is important in arousing the purchase motivation. Lundblad and Davies (2016) further point out, except the awareness of sustainable devotion, consuming exclusive and sustainable garments is associated with self-achievement which relates

to self-esteem and care for personal appearance. Thus, enhancing self-achievement is another aspect valued by consumers while purchasing slow fashion products.

Based on the earlier research, social media has strongly anchored in the trends of consumers' behaviors. It is found that influencers with high credibility are more likely to be perceived as trustworthy fashion mediators for the consumers (Chetioui et al., 2020). Namely, the fashion opinions addressed by those influencers are associated with consumers' purchase intentions (Mohammad et al., 2020; Stoldt et l., 2019; Sudha & Sheena, 2017). These emergent microcelebrities not only inspire more consumers to engage with slow fashion but also introduce sustainable fashion brands to more consumers which helps to establish a new community in the online sphere. Since little research has investigated the role of mediators in slow fashion markets, this research aims to study how sustainable-fashion-focused content creators assist to bridge the gap between retailers and consumers while expanding the slow fashion community.

2.2. Online microcelebrity and product recommendation

The rise of social media has been contributed to the emergence of influential leaders who are active on social media accounts by sharing personal experiences of certain products while a great number of audiences and subscribers are following (Abidin, 2015; Duguay, 2019). This new form of aesthetic labors is characterized by constant exposure of personal life through photos, video, audience engagement, and online or offline actives to catch people's attention (Abidin, 2016; Lange, 2019). With the usage of multiple social media platforms, the parasocial relationships between the influencers and audience are built resulting from the interactive features performed in the digital sphere (Kim et al., 2018).

According to the research conducted by Abidin (2015), these microcelebrities tend to identify themselves as ordinary people enthusiastic in disclosing everyday life towards social media users. Through the documentation of personal life, those influencers are perceived to be authentic and instrumental (Lange, 2019). Simultaneously, the frequent interaction with the audience via liking, responding, and retweeting, helps establish a sense of exclusiveness and intimacy among viewers which leads to a collective online community (Chapple & Cownie, 2017). Furthermore, concerning the multiple venues of personal lifestyle disclosure, fashion influencers can demonstrate fashion items outside fashion magazines and the runway giving a more authentic representation for fashion brands (Duffy & Hund, 2015). In essence,

incorporating with fashion influencers becomes one of the essential marketing strategies in the fashion industry (Brydges & Sjöholm, 2019). Abidin (2015) also suggested that the networking with other microcelebrities from the similar niche has become crucial in increasing the traffic from the audience and brand awareness. Thus, offline influencer meetups are taken place frequently to bridge the connection with other influencers to develop opportunities of co-creation which can gain more audience recognition through cross-channel appealing. Meanwhile, through the networking, the influencers can support each other's content, brand collaboration and personal brands to build an internal community among microcelebrities.

Furthermore, as previous research suggested, emerging microcelebrities on social media show entrepreneurial traits that individual social media accounts resemble a personal brand in the virtual spaces to incorporate strategies of promoting particular products, services, and personal brands (Bahcecik, et al. 2019). Bahcecik et al. (2019) point out due to the low starting capital and easy-to-access features of Web 2.0., creative entrepreneurs on social media are able to build personal brands with knowledge and expertise to increase business opportunities. These entrepreneurs occurred from virtual organizations tend to share similar characteristics including independence, risk analysis, innovation, problem-solving, and opportunities achieving. With such psychological traits, they can mobilize the distinct insight of specific culture, value judgments, and societal perspectives to interact with their community to expand the business scale. Bahcecik et al. conclud that this digital branding involve the following strategies to appeal to the audiences: 1) sincerity, 2) consistent content presentation, 3) distinct value and lifestyle exhibition, 4) awareness arouser, 5) educational purpose, 6) authentic emotional disclosure, 6) up-to-date content creation, and 7) open for audience contribution. With these strategies, the correspond community on social media has expanded significantly (Brydges & Sjöholm, 2019; Lange, 2019).

However, when it comes to product recommendation endorsed by traditional celebrities, such as well-known movie stars or artists, and micro-celebrities occurred from social media, the degree of influence may differ in situations (Ewers, 2017). Even though the aroused purchase intention is generally low derived from the product recommendation generated by both celebrities and micro-celebrities due to the constant exposure to online product endorsement among the audience, the contents represented by celebrities are found to trigger slightly higher consumption intention than those provided by microcelebrities owing to the lower credibility

perceived by the consumers. Nevertheless, it is discovered that the inclusion of product replacement without excessive precautional expressions may enhance the positive perception of microcelebrities among the audience. To cope with the gap of the influence between microcelebrity and traditional celebrity, intermediators agencies have occurred to assist the microcelebrities to improve the content creation of product recommendation for profit purpose (Stoldt et al., 2019). With the professional guidance and advice offered by the agency, micro-celebrities are able to create content aligning the commercial needs of the brands with a fair payment. Thus, those intermediaters play important role in bridging the informational gap between self-developed content creators and the brands to sustain the instrumental relationship among the stakeholders.

2.3. Online social activism

With the prevalence of Web 2.0., people are empowered to share information on social media ranging from personal stories to the concerns of social issues (Caren et al., 2020). The function of social media has expanded from pure hedonic purpose regarding having fun with other users through virtual interaction to societal informational sharing, such as the latest social movements and consumer activism (Sandoval-Almazan & Gil-Garcia, 2014). In this regard, social media platforms have opened a venue for the social activists to initiate conversations to gain public awareness while the traditional media outlet does not fully cover those social movements (Poell & Borra, 2013). Take the demonstration against G20 in 2010 as an example, since the traditional broadcasting media does not include the demonstration organized by the minority groups in the outlets, the hashtag #g20report was used as the key to connect the protesters on social networks, such as Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr. With the great number of the hashtags, the demonstration was aware by the public disregard the exclusion from the broadcasting. A similar occasion happened in 2017 when a demonstration against systematic suppression of Black women in the United States of America. This online protest emerged rapidly on social media through the hashtag #SayHerName (Brown et al., 2017). Since the composition of these social movements is primary marginalized groups neglected by the mainstream, those movements tend to take place in the online sphere to attract participation without the constrain of space and time. By doing so, they can successfully gain awareness within a short period of time while empower the communities to fight against intersectional injustice simultaneously.

In this regard, cyberactivism has commonly adopted by protesting groups in recent years, such as Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, and Black Lives Matter, which transcended the ecology of social movement (Caren et al., 2020). The visual representation of social movement also enable the audience to witness the movement with a closer distance and gain firsthand information from the social media (Cornet et al., 2017). Intense visual and audio contents spread on social media spark the intention of participation due to the educational, genuine, persuasive discourse (Hwang & Kim, 2015). Moreover, the image-based information assists the activists to develop collective identities that an organizational connection is developed between individuals and the community. This form of identity motivates the participants to join the activism through the sharing of information which increase the appeal of activism in turn.

With the identity development, more people or consumers sharing the same perspective are able to gather in the cyberspace to broaden community aiming to change the social system (Colli, 2020; De Choudhury et al., 2016). To sum up, the usage of social media motivates social movements and consumer activism to make diverse voice heard by more audience in the digital sphere. Particularly, the participation of microcelebrities and celebrities enables the digital activism to expand to a certain extension which requires academic research to investigate (Caren et al., 2020).

2.4. Mental health support on social media

Previous research has found that excessive exposure to social media usage is positively related to depression. In addition, social comparison of assessing social media presence of other users' is found to be strongly correlated to mental depression (Yoon et al., 2019). In this regard, recent studies suggest intense social media usage can lead to mental burnout (Charoensukmongkol, 2016; Hebben, 2019). Burnout is defined as a fatigued mental, physical, and emotional state occurred after a person has experienced an enormous amount of stress from the reality (Han, 2018). Such emotional exhaustion can have negative influence on the performance of work and social life. In essence, excessive exposure to social media can lead to social media burnout. Owing to the overloading information sharing, overwhelming social participation, and dissatisfaction with social media usage, there are three dimensions of social media burnout are found (Hebben, 2019). Firstly, people may encounter emotional exhaustion lacking the energy and passion to engage in the virtual organization. Depersonalization is the

second dimension happened when a social media user feels detached from regular behaviors and social interactions which leads to an emotional distinction between the user and his or her performance. Lastly, ambivalence is the other dimension with a feeling of lacking personal accomplishment due to the negative disconnection of instrumental and hedonic experiences which are expected to gain during social media immersion.

With the fundamental understanding of social media burnout, it is found that people intensely utilizing social media platforms for business purposes are prone to have a higher tendency to have burnout symptoms (Charoensukmongkol, 2016). Moreover, existing research reports that contents disclosing mental burnout due to intense social media usage are commonly found on various platforms. Diving into the influence of those self-disclosing contents, Hebben (2019) has suggested that the audience exposed to the contents directly mentioning burnout and depersonalization is likely to respond and interact with the content creators. In addition, the representation of the burnout symptom and revealing temporary leave from social media are found to help the audience reflect personal mental state and sense a certain degree of relativity. This finding indicates the self-disclosure of mental problems opens positive conversations in the online sphere which develops a new form of collective support through multi-directional engagement among the audience and content creators (McCosker, 2018).

According to relevant studies, mobilizing social media as the discourse of mental health issues can lead to positive effects on the users suffering mental problems (O'Reilly et al., 2019). With the empowered user contribution featured by Web 2.0., people are able to share mental and physical status anonymously which encourages more users to seek help in the virtual organizations. In essence, those who are suffering from mental health issues can disclose their situation to receive advice from other users. In the meantime, owing to the public access to the contents, mental health service providers are enabled to take part in the conversation to provide professional information mediating the discussion regarding the approach to cope with mental health problems (Shepherd et al., 2015). Furthermore, O'Reilly et al. (2019) have found that anonymous discourse of mental health issues allows adolescents lacking access to professional advice to absorb fundamental knowledge relating to mental health. Thus, social media sites provide a valuable venue for mental health discourse through the active sharing of experience and advice among the ordinary users and mental care providers. This interactive forum makes people with serious mental illness feel comfortable to disclose individual stories and decisions to

cope with mental illness (Naslund et al., 2016). Unlike online organizations, the fear of stigma and being mistreated has hindered some patients to reveal the state of illness, however, the online sphere creates a more comfortable environment for the patients to uncover their personal journey. Under such a trustworthy environment, supportive groups have been built to provide mental connection and support for people suffering similar mental illnesses which gives them a sense of belonging and empowerment to deal with mental challenges collectively.

In this regard, social media platforms are characterized as comfortable spaces to promote mental health illness through the content creations generated by both microcelebrities and ordinary users. Through their engagement, knowledge and support towards mental illness are able to be aware by the mass audience which encourages the discussion of mental health issues.

2.5. Sustainable fashion promotion

As sustainability has been highly advocated by the public in the past decades, the fashion industry which is considered one of the notorious industries causing pollution to the environment has strived to evolve sustainably to devote social responsibility (Davis, 2020). Regarding this transition, both luxurious and local fashion brands have put efforts to make their product greener to align with the social agenda (Kong et al., 2020). To appeal to more consumption intention, the marketing strategy of sustainable fashion with a distinct narrative has been designed aiming to impress potential audiences (Kim et al., 2018).

Based on the study conducted by Septianto et al. (2020), pride as an emotional stimulus indicated in the advertisements of the sustainable luxury brand can positively increase consumer's impression even though the luxury facet of this brand is emphasized more. In the meantime, the emphasis on sustainability represented through commercial also help stimulate consumption intention in both local and luxury brands.

Since eWOM has become an important element in marketing sustainable fashion products, Hyun and Ko (2017) have demonstrated that environmental concerns, product knowledge, received risks, perceived benefits can determine consumer's satisfaction with sustainable products which in turn influence their intention in engaging eWOM. This finding reports that the aforementioned values are highly associated with consumer's cultural background influencing the willingness of generating eWOM for the sustainable brands. Additionally, Kong et al. (2020) has found that the concepts of eco-friendly contribution towards the environment portrayed in

the advertisements of luxury brands can increase consumer's intention in spreading positive evaluations which increases the marketing impression of the brands. Furthermore, eWOMs mentioning the pro-environmental devotion of the fashion brands are reported to pose a positive impact on consumer's intention of consumption (Mohammad et al., 2020). Namely, spreading positive eWOM as a marketing strategy can influence the way the audience perceives slow fashion.

Fashion YouTubers who are perceived to accumulate social capitals, including special knowledge of fashion, legitimate influence, referent power in altering audience's decision, are reported to have a positive influence on viewer's consumption (Kim et al., 2018). This indicates that marketing through the eWOM contents of YouTubers can successfully outreach to potential consumers based on the trustworthiness and powerful impact of those intermediaters. Considering limited research has investigated the relationship between sustainable fashion promotion and influencer, this study will adapt the aforementioned findings as sensitizing theories during the process.

2.6. YouTube videos as eWOM formats

Among all the social media sites, the user-generated contents on YouTube are categorized as vernacular formats combining visual and oral presentation allowing a wide range of creative outputs to be uploaded by users (Lange, 2019). This distinct feature leads to the emergence of experience-sharing videos generated by fashion influencers, such as fashion haul, vlogs of a day in the life, "ad-tutorial", and other forms of videos, inviting the audience to enter their personal life (Jerslev, 2016). Since those videos highly involve the recommendation of the commodities used by the influencers, YouTube videos are regarded as an important outlet of eWOM spreading the reviews as reference for the audience.

These forms of eWOM help establish a global connection between the international audience and the merchandise due to the mediator role played by the fashion content creators (Jorge et al., 2018). ALNefaie et al. (2019) point out that YouTube videos involving product recommendations are perceived to be both utilitarian and hedonic references for the audience. Namely, the viewership can be influenced by the available information and emotional satisfaction depicted from the YouTube videos to determine their choices of consumption. As Jerslev (2016) suggests, this phenomenon can be explained by the authentic narrative and distinct

filming style performed by the influencers that stimulate the sense of realness and relativity among viewers.

Through the aesthetic and distinct presentation portrayed in the videos, the influencers are often seen as experts sharing sincere, reliable, and qualified information of products which increases the purchasing intention among the audience (Chapple & Cownie, 2017; Tybussek, 2020). In this regard, the content creators on social media concentrating on product recommendation and reviewing has blurred the boundary between consumers and expertise due to the appliance of personal experience with particular fashion and beauty product to influence purchase intention among the audiences (Mardon et al., 2018). These content creators are titled "fashion or beauty gurus" generating in-depth information on social media regarding the review of specific products. Since the presentation of gurus involves both facets of consumers and professions, a series of emotional bonds are built with the audience resulting from the high reliance on the information shared by fashion and beauty gurus. Under such a parasocial relationship, some emotional exchanges are found to take place in the connected community. Consequently, YouTube has become a crucial eWOM platform to seek sustainable knowledge.

However, the content creators have faced three challenges as making videos of eWOM for the products on YouTube (Müller, 2016; Vear, 2020). Firstly, the contents of product recommendations generated by trustworthy influencers are generally characterized by transparent, in-depth user-based information, and authentic depiction through the partial exposure of private life (Vear, 2020). Namely, to create realistic eWOM on YouTube, the gap between privacy and public representation is marginalized to a certain extent. The first tension is, thus, occurred. Secondly, Vear points out due to the constant change of algorithm on social media, content creators are forced to create specific titles, descriptions, and hashtags aligning to the requirement of the platforms to attract traffic. In essence, the content creators are obligated to sacrifice partial personal interests to meet the constraint proposed by platforms. Thirdly, considering the audience perception and the commission contracted with the brands, the content creators are compromised to balance the portrayal of product placement and the main topic of each video (Vear, 2020). Regards this, the content creators on YouTube are inclined to include less product endorsement within the videos while mentioning the affiliated links of the collaborated products in the description section. In addition, creative forms of activities are initiated, such as product giveaways and audience competition, to reinforce brand awareness

among the audiences. Meanwhile, responding to the comments of the audience is claimed as an extension of realistic representation to provide an informational user experience upon the products stated in the video.

Consequently, even though the authentic and transparent user experience sharing in the eWOM videos has appeal to an emotion-bonded community on YouTube, attributed to the constraints of the platforms, the videos of eWOM on YouTube has altered constantly raising the challenges for the content creators and gurus.

2.7. Product endorsement through eWOM

The prevalence of generating eWOM regarding genuine user experience of fashion products has been perceived as a valuable approach to incorporate business collaboration as a form of marketing promotion (Childers, 2019). Thus, many fashion brands have outreached microcelebrities with significant follower bases to co-create dynamic visual or video content aiming to appeal to more consumers. The types of brand collaboration represented on social media can be categorized into three forms: 1) sponsorship, 2) link affiliation, and 3) public relation (PR) gifting. The first two types involve monetary payment with different procedures. Sponsorship collaboration implicates promoting specific items with monetary rewards through generation of contents, such as eWOM, creative campaign, and audience engagement activities. Promoting affiliated links, on the other hand, functions differently from sponsorship. The content creators would include the link for the collaborated products in the description section for the audience to access. Eventually, the content creators may receive a particular amount of payment according to the ratio of rewards which was contracted between the stakeholders. Lastly, the PR products are free gifted items without any rewards or payments. However, the content creators still tend to generate some content mentioning those free-giving items as a gratitude for the brands. Even though such forms of product replacement do not interfere with payment, it is an approach to maintain a great relationship with the content creators (Childers, 2019).

However, since the contents containing business-oriented product recommendation has increased significantly on the social media in the recent years, some governments have enacted relevant regulation requiring the content creator to disclose the business purpose. For instance, according to the Federal Trade Commission in the United States, any type of online content sponsored by a third-party source is expected to reveal sponsorship information clearly to avoid

misleading information for the consumers (FTC, 2017). To fulfill the related regulations, some platforms, such as YouTube and Instagram, also altered the usage policies to reinforce the transparency of business-related content. Take YouTube as an example, it is stated that, "creators and brands are responsible for understanding and fully complying with legal obligations to disclose Paid Promotion in their content" (YouTube support, 2018). Following the obligation, most of the user-generated contents involving business purpose are found to include explicit and implicit sponsorship disclosures (Lee & Kim, 2020). The former is defined as the content description comprising thorough sponsorship clarification, including the mention of advertising or sponsorship in the description, to notify the business collaboration behind the contents, whereas the latter refers to the implicit presentation of commercial purposes, such as mentioning "ad" or "sp" in the corner of the contents as the abbreviation of advertisement and sponsorship and unsealing any wordings indicating PR product or sponsorship.

In essence, academic investigation regarding the influence of sponsorship disclosure has studied the association with audience perception. It is found that the visualized coverage of brand collaboration initiated by the microcelebrities helps accentuate the brand engagement among the audience (Argyris et al., 2020). Furthermore, incorporating the information of brand and products in the contents is found to arouse a positive attitude on the brand (Lee & Kim, 2020). Additionally, the recognition of the brand is positively associated with the genuine persuasion indicated in the sponsored posts (Eisend et al., 2020). Namely, the memory, understanding, and purchase intention are strongly enhanced while the product endorsement is clarified in the contents. Overall, including the brand sponsorship within the contents on social media has improved the recognition and positive credibility of the brands. Furthermore, generating contents with sponsorship disclosure does not result in a negative perception towards the content creators, instead, the source and message credibility of the content creators are found to be improved (Ewers, 2017; Lee & Kim, 2020). In addition, contents involving the dissemination of the momentary compensation trigger positive perception among the audience (Stubb et al., 2019). Regards, the credibility of the microcelebrities may increase not only due to the transparent disclosure of commercial collaboration but also because of the public perception that the content creator is well-known and trustworthy enough to be chosen by the brands for cooperation.

However, since slow fashion is an emergent niche, little research has operated to study the perception of sponsorship disclosure from the perspective of content creators. Thus, this research

is designed to immerse into the representation of product sponsorships from the content created by slow-fashion-focused content creators. Meanwhile, their perception towards the honest disclosure will be investigated respectively.

3. Research design

This chapter justifies the mix-method approach used to answer the research questions of this study. Standard of methodology, data collection, and detailed description of data analysis are also elaborated respectively in this section. Concerning the diverse interaction on social media platforms, this research chose an ethnographical approach to capture the social networking relating to slow fashion content creators on YouTube and other virtual organizations (Berthod et al., 2017). By doing so, the complex and constantly changing online network of slow fashion can be collected to investigate the undiscovered relationship and practices represented within this sustainable-focused community. In-depth interviews were simultaneously collected to confirm the findings based on ethnographic exploration which enhances the understanding of the intertwined interaction happened between the slow fashion content creators and the related communities.

However, to gain a greater understanding of the existing community of sustainable fashion active on YouTube, qualitative research can merely provide partial insights into this network. Therefore, a quantitative method was applied simultaneously to analyze the social networks of the community concentrating on slow fashion on social media (Born & Haworth, 2017). To realize, computational social network analysis was conducted to capture the overall structure of the slow fashion community on YouTube, involving both of the content creators and audience. Namely, quantitative analysis was integrated to have more thorough knowledge about the role of the online slow fashion community in promoting sustainable fashion brands (Guest & Fleming, 2015). As a result, a mix-method approach with convergent parallel design was determined to complete this research (Berthod et al., 2017).

3.1. Mix-method approach

To comprehensively understand how slow fashion production is promoted by those influencers through self-generated videos on YouTube and other social media platforms, a mixed-method research approach was chosen (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Given that this research aims to investigate eWOM of slow fashion items conveyed by fashion influencers on social media, it is crucial to understand the key criteria, taste and concerns of the brand in terms of the production of slow fashion items indicated by the influencers (Kozinets, 2002). To identify the symbolic narrative in spreading eWOM of green fashion through the marketing means

conducted by influencers, one month of netnography was adapted for this study (Boeiji, 2010; Kozinets, et al., 2014). This netnographic approach comprised participant observation on YouTube and other social media profiles of fashion influencers and 8 in-depth interviews.

Unlike other methods, netnography as a market-oriented form of digital ethnography can investigate social media users' perception, decision-making process, distinct taste, and desire for particular products through participant observation in the online sphere (Kozinets, 2012). In this regard, participants observation on YouTube was used allowing researcher to immerse the online community unobtrusively to comprehend the influencers' realistic engagement with slow fashion through social media (Delamont, 2004; Hetland & Mørc, 2016; Ritter 2021). Meanwhile, adopting netnography to observe the engagement and promotion created by the YouTubers in the cyberspace enabled the researcher to access the database in a time and space efficient approach. Furthermore, to obtain credibility of this study, interviewing with observed influencers was done to cross-check the results collected from online observation (Kozinets, 2012). This may boost the degree of trustworthiness for the qualitative analysis.

The theories related to this research are grounded through the process of analysis (Bowen, 2008; Charmaz, 2014; Kozinets, et al., 2014). Consequently, the researcher remained open and flexible during the analysis to discover emergent theories. Namely, the researcher was sensitively aware and constantly refer to existing concepts to obtain the academic relevance.

The mixed-method research is based on a parallel-convergent approach (Berthod et al. 2017). Qualitative and quantitative data were separately collected and analyzed. In the end, computational social network analysis can enhance the ethnographic immersion in the online community of slow fashion influencers (Rogers, 2015). Digital ethnographers increasingly integrate digital methods to enhance their investigations (Born & Haworth, 2017). In this regard, the contextualization of social network retrieved from YouTube was able to visualize the dynamic interaction between the contents and the users enabling to realize the multi-direction interface on the social media site (Akhtar & Javed, 2014).

3.2. Data Collection

As YouTube has become one of the largest social media platforms with 2 billion active users where anyone can upload user-generated videos in diverse genres (YouTube, n.d.), a great number of influencers frequently shares their sustain fashion experience to gain popularity and

recognition cross-nationally (Rodrigues, 2020). Through the personal sharing conveyed in the video contents, sustainable fashion YouTubers are able to voice their opinions, disclose individual lifestyle to advocate eco-friendly lifestyle. This form of content creation, in turn, builds up a sustainability-focused community between the influencers and the audience. Consequently, this research concentrates on an online community of YouTubers to obtain appropriate dataset.

3.2.1. Participant Observation on digital platforms

Through the queries of popular sustainable influencer posted on search engines and snowballing recommendation suggested by the algorithm in YouTube, 70 influencers claimed to engage sustainable lifestyle were collected, such as Alyssa Beltemo and insprioue. The researcher performed as observer as participant for a month to follow and attend all of the online announcement or activities created by the influencers on YouTube (Alleyne, 2018). Since digital creators were found to use multiple social media platforms to build their brand and persona, those external posts such as on Instagram and personal blog sites were investigated in the meantime. In other word, to realize the image and persona of a content creator represented on the social media and the distinct approach in promoting slow fashion products, a comprehensive digital ethnography involving observation on the two main social media sites: YouTube and Instagram were required to ensure the capture of thick information. As a result, 13 YouTube videos with total length of 158 minutes, and 30 comments of the videos, and 200 Instagram live stories accessible for 24 hours, which were related to the sharing of slow fashion were well collected.

Considering the uncertainty of accessing data on social media, all the data were legally recorded or downloaded on YouTube to ensure permanent access to the data. Simultaneously, the fieldnotes were kept on the daily basis during the period of time to ensure sufficient data and insights are well collected (Kozinets, 2002). Moreover, everyday observational protocols and comments threads were collected simultaneously. Namely, the researcher recorded all the findings, including immediate online communication and comments taken place during the observation as part of the analyzed data to enrich the understanding towards the digital engagement provoked by sustainable fashion influencers.

3.2.2. In-depth Interviews

A total of 8 observed sustainable-focused influencers were outreached through snowballing sampling (Boeije, 2010). Through the personal contact mentioned in the YouTube profile, some of the interviewees were recruited, whereas the others were reached through the recommendation from the interviewed participants and YouTube search engine. Thus, each of recruited interviews participated in-depth interviews lasting approximately between 30 and 45 minutes. 6 of them are located in the United States as the primary source for this research while another interviewee residing in United Kingdom and the other living in Australia provided additional insight into slow fashion community resulting from the borderless connection online. The findings from the interviews were performed as crosscheck to confirm the primary findings from participation observation. Due to the pandemic, organizing face-to-face interviews became difficult and unsafe. Thus, all the interviews were conducted online with the usage of Zoom while recorded simultaneously. Prior to the interview, consent of recording and usage of the transcribed interview contents were gained by the interviewees. The interviews started from factual queries to the core questions regarding practice of acknowledging eWOM of ethical fashion items through YouTube videos and relation of sustainable product sponsors. In this essence, the qualitative data collected from participant observation and interviews helped provide answers to the the main question and the sub-questions.

3.2.3. Computational Social Network Analysis

Including the digital method computational social network analysis in the research project increases the trustworthiness of the suggested study (Rogers, 2015). The data for the network visualizations was collected with the tool of NodeXL Pro. Social network data, such as GEXF and GDF files, was retrieved from the YouTube API (Wajahat et al., 2020).

To do so, the key search queries to assemble the data set about YouTube users were: "ethical fashion" and "declutter wardrobe" which were common themes of popular YouTube content in sustainable fashion industry. These social network data sets provided evidence to answer the first sub-question. Such data collection provided insights into the hubs, bridges, connected communities, and roles of gatekeepers within the network created by YouTubers who publish social media content about slow fashion. Moreover, the data for computational analysis of three interviewed slow fashion content creators were retrieved. Emily Elizabeth May, Thrifts

and Tangles, and ClassifiedCloset were selected because they had the highest numbers of subscribers among the interviewees. Based on the YouTube channel IDs of the research participants, which were taken from the URLs of the channels, the YouTube Data Tools were used to retrieve the IDs of all the videos of a channel (Moe, 2019; Venturini & Rogers, 2019). The YouTube Data Tools were used on the 5th of May 2021, and, thus, videos prior to this date were included (see appendix 3). The ID list was used to collect a specific data set for each content creator with NodeXL Pro (see appendix 4). The retrieved GDP files were subsequently loaded in Gephi to analyze the network graphs.

3.3. Data analysis

This study focuses on verbal representation from social media contents and the texts of transcripts as the units of analysis for qualitative analysis, while the social network data retrieved from YouTube is the unit of analysis for quantitative research, providing insights into the popularity of videos. Although those contents are uploaded publicly, concerning ethical issues, those data was stored privately in the researcher's computer with a password.

3.3.1. Qualitative Data

Once the data was fully collected, the interview and collected videos were transcribed into text enabling the researcher to concentrate on the underlying verbal components relevant to this research. To proceed analysis phase, researcher choses to use ATLAS.ti as the software to import all the data, including the screenshots of Instagram and transcripts of interview collected videos. With the usage of ATLAS.ti, textual components implied within the data were interpreted manually into different codes firstly (Boeiji, 2010). Then continuous comparison among the open codes was taken place to cluster the codes into different categories based on the differences and similarities indicated from the texts during axial coding phase (Adu, 2019). The internal differentiation was conducted to build sub-categories under the main segmentations (Bowen, 2008). Finally, selective coding was done to comprehend the theories and phenomenon enabling to answer the research question. In this regards, 9 main categories related to this research were developed after the intense comparison and categorization of the codes: 1) relationship development with followers, 2) identity development, 3) social media activism, 4) mental health awareness, 5) networking and community development, 6) values of content creation, 7) product

recommendation (eWOM), 8) sponsorship/affiliation/PR product disclosure, 9) challenges and impact of algorithm. The first 5 categories related to the image building of the content creators while from categories 6 to 8 the approach of incorporating eWOM and disclosure of brand collaboration were indicated. The last category, however, showcased the existing challenges and effect of platforms' algorithm on content creation regarding slow fashion promotion.

3.3.2. Quantitative Data

The social network data was analyzed in Gephi (Born & Haworth, 2017). Through the statistical analysis run by the Gephi, the 'popularity' of a user was measured and the network visualizations were performed based on the layout graph ForceAltas2 (Jacomy et al., 2014). In addition, the layout of the network graph was refined with the options 'nooverlap', 'label adjust', and 'expansion'. To clean the data, a self-loop filter was added to the degree range filter. As a result, nodes that referred to themselves, which occurred when YouTube users comment on their own comments, where excluded from the data set. These actions led the data to be filtered without overlapping and concentrated on the main slow fashion community appeared on YouTube (Wajahat et al., 2020). While viewing the network graphs, the nodes of the network graph were related to YouTube users while the edges referred to the action of commenting on videos and replying to comments (Bokunewicz & Shulman, 2017). To distinguish diverse subgroup within the community, modularity class was applied to partition the subgroups in different color presented on the nodes. Through the analysis of PageRank, the different degree of popularity was revealed and visualized by the size of nodes (Scott, 2016). Thus, the larger the node was, the more influential was the YouTuber. Meanwhile, the thickness of edges showed the frequency of interaction with the connected content creator. Consequently, the most engaging relation had the thickest edge between the two figures on YouTube. Furthermore, to gain an in-depth understanding of the active YouTube users in the community, the statistics of PageRank, betweenness centrality, and closeness centrality were analyzed simultaneously (Newman, 2010).

- Modularity class: partitioning the network into various communities based on the online interaction.
- PageRank: a measurement to identify the extent of importance and popularity of the YouTube channel based on the web search.

- Betweenness centrality: a measure of centrality represents the extent of the information was passed through a YouTube user which highlights the degree of influence the user pose on the network.

- Closeness centrality: a measure refers to the mean distance between each node which showcases the distance to gain information and pose direct influence on others. The lower the mean distance closeness centrality indicates the faster the opinions of a YouTube user received by other users in the network.

Through the statistics of the measures, an overview of the collected slow fashion YouTubers was grasped to realize the distinct virtual engagement practiced within the community.

Moreover, the online networking between the interviewed YouTubers was investigated. To do so, data of three interviewees were retrieved and the Yifan Hu algorithm was used to analyze the network graph (Bokunewicz & Shulman, 2017). Given this algorithm and data preparation through adjusting degree range and self-loop, the involved online interaction of these three content creators and the connected networking were visualized to showcase their audience engagement with other YouTube users. Likewise, the nodes represented the users while the edges indicated the frequency of interaction through commenting and responding under YouTube videos. The thickness of the edge revealed the level of engagement between the YouTubers and other users. Since this analysis focused on individual networking taken place on YouTube, three respect analysis were represented to show the connected community formed by these three YouTubers. In this regard, nodes of content creators were placed in the middle to emphasize the connection built around the other content creators. To sum up, with the assistance of the software Gephi, an deeper understanding of the digital interaction between YouTube influencers and their online community development were gained (Wajahat et al., 2020).

3.4. Ethical standards

Despite the unobtrusive and observative character of netnography and computational analysis, ethical aspects is taken into account simultaneously. To ensure this research is conducted ethically, there are several manners were profoundly considered. Firstly, despite the social interaction between the content creators and users are publicly available on YouTube, the expectation of privacy was concerned. Nevertheless, since the chosen YouTube videos, channels, and the retrieved quantitative data through queries were originally generated by the target

community and accessible for the public, it was perceived as contents obtainable by all the viewers. Consequently, the source of the data was well stated in the appendix to clarify the access. Secondly, the ethical concern of collected information from interviews was seriously assessed. Thus, the detailed personal information of participants remained anonymous and confidential. Furthermore, the authorization was gained from the creators when the quotation of contents were involved.

4. Results

4.1. The development of the slow fashion community

During netnography, online networking between the content creators and the audience is observed by the researcher. Slow fashion as a niche topic has been a growing online community through communication with social media users and collaboration with other content creators. As reported by the interviewees, developing the scale of community through the engagement on social media is a vital action for microcelebrities.

> '*Because I think the community aspect is what makes social media so special. So, I definitely like to keep working on that and growing. So, for the content creator, building up, their like follower bases, as a community is kind of important*' - BG, 20-year-old, Virginia.

In this regard, the growth of this community can be categorized into two aspects, the first one relates to constant engagement with audiences on social media to expand the number of followers while the other one is networking with content creators to enhance collaboration within the niche. Through developing an online community from these two sides, the slow fashion community is able to gain more awareness on digital platforms which in turn helps increase the public consciousness upon the green fashion revolution and relevant brands.

4.1.1. The existing slow fashion community on YouTube
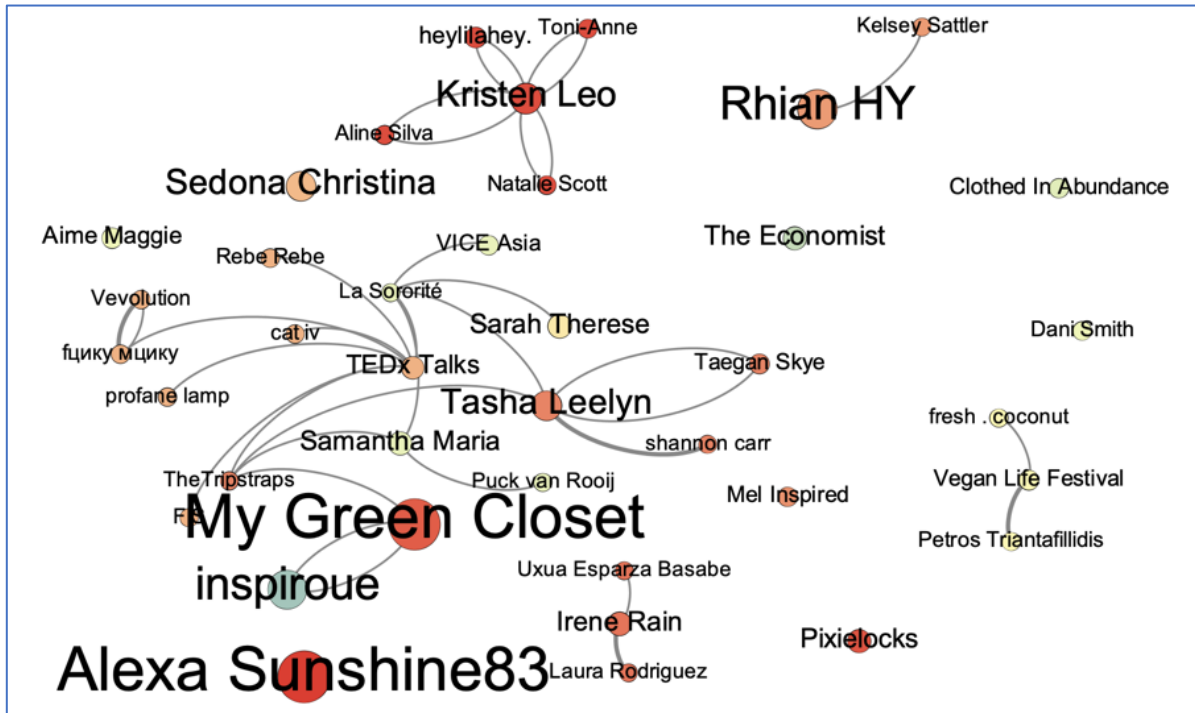
Figure 1 Significant members of slow fashion community on YouTube through the query of 'ethical fashion'

To ensure the results focus on the most popular and engaging communities highly relevant to slow fashion on YouTube, the degree range was adjusted to a range from 5 to the ultimate. Based on the measures, some of the clusters are shown in the great component presented in *Figure* 1 with different colors of nodes. The nodes represent the YouTube user, while the connected edges stress the connection between the YouTube users through commenting and replying to comments of videos. The size of the nodes represented the degree of popularity owned by the YouTube user. Thus, it is found that Alexa Sunshine83, My Green Closet, and Rhian HY are most popular figures in this community. Notably, the network graph indicates that the communications between those YouTubers and audience are mostly single directional while few are reciprocal, especially within the cluster involving Kristen Leo.

Channel	Subscriber	PageRank	Betweeness centrality	Clossness centrality
Alexa Sunshine83	265k	0.0278	12396	1.00
My Green Closet	80.3k	0.0274	71118	0.70
Rhian HY	99.4k	0.0174	3599	1.00

34

inspiroue	47.3k	0.0172	49460	0.62
LoeppkysLife	291k	0.0120	1760	1.00
Kristen Leo	336k	0.0103	22894	0.33
Tasha Leelyn	460k	0.0096	1421	1.00
Sedona Christina	228k	0.0094	234	1.00
Blue Ollis	76.3k	0.0083	867	1.00
Vanessa Nagoya	399k	0.0082	0	0.00
CC Marie	25.6k	0.0078	462	1.00
The Adventures of Jade	43.3k	0.0076	3383	0.80
Justine Leconte officiel	865k	0.0071	100	1.00
Miss Bee Townsend's Vintage Tips & Tricks	32.2k	0.0062	1340	1.00
imperfectidealist	4390	0.0062	13587	0.33
				Total Number of communities: 61

Figure 2 Top 10 influential YouTuber generating contents regarding ethical fashion

The PageRank is one possible measure for establishing the popularity of content creators within a given network (Weng et al., 2013). This measure was chosen for the analysis of fashion influencers since it can provide an importance score for their platform practices on YouTube (Scott, 2016). PageRank is a variant of the eigenvector centrality (Newman, 2010). It can be used for the analysis of directed networks since it is based on calculations of in-degrees. Betweenness centrality, on the other hands, is a measure of centrality which represents the degree of connectivity of the YouTuber. Regards, the figure with higher degree of betweenness centrality is seen to be more influential for spreading relevant information within the community. Clossness centrality, however, measures the mean distance between the YouTube users. This measurement highlights the extent to which a figure can access to information or pose direct influence on others in limited time. In other word, figures with lower closeness centrality can quickly spread their viewpoints to others in the community. Based on the results, 61 sub-communities are found in the community clustered through 'ethical fashion'. Accordingly, Alexa Sunshine83, the most popular slow fashion YouTuber in this community with .0278 PageRank,

is found to be less interactive (12,396 betweenness centrality) and less directly influential (1.00 closeness centrality) in the community. Nevertheless, based on the visualization, 3 other most popular YouTubers, such as My Green Closet (.0274), Kristen Leo (.0174), and inspiroue (.0172) are intensively engaging with other content creators to develop subgroups with different degree of influence. Among them, My Green Closet is the most connected and influential content creators with 71,118 betweenness centrality while inspiroue has the quickest influence and access to the information with .62 closeness centrality. Thus, the statistics aligns to the visualization those with higher popularity are presented with larger nodes while those with lower degree of betweenness centrality are less connected with other figures.
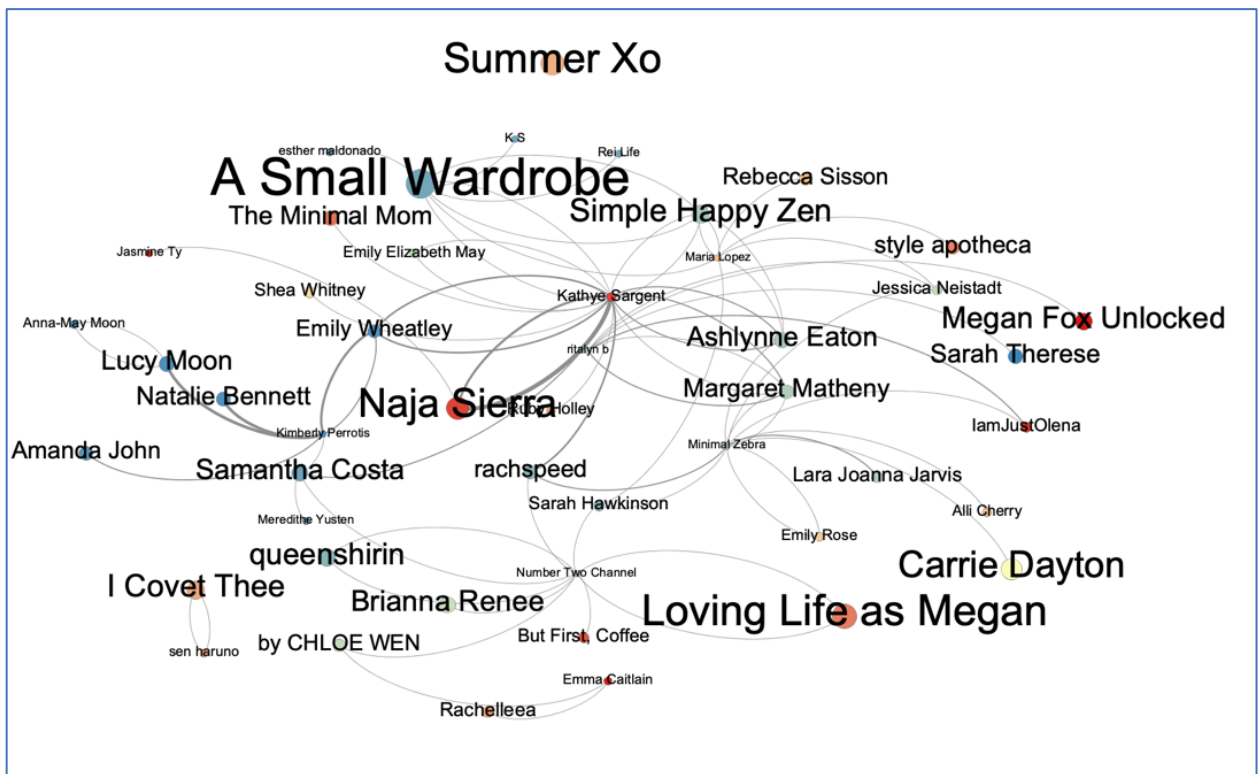
Figure 3 Significant members of slow fashion community on YouTube through the query of 'declutter wardrobe'

The degree range was covered from 7 to the end to focus on the relevant community collected through 'declutter wardrobe'. According to *Figure* 3, this niche is segmented into several subgroups with different color shown on the nodes. A Small Wardrove, Loving Life as Megan, and Naja Sierra are the most popular YouTubers involving abundant connection with other content creators and users whereas Summer Xo is less interactive with other figures in the community. In addition, A Small Wardrobe has the most densely interaction with more micro-

level content creators, such as esther maldondo. The network graph also indicates that the audience are highly participating in the community. For instance, Kathye Sargent, an active audience, is found to interact intensively with several YouTuber simultaneously, such as Naja Sierra and Emily Elizabeth May, which underlines parasocial interactions among the audience and content creators within this virtual community.

Channel	Subscriber	PageRank	Betweeness centrality	Clossness centrality
A Small Wardrobe	112k	0.0123	357592	0.23
Loving Life as Megan	139k	0.0095	634640	0.26
Summer Xo	167k	0.0091	1085	1.00
Naja Sierra	9100	0.0086	536180	0.25
Carrie Dayton	409k	0.0077	7992	1.00
Simple Happy Zen	138k	0.0062	461076	0.26
I Covet Thee	439k	0.0059	15141	1.00
queenshirin	12.6k	0.0056	212869	0.21
Megan Fox Unlocked	114k	0.0056	34390	1.00
Benita Larsson	95.5k	0.0055	67410	1.00
Brianna Renee	1.28m	0.0053	54386	1.00
Samantha Costa	17.3k	0.0051	16299	1.00
Eve Bennett	236k	0.0051	9615	1.00
Ashlynne Eaton	218k	0.0048	403750	0.26
Lucy Moon	295k	0.0047	12649	1.00
				Total Number of communities: 64

Figure 4 Top 10 influential YouTuber generating contents regarding declutter wardrobe

Based on the statistics, 64 communities retrieved from the keyword of 'declutter wardrobe' is found. A Small Wardrobe (.0123), Loving Life as Megan (.0095), Summer Xo (.0091), and Naja Sierra (.0086) are the most important YouTubers locating in the community with connection

among content creators owning smaller scale of followership. However, Summer Xo as one of the influential figures is found to connect less with others whose degree of betweenness centrality is significantly lower (1,085) and closeness centrality (1.00) is higher than other popular YouTubers of this community. This indicates Summer Xo is less connected and engaging within the group in terms of the access to information and the extent of influence in limited time. In comparison, Loving Life as Megan is the most connected YouTuber with 634,640 betweenness centrality while A Small Wardrobe has the lowest degree of closeness centrality (.23) who is an important figure to influence other members within the shortest period of time. Accompanying the results of visualization, the majority of the slow fashion content creators in this community are highly interacting with other YouTubers and audience based on the high degrees of betweenness centrality and entangled edges between the nodes. Summing up, Alexa Sunshine83, My Green Closet, Rhian HY, inspiroue, and A Small Wardrobe are the most popular slow fashion YouTubers in the community.

Channel	Subscriber	Number of edge	Replied comment	Commented video
Emily Elizabeth May	54.5k	808	807	1
Thrifts and Tangles	10.5k	244	243	1
ClassifiedColset	8460	735	734	1

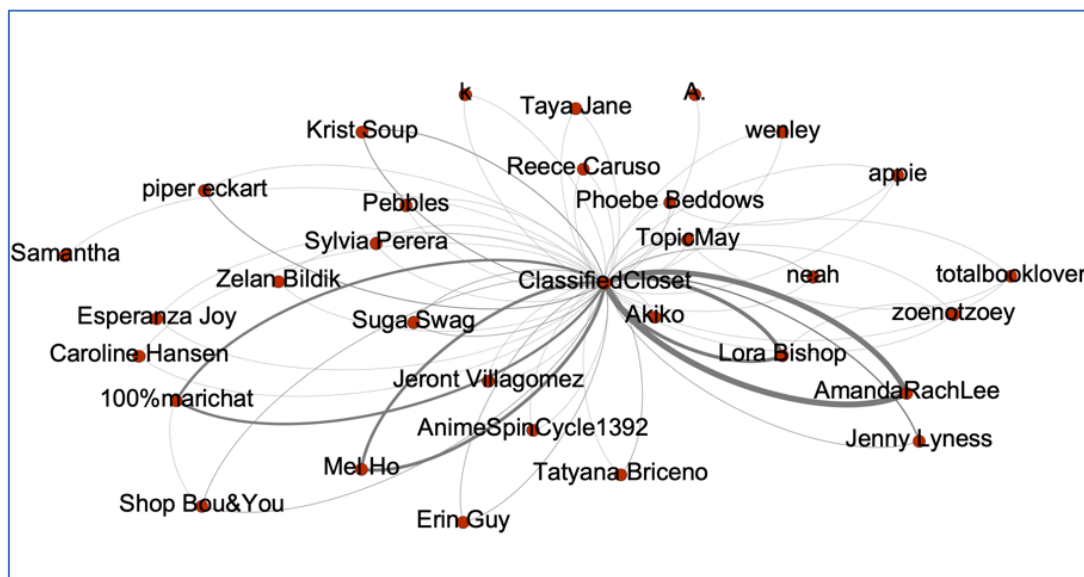*Figure 6 An overview of three selected YouTubers*

Figure 5 Audience Engagement of ClassifiedCloset
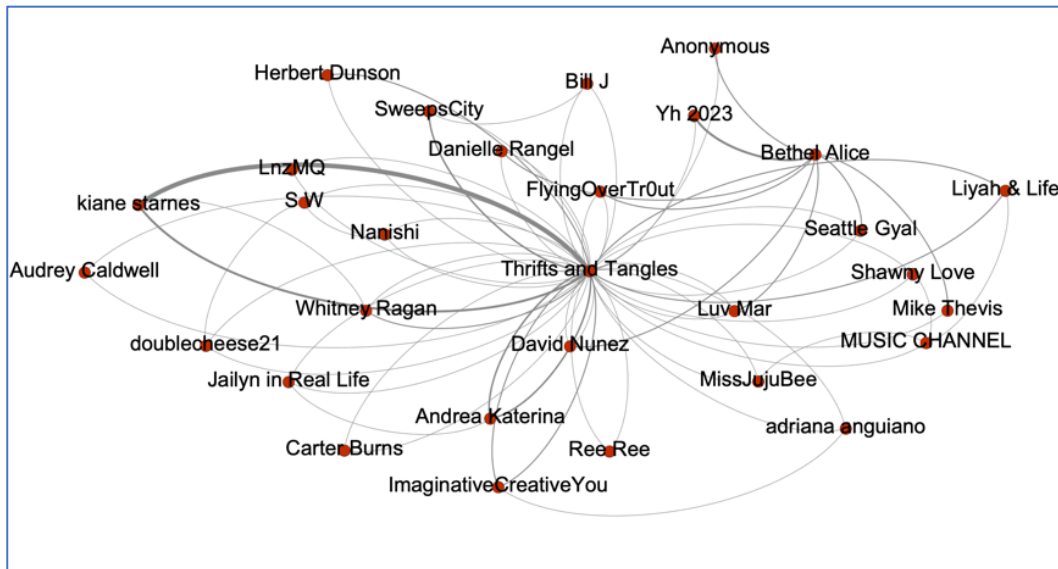
Figure 7 Audience Engagement of Thrifts and Tangles
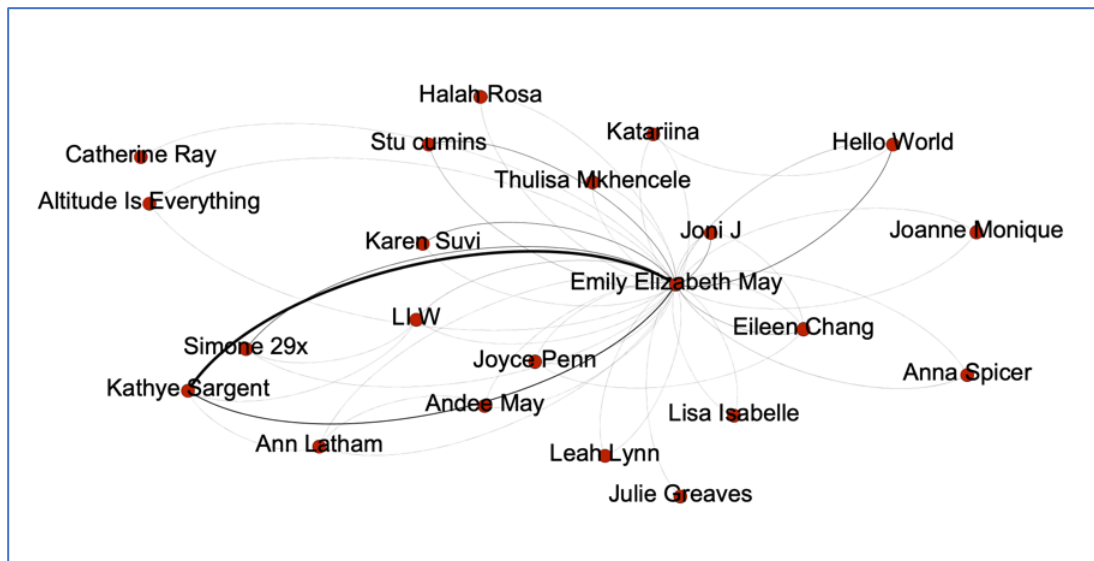
Figure 8 Audience Engagement of Emily Elizabeth May

Building upon the overall understanding of the slow fashion community on YouTube, individual connection is also worthy to be investigated to have a detailed understanding of personal engagement with other content creators. In this regard, the post-video discussion of three selected content creators are visualized as the above figures depicted. From Figure 6 to 8, the nodes represent the YouTuber users, while the edges refer to online interaction involving responding to the comments and commenting on the others' videos. The thickness of the edge indicates the frequency of the interaction between the YouTuber and the audience. Based on the statistics, these 3 YouTubers frequently reply to the comments instead of commenting on other

videos while engaging with the audience and other content creators. Firstly, Emily Elizabeth May, who has the most followers, is found to have 808 audience engagements between the connected YouTube users. Among the networking of Emily Elizabeth May, the connection with Kathye Sargent, is the most frequent one indicating a firm relationship between content creator and the follower, whereas the connections with other figures are less engaging. The networking of Thrifts and Tangles, however, is equally engaging with all of the connecting content creators with 244 edges (see Figure 7). ClassifiedCloset, on the other hand, is also quite engaging with the community as the network graph contains 735 edges. Her connections with Amanda RachLee, Lora Bishop, Mel Ho, and 100% marichat are significantly strong comparing to others. Thus, a general capture of connections among slow fashion YouTubers is realized through computational analysis. In sum, the figures 5-7 provide evidence for collaborations among fashion influencers and insights into their strategies for initiating an engaged audience.

To deeply immerse in the interaction of this niche, qualitative analysis is required to investigate the detailed approach of interaction. The following sections address the qualitative understanding of community development among slow fashion content creators.

4.2. Individual growth strategists and audience engagement

Figure 9 A YouTuber seeks tips for convincing loved ones to engage sustainability

Even though the arrival of social media enables content creators to share a diverse perspective to influence the audience's perception, some strategic approaches are adopted to sustain a positive growth of the subscribers and engagement among the followers (Abidin, 2015;

Duguay, 2019). Among the strategical approaches, the interactive features introduced by the social media platforms provide the microcelebrities an easy-to-access scenario to operate the rapid engagement with subscribers. Firstly, the usage of social media opens genuine conversations between the microcelebrities and the audience. For example, *Figure* 9 presents a YouTuber commenting on her video and encouraging audience to share their personal tips of inspiring people to engage in sustainability. This showcases that with the comment section on YouTube, the microcelebrities can easily seek advice from the followers, ranging from the recommendation of sustainable tips to thoughts about future contents. Moreover, some YouTubers may encourage their audience to leave comments regarding questions about the contents to have a more sophisticated conversation.

> *'I'm going to look into more on how to identify an ethical, ethical factory in the future, when I have time. So if you guys are interested to learn stuff like that, leave a comment down below.' (Nisa Fareeha, 2021)*
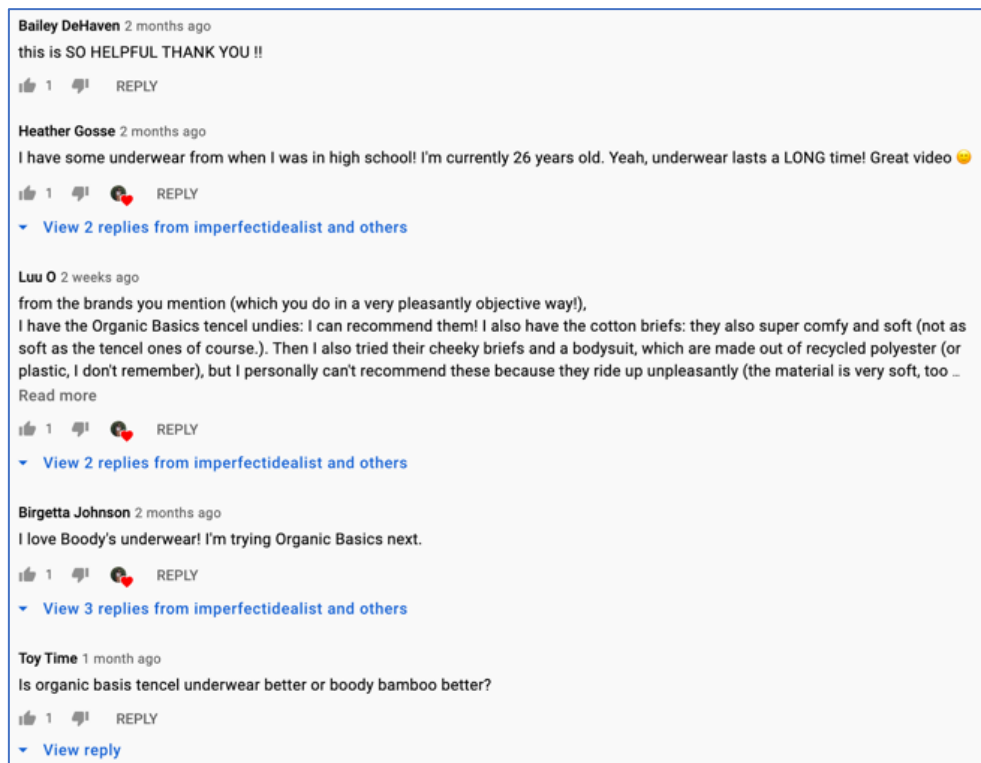

Figure 10 Audiences response to the YouTuber about user experience of sustainable product in the comment

Thus, it also opens a space for both audience and content creators to have direct

conversations regarding the videos or further questions about the slow fashion. To stimulate the conversation with the viewers, content creators generally encourage the audience to leave any questions in the comment section or send a personal message for advance discussion.

'*So of course, if you have more questions or if it's a topic, you'd like me to dive deeper into, I do go a little bit deeper on my blog, but I'm always happy to take the discussion further on here. So let me know. I hope that you found these tips helpful and encouraging.*' (Beltempo, 2021)

'*If you tried the brands in this video. I'd also love to hear your thoughts especially if it's one that I didn't personally try.*' (imperfectidealist, 2021)
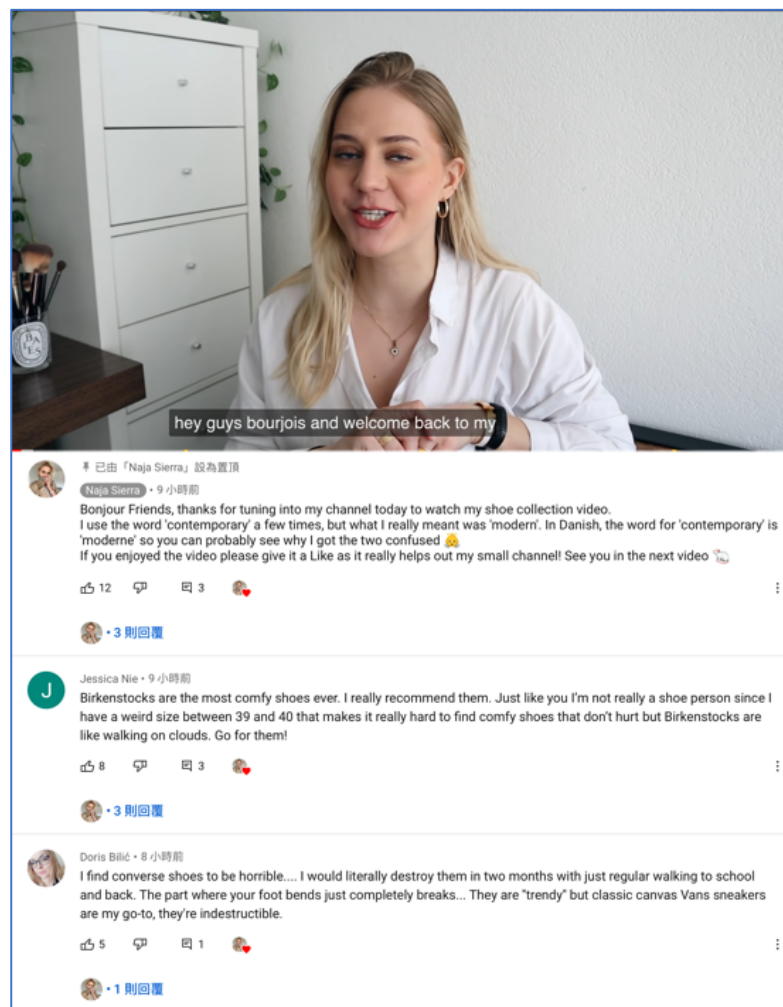

Figure 11 An influencer interacts with the audience by replying to many of the comment

Figures 11, thus, justifies the parasocial interaction between the comment audience sharing personal recommendation of slow fashion items and the response of the YouTuber. In this regard, it is commonly found that content creators reply or like the comment from the audience

to have a more organic engagement with the audience. Additionally, more intense conversation concerning the controversial issues of sustainability and social responsibility are initiated by the content creators under the uploaded video or visual contents as a space for opinion sharing as *Figure* 12 shown.
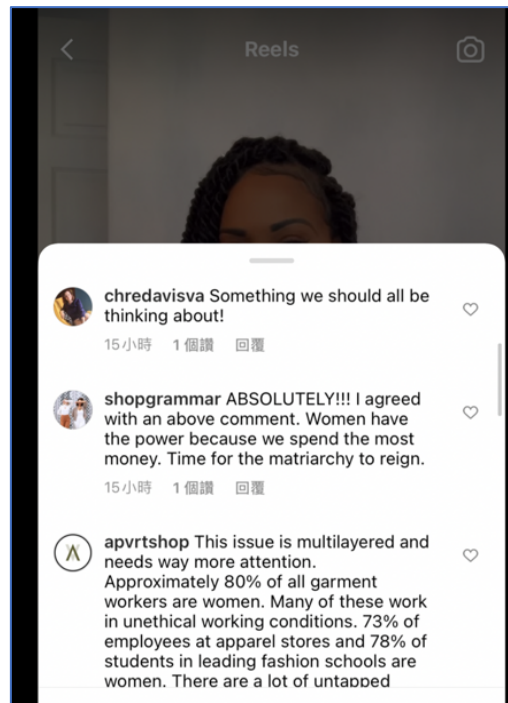
Figure 12 An interactive discussion about sustainable fashion and women responsibility initiated by an influencer through Instagram reel

In this regard, the content creators suggested that opening spaces for opinion sharing is one of the responsibilities of promoting sustainable fashion.

> *'I think it's important to open the conversation. Sometimes I feel like I have like a*
>
> *perspective to share that maybe I haven't seen.' - T, 20-year-old, New York.*

Consequently, an open space for perspective exchanging is taken place in the community built by the content creators which assists to grasp the public perception of slow fashion and other social issues conveyed by various voices.

Furthermore, responding directly to the comments generated by the audience may create an intimate relationship between the followers which helps form a sense of closeness among the audience. On some occasions, content creators are found to reshare the feedbacks of the followers or create videos as a form of response to the audience. According to the interview,

content creators suggest that being authentic while interacting with the followers is integral to maintain a good relationship with the audience.

> *'Anyone that sends me DMS, or whatsoever I try to, I try my best to make my relationship as authentic as possible.'- N, 24-year-old.*

Some content creators also indicate their passion in interacting with the followers through disclosing the process of responding to all of the personal messages which showcases a down-to-the-ground persona valuing the followers significantly. Moreover, such an intimate relationship developed between the content creators and audience can be found through the constant greeting to the followers represented by the microcelebrities. This includes sending greeting on social media in the morning to wish the audience having a nice day, being grateful for the support from followers and sharing the praise from the audience publicly with appreciation.

Figure 13 A screenshot of positive comments left under a YouTube video

With the multi-directional conversation presented on the social media, the slow fashion community is found to be supportive and positive compared to other niches. Based on the data retrieved during the participation observation, many loyal followers are found to leave comments in all of the videos generated by the microcelebrity. For instance, *Figure* 13 shows several positive comments left under one of the observed videos regarding slow fashion styling. Moreover, the interviewed microcelebrities also acknowledge this community is generally encouraging since such a topic is newly developed where everyone involved are growing together as a community.

> *'I think when you have more of like a niche topic, it does create kind of like, this small kind of like, particularly on Instagram, I felt like I have like a really small kind of like family bubble community on them.'- N, 27-year-old, London.*
> *'I think because everyone is aligned on a similar goal, it makes it easier to connect and yes, everyone, for the most part it's really genuine and everything with it.'- S, 23-year-old, California.*

Thus, unlike other online communities, slow fashion is such a niche where participators are learning to engage in sustainable lifestyle as a collective group with positive support for each other. In essence, more meaningful discussion and intense conversation regarding slow fashion, sustainability, and social issues happen within such a genuine and encouraging online space which in turn helps expand the scale of individual community built by the content creators.

4.2.1. Networking and relationship with other content creators

On the other hand, developing an online community also involves building connections with the other content creators. Within 30 days of netography, I could observe that many content creators support or cooperate with others microcelebrities to promote contents, which discloses the entangled networking within this community. This indicates that to broaden a niche community on virtual organizations, interacting with other content creators appears to be vital for increasing online engagement regarding slow fashion.

> *'It's starting to happen naturally… there's a couple accounts on Instagram who have like a similar size to me, you know, we've kind of started commenting on each other's photos and supporting each other that way. I think maybe as that relationship continues to*

develop, it'd be awesome to like, actually work on a collaboration of sorts'- BG, 20-year-
old, Virginia.

In this regard, content creators would initiate genuine contact with other influencer owning similar scale of followership through commenting their newly uploaded contents or sending direct messages.

'*Just making sure it comes from a genuine place to actually want to be friends with them because they seemed cool and whatever, rather than how many followers they have or something like that.'- SM, 23-year-old, Los Angeles.*

Except for commenting on the content represented by other microcelebrities, attending virtual and offline meetups organized by ethical fashion brands or existing community are approaches to build connection with content creators sharing same values.

'*Ambassador groups helps a lot more, I'm one of the ambassadors for meet the label, which is a sustainable and ethical brand. And with that, you have a lot of people who are either into environments outdoors, whatever, I interact with them, like we, we will usually follow each other, and then we would just DM.' - NF, 24-year-old.*

Figure 14 A YouTuber co-creates a thrifting video with another influencer

In this regard, some content creators are found to co-create contents or campaigns as *Figure* 14 shown. Through such interactions with other content creator, a supportive connection is built to conduct cross-channel promotion to appeal to more audience from each other's followership.

'I collab with other sustainable influencers or other influencers, we get a lot of likes, the other person's audience coming over to follow because it's relevant to what they care about....I share five on my YouTube channel, and she shared five on hers. And we're able to cross promote our audiences.'- TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.

Moreover, content creators coming from similar background are able to have a more profound conversation regarding current challenges and experience sharing to grow the channels together. For instance, since the payment rate of business commission is not transparent in general, some content creators are disbursed with less money and having hardships in negotiating with the brands. In this regard, one of the interviewed influencers launch series of YouTube videos and Podcast to share her experience as a guidance for other content creators struggling with this problem.

'I think...it is my way of being transparent as an influencer to like, this is, this is what I charge this is how I come up with a number and it helps other inspiring influencers figure it out, too.' - TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.

In addition, content creators with similar background and values are found to assemble groups to support each other. For instance, influencer communities concentrating on Black and other ethnic minorities microcelebrities are organized because some existing communities remain dominated by White people while the other ethnic groups feel distant.

'And it would be, you know, I would be the only black person at the event. I would just feel very, like, left out or like, the events wouldn't be very welcoming' - TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.

Given such a phenomenon some of YouTubers are dedicating to raise the awareness of Black and other ethnic minorities' influencer community which involves online activism against White supremacy and acknowledging the suppression against marginal groups (Brown, 2017; Colli, 2020). In this regard, a content creator's community focusing on ethnic minority is grouped both offline and online to increase the engagement and collective support from people sharing similar beliefs.

'I think we all bonded in the fact that we are the minority in the space, and we want people to be very welcome. And so, our group, and we invite, like, the minorities to come You know, this is the place where you can it's a safe space, you can be welcome.' - TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.

Even though the growth of networking with similar content creators provides a positive community where the microcelebrities are evolving simultaneously, competition with other can still be found due to individual's ambition in thriving the scale of attention from the audience.

> *'I've definitely encountered people where they feel very possessive over their brand. And if anyone else starts to kind of post similar stuff, or has a similar vibe, then they get like, really defensive.'- T, 20-year-old, New York*

In the meanwhile, some of the completion is attributed to personal pressure imposed by themselves while comparing to other channels and social media accounts.

> *'I want to set my own goals and be like, let's see how much I can grow…And then you do see like other people that are so on top of it, you're like I need it to get to their level. I need to I keep up.' - H, Brooklyn.*

Summing up, networking with content creators with similar values is essential for fashion YouTubers to promote sustainable fashion. The inner-circle community developed via networking can lead to positive influence upon mutual support and cross-channel promotion to increase the public attention on slow fashion, yet competitions resulted from personal desire and possession of the accounts is also found in such a niche.

4.3. Identity of microcelebrity

The identity perceived by the microcelebrities is highly related to the way of representing self-generated contents and strategies in engaging in the community (Abidin, 2015). Based on the finding collected during the observation, the identity of slow fashion microcelebrities can be primarily clustered into two categories: 1) content creator and 2) influencer. The former links to regular social media users with numbers of followers' attention while the latter is defined as an influential figure with the emphasis on the significant effect on the audience's perception of particular topics. Based on the findings, since the slow fashion community on social media remains niche comparing to other communities, the pool of followers is generally between medium and micro-level ranging from 2 million to hundreds of followers. Consequently, most of the microcelebrities focusing on slow fashion perceived themselves as content creators enjoying sharing distinct opinions upon social issues. They are reported to interact with online acquaintance as an ordinary user addressing personal experience of eco-friendly fashion consumption. This interview quote illustrates this tendency:

'*I think I definitely wanted to be clear that I'm not an expert. You know, I'm not like majoring in this and university I don't work in this field professionally, like for organization like fashion revolution or like a company…I kind of just tried to come at it as like, I, like I am a pretty average person, you know, like, how do I'm slow fashion and other elements of sustainability work... So, I kind of just try to show up, as, you know, myself, of course, and just, like, share how I'm able to make these things work for me.'* - BG, 20-year-old, Virginia.

Since these content creators perceive themselves as ordinary figures instead of expertise, some of the other microcelebrities claim to have negative perception upon the term 'influencer' since this title has been overemphasized without serious concern in the recent years.

'*I think that I'm one I don't think it's the right choice of word for that job. I just think that if any, like, yeah, influencers have influence, and a lot of that is positive. And that's great. But like, I feel like the word influencer is so powerful, and it deserves to be like used in a really serious way. And I think a lot of influencers don't like they will just promote whatever gets them money and, and fame. So, I don't love the word.'* - T, 20-year-old, New York.

On the other hand, some content microcelebrities identify themselves as influencer due to the empowerment granted by web 2.0. that all of the users are potentially influential to the online community through user-generated contents. In this regard, the distinguish between ordinary
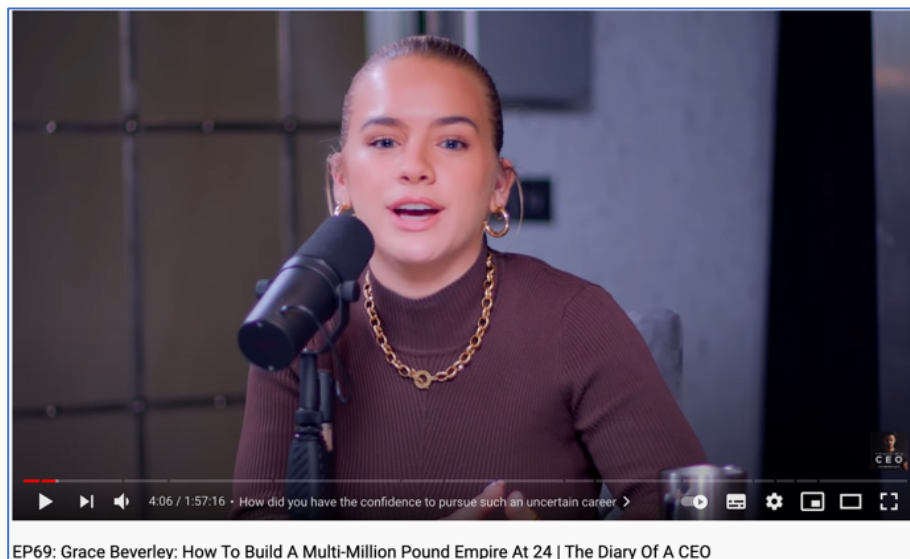

Figure 15 A YouTuber perceives herself as entrepreneur has an interview with another YouTuber about life as CEO

users and influencers is blurring due to the power of impact empowered by the social media platforms. Thus, anyone having knowledge upon various topics and social agenda are able to influence other users to a certain degree.

Additionally, it is found that the identity of microcelebrities may change throughout the expansion of the business on virtual organizations. For instance, as *Figure* 15 shown, one of the observed microcelebrities who now has launched an ethical fashion brands and publications regarding personal journey has altered her identity as an entrepreneur on the social media profile. Thus, the identity perceived by the microcelebrities are strongly linked to the development of the individual community in the online sphere that initially starts as a content creator, yet, through the growth of followership and business, the identity may alter based on the scale of the business. However, the identity of microcelebrities does not confined to the aforementioned forms but involves various persona during the constructure of individual channel according to the finding throughout participation observation. The other forms of identity can be divided into two types; the first one is activist of social movements while the other one relates to mental health advocator which can be attributed from great amount of social media usage and the relevant social change regarding cyberactivism and mental health awareness (Caren et al., 2020; Naslund et al., 2016). Thus, the following subsections will explain the findings thoroughly to investigate multiple forms of identity represented by the slow fashion content creators.

4.3.1. Social movement activist

Aside from presenting content related to slow fashion, the identity of those microcelebrities also involves other persona depicted on social media. For instance, since the social movement against Asian hatred occurred during the netnography session, the majority of the observed content creators are found to participate in the movement that social activist as another form of their identity is revealed accordingly. This confirms claims that social media is now utilized as an important venue for social activism to demonstrate distinct perspectives upon social issues (Caren et al., 2020). During the past few years, many celebrities, microcelebrities, and ordinary users are found to share specific social agendas on their accounts to showcase their opinions and concerns towards the ongoing social movements. This is perceived as a way to position personal identity in virtual organizations. Thus, the majority of the microcelebrities, especially those concentrating on slow fashion, are highly immersed in online social activism sharing relevant

content constantly. Such a finding aligns with the response of interviewees that slow fashion and sustainability are strongly linked to intersectional social issues, ranging from human rights, racial discrimination, to the problem of capitalism, they tend to be aware of multiple social issues and stress their opinion to support the marginal groups.

'Sustainability is such a broad term, and it opens so much other topics and nuances. And so when I consume a lot of things that talks about sustainability, there's a little bit of intersectionality within it, which talks about privilege and oppression.' - NF, 24-year-old.

In this regard, content connecting from sustainable fashion to human rights exploitation and racial issues are commonly found from content creators' accounts due to the intertwined relationship between those social issues that content creators find important to include on the channel.

'Because there's the issue of fast fashion and sustainability issue, there's the human rights and ethics issue. And that's so much of it, like all these clothes that are being made in sweatshops, and, you know, people that are developing diseases and cancers from, from what they're exposed to at work, and they're working, like all day, every day and in horrible conditions. And then, like, even learning more about it, and how like is tied in with racism, and all these all these different areas of justice that we need to work on are all super connected.' - T, 20-year-old, New York.
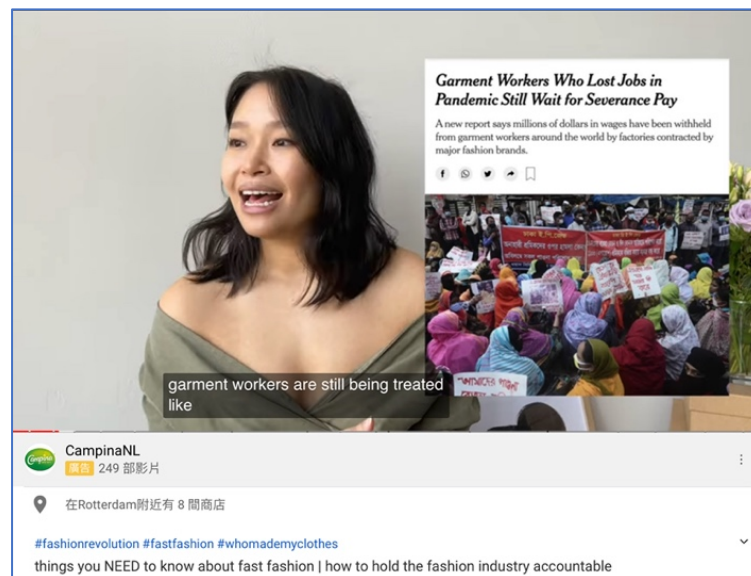

Figure 16 A YouTuber shares knowledge about fast fashion and ethical issues on human right

Concerning ethical and humane issues resulted from the prevalence of fast fashion, content creators also emphasize women's rights and safety with condemning of masculinity abounding in the societies. In essence, contents addressing the connection from sustainable awareness to misogynistic social norms and their effect on the environment commonly appears in the online slow fashion community. For example, *Figure* 16 is the YouTube video regarding fast fashion and its negative influence on human right.
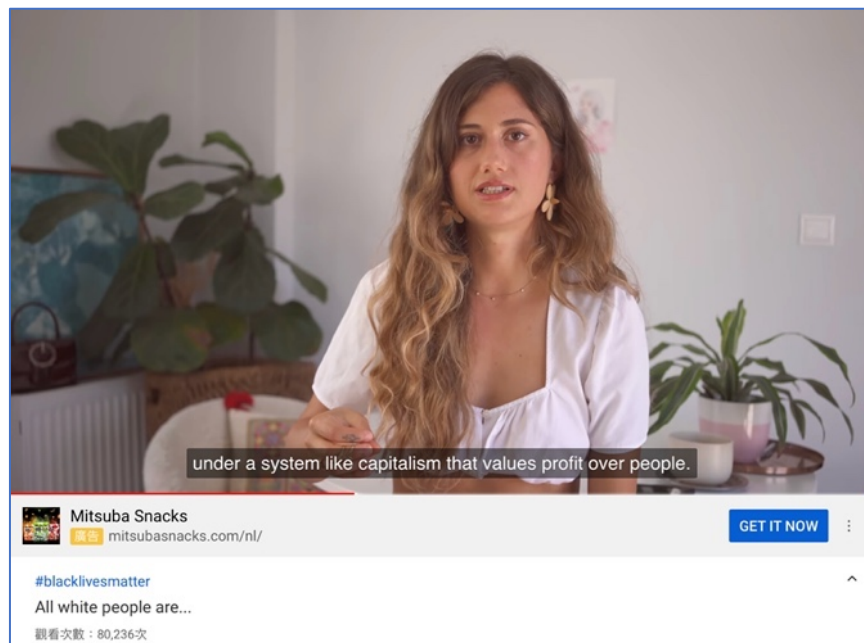

Figure 17 A slow fashion YouTuber generates a YouTube video about white supremacy and #BlackLivesMatter

Furthermore, racial issues are another topic acknowledged by content creators. During the participant observation, hatred against the Asian community has ascended significantly in USA, almost all of the observed content creators are found to share relevant posts to increase the awareness of this racial issue on daily basis. They even participate in the hashtag movement of #StopAsianHate emerged in cyberspace to boost public consciousness on this issue. Such support enables the social movement against racial discrimination to be exposed more effectively. Meanwhile, sharing related posts is regarded as a form of statement to demonstrate the perspective of particular social issues. Thus, addressing viewpoints on social issues and joining online social movements helps the audience to capture the standpoints of the content creator.

In this regard, since social movements happened in the online sphere are regularly taken place, joining that social demonstration is perceived as part of image development to showcase

the perspective. Such forms not only represent educational purpose in affecting the audience perception through influential image but also help build a clearer online image for the followers.

4.3.2. Mental health support

Except for promoting slow fashion and social movements, increasing mental health awareness through the posts is perceived as an approach in constructing an online identity by disclosing honest and positive encouragement for the audience (Naslund et al., 2016). According to the interviews with content creators, some of them are reported to face mental burnout and anxiety owing to the intense usage of social media.

Figure 18 An announcement of temporary leave from Instagram

> *'A lot of it's because I have work, and I have school... And then I have like content creation. So, when it comes to like allocating time, that's also a thing. But I think like my burnout is mostly because the things that I talk about can be triggering to me as a woman, as a woman of color. And especially when you listen to things like, oh, other people are dying, other people are hurting, animals are hurting all that kind of stuff. Of course, it hits so much. And you can be like, kind of depressed sometimes. So that's definitely the root of the cause... That's the whole time and emotion that you have to put through.' - NF, 24-year-old.*

Regards, due to the intensified immersion into the research of slow fashion and content creation, some of the content creators are found to disclose their mental health problem and announce a temporary leave owing to mental crisis. Based on the sharing provided by the interviewee, temporary leave from social media not only allows the content creator to rest, but also relates to the pursue of value represented on social media.

> *'I needed to take some time off... it was too much for me. And I like to only make videos, when I feel like I can when I'm being authentic and can like, share, honestly. And I felt*
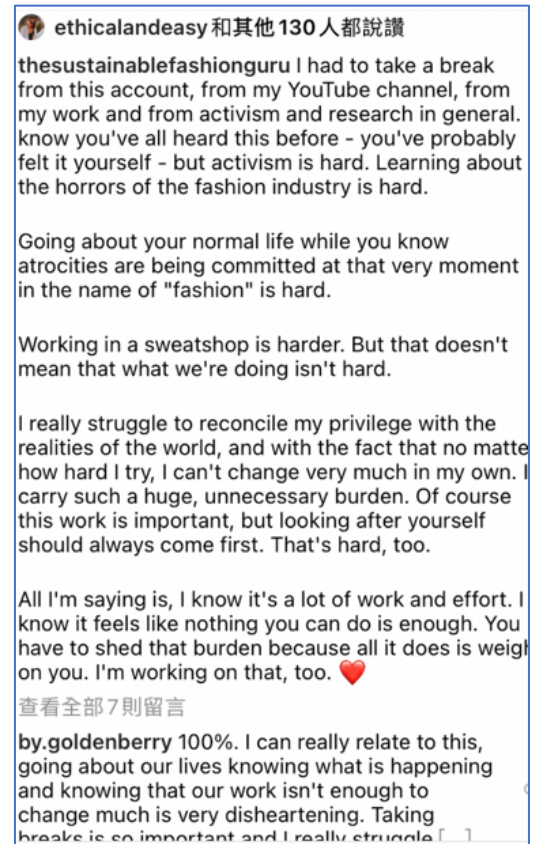
53

like if I made videos during that time, it would be inauthentic.' - T, 20-year-old, New York.
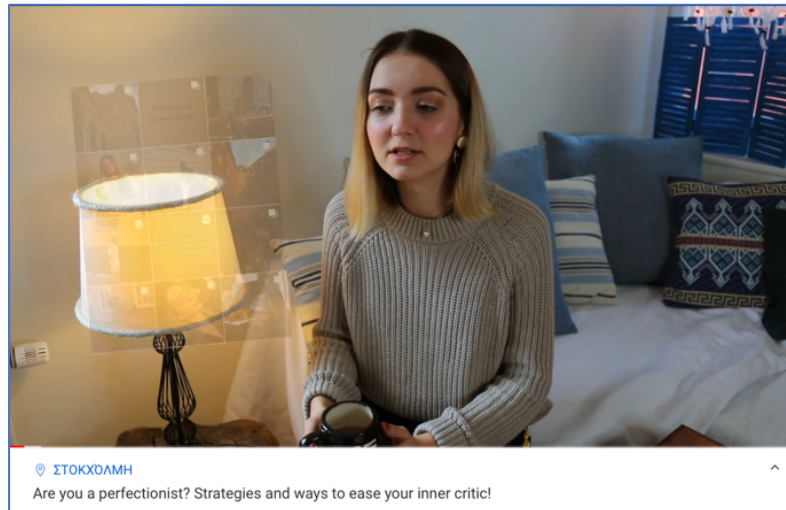

Figure 19 A slow fashion YouTuber shares tips dealing with mental health issues

Furthermore, some content creators who have been through mental illness tend to disclose the experience as a support for the audience who are suffering from similar symptoms. For example, *Figure* 19 shows a clip of video regarding mental struggles generated by an observed YouTuber which gives advice for audience suffering the same situation. In essence, it is commonly found that many content creators would share and make posts relating to mental health to give the audience support and guidance to deal with the illness and depression. Such a self-disclosing behavior does not only reinforce the authentic image but also assists people dealing with a similar situation to feel encouraged and comfortable due to the relatable bonding built by the content creators. Consequently, the other form of identity is embraced through the support of mental health raised via video contents.

To sum up, the diversified identities presented on social media enable slow fashion YouTubers to anchor their viewpoints firmly in the virtual organization appealing to more audience sharing similar opinions about social and mental health issues. Through the display of specific identities, content creators can develop their followership gradually to promote slow fashion to more audience.

4.4. Slow fashion promotion and eWOM creation

Individual account on social media is regarded as a brand for the content creator to showcase their values and characteristics. In essence, all of the contents, including visual story sharing,

videos, and texts, represent particular themes and objectives of the content creators to attract specific groups of audience. Applying this concept to slow fashion microcelebrities, promoting slow fashion and sustainability are the main subjects portrayed on their social media accounts to increase public awareness. In essence, contents including the educational purpose and user experience sharing of slow fashion products are commonly generated based on the observation. To acknowledge the fashion revolution to the audience, certain actions are strongly emphasized by the content creators in terms of self-research, fact checking, and primary selection to ensure content creation aligns to initial values of their virtual brand.

> '*I've turned many brands down. I mean, there's so many now that they you know, are trying to capitalize on influencer marketing, and they just don't even align with what I talk about whatsoever…but I'm not going to do it. It's not a company…aligns with my values.' - BG, 20-year-old, Virginia.*

Concerning the consistent value representation, slow fashion promotion is generally represented in a persuasive but authentic way to encourage to transit to sustainable alternatives. Regards, such a genuine representation involves series of efforts discussed in the following sections to promote slow fashion to the public.

4.4.1. Promotion of slow fashion and sustainability

To enhance public awareness of the slow fashion movement, the consistency of the contents is the primary objective to concentrate on topics of slow fashion and sustainability. This helps the audience identify the account easily which can increase the willingness of following. Secondly, aiming to raise the consciousness of the slow fashion revolution, contents involving educational acknowledgment of downsides of fast fashion and solutions are important to be mentioned through textual and visual components. To obtain such an educational purpose, content creators are inclined to utilize their profession and knowledge to share the pollutive, wasteful, and unethical facet of the fashion industry, including the negative impact of the pollutive material posing on the body.

> '*It says here the material can impact your vaginal health and synthetic materials such as nylon or any non-breathable material can lead to irritation, infection and rashes.' (Nisa Fareeha, 2021)*

Furthermore, some of the content creators claim that they have the responsibility to inform the reality of fast fashion to arouse the consciousness among the consumers.

> *'So now when I create content, I try to make it more educational. And try to share tips and my mission statement is give thrifting sustainability and your natural self a chance.'-TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.*

This links to another aspect that those content creators aim to inform consumer empowerment that individual purchase is believed to have ability to lead to the transformation of the fashion industry.

> *'The beauty of this is that everyone can participate.' (Alyssa Beltemo, 2021)*
> *'I know a lot that especially in PR brands are scared when consumers know what they want, or consumers know what's going on. So, ...in order for us to move as a society, we need to feel like we know we can do something, and we can as long as we have each other...Like, hey, you do have space. It's not just the big corporations.'- NF, 24-year-old.*

On the other hand, through reinforcing consumer consciousness of granted empowerment, content creators also acknowledge the power of employing creativity to style based on existing wardrobe without overconsuming garments brainwashed by fast fashion advertisements.

> *'I think it is so empowering to know that you can create so many cool outfit combinations. Using what you already have. Creativity is like a muscle. The more you use it, I think the stronger and more comfortable you get.' (Alyssa Beltemo, 2021)*

In this regard, introducing sustainable and ethical fashion lets the audience not only access to eco-friendly alternative for fashion consumption but also absorb more knowledge about this emergent fashion revolution that happened in recent years. For instance, informational content involves the clarification of common myths upon sustainable fashion materials, and how to distinguish green-washing strategies applied by fashion brands are also commonly stressed by slow fashion influencers.

> *'I created my cautious consumption series, just to be just to give more like knowledge and perspective to consumers, because green washing is a huge thing.' - NF, 24-year-old.*
> *'Recycled plastic bottles aren't the absolute most sustainable material as they release microplastics. Clothing can't be recycled indefinitely, unlike plastic bottles, but that being said, there aren't yet tons of good alternatives to synthetics for activewear and it's better for the polyester be recycled then new.'* (imperfectidealist, 2021)
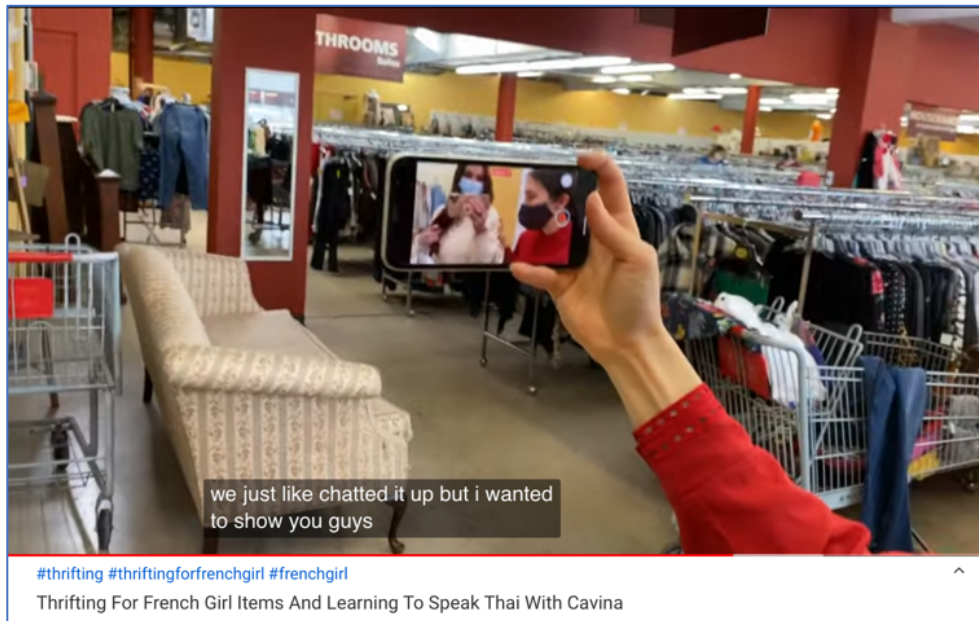
Figure 20 A clip shows the behind the scenes of a video collaborated with the other YouTuber

Meanwhile, being authentic is highly valued by the content creators while engaging with the audience since it can establish honest images to gain the trust of the followers. Such a value is especially crucial for contents linking user experiences of certain slow fashion items to stimulate the awareness of slow fashion brands and purchase intention. For example, to sustains an authentic presence on social media, disclosing partial behind-the-scenes of content creation also enhances the extent of an honest image built by the microcelebrities as *Figure* 20 shown.

Lastly, since multiple social media platforms have functioned for instrumental purposes, multi-platform management is commonly found from the observed content creators to ensure all of the contents are connected and accessible for the audience active on various social media sites. According to the interviews, multi-platform management results from different ecology of the platforms motivating the content creators to generate diverse interactive contents for each site. For instance, to include more profound and serious discussion upon slow fashion products, YouTube is regarded as the most suitable platform to upload, whereas Instagram is apted for more light-hearted and short contents. However, because the adoption of each platform varies a lot, the content creators are faced with several challenges in sustaining the operation of every social media accounts.

> *'...For YouTube, I find a lot easier because I post once a week...it doesn't feel like a task as much. Whereas with Instagram, sometimes I feel like it's easy to create content for the*

sake of creating content, just say like, oh, I got a post out this week, rather than creating stuff that you genuinely think is important to create.' - NF, 24-year-old.

Nevertheless, to maintain the growth of followership and audience engagement on social media, the influence of algorithms constantly renewed by the platform needs to be taken into account because it is highly related to the extent of exposure to the users. Under such a constrain, some content creators are forced to sacrifice partial interest of creativity to align the algorithm and sustain the scale of channel which strongly links to the revenues and rewarded business opportunities.

'Like some of my favorite videos that I made on YouTube were the more creative like movie style ones. And those always get the least number of views… It's that's also can be frustrating, because then I feel like in order to keep growing, I have to just keep like posting selfies or whatever, which can definitely be frustrating.'- T, 20-year-old, New York.

As a result, to build an attractive image in terms of promoting slow fashion on social media, not only genuine and consistent depiction involving education, convincing, and authentic contents need to be represented, but the concern of impact attributed to algorithm also needs to be considered simultaneously to enhance the scale of viewership under the accounts.

4.4.2. Behind-the-scenes of eWOM creation

In addition, when it comes to slow fashion products' eWOM creation, series of considerations are taken place to ensure the quality of content. Since slow fashion aims for sustainable and ethical manufacture, it is essential to endorse the brands which practice eco-friendly and ethical production. Moreover, since content creators perceive themselves as the mediators of slow fashion industry who promote more sustainable alternatives and brands to the consumer, they are found to feel responsible in recommending brands truly engaging in sustainable and ethical manners. With such objectives, the interviewees claim that in-depth research is conducted prior to the introduction of the collaborated fashion products.

'I'm the person who like does the research for… And there's greenwashing going on so…I see myself as an influencer as the person who does the research for you, shares the information and then you go off on your own and pick you know what works for you.' - TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.

The content creators are reported to have a process in researching the brands. Firstly, they would review the information provided by the firms cautiously to see if all of the evidence indicating sustainable production are shown. If not, the content creators would then ask for more information from the company to investigate if greenwashing is presented by the company.

> *'I would go on their website after their website, this is such a PR thing to do… I would look for their news, if they have any scandals or whatsoever. And if the brands don't really have that… I would ask them directly, and sometimes they would give like, a fact sheet of what ingredients they use or what they do. And from there, I would just copy paste, and just Google. It's just a lot of googling to make sure. And if I don't know something very much, I will always tell my audience like, this sounds great. But keep in mind, like maybe there's more to it.' - N, 27-year-old, London.*

This fact-checking process evolves with time and experience. According to the response of interviewees, owing to the accumulated experience of brand research, it now consumes less time in distinguishing legitimate and greenwashing brands.

> *'…you know, clicked on their website. And honestly, if it's not pretty clear, just from that first home page, I don't think that that brand really has a sustainable focus.' - N, 27-year-old, London.*

Secondly, aligning individual values is vital in selecting product endorsements. Despite those values may vary from the content creators, there are several standards are commonly emphasized by the majority of the content creators for promoting slow fashion brands. For example, most of the content creators suggest that they merely recommend products used and adored by themselves, thus, price accessibility is one of the concerns that the majority of the audience are able to engage in slow fashion through consumption.

> *'I want to make sure that I actually use this brand.' - NF, 24-year-old.*
> *'I also like a with that price point, because, like I said, some ethical stuff is really expensive. And my content is about thrifting. And so, I have to make sure it's affordable for my audience.' - TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.*

Conducting transparent and sustainable campaign initiated by the brands is another aspect accentuated by the content creators. For instance, when making eWOM videos about slow fashion products, the content creators are prone to highlight the degree transparency of the

information and relevant sustainable campaigns as reference for the social responsibility proposed by the firms.

> *'...here are some ethical and sustainable options to consider if they're accessible to you. Nikki has a lot of great things going for it for one, the company is extremely transparent. They traced all of their supply chain which often doesn't happen even with more sustainable brands...'* (imperfectidealist, 2021)

> *'They have a recycling program where they partner up with a local NYC nonprofit to safely recycled your retired underwear and making sure to avoid the landfill.' (Nisa Fareeha, 2021)*

Materials and size inclusivity are also perspectives that often mentioned by the content creators as recommending the items towards the audience.

> '…they're using a certified organic cotton and non-toxic material.' *(Nisa Fareeha, 2021)*

> *'...what I'm starting to be more aware is would be the sizes, because I'm in the size medium. You know, it's so easy to forget, like some people need like triple XL. Yeah, so I need to incorporate more like, oh, if they're size inclusive, or they're not size inclusive.' - NF, 24-year-old.*

Remarkably, from the consumer's perspective, the extent of comfortability is considered as one of the most important criteria for clothing. Thus, content creators are found to constantly share their user experience upon how comfortable the slow fashion clothes are while wearing them.

> *'I'm usually not a huge fan of normal bras but this bra was comfortable, and I didn't notice it that much when I was wearing it, which is always the goal*.' (imperfectidealist, 2021)

On top of that, the ethnic of the owner of the slow fashion brand is valued by some content creators. This links to the recent social movement against racial discrimination and advocation for feminism taken placed in USA, thus, the content creators are more willing to support companies owned by ethnic minorities as an action to support the racial issues.

> *'Sometimes I like to think about the founder. Are you black owned or Asian oAh, that's important for me, or are women owned? I want to know more of that.' - NF, 24-year-old.*

As a result, to represent an eWOM format of content relating to slow fashion products, serious fact-checks and selection are taken place behind the scenes which highlights the responsibility of mediators embraced by the content creators to introduce more trustworthy slow fashion options

for the consumers. In this regard, the consumers can refer to that eWOM as the reference to determine the choice of purchase.

4.4.3. Sponsorship incorporation

With the in-depth research and internal selection conducted by the content creators, those eWOM contents spark honest images to increase the degree of trustworthiness among the audience. Nevertheless, considering business collaboration with the companies, it would be challenging to incorporate the expectation of the brands with authentic eWOM. Based on the interview, some of the interviewees mention that intense communications often happen while co-working with a brand to promote certain slow fashion products through self-generated contents. Once the content creators try on the gifted products, they would send an initial draft of the eWOM format to the company to discuss further details.

> *'I always send that to the brand first as well, so the brand can look it over and be happy with it because I wouldn't want to post anything that necessarily isn't representative of the brand… But then the brand would be like, oh, we wish you'd done something like this. So, I'll always send over the content, both the description and the pictures fast over to the brand, let them have a look, see if they're okay with it.' - N, 27-year-old, London.*

However, some content creators claim their autonomy remain empowered as negotiating with the companies when generating authentic eWOM for the audience. Notably, a few content creators share that without monetary obligation, they have freedom in determining whether to create eWOM related to the gifted slow fashion items. Thus, they remain independent in sharing honest user experience with consumers.

> *'I will tell them, you know, I don't follow scripts, you can give me talking points I am in usually beforehand, they'll let you send like this is what I want to say the only time I've ever had…' - TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.*

In this regard, content creators are found to incorporate realistic product reviews in their videos to show the audience all of the advantages and disadvantages of the sustainable products discovered from personal experience. In the meantime, if the content creators dislike certain items, they will refine the description into a more mutual tone concerning the relationship with the brands.

> *'I'm a kind of person if I have a problem. If I don't like a brand of a specific product, I would like to give them a solution or an alternative how to use it. Because I want to maintain that relationship with a brand.' - NF, 24-year-old.*

By doing so, videos of eWOM remain honest in sharing detailed review upon the products while the contents are balanced without being too persuasive and unrealistic. Regards, the collaborated and sponsored contents stay attractive and valuable for the consumers considering to purchase slow fashion products.

The other hand, concerning the impact of disclosing sponsorship within the contents, all of the interviewees find revealing business facet can lead to positive perception among the audience.

> *'I think for my audience, my audience is so supportive when I get an ad. They're like, they engage even more on the act, because they're happy that I'm, you know, able to get these brand deals. And I'm growing as a creator because they were with me before I ever had sponsors. Yep. So, my audience doesn't get mad when I post ad you know, and I think if you're transparent about it, like, I mean, you're it's the law like you're supposed to be transparent. Yeah, I think they trust you even more…' - TC, 26-year-old, Los Angeles.*
> *'I think it's good in one aspect because people are able to know more sustainable brands that they can turn to, and they can support.' - S, 23-year-old, California.*

According to the expression shared by those content creators, disclosing advertisement for the brands is regarded as an honest action in representing eWOM contents while introducing more slow fashion brands for the audience to engage in. Furthermore, as it is mentioned previously, slow fashion community is generally supportive and positive. The followers are found to be more engaging and delight as the content creators are able to gain monetary commission with the brands.

To sum up, the values and quality of the brand are considered profoundly while selecting product endorsement and sponsorship for eWOM creation. Firstly, slow fashion YouTubers generally conduct research and make factcheck to determine whether the production of the items corresponds to the brands' ethical and sustainable statements. Secondly, the accessibility and quality of the items are measured to ensure the presented products aligns the values addressed by the YouTubers. In addition, personal try-on is always conducted by the YouTubers to make genuine user experience of those fashion items. Lastly, disclosure of sponsorship and authentic

eWOM is essential for the slow fashion YouTubers to promote sustainable fashion to potential customers.

5. Conclusions

This study illustrates the slow fashion community on YouTube, including the most influential YouTubers and the relevant connections, to understand the development of this niche community. Simultaneously, slow fashion YouTubers' approaches to promote sustainable fashion incorporated through perceived identities and sponsored eWOM contents is investigated. The results from both quantitative and qualitative analysis help capture the role of this existing niche for introducing eco-friendly alternatives to the audience. Based on the quantitative results, there are 61 and 64 communities on YouTube respectively found through the queries of 'ethical fashion' and 'declutter wardrobe', the popular themes presented by slow fashion YouTubers. Within those communities, Alexa Sunshine83, My Green Closet, A Small Wardrobe, and Loving Life as Megan are the most influential slow fashion YouTubers actively interacting with clustered groups involving other YouTubers and their audiences. This answers the first sub-question. Meanwhile, the analysis of individual community composed by the selected interviewees indicates dynamic interaction that reciprocal communication with the audiences through constant responding to the comments is found to showcase the multi-directional engagement in the community. Thus, the online communities hold entangled connections among slow fashion YouTubers and users to promote content related to sustainable fashion.

The result from qualitative analysis, on the other hand, provides answers to the main question. The community developed by YouTubers can be segmented into individual followership and networking with other content creators. The latter is significantly crucial for the content creators to have mutual support and collaboration within the community. Aligning previous studies, constant replying to comments left by the audience, and genuine interaction are involved to build an intimate relationship between content creators and followers (Abidin, 2016; Chapple & Cownie, 2017; Kim et al., 2018). Under this basis, this niche is reported to be a supportive and positive community where the followers and YouTubers are growing together as an organic group to promote slow fashion. Since online networking is highly emphasized by creative laborers emerged from virtual organizations, connections with content creators with similar scale is commonly found among slow fashion YouTubers (Abidin, 2015). Despite commenting and sharing each other's videos, attending networking venues and organizations enable slow fashion influencers to bridge the connection with other content creators (Lange, 2019). Due to the pandemic, most of the networking sessions have been moved to the online

sphere instead of offline activities which differs from existing theories. Through these connections, content creators can cross-promote the collaborated content, such as videos and campaigns, to the followers from each other's pool (Brydges & Sjöholm, 2019). Furthermore, content creators sharing similar values and backgrounds, including ethnic and objectives, tend to compose an inner-circle community to support each other. Even though the networking among slow fashion content creators is generally positive, competitions can still be found within the community according to the interviewees. Especially, one of the interviewees acknowledges the racial gap within the influencer community highlighting the downside of the community rarely mentioned by the previous research.

Aside from investigating the slow fashion community on social media, the identity represented by those content creators is highly related to perceived images on social media. Corresponding to the theories, most of the slow fashion YouTubers identify themselves as content creators with little difference from regular users whereas a few regarding themselves as influencers and entrepreneurs emphasizing the power of influence on the audience (Abidin, 2015; Bahcecik et al., 2019; Ewers, 2017). This shows the identity of microcelebrities may differ depending on the scale of the channel. Meanwhile, the slow fashion content creators are found to share multiple identities simultaneously, including the identities of being social activists and mental health advocators. In this regard, the majority of the observed YouTubers are reported to share opinions towards social movements, ranging from Black Lives Matter (BLM), Stop Asian Hate, to the demonstration against misogynism (Caren et al., 2020; Cornet et al., 2017; Poel & Bora, 2013). Mental health discussion is another aspect uncovered by the slow fashion YouTubers to raise awareness of the mental illness and social media burnout symptoms (Charoensukmongkol, 2016; Hebben, 2019). Such a phenomenon can be explained by the intersectional relationship between the social issues that occurred during the generation of informational content relating to sustainable fashion. These represented personae are part of image construction influencing the perception of the audience. This can reinforce the distinct image aimed by the slow fashion influencer to attract more audience for the purpose of sustainable fashion promotion.

With the community and perceived identities developed by the slow fashion YouTubers, content promoting slow fashion products can be conveyed in more persuasive ways to appeal to potential consumers. However, a series of considerations are involved prior to the content

generation which answers the second sub-question. Firstly, the values set by the YouTubers are taken into account while endorsing slow fashion items. This includes consistency, informative and educational purpose, transparency, authenticity which can arouse public consciousness of sustainable fashion and consumer power (Brydges & Sjöholm, 2019; Jerslev, 2016; Vear, 2020). Secondly, in-depth research and primary selection are conducted while determining business collaboration with brands to ensure the representation of eWOM meets ethical and sustainable standards. Namely, aligning personal values, such as zero waste, ethical production, and diversity, is crucial for slow fashion microcelebrities to cooperate with brands. Lastly, the concern of algorithms and public perception highly relate to the presentation of the videos (Argyris et al., 2020; Childers, 2019; Stubb et al., 2019). Even though disclosing sponsorship is found to be positive for slow fashion YouTubers, the influence of algorithm may hinder creative production in terms of aesthetic presentation and topics which challenges those content creators. In this regard, a great amount of effort is made to ensure the contents are attractive to both audience and the platforms while introducing slow fashion through eWOM.

Based on the evidence studied, I argue that the researched fashion influencer utilize the social media to interactively engage with the audience and other influencer to increase the attention of slow fashion in the virtual organizations. Networking with other influencers enables the slow fashion community to grow through the mutual support involving content sharing and collaboration. Development of distinct identities on social media also assists slow fashion YouTubers to be identified through the acknowledge of sustainable fashion and social activism increasing the awareness of slow fashion. Moreover, eWOM contents regarding sustainable fashion products provide access to sustainable fashion brands through the authentic user experience. Thus, slow fashion products are promoted accordingly by the fashion influencers to increase public awareness of sustainable revolution which answers the main research question.

5.1. Implication

The finding of this research demonstrates the existing YouTube community focusing on slow fashion and its way to enhance public awareness of sustainability through eWOM content. It provides evidence to bridge the gap of the marketing approach adopted by sustainable fashion brands and relevant creative industries in the academic fields. In this regard, the operations of social media for developing a slow fashion community between the audience and content

creators is profoundly understood to enhance the knowledge about microcelebrities' community. Furthermore, the diverse identities embraced by the slow fashion YouTubers have enhanced the scientific understanding of different digital identities represented in virtual organizations. Lastly, the results indicate fundamental information about the involved inputs behind the content creation for promoting slow fashion items. It offers an academic understanding of the approaches applied by creative laborers, including the concern of value, aesthetics, and algorithm, to endorse business commission through eWOM formats. Consequently, this research strengthens the theoretical insight into the overall slow fashion community in the creative field and the emergent marketing approach of advertising sustainable products through user-generated contents.

In addition, the outcome of this research has broadened the societal understanding of the connected community and presented identities of slow fashion on social media. This validates the intertwined social agendas spread between microcelebrities and the connected community to ascend public consciousness about sustainability and related social issues. Moreover, realizing the creation of eWOM adopted by slow fashion YouTubers has revealed the marketing strategies in endorsing creative products in eWOM videos resulted from a series of considerations incorporated by the content creators. This helps comprehend the strategical model applied by the creative laborers to raise the consumption intention and brand awareness among the audiences. In this regard, this research provides thorough information for the creative industry, especially for sustainable-focused brands, to gain insights regarding the operation of microcelebrities and the generation of product recommendations in the digital sphere.

5.2. Limitations and future research

Even though this research has provided thick information about the slow fashion community and their eWOM creation on YouTube, there are several limitations found in this research needed to be addressed. Firstly, concerning the representation of intersectional social agendas that emerged significantly in recent years, the understanding of the influence caused by the microcelebrities' opinion sharing is lacking. In essence, since many of the slow fashion content creators have participated several social movements relating to racial and environmental injustice, the motivation behind these actions can be investigated furtherly to illustrate the connected relationship among different social issues and online activism. Additionally, although advocating mental illness through creative content has been found in this study, the intertwined

reasons and its influence on the public perception viewed by the audience remain little. Thus, future research is advised to dive into the diverse discourse of social issues and mental health awareness raised by the microcelebrities to realize the effect on the audience.

Secondly, according to the interview, multiple-platform management is become essential for creative laborers to expand the scale of business, however, the various forms of eWOM contents incorporating product sponsorships on different social media sites are scarcely studied in the academic fields. Namely, due to the rapid change of informational technology, the dominant approach to introduce eWOM on distinct platforms may alter over time, thus, research focusing on different eWOM presentations on social media sites can be furthered conducted to realize multi-platform management proposed by microcelebrities.

Lastly, since this research primary concentrates on the content creator's perspective whereas its effect on the consumers' perception and consumption intention of slow fashion remain limited, future studies are recommended to investigate the image depicted by slow fashion remain limited, future studies are recommended to investigate the correlation between the image depicted by slow fashion content creators and its influence on the audience in general. In this regard, a comprehended capture of slow fashion promotion through eWOM generated by content creators can be understood from both microcelebrities' and the audiences' perspectives via quantitative and qualitative research.

Reference List:

Abidin, C. (2015). Communicative Intimacies: Influencers and Perceived
    Interconnectedness. *Ada*, *8*, 1-16. http:// adanewmedia.org/2015/11/issue8-abidin/

Abidin, C. (2016). "Aren't these just young, rich women doing vain things online?":
    Influencer selfies as subversive frivolity. *Social Media+ Society*, *2*(2), 1-17.
    https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305116641342

Abidin, C. (2017). Influencer extravaganza. In L. Hjorth, H. Horst, A. Galloway, & G.
    Bell (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography* (pp. 159-169). Leiden:
    Taylor & Francis.

Adu, P. (2019). *A Step-By-Step Guide to Qualitative Data Coding*. Milton Park:
    Routledge.

Akhtar, N., & Javed, H. (2014, April). Social Network Analysis Tools. *2014 Fourth
    International Conference on Communication Systems and Network Technologies*, 388-
    392. https://doi.org/10.1109/csnt.2014.83

ALNefaie, M., Khan, S., & Muthaly, S. (2019). Consumers' electronic word of
    mouth-seeking intentions on social media sites concerning Saudi bloggers' YouTube
    fashion channels: an eclectic approach. *International Journal of Business Forecasting
    and Marketing Intelligence*, *5*(1), 1-22. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBFMI.2019.099000

Argyris, Y. A., Wang, Z., Kim, Y., & Yin, Z. (2020). The effects of visual congruence on
    increasing consumers' brand engagement: An empirical investigation of influencer
    marketing on Instagram using deep-learning algorithms for automatic image
    classification. *Computers in Human Behavior, 112*, 1-15.
    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106443

Bahcecik, Y. S., Akay, S. S., & Akdemir, A. (2019). A Review of Digital Brand Positioning
    Strategies of Internet Entrepreneurship in the Context of Virtual Organizations:
    Facebook, Instagram and Youtube Samples. *Procedia Computer Science, 158*, 513-522.
    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2019.09.083

Berthod, O., Grothe-Hammer, M., & Sydow, J. (2017). Network ethnography:
    A mixed-method approach for the study of practices in interorganizational settings.
    Organizational Research Methods, *20*(2), 299–323. doi: 10.1177/1094428116633872.

Boeije, H. (2010). Analysis in qualitative research. New York: Sage.

Born, G., & Haworth, C. (2017). Digital ethnography and online research methods—
A tale of two global digital music genres. In L. Hjorth, H. Horst, A. Galloway, & G. Bell
(Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*, (pp. 70-86). Oxfordshire:
Routledge.

Bowen, G. (2008). Grounded theory and sensitizing concepts. *International Journal of
Qualitative Methods, 5*(3), 12–23.

Boxman-Shabtai, L. (2019). The practice of parodying: YouTube as a hybrid field of cultural
production. *Media, Culture & Society*, *41*(1), 3-20.
https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443718772180

Brown, M., Ray, R., Summers, E., & Fraistat, N. (2017). # SayHerName: A case study of
intersectional social media activism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 40*(11), 1831-1846.
https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1334934

Brydges, T., & Sjöholm, J. (2019). Becoming a personal style blogger: Changing
configurations and spatialities of aesthetic labour in the fashion industry. *International
journal of cultural studies*, *22*(1), 119-139. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877917752404

Chapple, C. & Cownie, F. (2017). An investigation into viewers' trust in and
response towards disclosed paid-for-endorsements by YouTube lifestyle vloggers.
Journal of Promotional Communications, 5(2), 110-136.
http://promotionalcommunications.org/index.php/pc/index

Caren, N., Andrews, K. T., & Lu, T. (2020). Contemporary social movements in a hybrid media
environment. *Annual Review of Sociology, 46*, 443-465. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-
soc-121919-054627

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing Grounded Theory*. London: Sage.

Charoensukmongkol, P. (2016). Mindful Facebooking: The moderating role of mindfulness on
the relationship between social media use intensity at work and burnout. *Journal of
health psychology, 21*(9), 1966-1980. https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105315569096

Chetioui, Y., Benlafqih, H., & Lebdaoui, H. (2020). How fashion influencers contribute to
consumers' purchase intention. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An
International Journal, 24*(3), 361-380. https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-08-2019-0157

Childers, C. C., Lemon, L. L., & Hoy, M. G. (2019). # Sponsored# Ad: Agency perspective on

influencer marketing campaigns. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising,*
40(3), 258-274.

Cernansky, R. (2020, December 17). From circularity to climate change: Sustainable
fashion in 2020. *Vogue Business*. Retrieved from https://www.voguebusiness.com/

Colli, F. (2020). Indirect consumer activism and politics in the market. *Social Movement*
Studies, *19*(3), 249-267. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2019.1662286

Cornet, V. P., Hall, N. K., Cafaro, F., & Brady, E. L. (2017, May). How image-based social
media websites support social movements. In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference*
Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems (pp. 2473-2479).
https://doi.org/10.1145/3027063.3053257

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research Design: Qualitative,*
Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. London: Sage.

De Choudhury, M., Jhaver, S., Sugar, B., & Weber, I. (2016, March). Social media participation
in an activist movement for racial equality. In *Proceedings of the International AAAI*
Conference on Web and Social Media, 10(1), 92-101. Retrieved from
https://ojs.aaai.org/index.php/ICWSM/article/view/14758

Delamont, S. (2011). Ethnography and participant observation. In C. Seale, G.Gobo,
J. F. Gubrium & D. Silverman (Eds), *Qualitative Research Practice* (pp. 205-217).
London: Sage.

Davis, N. (2020, April 7). Fast fashion speeding toward environmental disaster, report
warns. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/

Duffy, B. E., & Hund, E. (2015). "Having it all" on social media: Entrepreneurial
femininity and self-branding among fashion bloggers. *Social Media+ Society*, *1*(2), 1-11.
https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305115604337

Duguay, S. (2019). "Running the Numbers": Modes of microcelebrity labor in queer
women's self-representation on Instagram and Vine. *Social Media+ Society*, *5*(4), 1-11.
https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305119894002

Eisend, M., van Reijmersdal, E. A., Boerman, S. C., & Tarrahi, F. (2020). A meta-analysis of the
effects of disclosing sponsored content. *Journal of Advertising, 49*(3), 344-366.
https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2020.1765909

Elmhirst, S. (2019, April 5). It's genuine, you know?: why the online influencer

industry is going 'authentic'. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from

https://www.theguardian.com/

Ewers, N. L. (2017). *# Sponsored–Influencer marketing on Instagram: An snalysis of the effects of sponsorship disclosure, product placement, type of influencer and their interplay on consumer responses* (Master's thesis, University of Twente).

http://purl.utwente.nl/essays/72442

Fletcher, K. (2010). Slow fashion: An invitation for systems change. *Fashion Practice, 2*(2),

259-265. https://doi.org/10.2752/175693810X12774625387594

Garner, S. (2021, May 6). Slow fashion is back: How environmental sustainability becomes the

hottest trend this season. *E27*. Retrieved from https://e27.co/

Guest, G., & Namey, E. (2015). Public health research methods. *SAGE Publications, Inc*.

https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781483398839

Han, B. (2018). Social media burnout: Definition, measurement instrument, and why we care.

Journal of Computer Information Systems, 58(2), 122-130.

https://doi.org/10.1080/08874417.2016.1208064

Haug, A., & Busch, J. (2016). Towards an ethical fashion framework. *Fashion Theory*, *20*(3),

317-339.

Hebben, L. (2019). *# mentalhealth: The effect of influencer messages on burnout self-diagnosis and the intention to act* (Master's thesis, University of Twente, The Netherlands).

Retrieved from https://essay.utwente.nl/80096/

Helmond, A. (2016). The Platformization of the Web: Making Web Data Platform Ready. *Social Media+ Society, 1*(2). doi:10.1177/2056305115603080

Hetland, P., & Mørch, A. I. (2016). Ethnography for investigating the internet. *Seminar.Net, 12*(1). Retrieved from https://journals.oslomet.no/index.php/seminar/article/view/2335

Hwang, H., & Kim, K. O. (2015). Social media as a tool for social movements: The effect of

social media use and social capital on intention to participate in social movements.

International Journal of Consumer Studies, 39(5), 478-488.

https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12221

Hyun, M. & Ko, E. (2017). Why do consumers choose sustainable fashion? A

cross-cultural study of South Korean, Chinese, and Japanese

consumers. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing, 8*(3), 220-234.
https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2017.1336458

Irmas, A. (2021, January 20). How new-age social media marketing is changing and
what you need to know. *Business.Com*. Retrieved from https://www.business.com/

Jabor, R. (2021, May 24). The Palestinian movement on social media: a new global force for
change*. Roya News*. Retrieved from https://en.royanews.tv/news/

Jacomy, M., Venturini, T., Heymann, S., & Bastian, M. (2014). ForceAtlas2, a
continuous graph layout algorithm for handy network visualization designed for
the Gephi software. *PLoS ONE, 9*(6). doi:10.1371/journal.pone.009867

Jarin, A. (2021, April 28). Sustainable fashion advocate brings awareness to slow fashion. *The
Daily Aztec*. Retrieved from https://thedailyaztec.com/

Jerslev, A. (2016). Media times in the time of the microcelebrity: celebrification and
the YouTuber Zoella. *International Journal of Communication*, *10*, 5233-5251.
https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/5078

Jorge, A., Marôpo, L., & Nunes, T. (2018). I am not being sponsored to say this: a
teen youtuber and her audience negotiate branded content. *Observatorio (OBS*)*, *12*(1),
76-96. http://www.scielo.mec.pt/scielo.php?pid=S1646-
59542018000500005&script=sci_arttext&tlng=es

Jung, S., & Jin, B. (2016). Sustainable development of slow fashion businesses: Customer value
approach. *Sustainability, 8*(6), 540-560. https://doi.org/10.3390/su8060540

Kim, J., Kang, S., & Lee, K. H. (2018). How social capital impacts the purchase
intention of sustainable fashion products. *Journal of Business Research, 117,* 596-603. H
ttps://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.10.010

Kong, H. M., Witmaier, A., & Ko, E. (2020). Sustainability and social media
communication: How consumers respond to marketing efforts of luxury and non-luxury
fashion brands. *Journal of Business Research.*
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.08.021

Konstantopoulou, A., Rizomyliotis, I., Konstantoulaki, K., & Badahdah, R. (2019).
Improving SMEs' competitiveness with the use of Instagram influencer advertising and
eWOM. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, *27*(2), 308-321.
https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-04-2018-1406

Kozinets, R. V. (2002). The field behind the screen: Using netnography for marketing research in online communities. *Journal of marketing research, 39*(1), 61-72. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.39.1.61.18935

Kozinets, R. V. (2012). Marketing netnography: Prom/ot(ulgat)ing a new research method. *Methodological Innovations Online*, *7*(1), 37-45. https://doi.org/10.4256/mio.2012.004

Kozinets, R. V., Dolbec, P. Y., & Earley, A. (2014). Netnographic analysis: Understanding culture through social media data. In U. Flick (Eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis* (pp. 262-276). London: Sage. https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781446282243

Lange, P. (2019). *Thanks for Watching: An Anthropological Study of Video Sharing on YouTube*. Colorado: University Press of Colorado.

Le, N. (2020, July 20). The impact of fast fashion on the environment. *PSCI*. Retrieved from https://psci.princeton.edu/

Lee, S., & Kim, E. (2020). Influencer marketing on Instagram: How sponsorship disclosure, influencer credibility, and brand credibility impact the effectiveness of Instagram promotional post. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, *11*(3), 232-249.

Lundblad, L., & Davies, I. A. (2016). The values and motivations behind sustainable fashion consumption. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 15*(2), 149-162. https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1559

Mardon, R., Molesworth, M., & Grigore, G. (2018). YouTube Beauty Gurus and the emotional labour of tribal entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Research, 92*, 443-454. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.04.017

McCosker, A. (2018). Engaging mental health online: Insights from beyondblue's forum influencers. *New Media & Society*, *20*(12), 4748-4764. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818784303

Moe, H. (2019). Comparing platform "ranking cultures" across languages: The case of Islam on YouTube in Scandinavia. *Social Media+ Society*, *5*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118817038

Mohammad, J., Quoquab, F., & Sadom, N. Z. M. (2020). Mindful consumption

of second-hand clothing: the role of eWOM, attitude and consumer engagement. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal,* 1361-2026. https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-05-2020-0080

Mukherjee, S. (2015). Environmental and social impact of fashion: Towards an eco-friendly, ethical fashion. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies, 2*(3), 22-35. http://www.ijims.com

Müller, A. (2018). *Exploring YouTuber considerations on public relations-sponsored content on their channels*. (Master thesis, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10230/35791

Naslund, J. A., Aschbrenner, K. A., Marsch, L. A., & Bartels, S. J. (2016). The future of mental health care: peer-to-peer support and social media. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences, 25*(2), 113-122. https://doi.org/10.1017/S2045796015001067

Neman, M. (2010). *Network: An Introduction*. UK: Oxford Scholarship Press. 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199206650.001.0001

O'Reilly, T. (2005). What is web 2.0? Design patterns and business models for the next generation of software. Retrieved from http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html

O'Reilly, M., Dogra, N., Hughes, J., Reilly, P., George, R., & Whiteman, N. (2019). Potential of social media in promoting mental health in adolescents. *Health Promotion International, 34*(5), 981-991. https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/day056

Pink, S., Horst, H., Postill, J., Hjorth, J., Lewis, T., & Tacchi, J. (2016). *Digital Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Poell, T., & Borra, E. (2012). Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr as platforms of alternative journalism: The social media account of the 2010 Toronto G20 protests. *Journalism: Theory, Practice & Criticism, 13*(6), 695–713. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884911431533

Poh, J. & Seligson, P. (2021, May 24). U.S. sustainability-linked loans are 292% more than all of 2020. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from https://www.bloomberg.com/

Pookulangara, S., & Shephard, A. (2013). Slow fashion movement: Understanding consumer perceptions—An exploratory study. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *20*(2), 200-206. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2012.12.002

Sandoval-Almazan, R., & Gil-Garcia, J. R. (2014). Towards cyberactivism 2.0? Understanding the use of social media and other information technologies for political activism and social movements. *Government Information Quarterly, 31*(3), 365-378. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2013.10.016

Schreier, M. (2013). Qualitative content analysis. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis* (pp. 170-183). London: Sage.

Scott, J. (2016). *Social Network Analysis*. UK, London: Sage.

Septianto, F., Seo, Y., & Errmann, A. C. (2020). Distinct effects of pride and gratitude appeals on sustainable luxury brands. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-020-04484-7

Shapiro, M. A., & Park, H. W. (2018). Climate change and YouTube: Deliberation potential in post-video discussions. *Environmental Communication, 12*(1), 115-131. https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2017.1289108

Shen, B. (2014). Sustainable fashion supply chain: Lessons from H&M. *Sustainability, 6*(9), 6236-6249. https://doi.org/10.3390/su6096236

Shepherd, A., Sanders, C., Doyle, M., & Shaw, J. (2015). Using social media for support and feedback by mental health service users: thematic analysis of a twitter conversation. *BMC Psychiatry, 15*(1), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-015-0408-y

Silva, M., Farias, S. A. D., Grigg, M. K., & Barbosa, M. (2020). Online engagement and the role of digital influencers in product endorsement on Instagram. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, *19*(2), 133-163. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332667.2019.1664872

Štefko, R., & Steffek, V. (2018). Key issues in slow fashion: Current challenges and future perspectives. *Sustainability*, *10*(7), 2270 -2 282. https://doi.org/10.3390/su10072270

Stoldt, R., Wellman, M., Ekdale, B., & Tully, M. (2019). Professionalizing and profiting: The rise of intermediaries in the social media influencer industry. *Social Media+ Society*, *5*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305119832587

Stubb, C., Nyström, A. G., & Colliander, J. (2019). Influencer marketing: The impact of disclosing sponsorship compensation justification on sponsored content effectiveness. *Journal of Communication Management*, *23*(2), 109-122. https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-11-2018-0119

Sudha, M., & Sheena, K. (2017). Impact of influencers in consumer decision process: the fashion

  industry. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*, *14*(3), 14-30.

  https://www.proquest.com/docview/2232623787?pq-

  origsite=gscholar&fromopenview=true

Tait, A. (2020, May 3). How Instagram changed our world. *The Guardian*. Retrieved

  from https://www.theguardian.com/

Torres, P., Augusto, M., & Matos, M. (2019). Antecedents and outcomes of digital

  influencer endorsement: An exploratory study. *Psychology & Marketing*, *36*(12), 1267-

  1276. https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21274

Tybussek, N. M. (2020). *Exploring young audiences' engagement with" green"*

  content on YouTube: A small qualitative study. (Master thesis, Jönköping

  University, Jönköping, Sweden). Retrieved from http://www.diva-

  portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1396318&dswid=2366

Ritter, C. S. (2021). Rethinking digital ethnography: A qualitative approach to understanding

  interfaces. *Qualitative Research*. doi:10.1177/14687941211000540

Rodrigues, C. (2020). *Dress with less: consumers' engagement in slow*

  fashion [Doctoral dissertation]. Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10400.14/31293

Rogers, R. (2015). Digital methods for web research. In S. Kosslyn & R. A. Scott

  (Eds), *Emerging trends in the social and behavioral sciences: An interdisciplinary,*

  searchable, and linkable resource, (pp. 1-22). Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons.

Vear, A. M. (2020). *The influencer experience: Identity performance, commodification, and*

  agency in YouTube influencers (Master's thesis, University of Maine, The United States).

  Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/etd/3294/

Venturini, T., & Rogers, R. (2019). "API-based research" or how can digital sociology and

  journalism studies learn from the Facebook and Cambridge Analytica data

  breach. *Digital Journalism*, *7*(4), 532-540.

  https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2019.1591927

Wajahat, A., Nazir, A., Akhtar, F., Qureshi, S., ullah, F., Razaque, F., & Shakeel, A.

  (2020, January). Interactively Visualize and Analyze Social Network Gephi. *2020 3rd*

  International Conference on Computing, Mathematics and Engineering Technologies

  (ICoMET), Sukkur, Pakistan. https://doi.org/10.1109/icomet48670.2020.9073812

Weng, J., Lim, E. P., Jiang, J., & He, Q. (2010, February). Twitterrank: finding topic-sensitive influential twitterers. *Proceedings of the third ACM international conference on Web search and data mining*, USA, 261-270. https://doi.org/10.1145/1718487.1718520

Yoon, S., Kleinman, M., Mertz, J., & Brannick, M. (2019). Is social network site usage related to depression? A meta-analysis of Facebook–depression relations. *Journal of affective disorders, 248*, 65-72. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2019.01.026

YouTube. (n.d.). *YouTube for Press*. Blog. Youtube. Retrieved November 27, 2020, from https://blog.youtube/press

Zhang, Y., Lin, Y., & Kim, H. G. (2018, June). Impact of online influencer endorsement on product sales: quantifying value of online influencer. *Proceeding of Asia Conference on Information Systems (PACIS), JP, 21*. https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2018

Appendix 1: Informed consent

CONSENT REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, CONTACT:

[Cheyu Hsu/ Bulgersteyn 7131, 3011AB, Rotterdam, The Netherlands/ 526557ch@student.eur.nl/ +31627125461]

DESCRIPTION

You[1] are invited to participate in a research about YouTube influencer and sustainable fashion. The purpose of the study is to understand how influencers promote sustainable fashion through the YouTube videos.

Your acceptance to participate in this study means that you accept to be interviewed. In general terms,

- the questions interview will be related to your videos making practice and sustainability

Unless you prefer that no recordings are made, I will use a tape / video recorder for the interview.

You are always free not to answer any particular question, and/or stop participating at any point.

RISKS AND BENEFITS [alternatives A and B are presented below, but there may be further variations]

A. As far as I can tell, there are no risks associated with participating in this research. Yet, you are free to decide whether I should use your name or other identifying information such as your account name not in the study. If you prefer, I will make sure that you cannot be identified, by your name and account name but only mentioning your age and gender, etc.

B. I am aware that the possibility of identifying the people who participate in this study may involve risks for your reputation and business relationships etc. For that reason—unless you prefer to be identified fully (first name, last name, occupation, etc.)—I will not keep any information that may lead to the identification of those involved in the study. I will only pseudonyms to identify participants.

I will use the material from the interviews and my observation exclusively for academic work, such as further research, academic meetings and publications.

TIME INVOLVEMENT

Your participation in this study will take about 45 minutes. You may interrupt your participation at any time.

PAYMENTS

There will be no monetary compensation for your participation.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

If you have decided to accept to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you prefer, your identity will be made known in all written data resulting from the study. Otherwise, your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact –anonymously, if you wish, through my email.

SIGNING THE CONSENT FORM

If you sign this consent form, your signature will be the only documentation of your identity. Thus, you DO NOT NEED to sign this form. In order to minimize risks and protect your identity, you may prefer to consent orally. Your oral consent is sufficient.

I give consent to be audiotaped during this study:

 Name   Signature   Date

I prefer my identity to be revealed in all written data resulting from this study

Name   Signature   Date

This copy of the consent form is for you to keep.

Appendix 2: Interview guideline

1. Background information:
   - What is your age?
   - Where are you from? And where do you live in the moment?
   - How long have been you engaging sustainable lifestyle, such as eating or wardrobes?
   - How long have you been your making YouTube videos?
   - Is being YouTuber your main occupation and income resources?
2. Sustainability
   - Why do you start engaging sustainability?
   - Which aspects of sustainable lifestyle do you focus the most? And why?
   - What do you think can sustainable fashion change the current environmental problem?
   - How does sustainable lifestyle change your life?
   - Why do you present yourself as sustainable influencer?
3. The life of influencers
   - What do you think about being an influencer on YouTube?
   - Do you perceive yourself as an influencer?
   - What are the hardships you have encountered when maintain your YouTube channel?
   - How do you interact with your followers/fans?
   - How do you interact or perceive other influencers having similar aesthetics as you do?
4. YouTube videos
   - How long do you spend working on the designing, filming and editing of a video?
   - What types of videos have you presented? Ans which one do you focus on the most?
   - How do you choose the aforementioned themes to present?
   - How do you design the topic scheme?
   - What are the motivations to keep you making certain types of video regarding sustainable fashion?
   - How do you deal with the boundary between privacy and the exposed life on the screen?
5. eWOM & product sponsorships
   - How do you introduce and recommend the product in your videos?

- What criteria is more important to be mentioned when recommending sustainable fashion items?
- How do you design your script considering the audience's possible reaction of your recommendation?
- How do you perceive your role of spreading the user-comment of sustainable fashion products through YouTube?
- What kinds of sponsored products do you share the most? And why?
- What is the process of selecting sponsorships to be introduced in the videos?
- How do you incorporate your real opinions about the product with the expectation from the brand?
- How do you think about disclosing product sponsorships in the videos?

Appendix 3: YouTube Data Tools for accessing video IDs of creators

Appendix 4: Quantitative data retrieval from NodeXL Pro
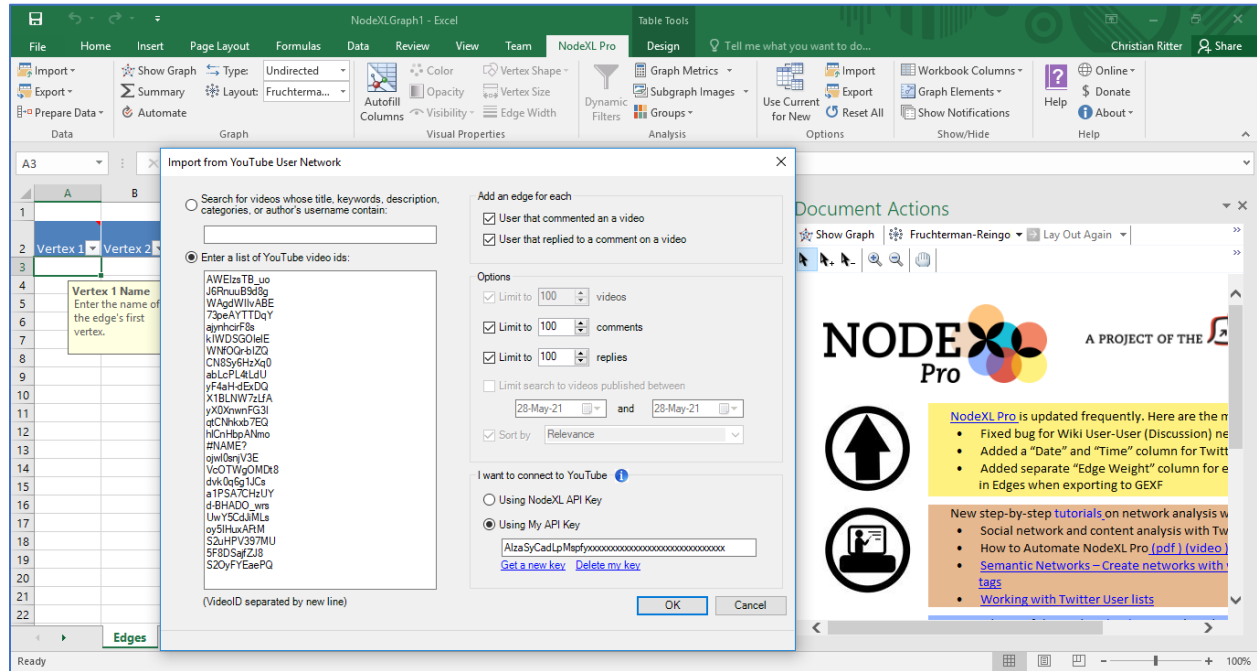
Appendix 5: List of interviewees

Abbreviation	Age	Gender	Location	Occupation
BG	20	Female	The United States	University Student
EM	29	Female	Australis	Full time YouTuber
H	23	Female	The United States	Fashion design graduate working in sustainable star-up
N	27	Female	The United Kingdom	Theatre costume making
NF	24	Female	The United States	Master's student
SM	23	Female	The United States	Brand strategist in marketing consultant
T	20	Female	The United States	University Student
TC	26	Female	The United States	Marketing related job in insurance company

Appendix 6: List of Transcribed YouTube videos

Creator	Date	Title	Length	Hyperlink
Kristen Leo	2020, Jun 10	All white people are…	20:41	https://youtu.be/4vDMuVEftWE

inspiroue	2021, Apr 19	things you NEED to know about fast fashion | how to hold the fashion industry accountable	15:04	https://youtu.be/pnSIWK7LNjA
Audrey Coyne	2021, Mar 21	Casual Spring Outfits	5:07	https://youtu.be/sIFwUhRrLPY
Alyssa Beltempo	2021, Mar 21	Easy & Simple Slow Fashion Tips for Every Budget and Style Type | Guide to Slow Fashion	12:58	https://youtu.be/rOgPp4-kG_M
Naja Sierra	2021, Mar 20	My Entire Minimalist Wardrobe - Every Item In My Small Wardrobe (Closet Tour)	7:05	https://youtu.be/2IbCI2h9Foo
Ethical Made Easy	2021, Mar 20	Are you a perfectionist? Strategies and ways to ease your inner critic!	16:36	https://youtu.be/Kd1pW_vP4Xs
Nisa Fareeha	2021, Mar 4	Ethical & Sustainable Underwear | Knickey Review + GIVEAWAY	9:28	https://youtu.be/WTZ732o5fdI
Naomi's Little Time	2021, Mar 7	3 TOP TIPS to quit fast fashion!	8:16	https://youtu.be/ZLLy1YqjEUM
inspiroue	2021, Apr 12	sustainable & ethical underwear brands to know | arq, pansy, pico, proclaim, mary young, knickey	16:27	https://youtu.be/sNZ4Wbk6Mz0
Alyssa Beltempo	2021, Feb 28	Wearable Spring Fashion Trends 2021 That Are Already In Your Closet	9:38	https://youtu.be/aH7tNicf9tY
imperfectidealist	2021, Feb 18	7 Sustainable Underwear Brands: Knickey, Organic Basics, Boody & More	9:01	https://youtu.be/e1yn4RuSWmA
Thrifts and Tangles	2021, Mar 12	Thrifting Tips You Need to Know	10:58	https://youtu.be/ZypgcfGnDA4
Alli Cherry	2021, Feb 18	Declutter with Me (Konmari Method) Curating my Dream Minimalist Closet	14:52	https://youtu.be/dxm98dAjHpQ

Appendix 7: Code table

Main Category	Sub-category	Open Codes
Follower community development	Active conversation with followers	Expressing the relatable current life shared by follower
		Seek advice for activity
		Seek advice for book
		Seek advice for activity
		Showing the result of IG voting
		Offline thrifting meetup with followers
	Arouse public conversation	Encourage audience leave comments
		Initiate the conversation about sustainable fashion
		Initiate a discussion over sustainability and feminism
		Encourage follower to share user experience about the recommended brand
	Authentic online interaction	Being authentic while interacting with people online
		Building a trustworthy relationship wirh follower
		Exposing the devotion in replying all feedbacks and request

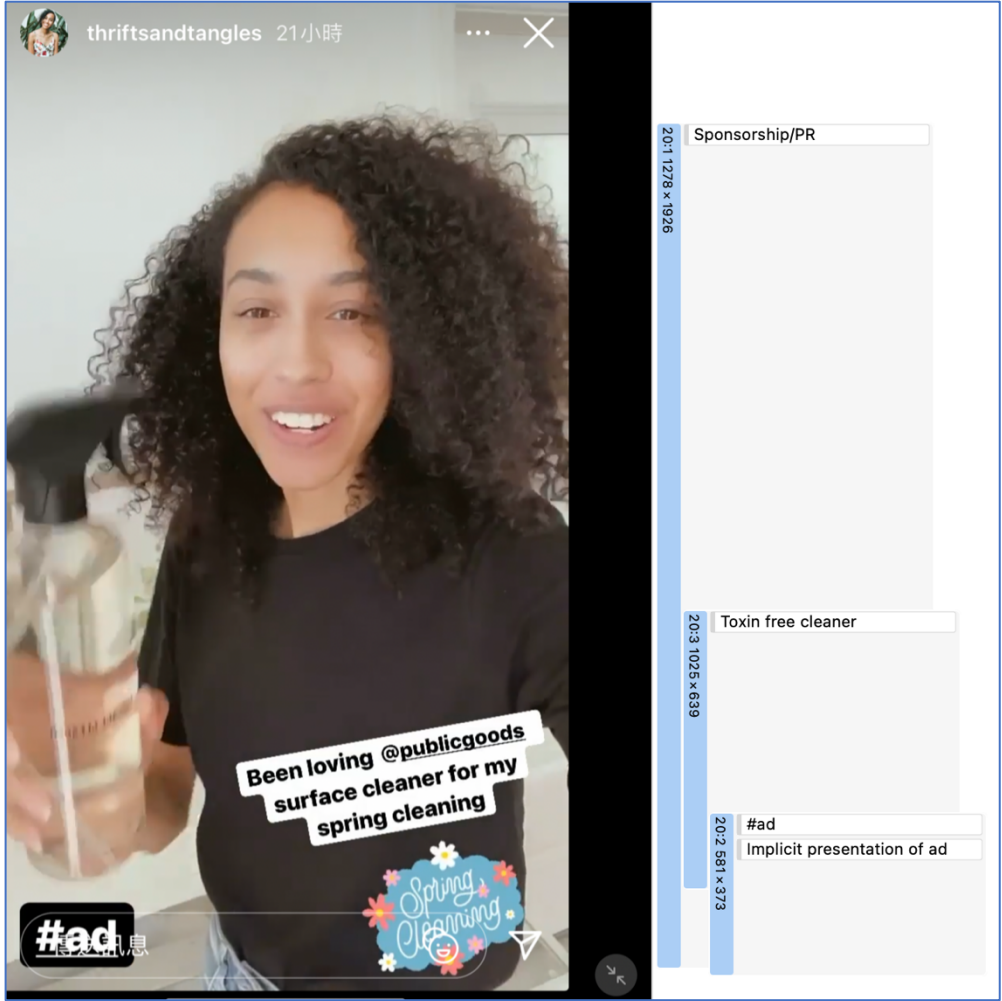|		
	Direct conversation with followers	Responding followers genueinly but not like with friends
		Encouraging follower to DM for further conversation
		Responsing to follower's tagged post
		Replying to comments on YT to create engagemeny
	Interactive social media features	IG sales
		IG polls
		Interactive IG countdwon feature
	Intimate relationship with followers	Indicating intimate bonding bewteen follower and influencer
		Resharing follower's praise
		Respond follower's feedback
		Greeting followers for having nice morning/week/weekend
		Gratitiude for follower's sharing and comments
	Sustainable fashion as supportive online community	A genuine community with the silimar objective
		A more friendly and supportive community
		Building community is vital in terms of growing the accounts
		Niche and supportive bubble of sustainable fashion
	Fast growing online community	Diverse voice sharing
		Involves spaces for flaws and correction
		Witnessing the rapid expansion
Idetity development	Identify as inlfuencer	A sustainable influencer introduce sustainable brands
		Everyone could be an influencer in certain perspective
		Feel neutral about the term of influencer
	Micro-celebrity identity	Less external pressure in feeding the followers
		Intimidated to enter community involving bigger influencers
	Identify as content creator	Identify as regular person/user
		Negative perception on the term of influencer
		Sharing diverse voice and opinions
		Student with limited budget sharing tips about sustainable fashion
Social movement activism	Recent social movement	Supporting StopAsianHate movement
		Women's unsafety and right
	Intersectional social issues	Sharing knowledge about masculinty and the impact on earth
		Link from sustainable fashion to racial issue
		Link from sustainable fashion to ethical and human right
		Issue of misogny and racism
		Engaging sustainability help liberate thoughts
		Critical self-reflection of racial issues
		Acknowledging fast fashion relates to women right
Networking development	Collaborate contents with other creators	Virtual vintage swap with other influencer
		Live-streaming with other influencer regarding mindful empowering social media community
		Making video with a content creator
		Making sponsored video with other influencer
	Create conversation with influencers	Holding a Podcasting sharing experience in becoming an influencer
		Sharing opinion about the paying rate of influencer
		Revealing the charging rate
	Networking with similar influencers	Networking with other influencer is essential for this industry
		Tagging actively with other influencer
		Offline coffee meetup with other influencers

		Being ambassador of a brand helps networking
		Being genuine is fundamental to network with followers
		Commenting on YT videos as type of networking
		Commenting on IG post as type of networking
		Virtual meeting hold by brands develop a form of network
		An UK based ethical fashion influencer community venue
	Competition in Sf influencer community	Competitive environment
		Peer pressure results from individual and other influencers
	Support other creators	Help promoting other creator's brand
		Supporting other influencer/content creator
Slow fashion promotion	Downside of fashion industry	Sharing knowledge about the unsustainable facet of returning
		Information about harmful clothing material and impact on health
		Having a responsibility to reveal the damage of fashion industry
		Revealing the unethical facet of fashion industry
	Acknowledge consumer power	Acknowledge the empowerment owned by individual consumer
	Educating knowledge of sustainable fashion	Clarify the myth of plastic-recycled fabrics as releasing microplastics
		Providing knowledge about sustainability and green-washing
		Showcasing the doable facet of sustainable fashion
	Educating knowledge about sustainability	sharing knowledge about sustainability and ethcial right
		Educating other people about the importance of sustainability
	Authentic brand-research results	Honest reveal of worker condition of the brand
	Need of followers	Asking follower if they have tried capsule wardrobe
		Asking follower's intersted topic
		Internal analysis provides insight for next video
	Personal experience in transitioning towards sustainable fashion	Authentic and geniue contents focusing on personal experience
		Personal experience of making mindful wardrobe
		Disclosing the journey of being sustainable
	Behind the scenes	Behind the scene exposure
		Exposing the process of replying followers
	Multiple platforms management	Launching podcasting
		Promoting personal blog site
	Differentiation of social media platforms	IG contents are less serious and informational
		IG is easier to transit the topic
		IG reels is now easier to get exposed
		Growing community on YT is harder than on IG
		YT video is more knowledgable and informative
		Easier to manage Yt by puloading a video per week
		YT content is easier to be exposed than IG for beginner
		YT help attract to audience with similar background
Product recommendation (eWOM)	Authentic user experience	Acknowledge all the pros and cons of collaborated products
		Introducing cheaper and accessible combo of products
		Only recommend product has been used
		Only post the product that the influencer truly like
		Remaining authentic and honest when recommendating sponsorships
	Balancing brand expectation and genuine opinion	Balance the content to make it attracitve and authetic
		Easy to express honest review without payment commission
		Intense commincation with brand to incoporate authentic user experience
		Having automacy in negotiating with partnership brands

	Criteria of product selection	Accessible price
		Honest and transparent brand description
		Initiates sustainable campagin of recycling old clothes
		Owned by minority or women
		Responsible and sustainable fabric
		Pays ethical wage and treatment to workers
		Diverse clothing options for different needs
		Low waste package and material
		Sustainable supply chain
		Comfortable to wear and true to size
		Has collaborated with multiple infleuncers ihas influence
		Size inclusive
		Aligns channel value
		Related to personal lifestyle
	Prior reserach	Check if greenwashing presented
		Clarify the marketing myth
		Information chack on brands' contribution
Sponsorship/PR/Affliation disclosure	Positive attitude	Followers are genuinely supportive ans positive
		Positive perception on disclosing sponsorship
		Sponsorship as a way to introduce audiecne ethical brands
	Disclosure of sponsorship/PR	Disclosing sponsorship as being responsable and honest towards the audience
		Putting effort in writing description of YT video to make sure affliationd are clear
	Explicit disclosure of brand collaboration	#ad
		Unncover the collaboration with brand
	Implicit disclosure of brand collaboration	Possible sponsorship/PR
		Affliated links with sustainable clothing without mentioning commission
Challneges and impact of algrothim	Awaring impact of algrorithm	Alogrithm on social media has bias upon races
		Pictures showing more body parts attracts more exposure
		Trends and alogrithm changes every 2-3 years
		Views of asthetic contents has less exposure
	Conflict between personal interest and algrorithm	Balance between taste of algorithm and personal taste is needed
		Committing to commercial needs can be overwhelmed
		Doing the YT by heart doesn't matter the alogrithm change
		Sacrifacing personal interest of contents but fitting to algorithm can be frustrating
	Dilemma between value and business	Ironic to promote consumption of brand while promoting conscious consumption
		Ironic problem of overconsumption about thrifting haul
	Search engine optimazation	Adding keywords and description to fit into the favor of algorithm
		Used to search trendy key words to determine the topic of video
		Using IG reel to follow the trend
Mental health awareness	Self-burnout	Immersed into sustainability issues leads to depression
		Burnout and bored from the contents on YT
		Managing social media can be fatigued
		Need new energy to update YT
	Self disclosure of illness	Acknowledge personal illness and the leave from Internet
		Disclosing personal health issue to initiate the conversation
		Sharing knowledge about mental health and relationship

	Revealing personal struggle with depression
	Stop updating YT videos becaude of mental and life crisis
	Personal experience of anxiety and friendship
Providing positive contents	Giving guidance to deal with mental issues
	Mental guidance for depression related to racism
	Reminding follower is alright to care self-apperance and dismanteling system
	Sharing positive video regarding mental support

Appendix 8: example of an observation protocol

Appendix 9: example of interview transcript

Right now, I

love YouTube. I've been on YouTube for a long time since I think 2013 was my first video. But like I said, when I first started YouTube, I would do thrift hauls all the time, and people liked it, but it wasn't. It wasn't valuable content, right. It's just like, look what I bought, you should go to your thrift store. So now when I create content, I try to make it more educational. And try to share tips and my my mission statement is give thrifting sustainability and your natural self a chance. And I try to convince people to give it a chance by sharing easy tips making it really relatable and talking about the money aspect because a lot of people think being unsustainable how you have to have it's a privilege to be sustainable, which it is. But the mainstream media makes it seem like you have to buy all these new bamboo products. Yeah, and, and you don't right. And so I want to educate people and let them know the little tiny daily habits like reusing a plastic fork is actually sustainable and have tried to change their mindset a little bit through education. So that's what my content

Daphne Hsu 10:28
right? And also, I want to ask you, like, do you perceive yourself as influencer?

Tyler 10:37
I just did a conversation about this other day with someone. I know a lot of people don't like that word, influencer. But I think they think I am an influencer. I check all the boxes of what people think of for influencer, I usually call myself because I started blogging. Because I have a website too. And a blog. I started that back in 2012. And I still call everything blogging. Like if you're an instagramer, I call you a blogger. If you're a YouTuber, I call you a blogger. I still use outdated language. Because it's not really blogging if you're on YouTube, right? But I feel like it's all the same thing. If you're an influencer content creator, if you're a blogger, it's all the same.

Daphne Hsu 11:16
Yeah, yeah, exactly. It's like spreading like your thoughts, or your experiences, etc, like to everyone else in the world? Yeah. And like says, like, you're super passionate. And on YouTube, I want to ask, like, what kind of hardships Have you ever encountered when you're mentally or like YouTube channels?

1428:16 I've b...	Starting YT video 8years ag...
1428:1...	Showcasing the doable face...
1428:18 I try t...	Convince people about the f...
1428:19 And...	Educating people to enter s...

1428:21 - I check	Identify blogging as an idica...		Identify as an influencer
	Writing blogs for 9 years		
1428:22 Like if y...	Content creator no matter w...		