

"Don't Read this Thesis! How Disrupt-then-Reframe Shapes Consumer Behavior"

A Quantitative Study of the Influence of the Disrupt-then-Reframe Communication on Product Value Perception and Purchase Intentions Among Consumers with High Awareness of Sustainable Fashion.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of the Disrupt-then-Reframe (D-T-R) communication strategy on consumer perceptions of product value and purchase intentions within the sustainable fashion industry. On the one hand, the fast fashion industry, despite its environmental impacts, remains the most popular option among consumers due to its affordability and trendiness. On the other hand, sustainable fashion is an emerging phenomenon, born to address the environmental concerns of the industry. However, sustainable fashion often faces challenges due to the higher costs associated with environmentally ethical production and supply sourcing.

The study used a quantitative experimental design with 152 participants, who were exposed to one of three advertising conditions: D-T-R, Disrupt-Only, or Reframe-Only. The research problem focuses on the effectiveness of the D-T-R strategy in promoting sustainable fashion. The study aimed to determine whether the D-T-R strategy, compared to its components, influences product value perception and purchase intentions, especially among consumers with high awareness of sustainable fashion. Therefore, the main research question is: "To what extent does the D-T-R communication strategy influence product value perception and purchase intentions among consumers with high consumer awareness of sustainable fashion?"

Data was collected through an online experiment measuring product value perception, purchase intentions, and consumer awareness using peer-reviewed scales. The method involved exposing participants to different communication techniques to measure their responses.

Results indicated that the D-T-R technique significantly enhanced perceived product value, particularly among consumers with a high awareness of sustainable fashion, but also reduced purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only and Reframe-Only techniques.

These findings suggest that the D-T-R strategy can enhance perceived product value by leveraging consumer awareness of sustainability, but it simultaneously lowers immediate purchase intentions due to consumers' increased environmental consciousness. This in turn results in a higher amount of hesitation to make impulsive purchases.

The study highlights the need for sustainable fashion brands to balance their communication strategies and carefully guide consumers toward more ethical consumerism. This research provides interesting insights for marketers in promoting sustainable consumption and meeting consumer values to encourage more sustainable purchasing decisions. In conclusion, this research examined the potential of the D-T-R strategy in influencing consumer behavior toward sustainable fashion.

Keywords: Disrupt-then-Reframe, Product value, Purchase intentions, consumer awareness of sustainable fashion

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1.0 Introduction

In the 21st century, the fashion industry is characterized by a strong paradox: on the one hand, consumers are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of this business (Mukherjee, 2015, p. 22). On the other, the *fast fashion industry* ranks second in the podium of the most polluting sectors worldwide, with increasing environmental repercussions every year (Mungiu-Pupazan, 2022, p.191).

This phenomenon underlines how consumers still engage in fast fashion despite being aware of the environmental implications (Mukherjee, 2015, p. 24). For this reason, researchers have for long been interested in investigating the key drivers of this sector, identifying the ability this industry holds in providing affordable, trendy, and quick apparel options to its consumers (Hu & Shiau, 2015, p. 127-129). Nevertheless, fast fashion led consumers to conceive a manipulated perception of product value, characterized by very low and appealing prices that do not truly represent the real cost of resources, labor, material, and environmental impact (Chen, 2021, p. 47). On top of this, Cavender and Lee (2018, p. 94) identified that these pricing strategies have strongly contributed to increased purchase intentions, thus leading to an even higher consumer demand. Moreover, their research highlights how fast fashion marketing approaches, focused on price accessibility and rapid trend turnover, shift consumers from making conscious and sustainable considerations (Cavender and Lee, 2018, p. 92).

With a lack of regulation regarding fast fashion advertising, sustainable fashion brands have developed strategies to tackle some of the above-mentioned issues. More specifically, this is the case for Patagonia, a global retailer well-known for its environmental sustainability efforts, which launched an advertisement called “Don’t Buy This Jacket” (*see Figure 1*) (Patagonia, 2011, n.p.).

Figure 1

Patagonia’s “Don’t buy this jacket” 2011 Black Friday advertisement.



DON'T BUY THIS JACKET

It's Black Friday, the day in the year retail turns from red to black and starts to make real money. But Black Friday, and the culture of consumption it reflects, puts the economy of natural systems that support all life firmly in the red. We're now using the resources of one-and-a-half planets on our one and only planet.

Because Patagonia wants to be in business for a good long time—and leave a world inhabitable for our kids—we want to do the opposite of every other business today. We ask you to buy less and to reflect before you spend a dime on this jacket or anything else.

Environmental bankruptcy, as with corporate bankruptcy, can happen very slowly, then all of a sudden. This is what we face unless we slow down, then reverse the damage. We're running short on fresh water, topsoil, fisheries, wetlands—all our planet's natural systems and resources that support business, and life, including our own.

The environmental cost of everything we make is astonishing. Consider the R2™ jacket shown, one of our best sellers. To make it required 135 liters of

COMMON THREADS INITIATIVE

REDUCE
WE make useful gear that lasts a long time
YOU don't buy what you don't need

REPAIR
WE help you repair your Patagonia gear
YOU pledge to fix what's broken

REUSE
WE help find a home for Patagonia gear you no longer need
YOU sell or pass it on

RECYCLE
WE will take back your Patagonia gear that is worn out
YOU pledge to keep your stuff out of the landfill and incinerator

REIMAGINE
TOGETHER we reimagine a world where we take only what nature can replace

water, enough to meet the daily needs (three glasses a day) of 45 people. Its journey from its origin as 60% recycled polyester to our Reno warehouse generated nearly 20 pounds of carbon dioxide, 24 times the weight of the finished product. This jacket left behind, on its way to Reno, two-thirds its weight in waste.

And this is a 60% recycled polyester jacket, knit and sewn to a high standard. It is exceptionally durable, so you won't have to replace it as often. And when it comes to the end of its useful life we'll take it back to recycle into a product of equal value. But, as is true of all the things we can make and you can buy, this jacket comes with an environmental cost higher than its price.

There is much to be done and plenty for us all to do. Don't buy what you don't need. Think twice before you buy anything. Go to patagonia.com/CommonThreads or scan the QR code below. Take the Common Threads Initiative pledge, and join us in the 5th "R," to reimagine a world where we take only what nature can replace.

The Patagonia Black Friday campaign invited readers to not buy the advertised product by presenting all the resources required for its production. On top of that, the ad invited its consumers to adopt unconventional approaches before purchasing a new product such as encouraging item repair or considering second-hand purchases first (Hwang et al., 2019, n.p.; Patagonia, 2011, n.p.).

By proposing these alternatives, studies suggest that Patagonia triggered a transformative shift in consumers' fashion sustainability perception and behaviors (Hwang et al. 2019, n.p.). More specifically, by employing a thought-provoking communication strategy, called *Disrupt-then-reframe (D-T-R)*, Patagonia challenged its consumers to double-think their purchase intention while providing valuable education on factors determining a product's value (Hwang et al., 2019, n.p.). Moreover, research suggests that Patagonia, through effective leveraging of its communication strategy, made a meaningful impact on consumers' awareness of sustainable fashion and purchase intentions (Hwang et al., 2019, n.p.).

Within the context of advertising being the main driving force of consumerism habits (Powers, 2016, p. 344), exploring whether the same communication technique would have the same impact beyond a well-known brand becomes interesting. The purpose of this research is to discern if this approach maintains the transformative potential for influencing consumer awareness of sustainable fashion, purchase intentions, and product value across a broader context of brands and products.

For this reason, the following research aims to answer the following research question: *"To what extent does the Disrupt-then-Reframe communication strategy influence product value perception and purchase intentions among consumers with high consumer awareness of sustainable fashion?"*.

1.1 Scientific relevance

The scientific relevance of this study lies in addressing a critical gap in the existing literature. Previous research carried out by Hwang et al. (2019, n.p.) focused on the impact of the communication strategy Patagonia applied to its campaign on variables such as purchase intentions and consumers' environmental concerns. The results suggested that the Disrupt-then-Reframe framework resulted in lower purchase intentions and higher levels of consumers' environmental concern. However, on the other hand, marketing reports from the actual campaign indicate a 30% increase in sales within the following nine months from the campaign's initiation (Szekely & Dossa, 2015, para 1).

Therefore, this study aims to bridge the gap concerning the different elements affecting these results. More specifically, previous research has not comprehensively studied the different variables of consumers' environmental concerns intended as individuals' awareness of sustainable fashion, purchase intentions, and product value in the same context as the D-T-R communication technique. Furthermore, a critical aspect that has been overlooked is the comparison of the D-T-R technique to

its individual components: disrupt-only and reframe-only. By comparing the D-T-R technique with its individual components, this study will make a significant contribution to the theory, offering a stronger understanding of how each element influences consumer behavior. Finally, this research will also contribute to more specific knowledge in the context of factors affecting consumers' responses to sustainability-focused advertising strategies beyond a specific brand.

1.2 Societal relevance

As regards societal relevance, the results from this research could be highly beneficial to creating a more sustainable and ethical consumer culture within the fashion industry. Considering the polluting and rapidly evolving patterns of the fashion industry, addressing it from an advertising lens could contribute to more informed and responsible consumer choices. These informed choices could, in turn, trigger a transformative shift towards more sustainable practices, where consumers actively support brands based on their sustainable efforts and communication strategies. By understanding the effectiveness of different communication techniques in promoting sustainability, this study has the potential to influence both marketing practices and consumer behavior, leading to a more environmentally conscious and ethically driven market landscape. Consumers, informed and empowered by knowledge, can indeed play the most important role in driving a shift towards a more sustainable fashion.

2.0 Theoretical framework

2.1 Overview of the fast and slow fashion industry

For its nature, the fashion industry is one of the most extensive and resource-consuming sectors worldwide (Niinimäki et al., 2020, p. 189). All this is due to its complex supply chain, which often leads consumers to underestimate the numerous steps involved in the production of one single piece of garment (Zhang et al., 2021, p. 3). Beginning with fiber production, which heavily exploits agricultural and petrochemical resources, the process continues through manufacturing, logistics, and retailing, each phase contributing significantly to the environmental impact of the industry (Niinimäki et al., 2020, p. 190). According to the European Parliament (2021, p. 4), the fashion industry is responsible for 8-10% of global carbon emissions and it additionally accounts for 20% of industrial wastewater pollution worldwide originating from dyeing and finishing processes used in textile manufacturing (Kant, 2012, p. 23).

Within this context, the past few decades are responsible for these radical and worrying transformations within the industry. Compared to the late 90s, the production of apparel collections has doubled, and this phenomenon is attributed to fast fashion (Niinimäki et al., 2020, p. 192). As one of the pillars of the fashion industry, fast fashion refers to a business model that is characterized by its quick response to consumer trends, rapidly turning market demand into available apparel items in shops (Zhang et al., 2021, p. 3). Moreover, since the 2000s, major fast fashion retailers have significantly raised the number of collections available per year. For instance, *Zara*, a major player in the fast fashion industry, launches twenty-four collections per year, one every two weeks. In comparison, traditional retailers usually only introduce four new lines a year, one every season (Remy et al., 2016, p. 2).

The counterpart of fast fashion is best known as “slow”, “green”, or “sustainable” fashion (Fletcher, 2010, p. 260). The latter refers to a business model focused on ethical labor, sourcing, and manufacturing of fashion apparel (Solino et al., 2020, p.165). With the objective to advocate for a major change in the entire lifecycle of fashion garments, in the past few years, sustainable fashion has gained more traction (Solino et al., 2020, p. 166). Moreover, sustainable brands embarking on the trend of slow fashion need to follow some guidelines to make sure to respect all the points that fast fashion oversees (Fletcher, 2010, p. 263). For instance, brands that want to be sustainable need to work on the minimization of their carbon footprints by using small scales and local production (Fletcher, 2010, p. 264). Furthermore, they need to include several practices that range from ensuring the ethical sourcing of materials to implementing fair labor practices across their whole supply chains (Fletcher, 2010, p. 264). Considering the sustainable practices that slow fashion

undertakes, it is reasonable that the latter is generally more expensive compared to fast fashion (Jung et al., 2020, p.3).

2.2 Consumer behavior and fashion communication

Nowadays, communication plays one of the main roles in shaping and pushing consumers to engage in sustainable practices (Piligrimiene et al., 2020, p. 2). According to Chen (2021, p. 42), the past years have witnessed a steady and growing interest in sustainability, which has been attributed to the power of media communication. With the increasing presence of social media awareness campaigns, consumers now feel a personal responsibility for the impact of their fashion choices. This represents a shift from the past, in which the fault was mainly attributed to companies (Piligrimiene et al., 2020, p. 2).

This increased consumer awareness has pushed many brands to adopt sustainable practices within their business model, thus contributing to a more ecologically responsible industry (Fletcher, 2010, p. 263). For instance, according to Falk (2023, para 4), from 2017 to 2022, the market share of sustainable fashion apparel has risen from 2.8% to 4.3%, highlighting the small but gradual increase in interest from brands to transition to a more sustainable industry.

These efforts reflect a broader strategy known as “green marketing,” which encompasses genuine company efforts to promote sustainability through their practices and products (Mishra & Sharma, 2012, p. 78). Green marketing aims to inform and educate consumers about companies’ eco-friendly efforts. This, is in order to create a connection with customers and embody the shift that they increasingly demand (Mishra & Sharma, 2012, p. 79). Therefore, by bridging the gap between consumer values and companies’ actions, green marketing plays a significant role in encouraging a cultural shift toward sustainability (Mishra & Sharma, 2012, p. 78).

Previous efforts carried out by known sustainable brands such as Patagonia show this dynamic in real life. Patagonia is considered to be among the main companies using green marketing campaigns to promote their products as well as educate consumers about their environmental fashion choices and their impact on the fashion industry (Zint & Frederick, 2001, p. 97). Studies of Patagonia’s approach show that by transparently communicating its sustainable efforts as well as the rationale behind the whole brand, they significantly influence consumer awareness of sustainable fashion as well as purchase intentions and product value (Hwang et al., 2016, n.p.). For instance, Zint and Frederick (2001, p. 97) suggest that Patagonia’s communication strategies follow a pattern in which they challenge individuals’ consumerism behaviors, inviting them to reconsider their need to purchase new items and to double-think about the real environmental costs of production (Zint & Frederick, 2001, p. 95).

Furthermore, through their campaign “Worn Wear: Better Than New”, Patagonia promoted among its consumers the possibility to purchase second-hand items from the brand, that had passed rigorous quality checks (Bürklin, 2019, p. 194). By doing so, the company promoted a more responsible and circular consumption model through which consumers can actively participate in reducing the impact of the fashion industry by extending the life cycle of apparel items.

Patagonia is the perfect example of how businesses, by implementing a transparent communication strategy can teach consumers about their products and the brand’s efforts. Whether they are entering the slow fashion industry for the first time or shifting their existing business towards sustainability (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020, p. 7). This approach not only helps consumers gain knowledge about slow fashion but also enables them to make more conscious purchasing decisions (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020, p. 13).

Although recent years have witnessed an increasing consumer interest in more sustainable apparel, research suggests that financial constraints remain one of the key drivers in purchasing decisions (Jung et al., 2020, p. 3). Despite brands’ efforts and consumer demand for sustainable apparel, the higher cost of eco-friendly items often disincentivizes individuals from purchasing the product. Furthermore, many consumers might also be reluctant when it comes to purchasing a more expensive item that claims to be eco-friendly, because not everyone is able to distinguish if a product is truly sustainably produced or not (Pookulangara & Shepherd, 2013, p. 204).

This challenge is enhanced by the lack of standardized labels that certify the authenticity of “sustainable” claims, leading consumers to be hesitant when it comes to finalizing the purchase (Dreyer et al., 2017, p. 5). As a result, Moore (2016, n.p.) notes that out of the 52% of individuals wanting a shift from the industry towards a more sustainable model, only 29% are willing to pay for the price of this type of garment. For this reason, fast fashion with its low and cheaper prices is still the most chosen option (Moore, 2016, n. p.).

However, effective communication techniques and strategies can shape or change consumer choices and behaviors (Levin and Gaeth, 1988, p. 278). Therefore, by portraying the eco-friendly efforts behind products and educating consumers about the long-term benefits and quality of sustainable fashion, brands can justify higher prices. Thereby helping consumers see the worth of investing in sustainable fashion as well as helping them make more ethical and quality-driven choices.

2.3 Disrupt-then-Reframe communication

Nowadays, psychological principles of social influence are extensively employed in the advertising and marketing world. This is due to advertisers leveraging new communication

techniques to effectively guide consumers toward purchasing new products (Fennis & Stroebe, 2020, p. 13).

Within the context of this study, the psychological principle of social influence under investigation is called Disrupt-then-reframe (D-T-R). This principle, developed by Davis and Knowles (1999, p. 198), employs a brief disruption within a message followed by a reframing moment, thus guiding individuals from one level of identification to another in a matter of seconds (Dolinski & Szczucka, 2013, p. 2030). More specifically, the disruption element is designed to create a cognitive break in the reader's thought process, whereas the reframing moment contextualizes the disrupted message making it more persuasive (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 382).

Davis and Knowles (1999, p. 200) developed this principle through a series of experiments where they applied the D-T-R technique to various contexts. For instance, in one study, participants were approached with a request to purchase note cards. When the request was framed disruptively ("This package of cards sells for 300 pennies!") and then immediately reframed ("That's \$3. It's a bargain!"), people were increasingly more inclined to purchase note cards compared to participants exposed to straightforward requests (Davis and Knowles, 1999, p. 200).

To better grasp how this technique is applied to real-world advertisements, it is necessary to examine the Patagonia ad (*see Figure 1*). Hwang et al. (2016, p. n.p.) suggest that the "disruption" element is present in the unconventional title, "Don't Buy This Jacket". This unexpected message, which creates ambiguity among consumers, had been chosen to challenge viewers' expectations of a campaign that is typically aimed at promoting product sales. The "reframing" process is then presented in the second part of the advertisement, where viewers delve into the campaign's content. This part enlists the reasons as to why they should resist purchasing the product, thus clarifying the ambiguity (Hwang et al., 2016, n.p.).

In this case, as stated by Patagonia itself (2011, n.p.), the purpose of this campaign is to dissuade consumers from buying the jacket, all this to encourage a more mindful approach to consumption and promote awareness about the environmental impact of purchasing an apparel item.

More specifically, in the aftermath of the campaign, Patagonia explained that to make a real change in the world of sustainable and circular fashion, they must be the first to invite customers to double-think about their purchase intentions through their communication (Patagonia, 2011, n.p.).

In line with this, previous research carried out by Hwang et al. (2016, n.p.) suggests that this advertisement employing the D-T-R communication technique can influence purchase intentions in consumers. More specifically, in their study, Hwang et al. (2016, n.p.) exposed their participants to two different kinds of advertising. One applies the disrupt-then-reframe (D-T-R) technique, and the other employs a regular approach without a strategic communication technique. Notably,

individuals exposed to the D-T-R advertisement were less inclined to purchase the promoted product, but their perception of product value increased in comparison to those subjected to the conventional advertisements (Hwang et al., 2016, n.p.). All this is due to the D-T-R advertisements' ability to evoke a higher awareness about the environmental crisis caused by consumers overconsumption habits (Hwang et al., 2016, n.p.).

Interestingly, reports from the Patagonia advertisement show that, in the following months after the initiation of the campaign, purchases increased by 30% (Szekely & Dossa, 2015, para 1). For this reason, this inconsistency in findings highlights the versatility of the D-T-R technique.

If on the one hand, it generally increases sales across various contexts by presenting products as bargains, in the fashion industry, it can reduce purchases when the environmental resources utilized are highlighted. This duality is particularly valuable for this research, as it aims to illustrate that the impact of D-T-R communication varies depending on the context and the nature of the message.

2.4 Disrupt-only and Reframe-only communication techniques

This study aims to deepen the exploration of the D-T-R communication technique by examining its two principal components individually: Disrupt-only and Reframe-only communications. On the one hand, previous research by Davis and Knowles primarily focused on the D-T-R technique and the reframe-only condition, they did not examine the singular effect of the disrupt-only condition.

On the other, Kardes et al. (2007, p. 380) included the disrupt element alone in their studies to bridge this gap. More specifically, in their research, Kardes et al. (2007, p. 382) analyzed in three different contexts the effects of a D-T-R, disrupt-only, and reframe-only communication. In both a grocery shop and a school environment, they found that the D-T-R technique had positive outcomes, such as increasing retail sales, willingness to pay, and support for certain decisions (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 382). However, students or consumers exposed to disrupt-only advertisements reported higher levels of ambiguity and thus confusion (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 383). As a result, they were less successful in getting clear perspectives or making informed decisions compared to those exposed to the disrupt-then-reframe technique or reframe-only.

To understand the individual effects of these components more clearly, it is important to examine the disrupt-only and reframe-only conditions in detail.

Disrupt-only communication includes presenting a message that aims to challenge and confuse viewers' cognitive framework without guiding them toward a new perspective (reframing) (Kardes et al, 2007, p. 382). Focusing on the initial surprise element of the message, it is possible to analyze how this communication influences behavior, independently of reframing. More specifically, it will be possible to evaluate how consumers perceive the message and how it affects their behavior in terms of purchase intentions and perceived product value. Studies indicate that when individuals

encounter unexpected or incongruent information, they experience increased attention since their cognitive systems try to work to resolve ambiguity (Lee & Labroo, 2004, p. 159; Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989, p. 40). This reaction of increased attention could challenge their initial assumptions and guide consumers toward the reevaluation of their beliefs and attitudes regarding a product, even without direct reframing. This aligns with the findings of Kardes et al. (2007, p. 382), suggesting that consumers exposed to disrupt-only communications might exhibit lower purchase intentions due to the resulting ambiguity and confusion.

On the other hand, *Reframe-only* communication includes an approach through which consumers are exposed to positive and logical reinforcement of the product characteristics, thus aiming at shaping a positive understanding of the message by the consumer (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 379). Both Kardes et al. (2007, p. 382) and Davis and Knowles (1999, p. 195) conducted experiments in different contexts to explore the effectiveness of reframe-only communication. Their research indicates that this approach can significantly enhance the persuasiveness of a message by clearly reinforcing the positive aspects of the product. On the one hand, Kardes et al. (2007, p. 382) suggest that reframe-only communication, when compared to disrupt-only communication, is more effective in shaping positive consumer perceptions and decision-making processes. On the other, Davis and Knowles (1999, p. 195) compared reframe-only to the entire disrupt-then-reframe technique, demonstrating that while reframe-only communication is persuasive, the combination of disruption followed by reframing is even more impactful.

2.5 Effect of the communication techniques on product value

In a goods-based industry, product value is determined by consumers' assessment of various factors including product quality, features, uniqueness, and price (Zhang et al., 2023, p. 3). In the context of the apparel industry, product value can also go beyond monetary considerations and include subjective elements such as fashion trends and personal affirmation through apparel (Kim et al., 2017, p. 268). Therefore, through these components individuals ultimately assess the overall worth of a product, directly reflecting the amount of money one is determined to spend and the personal benefits they can gain from the product (Zhang et al., 2023, p. 5).

Communication can influence individuals' perception of product value. More specifically, Lu et al. (2022, p.5) suggest that awareness-raising campaigns about the environmental repercussions of production practices can significantly impact consumers' perception of product value. Individuals exposed to communication in which information about the environmental impact of production is highlighted tend to re-evaluate their perception of the product's worth. In particular, consumers who are exposed to communications about products being sustainable and eco-friendly develop a higher perceived value for these products because they become more aware of the benefits and positive

impacts associated with them (Liao et al., 2020, p. 3). Conversely, when consumers are exposed to reinforcements about the environmental impact through an ambiguous lens, their perceived value of the products decreases as they become uncertain about the actual benefits and impacts (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 383).

All this aligns with previous research about the communication strategies applied to this study. On the one hand, the D-T-R technique by initially disrupting consumers' typical thought patterns and then providing a coherent reframe aims to increase engagement, and by highlighting the sustainable attributes of the product it manages to enhance the perceived product value. This is consistent with the Patagonia advertisement (*Figure 1*), where the brand increased consumers' perception of the value of the product because it portrayed the environmental benefits associated with the products (Hwang et al., 2019, n. p.).

On the other hand, the disrupt-only communication technique, while effective in capturing attention through an unexpected message, may lead to confusion without the subsequent explanation provided by a reframe. The lack of the second element can result in lower perceived product value since consumers are not able to solve the ambiguity of the message (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 383).

Lastly, the reframe-only communication technique focuses solely on reinforcing the positive attributes of the product. Providing clear and logical information about the product's sustainability and ethical manufacturing shapes consumer perceptions positively. This method is effective in enhancing perceived product value, although it may not capture initial attention as strongly as the D-T-R technique (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 382).

Based on this information, this study aims to test the following hypotheses:

H1: The use of the Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R) communication technique leads to higher perceived product value compared to other techniques.

H1a: The D-T-R communication technique leads to higher perceived product value compared to the Disrupt-Only communication technique.

H1b: The Reframe-Only communication technique leads to higher perceived product value compared to the Disrupt-Only communication technique.

H1c: The D-T-R communication technique leads to higher perceived product value compared to the Reframe-Only communication technique.

2.6 Effect of the communication techniques on purchase intentions

Purchase intentions, refer to the degree to which individuals are willing or inclined to buy a product (Lu et al., 2022, p. 4.). These factors are measured through the combination of consumers' willingness and readiness to buy a good combined with the level of effort required to purchase the specific product (Lu et al., 2022, p. 4).

Previous research discussed in sections 2.3 and 2.4 extensively addresses the effects of the D-T-R, disrupt-only, and reframe-only communication techniques on purchase intentions. However, only one study focused on the effect of this communication in the fashion industry. Therefore, the following framework has been developed to investigate if its relevance applies to this industry.

Firstly, exposure to a disruptive message followed by a reframing one in the D-T-R communication technique tends to raise awareness, often resulting in a decrease in purchase intentions as consumers become more conscious of the environmental impact of their buying choices (Hwang et al., 2016, n.p.).

Secondly, disrupt-only communication challenges consumers' cognitive frameworks without offering a clear resolution, potentially leading to confusion and reduced purchase intentions (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 383).

Lastly, reframe-only communication focuses on highlighting a product's positive qualities, including its ethical and sustainable manufacturing practices, which can encourage purchase intentions by aligning with consumers' growing preference for sustainability and ethical products (Kardes et al., 2007, p. 382).

Considering this framework, the following hypothesis will be tested:

H2: The use of the Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R) communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions compared to other techniques.

H2a: The D-T-R communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only communication technique.

H2b: The Reframe-Only communication technique leads to higher purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only communication technique.

H2c: The D-T-R communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions compared to the Reframe-Only communication technique.

2.7 Consumer awareness of sustainable fashion

Within the context of the fast fashion industry contributing significantly to global pollution levels, more and more consumers are reported to have increased interest in what kind of clothing

items they purchase. All this is because consumers are reported to pay more attention to the effects their fashion choices have on a social and environmental scale (Jung et al., 2020, p.3). This phenomenon has been named by researchers as *consumer awareness of sustainable fashion* (Shen et al., 2013, p. 134). In particular, it involves the extent to which consumers are interested in choosing clothes made from sustainable materials, considering brands' ethical practices, actively searching for environmentally responsible brands, and educating themselves about the industry's impact (Shen et al., 2013, p. 136).

Previous research suggests that consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is a key driver in consumers' decision-making processes when buying a fashion item (Shen et al., 2013, p. 134). This is because people who are more informed about the negative effects of the fashion industry on the environment, prefer buying apparel that is more sustainably produced (Shen et al., 2013, p. 134). Furthermore, considering the higher costs of production of slow fashion, Solino et al. (2020, p. 166) suggest that consumers with a higher interest in sustainability are willing to pay heightened prices for their apparel.

This research seeks to understand to what extent consumer awareness of sustainable fashion moderates the effect of D-T-R, disrupt-only, and reframe-only communication on purchasing intentions and product value perception. Specifically, it aims to determine if and to what extent higher levels of awareness increase the effectiveness of these communication techniques, potentially leading to higher perceived product value and influencing purchase decisions.

Therefore, the following hypotheses have been developed:

H3: Higher consumer awareness of sustainable fashion moderates the effect of communication techniques on perceived product value.

H3a: The D-T-R communication technique leads to higher perceived product value than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.

H3b: The Reframe-Only communication technique leads to higher perceived product value than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.

H3c: The D-T-R communication technique leads to higher perceived product value than the Reframe-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.

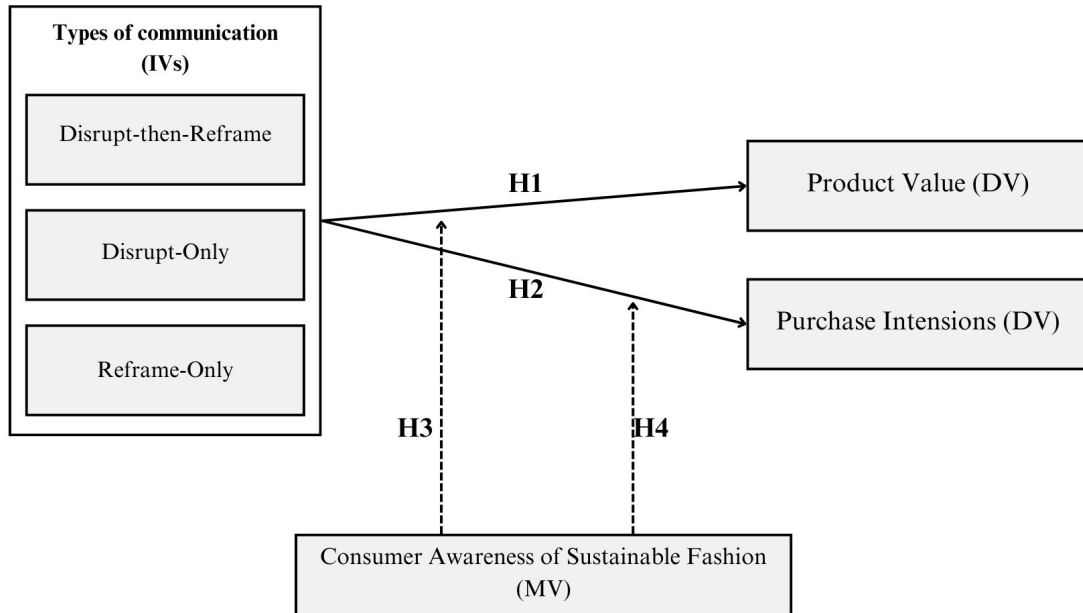
H4: Higher consumer awareness of sustainable fashion moderates the effect of communication techniques on purchase intentions.

H4a: The D-T-R communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.

H4b: The Reframe-Only communication technique leads to higher purchase intentions than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.

H4c: The D-T-R communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions than the Reframe-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.

These hypotheses align with our understanding of how various communication techniques influence consumer attitudes and behaviors. When consumers are exposed to a disruptive message followed by a reframing one, the D-T-R communication technique raises awareness and enhances perceived product value, while potentially reducing purchase intentions due to increased environmental consciousness. Disrupt-only communication, on the other hand, challenges our cognitive patterns and by not offering a clear resolution, leads consumers to confusion and negative perceptions of both product value and purchase intentions. In contrast, reframe-only communication focuses on highlighting the positive qualities of a product, including its ethical and sustainable manufacturing practices, thus enhancing consumer perceptions of its value and encouraging purchase intentions. These effects are particularly significant among consumers with high awareness of sustainable fashion, who are more likely to understand and make more informed decisions about their sustainable practices by making purchasing decisions that reflect their values.

Figure 1.2*Conceptual model*

3.0 Method

In this chapter, the researcher illustrates the method that has been chosen to answer the following research question: “*To what extent does the Disrupt-then-Reframe communication strategy influence product value perception and purchase intentions among consumers with high consumer awareness of sustainable fashion?*”. The study uses a quantitative research design, specifically an experimental approach, to investigate the moderating role of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion on the effectiveness of different communication techniques. The following subsections will illustrate the research design, experimental setup, stimulus materials, data collection, and measurement tools that were used to gather and analyze the data.

3.1 Research approach

A quantitative research study was conducted to address the research question and test the hypotheses. According to Newman and Ridenour (1998, p. 18), quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of structured data, thus providing statistical and numerical inferences. This type of empirical analysis can employ various kinds of quantitative designs; in this thesis, an experimental design was utilized. Newman and Ridenour (1998, p. 10) argue that experimental design is the most suitable quantitative method for assessing causal relationships, as it allows for control over the study environment (Vargas et al., 2017, p. 104). In addition, Richards (2005, p. 33) highlights that quantitative research effectively gathers valuable data from smaller samples to draw conclusions about larger populations.

Another noteworthy reason for employing quantitative research is its ability to ensure participant anonymity, which is crucial in reducing biases (Babbie, 2014, p. 68). When participants are assured that their identities are protected, they are more likely to provide honest and accurate responses (Babbie, 2014, p. 69).

Conversely to qualitative research, where in-depth interviews and personal interactions may reveal participant identities, anonymity is easier to maintain in quantitative research, as researchers do not interact with participants in any way (Babbie, 2014, p. 70). More specifically, as this research examines *consumer awareness of sustainable fashion*, ensuring participants' anonymity is important for collecting reliable and valid responses. This anonymity helps prevent participants from providing socially desirable answers, instead of honest opinions, thus reducing the likelihood of biased or withheld information (Babbie, 2014, p. 70).

For this reason, the collected data reflects more accurately consumer attitudes and behaviors, increasing the overall quality and credibility of the research findings. Leveraging these aspects of quantitative research methodology enabled a thorough analysis of how the Disrupt-then-reframe

communication technique influences consumer behaviors in the context of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion.

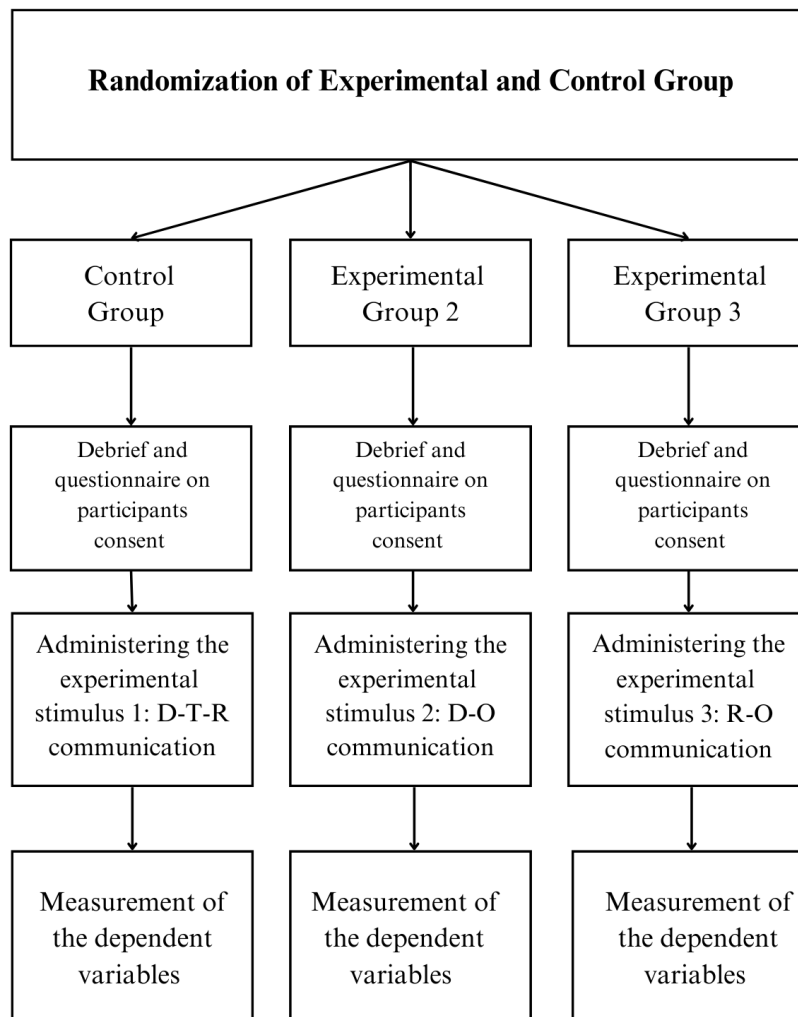
3.2 Research design

3.2.1 Experimental setup

The research question of this study was answered by setting up an online experiment within a survey design. Moreover, a single-factor between-subject experimental design was adopted by the researcher, this approach entailed that each participant was exposed to only one of the experimental conditions (*see Table 3.1*). This design is ideal for examining the impact of different variables on participants' responses, as it helps to isolate the effects of the experimental manipulation (Nardi, 2018, p. 17).

Table 3.1

Depiction of the experimental procedure



3.3 Stimuli material

To carry out this research, the stimuli materials utilized a fictional brand called J-Jeans. According to Beuer and Rumpf (2012, p. 6), employing an imaginary brand reduces consumer bias associated with previous brand associations. This ensures that participants have no prior awareness or experience with the company, which could otherwise influence their responses and affect the study's independent and dependent variables (Vargas et al, 2017, p. 104).

The chosen product for the advertisements was jeans, as they are the most universally worn item, transcending age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation (Fisher, 2022, p. 6). The advertisements all included the same image, price tag, and brand and they were created by the researcher on *Canva*, a graphic design platform (*see Appendix B*). This uniformity was employed to ensure that the only variable manipulated was the type of communication technique used in each ad.

The first group was exposed to the D-T-R advertisement, characterized by an initially confusing headline stating, “Don’t buy these (J) jeans”, succeeded by a reframing message featuring reassessment statements about the product.

Conversely, the second group was presented with the Disrupt-only ad, sharing the same headline as the first condition but followed by negative statements about the product.

Finally, the third group encountered a Reframe-only communication, with the title “Buy this (J) jeans” along with positive statements about the product.

In this study, the first group (D-T-R) was set to be the experimental group whereas the third was the control group (reframe-only). In social science research and quantitative experimental designs, researchers usually employ both experimental and control groups to better understand and analyze the effects of the experimental stimulus as this helps detect any changes that can be attributed to the experimental manipulation rather than external factors (Babbie, 2014, p. 241).

By keeping the visual and brand elements consistent across all conditions (Vargas et al, 2017, p. 104), the study aimed to isolate the effect of the communication techniques on consumer attitudes and responses.

The stimuli materials took inspiration from the title of the Patagonia campaign (*Figure 1*). In the Patagonia ad the brand states “Don’t buy this jacket”, whereas in this research the materials state either “Don’t Buy these (J) jeans” for the D-T-R and Disrupt-only condition or “Buy these (J) jeans” for the Reframe-only. Furthermore, under each title, the sentence “There is only one planet” is present in all advertisements.

In addition to this, the D-T-R and Disrupt-only advertisements both present on the left side fictional data about the polluting factors of the jeans industry. The D-T-R ad, however, includes reframing statements on the right side, highlighting how the (J) jeans are less environmentally

impactful. Whereas the Disrupt-only advertisement states “Choose Wisely, You already own plenty of jeans!”. This statement was included to highlight the disrupting continuum in the ad.

The third advertisement, the Reframe-only shared the same reframing statements present in the D-T-R ad, however, they are located on the left side instead of the right. This is because on the right, there is one sentence stating: “Choose Wisely!”. Included to invite participants to think about the information provided in the ad.

The fictional data presented in the images crafted by asking AI to provide fictional information (*see Appendix C*)

Finally, it is important to mention that all information that each advertisement presents is fictional as well, thus meaning that none of them have a scientific base or are grounded in real-world data. All stimuli materials can be seen in *Appendix B*.

3.4 Data collection, sampling, and sample

The data collection period of this study took place from the 12th of April to the 15 of May 2024. Non-probability sampling techniques were chosen. In social science research, the latter refers to a sampling procedure in which individuals taking part in the study are not selected randomly from the population but through specific selection methods (Babbie, 2017, p. 199). More specifically, the researcher employed convenience and snowball sampling techniques for this study. Snowball sampling occurs when the researcher collects data on a few members that fit the criteria of the study and then these participants themselves recruit future participants from their network, thus expanding the sample size (Babbie, 2017, p. 200).

For this study, the snowball sampling took place online through a social media post like Instagram, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn. Secondly, convenience sampling was employed as well in this research. The latter involves selecting readily available participants willing to participate in the study, the participants were recruited on campus at Erasmus University of Rotterdam.

As regards the sample, a total of 232 responses were recorded. After data cleaning $N=152$ (65.5%) were included in further analysis. Participants who were excluded did not complete the full survey ($n = 80$, 34.5%). Of the valid sample, the participants' ages ranged from 18 to 76 years old, and on average the age was 28 years old ($M = 28.12$, $SD = 10.14$).

3.5 Procedure

An online survey was crafted utilizing the Qualtrics online platform. The online questionnaire commenced with a consent form in which respondents were briefed about the nature of the research and the institution in which the study was conducted. Participants were also informed about their

rights such as assurance of anonymity for their responses, confidentiality of data, and the voluntary nature of their participation.

Moreover, all respondents were informed that if they wished to not proceed with their involvement in the study, it would not affect them in any way and they were free to finish the survey whenever they preferred. Additionally, the contact information of the researcher was included in case participants were interested in additional information.

Out of all the participants who began filling out the online questionnaire, one was directed towards the end due to not giving consent, while the rest was directed towards the beginning.

The questionnaire started with a debrief in which participants were invited to imagine themselves as coming across an advertisement featuring jeans. They were also informed that there are no right or wrong answers, indicating that the survey seeks honest and subjective feedback from participants.

Lastly, a disclaimer was shown informing individuals that the advertisement would no longer be visible after proceeding with the survey, thus inviting them to take a careful look at it (*see Appendix A*). After this section, participants were randomly assigned to one of three advertisements: 54 participants (34%) viewed the Disrupt-then-reframe ad, 41 participants (26%) viewed the Disrupt-only ad, and 57 participants (36%) viewed the reframe-only communication.

After exposure to the stimulus material, participants were asked about their level of awareness in terms of sustainable fashion. Following this section, questions regarding product value perception and purchase intentions were presented. To make sure participants were careful during the visualization of the stimulus, two attention checks were carried out, asking participants to indicate which advertisements they recalled seeing as well the wording of the main statement presented in the ad. Subsequently, two manipulation checks investigated if participants correctly understood the type of communication strategy used in the advertisements.

The last section recorded the demographics of the participants, this section was included at the end. Hughes et al. (2016, p. 138) note that gathering demographic information at the end ensures that participants provide thoughtful and unbiased responses without being influenced by potentially sensitive demographic questions. Finally, participants were debriefed, shown all the stimuli material, and informed about the purpose of the research. The survey structure is presented in *Appendix A*.

3.6 Measurements

This section will discuss the validated scales used to measure the variables. In this study, three scales were used to measure the two dependent variables and the moderating variable, namely: product value, purchase intentions and consumer awareness of sustainable fashion. Furthermore, this section will also include the exploratory factorial analyses carried out to identify the factor structures.

3.6.1 Product Value

Product value was assessed using the PERVAL scale designed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001, p. 212). Nineteen items were presented in the original scale, however, one item was removed because it was not relevant to the study, as it measured social approval within a different context compared to the one from this study (*see Appendix A*). Moreover, Participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Completely disagree) to 5 (Completely agree) whether the statements in the item applied to them.

3.6.2 Factorial analysis for product value

An exploratory factorial analysis was conducted on the items of the variable product value to identify their factor structure. Two items from the product value scale were recoded because they had negative connotations. By reversing these items, it was possible to align them with the positive direction of the other items in the scale, thus addressing consistency in the responses. This adjustment allowed for a more accurate factor analysis of this variable. The *KMO* Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .90, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $\chi^2(151, 153) = 18861.62, p < .001$. Therefore, the prior criteria were met, indicating that the product value variable was suitable for factorial analysis.

The eighteen items measuring product value were entered into the exploratory factorial analysis using Principal Components extraction with oblique rotation (direct oblimin) which revealed that four components had *Eigenvalue* (>1.00). The resultant model explained 71.49% of the variable in product value, and the factors found were:

Product Feeling. the first factor included eight items that related to participants' emotional responses to the product, such as enjoyment and relaxation.

Product Quality Over Time. The second factor included two items that assessed perceptions of the product's durability and longevity.

Product Price: The third factor included four items that captured perceptions of the product's value for money and price fairness.

Product Quality Current: The fourth factor included four items that measured current quality standards and overall craftsmanship.

Even though the scales selected for this study have already been employed in existing research, a reliability analysis was conducted to further evaluate the reliability of the items. The results showed that all *Cronbach's alpha* were satisfactory (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2

Factor loadings explained variance and reliability of the four factors found for the scale "product value".

These Jeans	Product Feeling	Product Quality Over Time	Product Price	Product Quality Current
Would make me feel good.	.82			
Would help me feel accepted.	.78			
Would improve the way I am perceived.	.76			
Would make me want to use it.	.75			
Would make me feel good.	.72			
Would give me pleasure.	.66			

Is one that I would enjoy.	.55	
Has poor workmanship. (R)		.87
Would not last long time. (R)		.85
Offers value for money.		.83
Is reasonably priced.		.79
Is a good product for the price.		.78
Would be economical.		.71
Would perform consistently.		-.80
Has an acceptable standard of quality.		-.79
Have a consistent quality.		-.76
Are well made.		-.72

<i>Eigenvalue</i>	8.5	1.8	1.3	1.2
<i>Cronbach's α</i>	.92	.64	.89	.87

3.6.3 Purchase intentions

Purchase intentions were measured through an adapted version of Sameti and Kahlili's (2017, p. 538) scale and it consisted of three items (see *Appendix A*). The adaption consisted in changing the phrasing of the items by including the word "Jeans" instead of "Product". Participants responded to three items on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (Completely disagree) to 7 (Completely agree), indicating how likely they were to purchase the advertised product.

3.6.4 Factorial Analysis for Purchase intentions

Firstly, purchase intention met the apriori criteria with a *KMO* Measure of Sampling Adequacy that was .745, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $\chi^2 (151, 3) = 2420.85, p < .001$. Therefore, the factorial analysis was carried out with the three items measuring purchase intentions, which revealed that one component had *Eigenvalue* (>1.00). The resultant model explained 80.97% of the variance in purchase intentions, and the factor found was:

Purchase Intentions: The single factor included three items that measured participants' likelihood of purchasing the advertised product.

Subsequently, the reliability test showed that the Purchase Intentions scale had a *Cronbach's α* of .882 (see *Table 3.3*), indicating high reliability.

Table 3.3

Factor loadings explained variance and reliability of one factor found for the scale “purchase intentions”.

To what extent do you agree with the following statement?	Purchase intentions
How likely are you to purchase the advertised jeans?	.90
Next time that I need jeans, I will choose the brand in the advertisement.	.98
How likely are you to buy these jeans if they were available in the stores that you regularly visit?	.90
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2.4
<i>Cronbach's α</i>	.88

3.6.5 Consumer awareness of sustainable fashion

This variable was measured through the adaptation of Zhang's (2014, p. 61) scale and it consists of six items that measured the participants' levels of concern and engagement with sustainable fashion practices, reflecting their awareness and commitment to sustainability (*see Appendix A*). Participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Completely disagree) to 5 (Completely agree) whether the statements in the item applied to them.

3.6.6 Factorial Analysis for consumer awareness of sustainable fashion

The variable consumer awareness of sustainable fashion underwent the preliminary analysis, resulting in *KMO* Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .893, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $\chi^2(151, 15) = 4326.35, p < .001$. For this reason, this variable was suitable for factorial analysis. The six items measuring consumer awareness were entered into the exploratory factorial analysis using Principal Components extraction with oblique rotation (direct oblimin), which revealed that one component had an *Eigenvalue* (>1.00). The resultant model explained 61.84% of the variance in consumer awareness, and the factor found was:

Consumer Awareness of Sustainable Fashion: The single factor included six items that measured participants' awareness and concern about sustainable fashion practices.

Lastly, the results from the reliability test showed that the Consumer Awareness of Sustainable Fashion scale had a *Cronbach's alpha* of .875 (6 items), indicating high reliability (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4

Factor loadings explained variance and reliability of the one factor found for the scale "purchase intentions".

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Consumer awareness of sustainable fashion

I am very concerned about the clothes I wear for their impact on the environment.	.85
I think a lot about the fashion I wear.	.85
I make an effort to purchase clothing items that are made from sustainable materials (e.g., organic cotton, recycled polyester).	.85
When shopping for clothes, I consider factors such as the brand's ethical practices and commitment to sustainability.	.81
I actively seek out fashion brands that prioritize environmental and social responsibility in their production processes.	.72
I educate myself about the environmental and social impact of the fashion industry.	.56

<i>Eigenvalue</i>	3.7
<i>Cronbach's α</i>	.87

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability in this study were addressed through the application the use of validated scales for the variables measured, manipulation checks and the use of a fictional brand.

Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure, which means whether the same results can be obtained consistently under the same conditions (Babbie, 2017, p. 152). This study's reliability was achieved by using validated and peer-reviewed scales.

For example, the PERVAL scale for product value and adapted scales for purchase intentions and consumer awareness of sustainable fashion were employed. These scales have been proven reliable in previous research and were also subjected to internal validity checks by checking Cronbach's alphas. All scales demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values indicating strong internal consistency across items.

The experimental design included manipulation checks and attention checks to address potential reliability issues associated with subjective interpretations. These checks examined whether participants understood the stimuli as intended, thus reducing the likelihood of biased responses. The use of a fictional brand, J-Jeans, was used deliberate strategy to minimize consumer bias associated with brand recognition and prior experiences as suggested by Beuer and Rumpf (2012, p. 6). By presenting a fictional and therefore unknown brand, the study aimed to isolate the effects of communication techniques on consumer perceptions and behaviors beyond pre-established ideas regarding a brand.

Lastly, validity refers to the extent to which the measures accurately capture the concepts they are intended to measure (Babbie, 2017, p. 153). In this study, validity was addressed by using advertisements that were identical in all aspects except for the manipulated communication technique. This ensured that any observed differences in participant responses could be attributed only to the communication rather than other variables as suggested by Hauser et al. (2018, p. 2). Additionally, all scales used to measure the variables in this study underwent an exploratory factor analysis that confirmed the construct validity of the scales, this made sure that the items appropriately loaded on their respective factors and therefore reflected the intended constructs (Stapleton, 1997, n.p.).

4.0 Results

This section will illustrate all the results from the different analyses carried out to test the hypothesis of this study. Two analyses were carried out for the manipulation checks, namely: an ANOVA and a chi-square test. Lastly, two regression analyses were carried out to examine the effects of different communication techniques (Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R), Disrupt-Only, and Reframe-Only) on perceived product value and purchase intentions, and how these relationships are moderated by consumer awareness of sustainable fashion.

4.1 Manipulation check

In this research, two manipulations were carried out to understand if participants were attentive and understood the material presented in the study. Hauser et al. (2018, p. 2) suggest that manipulation checks are essential for ensuring that participants understand the material as intended by the researcher. If participants fail to understand the content, it indicates that the manipulation has not been effective, thus leading to a decrease in statistical power as it increases the variability in the responses (Hauser et al., 2018, p. 2). Considering the different nature of the variables measured for the manipulation checks, one being continuous and one categorical, two separate analyses were carried out, respectively an ANOVA and chi-square test (*see Appendix A*).

On one hand, a one-way ANOVA was performed to examine differences in the mean scores for perceived confusion between the three groups. By doing so, it was possible to determine if the different experimental conditions (Disrupt-then-Reframe, Disrupt-only, and Reframe-only) significantly affected participants' levels of ambiguity toward the title of the ad.

Participants exposed to the Disrupt-then-Reframe and Disrupt-only conditions were expected to have higher scores in perceived confusion due to the theory suggesting that the disruptive element in the title is meant to create ambiguity and thus confusion (Dolinski & Szczucka, 2013, p. 2030). Therefore, the purpose of this analysis was to understand if the manipulation worked as intended.

The one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference in mean perceived confusion between the three groups, ($F(2, 149) = 7.345, p < .001$), with a partial η^2 of .090, indicating that 9% of the variance in perceived confusion was explained by the different manipulations. Post hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD test showed that the mean score for the Reframe-only condition ($M = 2.98, SD = .77, p = 0.797$) was significantly lower than both the Disrupt-then-Reframe condition ($M = 3.76, SD = .79, p = 0.001$) and the Disrupt-only condition ($M = 3.61, SD = .72, p = 0.020$). There was no significant difference between the Disrupt-then-Reframe and Disrupt-only conditions. These results indicate the Disrupt-then-Reframe and Disrupt-only conditions did not significantly differ from each other, suggesting that the disruptive element effectively increased perceived confusion, as intended by the researcher.

Secondly, the analysis showed that the Reframe-only condition caused significantly less confusion compared to the other two conditions. These results confirm that the manipulation worked as expected, with the disruptive elements successfully increasing confusion among participants.

On the other hand, for the second manipulation check, a chi-square test was conducted to assess whether the advertisement highlighted favorable or unfavorable reasons to consider purchasing the product. This test examined the association between the experimental conditions and participants' responses to the categorical manipulation check question. The chi-square test revealed a significant association between the conditions and participants response, $\chi^2(6, N = 152) = 65.143, p < .001$. This result indicates that the differences in participant's perceptions were not due to random chance but were related to the experimental manipulation.

The results from the cross-table show that the manipulation worked as expected, with the majority of participants in the Disrupt-then-Reframe condition stating that the advertisement presented both positive and negative aspects. In contrast, most participants in the Disrupt-only condition perceived the advertisement as emphasizing drawbacks, and the majority in the Reframe-only condition perceived it as emphasizing benefits (*see Table 4.1*). This pattern aligns with the theoretical predictions that the disruptive element would create ambiguity and emphasize negative aspects, while the reframe element alone would highlight the positive benefits (Hwang et al. 2016, n.p.). Therefore, the experimental manipulations were successful in influencing participants' perceptions as intended in the first place.

There were 68 respondents for which both manipulations were successful. The following regression analyses carried out on the full sample do not show significant differences in results compared to the sample that passed both manipulation checks.

Table 4.1*Manipulation check Cross-Tab*

		CONDITIONS			Total	
		D-T-R	D-O	R-O		
		Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3		
Did the advertisement highlight favorable or unfavorable reasons to consider purchasing the product?	The advertisement presented both positive and negative aspects regarding purchasing the product.	Count	20	4	9	33
		Expected	11,7	8,9	12,4	33,0
		Count				
	The advertisement emphasized drawbacks or concerns that may arise from purchasing the product.	Count	11	29	7	47
		Expected	16,7	12,7	17,6	47,0
		Count				
	The advertisement emphasized the benefits and advantages of purchasing the product.	Count	19	2	38	59
		Expected	21,0	15,9	22,1	59,0
		Count				
	I don't remember.	Count	4	6	3	13
		Expected	4,6	3,5	4,9	13,0
		Count				
Total	Count	<i>N</i> = 54	<i>N</i> = 41	<i>N</i> = 57	<i>N</i> = 152	
	Expected	54,0	41,0	57,0	152,0	
	Count					

4.2 Regression analysis

Two regression analyses were carried out to examine the effects of different communication techniques (Disrupt-Then-Reframe, Disrupt-Only, and Reframe-Only) on perceived product value and purchase intentions, and how these relationships are moderated by consumer awareness of sustainable fashion. The data was prepared by coding the different communication techniques into dummy variables. The Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R) communication technique was used as the reference category, and dummy variables were created for Disrupt-Only and Reframe-Only

conditions. Additionally, an interaction term between the consumer awareness of sustainable fashion and each communication technique was computed to test for moderating effects.

4.3 Results for product value

In the first model (Model 1), the main effects of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion and the dummy variables for Disrupt-Only and Reframe-Only conditions were included. In the second model (Model 2), interaction terms were added to assess the moderating effects of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion.

The first model (Model 1) assessed the direct effects of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion and communication techniques on perceived product value. On the one hand, the analysis showed that consumer awareness of sustainable fashion had a positive and significant effect on perceived product value ($B = 0.234, t = 4.608, p < 0.001$). This indicates that as consumers' perception of fashion sustainability increases, their perceived value of the product also increases. More specifically, consumers who are more aware of and value sustainability in fashion tend to perceive a higher value in fashion products.

On the other hand, the Disrupt-Only communication condition was found to be negatively affecting perceived product value ($B = -0.444, t = -3.913, p < 0.001$). This suggests that when consumers are exposed to the Disrupt-Only communication technique, they perceive the product as having less value compared to when they are exposed to the Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R) technique, therefore supporting H1a. This result shows the effectiveness of the D-T-R technique in maintaining or increasing perceived product value compared to Disrupt-Only communication.

Lastly, the Reframe-Only communication condition did not show a significant effect on perceived product value ($B = -0.188, t = -1.777, p = 0.078$), thus H1c was not supported. This means that the Reframe-Only technique does not significantly change consumers' perceived value of the product compared to the D-T-R technique. Although the coefficient is negative, it does not reach statistical significance; therefore, the impact of the Reframe-Only technique on perceived product value is not substantially different from the reference category. Lastly, H1b was not supported.

In the second model (Model 2), the interaction effects were added to assess the moderating effects of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion. The results showed that consumer awareness of sustainable fashion remained positively affecting perceived product value ($B = 0.391, t = 4.871, p < 0.001$). However, the interaction terms indicated significant effects. The interaction between consumer awareness of sustainable fashion and Disrupt-Only communication was significant ($B = -0.248, t = -2.043, p = 0.043$), and the interaction between consumer awareness of sustainable fashion and Reframe-Only communication was also significant ($B = -0.265, t = -2.191, p = 0.030$).

These results suggest that the positive effect of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion on perceived product value decreases when consumers are exposed to either the Disrupt-Only or Reframe-Only communication techniques, compared to the D-T-R technique. The results from this model then suggest that H3a and H3b are supported, whereas H3c is rejected (*see Table 4.2*).

Table 4.2

Regression Analysis for Perceived Product Value (N = 152)

Variable	Model 1 (B)	SE	t	Model 2 (B)	SE	t
Constant	2.627***	0.196	13.410	2.070***	0.295	7.015
Consumer Awareness of Sustainable Fashion	0.234***	0.051	4.608	0.391***	0.080	4.871
Disrupt-Only	-0.444***	0.113	-3.913	-0.439	0.446	-0.984
Reframe-Only	-0.188	0.106	-1.777	0.717	0.420	1.709
CASF x Disrupt-Only Interaction				-0.248*	0.121	-2.043
CASF x Reframe-Only Interaction				-0.265*	0.121	-2.191
R²	0.202			0.235		
Adjusted R²	0.186			0.209		
F	12.486***			8.958***		
ΔR²				0.033		
ΔF				9.958***		

Note. Significance levels: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

4.4 Results for purchase intentions

The first model (Model 1) assessed the direct effects of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion and communication techniques on purchase intentions. The analysis showed that consumer awareness of sustainable fashion was positively affecting purchase intentions ($B = 0.254$, $t = 2.763$, $p = 0.006$), indicating that as consumers' perception of fashion sustainability increases, their intention to purchase the product also increases. Specifically, consumers who are more aware of and value sustainability in fashion are more likely to intend to purchase fashion products.

The Disrupt-Only communication condition was found to be negatively affecting purchase intentions ($B = -0.684$, $t = -3.337$, $p = 0.001$). This suggests that when consumers are exposed to the Disrupt-Only communication technique, their intention to purchase the product decreases compared to when they are exposed to the Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R) technique. This result highlights the effectiveness of the D-T-R technique in encouraging purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only technique, therefore H2a is not supported.

The Reframe-Only communication condition was also negatively affecting purchase intentions ($B = -0.443$, $t = -2.319$, $p = 0.022$). This indicates that the Reframe-Only technique reduces the

likelihood of consumers intending to purchase the product compared to the D-T-R technique, therefore, H2c is supported. Although the Reframe-Only technique negatively impacts purchase intentions, the effect is smaller than with the Disrupt-Only technique, supporting H2b.

In the second model (Model 2), interaction terms were added to assess the moderating effects of consumer awareness of sustainable fashion. The results showed that consumer awareness of sustainable fashion remained positively affecting purchase intentions ($B = 0.353$, $t = 2.392$, $p = 0.018$). However, the interaction terms for Disrupt-Only ($B = -0.187$, $t = -0.836$, $p = 0.405$) and Reframe-Only ($B = -0.139$, $t = -0.625$, $p = 0.533$) were not significant. This indicates that consumer awareness of sustainable fashion does not significantly change the effect of the communication techniques on purchase intentions. Therefore, the moderating effect of consumer awareness does not significantly influence the relationship between the communication techniques (Disrupt-Only and Reframe-Only) and consumers' purchase intentions. Thus, H4a, H4b, and H4c are not supported (See table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Regression Analysis for Purchase Intentions (N = 152)

Variable	Model 1 (B)	SE	t	Model 2 (B)	SE	t
Constant	2.627***	0.196	13.410	2.070***	0.295	7.015
Consumer Awareness of Sustainable Fashion	0.254**	0.092	2.763	0.353*	0.147	2.392
Disrupt-Only	-0.684***	0.205	-3.337	-0.439	0.446	-0.984
Reframe-Only	-0.443*	0.191	-2.319	0.717	0.420	1.709
CAFS x Disrupt-Only Interaction				-0.187	0.223	-0.836
CAFS x Reframe-Only Interaction				-0.139	0.222	-0.625
R²	0.202			0.235		
Adjusted R²	0.186			0.209		
F	12.486***			8.958***		
ΔR²				0.033		
ΔF				9.958***		

Note. Significance levels: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

4.5 Summary of hypotheses

Hypothesis	Description	Status
H1	The use of the Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R) communication technique leads to higher perceived product value compared to other techniques.	Supported
H1a	The D-T-R communication technique leads to higher perceived product value compared to the Disrupt-Only communication technique.	Supported
H1b	The Reframe-Only communication technique leads to higher perceived product value compared to the Disrupt-Only communication technique.	Not Supported
H1c	The D-T-R communication technique leads to higher perceived product value compared to the Reframe-Only communication technique.	Not Supported
H2	The use of the Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R) communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions compared to other techniques.	Supported
H2a	The D-T-R communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only communication technique.	Not Supported
H2b	The Reframe-Only communication technique leads to higher purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only communication technique.	Supported
H2c	The D-T-R communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions compared to the Reframe-Only communication technique.	Supported
H3	Higher consumer awareness of sustainable fashion moderates the effect of communication techniques on perceived product value.	Supported

H3a	The D-T-R communication technique leads to higher perceived product value than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.	Supported
H3b	The Reframe-Only communication technique leads to higher perceived product value than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.	Supported
H3c	The D-T-R communication technique leads to higher perceived product value than the Reframe-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.	Not Supported
H4	Higher consumer awareness of sustainable fashion moderates the effect of communication techniques on purchase intentions.	Not Supported
H4a	The D-T-R communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.	Not Supported
H4b	The Reframe-Only communication technique leads to higher purchase intentions than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.	Not Supported
H4c	The D-T-R communication technique leads to lower purchase intentions than the Reframe-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion is high.	Not Supported

5.0 Conclusion and Discussion

This research aimed to answer the research question: *"To what extent does the Disrupt-then-Reframe communication strategy influence product value perception and purchase intentions among consumers with high consumer awareness of sustainable fashion?"*. By examining the impact of the Disrupt-Then-Reframe communication technique on perceived product value and consumers' purchase intentions, this study used consumer awareness of sustainable fashion as a moderating factor to understand its influence on the effectiveness of this communication technique.

By incorporating this moderating variable, the research sought to determine whether higher levels of consumer awareness would enhance or diminish the impact of the Disrupt-Then-Reframe technique on both product value perception and purchase intentions. Additionally, the research took a step deeper by comparing the Disrupt-Then-Reframe communication technique in its entirety with its components, the Disrupt-Only and Reframe-Only techniques, to better investigate their distinct effects.

To answer the research question, the study confirmed that the D-T-R communication technique generally leads to higher perceived product value compared to the other communication techniques. On the one hand, the D-T-R technique was more effective in increasing perceived product value compared to the Disrupt-Only technique. This confirms the suggestions by Davis and Knowles (1999, p. 200) and Kardes et al. (2007, p. 382), indicating that the combination of disruption followed by reframing effectively heightens product value perception. On the other hand, the assumption that the D-T-R technique would lead to higher perceived product value compared to the Reframe-Only technique was not supported. This suggests that while the D-T-R technique is effective, the reframing component alone can be equally or more effective in enhancing product value perception. Thereby aligning with Kardes et al. (2007, p. 382)'s findings, which highlighted the significant impact of positive reframing on consumer perceptions. Interestingly, the expectation that the Reframe-Only technique would lead to higher perceived product value compared to the Disrupt-Only technique was also not supported, indicating that only the reframing element without the initial disruption does not significantly improve product value perception.

When consumer awareness of sustainable fashion was included as a moderator factor, it revealed that higher awareness levels significantly enhance the effectiveness of communication techniques on perceived product value. In particular, the D-T-R technique led to higher perceived product value than the Disrupt-Only technique, especially when consumer awareness of sustainable fashion was high. This supports the idea that consumers who are more informed about sustainability issues are more affected by the D-T-R technique since it resonates with their environmentally friendly values. Similarly, when the Reframe-Only technique was compared to the Disrupt-Only technique,

it showed that the Reframe-Only technique led to higher perceived product value, especially among consumers with high awareness of sustainable fashion. This aligns with the suggestions by Solino et al. (2020, p. 166) and Shen et al. (2013, p. 3), who noted that consumer education and awareness improve the effectiveness of sustainable marketing strategies.

However, the assumption that the D-T-R technique would lead to higher perceived product value compared to the Reframe-Only technique, in consumers with high awareness, was not supported. This suggests that while both techniques are effective, the reframing component alone is enough to improve perceived product value in consumers with a high awareness of sustainable fashion.

In addition to these findings, this study also revealed that the D-T-R communication technique generally leads to lower purchase intentions compared to other techniques. More specifically, the D-T-R technique resulted in lower purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only technique. This supports Hwang et al. (2016, n.p.), which suggested that disruption followed by reframing heightens awareness of environmental impacts, thus reducing purchase intentions. Additionally, the D-T-R technique led to lower purchase intentions compared to the Reframe-Only technique, reinforcing the idea that while the D-T-R technique raises awareness, it also introduces resistance towards purchasing. Conversely, the Reframe-Only technique led to higher purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only technique, indicating that positive messaging without disruption is more effective in encouraging purchases.

When consumer awareness of sustainable fashion was included as a moderating factor, it revealed that higher awareness levels do not significantly enhance the impact on purchase intentions. In particular, the D-T-R technique did not lead to higher purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only technique among highly aware consumers. This suggests that the D-T-R technique can still introduce hesitation due to increased environmental consciousness. Resulting in lower purchase intentions, especially in consumers with higher awareness.

Similarly, the Reframe-Only technique did not lead to higher purchase intentions compared to the Disrupt-Only technique in highly aware consumers. This indicates that, while consumers may be more informed about sustainability, it does not necessarily translate into a greater willingness to purchase sustainable fashion. This could be justified by increased attention to the environmental impact of additional and unnecessary fashion items, which may lead consumers to become more critical and selective about their purchases, ultimately reducing their intention to buy.

Considering these findings, it is possible to infer that the Disrupt-Then-Reframe communication strategy enhances perceived product value among consumers with high awareness of sustainable fashion but tends to decrease their purchase intentions due to increased environmental awareness.

In conclusion, this study's insights can help tailor more effective communication strategies that promote sustainable consumption practices, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable fashion industry. Moreover, considering the limited number of studies addressing the context of sustainable fashion, it is surprising to see how the D-T-R communication technique can be applied in different contested and still provide similar results. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the results from this research could be applied to different fields of interest with a good chance that the results could align with the ones of this thesis.

5.1 Limitations and suggestion for future research

Although this research carries significant theory-based results, some limitations might have affected the further support of some of the hypotheses. In particular, three constraints were identified, namely lack of sample age range, fictional brand implications, and fictional material information.

The sample included participants ranging from 18 to 76 years old, which, while providing a diverse perspective, might weaken specific insights related to younger generations. In particular, younger generations, such as Gen Z and Millennials, are more engaged with sustainable fashion (Jung et al., 2020, p. 3). Focusing future studies on specific age groups could provide a more detailed understanding of how these communication strategies affect a generation that is highly concerned about sustainability. Furthermore, by examining the responses of younger age groups in more detail, researchers can examine evolving trends and preferences of the sustainable fashion industry more effectively.

Secondly, another limitation of this study is the use of a fictional brand, J-Jeans. Even though Beuer and Rumpf (2012, p. 6) suggest that employing an imaginary brand reduces consumer bias associated with previous brand associations, it would be interesting for future research to focus on real brands as well. More specifically, by incorporating both fictional and known sustainable brands in future experiments, researchers could better understand if and how brand reputation and familiarity influence consumer responses. This approach would also help determine if it is true that sustainable brands have consumers with higher sustainability awareness compared to lesser-known or fictional brands. By doing so, future research could provide more detailed insights into the dynamics between brand perception, consumer awareness, and the effectiveness of communication techniques.

Lastly, the information stated in the materials used for this experiment included fictional data, which might have biased participants who recognized the numbers as fake. Future research should consider using real data to avoid this issue and ensure that participants respond without bias and

more authentically. By incorporating real-world statistics and facts, the results could reflect more consumer perceptions and behaviors, thus offering more valuable insights for the industry. This adjustment would help in better understanding how communication strategies work when the information is perceived as credible and trustworthy.

5.2 Practical implications

The findings from this study offer valuable information for marketers and sustainable fashion brands looking to refine their communication strategies. By understanding that the Disrupt-Then-Reframe (D-T-R) technique influences consumer perceptions and behaviors, sustainable brands can use this approach to communicate more effectively with their audience

Firstly, the study demonstrates that the D-T-R technique can significantly increase the perceived value of products among consumers who are highly aware of sustainable fashion. For marketers, this implies that emphasizing the environmental benefits and ethical practices behind their products can enhance consumer perception of product value. Given that sustainable products often come with a higher price tag, this strategy can help justify the cost and encourage consumers to see the worth of investing in environmentally friendly apparel.

However, the research also reveals a potential downside: while the D-T-R technique can increasingly improve perceived product value, it might also reduce purchase intentions. This finding suggests that brands need to balance their messaging in a very attentive way. More specifically, brands and marketers in the sustainable fashion industry must commit to the greater purpose of improving the industry's impact on the planet. By enhancing product value with D-T-R communication, brands can build strong relationships with consumers, who will then be more likely to make purchases. This reflects the outcome of the Patagonia ad. Even though the campaign was an anti-consumerism one, it still resulted in increased sales because it targeted individuals who highly valued the product. This alignment with consumer values would encourage them to support the brand, demonstrating that a thoughtful approach to messaging can connect both sustainability and consumer loyalty.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of leveraging specific communication elements to maximize the effectiveness of the D-T-R technique. Marketers should ensure that their disruptive messages genuinely challenge conventional thinking and cognitive patterns. For example, starting with an unexpected statement like "Don't Buy This Shirt" can grab attention and create cognitive ambiguity. This disruption should then be followed by a clear, value-driven reframe that explains the sustainable benefits of the product, such as "Choose Wisely: this shirt uses 500 gallons of water less compared to fast-fashion retailers." This example of a reframing element helps to resolve the

initial confusion and guides consumers toward understanding the value and importance of sustainable choices.

In addition, marketers should integrate visual elements that support the D-T-R messaging. Infographics showing the environmental impact of conventional fashion versus sustainable fashion can reinforce the reframe and deepen consumer interest and engagement. Furthermore, interactive content, such as cognitive challenges can encourage consumers to reflect on their fashion habits and learn about sustainability, thus further enhancing the impact of the D-T-R technique.

In conclusion, this study shed light on the importance of targeting marketing strategy toward consumers with a high awareness of sustainable fashion. Brands should focus on creating communication strategies that embrace the values and concerns of these consumers. By doing so, they can foster greater loyalty among those individuals who prioritize sustainability in their purchasing decisions.

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Appendix A: Survey

Introduction

Dear participant,

Thank you very much for participating in this research.

This research is conducted by a student of the Media & Business master's programme of Erasmus University Rotterdam. It consists of a questionnaire about a digital advertisement and your opinion about it.

Please be aware that participating is completely **voluntary**, meaning that you can quit at any time during your participation. Furthermore, your personal information will be kept strictly **confidential**, and the findings of this survey will be used solely for thesis purposes. Hence, **your anonymity is guaranteed**.

Completing the survey will take less than 10 minutes. If you have any questions during or after your participation, please feel free to contact the researcher, Ginevra Maneschi (659053ds@eur.nl).

Consent

I understand the above and agree on participating in this research.

Yes

No

Debrief 1

Imagine you've randomly come across an advertisement featuring jeans. In this survey, there is no right or wrong answers, we only want to gather your thoughts and impressions on the advertisement you see.

Disclaimer

Take a good look, you won't be able to see the advertisement again.

Stimulus Material

See Appendix B

Consumer awareness of sustainable fashion

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I am very concerned about the clothes I wear for their impact on the environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think a lot about the fashion I wear.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I make an effort to purchase clothing items that are made from sustainable materials (e.g., organic cotton, recycled polyester).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When shopping for clothes, I consider factors such as the brand's ethical practices and commitment to sustainability.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I actively seek out fashion brands that prioritize environmental and social responsibility in their production processes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I educate myself about the environmental and social impact of the fashion industry.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Product Value

These jeans...

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
have a consistent quality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
are well made.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
has an acceptable standard of quality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
has poor workmanship. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
would not last a long time. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These jeans...

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
would perform consistently.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
is one that I would enjoy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
would make me want to use it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
is one that i would feel relaxed when using it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
would make me feel good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These jeans...

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
would help me to feel accepted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
would improve the way I am perceived.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
would make me feel good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Purchase intentions

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely
How likely are you to purchase the advertised jeans?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How likely are you to buy these jeans if they were available in the stores that you regularly visit?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Next time that I need jeans, I will choose the brand in the advertisement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Attention check 1

What was the advertised product in the campaign?

- Jacket
- Jeans
- Jumper
- I don't remember

Attention check 2

What was the first statement of the ad you saw?

- Buy this (J)acket!
- Don't Buy this (J)jacket!
- Buy these (J)ears!
- Don't buy these (J)ears!
- Buy this (J)umper!
- Don't buy this (J)umper!
- I don't remember

Manipulation check 1

Did the first statement of the advertisement confuse you?

- Strongly disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Strongly agree
-

Manipulation check 2

Did the advertisement highlight favorable or unfavorable reasons to consider purchasing the product?

- The advertisement presented both positive and negative aspects regarding purchasing the product.
 - The advertisement emphasized drawbacks or concerns that may arise from purchasing the product.
 - The advertisement emphasized the benefits and advantages of purchasing the product.
 - I don't remember.
-

Age

How old are you? Please indicate your age with numbers.

End and Debrief 2

Congratulations!

You have reached the end of the survey, Please move to the next page to record your responses.

Thank you for your participation, your answers are very valuable for this research.

This study focuses on exploring the Disrupt-Then-Reframe (DTR) communication technique and its impact on perceived product value and purchase intentions, all within the context of fashion sustainability and individuals' fashion sustainability perception.

Participants were exposed to advertisements employing one of three conditions: Disrupt-then-reframe, Disrupt-only and Reframe-only.

The objective of this research is to understand how different communication approaches can influence consumers' intentions to purchase a product and their perception of its value. Additionally, this study seeks to assess the importance of sustainability in fashion to our participants, examining how this moderates the relationship between our communication strategies and their outcomes.

Both the brand and the advertisements are fictitious. All ads used for this research are shown below.

See Appendix B

Finish

Thank you again for participating, you're helping a student graduating!

Please move to the next page to record your responses.

Appendix B: Stimuli Material

Disrupt-then-Reframe Ad

Don't buy these (J) jeans
Choose Wisely - There is only **one** planet

Did you know that
 10,000 liters of water are consumed per pair of jeans produced.
 The production of one pair of jeans emits approximately **25 kilograms** of carbon dioxide equivalent
3 kilograms of waste are generated per pair of jeans produced.

We only use **5,000** liters of water per pair of jeans produced.
 We only emit approximately **15 kilograms** of carbon dioxide equivalent.
 We **only** produce **1 kilogram** of waster per pair of jeans produced.

100,00€
J-Jeans

Disrupt-Only Ad

Don't buy these (J) jeans
There is only **one** planet!

Did you know that
 10,000 liters of water are consumed per pair of jeans produced.
 The production of one pair of jeans emits approximately **25 kilograms** of carbon dioxide equivalent
3 kilograms of waste are generated per pair of jeans produced.

Choose Wisely,
You probably already own plenty of jeans!

100,00€
J-Jeans

Reframe-Only Ad

Buy these (J) jeans

There is only **one** planet!



We **only** use **5,000** liters of water per pair of jeans produced.



We **only** emit approximately **15 kilograms** of carbon dioxide equivalent.



We **only** produce **1 kilogram** of waster per pair of jeans produced.

Choose Wisely!

100,00€
J-Jeans

Appendix C: AI declaration

Classification:
Internal

**Erasmus School of
History, Culture and
Communication**

Declaration Page: Use of Generative AI Tools in Thesis

Student Information

Name: Ginevra Maneschi
Student ID: 659053
Course Name: Master Thesis CM5000
Supervisor Name: Dr. ir. Niels NY Vink
Date: 26.06.2024

Declaration:

Acknowledgment of Generative AI Tools

I acknowledge that I am aware of the existence and functionality of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, which are capable of producing content such as text, images, and other creative works autonomously.

GenAI use would include, but not limited to:

- Generated content (e.g., ChatGPT, Quillbot) limited strictly to content that is not assessed (e.g., thesis title).
- ~~Writing improvements, including~~ grammar and spelling corrections (e.g., Grammarly)
- Language translation (e.g., DeepL), without generative AI alterations/improvements.
- Research task assistance (e.g., finding survey scales, qualitative coding verification, debugging code)
- Using GenAI as a search engine tool to find academic articles or books (e.g.,

I declare that I have used generative AI tools, specifically [Name of the AI Tool(s) or Framework(s) Used], in the process of creating parts or components of my thesis. The purpose of using these tools was to aid in generating content or assisting with specific aspects of thesis work.

I declare that I have NOT used any generative AI tools and that the assignment concerned is my original work.

Signature: [digital signature]
Date of Signature: [Date of Submission]

Extent of AI Usage

I confirm that while I utilized generative AI

tools to aid in content creation, the majority of the intellectual effort, creative input, and decision-making involved in completing the thesis were undertaken by me. I have enclosed the prompts/logging of the GenAI tool use in an appendix.

Ethical and Academic Integrity

I understand the ethical implications and academic integrity concerns related to the use of AI tools in coursework. I assure that the AI-generated content was used responsibly, and any content derived from these tools has been appropriately cited and attributed according to the guidelines provided by the instructor and the course. I have taken necessary steps to distinguish between my original work and the AI-generated contributions. Any direct quotations, paraphrased content, or other forms of AI-generated material have been properly referenced in accordance with academic conventions.

By signing this declaration, I affirm that this declaration is accurate and truthful. I take full responsibility for the integrity of my assignment and am prepared to discuss and explain the role of generative AI tools in my creative process if required by the instructor or the Examination Board. I further affirm that I have used generative AI tools in accordance with ethical standards and academic integrity expectations.

Signature: *Gianna Haueschi*
Date of Signature: 26.06.2024

AI Prompt for creation of fictional data for stimuli materials:

Hi, I would need some statistics on water usage, waste production, and CO2 emissions for a typical pair of jeans?



Hello! Here are some statistics for the typical production of a pair of jeans:

- **Water Usage:** About 10,000 liters of water are consumed to produce a single pair of jeans.
- **Waste Production:** Approximately 3 kilograms of waste are generated per pair of jeans.
- **CO2 Emissions:** The production of one pair of jeans emits roughly 25 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent.

These figures highlight the significant environmental impact of conventional jean manufacturing. If you need more detailed information or a comparison with more sustainable practices, feel free to ask!

Could you also provide me a comparison with a more sustainable production of jeans?



Certainly! When comparing more sustainable methods of producing jeans to conventional ones, the environmental impacts are generally lower:

- **Water Usage:** Sustainable production methods can reduce water consumption to about 5,000 liters per pair of jeans.
- **Waste Production:** Waste can be minimized to approximately 1 kilogram per pair.
- **CO2 Emissions:** CO2 emissions can be lowered to around 15 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent per pair.

These improvements are due to more efficient use of resources and often involve recycling materials, using less water-intensive processes, and employing renewable energy sources during manufacturing. This not only reduces the environmental footprint but also promotes a more sustainable fashion industry.

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