



MASTER'S DISSERTATION

SECOND-HAND FASHION: RAGS OR RICHES?

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ABSTRACT

The abrupt changes in the environment have sparked a shift in behavior toward more environmentally friendly, sustainable forms of consumption. Textiles is one of the businesses that most degrades nature, therefore second-hand fashion emerges as one of the expanding phenomena in this industry, with various perceptions and motivations according to the culture in which an individual is inserted. Thus, this study aims to dive deeper into the current perceptions and motivation of Portuguese consumers toward this market. For this, a qualitative methodology with an exploratory approach is adopted. The data collection technique consisted of 15 semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. The findings show that in a general overview and in the context of this study, consumers are starting to become more open and receptive to the concept of second-hand fashion, even though several prejudices and stigmas were mentioned. In terms of motivation, the need for uniqueness and vintage items, closely followed by economic and sustainable concerns were the most commonly stated motives. At last, most consumers expressed positive second-hand shopping experiences, along with its challenges, and showed a desire to be more exposed to second-hand brand marketing and advertising on social media.

Keywords: Second-hand Fashion, Circular Economy, Consumer behavior, Sustainable Fashion

RESUMO

As mudanças abruptas no meio ambiente provocaram uma mudança de comportamento em relação a formas de consumo mais sustentáveis. A indústria de têxtil é um dos negócios que mais degradação causa no nosso planeta, por isso a popularidade de moda em segunda mão surge como um dos fenómenos em expansão nesta indústria, com várias perceções e motivações consoante a cultura em que os consumidores estão inseridos. Assim, este estudo pretende aprofundar as atuais perceções e motivações dos consumidores portugueses em relação a este mercado. Para isso, adota-se uma metodologia qualitativa com uma abordagem exploratória. A técnica de coleção de dados consistiu em 15 entrevistas semiestruturadas com perguntas abertas. Os resultados mostram que numa visão geral e no contexto deste estudo, os consumidores começam a tornarem-se mais abertos e recetivos perante o conceito de moda em segunda mão, embora vários preconceitos e estigmas tenham sido discutidos. Em termos de motivações de compra, a necessidade de exclusividade e acesso a produtos vintage, seguidos por preocupações económicas e sustentáveis foram os motivos mais comuns. Por fim, a maioria dos consumidores expressou experiências positivas na compra de roupa em segunda mão, juntamente com os seus desafios na hora de compra e mostrou desejo de ser mais exposto a marketing e publicidade de roupas em segunda mão.

Palavras-chave: Moda em Segunda Mão, Economia Circular, Comportamento do Consumidor, Moda Sustentável

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INTRODUCTION

At present times, one of the most important issues is how to advocate and implement sustainable practices in regards to fashion clothing in order to reduce its extreme production, consumption as well as its disposal (Schor, 2005), but perhaps the biggest challenge is how to balance the social, ecological and economic aspects in society (Elkington, 2002). The fashion industry comprises an extended category of products such as textiles, house furniture, home furniture and clothing apparel (Stroescu et al, 2015), but in this study, the term fashion apparel will be considered clothing, shoes and accessories (Stroescu et al, 2015). Clothing and textiles are a crucial part of quotidian life and currently represent an important sector in the global economy. In the last 15 years, the production of clothing has multiplied, which is driven by a phenomenon called "Fast Fashion" that consists in the possibility of producing and presenting collections in a faster and constant way in larger quantities (MacArthur, 2017).

The capitalistic fashion industry is included in a bigger fashion order that basically entails people's perspectives, economic and environmental changes, and by capitalizing on them through marketing strategies, the fashion industry instills in a strong demand for change and novelty (Hamilton, 1987; Vinken, 2005; Stroescu & Hawley, 2014). As a result, individuals often buy new products, even if they don't need to (Kawamura, 2005), a concept recognized as consumerism (Evans, 2011). In fact, in today's world, on a global average, each

person buys 5 kg of fashion apparel per year (Kerr & Landry, 2017), and the average number of times an item of clothing is worn before being thrown away has dropped by 36% in comparison to 15 years ago (MacArthur, 2017), as it is estimated that more than half of “Fast Fashion” production is eliminated within a year (MacArthur, 2017).

Consumer behavior can impact the environment in a negative manner because the production of fashion apparel wears out the planet of renewable and nonrenewable resources, generates unsustainable quantities of waste and releases toxic substances into the atmosphere, oceans, rivers, and soil (Kasser & Kanner, 2004). Recently, consumers as well as the fashion industry are starting to become more conscious of the negative social and environmental impacts of its current practices and companies are beginning to face specific environmental and social challenges within their production chains (MacArthur, 2017). This awareness from the consumer's side has brands interested in sustainable fashion consumer behavior (Easey, 2009). Although extensive research has been done in the area of consumer behavior connected to eco-friendly shopping (Lee et al., 2012) and textile recycling (Hawley, 2006), usage practices and mechanisms for reducing the consumption of fashion garments have gotten far less attention (Stroescu et al, 2015).

In addition, another notion related to fashion consumption that has gained popularity over the past years is the concept of second-hand clothing (Kananukul et al., 2015). And the stigma that is frequently associated with this

market such as damaged and unsanitary garments, has undergone changes over the past ten years, despite the fact that the second-hand phenomenon is considered to be recent (Kananukul et al., 2015).

This, along with the fact that little is known about consumers' sustainable fashion consumption behaviors or even how consumers perceive or interpret the concept of sustainable fashion (Bly et al., 2015), especially regarding the second-hand phenomenon, is considered to be the primary motive for carrying out this study.

The general objective of this exploratory research is to understand how consumers regard sustainable fashion, and, in particular, second-hand fashion goods.

This research pays particular attention to answering the following questions:

- (i) What are the consumers' perceptions regarding the market of second-hand fashion clothing and apparel?
- (ii) What are the consumer's motivations to purchase second-hand fashion clothing and apparel?
- (iii) What are their experiences and opinions after purchasing second-hand fashion items?

It is expected that through this, it will be brought to attention potential starting points that brands can use to promote more sustainable fashion strategies and systems. Based on the objective of this study and its research questions, qualitative research was applied, and semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to collect data.

This research is broken down into 6 chapters. Firstly, the Literature review presents a state-of-art of the fashion industry, more specifically sustainable fashion and other emerging alternative methods such as the concept of second-hand fashion. Then, is the Methodology chapter in which the methods, techniques, and data collection are presented and discussed followed by the analysis of the data collected. In the Findings and Discussion chapter, and based on the previous chapter, the findings of this study along with its discussion and relation to the theoretical background are considered. In the Conclusion chapter, the findings are once over discussed along with the main contributions of this study, and at last, in the Limitations and Future Research chapter, the limitations of this study and suggested future topics to further research are mentioned.

1.LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. SUSTAINABLE FASHION

The fashion industry has significant detrimental social and environmental effects, just like many other currently operating industries (Fletcher, 2010). This sector fosters the development of a global value chain in which various stages of product manufacture take place across numerous nations. Product manufacturing and design are a few of the steps, then distribution networks and the final consumer come next (Jacometti, 2019). Given that the non-sustainable practices involved in these processes are dispersed throughout multiple supply chains and various forms of unlawful labor, this production model is regarded as complex and among the most difficult to change (Jacometti, 2019). The challenges with the transformation processes up to the finished product are often linked to the use of harmful chemicals that are frequently released into the environment, the use of water and energy, and the generation of hazardous waste (Jacometti, 2019).

However, the consumer use phase of a garment is thought to have the greatest environmental impact due to energy, water, and chemical usages like fabric softener and detergents used for washing garments as well as the release of microplastics found in the textile into the oceans and rivers (Jacometti, 2019).

In addition to this, there is the issue of material manufacturing, as the world's production of fiber continues to grow dramatically in response to the rising demand. By 2030, the fashion industry expects cotton agriculture, which currently uses the largest portion of woodland area and has already consumed 17 percent of its operating capacity, to expand to 35 percent (Kerr & Landry, 2017).

Given the issues arising from the increase in consumer demand, these behaviors can be impacted by the consumer's environmental consciousness or lack thereof by how they use and maintain fashion garments over the course of their lifespan. This implies that the waste produced, which ends up in landfills and bodies of water, can be mitigated or made worse depending on customers' moral principles and sense of responsibility toward the environment (Allwood et al., 2008).

Aside from consumer actions, the textile and garment sector might decide to shift from the "extract-produce-dispose model" to a circular one, which would considerably lessen the negative effects outlined above (Jacometti, 2019). The demand for final "products and fibers might be significantly decreased by extending the lifespan of the garment, effectively recycling textile waste, and utilizing it as a source of raw materials" (Jacometti, p. 5, 2019).

1.1.1. Sustainable Fashion Components

Slow fashion, a concept that is a part of sustainable fashion, is a movement that has been developing for many years and is connected to sustainable and ecologically friendly fashion practices (Cervellon & Carey, 2014). When consumers first became aware of the effects that the fashion industry had on the environment and society in the 1960s, they demanded a drastic shift in the industry's practices (Jung & Jin, 2014). Although there was initially a negative stigma associated with eco-fashion, this perception started to shift with the rise of anti-fur initiatives in the 1980s and 1990s as well as a focus on sustainable fashion, which demanded ethical and safe working conditions, sustainable labels, and certifications (Henninger, 2015), as well as ethical business practices (Joergens, 2006).

This concept encourages moral practices, a decrease in the production of clothing, and quality over quantity buying habits (Fletcher, 2010; Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2014). Sustainable fashion aims to empower employees along the entire supply chain, use natural and organic materials in its manufacture, and incorporate traditional manufacturing methods, upcycling, and recycling (Johnston, 2012).

As a result, this idea differs from present capitalist-based fashion industry processes and calls for a change in the infrastructure, scalability, and planning of

product designs (Fletcher, 2010). A stable approach to fashion manufacturing that promotes long-term connections, generates employment possibilities, and places a focus on transparency is the key to the effective application of sustainable practices for both the environment and communities (Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2015).

Reforming an entire system of supply chains is not always simple, however, as there may be a number of obstacles to overcome (Goworek, 2013; McNeill & Moore, 2015). For example, maintaining transparency throughout the process can be difficult because producers are often encouraged to cut corners in order to remain competitive. Additionally, the demand for fashion is boosted by increased fashion production and availability, which widens the gap between people's intentions and actions when it comes to making eco-friendly decisions (Goworek, 2013; McNeill & Moore, 2015). This behavior may be attributed to a lack of understanding, which could hinder the advancement of sustainable fashion in the future (Goworek, 2013).

Companies are beginning to use keywords like "eco-friendly," "green," or "organic" into their communication strategies (Chen & Chang, 2013) as sustainability becomes a "megatrend" (Mittelstaedt et al., 2014). Although integrating sustainable practices into the textile manufacturing process is beneficial, more businesses are starting to engage in greenwashing, which is the deceptive advertising of green principles and practices (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). This means that a business intentionally has poor environmental

performance yet promotes it in a favorable way (Du, 2015). Consumers lose faith in sustainability claims as a result since they are unable to verify them, and businesses that actively promote ethical and sustainable ideals in their communications are viewed with skepticism (Joshi & Rahman, 2015). Because of this, building trustworthy customer relationships is achievable but could take more time (Joshi & Rahman, 2015).

To understand the shifts that sustainable fashion represents, it is important to explain what sustainable production and consumption are and what it entails (Jung & Jin, 2014). The development of sustainable fashion depends on three key pillars, the first of which is a shift in customers' purchasing habits from frequent acquisition of cheap goods to more frequent acquisition of high-quality ones (Jung & Jin, 2014). Facilitating clothing production that doesn't waste natural resources or people to speed up manufacturing time is the second pillar. The final pillar is to prolong consumption to lengthen the lifespan of a garment (Jung & Jin, 2014).

1.1.2. Sustainable Fashion Methods

Big worldwide trends, including slow fashion and the circular economy, are emerging in opposition to the existing mass manufacturing issue and favoring sustainability. Some of these trends, like slow fashion and the above-

mentioned circular economy, can be implemented immediately in the fashion sector (Todeschini et al., 2017). The traditional supply chain's use of hazardous materials, high amounts of electricity, and the release of greenhouse gasses, which have a significant negative influence on sustainable practices in the fashion sector, are the main drivers of this movement. This leads to new sustainable mindsets such as the “The five-R model” (Choi, 2013; Muthu, 2014).

The primary objective of fashion retailers is to achieve in a broad sense, sustainable streams of goods, services, and money to maximize the value to all stakeholders, in spite of the fact that their motivations vary (Salzmann et al., 2005). Fashion retailers can use and adapt a number of models to strengthen their sustainability, including the Five-R model. The five R's of this approach are recycling, reuse, reducing, re-designing, and re-imagining (Esty & Winston, 2006).

In the context of fashion, recycling refers to the collection, processing, and subsequent use of fabrics as raw materials in the creation of other products, and typically, there are two forms of waste: post-industrial waste and post-consumer waste (eg. clothing that ends up in landfills) (Pui-Yan Ho & Choi, 2012). Shedroff (2009) claims that unlike post-industrial waste, where the content, products, and material composition are known, post-consumer waste requires that the goods be easily and effectively disassembled into pieces and segregated by material. Because the garment has undergone many changes since its initial

manufacture, post-consumer waste provides a more complex separating process (Pui-Yan Ho & Choi, 2012).

Another sustainable practice is reuse, which is utilizing something regularly in its original form as opposed to discarding it, that includes product packaging or even sewing needles in the apparel industry (Pui-Yan Ho & Choi, 2012). The majority of the components might continue to be used by adjusting the business' operations and components to be exchanged more effectively than by prolonging their period of use (Shedroff, 2009). Additionally, it has been verified that an increase in online clothing sales through retailers has improved the availability and circulation of used fashion products (Muthu, 2014).

The third R in this approach is for reducing, which is connected to the minimization of source and waste (Prewaste, 2015). In the context of fashion, this might simply entail making careful decisions as to where to source textiles, such as purchasing local fabrics rather than importing them from other nations, which would result in longer transportation distances and a larger carbon footprint. If global sourcing is necessary, fashion retailers might also try to reduce their safety stock order (Muthu, 2014). During the “garment manufacturing process, sophisticated lay planning software can help map out the ideal layout for pattern pieces which would result in less fabric wastage following the fabric cutting process” (Pui-Yan Ho & Choi, 2012, p. 168).

Re-designing a garment means that the item is created in a manner that lessens the environmental impact of its life cycle processes from the supplier inputs, to the product and at last to end-of-life disposal (Esty & Winston, 2006). The re-design process includes distinct perspectives, the first being on the product design, which involves topics like material usage. When a garment is redesigned, its production is done in a way that minimizes the environmental effects at every stage of its life cycle, from supplier inputs through product development to end-of-life disposal (Esty & Winston, 2006).

The process of redesigning encompasses several viewpoints, the first of which is product design, which covers issues like material usage. The second viewpoint focuses on process re-design, with the business process re-engineering (BPR) process scheme serving as an example. From this viewpoint, businesses aim to make their business model processes simpler by making them more effective. It is frequently planned to streamline business processes in the context of supply chain management and BPR in order to decrease wastes associated with logistics and to improve workflows in conjunction with waste reduction (Pui-Yan Ho & Choi, 2012).

Last but not least, the fifth R stands for re-imagining, and companies are suggested to think about re-imagining their products and corresponding procedures before this process begins. Both emphasize innovative environmental thinking and promote exploring ways of increasing revenue, brand value, and vision (Pui-Yan Ho & Choi, 2012). According to this idea,

commonly referred to as "Design for Environment," managing or remodeling a high-impact product is more expensive than designing a low-impact one (Powell, 2010).

1.2. SECOND-HAND FASHION APPAREL MARKET

The intention of consumers to purchase second-hand goods has changed in recent years. Until mass production, often known as the notion of "Fast Fashion," and the rise in affluence and financial prospects in the nineteenth century, this sector of the market was seen as an important buying source in Europe and North America. Thereafter, the market for used clothing started to rely on exports until recently (Skov, 2010). Second-hand clothing, which is sold in flea, second hand, and antique markets, was once considered to be an unimportant form of business (Guiot & Roux, 2010), however this concept is currently beginning to receive more interest and attention: "[...] used apparel has grabbed a wider spotlight than ever" (Skov, 2010, p. 234).

The French word "d'occasion," which is derived from the Latin word "occasio," is translated as "second hand" in English. As it has been employed in the past, it is used to describe advantageous occasions or a profitable transaction from the buyer's perspective, as well as the object of the "occasion" of this transaction, and as a result, it offers an alluring value (Roux & Guiot, 2008).

Although the market for second-hand fashion has existed for a long time, it only really gained popularity in the 1990s, when it began to spread to nearly every country and sellers and buyers of used apparel began to appear in most of them (Herjanto et al., 2016). Additionally, Beard (2008) claims that the meaning behind this market began to change in the early 2000s. According to Todeschini et al. (2017) and Beard (2008), this sort of consumption consists of reusing clothing, which reduces the demand for new garments and lessens the consumption and depletion of natural raw materials.

Additionally, environmentally conscious customers who seek answers to ethical problems in the fashion industry are linked to the second-hand market (Beard, 2008). However, Williams and Paddock (2003) suggested that the middle classes' declining purchasing power since the 1980s may be a significant driver behind their increased consumption of second-hand goods. Iverson (2010), who identified the economic recession as a cause of the change in purchasing habits and, consequently, an increase in the demand for used clothing, supported this theory. However, in the present, buying second-hand goods through consumer initiatives might be seen as a stance against mass consumption (Roux & Korchia, 2006).

There is also the emotional perspective in addition to the economic and ecological ones. As was said above, the word "second hand" in French is "l'occasion," which in other words means "a stroke of luck" (Roux & Guiot, 2008).

Customers who buy second-hand items tend to have pleasant shopping experiences because they enjoy finding great deals or the thrill of making an unusual discovery (Roux & Guiot, 2008).

This idea is increasingly observed and discussed in today's society on a global scale, in both fashion and other kinds of items. With very good logistics to supply the market in these developing nations (Mhango & Niehm, 2005), the second-hand market, which was once seen with skepticism and stigma, has become a trend in people's lives, especially in Europe and the United States (Guiot & Roux, 2010). First-hand fashion goods are purchased in a different manner and location than second-hand items (Guiot & Roux, 2010), however when it comes to distribution, industrialized nations typically have more effective routes and fewer intermediaries between processes (Mhango & Niehm, 2005).

Even while many consumers have developed a positive outlook and actively responded to the second-hand fashion market, many people may experience several downsides from its use (Gullstrand et al., 2016). Consumers usually perceive second-hand products as being inferior to first-hand ones (Norum & Norton, 2017). Individuals frequently face difficulties purchasing from this market due to stigma and prejudice around previously owned clothing, unknown origins, unsanitary conditions, and the shame of visiting second-hand stores (Crewe et al., 2003; Connell, 2005; Hur, 2020; Tarai & Shailaja, 2020). According to a study by Sorensen and Johnson Jorgensen (2019), misconceptions

surrounding second-hand fashion stores including bad smells, damaged apparel, and an unstructured store layout deter customers from shopping there, however, improving marketing strategies and communication could aid brands in reducing these misconceptions and create a more positive perception (Hur, 2020).

The terms second-hand and vintage are frequently used interchangeably, but it's vital to recognize the distinctions between them. Products classified as vintage have previously belonged to someone else, but they weren't necessarily used (Cornett, 2010). According to Cervellon et al. (2012), the age, era, and condition of vintage goods determine their market value. When compared to second-hand items, the sole resemblance is that both have been owned before (Cervellon et al., 2012).

A 2014 survey conducted by IPSOS, a global leader on market research, found that second-hand purchases and consumption are receiving growing attention (Fitzgerald, 2015). This study also demonstrated that this shift happened within the previous five years and is continuing to increase (Fitzgerald, 2015). UK customers show the most interest in the second-hand fashion market, followed by Germany, the United States, and France (Fitzgerald, 2015).

1.2.1. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN SECOND-HAND FASHION

When a customer decides to stop using a still-usable product, they may choose to dispose of it in a variety of ways, including giving it away, donating, reusing, selling, keeping, lending, or throwing it away (Jacoby et al., 1977). Reusing clothing gives it a new purpose, a behavior that may or may not be associated with the physical transformation of the item (Grönroos & Voima, 2012). According to the customer-dominant logic theory (Grönroos & Voima, 2012), which sees the consumer as the key player in value creation, the act of reusing clothing is an autonomous behavior in which the consumer combines resources and performs several acts to produce value.

When a person must choose how to dispose of something, the possibility of reusing typically "faces competition" with other disposal methods, and the decision's outcome will rely on what the consumer values (Cruz-Cárdenas et al., 2019; Türe, 2013). Besides this, other factors such as product quality, lack of local stores and accessibility, lack of information and transparency associated with the second-hand fashion market could impact consumer behavior (Hur, 2020)

1.2.2. INFLUENCING MOTIVATIONS IN THE CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISION IN SECOND-HAND FASHION

Economic Motivations

The urge to discover alternate forms of consumption is frequently influenced by factors related to income and the economy (Herjanto et al., 2016). Frugality has been recognized by several studies (Guiot & Roux, 2010) as the central determinant of second-hand clothing purchases since it requires judicious and disciplined financial management (Cervellon & Shammass, 2013).

In a study conducted by Badhi & Arnould (2005), it is argued that there are two diverse economic motives prompting people to buy used clothing. Such motivations enable people to spend less money while addressing other demands. Hedonistic incentives reveal personal desires for consumption in addition to the necessity for survival, making them more compulsive and materialistic consumers (Kasser, 2011).

In comparison, economically motivated shopping occurs when individuals regulate their spending by managing their resources in effort to expand their purchasing power and, as a result, their ability to save money or shop fairly (Herjanto et al., 2016). For instance, buying designer clothing and accessories second hand allows individuals to do so without having to spend the full price they would have if they had purchased them first-hand. This may inspire feelings of pride and triumph (Roux & Guiot, 2008). However, bargain

hunting is an excellent approach for shoppers to increase their resources so they can allocate money to other wants and requirements (Herjanto et al., 2016).

Some consumers choose to purchase through second-hand marketplaces because they perceive them as economic opportunities and as a way to invest, retain their status quo, and form their own identities (Ferraro et al., 2016). Consumption of used fashion and enjoyment can complement one another by permitting individuals to express their hedonistic needs while acknowledging their financial concerns (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005).

Recreational Motivations

Although it is suggested that economic motivation is the primary motivating factor for consumers to shop at second-hand clothing markets, recreational motivation is also seen as a significant motivating cause for individuals to choose this alternative (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Herjanto et al., 2016; Roux & Guiot, 2008; Sihvonon & Turunen, 2016). The thought of discovery and exploration inspires consumers who shop in this market to feel joyful, excited, and entertained as they walk into a store. These feelings arise from the potential finding of unexpected and exceptional items among a variety of others (Ferraro et al., 2016). Customers of the second-hand market are likewise driven by "scavenger hunting," as their main goal is to find the most unique and distinct item at a lower cost (Cervellon et al., 2012).

Additionally, the visual sensory stimulus fosters community engagement, as does the product and sales dimension, which are in contrasting to those of traditional "first-hand" retailers (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Herjanto et al., 2016). For individuals who like to be surprised by their discoveries, a sense of warmth that might arise throughout the exchange and communication between sellers and customers provides a unique and playful environment (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Cervellon et al., 2012; Ferraro et al., 2016).

Uniqueness Motivations

The quality of pursuing singularity that is objective to others as a result of the purchase, use, and disposal of consumer items to elevate a person's social and self-perception is the definition of uniqueness (Tian et al., 2001). Second-hand fashion brands allow consumers to attain distinctiveness to a certain degree as a way to communicate their social and desired self-image among other people or members of a group or community (Gullstrand et al., 2016).

Looking through racks of second-hand clothing apparel enables consumers to find products that are out-of-production, discontinued by the brand, or exclusive pieces and collections that reassure people in their search for singularity and uniqueness. These findings help customers achieve a desirable amount of individuality (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Herjanto et al., 2016).

Sustainability Motivations

The idea that the second-hand market offers a real choice to depart from the conventional production system is supported by ethical and sustainable considerations. This motive is predicated on the idea that purchasing luxury products used rather than new allows one to escape the mass consumerism prevalent in today's culture while still acquiring items that are deemed well conserved and suitable for further usage (Guiot & Roux, 2010). Consumers are progressively supporting the reduction of the mass consumption of fashion garments by significantly prolonging their lifetimes as they become more environmentally "eco-fashioned" in today's society (Cervellon et al., 2012).

This tactic succeeds in achieving its goal of minimizing the manufacture of new clothing and, as a result, the amount of toxic and chemical waste, which worsens the environment and its ecosystem (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Herjanto et al., 2016). For instance, buying and using secondhand products offers an alternative to reusing used items among family, friends, or even complete strangers through market-specific stores (Arnould, 2005).

Environmental concern is not cited in the literature study as a compelling reason for second-hand consumption because it is personal to each consumer (Cervellon & Shammass, 2013; Mcneill & Moore, 2015). In actuality, numerous studies have failed to establish a connection between environmental concerns

and second-hand consumption (Cervellon & Shammass, 2013; Mcneill & Moore, 2015).

This sort of consumption is influenced by economic variables based on three dimensions: "fair price," "ethics and environment," and "distance from the system" (Roux & Guiot, 2008). According to Mcneill & Moore (2015), people occasionally recycle unknowingly and only afterward place more emphasis on saving money. The concept of critical motivation was included by Guiot & Roux (2010) in their conceptual framework as a factor that they believed would affect the consumption of used goods. It disapproves of established avenues for mass consumerism as well as ethical and environmental issues. Consumers regularly act in ways that are incongruent with these concerns, despite the fact that they are aware of sustainability issues and the effects that their consumption choices have on the environment. (Cervellon, & Shammass, 2013.; Mcneill & Moore, 2015).

Fashion Motivations

The significance of fashionability is not well understood, despite previous studies describing the shopping motivations of the second-hand market in terms of critical, economic, and recreational factors (Guiot & Roux, 2010). The value of second-hand retail channels has recently been redefined because of how quickly they are becoming more and more popular (Ferraro et al., 2016).

Fashionability is a concept that pertains to the process of creating and enhancing a person's identity, meaning, and experiences (Roux & Korchia, 2006). Despite the fact that Cervellon and Shammas (2013) contended that the idea of fashion, which is regarded as transient in accordance with seasonal demands and trends, is incompatible with the financial incentives of frugality. While avoiding mainstream fashion, used clothing businesses allowed customers to create their own authentic and distinctive looks. Cervellon and Shammas (2013) state that it is currently fashionable, trendy, and stylish to buy and wear products that are offered for sale in second-hand shops.

Vintage Motivations

An item is considered vintage if it is uncommon and genuine and represents the fashion of a certain time period or decade (Gerval, 2008). The primary distinction between secondhand and vintage clothing is that, while the former has been used previously, the latter does not, as vintage pieces are characterized by the age of the items and may not have never been worn before (Cervellon & Shammas, 2013).

Although some vintage clothing may be second-hand, there are different motivations for vintage consumption than for used clothing and accessories. The three dimensions of nostalgia, fashion involvement, and need for status are linked to second-hand consumption (Cervellon & Shammas, 2013) despite economic motivations driven by the value of frugality (Roux & Guiot, 2008) not

being considered as an antecedent to the buying and consumption intention of vintage fashion goods (Dawson & Cavell, 1987). People who look for antique fashion items are emotionally motivated, which makes them willing to pay a higher price even if it is not at a bargain deal (Cervellon & Shamma, 2013).

Finally, nostalgia plays a significant role in motivating people to buy antique goods (Cervellon & Shamma, 2013). In fact, many individuals search used clothing shops in the expectation of discovering genuine vintage items that (Roux & Guiot, 2008) are linked to positive memories and elicit strong emotions (Makkar & Yap, 2018).

2. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the general objective as well as the research questions, empirical context, methodological approach, data source, techniques and research process are discussed. Besides this, data collection instruments including its analysis are also explained.

2.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The general objective of this exploratory research is to understand how Portuguese consumers regard sustainable fashion, in particular, second-hand fashion goods. In order to find answers for this objective, three research questions were developed.

- What are the Portuguese consumers' perceptions regarding the market of second-hand fashion clothing and apparel?
- What are the Portuguese consumer's motivations to purchase or not second-hand fashion clothing and apparel?
- What are their experiences and opinions during and after purchasing second-hand fashion items and apparel?

2.2.METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

In the light of the presented objectives and its research questions, qualitative research was considered to be more suitable. That choice is justified by the fact that qualitative research is done with the purpose to enhance understanding of individuals' cultures, beliefs and values, human experiences, and situations, as well as developing theories that describe these experiences (Creswell et al., 2011; Munhall, 2012; Wuest, 2012; Holloway & Galvin, 2016). The behavioral and social sciences gave rise to this research approach as a way to comprehend the distinctive, dynamic, and all-encompassing nature of people (Hogan & Donnelly, 2009; Maxwell, & Mittapalli, 2010; Creswell, 2014). In other words, the qualitative approach sheds light on the reasons behind a phenomenon without generalizing, based on the setting and used sample (Forman & Damschroder, 2007).

This study is exploratory since it enables further investigation of research questions that have yet to be studied more in depth, most specifically regarding the Portuguese market. Consequently, additional information and insights from respondents through the investigation were necessary, as qualitative research focuses on understanding words, opinions and experiences.

Taking into consideration the nature, an inductive reasoning was considered the right choice. This approach is a methodical procedure for assessing qualitative data in which the analysis is guided by specific goals. Its fundamental objective is to release research conclusions from the restrictions imposed by organized procedures and to arise from the common, dominant, or significant themes present in raw data (Thomas, 2003).

2.3. DATA SOURCE, TECHNIQUE & COLLECTION PROCESS

For the interviews, the selected participants were contacted through social media (Instagram and Facebook) in the form of a small survey to understand who had and who had not previously purchased second-hand fashion goods. Based on their answers from the survey, the selection process began.

After the selected participants were chosen, they were individually contacted and informed about the study and requested to participate in the interview; those who agreed were informed that the interview would be conducted with a camera on and the answers to the questions were to be recorded, while their names would remain anonymous in the dissertation document.

The demographic profile of the people who took part in the study's interviews is given in the table below.

RESPONDENTS	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION LEVEL
Respondent 1	Female	22	Masters Degree
Respondent 2	Female	22	Masters Degree
Respondent 3	Male	22	Bachelor's Degree
Respondent 4	Female	26	Masters Degree
Respondent 5	Male	21	Bachelor's Degree
Respondent 6	Female	22	Bachelor's Degree
Respondent 7	Female	22	Masters Degree
Respondent 8	Female	26	Bachelor's Degree
Respondent 9	Female	18	Completed High School
Respondent 10	Female	26	Bachelor's Degree
Respondent 11	Female	22	Masters Degree
Respondent 12	Female	22	Masters Degree
Respondent 13	Male	23	Masters Degree
Respondent 14	Female	21	Bachelor's Degree
Respondent 15	Female	22	Masters Degree

Table 1- Summary of this study's participants' demographics profile

Source: Self-elaborated

The interviews included only Portuguese consumers living in Portugal, three men and twelve women. In terms of age, the interviewed individuals ranged from eighteen years old to twenty-six years old, since only individuals from this age gap agreed to an interview. The participants also had a background

of medium to high financial status, with levels of education that vary between High School and master's degree. Regarding consumers that do purchase second-hand fashion goods, the interviews included both individuals that purchase online and in physical stores.

The interviews were conducted in Portuguese and lasted between thirty and sixty minutes, and the reasoning behind it is that individuals who have purchased second-hand fashion goods had more questions to answer than those who had not, and thus, the interviews were on average longer than thirty minutes. The interviews were conducted through an online platform and the participants were sound recorded from the start to the finish with their knowledge and consent.

The number of participants was fifteen individuals and the strategy behind it was to extend the number of the interviewed individuals until the believed saturation point was reached (Glaser et al., 1967). For the first research question, fifteen people were interviewed, and they were composed of consumers who already have purchased second-hand fashion goods as well as those who have not. For the second research question, fifteen people were also interviewed, but because five individuals from all participants have never bought second-hand fashion before, the questions were asked in a hypothetical manner. At last, for the third research question, those who have never bought a second-hand fashion item were asked questions in a hypothetical manner as

well along with their thoughts of what could be improved in the shopping experience in this market.

2.4. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Regarding the interview guide, presented in the table below, it is possible to observe the interview questions according to each research question as well as authors from this theme’s theoretical background on which the script was based.

	Interview Questions	Authors References
	Name, age & gender	
What are the Portuguese consumers’ perceptions regarding the market of second-hand fashion clothing and apparel?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you think about second-hand fashion goods, what is the first thing that comes to your mind? • What do you think second-hand fashion brands represent? • Do you believe that your perceptions regarding it would change if brands started to use influencers/celebrities? • What are your perceptions concerning second-hand fashion goods luxury? 	Connell (2009) Cornett (2010) Gullstrand, et al., (2016) Norum & Norton (2017) Gregson, et al., (2003) Tarai & Shailaja (2020) Sorensen & Jorgensen (2019)
What are the Portuguese consumer’s motivations to purchase or not second-hand fashion clothing and apparel?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think people purchase second-hand fashion goods? • Second-hand shopping is generally driven by various motivations such as: recreational, fashion statement, uniqueness, environmental consciousness, economical... What is/are the main motivation(s) for you 	Bardhi & Arnould (2005) Beard (2008) Cervellon & Carey (2014) Cervellon & Shammass (2013) Ferraro, et al., (2016) Guiot & Roux (2010)

	<p>to purchase second-hand fashion goods?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is/are the main motivation(s) for you to not purchase second-hand fashion goods? • Before you decide to purchase or not second-hand fashion goods, do you do any sort of research? If so, where? and not, why? • If you were to purchase second-hand fashion goods what would you more easily/preferably buy and why? • Do you prefer to purchase first-hand (new) fashion items over second-hand if yes/no, why? 	<p>Herjanto, et al., (2016) McNeill & Moore (2015) Roux & Guiot (2008) Tian, et al., (2001)</p>
<p>What are their opinions during and after purchasing second-hand fashion items and apparel?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many times have you purchased second-hand fashion items? • What sensation and feelings do you have after purchasing second-hand fashion goods? • Where do you tend to purchase second-hand fashion goods: online or in store or both and why? • What do you consider to be your biggest challenge when purchasing second-hand fashion goods? • Have you ever had a bad experience while shopping second-hand fashion yes/no elaborate? • What do you think second-hand fashion brands could do better and why? • What would you wish to see more on second-hand fashion brands ads? • Would you purchase it again? and why? 	<p>Sorenson & Jorgensen, (2019) Hur (2020)</p>

Table 2- Summary of the interview questions based on literature authors

Source: Self-elaborated

In order to conduct empirical research, semi-structured questions were considered to be more appropriate for the qualitative approach for this study. An open-ended question, developed according to the explorative nature of this research, was chosen to enable the participants or respondents from this study

to share and express their thoughts and perceptions regarding this theme without being influenced in any way (Qu & Dumay, 2011).

2.5. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

After conducting the interviews, the next step was to analyze the collected data and transform them into codes in order to begin moving methodically to a slightly higher conceptual level (Yin, 2016). These codes represented the interpretations inferred from the raw data (Charmaz, 2014). This higher conceptual level enabled access to insight into potentially important processes (Emerson, et al., 2011, p. 175).

As such, this analysis was divided into two codes: The level 1 codes or open codes and the level 2 or category codes (Hahn, 2008). The first cycle code was considered to be the initial code, and therefore very close to the original data and sometimes even the same words were used (Saldaña, 2013). With the development and completion of the first coding cycle, the next step was the creation of the level 2 codes. Here, the data that was previously analyzed was turned into categories based on identified patterns. During this process and in order to efficiently organize and categorize this data, a schematic diagram was made, which later on was adapted into the current text form in the next chapter.

During the first coding cycle, twenty-seven codes were created, however, some of those codes did not transform and develop into patterns. Based on the patterns that were possible to identify, the initial number was reduced and reorganized into 17 categories during the second cycle.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

The empirical data collected from the interviews for the purpose of this study is presented in this part. Fifteen individuals were interviewed, being ten of them consumers of the second-hand fashion market and five of them non-consumers from this market. Despite the fact that the questions were in fact founded on the theoretical background, other questions were made during the discussion to allow for a more thorough elaboration of the findings. However, because each response and comment contribute to the understanding of this emerging phenomenon, all of them were considered to be of added value.

Research Question Objective 1: What are the consumers' perceptions regarding the market of second-hand fashion clothing and apparel?

The second-hand fashion is perceived as having many vintage and unique items

During the interviews, many participants connected second-hand fashion items with vintage and unique fashion items. Some individuals argued that it is very common to find vintage fashion items among second-hand fashion stores as Respondent 1 stated: *"There are a lot of vintage items in the second-hand market"* and like Respondent 7 said: *"When thinking about second hand fashion I think about vintage items"* and, as for the non-consumers of second-hand fashion, some

also made the connection of this market to vintage goods as Respondent 14 stated: *“I also associate the second hand fashion market with vintage items or different styles that are not found today”* and according to Respondent 15, vintage items are becoming more valuable in present times *“Now the old and vintage items are becoming more valuable and desired”*, considering the rarity of those items.

The second-hand fashion market helps to promote sustainability in the fashion industry

Another perception mentioned is the association of the second-hand fashion market and how it helps to promote sustainability by reducing the need for fast fashion as Respondent 2 said: *“I connect second-hand fashion market to sustainability, fast fashion and about avoiding it”*, reducing the resources used and the demand for them during the production process according to Respondent 4: *“For me, buying second-hand fashion is giving a new life to an item that has spend many resources to be made and is still in great condition”* as well as being part of the circular economy *“When thinking about second-hand fashion, I think about sustainability and circular economy”* such as stated by this Respondent 7.

This perception was also present among individuals who have yet to purchase a second-hand fashion item and many of them discussed issues such as the fast fashion industry and the possibilities that this market offers *“I connect*

the second-hand fashion market with circular fashion and avoiding the fast fashion mass market” as said by Respondent 14 or the act of re-utilizing fashion goods “I believe that second-hand fashion represents above all sustainability, the concepts of re-utilizing as well as showing that this is a cycle in which clothes are always being used with no beginning and no end, unless the item is in no condition to be used” like Respondent 11 mentioned.

General prejudice against the second-hand fashion

Another discussed perception during the interviews was the general, negative connotations commonly associated by society with the second-hand fashion market. Among many, is the prejudice that the fashion item had been worn by someone else before them like Respondent 5 stated: *“In opposite to me, some people in my family can’t wear clothes that have been worn by others (...)”* or that this market had mainly damaged and old fashion items as Respondent 7 stated: *“At first I really associated this market with poor, damaged and worn-out clothes”* and *“There are also people that connect second-hand fashion to old, dirty and undesired clothes and I believe this is the general mentality of the second-hand market in Portugal”* according to Respondent 2.

There is still a taboo, and even those who choose to purchase and wear fashion items in second-hand, get judged by those around them as Respondent 4 stated: *“Sometimes I say that I have bought this clothing item second-hand and*

people look at me judging as if I am weird” or “I always wanted to buy second-hand but was fearful of what others would think of me” like Respondent 9 stated.

During the interviews of those who have never purchased a second-hand item, some participants admitted to having negative perceptions of this market in the past, but stated that their prejudices and stigmas have been changing due to influencer impact “*(...) influencers changed my perceptions about the second-hand fashion market (...)*” according to Respondent 14, but also by coming in contact with second-hand fashion stores “*I also regarded second hand fashion items as being damaged or very used, with missing buttons or liveless colors... so when I went to this store I noticed that it was not the case, because had I not known that it was a second-hand store, I would have thought it was a regular one*” like Respondent 12 stated.

However when presented in a scenario where two different fashion items equally liked, for instance a dress, was available in the same conditions, for the same price, most participants still gave preference to the item in first-hand, by saying that “*I prefer to buy fashion items in first-hand but only because of habit and not stigma*” as said by Respondent 12 or “*(...) I would prefer the new one... maybe because if I bought it from a regular store and something happened to a product I would have this security, whereas second-hand I would think that it is my fault because I didn't notice the damage*”, like Respondent 13 stated.

The second-hand market culture and product offer is not developed enough

One perception that was shared between a few participants was that the second-hand fashion market in Portugal still needs to be more developed and is less dynamic in comparison with other countries, with Respondent 2 stating that: *“The second-hand fashion market is more dynamic and hot outside of Portugal”* and that in contrast to other countries, second-hand fashion “thrifting” is still not viewed as a popular activity to do *“In Portugal, there isn’t this culture of “thrifting” and there aren’t as many options”*, like Respondent 2 additionally said.

This perception was also existent among non-consumers of second-hand fashion who argue that the market is not developed enough in Portugal *“Another reason as to why I don’t buy second-hand fashion items is because it is still not very common in Portugal and I don’t know many people that buy second-hand”* which was stated by Respondent 13.

The second-hand fashion thrifting is viewed as a trendy and cool activity

Another perception shared by a few interviewed individuals was that even though the current stigmas related to this market were discussed in relation to Portugal, some considered the second-hand market to be a trend and rising in popularity not just outside of Portugal *“Outside of Portugal, shopping for*

second-hand fashion items is seen as an activity to do, something cool” said Respondent 2 but also in Portugal *“I honestly think this market is trending here”*, as stated by Respondent 7.

In addition, several non-consumers of second hand fashion mentioned during the interviews that they believe that this market is increasing its popularity by Respondent 11 stating: *“I believe that the perceptions that second-hand fashion items are for poorer people or that they are dirty changed a lot by the rise in popularity of “thrift shopping””* and that this market is growing and could be the future of the fashion industry *“I believe the second-hand fashion market represent the future, especially now that the fashion market is becoming so saturated”* or *“(…) I think that this market has everything to grow”*, both statements made by Respondent 15.

The second-hand fashion market is starting to be perceived in a more positive way

One of the perceptions that many participants shared in common was their shift from their stigmas associated with the second-hand market in the past towards a more positive outlook in the present. Some of the reasons for these changes according to consumers were due to influencer impact and growing concern towards sustainability like Respondent 7 stated: *“My perceptions about the second-hand fashion market have been changing... At first I really associated this market with poor, damaged and worn-out clothes, but I believe that due to the*

path that the fashion industry is taking, as well as the concern about sustainability and seeing influencers and TV shows talking about it, is making me consider this something more acceptable (...) "Vinted" and platforms like this has also been helping end with these ideas" but also due to access to internet and information "Five years ago I started to gain interest in the second-hand fashion market, seeing social media accounts about this market and that is when I started to search about the subject" said Respondent 4 or "Seven years ago, I started searching on the internet and discovered the fast fashion problem, so I went to a second-hand fashion store and saw that the items weren't dirty or old or damaged and so, I began buying from this market" stated by Respondent 6, and the possibility to travel to other countries and adopt new culture habits like "Only when I went to New York and "clothes thrifting" was popular did my opinion change", like Respondent 2 stated.

When asked about their thoughts during the interview, and as briefly mentioned above in the discussion of "general prejudice", many individuals who don't purchase second-hand fashion items admitted to a change in perceptions regarding this market *"I feel like my perceptions about the second-hand fashion market are definitely changing, and I am starting to have more awareness about my purchasing choices... like pieces with more quality and reducing the necessity of always buying something new"* said Respondent 14, or that they were even open to purchase second-hand fashion items in the future if the conditions presented themselves *"My perceptions about the second-hand fashion market are*

changing... if I saw an item that I like and if it was in good quality, I wouldn't have any problem in buying it... but I need to see it first", according Respondent 12.

The second-hand luxury market is viewed as having better product quality and a price-quality opportunity

Last but not least, when asked about their perceptions regarding the luxury segment of the second-hand fashion market, most participants made a positive association, by identifying positive aspects such as having more organized stores, with products in better condition as stated by Respondent 1: *"Second-hand fashion luxury stores are more organized and usually in great conditions"* or according to Respondent 6: *"I really like the second-hand luxury fashion market since those pieces last longer"* as well as identifying this as an opportunity for individuals to have access to luxury items while being able to save money *"I believe the second-hand luxury market is a very big opportunity for someone to purchase something that otherwise they wouldn't be able to"*, like Respondent 2 and Respondent 4 stated.

Some consumers who have never bought second-hand fashion also associated this segment of the market with quality pieces with Respondent 11 saying: *"I believe the luxury segment of second-hand fashion is the one that presents more advantages and opportunities for consumers, since they are items*

that are probably going to last longer” or “I even understand more the act of buying second hand fashion luxury than say a Zara T-shirt because the quality and materials are better “ said Respondent 15 and also identifying the opportunity of it “My perceptions regarding to second hand luxury fashion is that people buy it because it is cheaper and they don’t have possibilities to buy in first hand” according Respondent 12.

Two comments made by one consumer was that in Portugal, the luxury second-hand fashion market might be more well received and adopted in comparison with regular and more accessible second-hand fashion *“I even believe that the second-hand luxury fashion segment would be more easily well received by the Portuguese market because many people still associate it with damaged clothes, and the luxury part could be a positive association” and “Especially in Portugal, we have this necessity of accessing the luxury market, whether we have possibilities or not.... I remember telling my mother that this market really has potential in Portugal”,* like Respondent 14 stated.

Research Question Objective 2: What are the consumer’s motivations to purchase or not second-hand fashion clothing and apparel?

Vintage and Uniqueness Motivations

During the discussion, many participants said that they purchased second-hand fashion items because this market offered them the possibility of finding vintage and unique items. Even though vintage and uniqueness can be considered different categories or purchasing motivations, in this case, it was decided that both motivations should be combined as many participants associated both motivations with one another.

For instance, Respondent 2 mentioned that she would not mind spending more money in buying a second-hand fashion item, if it was something unique by stating: *“The most important factor for me for buying second-hand fashion items is to find unique pieces, I don’t mind spending more money for an item if it has quality and is different from the norm”*, while another consumer said that the second-hand fashion market enabled them to distinguish themselves from current trends that are standardized in our society with Respondent 14 arguing: *“If I were to buy a second-hand fashion item, my motivations would be to find items with unique and different styles so I don’t dress like everyone else”* and *“One reason for buying second-hand fashion is to find interesting pieces that you don’t find in fast fashion”*, as said by Respondent 1, while other participants mentioned the rarity that is sometimes associated with the second-hand fashion market *“(…) an influencing factor for purchasing second-hand fashion is my taste for vintage items, associated with the second-hand market and the rarity that comes with it”* said Respondent 5 or *“My biggest motivation for buying second hand fashion items is the fact that they are unique, as I am not a person that likes to wear what other people are wearing”*, which was stated by Respondent 6.

Besides those two reasons discussed above, some consumers also mentioned that the reason why they purchase second-hand vintage fashion is that they can find specific styles that are from past decades and have colors and patterns that they are not able to commonly find nowadays, like Respondent 7 said: *“Another motivation to buy second hand fashion items is because many clothes are vintage and I really like the 70’s and 80’s style”* and *“I think my style is kind of alternative... I like to dress a little differently. So there are many pieces that are already considered vintage that I love... I love the patterns that are more flowery or with bright colors and earthy colors, I love them more hippy and I know that if I go to a Zara I will also find colors but not the old patterns”*, according Respondent 9.

Regarding the non-consumers of second-hand, participants were asked to share their motivations if they were to purchase a second-hand fashion item in the future, what would be their main motivations be. An example of that being *“If I were to buy second-hand fashion items, my main motivation would be to find vintage style pieces”* as said by Respondent 11, and *“(...) one motivation would be to find items with unique and different styles so I don’t dress like everyone else”*, according to Respondent 14.

Sustainable Motivations

During the analysis of the conducted interviews with fifteen individuals, both consumers and non-consumers of the second-hand fashion market, suggested that for them, environmental concerns and values played a role in their motivations. Some believed that sustainability would not be considered one of the most important values by Portuguese consumers with Respondent 11 saying: *“I don’t think that sustainability is the biggest factor as to why people buy second-hand fashion items”* or with Respondent 5 stating: *“When buying second-hand fashion items, I don’t think that the sustainability aspects will be the decisive factor for consumers to alter purchase patterns”*, however when asked about their own major motivations, environmental and sustainable awareness were one of the most frequently mentioned motivations *“The most important factor for me for buying second-hand fashion items is the sustainable aspect”* as stated by R1 and *“My first motivation for buying second-hand fashion is do to sustainability”*, according to Respondent 3.

Some even went further by explaining why the sustainable aspect of second-hand fashion is so relevant with Respondent 4 saying: *“When buying second-hand fashion, I relate much with the sustainability aspect, especially when I think about all water that is used to produce those items”* and *“I believe an influencing factor for people to purchase from the second-hand fashion market is due to the sustainability since people know that we live in a world with limited resources”*, which was stated Respondent 6.

Regarding the group of non-consumers of second-hand fashion, the desire to be more sustainable was in fact not so predominant in comparison with consumers of second-hand fashion as stated by Respondent 12 that argued: *“Maybe for me the sustainability aspect is not as important, but only because I am not very aware of it, but there would be less waste if people would buy more second-hand fashion”*. Nevertheless, one participant considered the sustainable aspect to be one of their main motivations if they were to purchase a second-hand item, *“If I were to buy second-hand fashion items, one motive would be to become more sustainable”*, according to Respondent 11.

Economic Motivations

The economic motivation was one the most commonly stated motives for the purchasing of second-hand fashion among consumers and non-consumers of this market. While some said that they buy second-hand fashion in general in order to simply save money like Respondent 5 said: *“The first influencing factor for purchasing second-hand fashion is the price”*, others prefer to invest in more luxurious items as stated by Respondent 10 *“For me, it's very much in the financial sense, like if I made more euros a month, maybe I would buy a luxury purse in first-hand instead of second”*, others related this motivation specifically towards purchasing second-hand luxury fashion instead of “regular” fashion *“I have noticed that many people in Portugal are starting to have better jobs and many friends of mine between the ages of 25 to 35 started to put money aside to buy a*

few luxury fashion items a year but purchase second hand because it is cheaper” as stated by Respondent 10.

Recreational Motivations

At last, during the discussion, some individuals mentioned that they enjoy the activity of looking and searching for something exciting, also known as “scavenger hunt” as stated by Respondent 3: *“I believe people buy second-hand fashion items because part of it is about going on a scavenger hunt, since most items are mixed”* or according to Respondent 5: *“One motivation for buying second-hand fashion is the treasure hunt experience”*, while others simply enjoy the process of looking through the items without the intention of buying anything that day *“Sometimes I enter a “Humana” store downtown just to look around and ten minutes later I walk out again without buying anything”* as stated by Respondent 3 or *“I love visiting local stores with my friends just for the fun of it, it’s a fun activity to do with your friends on a Saturday”*, as mentioned by Respondent 9.

Research Question Objective 3: What are their purchasing experiences and opinions when purchasing second-hand fashion goods?

In order to answer the third and final research question regarding consumers' experiences and opinions after purchasing second-hand fashion, several questions were asked during the interviews, and after the coding

analysis was concluded, some categories were identified. For those who have never purchased a second-hand fashion item, instead of discussing their post-purchase experiences, they were asked to give suggestions and feedback of the second-hand fashion market as it currently is and how it could be improved in order to become more appealing to them and to consumers who have yet to purchase a second-hand fashion item.

Preference to purchase second-hand fashion in physical stores

One of the first categories discussed regarding the third research question was the preference of location to purchase second-hand fashion. It was possible to identify that the preference to buy online or in a physical store had motivations of its own. For instance, some consumers stated that they prefer to buy online because the prices are lower *“I prefer to buy online because in a physical store, the luxury items are frequently more expensive”* as stated by Respondent 10, while others justified convenience *“Usually I buy my second-hand fashion items online with “Vinted” because the platform is so easy to use and filter according to my needs “* as referred by Respondent 9 and *“I like to buy second-hand fashion items from physical stores, but only when I have the time”*, according to Respondent 6.

Concerning the preference to buy in-store instead of online, it is due to lack of trust in online platforms *“In Portugal I don’t buy second hand fashion items*

online because I don't trust enough...and you can't always see if the item has imperfections" as Respondent 1 referred, as well as the fear that the item won't fit "If I buy online, there is always the risk of it not fitting me and then I have to send it back and possibly lose money with shipping" like Respondent 15 mentioned and "If I find a store with a style and items that I like, I give preference to second hand fashion physical stores because it is easier to see the sizes and try it on", according to Respondent 4.

Many participants shared their desires for online and physical stores to have a point-of-sale in a mall as a way to attract more awareness and increasing trust in the brand with Respondent 12 saying: *"I think second-hand fashion brands could improve by creating more physical stores, maybe in a shopping or so to be more flashy and bring attention to this concept, since it is a place where most people go to buy fashion items (...)"* and *"I am someone that really likes to get face to face recommendations and opinions from people that I trust, so if second hand fashion brands had a store, even if small in a shopping, I could go there, see the items with my own eyes and talk to the staff and they would say something like "look, these are the items that we have here, but online we have much more if you want to explore" would be good because they would be mainly online, but I would still have a reference point to go to",* as stated by Respondent 13.

Post-purchase feelings and expectations of second-hand fashion are a mix of positive and negative emotions

In this category, most participants admitted a mix of emotions going from feeling giddy like Respondent 1 said: *“Whenever I buy a second-hand fashion item, I always feel giddy because they are different pieces and I wanna see how I will use them”* and feeling like it's Christmas again (an expression that was repeated in some interviews related to this category) with Respondent 2 stating: *“When it comes the time to open the item bought online, it’s like its Christmas again”* and with Respondent 4 stating: *“ I always feel like a kid on Christmas because I am excited for the item to arrive”* but also the fear of disappointment and a bad shopping experience *“I really like the feeling of receiving the package at home but sometimes in the case of handbags, I am afraid that the condition of the item is going to disappoint me”* according to Respondent 10 and *“When I buy a second-hand fashion item online I am very nervous that the piece arrives not matching the description... this happened to me once and now I am a little traumatized”* as mentioned by Respondent 7.

Some consumers consider the after-purchasing feeling to be better than buying first-hand as Respondent 7 shared: *“When buying second-hand fashion items in a physical store versus a first-hand physical store, my feelings are different... I think I end up giving more value to an item bought at a second-hand store because I associate stores like Zara and Mango with fast fashion and more disposable items and because the second-hand item has a past, my feelings are more positive and have a bigger purchase satisfaction”* and *“When buying second-hand fashion items, I always feel very excited because the sensations in comparison*

to buying first-hand is different, you feel like you are contributing to the environment”, according to Respondent 5.

Main challenge when shopping online for second-hand fashion is sizing and product quality

Another issue discussed during the interviews are consumer’s challenges when shopping second-hand fashion online, and the challenges mentioned are closely related with their preferences to buy in store over online.

A few consumers pointed out their troubles in ensuring the product’s quality, which is the case of Respondent 7 that said: *“When buying second hand fashion items, and this happens only online, my biggest challenge is that I am afraid that the picture does not show the actual condition of the piece... this results in me not buying the item that otherwise I would”* and according to Respondent 10: *“Making sure that the item does not look very used and the quantity of the pictures”* while others, such as Respondent 2 pointed out making sure they choose the right sizing *“My biggest challenges when buying second hand fashion items, specially online is not being able to try it on or see the item’s dimensions”* and *“One challenge that I have when buying a second hand fashion item is the sizing, especially with shoes and not knowing if it will fit or not, as sizing varies according to brands”,* as said by Respondent 4.

Second-hand fashion brands should improve website and store layout quality

When questioned about their opinions on how brands, whether online stores, platforms or physical stores could improve in order to become more user/customer friendly as well as more convincing towards non-consumers of this market, it was possible to identify some shared opinions. Most thought that brands that have online presence should improve and invest more in their photography quality and staging with Respondent 2 saying: *“Brands could showcase the items being sold on someone instead of in a rag or alone in order for customers to be able to see the item’s dimensions or to get a notion of how it would fit people (...) I believe this would help because many times people end up not buying an item because they are afraid it won’t fit them”* and as Respondent 11 believes that *“Second-hand fashion brands should use images that are more aesthetically pleasing and similar to first-hand fashion brands like from About You or Stradivarius”*. In terms of physical stores, one person mentioned the store’s product organization and layout *“I believe if second-hand fashion physical stores were better organized aside from men and women separation, it would be easier to find things”* as said by Respondent 3.

Second-hand fashion brand’s social media presence

The last category analyzed was the second-hand brand's social media presence and like in other categories, it was possible to identify shared opinions. Of 15 participants, the majority expressed their desire to be more exposed to social media marketing and advertisements from second hand fashion brands, not only to gain more brand awareness with Respondent 12 saying: *"I would also like to see more second-hand fashion brands ads and marketing where they would show what kind of fashion styles or items they sell to see if it would be something that I liked and give an idea of what prices they would have"* and Respondent 1 stated: *"For second hand fashion brand marketing, I would like to see more ads to increase the awareness of physical stores"* but also to look more trustworthy *"I think it is very important that second hand fashion brands invest more in marketing and publicity, because something that is always appearing on social media and TV makes the brand look less shady and more trustworthy"*, which was also stated by Respondent 1. The consumers that argued that they did not wish for brands to have social media presence said that it was not because the marketing was irrelevant or annoying, but because and according to Respondent 5, he wanted to keep this market a "secret" and a niche *"I like that second hand fashion brands/platforms to not be very present in social media or Tv ads because I want them to keep a niche"* and *"On one hand I want second hand fashion brands to gain awareness because then I would have more product options and it is more sustainable, but at the same time I would feel that those rare, vintage pieces would become rare, and more mainstream pieces would be more common"*, also stated by Respondent 5.

4.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following chapter presents the main results of the analyzed data in chapter three. The objective of the research questions of this study was to gain further understanding over the perceptions of consumers who purchase second-hand fashion goods as well as those who do not. In a general manner, all participants of the interviews have a grasp of the concept of second-hand fashion and what it entails.

What are the consumer's perceptions regarding the second-hand fashion market	Findings
General prejudice against second-hand fashion	1. Consumers believe that the second-hand fashion market still has a negative connotation in society in regard to hygiene and product quality because this concept has yet to improve its brand/product offer in Portugal
The second-hand market product offer and culture is not developed enough	
The second-hand fashion market helps to promote sustainability in the fashion industry	2. Consumers recognize a shift in second-hand fashion related prejudices to a more positive view due to access to internet that grants them educative information about the fashion industry and existing second-hand fashion brands and products
The second-hand fashion market is recognized as starting to be perceived in a more positive way	
Second-hand fashion luxury is viewed as having better product quality and infrastructure as well as price-quality opportunities	3. Consumers believe that second-hand fashion luxury goods would be better accepted in Portugal than the market for lower priced fashion items

Second-hand fashion thrifting is viewed as a trendy and cool activity	4. Consumers believe that the second-hand fashion market is becoming popular and that the purchase of second-hand fashion is starting to be perceived as a trendy and cool activity to do, especially when associated with vintage or unique items
Second-hand fashion is perceived as having many vintage and unique items	

Table 3- Findings regarding the perceptions of consumers towards the second-hand fashion market

Source: Self-elaborated

In the table presented above, the major key findings of this study regarding the first research question are summarized. One of the most frequently mentioned perception of consumers during the interviews was the general prejudice of society about the second-hand fashion market and their belief that it has to be more developed in Portugal in order for this market to become more accepted.

While participants from this study that purchase second-hand fashion items believe that this market is still viewed negatively, they do not have negative perceptions about this market. However, it was possible to conclude that not all consumers who have yet to purchase a second-hand fashion item share the same thought.

Because of their lack of contact and interaction with this market's products and points of sales, they not only perceive it to have damaged, old and

dirty garments for sale, but also believe that this market has to improve its business model offer, product availability and the concept itself in Portugal, in comparison with the “thrifting” culture that is already mainstream in other countries.

One finding that may contradict this perception is that while consumers from this study believe that this market is still not mainstream in Portugal due to lack of product/brand options, it was also possible to conclude that this justification might not be the only reason for them to not buy second hand fashion items. During a number of interviews, it was said by some consumers that they haven’t truly researched and purchased from this market because none of their friends, family members, or acquaintances were second-hand fashion consumers, and therefore have not given feedback on their experiences.

Another finding that resulted from this study is that both consumers and non-consumers of second-hand fashion recognize a shift from the negative perceptions related to this market to a more positive view. The possible reason stated by respondents for this change of perceptions is the rise and increasing usage of the internet and social media over the past years. Consumers are gaining more access to information about the second-hand fashion market, how it is improving its product and brand offer in terms of quality, and what are the positive aspects of this market. It was shown through this study that consumers are perceiving the second-hand fashion market as being a more sustainable

option in comparison with the first-hand fashion industry, which were also linked to the usage of internet and social media and how these channels enable the participants to educate themselves and learn facts about the negative effects of the fashion industry, namely the fast fashion concept, for the environment.

From this study, it also became strongly evident that the luxury segment of second-hand fashion was by most participants of this study not only perceived as being an economic opportunity to save money but was also viewed in general with significantly better perceptions and opinions in comparison with more accessible price wise fashion items. The quality of the items is considered superior, and the physical stores that have luxury goods available are perceived as cleaner and more organized.

Besides this, it is also possible to establish a pattern of shared thoughts between consumers and non-consumers of this market, for instance, the belief that the market for second-hand luxury goods would be more accepted and adopted in Portugal in comparison with the market of more accessible fashion items because of their view that Portugal is part of a culture that values and highly regards appearances and status quo. Due to this, this segment of the market presents an advantage over the regular one, by making luxury fashion goods more economically attainable than it would be if it were first-hand.

It was also possible to determine that among some participants of this study, second-hand fashion “thriftling” which translates to going physically shopping at thrift stores or flea markets, is perceived as a trendy and cool activity to do, especially in a social setting. During the interview conversations, it became evident that while consumers (both consumers and non-consumers of second-hand fashion) believe that there is still a stigma attached to this market in Portugal, this fashion industry niche is becoming more popular and socially acceptable.

Perchance, the awareness that this concept is becoming widely socially acceptable according to participants from this study, could act as an opportunity for those who have not bought second-hand fashion items yet due to this market’s stigma and fear of judgment. The act of “thriftling” second-hand fashion is perceived as trendy and cool by consumers especially when associated with the possibility of finding vintage items.

Many consumers associate the second-hand fashion market with vintage and unique goods, and while this association was more frequent among people who purchase second-hand fashion items, a few individuals who have never bought a second-hand fashion item also share the same perspective. This logic makes sense considering that for an item to be classified as vintage, it has to be at least 20 years old, and since most second hand fashion items previously belonged to someone, this market would be the easiest place to find a vintage item in comparison with a first-hand store, and because vintage fashion items

are usually garments that are not sold anymore and therefore difficult to find, they are considered to be unique by consumers. This could possibly suggest that even the consumers that do not buy from this market, are to a certain extent aware of this concept and what it entails.

The purpose of the second research question of this study was to discover what the main motivations of consumers are to purchase second-hand fashion goods.

Discover what are the consumer's motivations to purchase second-hand fashion	Finding
Vintage and Uniqueness Motivations	1. The motivation to find vintage and unique fashion goods is the most common motivation, and the reason behind it is consumers' desire to stand out and dress differently from others
Sustainable Motivations	2. The motivation to be more sustainable through the purchase of second-hand fashion goods is one of the most common motivations and highlight the increasing environmental awareness among young Portuguese consumers
Economic Motivations	3. The desire to save money by buying a second-hand item over a first-hand one is one of the most common motivations among consumers, especially in association with luxury fashion items

Recreational Motivations	4. Consumers go shop in second-hand fashion physical stores for the sole purpose of the pleasure taken by roaming through the stores. This motivation seemed to be more prevalent among the male consumers
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Table 4- Findings regarding the motivations of consumers to purchase from the second-hand fashion market

Source: Self-elaborated

In the table presented above, the major key findings of this study regarding the second research question are summarized. From this study, it became evident that the motive to find vintage and unique items in the second-hand fashion market was their biggest motivation in comparison to other identified motivations.

Diving further into this motivation, consumers consider that the second-hand fashion market enables them to differentiate themselves from others in terms of style and make a fashion statement, since vintage clothes are not produced anymore and therefore rarer. Although this motive was more prevalent between consumers who purchase second-hand fashion, some non-consumers of this market also considered this to be one of their major motives if they were to purchase from this market in the future. This finding could suggest that consumers are starting to seemingly give more value to vintage fashion goods and at least a certain percentage of individuals from younger generations

are trying to distance themselves from the concept of fast fashion and its mass production, in which millions of people worldwide have access to the same collections of clothing and accessories.

Another key finding in terms of motivations to purchase second-hand fashion over first-hand is the economical one. Consumers from this study purchase second-hand fashion because it is less expensive in comparison with “new” garments, which enables them to spend less money on more items. Another identified reason behind this motivation is related to the luxury segment of the second-hand fashion market and the opportunity for accessing this segment through the second-hand market by purchasing those items for a cheaper price.

One motivation that is very prevalent among consumers from this study is the desire to be more sustainably conscious in fashion purchases. This motivation was as frequently mentioned as the economic one, and while this reason was more popular among consumers of second-hand fashion, non-consumers of this market are also aware and concerned about the negative aspects of the fashion industry. Consumers associate fast fashion with environmental pollution and usage of valuable resources, but also with “sweatshops” and unfair pay and work conditions in manufacturing plants, and since buying in second hand promotes a more sustainable approach by reducing

the need to produce and buy “new” fashion garments and a circular economy, this becomes one of the biggest motivation to purchase from this market.

From this study, it was also possible to identify another common, but less frequently mentioned motive, which is the recreational one. Consumers purchase and visit second-hand fashion stores simply for the pleasure and distraction of the activity. While some consumers only roam these stores to just look around and pass time, especially in a social setting, like for instance with friends, others find thrilling the possibility of finding among disorganization and many garments, unique and even rare vintage fashion items, which is described as a “Scavenger hunt”. This motivation is more prevalent among male participants, however, this can also be identified in some female participants.

The third and final objective of the research question of this study was to gain knowledge about the purchasing experiences and opinions of second-hand fashion consumers.

What are the consumer's second-hand fashion purchase experiences and opinions	Finding
Preference to purchase second-hand fashion in physical stores	1. Consumers prefer to purchase second-hand fashion goods in a physical store over online websites and platforms, mostly due to lack of

Main challenge when shopping online for second-hand fashion is sizing and product quality	confidence over the product's quality and size and some showed their desire for second-hand fashion brands to have a physical point-of-sale specifically in shopping malls
Post-purchase feelings and expectations of second-hand fashion are a mix of positive and negative emotions	2. Consumers demonstrate a mix of emotions regarding the purchase of second-hand fashion goods. While some feel "giddy" and excited, others fear to be disappointed in terms of expectations
Second-hand fashion brands should improve website and store layout quality	3. Consumers want that brands from the second-hand fashion market to improve their online presence, such as website quality and layout as well as their social media pages and marketing
Second-hand fashion brands' social media presence is desirable	

Table 5- Findings regarding the purchasing experiences and opinions of consumers towards the second-hand fashion market

Source: Self-elaborated

In the table presented above, the major key findings identified during the interviews with the participants of this study are presented. In this study, it became evident that consumers' shopping channel preferences are connected with their online shopping struggles, because even though online shopping is increasing over the years, including in the second-hand fashion market, most consumers prefer to shop and purchase second-hand fashion items in a physical store over a website or platform. The identified reasons for that are due to the challenges that online shopping presents, especially when considering the second-hand market, such as the fear that the item's quality condition might be

inferior to the one stated and not noticeable through pictures, as well as the item not fitting them.

Consumers also want second-hand fashion brands to create physical stores in shopping malls, as they believe that because it is a place where people come to frequently purchase fashion items, this market could gain awareness and visibility through it. Another reason for it is the fact that consumers trust the brand more if they also have a physical point of sale to go, talk with the staff and see and touch the items with their hands instead of just an online website. This would not only promote brand awareness but also possibly create trust and loyalty between consumers and the brand.

Another finding which resulted from this study is that while consumers show some fear over purchasing online for reasons discussed above, many enjoy the feeling of excitement and even childishness with not knowing what to expect before opening the package and all the possibilities that might come with it.

At last, consumers want second-hand fashion brands with an online presence to improve their channels. In order to become more user-friendly and attract possible future customers, brands should improve the quality and staging of photography and the layout of websites and platforms by making them more similar to first-hand fashion ones. The same applies to brands social media presence since consumers wish to be more exposed to second-hand fashion ads and marketing and the identified reason for that is because they want to be more

aware of which brands are available to them or could match their tastes, but also because seeing ads on social media from second-hand fashion brands would make them more trustworthy, especially if influencers with a transparent and honest approach were used.

For the discussion, it was possible to establish a connection between the key findings that resulted from this study and the context of the current state-of-art concerning this phenomenon. For instance, regarding the findings that address the consumer's perceptions of the second-hand fashion market. One of the most discussed perceptions during the interviews was the association of this market with stigma and taboo. Despite recent increase in second-hand fashion's acceptance and popularity by society, many consumers still view second-hand clothing as having a bad image (Gullstrand et al., 2016). During the interviews, most consumers admitted to the awareness of this negative perception especially present in Portugal, while discussing some of the most common prejudices of second-hand fashion, which is the belief that clothes are old and damaged, the non-acceptance of the item having a previous owner as well as the judgment itself from society. This perception is also something that has been mentioned in previous literature to which authors suggested that the stigma attached to used clothes, unknown origins, poor hygiene conditions, and embarrassment of shopping in second-hand stores have been identified as popular shopping barriers for consumers (Crewe et al., 2003; Connell, 2009; Hur, 2020; Tarai et al., 2020).

Another frequently mentioned perception that can be related to the consumer's prejudices and stigmas discussed above, is the belief that the second-hand fashion market in Portugal has still to be more developed in many ways, such as the customer journey process, the cultural adoption of this concept by society as well as the market offer in terms of stores and products. Unfortunately, to the extent of my knowledge, no scientific data or studies have discussed this particular perception.

Taking this into consideration, studies also suggest, however, that the popularity of second-hand shopping and consumption is rising, more consumers are pleased with the idea of buying second-hand fashion, and this change occurred in the last five years and is continually progressing (Fitzgerald, 2015). This information is compatible with this study's findings where consumers showed a newfound interest and change of views about this market. Several were the conductors of this change, but the major influence is the access to the internet, most specifically influencer marketing, tv shows/movies, and social media exposure. In fact, since social media has developed into a platform that encourages human interaction and collaboration, it is now used by businesses and brands as a tool for efficient user-to-user communication and interaction as well as for spreading information to a wider audience and raising brand awareness (Hamid, et al, 2017).

During this study, the link between vintage fashion items and second-hand fashion was one of the most mentioned perceptions. Even those individuals who have never purchased a second-hand fashion item seem to make the association and some studies appear to re-enforce this idea by stating that vintage goods and second-hand goods can occasionally be used interchangeably (Cornett, 2010).

Another perception that has been increasing among consumers is that the second-hand fashion market is helping to promote sustainability. This consumption is linked to environmentally concerned consumers who look for solutions to moral questions regarding fashion apparel (Beard, 2008). This association was shown in this study in which many individuals believe that the second-hand fashion market is not only reducing usage of resources but also presents a better alternative to the concept of fast fashion.

The view that the act of shopping for second-hand fashion items is becoming trendy and a cool activity to do among consumers was another commonly mentioned perception. Again, while no literature was found specifying this perception, this can be linked to the recreational motivation in which consumers take pleasure in “thrifting” second-hand fashion, an activity that can also be suggested as a social activity.

The last frequently mentioned perception was the association of second-hand fashion luxury with better store layout and product quality as well as the

opportunity to save money in comparison with first-hand luxury. This perception which can also be connected with economic motivations have been discussed in previous literature that argue that in addition to being frugal, bargain hunting in the context of second-hand shopping is related with careful resource management and the application of money-saving strategies (Guiot & Roux, 2010).

Following the analysis of consumers perceptions, it was possible to connect all identified motivations in this study with previously existing studies and literature. The most common motivation expressed during the interview discussions by consumers was the need for vintage and unique items. The urge to escape social pressure as mass consumerism is an expression of the second-hand need for uniqueness (Roux & Guiox, 2008), and it is done by creating distinct styles that differ from the norm and exhibit specialness and uniqueness (Tian et al., 2001). According to those who identified this as their main motivation to purchase second-hand fashion, they believed that this market provided them an alternative to escape the mass-consumerism created by fast fashion and social media influence as well as enabling the development of their own unique and personal style. Several participants argued that the purchase of vintage fashion items enabled them to distinguish themselves by finding something exclusive that is not commonly found being worn by people.

Cervellon and Shamma (2013) noted that purchasing vintage items might evoke sentiments of nostalgia and that many consumers browse second-hand shops in search of genuine aged items (Roux & Guio, 2008) connected to fond memories or possessions that evoke strong emotions (Makkar & Yap, 2018). Although this was not a common motivation among interviewed consumers, one participant mentioned that growing up, the fashion styles and pieces used in the early 00' movies and series had an impact on her and because of that, she tries to find fashion pieces from that era.

The second finding regarding motivations was the sustainability aspect. Consumers today are becoming more "eco-fashionable" and supporting the reduction in the mass consumption of clothing by greatly increasing their lifecycle (Cervellon et al., 2012). During discussions, many interviewed consumers also expressed their growing concern for the environment and the importance of sustainability as one of their most influencing motivations for them to purchase second-hand items over first-hand fashion.

This finding might indicate a shift in consumers' environmental attitudes in the past years since some studies suggest that according to literature, environmental concern isn't identified as a strong influence on second-hand purchases as it is subjective to each individual. In fact, several academics have been unable to establish a link between environmental issues and second-hand consumption (Cervellon & Shamma, 2013; McNeill & Moore, 2015).

Another very common motivation identified during the interviews was the economic one. In fact, according to numerous investigators (Cervellon & Shamma, 2013), frugality is the primary motivator of second-hand consumption because it entails the wise and disciplined management of finances (Guiot & Roux, 2010). During the interviews, many consumers mentioned this as their main motivator, while identifying two sub-motivations inside the bigger one. While some said that they buy second-hand fashion because it was cheaper and this enabled them to have a bigger wardrobe, others stated that they purchase second-hand because in that way they can obtain more valuable and luxurious items with a bargain opportunity. This could also be compared to existing literature regarding these sub-motivations as studies suggest that consumers become more materialistic and compulsive shoppers as a result of their hedonic purchasing motivations, which reveal the consumers' demands for consumption apart from the need for survival (Kasser, 2011). Contrastingly, economic shopping occurs when consumers control their spending by managing their resources with the goal of acquiring a valuable and higher purchasing power and, as a result, the opportunity to invest or secure honest and fair deals (Herjanto et al., 2016). For instance, purchasing designer and second-hand luxury items used allows buyers to do so without having to pay full price, which may be a sense of pride and achievement (Roux & Guiot, 2008).

Another key finding regarding motivations was the recreational one, and although this was not as frequently mentioned as the economic or sustainable motivation, it is still relevant to discuss, as current literature suggests this as a strong influence for individuals to purchase from this market. Second-hand fashion consumers are stimulated, excited and entertained by the idea of exploration and discovery while entering a second-hand store. These feelings are brought on by unexpected and unusual items discovered inside a store (Ferraro et al., 2016), as well as by the pursuit of amusement and treasure hunting, as consumers' main goal is to find the most distinctive and uncommon item at the lowest cost (Cervellon et al., 2012). This is consistent with this study's findings regarding this motivation, as some participants mentioned that they enjoy entering and roaming through stores that are not very organized because it increases their "scavenger hunt" experience.

The last finding was related to consumers' experiences and opinions during and after the purchase of second-hand fashion. One of the most stated needs from consumers that participated in this study is the improvement of the shopping experience in online as well as physical stores. During the interviews, some participants admitted to having had negative shopping experiences during and post-purchase and believed that brands should implement product quality control, a more user-friendly and attractive website as well as a better store layout and overall environment. This can be linked to a previous study in which the author suggested that in order to change consumer opinions regarding this

market, stores could assure that all clothing is cleaned in their own facility and that any pieces that are damaged are mended or used elsewhere. Second-hand brands should also take into consideration alternative merchandising strategies or purchasing experiences (Sorenson & Jorgensen, 2019).

Something which was also discussed during the interviews were consumer's difficulty in finding clothing that they were certain would fit them (in online shopping) as well as the risk of purchasing an item online that might have unnoticeable damage. These second-hand shopping circumstances were also mentioned in a study that implied that product availability such as size, along with product quality and transparency were considered some of the deciding factors that would make the purchase of second-hand fashion items easier (Hur, 2020).

During this study, consumers also expressed their desire to be more exposed to social media and advertising from second-hand fashion brands, not only to learn more about the brand offer and the market itself, but also to inspire more trust as a way to decrease the negative connotations associated with second hand fashion. Current studies also suggest that by improving marketing strategies, brands could decrease stigma and build a more positive image (Hur, 2020).

5. CONCLUSION

Although the concept of second-hand fashion is not a recent one, this market, which can be included in the fashion industry, is considered to be more sustainable, and investigating the development of the second hand fashion phenomena and the shifts in consumer's behavior is crucial in order for companies, the market as well as society to adapt. Taking this into consideration, it is possible to say that the objective of this exploratory study was accomplished, as for each research question, several findings concerning perceptions, motivations and experiences were found.

In a general overview and in the context of this study, it was found that consumers are starting to become more open and receptive towards the concept of second-hand fashion. Most of this study's participants perceive this market in a neutral or positive light, even though several prejudices and stigmas were mentioned. In terms of motivation, the need for uniqueness and vintage items, closely followed by economic and sustainable concerns were the most commonly stated motives. At last, most consumers expressed positive second-hand shopping experiences, along with its challenges and showed desire to be more exposed to second-hand brand marketing and advertising on social media.

Regarding the first research question, it was possible to conclude that the consumers' perceptions about this market are generically positive, however

negative perceptions were more prevalent among non-consumers of the second-hand fashion market. After this study, it was possible to identify perceptions that have been previously mentioned and discussed in literature review, such as consumer's association with more sustainable practices, prejudices regarding hygiene and product quality and the belief that this market has more vintage and unique items. However, through this research it was discovered that consumers that participated in the interviews recognize the potential of the second-hand fashion market and regard it as trendy and cool. Another perception that had not been previously discussed in literature according to my knowledge, was that some consumers believe that this market has yet to become more mature in terms of product/brand offer in Portugal.

Concerning the second research question, which pays attention to consumers motivations to purchase second hand fashion items, four major motives were identified: the desire to make more sustainable purchase decisions (Sustainability), the want and need to spend less money (Economic), the wish to have a different type of shopping experience through "scavenger/treasure hunting", (Recreational) and lastly, wanting to differentiate themselves from other people in terms of style by finding vintage and unique items.

At last, the third research question was directed towards consumers' experience during and post second-hand fashion shopping and although most of their customer journey was considered positive and pleasant, a few negative experiences were identified. Some of them were struggles during the search and purchase of second-hand clothes such as sizing and product quality fears, non-user-friendly websites and unpleasant store layout and window display. In addition, through this study and the consumers who participated in it, it was possible to discover that some individuals have different feelings after shopping second hand in comparison with first-hand, especially online. Very specific feelings and sensations were described by consumers during the time of ordering the item and awaiting its arrival, some positive and some negative and even a mix of both.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings of this study will provide a better understanding of not only what are Portuguese consumers' current perceptions regarding the second-hand fashion market but also their motivations and opinions and feelings during and after purchase. Even though several findings were found and presented, there is still a need to further research this phenomenon and how it impacts consumer behavior in our society.

Because the number of interviewed consumers was only fifteen and with similar demographics (age, city, financial power, and education level), the perceptions and motivations of consumers with other demographic profiles might change. Since the concept of second-hand fashion is only gaining more attention in recent years, especially in Portugal, finding individuals that purchase or have purchased from this market and were willing to be interviewed within the scope of this study presented a challenge in itself. Also, the lack of second-hand fashion literature reviews and studies regarding consumers' feelings during and after purchasing second-hand fashion items (to my extended knowledge) is considered a limitation, especially while writing the literature review and discussion chapters.

Regarding possible future research, during this study, the identified consumers' high interest and perceived value of second-hand luxury fashion could represent an opportunity for further researching and understanding this interest and specific motivation and how to use this data to create concrete customer insight and strategies.

As the access and usage of internet and social media channels have been increasing (Statista, 2022), understanding how those tools could impact and benefit the second-hand fashion market could also present itself as an opportunity for accustoming consumers to the second-hand fashion market, fostering trust, awareness and customer relationship. At last, it might be interesting from a research and brand benefit point of view to further explore how the understanding of second-hand shopping experiences and feelings might impact their consumer behavior and how it would differ from first-hand shopping.

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