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Influencer versus Brand Advertising in Sustainable Fashion: A Literature Review of Consumer Responses

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Abstract. *The growing environmental consequences of fast fashion have increased the importance of effective sustainability communication. However, evidence remains inconclusive regarding whether influencer-generated or brand-generated advertising is more effective in shaping consumer responses to sustainable fashion. This literature review examines consumer responses to influencer- and brand-generated advertising in sustainable fashion. Twenty-one empirical studies published between 2018 and 2026 were identified through Scopus and Google Scholar and synthesized thematically. Five themes emerged: source credibility, message characteristics and source message congruence, psychological mechanisms, consumer and contextual factors, and consumer outcomes. The findings show that neither advertising source is universally superior. Influencer advertising is more persuasive when the source is perceived as credible, authentic, knowledgeable, and relatable, whereas brand advertising may be more effective when consumers require clear and easily processed sustainability information. These effects also depend on environmental knowledge, brand familiarity, product characteristics, and consumer demographics. Most studies focus on purchase intention rather than actual behavior, and direct comparisons between the two sources remain limited. Future research should examine when and why each source is most effective in promoting sustainable fashion consumption.*

Keywords: *Brand Advertising, Consumer Responses, Influencer Advertising, Purchase Intention, Sustainable Fashion*

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, environmental issues have received increasing public attention. One of the environmental problems associated with the fashion industry is the growing consumption of *fast fashion*. Current practices in the *fast fashion* industry often result in overproduction that exceeds market demand, thereby increasing production volumes and generating unsold clothing stock (Vladimirova, 2025). The rapid introduction of new collections, which is characteristic of the *fast fashion* industry, encourages consumers to purchase clothing more frequently and replace products that are still wearable. Such consumption patterns ultimately accelerate the accumulation of textile waste and exacerbate the negative environmental impacts of the fashion industry.

These consumption patterns highlight the need to encourage more responsible consumption practices, which are often associated with the concept of *sustainable fashion*. According to Sepe et al. (2024), *sustainable fashion* is a multidimensional concept that emphasizes not only environmental responsibility but also ethical sourcing of raw materials, circular business models, and alternative consumption practices such as clothing rental, thrifting, and upcycling. The development of the *sustainable fashion* industry has been driven, in part, by increasing public awareness of environmental issues. The adoption of *sustainable fashion* practices can encourage consumers to become more aware of environmental problems and increase their tendency to choose more environmentally friendly products (Li, 2025).

However, increasing awareness of environmental issues and *sustainable fashion* does not necessarily translate into actual purchasing behavior. Dangelico, Alvino, and Fraccascia (2022) found that although consumers' awareness and interest in sustainability continue to increase, actual purchasing behavior, particularly in the clothing sector, remains relatively low. This discrepancy highlights the persistent gap between consumers' sustainability awareness and their purchasing behavior. One potential barrier to increasing consumers' purchase intention toward *sustainable fashion* is their limited knowledge and understanding of sustainable products. A survey conducted by Katadata Insight Center (2021) found that only 28% of respondents genuinely understood the concept of sustainable products. This finding suggests that increasing consumers' knowledge and understanding of sustainable fashion may be an important step in encouraging their willingness to purchase sustainable products.

One means of increasing consumers' knowledge about *sustainable fashion* is through persuasive communication, particularly advertising. Beyond its persuasive function, advertising can serve as an important source of product-related information and may help consumers understand the environmental and sustainability-related attributes of products. Zhang et al. (2024) found that *green advertising appeals* are more effective in increasing purchase intention among consumers with high levels of environmental concern (Jian & Zhong, 2025). This suggests that the way sustainability-related information is communicated may play an important role in shaping consumers' responses to sustainable products.

In today's digital environment, advertising and marketing communication can be disseminated through social media platforms to reach a broader audience. Marketing messages on social media are communicated not only directly by brands through *brand-generated advertising*, but also by *influencers*, who often deliver promotional messages through more personal and interactive approaches. Influencer marketing can contribute to consumers' brand awareness and purchase intention (Luo & Yuan, 2019, as cited in Ge, 2024). Meanwhile, brand accounts can build consumer trust by providing clear information

and facilitating direct interaction with consumers (Song et al., 2025). These forms of digital communication may therefore provide consumers with greater access to information about sustainable fashion and potentially contribute to their knowledge and understanding of sustainable products.

Through this literature review, the researchers aim to examine the role of consumer knowledge in shaping purchase intention toward *sustainable fashion* products. Specifically, this review seeks to identify how consumers' knowledge and understanding of sustainable fashion may influence their willingness to purchase sustainable products. The findings are expected to contribute to the theoretical understanding of consumer behavior in the context of sustainable fashion and provide insights into factors that may help address the gap between consumers' growing awareness of sustainability and their purchase intention.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a literature review method to identify, examine, and synthesize previous research related to sustainable fashion, consumer knowledge, and purchase intention. The literature search was conducted using international journal databases through Scopus and Google Scholar. The article search was limited to publications from 2018 – 2026. The literature search was conducted using combinations of keywords related to the main concepts of the study, including "sustainable fashion", "sustainable fashion consumption", "purchase intention", "green purchase intention", "green advertising", "sustainability advertising", "influencer marketing", and "brand advertising". The identified articles were subsequently screened based on their relevance to the research objectives and the predetermined inclusion criteria.

The inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) the article examined consumer behavior, perceptions, attitudes, intentions, or purchasing behavior related to sustainable, green, or environmentally friendly products; (2) the study addressed factors relevant to sustainable consumption, such as consumer knowledge, environmental knowledge, sustainability communication, advertising, social media, influencer marketing, or other consumer-related factors; (3) the study was an empirical study employing quantitative, qualitative, experimental, or other relevant research designs; (4) the article was published within the predetermined publication period; and (5) the full text of the article was accessible for analysis. Following the search and screening process, the selected articles were reviewed systematically by examining their research objectives, variables, research methods, participants, and main findings. The findings were then compared and synthesized to identify common themes, relationships among variables, and research gaps related to consumer knowledge and purchase intention toward sustainable fashion. A total of 21 articles were included in the literature review.

3 RESULTS

Based on the search conducted via Scopus and Google Scholar, 21 articles were found that were relevant to the research topic.

No	Article	Methods	Results
1	Colaljo et al. (2026), *The Impact of Social Media Influencers on*	Quantitative study involving 300 participants.	The findings indicate that social media influencers influence consumers' behavior and purchase intention toward thrift fashion.

	Sustainable Fashion Promoting Thrift Shopping in Sta. Rosa, Laguna		Influencer-related factors can encourage consumers to consider thrifted apparel as a more sustainable fashion alternative.
2	Pereira et al. (2023), *Digital Influencers' Attributes and Perceived Characterizations and Their Impact on Purchase Intentions*	Quantitative study involving 243 participants.	The findings demonstrate that digital influencer characteristics positively affect purchase intention. Factors such as credibility, expertise, trust, and the perceived relationship between consumers and influencers contribute to consumers' willingness to purchase promoted products.
3	Elkashif, M., Bakr, Y., & Taher, A. (2026). *Virtual Advocates for Sustainability: How Influencer Type and Message Congruence Shape Consumer Responses in Emerging Markets*	Quantitative experimental study involving 311 participants, analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).	The findings indicate that human influencers are generally more effective than virtual influencers in generating consumer engagement and purchase intention toward sustainable fashion. The effectiveness of influencer communication is influenced by trustworthiness and congruence between the influencer and the sustainability message.
4	Schorn, A., Vinzens, F., & Wirth, W. (2022). *Promoting Sustainability on Instagram: How Sponsorship Disclosures and Benefit Appeals Affect the Credibility of Sinnfluencers*	Quantitative experimental study involving 141 participants.	The results show that sponsorship disclosure can reduce the perceived credibility of influencers. In addition, benefit appeals emphasizing personal benefits were more effective in generating credibility than appeals focusing exclusively on ecological benefits.
5	Jian, W., & Zhong, Z. (2025). *Eco Positioning Drives Sustainable Fashion Consumption Through Process-Related Strategies and Brand Familiarity*	Quantitative experimental study involving 102 participants.	The findings show that eco-positioning positively affects brand evaluation, willingness to pay, and sustainable fashion consumption intention. The effects are particularly relevant when sustainability communication emphasizes environmentally friendly production processes and when consumers are familiar with the brand.

6	Ge, J. (2024). *Influencer Marketing and Its Impacts on Sustainable Fashion Consumption Among Generation Z*	Quantitative survey study involving 120 participants.	The findings demonstrate that influencer-related factors significantly influence sustainable fashion purchase intention among Generation Z. Influencer experience, perceived similarity, expertise, attitudes toward influencers, and social influence from friends contribute to consumers' intention to purchase sustainable fashion products.
7	Kumagi, K., & Nagasawa, S. (2020). *Launch of Sustainable Plastic Apparel: Effects of Brand Luxury and Experience on Consumer Behavior*	Quantitative survey study examining brand luxury, brand experience, product experience, sustainable plastic apparel launch, brand attitude, and purchase intention.	The findings indicate that the launch of sustainable plastic apparel can influence brand attitude and purchase intention. However, the effects of sustainable product introduction may differ depending on consumers' perceptions of brand luxury and brand experience.
8	Li, D. (2025). *Impact of Green Advertisement and Environmental Knowledge on Intention of Consumers to Buy Green Products*	Quantitative survey study involving 512 participants.	The results demonstrate that green advertising positively influences consumers' intention to purchase green products. Environmental knowledge also plays an important role in consumers' green purchasing decisions. Eco-labeling and eco-branding can further strengthen consumers' perceptions and intentions toward green products.
9	Kim, S., Ko, E., & Kim, S. J. (2018). *Fashion Brand Green Demarketing: Effects on Customer Attitudes and Behavior Intentions*	Quantitative survey study involving 351 participants.	The findings show that green demarketing advertising can positively influence consumers' attitudes and behavioral intentions. The study suggests that sustainability-oriented advertising can influence how consumers evaluate the brand and subsequently affect their purchase-related intentions.

10	Behre, B., & Cauberghe, V. (2024). *"Eco-style" Perceptions: The Interplay of Different Sustainability Cues and Fashion Styles in Consumers' Fashion Brand Attitudes*	Quantitative experimental study involving 358 participants.	The findings indicate that environmental sustainability cues generate more positive consumer responses than social sustainability cues. The effectiveness of sustainability cues also depends on fashion style, with sustainability positioning being particularly effective for timeless/basic fashion styles.
11	Lee, Y., & Lin, C. A. (2021). *The Effects of a Sustainable vs Conventional Apparel Advertisement on Consumer Perception of CSR Image and Attitude Toward the Brand*	Quantitative experimental study involving 173 participants.	The results indicate that sustainable apparel advertising enhances consumers' perceptions of the brand's CSR image. The perceived CSR image subsequently contributes to perceptions of brand innovativeness, consumer–brand identification, and overall attitude toward the brand.
12	Pranta, A. D., Tareque Rahaman, M., Reazuddin Repon, M., & Shikder, A. A. R. (2024). *Environmentally Sustainable Apparel Merchandising of Recycled Cotton-Polyester Blended Garments: Analysis of Consumer Preferences and Purchasing Behaviors*	The study employed a quantitative experimental and survey approach. The study involved 60 individuals for observation and 12 participants for the main investigation. Consumer preferences, purchasing patterns, and attitudes toward sustainable apparel were examined using PLS-SEM.	The findings show that consumer preferences for recycled apparel are strongly influenced by demographic characteristics. Consumers aged 25–45, with higher educational and social backgrounds, demonstrated greater sustainability awareness and purchase interest. However, broader adoption remains constrained by concerns regarding comfort, durability, quality, product availability, and retail strategies.

13	Chen, C., Li, Z., Yang, S., & Cao, D. (2024). *Driving Eco-friendly Product Purchases Through Social Media: How Does Peer Influence Work?*	The study consisted of two studies. Study 1 used social media data from Xiaohongshu as a quantitative field study, analyzing engagement metrics and sales volume using Bayesian statistical analysis. Study 2 involved 273 participants from different regions of China in a cross-sectional survey-based experiment and employed path analysis.	The results show that peer influence through user-generated content (UGC) is stronger than marketer-generated influence in encouraging eco-friendly product purchases. Both informational and normative influences affect eco-friendly purchasing behavior. Environmental self-efficacy and positive moral emotions act as important mechanisms through which peer influence affects purchase intention. Tie strength also moderates some of these relationships.
14	Zhang, Y., Zhu, J., Chen, H., & Jiang, Y. (2025). *Enhancing Trust and Empathy in Marketing: Strategic AI and Human Influencer Matching*	The study consisted of four experimental studies. Study 1 involved 130 online participants, Study 1b involved 200 participants, Study 2 involved 200 participants, and Study 3 involved 300 undergraduate students. The studies employed 2 × 2 and 2 × 2 × 2 between-subject experimental designs, with chi-square tests, two-way ANOVA, and moderated mediation analysis.	The findings consistently demonstrate that the congruence between influencer type and advertising appeal enhances persuasive effectiveness. AI influencers are more suitable for functional appeals, whereas human influencers are more effective for experiential appeals. Perceived trust and perceived empathy mediate these effects, while consumer knowledge moderates the strength of the relationships.

15	Sung, E., Han, D. I. D., Choi, Y. K., Gillespie, B., Couperus, A., & Koppert, M. (2023). *Augmented Digital Human vs. Human Storytelling in Advertising*	The research consisted of two experimental studies. Study 1 involved 509 online consumers. Study 2 used 46 students for a pretest and 460 participants for the main experiment. Data were analyzed using SmartPLS and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).	Study 1 found that digital humans in AR advertising enhance storytelling immersion through narrative transportation, which subsequently improves technology-enhanced brand experience and consumer responses. Study 2 demonstrated that highly human-like digital storytellers generate stronger entertainment, narrative transportation, attitudes, and word-of-mouth intentions than machine-like digital humans. Overall, digital humans that are perceived as more human-like can produce positive consumer responses comparable to, or potentially replacing, human storytellers, in certain advertising contexts.
16	Mandliya, A., Varyani, V., Hassan, Y., Akhouri, A., & Pandey, J. (2020). *What Influences Intention to Purchase Sustainable Products?*	Quantitative survey study involving 205 business students from two business schools in India. The relationships were examined using moderated mediation analysis.	The findings indicate that attitudes toward social and environmental accountability are positively associated with intention to purchase environmentally sustainable products. Attitude toward environmental advertising plays an important role in this relationship, while materialism influences the strength of the relationship. The findings suggest that consumers' responses to environmental advertising can contribute to sustainable purchase intentions.
17	Choi, D., Tewari, D., Seo, Y., & Ko, E. (2025). *How Awe Shapes Sustainable "Buy Less, Buy Premium" Consumer Preference*	The study consisted of four experimental studies with sample sizes of 150, 140, 250, and 330 participants, respectively. Analyses included chi-square tests, one-way ANOVA, and PROCESS models.	The findings consistently demonstrate that awe increases consumers' preference for the "buy less, buy premium" (BLBP) concept. Awe influences preference through future time perspective and sustainability concern. The effect also extends to sustainable fashion choices, although the effect is stronger when consumers perceive the premium product as genuinely more sustainable than the alternative.
18	Song, Y. (Amy), Wu, J.,	The research consisted of six	Across the studies, the findings consistently show that brand

	Mookherjee, S., & Bose, I. (2026). *Advertising Green Products on Brands' Official Social Media Accounts vs. Mega-Influencer Accounts*	studies, including a large-scale field study and several quantitative experiments. Study 1 analyzed 132,130 Twitter comments using content analysis. Other studies involved 375 Instagram users recruited through MTurk, 180 Prolific participants, 640 Chinese social media users, 400 female participants recruited through Credamo, and 400 U.S. participants recruited through Prolific. The analyses included t-tests, regression analysis, two-way ANOVA, MANOVA, and PROCESS mediation/moderation models.	official accounts are more effective than mega-influencer accounts in improving consumer attitudes toward green products. The advantage of brand accounts is explained by consumers' greater elaboration, understandability, processing fluency, and perceived congruence. The findings also indicate that the effectiveness of the account type can vary depending on response timing, counter-persuasion, and consumers' psychological distance from environmental issues.
19	Jacobs, K., & Hörisch, J. (2022). *The Importance of Product Lifetime Labeling for Purchase Decisions: Strategic Implications*	Quantitative survey study involving 499 German consumers. Participants completed choice-based conjoint (CBC) tasks, and the data were analyzed using choice-based conjoint analysis to examine the influence of product lifetime labeling on purchase decisions.	The findings indicate that product lifetime labeling has a positive influence on purchase decisions. Providing consumers with information about product lifetime can support more informed purchasing decisions and represents a potentially effective sustainability communication strategy for companies.
20	Canova, L., Bobbio, A., & Manganelli, A. M. (2023). *Sustainable*	Quantitative survey study involving 235 participants living in Italy. Data were	The results demonstrate that TPB effectively predicts consumers' intention to purchase fair-trade products. The findings support the importance of attitudes, subjective

	Purchase Intentions: The Role of Moral Norm and Social Dominance Orientation	analyzed using Mplus 8.6 and path analysis.	norms, perceived behavioral control, and additional moral factors in explaining sustainable purchase intentions.
21	Casalegno, C., Candelo, E., & Santoro, G. (2022). *Exploring the Antecedents of Green and Sustainable Purchase Behavior: The Role of Generational Differences*	Quantitative survey study involving 1,068 participants from Italy. Data were analyzed using linear regression, with purchase intensity included as a control variable.	The findings show that older consumers engage in green and sustainable purchasing more frequently than younger generations, despite younger consumers reporting greater environmental concern. Environmental concern and perceived consumer effectiveness are important antecedents of green purchase behavior across generations, while environmental citizenship is significant particularly among Generations Y and Z. Collectivism was not found to significantly influence green purchasing behavior. Overall, the findings suggest that generational differences affect green purchasing behavior in more complex ways than initially expected.

Table 1. Data Extraction Results

Based on the literature review of 21 articles, the findings can be classified into five main themes.

Source of Sustainability Communication and Source Credibility

The reviewed studies indicate that the source of sustainability communication influences consumer responses, particularly through perceived credibility, expertise, experience, similarity, trustworthiness, and authenticity. Influencer- and user-generated content can encourage purchase intentions and eco-friendly behavior when consumers perceive the source as credible and relatable (Colaljo et al., 2026; Pereira et al., 2023; Ge, 2024; Chen et al., 2024).

However, brand-generated communication may also be more effective in certain contexts, as Song et al. (2026) found that brand social media communication can facilitate greater elaboration, processing fluency, and perceived congruence than *mega-influencer* communication. Thus, the effectiveness of a communication source depends on source characteristics, message type, and how consumers process the information.

Sustainability Message Characteristics and Message–Source Congruence

The effectiveness of sustainability communication is influenced not only by the presence of sustainability information but also by how the message is framed and its compatibility with the communication source. Concrete messages may be more effective than abstract messages (Kim et al., 2018), while environmental sustainability cues can generate more favorable

brand attitudes in certain fashion contexts (Behre & Cauberghe, 2024). In addition, sponsorship disclosure and benefit appeals can affect influencer credibility (Schorn et al., 2022), while message–source congruence can strengthen persuasive effectiveness (Zhang et al., 2025; Elkashif et al., 2026). Overall, message framing and source–message fit are important factors in determining the effectiveness of sustainability communication.

Psychological Mechanisms Underlying Consumer Responses
Sustainability communication influences consumers through cognitive, emotional, and social psychological mechanisms rather than solely through direct persuasion. Trust, empathy, environmental self-efficacy, and moral emotions can explain how influencer and peer communication contributes to eco-friendly purchase intentions (Zhang et al., 2025; Chen et al., 2024). Other mechanisms include perceived CSR image, narrative transportation, storytelling immersion, awe, future time perspective, and sustainability concern (Lee & Lin, 2021; Sung et al., 2023; Choi et al., 2025). These findings suggest that consumer responses emerge from the interaction of cognitive evaluations, emotional experiences, and social influence.

Consumer and Contextual Factors as Boundary Conditions
The effectiveness of sustainability communication varies according to consumer characteristics and contextual factors. Environmental knowledge, environmental concern, perceived consumer effectiveness, materialism, generation, and demographic characteristics can influence how consumers respond to sustainability messages (Li, 2025; Mandliya et al., 2020; Casalegno et al., 2022). Contextual factors such as brand familiarity, fashion style, product quality, comfort, durability, and availability can also shape consumer responses (Jian & Zhong, 2025; Behre & Cauberghe, 2024; Pranta et al., 2024). Therefore, the effectiveness of sustainability communication depends on both who receives the message and the context in which the product is evaluated.

Consumer Outcomes of Sustainability Communication
Sustainability communication has been associated with various consumer outcomes, including purchase intention, brand attitude, consumer engagement, willingness to pay, brand evaluation, and sustainable purchasing behavior. Overall, the reviewed studies suggest that effective sustainability communication can generate more favorable consumer responses through green advertising, eco-positioning, and influencer- or peer-generated communication (Li, 2025; Jian & Zhong, 2025; Colaljo et al., 2026; Chen et al., 2024). However, purchase intention is examined more frequently than actual sustainable purchasing behavior, indicating a gap between persuasive intention and behavioral outcomes. This limitation highlights the need for future research to examine how communication can translate positive attitudes and intentions into actual sustainable consumption behavior.

Overall, the five themes indicate that sustainability communication effectiveness is a multidimensional process involving communication source, message characteristics, psychological mechanisms, and consumer and contextual factors. Importantly, BGC and UGC/IGC cannot be considered universally superior, as their effectiveness depends on source credibility, message–source congruence, and consumer processing. However, relatively limited research has directly compared BGC and UGC/IGC within the same sustainable fashion context, particularly in relation to how consumers process these different communication sources. This gap provides a basis for examining when BGC versus UGC/IGC is more persuasive in influencing sustainable fashion purchase intentions.

4 DISCUSSIONS

The review of 21 articles identified five main themes representing various factors associated with the effectiveness of sustainability communication in the context of sustainable fashion. Overall, the findings indicate that consumer responses to sustainable fashion advertisements are influenced not only by communication sources but also by message characteristics, psychological mechanisms, individual differences, and product-related contextual factors. This suggests that the effectiveness of sustainability communication is a multidimensional phenomenon involving the interaction of various factors in the consumer decision-making process.

One of the main findings of this review is that communication sources can influence consumer responses through perceived credibility, expertise, experience, similarity, trustworthiness, and authenticity. Although influencer- and user-generated communication may be perceived as relevant and relatable, brand-generated communication can also generate positive consumer responses under certain conditions. These findings suggest that communication effectiveness cannot be determined solely by the category of the message source. Instead, source characteristics and how consumers evaluate the information conveyed should also be considered. Furthermore, message characteristics and their congruence with communication sources also play a role in shaping consumer responses. Therefore, sources and messages should be understood as interrelated aspects of sustainability communication.

In addition to source and message characteristics, the findings also indicate that consumer responses involve various psychological mechanisms, including cognitive, emotional, and social processes. Trust, empathy, environmental self-efficacy, and moral emotions are among the mechanisms that may explain how sustainability communication is associated with purchase intention. These findings suggest that consumers do not evaluate sustainability information solely through rational considerations but may also respond based on emotional experiences and social influences. Therefore, the effectiveness of sustainability communication cannot be fully explained by the provision of information about a product's environmental benefits alone.

The findings also demonstrate that individual characteristics and product-related contextual factors should be considered when examining consumer responses. Differences in environmental knowledge, environmental concern, materialism, and demographic characteristics may influence how consumers receive and evaluate sustainability messages. Meanwhile, product-related factors, such as quality, comfort, durability, and availability, may also shape consumer decisions. This suggests that consumers do not necessarily consider sustainability as the sole factor when purchasing sustainable fashion products. Instead, sustainability information may be evaluated alongside functional benefits and personal needs.

Theoretically, these findings can be interpreted through the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) proposed by Petty and Cacioppo (1990). ELM explains that persuasive messages can be processed through either the central or peripheral route, depending on individuals' motivation and ability to process information. In the context of sustainable fashion, message characteristics, source credibility, and individual differences may be relevant factors in understanding how consumers process sustainability communication. However, the findings of this review do not indicate that a particular source is invariably associated with a specific processing route. Instead, sources and message characteristics should be considered in relation to the processing conditions and individual characteristics of message recipients.

Furthermore, the findings concerning emotional and social mechanisms indicate that consumer responses to sustainability communication are not limited to the cognitive

evaluation of message arguments. Emotional and social factors may also contribute to shaping consumer responses. Therefore, although ELM provides a useful framework for understanding how persuasive information may be processed, the findings of this review suggest that sustainability communication should be understood as a multidimensional process involving not only information processing but also psychological and contextual factors. This broader understanding provides a basis for considering the theoretical and practical implications of the findings for sustainable fashion communication.

The theoretical implications of this review suggest that the effectiveness of sustainability communication should be understood through an approach that considers communication sources, message characteristics, psychological mechanisms, individual differences, and contextual factors. Such an approach may provide a more comprehensive understanding than one that focuses solely on the relationship between communication source types and purchase intention. Furthermore, the predominance of purchase intention as an outcome in the reviewed studies highlights the need for future research to place greater emphasis on actual purchasing behavior. This is important for understanding the extent to which positive consumer responses to sustainability communication translate into sustainable consumption practices.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that the development of sustainable fashion communication strategies should consider the congruence between communication sources and the messages being delivered. Fashion brands should communicate sustainability claims in a specific, transparent, and product-relevant manner. Influencers and users should provide information based on relevant experiences or knowledge while maintaining transparency regarding their commercial relationships with brands. Furthermore, marketers should consider differences in consumers' environmental knowledge, environmental concern, and individual needs when designing sustainability messages. Finally, campaign effectiveness should not be evaluated solely based on purchase intention but should also, where possible, incorporate actual purchasing behavior.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This literature review demonstrates that the effectiveness of sustainable fashion advertising depends on the interaction between communication source, message characteristics, psychological mechanisms, and consumer context. Neither influencer-generated nor brand-generated advertising is consistently superior. Influencer advertising tends to be more effective when influencers are perceived as credible, authentic, knowledgeable, and relatable. In contrast, brand advertising may be more persuasive when sustainability claims require clarity, detailed information, and greater processing fluency. In both cases, message–source congruence is essential for building trust and encouraging favorable consumer responses.

The review also reveals two important limitations in the existing literature. First, most studies examine influencer and brand communication separately, making direct conclusions about their comparative effectiveness difficult. Second, research primarily focuses on attitudes and purchase intentions rather than actual sustainable purchasing behavior. Future studies should therefore directly compare these communication sources within the same sustainable fashion context, incorporate behavioral outcomes, and examine relevant consumer and contextual factors. Such research would clarify when, why, and for whom influencer or brand advertising is most effective, while helping fashion marketers develop more credible and targeted sustainability communication strategies.

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