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Consumer social responsibility and Sustainable Fashion/ Clothing Disposal Practices in Ethiopia

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Consumer social responsibility and Sustainable Fashion/ Clothing Disposal Practices in Ethiopia

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APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Yilma Geletu, titled "Consumer social responsibility and Sustainable Fashion/ Clothing Disposal Practices in Ethiopia", complies with university rules and standards for originality and quality and was submitted in partial fulfillment for the Doctoral Degree of Philosophy in Management under the Department of Management, College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University.

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DEDICATION

To my dad: I hope this would've made you proud.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation titled *"Consumer Social Responsibility and Sustainable Fashion/ Clothing Disposal Practices in Ethiopia*", submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Management under the Department of Management, College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University, is the result of my own original and independent work. It has not been submitted, either in the same or different form, to this or any other institution for a degree, diploma, or other qualification.

All sources of information and assistance have been properly cited and acknowledged.

Yilma Geletu Woldeyohanis		06/29/2025
Name of the candidate	Signature	Date

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AVE	Average variance extracted
CNN	Cable News Network
CnSR	Consumer social responsibility
CoBE	College of Business and Economics
CR	Composite reliability
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
eg.	exempli gratia
etc.	et cetera
HTMT	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio
i.e.	id est
JIBS	Jönköping International Business School
PLS	Partial least square
PLS-SEM	Partial least square structural equation modelling
RMSEA	Root mean square error of approximation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEM	Structural equation modelling
Sida	The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SR	Socially responsible
SRMR	Standard root mean square residual
UN	United Nations
VIF	Variance inflation factor

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the evolving role of consumer social responsibility (CnSR) and sustainable consumption in a developing economy, focusing on clothing disposal methods and the underlying motives as reflections thereof. Through three interconnected studies, this dissertation highlights the conceptualization and research trends of CnSR in general and clothing disposal methods and motives in particular.

The first study presents a systematic literature review through a comprehensive analysis of existing research on CnSR. It examines diverse conceptualizations across various contextual, methodological, and theoretical perspectives, identifying key gaps and inconsistencies that serve as potential directions for future research.

The second study investigates clothing disposal methods and motives in Ethiopia using a qualitative method. The findings reveal multiple disposal methods including bartering, donating, gifting, repurposing and reuse, and discarding. These methods are influenced by various motives including economic benefits, altruism, and convenience.

The third study quantitatively examines young consumers' motives behind socially responsible fashion disposal methods. The results indicate that economic motives significantly affect bartering and repurposing, while altruistic motives drive charitable giving. Environmental motives affect all three disposal methods. Additionally, disposal convenience negatively moderates the relationship between altruism and charitable giving but does not significantly affect other relationships.

The findings contribute to the theoretical advancement of CnSR/ sustainability while offering practical insights for policymakers and businesses, particularly in developing economies. Future research should prioritize underrepresented regions, industries, and product categories, employing diverse methodological approaches to deepen understanding in this area.

Keywords: Consumer Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Developing Economies, Clothing Disposal, Responsible Consumption

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive introduction to the dissertation. It begins by outlining its background, motivation, and broader overview of consumer social responsibility (CnSR). The chapter highlights the importance of CnSR in shaping sustainable practices, with a specific focus on clothing disposal in Ethiopia. It also presents the problematization, objectives and questions that guide the compiled studies. Additionally, an overview of the relevant literature and theoretical perspectives is provided followed by a discussion on the methodological approach, ethical considerations, key contributions, and scope of the dissertation. The chapter concludes with a summary of each paper and an outline of the dissertation's structure setting the stage for the subsequent chapters.

1.1. Background and Motivation of the Dissertation

"What we consume, consumes us." - Anonymous

What we consume, in turn, shapes our world and responsibilities (Dauvergne, 2010). This is a reality particularly evident in the case of disposal. In a world where consumption is both a daily routine and a fundamental attribute of modernity, it is essential to pause and reflect: what impact does our consumption have on our society? The goods that we acquire and eventually discard are not merely passive objects. Rather, they impact our society and the environment. The cycle of consumption and disposal influences us just as much as we influence it, often without fully understanding its consequences. The clothes we wear, the items we buy, and the waste we generate all have implications that go beyond the individual, reaching the community and public spheres.

A stark reminder of these consequences was left in my mind in 2017, when a landfill collapsed in Addis Ababa (Koshe). The catastrophic landslide buried homes, resulted in the loss of over 110 lives, and left entire communities devastated (CNN, 2017). This tragedy underscored the dangers of unchecked waste accumulation. It was more than just an isolated incident or a local disaster, it revealed a systemic failure to manage waste sustainably. This failure threatens sustainability and undermines the efforts toward SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production, emphasizing the urgency of sustainable disposal.

This tragic event, along with the accelerating pace of global clothing waste generation, raises critical questions: While often seen as a symbol of progress, how does irresponsible consumption also be a source of environmental and social challenges? How does our clothing consumption and disposal habits contribute to landfills and disposal risks? How can individual and collective actions mitigate these risks? At the core of these questions is a need to rethink our relationship with the consumption cycle, and specifically how consumers dispose of items, particularly clothing/ fashion, which is highly scrutinized for its significant environmental impact (Bailey *et al*., 2022).

Inspired by this incident, my dissertation explores the evolving role of CnSR in addressing sustainability challenges with a focus on clothing disposal in Ethiopia. As economies grow, the intersection between consumer behavior and sustainable practices becomes increasingly critical. Clothing/ fashion disposal, as a post-consumption behavior, is deeply linked to CnSR, reflecting personal choices, social responsibility, and environmental impact. This phenomenon brings to light three crucial aspects of sustainability in clothing disposal.

First, it highlights the changing nature of clothing consumption. Clothing is a particularly important consumption category for individual consumers. It provides a sense of identity, expresses status, and reflects on how they present themselves to the world (e.g. Entwistle, 2023). There has been an increase in the number of clothing producers, all seeking to influence how people present themselves, giving consumers more choice (e.g., McNeill *et al*., 2024).

Second, fast fashion is a business model that thrives by offering trendy and affordable clothing to meet consumers' continuous desire for novelty (Niinimäki *et al*. 2020). This model is built on rapid production cycles and frequent product updates (Caro and Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015), driving unsustainable clothing consumption patterns (Boykoff *et al*., 2021). While consumers enjoy affordability and trendy clothing, the model accelerates disposability, raising ethical concerns regarding CnSR. Research shows that consumers are not just passive recipients of decisions from businesses; through their choices in purchasing, use, or disposal, they play an active role in sustainability (Schiaroli *et al*., 2024).

The third aspect, integral to the dissertation, relates to the challenges facing developing economies. In Ethiopia, as in many developing economies, the growing demand for fast fashion has made affordable clothing accessible to millions, but at a hidden cost (e.g. Khurana & Muthu, 2022; Bick *et al*., 2018). Behind the glamour of affordable clothing lies a cycle of excessive supplies (both new and used), rapid obsolescence, and waste accumulation that disproportionately affect nations with limited infrastructure to manage the consequences (e.g., Khurana & Tadesse, 2019). Addressing this challenge requires a shift in CnSR, where consumers take greater responsibility for the end-of-life phase of clothing, engaging in sustainable disposal methods than random discarding.

The empirical investigations in this dissertation provide new insights into CnSR, particularly in the methods and motives for clothing disposal, and the interplay between them. These studies also highlight the theoretical and practical implications of clothing disposal.

The discussion that follows in chapter 1 provides an overview of CnSR, including the problematization, the purpose and research questions; a pictorial illustration of the discussion on the role of various papers in attaining the dissertation's objectives; a concise literature review; methodological approaches and ethical considerations; as well as the significance and scope. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of each article and the dissertation's structure.

1.2. Overview of Consumer Social Responsibility

Literature broadly defines CnSR as consumers' ethical and sustainable behavior in response to societal and environmental concerns. CnSR extends the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) into individual consumer actions. It accentuates conscious purchasing, ethical consumption, and active engagement in socially responsible/ sustainability initiatives (Mohr *et al*., 2001; Caruana & Chatzidakis; 2014; Vitell, 2015; Quazi *et al*., 2016). This development underscores the growing recognition of consumers critical change agents who have the power to favorably affect company behavior and sustainability (Prendergast & Tsang, 2019; Vitell, 2015; Webb, Mohr, & Harris, 2008).

CnSR emphasizes how consumers can contribute to positive societal and environmental consequences through responsible purchasing, use, and disposal (Mohr *et al*., 2001; Roberts, 1995; Lee & Cho, 2019). One area where this is particularly evident is in clothing disposal, where consumer disposal decision can dramatically impact sustainability efforts at both the local global levels (e.g. Acquaye *et al*., 2023; Mason *et al*., 2022; Laitala, 2014).

1.3. The Ethiopian Context: Fashion, Sustainability, and Young Consumers

One of the attractive clothing markets in Africa is Ethiopia, having has the continent's second-largest population (Bizuneh *et al*., 2022). In Ethiopia, clothing disposal is affected by various factors. These factors include economic constraints, socio-cultural traditions, insufficient disposal facilities, and informal systems. Socially responsible and sustainable clothing disposal methods such as reselling and donation of used clothing are common and social oriented methods (Khurana & Tadesse, 2022). At the same time, the rapidly increasing fast fashion and secondhand clothing imports is changing consumer behavior, particularly among urban youth (Khurana & Muthu, 2022; Pankhurst, 2019).

Notably, young consumers make up approximately 70% of Ethiopia's population demography (Geda, 2020). This positions young consumers as crucial stakeholders in shaping the future of consumption in general and sustainable clothing consumption in particular. Young consumers are often labelled as fashion-savvy (Bubna & Norum, 2017); they are also becoming more cognizant of environmental and social concerns (e.g., Vlastelica *et al*., 2023). The methods through which young consumers acquire and dispose of clothing is likely to shape sustainability for decades to come. Encouraging responsible/ sustainable clothing disposal behaviors among this consumer demographics can serve as a catalyst for long-term change and support the efforts towards a more sustainable consumption. This is anchored in behavioral studies. For instance, early adoption of sustainable habits can result in lasting behavioral change, and this supports the argument that targeting young consumers today can influence broader societal norms including sustainable consumption in the future (Mason *et al*., 2022; Ghazali *et al*., 2018; Uddin & Khan, 2018). Subsequently, given the number of youth population in the Ethiopian context, this demographic group can be considered as a vital driver of any shift in the country toward a more sustainable consumption.

1.4. Problematization

While CnSR is a relatively established concept in developed countries, it continues to evolve in many developing economies, where consumption behaviors are shaped by limited infrastructure and distinctive social and economic contexts (Laitala, 2014). In developing economies, there are only limited studies that focus on consumers' socially responsible and sustainable consumption practices such as clothing disposal. On this regard, there is a clear gap in countries like Ethiopia, where sustainable consumption practices are still in their nascent stages. For this and other reasons such as diverse socio-economic and cultural environments, and limited infrastructure, developing economies present unique contexts for CnSR studies (Kumar & Srivastava, 2020). Khurana & Muthu (2022) argues that these economies often struggle with resource constraints, making sustainable and socially responsible consumption a challenge. Thus, this dissertation seeks to expand the understanding of CnSR beyond developed countries and explore its application within a developing economy context.

Similarly, existing research on clothing disposal methods and motives has predominantly focused on developed economies. Though there are a few studies in developing economies, they either overlook the Ethiopian context, or focus on the firm perspective, neglecting the consumer aspect (e.g., Bizuneh & Tadesse, 2022). This oversight in literature is concerning given the fact that developing economies, like Ethiopia, are experiencing rapid population growth and facing increasing environmental challenges. The growing consumer base in developing economies signifies an increase in consumption, underlying the urgent need to promote responsible consumption linked with global sustainability agenda (e.g., Bizuneh & Tadesse, 2022; Watkins & Aitken, 2020)., Sustainability initiatives may fall short of achieving meaningful engagement until we grasp a better understanding of how consumers in such contexts deal with clothing disposal. This dissertation seeks to investigate the

potential of CnSR as a means for sustainable consumption. By contributing to theoretical gaps and providing empirical insights, it aims to offer valuable perspectives for developing economies, advance scholarly discourse, and inform practical applications. The studies comprising this dissertation align with Sustainable Development Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), enhancing our understanding on the fundamental role of CnSR in shaping a more sustainable world.

1.5. Research Purpose and Questions

The overarching purpose of the dissertation is to examine the concept of CnSR with a focus on clothing disposal in the context of Ethiopia. Specifically, it pursues three objectives. First, it provides a systematic literature review on CnSR, identifying definitions and conceptualizations, key themes, research gaps, and directions for future research (Paper 1). Second, it conducts a qualitative investigation of Ethiopian consumers' clothing/ fashion disposal methods and motives, providing insights into sustainable/ socially responsible disposal in a developing economy context (Paper 2). Lastly, it conducts a quantitative analysis of disposal motives (independent variables) and disposal methods (dependent variables) of young Ethiopians using survey data (Paper 3). To achieve this, the dissertation was guided by two research questions. These are: 1) How is CnSR defined in academic research, and what is its current state? and 2) What clothing disposal methods and motives do Ethiopian consumers use?

The research questions were used in the development of the papers with paper 1 answering research question 1, and papers 2 and 3 answering research question 2. A summary of these appears in Figure 1 and shows how they are aligned with the purpose of the dissertation. As can be seen in the figure, Papers 2 and 3 build on the gap identified in the literature review and use qualitative and quantitative methods as their empirical approaches. Detail on the papers is provided in section 1.10.

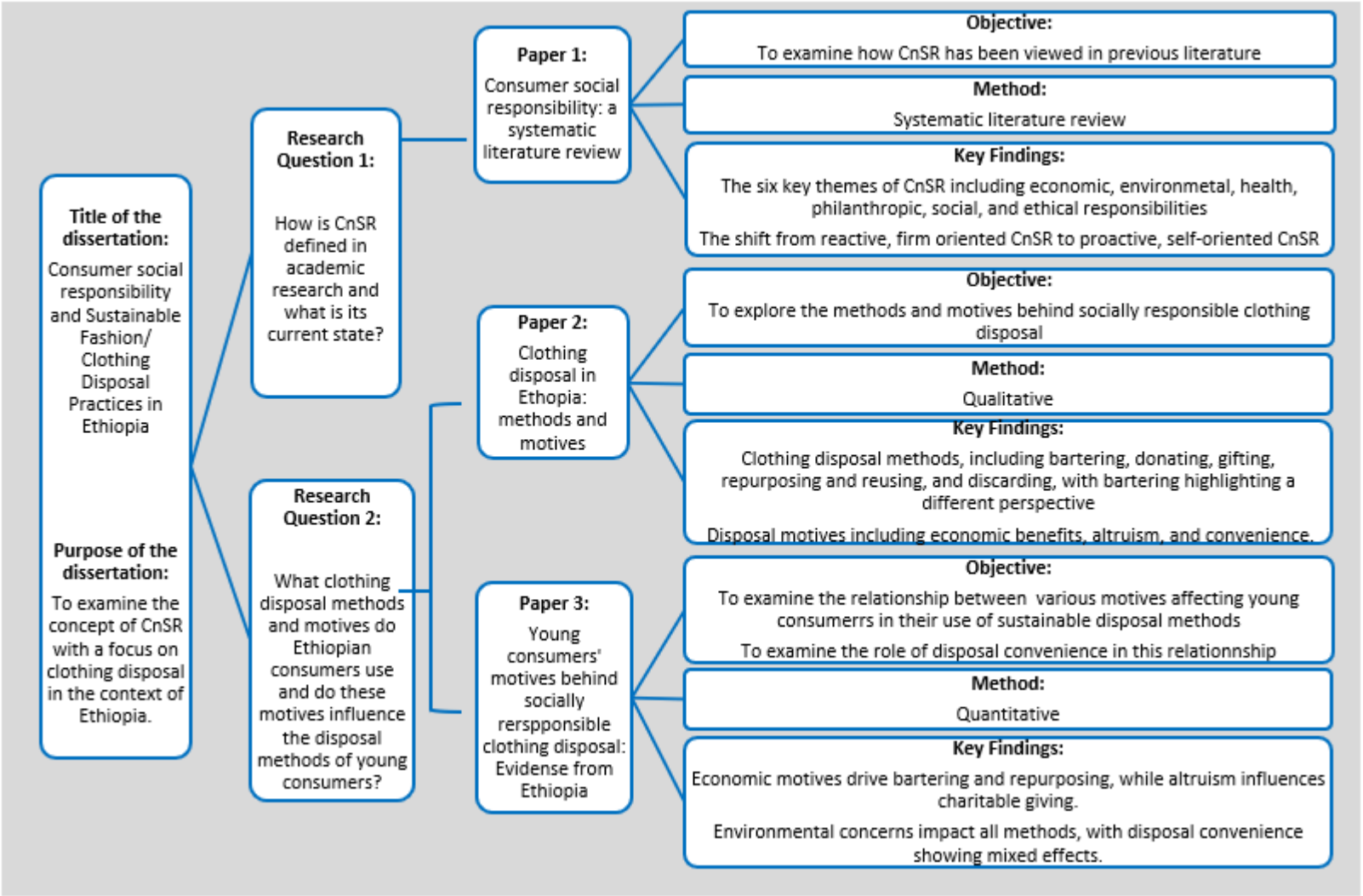

Figure 1: Summary of the dissertation

1.6. Literature Review/ Theoretical Perspectives

1.6.1. The nexus of CnSR and disposal

To attain the objectives of the dissertation and answer the research questions, extensive use of literature was made, i.e., to explore the current state of academic research in this field. A key finding from the literature review (Paper 1) was the importance of the actions of consumers and their decision regarding disposal as a crucial CnSR activity.

CnSR includes product disposal as a crucial aspect of the consumption process, as consumers' actions at a product's end-of-life impact both environmental sustainability and social welfare (e.g., Patwary *et al*., 2022). These actions are influenced by ethical consumption, environmental concerns, and social responsiveness of consumers, which shape the disposal methods they use and the respective motives (Quazi *et al*., 2016; Webb *et al*., 2008).

Furthermore, responsible disposal methods such as donation and recycling are influenced by factors identified in Paper 1 as elements of CnSR, including altruism, economic factors, and environmental consciousness. This reflects a commitment to minimizing waste and supporting societal well-being (Berné-Manero *et al*., 2011; Hassan *et al*., 2022). From the environmental perspective of CnSR, efforts towards waste reduction and responsible disposal stem from a broader sense of social responsibility (J. Lee & Cho, 2019; Vitell, 2015).

The systematic literature review on CnSR (i.e. the first paper of this dissertation) underscores the link between CnSR and disposal by highlighting how consumers' values and motives influence their disposal behaviors and how responsible disposal aligns with broader sustainability efforts (Devinny *et al*., 2006; J. Lee & Cho, 2019). The shift on CnSR from reactive to proactive behavior increases cognizance of consumers about the

continued impact of their consumption (Yan & She, 2011; Ertz *et al*., 2018). This further strengthens the connection between CnSR and disposal practices.

1.6.2. Clothing disposal and disposal methods

Disposal is a critical aspect of the consumption process. Clothing disposal takes place when a product no longer serves its purpose or the consumer stops using it, regardless of its condition (Garcia-Ortega *et al*., 2023). Initially identified by Jacoby (1977), disposal is now a crucial concept in consumer behavior and CnSR literature. It focuses on minimizing harm and promoting societal benefits (Mohr, Webb & Harris, 2001). Disposal is considered as part of the post-purchase phase of the consumption process and it is marked by the consumer's decision to no longer retain a product (Norum, 2017; Laitala 2014).

Clothing disposal refers to the different methods consumers use to part with unwanted clothing after use. This process is an important aspect of post consumption behavior and is influenced by factors such as fashion trends, emotional attachment to clothing, and condition of the clothing (Bianchi & Birtwistle, 2012; Lee *et al*., 2013). Understanding clothing disposal involves examining how consumers deal with clothing they no longer want. Some engage in mindful disposal methods such as donating, reselling, swapping, repurposing, while others simply discard (throw away) items due to convenience or lack of awareness (Farrant *et al*., 2010; Lee *et al*., 2013).

However, not all disposal methods are sustainable. Particularly, discarding drastically contributes to landfill and the overall environmental footprint of the fashion industry (Laitala, 2014; Cruz-Cardenas *et al*., 2018). A sustainable approach to clothing disposal is necessary to mitigate the detrimental effects of fast fashion over consumption (Niinimäki & Hassi, 2011). Encouraging appropriate disposal methods such as recycling and extended

clothing lifecycle plays a crucial role in waste reduction and environmental sustainability (Rotimi *et al*., 2023; Xie *et al*., 2021).

Recent studies highlight a growing consumer awareness and engagement in socially responsible behaviors, influenced by factors such as environmental consciousness, ethical brand perceptions, and personal values (Roster & Ferrari, 2023; Öztürk & Şahin, 2023). However, researchers argues that many consumers who support ethical fashion brands do not necessarily apply the same ethical principles when it comes to disposing of their clothing (Hassan *et al*., 2022). This incongruity which is often termed as the attitude-behavior gap (e.g. Soyer & Dittrich, 2021), could be related to barriers such as disposal convenience (Acuti, *et al*., 2023).

Studies have also shown that generational and cultural differences influence the adoption of socially responsible behaviors. Younger consumers, particularly the Millennials and Gen Zs, are highly cognizant of responsible consumption, despite the fact that their purchasing behaviors may still be constrained by economic factors (Sobuj *et al*., 2021; Adnan *et al*., 2017). Emerging consumption is shifting towards collaborative consumption and circular economy models, substantiating the argument that consumers play a pivotal role in sustainable market transformations (Chi *et al*., 2023, McNeill *et al*., 2024).

Through collaborative consumption, clothing disposal can be understood in a way that where access, sharing, and redistribution of goods are prioritized over exclusive ownership (Chi *et al*., 2023; Ertz *et al*., 2018). Practices such as swapping or exchanging, donating, bartering, and resale transform disposal into a redistribution process, allowing garments to retain value across users. Moreover, from a circular economy perspective, disposal behaviors such as reuse, repurposing, and recycling support product life extension and reduce material throughput (Lehner *et al*., 2020; Vehmas *et al*., 2018). Thus, socially

responsible clothing disposal represents consumer participation in circular systems, shifting disposal from waste generation toward responsible resource use.

Consumers have several options when it comes to disposing of unwanted clothing, which can be grouped into three broad categories. 1) retaining items for alternative use (e.g., repurposing), 2) temporarily parting with them (e.g., by renting them out), and 3) permanently disposing of them (e.g., through donation, exchange, or discarding through incineration or landfilling (Dommer & Winterich, 2021; Hassan *et al*., 2022; Jacoby *et al*., 1977; Roster & Ferrari, 2023; Sarigöllü *et al*., 2021). Another disposal method is recycling, which includes upcycling and downcycling (Sumo *et al*., 2023; Wilson, 2016). Expanding on these classifications, Soyer and Dittrich (2021) categorize clothing disposal into four methods: reusing, recycling, incineration, and landfilling. These various approaches provide consumers with the flexibility to manage unwanted clothing in ways that align with their individual preferences and motivations (Cruz-Cárdenas & Arévalo-Chávez, 2018; Sandes *et al*., 2019).

1.6.3. Motives for clothing disposal

Consumers' clothing disposal methods can be influenced by various motives. While environmental concerns influence some consumers, others are driven by economic and altruistic factors (Joung & Park-Poaps, 2013).

Environmental factors play a critical role in shaping socially responsible/ sustainable clothing disposal. Consumers who are cognizant of the environmental impact of their actions are more likely to engage in recycling, reusing, and repairing clothing (Wai Yee *et al*., 2016; Acquaye *et al*., 2023). However, despite their positive attitude toward sustainability, many fashion/ clothing consumers struggle to consistently translate their

awareness into responsible disposal actions, reflecting the attitude-behavior gap (Park & Lin, 2020; Soyer & Dittrich, 2021).

Besides environmental concerns, economic factors also influence clothing disposal methods (Hassan *et al*., 2022). Financial hardship often urge individuals to sell or repurpose clothing for monetary gain (Anderson & Anderson, 2020; Degenstein *et al*., 2020; Hassan *et al*., 2022). For example, reusing or modifying used clothing allow consumers to save money and avoid or reduce unnecessary spending (Shim, 1995; Sarigöllü *et al*., 2021).

Furthermore, altruistic motives are among the important factors affecting clothing disposal. Many consumers donate used garments to charitable causes with the desire to support those in need (Hassan *et al*., 2022; Kim & Childs, 2021). Philanthropic consciousness of consumers promotes community involvement and altruistic behavior (Davis *et al*., 2017). This is particularly true in collectivist cultures where donation aligns with social values; Cruz-Cárdenas *et al*., 2018).

Generally, sustainable clothing/ fashion consumption and disposal is influenced by different factors including environmental concerns, economic incentives, and altruism.

1.6.4. Relationship between clothing disposal methods and motives

The choice of disposal methods is closely linked to a consumer's motives behind clothing disposal. Understanding how these motives interact with the various disposal methods is crucial for promoting sustainable behaviors. Recognizing this interaction can help promote sustainable/ responsible consumption as some disposal methods are more sustainable than others.

Consumers who are motivated by environmental and altruistic concerns are more likely to use sustainable disposal methods such as donating, recycling, or repurpose clothing. These methods are motivated by consumers values such as waste reduction and selflessness (Bianchi & Birtwistle, 2012; Lehner *et al*., 2020). Additionally, economic factors affect how people dispose of their unwanted clothing. For instance, consumers may opt to resell or barter unwanted clothing through second-hand markets for the sake of getting money (Joung & Park-Poaps, 2013). Consumers with emotional attachment to their clothing may prefer reusing over other disposal methods to maintain the sentimental value of the cloth (Wang *et al*., 2020; Zhang *et al*., 2021).

On the other hand, disposal convenience plays an essential role in disposal decisions. For many consumers, the ease with which they can dispose of clothing influences their method of disposal. Those who prioritize convenience may be more inclined to discard clothing instead of looking for more sustainable alternatives such as recycling or donating (Lai & Chang, 2020; Shim, 2009). Yet, the presence of accessible disposal facilities can encourage responsible clothing disposal. Studies suggest that the presence of suitable disposal facilities can motivate consumers to adopt more sustainable disposal methods such as recycling and donation (e.g., Acuti *et al*., 2023). In contrast, consumers who prioritize convenience over other factors often choose to discard as a trash (Rotimi *et al*., 2023; De Ferran *et al*., 2020; Acuti *et al*., 2023). While convenience alone might not predict disposal behavior, it can play a moderating role in shaping such behaviors (Patwary *et al*., 2022; Phulwani *et al*., 2021; Paras *et al*, 2018).

The discussion above also highlights the importance of contextual conditions in shaping clothing disposal practices. Factors such as economic constraints, informal exchange systems, cultural norms, and infrastructural limitations influence how consumers interpret

and perform disposal (Kumar & Srivastava, 2020). Perspectives that view consumption as socially embedded suggest that behavior is shaped by socio-economic structures and everyday realities rather than solely individual attitudes. Methodologically, the pragmatic paradigm adopted in this dissertation further supports this stance, as pragmatism emphasizes problem-centered inquiry and context-sensitive explanations of behavior (Morgan, 2014). This dissertation treats the Ethiopian context as a condition influencing clothing disposal methods and the motives underlying them

1.7. Methodological Approach

1.7.1. Research paradigm

This dissertation adopts a pragmatic research paradigm, which offers a flexible and practical foundation for the research strategy, comprising three distinct studies, including two empirical ones that employ different methodologies (Morgan, 2014; Johnson *et al*., 2007). A key advantage of pragmatism is that it frees researchers from rigid adherence to a single methodological approach, and it allows them to make use of the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Rather than adhering to a single ontological or epistemological position, pragmatism focuses on what works best in addressing specific research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Ontologically, it assumes that reality exists but is interpreted through individual experiences and social contexts (Biesta, 2010; Johnson *et al*., 2007). Thus, the research question takes precedence over methodological purity. (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In the context of this dissertation, practices around clothing disposal in Ethiopia are real and observable, yet their meaning and underlying motivations are shaped by economic and social conditions (Majeed, 2019). Epistemologically, pragmatism is problem-driven, favoring knowledge that is applicable for understanding and influencing behavior (Morgan, 2014). Reflecting this orientation, the dissertation embraces methodological

pluralism by employing three distinct methods and reasoning approaches, each carefully aligned with the respective paper and tailored to specific research objectives.

Paper 1: A systematic literature review utilizing interpretative and descriptive reasoning approach, synthesizing existing research on CnSR and identifying conceptual, theoretical, contextual and methodological gaps.

Paper 2: A qualitative study, guided by an inductive approach, that explores Ethiopian consumers' clothing disposal methods and motives through thematic analysis of interview data.

Paper 3: A quantitative study, following a deductive approach, that statistically examines the relationship between disposal methods and motives of young consumers using survey data. (Majeed, 2019)

By adopting a pragmatic stance, this dissertation ensures that its findings are both theoretically informed and practically relevant (Morgan, 2014), offering insights for policy makers, businesses, and sustainable consumption initiatives in Ethiopia.

1.7.2. Data collection and analysis

Data collection

Data for the studies were collected between October 2021 and November 2023 through the various methods discussed earlier. For the systematic review, the PRISMA protocol was applied to extract 72 articles of ABS listed journals from Scopus and Web of Science databases. Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews whereas quantitative data was collected through structured surveys. In-depth interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 27 participants. The sample was selected to represent diverse demographic backgrounds such as gender, age, religion, and socio-economic

status. The survey also targeted a diverse sample of Ethiopian consumers (N=501) using judgement sampling, capturing trends in clothing disposal behaviors. The surveys included items on demographics, disposal methods, and motives for disposal. Responses were gathered using an online platform.

Data analysis

The literature review was analyzed using content analysis. Content was categorized by publication trends, geographic scope, theoretical frameworks, industry focus, and methodology. The findings were categorized and synthesized using a spreadsheet. This approach was used because first, it provides an objective, transparent, and replicable synthesis of the diverse literature; second, it allows for the structured classification of literature to reveal thematic and structural patterns across studies (Krippendorff, 2018; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Mayring, 2014). Qualitative data from interviews for paper 2 were examined through thematic analysis, which involved coding the data to identify recurring themes and patterns. Initial coding was conducted inductively to allow themes to emerge organically, followed by a more structured coding process to align with the research objectives. In addition to priori codes from the literature, emergent codes were generated from thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Quantitative data from surveys were analyzed using partial least square structural equation modelling due to three main reasons 1) the complexity of the proposed model, non-normality of the dataset, high statistical power of PLS-SEM (Hair *et al*., 2019; Usakli & Rasoolimanesh, 2023).

1.7.3. Ethical considerations

In writing this dissertation, especially the empirical papers, I adhered to key ethical principles relevant to my chosen methodologies. I ensured transparency in study selection, minimized bias in data interpretation, and properly cited all sources to maintain academic

integrity (Snyder, 2019). Before beginning the research, I obtained ethical approval from the Institutional Review Board of Addis Ababa University, College of Business and Economics, to ensure compliance with ethical standards. Participants were informed about the study's objectives, procedures, and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. All participants provided informed consent. To ensure confidentiality, interview transcripts and survey responses were anonymized, and all data were securely stored to prevent unauthorized access.

1.8. Significance and Key Contributions of the Study

This dissertation investigates a relatively underexplored aspect of consumer behavior - CnSR- in the context of a developing economy, with a specific focus on clothing disposal. By examining the methods and motives of sustainable /socially responsible clothing disposal, the study provides a better insight for business and management scholars, practitioners, and policymakers.

The systematic literature review establishes the foundation for the subsequent empirical studies by identifying existing research gaps and proposing future research directions.
The empirical papers introduce a fresh perspective on disposal methods - bartering, which is often overlooked in mainstream literature. This practice reflects the unique disposal practice of consumers in developing economies, underscoring the need for future research to incorporate diverse sustainable disposal methods.

Through qualitative and quantitative methods, the dissertation examines clothing disposal methods and motives in Ethiopia. The findings reveal that Ethiopian consumers use a variety of sustainable clothing disposal methods including bartering, donating, gifting, repurposing, and reusing, with bartering standing out as a particularly fresh perspective.

The dissertation also indicates the interplay between individual consumer motives and socially responsible disposal methods. Additionally, the dissertation provides new insights into the role of disposal convenience as a moderating factor. Notably, the findings reveal a negative relationship between disposal convenience and charitable donation. This aligns with prior research in consumer behavior (e.g., Small & Cryder, 2016; Olivola & Shafir, 2013), which suggests that greater convenience in charitable disposal reduces the perceived personal sacrifice. As a result, consumers sense of giving to charity diminishes, which in turn lowers their perceived altruistic satisfaction.

The findings of this dissertation provide practical implications for policymakers, businesses. Governments can address infrastructural and economic barriers to sustainable consumption, for instance, by investing in recycling facilities and waste management systems they can provide viable options for responsible disposal.

Businesses can integrate their CSR efforts with the consumer aspect. Their marketing communications can be designed to educate consumers on sustainable consumption. Moreover, they can integrate upcycling and recycling into their supply chain. They can also collaborate with informal vendors such as “liwach” to facilitate circular supply chain efforts.

The dissertation further magnifies the importance of community-driven initiatives in promoting CnSR, such as supporting donation programs in schools and religious institutions, promoting manufacturer buyback programs, and facilitating local thrift stores.

Overall, this dissertation underscores the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach to promoting CnSR in developing economies. By fostering an enabling environment for

sustainable consumption, these efforts contribute to global sustainability initiatives, particularly in alignment with the UNs' SDGs.

1.9. Scope of the Study

This dissertation focuses on the role of individual consumers as key drivers of change, particularly in addressing sustainability issues. Since it is not possible to cover all CnSR and sustainability issues in one paper, it focuses on CnSR, with specific emphasis on socially responsible clothing disposal methods and consumer motives behind these methods. While the primarily focus is on socially responsible clothing disposal in Ethiopia, the findings contribute to a broader understanding of sustainable and responsible consumption practices in developing economies. The systematic literature review was last updated in October 2021, while primary data for the empirical studies were collected between September 2022 and November 2023. The dissertation employs different methodologies across the three papers, including systematic literature review, qualitative analysis, and quantitative analysis. Empirical studies are specifically concerned with the post consumption stage of clothing disposal. They do not examine the pre-consumption and consumption stages, as the focus is on analyzing responsible disposal behaviours. These boundaries ensure a targeted and in-depth exploration of post-consumption practices within the scope of CnSR.

1.10. A Brief Summary of Each Paper

1.10.1. Consumer social responsibility: a systematic literature review

(Published in the Journal of African Business, 25 Oct 2024)

DOI:10.1080/15228916.2024.2414714

This paper presents a systematic literature review titled "Consumer Social Responsibility: A Systematic Literature Review." The study synthesizes existing research on CnSR, identifying the definition and conceptualization of CnSR, key themes, trends, theoretical foundations, and methodological approaches. It also identifies research gaps and unfolds future research directions.

By analyzing 72 peer-reviewed articles, the review highlights the growing interest in CnSR, particularly in advanced economies, and underscores the dominance of quantitative methodologies in the field.

Despite the divergent views in the definition and conceptualization of CnSR, the findings reveal that CnSR research is evolving, with increasing attention is shifting from the reactive view whereby consumers react to corporate behaviors to the proactive view whereby consumers shape their own behavior to be socially responsible. However, significant gaps remain, particularly in understanding CnSR within developing economies.

In conclusion, this chapter lays the foundation for subsequent empirical studies by highlighting the methodological trends and thematic gaps in existing CnSR research. The findings call for a more inclusive and context-specific approach to understanding CnSR with a particular attention to developing economies where socio-economic and infrastructural variables play a significant role in shaping post consumption behavior.

1.10.2. Clothing disposal in Ethiopia: methods and motives

(Published in Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal, 30 May 2024)

DOI: 10.1108/JFMM-01-2024-0029

This paper focuses on an empirical study titled "Clothing Disposal in Ethiopia: Methods and Motives." The research explores how Ethiopian consumers dispose of clothing and the motives influencing their choices of disposal methods. Using semi-structured interviews with a diverse consumer sample of 27 participants, the study employs thematic analysis to identify key themes and patterns.

The findings reveal that Ethiopian consumers utilize a variety of disposal methods, including donating, gifting, bartering, repurposing and reuse, and discarding. For instance, donation and gifting emerges as a prevalent practice, driven by cultural norms of community support and altruism. Bartering, on the other hand, reflects economic considerations, enabling consumers to exchange goods in the absence of monetary transaction. Repurposing and reuse show the creativity of consumers, as they transform old clothing into useful items such as cleaning rags or hand-crafted accessories such as bags. However, discarding remains a significant challenge, as waste management systems are limited.

Motivations for these behaviors are multifaceted, encompassing economic, altruistic, and disposal convenience. Economic constraints, such as limited income and lack of access to affordable alternatives, determine consumers' clothing disposal methods. Cultural values, including collectivism and mutual support, further influence clothing disposal.

Given the disposal inconvenience and unique socio-economic realities of Ethiopia, the study suggests improvement of infrastructure to sustainable clothing disposal, such as recycling facilities and secondhand charity shops.

1.10.3. Young consumers' motives behind socially responsible fashion disposal: evidence from Ethiopia

Submitted to Society and Business Review

This paper focuses on young Ethiopian consumers, analyzing their motives for engaging in socially responsible clothing disposal.

The paper is anchored on the argument that fast fashion is characterized by the rapid and inexpensive production of trendy clothing, fueling unsustainable consumption patterns (e.g. Boykoff *et al.,* 2021; Yan *et al*., 2021). This issue is particularly critical in developing economies like Ethiopia, where the rise of both domestic and imported second-hand fast fashion contributes to environmental and social challenges, with much of this clothing ultimately ending up in landfills (Khurana & Muthu, 2022). The growing preference for fast fashion among Ethiopia's youth exacerbates these problems, creating an urgent need to address sustainable clothing consumption. If current trends persist, projections indicate that by 2050, the fashion industry could triple its resource use and contribute to 26% of global carbon emissions (Pan, 2023). Addressing these concerns is crucial to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to responsible consumption and production (i.e. Goal 12).

Studies suggest that reducing waste in the clothing sector requires collective efforts from all stakeholders, including consumers. Given the significant youth population in Ethiopia, which comprises over 72% of the country's demographic, this study aims to examine the

relationship between economic, altruistic, and environmental motives and their influence on SR clothing disposal methods among young Ethiopian consumers. The study also incorporates disposal convenience as a moderating variable, exploring its role in shaping these behaviors. By using quantitative research design and a sample of 501 young consumers, the study investigates how these motives influence three disposal methods: charitable giving, bartering, and repurposing. Partial Least Square Structural equation modeling reveals that economic motives positively influence bartering and repurposing, while altruistic and environmental motives significantly influence charitable giving, and repurposing. Moreover, disposal convenience as a moderating variable has shown no effect except for altruism, where it showed negative significant relationship.

1.11. Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 presents Consumer Social Responsibility: A Systematic Literature Review (Paper 1). Chapter 3 discusses Clothing Disposal in Ethiopia: Methods and Motives (Paper 2). Chapter 4 explores Young Consumers' Motives Behind Socially Responsible Fashion Disposal: Evidence from Ethiopia (Paper 3).

Finally, Chapter 5 concludes the dissertation with a general discussion, conclusion, limitations and future research direction.

CHAPTER TWO

2. PAPER I- CONSUMER SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

While organizations continually focus on social responsibility, research and practice increasingly emphasize consumers' role and importance in this domain. This study explores consumer social responsibility research via a systematic literature review of 72 academic articles published in reputable journals. The results indicate consumer social responsibility has gained growing research attention, as evidenced by the increased articles published in reputable academic journals. The field is dominated by studies from more advanced economies, particularly the United States. Consumer social responsibility researchers have predominantly employed quantitative methods, although qualitative and mixed methods are in use. Moreover, the conceptualization of consumer social responsibility in these studies was analyzed using content analysis, resulting in economic, environmental, health, philanthropic, social, and ethical themes. Literature shows consumer social responsibility is shifting from firm-oriented (reactive) to self-oriented (proactive) responsibility. This study is limited to peer-reviewed academic articles published in English in reputed journals in business and management, extracted from Web of Science and Scopus databases. Consequently, the findings may not fully represent perspectives from non-English publications or other disciplines. Nevertheless, the study offers valuable insights into consumers' role in promoting social responsibility and consumer behavior's impact on society and the environment. Business practitioners and policymakers can utilize this research to promote responsible consumption. While prior research in the field may have addressed aspects of consumer social responsibility, this study offers a systematic literature review on the topic.

Keywords: Consumer social responsibility; literature review; responsible consumption; consumer behavior

Article classification: Literature review

2.1. Introduction

Over the past three decades, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a buzzword in business literature, achieving a dominant position in business ethics, management, and marketing research (e.g., Chakraborty & Jha, 2019; Fatma & Rahman, 2015; Maignan & Ferrell, 2004; Sanclemente-Téllez, 2017). Notably, CSR's meaning was derived in the 1960s, as business decisions began to be justified, at least to some degree, beyond firms' direct economic gains or technical advantages (Davis, 1960), in a way that business policies and decisions sought to consider societal values and objectives (Bowen, 1953). CSR was mostly associated with philanthropy, which gives profit back to society (Bosch-Badia et al., 2013). It was also delineated as a moral duty and stakeholder obligation, emanating from a notion that business is responsible to society in general and corporations should be answerable to those who directly or indirectly affect or are affected by their activities (Banerjee, 2008; Bowen, 1953; Gupta, 2011). From these initial discussions, we understand CSR as a management concept, whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders.

Consumers are the ultimate users of products or services (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010) constituting the market for goods and services produced by firms (W. T. Anderson & Cunningham, 1972). As long as they consume products and services in one way or another, everyone is a consumer, even businesses (Wood, 1991).

Stakeholders, specifically consumers, are crucial to the success of CSR (e.g., Chakraborty & Jha, 2019; Öberseder et al., 2013), as they directly affect and are affected by firms' activities (Friedman & Miles, 2006). Consequently, consumer social responsibility (CnSR), referred to as the "other CSR" (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Devinney et al., 2006), has emerged in the last two decades (e.g., Caruana & Chatzidakis,

2014; Pigors & Rockenbach, 2016; Quazi et al., 2016; Vitell, 2015) due to consumers' importance in shaping corporate behavior (Prendergast & Tsang, 2019; Webb et al., 2008) and the success of CSR eventually hangs on actions taken by consumers (Arli & Tjiptono, 2018; Vitell, 2015). To this effect, the focus of CnSR and, hence, this paper is on consumers who are concerned with the effects of their purchase, consumption, and disposal on themselves and their outside environs.

Extant literature in the CnSR field reports on a range of issues regarding perspectives and associated constructs of CnSR (Golob et al., 2019; Ingenbleek et al., 2015; Quazi et al., 2016), including ethical consumers as change agents and consumer citizens (Caruana & Crane, 2008; M. Anderson, 2018), consumers' perceptions of CnSR (Chen & Kong, 2009), consumers' religiosity and sustainable consumption (Arli & Tjiptono, 2018; Graafland, 2017; Rahimah et al., 2020), consumers' choice of CnSR products (Pigors & Rockenbach, 2016), the relationship between CnSR and consumer demographics (W. T. Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Gandhi & Kaushik, 2016; Pickett et al., 1993; Roberts, 1996b; Saleem, Eagle, & Low, 2018; Villa Castaño et al., 2016), and recycling and disposal behavior (Ertz et al., 2018). From another vantage point, Quazi et al. (2016) characterized CnSR as "the right thing to do" in fostering CSR practices, conceptualizing CnSR into six different dimensions: supporting business growth, critical appraisal, action, social impact, environmental impact, and solidarity.

The pattern of development in CnSR shows an increasing interest among researchers, covering a wide range of topics. To gain a thorough understanding of the subject and its development, the nature of the domain needs to be comprehended, necessitating a literature review (Snyder, 2019).

Despite the increasing research interest in CnSR (Vitell, 2015), literature review work is limited. For instance, among the articles reviewed in this study, only one paper

(Han & Stoel, 2017) reviewed part of the literature, where the authors used meta-analysis to discuss socially responsible consumer behavior through the lens of the theory of planned behavior (TPB) and the theory of reasoned action (TRA). The study associates the TPB constructs and socially responsible consumer behavior, proposing three additional predictors – namely moral norms, self-identity, and environmental consciousness – to explain behavioral intentions. The Han and Stoel (2017) meta-analytical review comprised a small sample of only 30 studies that connect socially responsible consumer behavior and the TPB. Furthermore, their study was limited to articles discussing the environmental protection and human rights aspects of social responsibility issues. The same authors suggested the need for more comprehensive work to understand a complete picture of CnSR. The growing importance of socially responsible production and consumption, coupled with the fact that CnSR is a relatively less explored area, forms the rationale for the current work. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, systematic review studies conducted in this scholarly domain are limited. Consequently, the research question addressed in this paper is: What is the conceptualization and current state of research on CnSR?

This study advances our knowledge of the domain through a comprehensive review of current literature, thereby encapsulating the diverse conceptualization of CnSR from multiple aspects and theoretical perspectives; and identifying gaps and inconsistencies as potential research avenues for future researchers. Therefore, the purpose of this review is to examine how CnSR has been viewed in previous literature by conducting a systematic literature review. This paper 1) identifies the research streams, trends, and dominant geographic and industrial contexts where CnSR research has been undertaken; 2) presents how CnSR has been defined, conceptualized, and categorized; 3) identifies the theoretical and methodological foundations of CnSR research; and 4) highlights the shortcomings in

literature, thereby unfolding future research opportunities. This literature review contributes to CnSR literature in two major ways. First, it creates a better understanding of CnSR and its constructs to yield an important discernment to researchers and practitioners in the field. Second, it provides future research directions to contribute to the development of research in this area.

This study is organized into five sections. Section 1 contains the introduction, section 2 discusses the methodology, and section 3 outlines the findings of the systematic review, which focuses on the research trends, definitions, and conceptualization of CnSR along with the theoretical and methodological foundations of the literature. Thereafter, section 4 discusses future research directions and section 5 concludes the study.

2.2. Methodology

A systematic review, which is the purpose of this study, is a transparent and replicable approach to the literature review that examines literature on a specific subject in a clearly designed sequential process (Tranfield et al., 2003) that results in a more formal, objective, impartial, and reliable literature aggregation (Egger et al., 2008). Ensuring the reliability of the study and reducing bias are other justifications for the choice of systematic review over other methods (Mohr et al., 2009; Snyder, 2019). To ensure the rigor and transparency of the study, the PRISMA protocol with four stages including identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion was applied (e.g. Mohr et al., 2009; Bhatia et al., 2021; Darviau &Cheikh-Ammar, 2021). The initial step in this review was to determine inclusion and exclusion criteria. The three criteria were:

1) Peer-reviewed journal articles written in English;

2) A business and management subject area; and

3) Reading for relevance, including those from Academic Journal Guide (AJG)/Association of Business Schools (ABS) listed journals.

Initially, articles were extracted from Scopus and Web of Science, as they are core sources for citation (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). These databases provide comprehensive and multidisciplinary coverage of peer-reviewed and reputable journal articles from various disciplines (Archambault, et al., 2006; Yadav et al., 2020) and a more refined search capability. The language used to search the articles was English, which might have caused omission bias, as articles written in other languages were excluded.

W. T. Anderson and Cunningham (1972) established the concept of CnSR as the socially conscious consumer. Thus, the search period for this study was 1972 to October 2021. Using the three criteria listed above, the review included only journal articles and excluded other sources, such as book chapters and conference proceedings. At the identification stage, the extraction of academic research articles took place in a systematic procedure using several keywords. The following search terms were sought in the title, abstract, and keywords of the articles: "consumer social respons*", "consumer social conscious*", "socially responsible consum*", "socially conscious consum*", and "CnSR". The initial search produced 578 articles, which was reduced to 510 articles after the removal of duplicates. At the screening stage, the search results were further refined based on the first inclusion criterion (i.e., peer-reviewed journal articles written in English), yielding 465 unique articles. Owing to the study's focus on consumers' perspective, the application of, the second inclusion criterion (i.e., business and management subject area) resulted in 208 articles. At the eligibility stage, to evaluate the articles on the third inclusion criterion (i.e., relevance), the researcher undertook a content analysis, reading the each paper's abstract. Where the abstracts did not indicate a CnSR focus, full-length papers were inspected to ensure important articles were not missed. Only ABS-listed journals were

considered for final analysis to maintain the quality of the review. Consequently, 68 relevant works ranked at all levels in the AJG 2018 (ABS) were selected for review. To minimize possible bias from the omission of relevant articles, the references of the 68 articles were checked. The backtracking search identified four additional articles, resulting in 72 articles being incorporated in the review, as illustrated in Figure 2. To systematically analyze these articles, a descriptive approach of content analysis was used and the findings were recorded on a spreadsheet. The selected studies were classified based on the journal type and period of publication, geographic coverage, theoretical underpinnings, and methodological approach. The different conceptual perspectives and the key aspects of the definitions of CnSR are outlined and synthesized in Table 2.

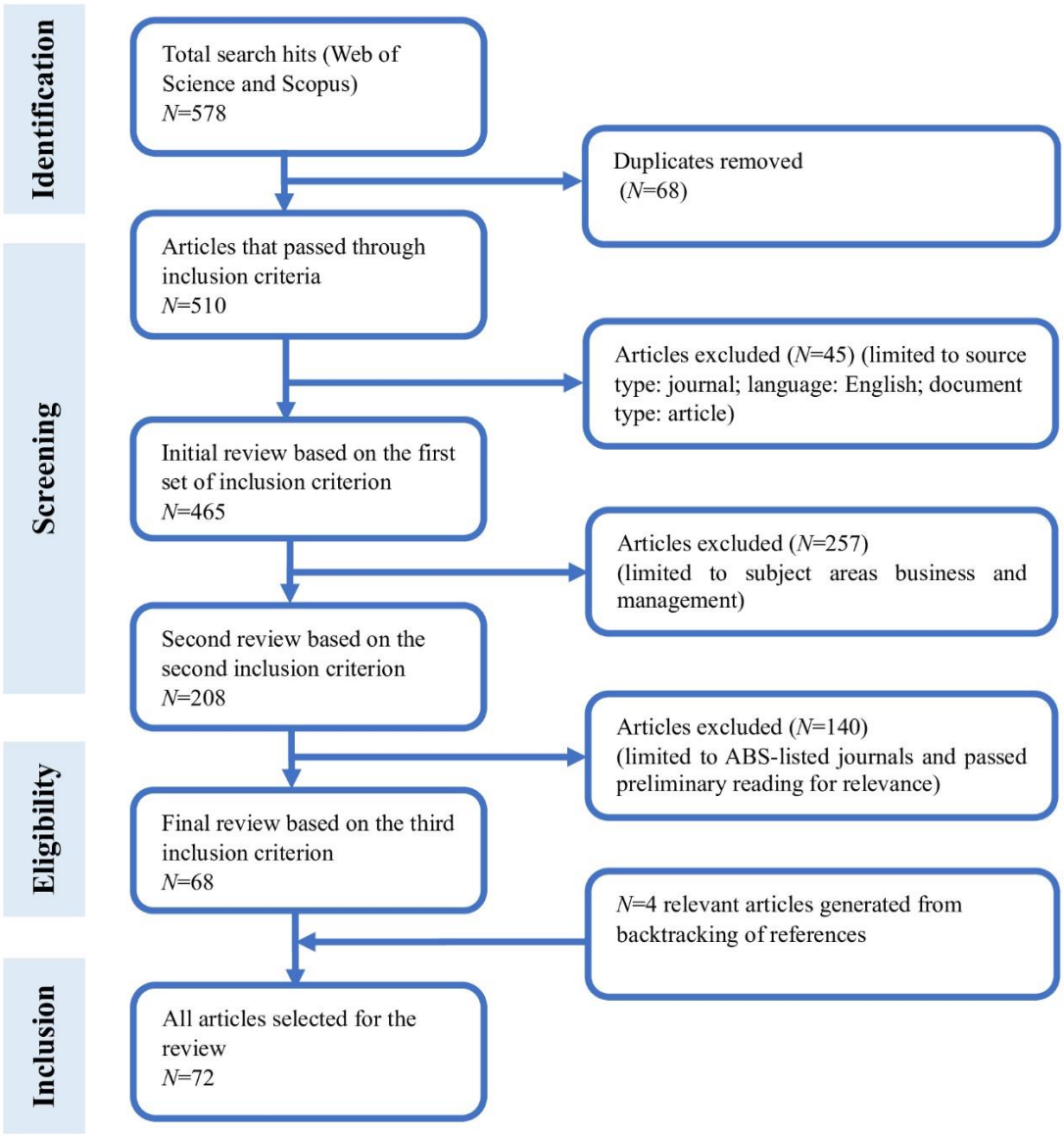

Figure 2: PRISMA protocol for summary of literature search

2.3. Findings of the systematic review

2.3.1. Journals that published consumer social responsibility research

The selected articles were published in 36 different journals with AJG rankings (i.e., 1 to 4*), including the *Journal of Business Ethics* (eight), *International Journal of Consumer Studies* (eight), *Social Responsibility Journal* (five), and *Journal of Consumer Marketing*

(five) (see Table 1). Publication in a variety of journals signifies the multi-perspective and multidisciplinary nature of this research topic. However, the literature search conducted using the databases and search terms outlined in the methodology did not yield any articles from a few of prominent journals including Business Strategy and the Environment and The Journal of Corporate Citizenship. This observed absence may be attributed to their specific editorial scopes, which predominantly emphasize business and organizational perspectives over consumer-centric viewpoints.

Table 1:Papers Included in the Study

Journals/Books/Series	Papers	References
Journal of Business Ethics	8	Caruana and Chatzidakis (2014); D'Astous and Legendre (2009); Graafland (2017); Green et al. (2016); Schlaile et al. (2018); Song and Kim (2018); Vitell (2015); Walker and Kent (2013)
International Journal of Consumer Studies	8	Balderjahn et al. (2013); Dos Santos (2012); Farah and Shahzad (2020); Koszewska (2013); Lee and Cho (2019); Pepper et al. (2009); Quazi et al. (2016); Robinot et al. (2017)
Social Responsibility Journal	5	Arli and Tjiptono (2018); Chen and Kong (2009); Gandhi and Kaushik (2016); Johnson and Chattaraman (2021); Syed and Shanmugam (2022)
Journal of Consumer Marketing	4	Ertz et al. (2018); Marquina Feldman and Vasquez-Parraga (2013); Prendergast and Tsang (2019); Saleem, Eagle, and Low (2021)
International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing	3	Berné-Manero et al. (2014); Pérez-Barea et al. (2015); Syed and Shanmugam (2020)
Journal of Consumer Research	3	Brooker (1976); Ferraro et al. (2005); Webster (1975)
Journal of Public Policy & Marketing	3	DeVincenzo and Scammon (2015); Granzin and Olsen (1991); Pickett et al. (1993)
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	3	Davis et al. (2020); Golob et al. (2019); Nam and Hwang (2019)
Journal of Business Research	2	Roberts (1996a); Webb et al. (2008)
International Journal of Market Research	2	Shobeiri et al. (2016); Yan and She (2011)
Journal of Macromarketing	2	Antil (1984); Leigh et al. (1988)
Advances in Consumer Research	2	Jackson et al. (1993); Petkus (1992)
Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice	2	Pauluzzo and Mason (2022); Roberts (1995)
Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising	1	Paek and Nelson (2009)
Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	1	Saleem, Eagle, Yaseen, and Low (2018)
Management Science	1	Pigors and Rockenbach (2016)
Journal of Marketing	1	W. T. Anderson and Cunningham (1972)
Business History	1	Newholm et al. (2015)
International Marketing Review	1	Marquina and Morales (2012)
European Journal of Marketing	1	Mathmann et al. (2019)
Journal of Consumer Behaviour	1	Johnson and Chattaraman (2019)
Management Decision	1	M. Anderson (2018)
Journal of Marketing Management	1	Ingenbleek et al. (2015)
Business Ethics: A European Review	1	Villa Castaño et al. (2016)
Journal of Economics & Management Strategy	1	Bagnoli and Watts (2003)
Business Horizons	1	Roberts (1996b)
Journal of International Consumer Marketing	1	Han and Stoel (2017)
Journal of Cleaner Production	1	Saleem, Eagle, and Low (2018)
Journal of Strategic Marketing	1	S. Anderson and Anderson (2020)

Journals/Books/Series	Papers	References
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	1	Rahimah et al. (2020)
International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	1	Wang and Chou (2021)
Academia Revista Latinoamericana de Administración	1	Villa Castaño et al. (2018)
Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	1	Yu et al. (2019)
International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing	1	Luan and Chen (2021)
British Food Journal	1	Manning (2013)
Organization Studies	1	Caruana and Crane (2008)
The Journal of Consumer Affairs	1	Mohr et al. (2001)
Leeds University Business School Research Paper Series	1	Devinney et al. (2006)

Furthermore, the number of quality journals publishing CnSR research is evident in Table 1. CnSR research received attention in highly ranked international journals, such as the *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, and *Journal of Consumer Research*.

2.3.2. Publication trends of consumer social responsibility research

The distribution of the articles across time shows that the publication of CnSR research has increased dramatically in recent years (see Figure 3). From all articles reviewed, three were published between 1971 and 1980, two were published between 1981 and 1990, seven were published between 1991 and 2000, nine were published between 2001 and 2010, and the remaining 50 articles (70%) were published in the last decade, 29 of which were published in the last five years, reflecting increased attention on this topic.

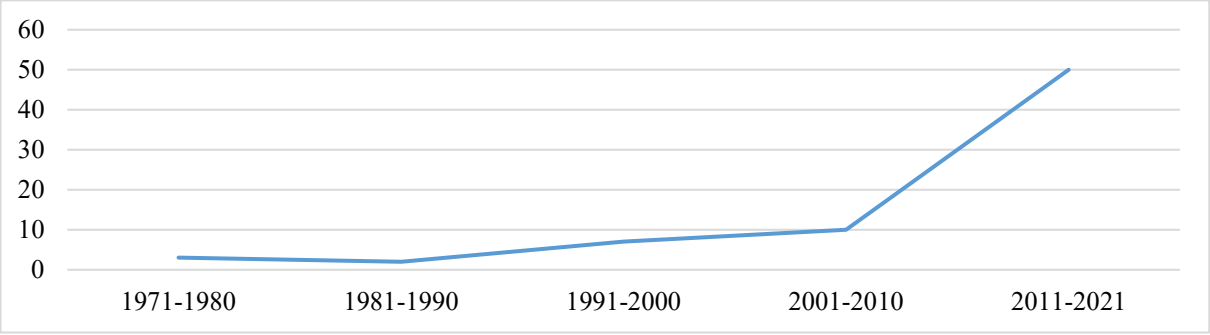

Figure 3:Growth of publication across time

2.3.3. Keyword analysis for the reviewed papers

A keyword analysis is shown in Figure 4, providing information on themes that appear frequently in the reviewed papers. The figure displays several terms together with their corresponding frequencies that are associated with consumer behavior, corporate social responsibility, and consumer social responsibility. Notable terms that show a strong emphasis on socially responsible and sustainable behaviors in consumer studies include consumer social responsibility, corporate social responsibility, socially responsible consumption, consumer behavior, and ethical consumption.

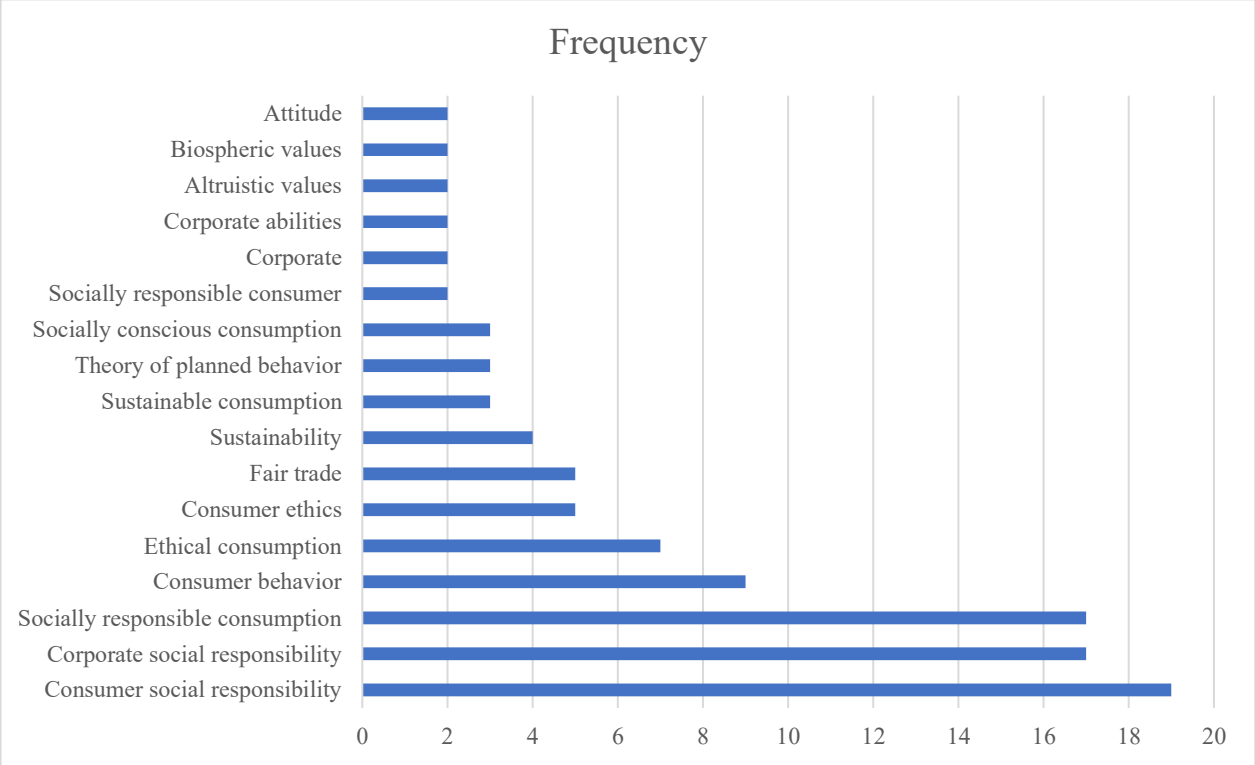

Figure 4:Keyword analysis

2.3.4. Regional contexts of consumer social responsibility research

A total of 58 papers explicitly or implicitly indicated the region of the study (see Figure 5). Most of the articles were conducted in developed countries, such as the United States (twenty-one) and Western Europe (twelve). The remaining papers were distributed as

follows: South Asia (seven), East Asia (five), Southeast Asia (three), Eastern Europe (two), Canada (three), South American countries (four), and South Africa (one). This implies there is limited CnSR research in a developing country context.

Despite the lack of publications from developing countries, social responsibility is a common concern of developed and developing countries. For example, the Gupta (2011) comparative study undertaken in the United States and India indicated that employee welfare and environmental responsibility are relevant to both countries, regardless of other context-specific issues. Similarly, over-consumption is observable in almost all communities (Yan & She, 2011). Therefore, consumer response in developing countries should not be underestimated, as economic development does not necessarily guarantee socially responsible consumer behavior (Gupta, 2011).

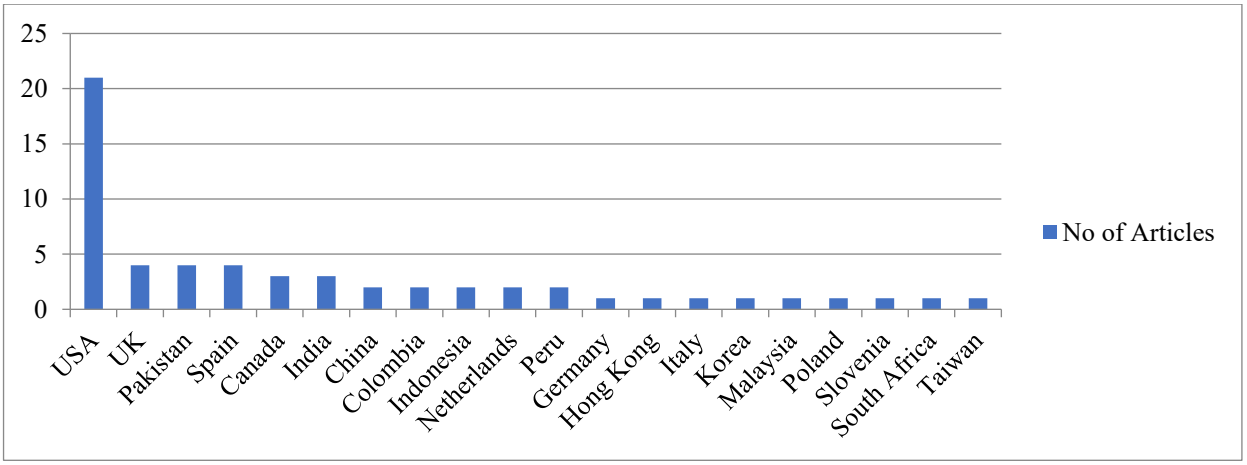

Figure 5:Distribution of publication across countries

2.3.5. Industry coverage of consumer social responsibility research

Of the papers reviewed in this study, 61 (84.7%) were empirical and 11 (15.3%) were conceptual. Only 16 of the empirical studies specifically reported an industry scope where the food and beverage industry (four), textile and apparel (three), automobile (three),

energy (two), and shoe (two) industries were in focus and another two articles addressed the retail and sport sector.

A range of issues related to CnSR were discussed in these studies, such as fair trade (M. Anderson, 2018; Wang & Chou, 2021); consumers' right to acquisition of goods in times of crises (S. Anderson & Anderson, 2020); civic behaviors, such as environmental consciousness and reduced consumption (Berné-Manero et al., 2014); educating children and legal compliance, such as paying taxes (Davis et al., 2021); adopting alternative energy sources (DeVincenzo & Scammon, 2015); charitable donation (Ferraro et al., 2005); health-related anti-consumption behaviors (Farah & Shahzad, 2020; Pepper et al., 2009); socially responsible gift-giving (Green et al., 2016); boycotting (Johnson & Chattaraman, 2019; Paek & Nelson, 2009); and ecologically friendly consumption (Pickett et al., 1993; Prendergast & Tsang, 2019; Saleem, Eagle, Yaseen, & Low, 2018). Contrastingly, responsible consumption can be associated with issues including "oppressive regimes, human rights, the environment, labor relations, land rights, irresponsible marketing, fair-trade, nuclear power, armaments, animal testing, factory farming, and political donations" (Newholm & Shaw, 2007, as cited in Villa Castaño et al., 2018, p. 554). Most of these issues are common in developing countries, particularly in labor-intensive industries, such as the textile and apparel sector. Although these industries are often associated with problems like labor exploitation (Marquina Feldman & Vasquez-Parraga, 2013; Newholm et al., 2015), water pollution (Reddy et al., 2014), and air pollution (W. T. Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Saleem et al., 2021; Saleem, Eagle, Yaseen, & Low, 2018), CnSR literature's emphasis on such sectors is minimal.

2.3.6. Definitions and conceptualization of consumer social responsibility

The second purpose of this study was to present the definitions, concepts, and categories of CnSR from previous literature, as it has been defined from different perspectives. Table 2 presents the most widely used definitions and the key aspects associated with them.

Table 2:Definitions and Concepts of Consumer Social Responsibility

Author (year)	Concept	Definition	Key aspects
Webster (1975)	Socially conscious consumer	"A person who takes into account the public consequences of his or her private consumption or who attempts to use his or her purchasing power to bring about social change" (p. 188).	Individual-focused purchase behavior to bring about social change
Antil (1984)	SRC	"Behaviors and purchase decisions made by consumers that are related to environmental-resource problems and are motivated not only by a desire to satisfy personal needs but also by a concern for the possible adverse consequences of their consequent effects'' (p. 20).	Individual consumers' behavior (not just purchasing behavior); cognizance of outcomes of purchasing
Roberts (1995)	Socially responsible consumer	"One who purchases products and services perceived to have a positive (or less negative) influence on the environment or who patronizes businesses that attempt to affect related positive social change" (p. 140).	Individual consumers' environmental outcomes of decisions; social change
Mohr et al. (2001)	Socially responsible consumer behavior	"A person basing his or her acquisition, usage, and disposition of products on a desire to minimize or eliminate any harmful effects and maximize the long-run beneficial impact on society" (p. 47).	Individual consumers' purchase decisions to impact society
Devinney et al. (2006)	Consumer social responsibility	"The conscious and deliberate choice to make certain consumption choices based on personal and moral beliefs" (p. 32).	Choices of individual consumers; impact of values on these decisions
Caruana and Chatzidakis (2014)	Consumer social responsibility	"The application of instrumental, relational, and moral logics by individual, group, corporate and institutional agents seeking to influence a broad range of consumer-oriented responsibilities" (p. 578).	Individual and corporate consumers' impact through using diverse logics; "consumer-oriented responsibilities"

Ingenbleek et al. (2015)	Buyer social responsibility	"Consumer's decision-making process that, in addition to satisfying individual needs, takes into account the perceived social consequences related to that consumption, as well as the social group that experiences those consequences" (p. 1431).	Consumer decision that looks beyond individual needs and addresses social problems
Quazi et al. (2016)	Consumer social responsibility	"The individual and collective commitments, actions, and decisions that consumers consider as the right things to do in their interactions with producers, marketers, and sellers of goods and services" (p. 49).	Individuals as consumers and group actions and their reciprocal reaction to CSR
Lee and Cho (2019)	SRC	"Consumer behaviors and purchase decisions that prevent or minimize environmental or social problems" (p. 123).	Impact of value on CnSR motives (values) of consumers in solving social and environmental problems

Table 2 shows there is no single, objectively established, and all-embracing definition of CnSR. To give an example of how CnSR has been conceptualized in literature, it is important to look at other authors' work. While the concept was initially introduced by W. T. Anderson and Cunningham (1972), Webster (1975) was the first author to define socially responsible consumers (Lee & Cho, 2019). Webster's definition centers on the psychological construct of social involvement, with an assertion that awareness of social problems and being actively involved in solving the problem sums to define a socially conscious consumer. Roberts (1995) extended this definition of socially responsible consumers to include environmental and social aspects.

Based on Webster (1975), Mohr et al. (2001) developed a more elaborate definition by associating it with the concept of CSR, in that both corporations and consumers should avoid harmful effects of their production and consumption on the society respectively. These authors contended that consumers should rather behave in a manner that maximizes their positive impact on society. With the definitions of Mohr et al. (2001) and Roberts (1993) as a basis, Lee and Cho (2019) coined socially responsible consumption (SRC) by

introducing purchase decisions to reduce the environmental and social impact of consumption.

Table 2 also shows the progression of CnSR definitions. As seen in the definitions, some of the authors defined CnSR very broadly, addressing numerous issues, including environment, social benefit, and labor rights (e.g., Ingenbleek et al., 2015; Lee & Cho, 2019; Roberts, 1995), while others merely emphasized environmental issues (Antil, 1984; Webster, 1975). The authors used different terminologies to describe consumers, including socially conscious consumers (Webster, 1975), SRC (Antil, 1984; Lee & Cho, 2019), socially responsible consumers (Roberts, 1995), socially responsible consumer behavior (Mohr et al., 2001), CnSR (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Devinney et al., 2006; Quazi et al., 2016), and buyer social responsibility (Ingenbleek et al., 2015). Thus, CnSR literature lacks consistency in articulating what CnSR is. Nevertheless, although the terminologies used are different, the message conveyed is the same. One of the reasons why this inconsistency is prevalent across studies in this research domain may be due to a limited understanding of the term (Han & Stoel, 2017).

Even though there are divergent views in the conceptualization of CnSR, the definitions in Table 2 highlight that there are two broader views: 1) CnSR is a mechanism taken by consumers to shape the behavior of firms (reactive view) (Roberts, 1995; Webster, 1975); and 2) CnSR is the responsibility of consumers in shaping their behavior (proactive view) (Antil, 1984; Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Devinney, 2006; Lee & Cho, 2019; Mohr et al., 2001). The development of CnSR literature depicts a shift from reactive (firm-oriented) responsibility to proactive (self-oriented) responsibility.

2.3.7. Categories (perspectives) of consumer social responsibility

The concept of responsible consumption incorporates diverse social issues, such as avoiding the use of goods and services that promote child labor (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Devinney et al., 2006; Lee & Cho, 2019), fair-trade certification issues (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Vitell, 2015), buying organic products (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Vitell, 2015), recycling (Arli & Tjiptono, 2018; Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Devinney et al., 2006; Lee & Cho, 2019), employment and human rights support (Han & Stoel, 2017), and standing up for local brands (Ertz et al., 2018; Yan & She, 2011). One of the objectives of this study was to indicate the categories of CnSR research. To this end, the different CnSR literature discussions are classified into six basic categories: economic-oriented CnSR, environmental-oriented CnSR, health-oriented CnSR, philanthropic-oriented CnSR, social-oriented CnSR, and ethical-oriented CnSR perspectives.

2.3.7.1. Economic-oriented consumer social responsibility

Economic-oriented CnSR involves the power of consumers in influencing the local economy through their purchases. In this way, consumers can support firms that produce locally (Ertz et al., 2018; Villa Castaño et al., 2018; Yan & She, 2011) and abstain from purchasing offerings of foreign firms (Villa Castaño et al., 2016) if it contradicts domestic values and national dignity (Yan & She, 2011). Consumers are also willing to buy from firms that create more jobs and improve work-life quality (Arli & Tjiptono, 2018), which are particularly important economic issues in developing countries.

2.3.7.2. Environmental-oriented consumer social responsibility

CnSR that is environmental oriented involves consumers' commitment to ensuring their purchase decisions do not have an unfavorable impact on the environment (Quazi et al., 2016; Webb et al., 2008), with consumers preferring to buy environmentally friendly products. For example, customers may recycle or patronize firms producing ecologically labeled products. It is common to see literature on environmental responsibility with terms like fair trade (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005), responsible waste disposal (Granzin & Olsen, 1991) not harmful to the environment (Harper & Makatouni, 2002), ecological consciousness (Koszewska, 2013; Straughan & Roberts, 1999), green consumption (Elkington, 1994; Straughan & Roberts, 1999), more positive/less negative influence on the environment (Pickett et al., 1993; Webster, 1975).

2.3.7.3. Health-oriented consumer social responsibility

Health-oriented CnSR focuses on consumers' behavior, specifically their and others' health (Syed & Shanmugam, 2020). Consumers prefer products that have health benefits and make health-minded purchases (S. Anderson & Anderson, 2020; Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Jackson et al., 1993; Kautish & Sharma, 2019; Saleem et al., 2021), and are willing to pay for an organic claim (Green et al., 2016). Health-conscious purchasing has received more attention over time (e.g., Farah & Shahzad, 2020; Saleem, Eagle, & Low, 2018; Villa Castaño et al., 2016), which may be due to increasing awareness of consumers regarding lifestyle diseases and the positive perceptions of the saying "you are what you eat" (Norman et al., 2000, as cited in Rana & Paul, 2017).

2.3.7.4. Philanthropic-oriented consumer social responsibility

Philanthropic-oriented CnSR concerns the altruistic and humanitarian activities of consumers, such as donating to a social cause and charity (Berné-Manero et al., 2014; Ferraro et al., 2005; Quazi et al., 2016), purchasing based on firms' employee treatment (Webb et al., 2008), and active engagement in activities related to social change (Walker & Kent, 2013). The altruistic and philanthropic view of CnSR is "a way of being critical, acting, caring for fellow human beings, living in peace with the environment, and joining hands and creating solidarity" (Fazal, 2011, as cited in M. Anderson, 2018, p. 635).

2.3.7.5. Social-oriented consumer social responsibility

Social-oriented CnSR deals with the impact of consumption on society and is constituted in consumer social responsibility (Vitell, 2015), socially responsible consumer behavior (Mohr et al., 2001; Roberts, 1995), and patronizing social change (Roberts, 1996b). The premise of this perspective is that to minimize the negative social impact of their consumption, consumers should behave carefully and with a sense of responsibility to fellow customers and citizens (Caruana & Crane, 2008; Quazi et al., 2016), preferring to consume produces of firms with a positive social impact (Ingenbleek et al., 2015; Mohr et al., 2001; Quazi et al., 2016). For example, responsible consumers may purchase from firms hiring employees with disabilities (Kuo & Kalargyrou, 2014).

2.3.7.6. Ethical-oriented consumer social responsibility

Finally, the fourth stream of literature mentions the ethical view of consumption, grouping terms including the right behavior (Quazi et al., 2016; Webb et al., 2008), "application of instrumental, relational and moral logics by individuals, groups, corporate and institutional agents" (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014:578), compliant with standards (Balderjahn et al.,

2013), “consumption choices based on personal and moral beliefs” (Devinney et al., 2006:3), and “ethical consumer” (Harrison et al., 2005:120), though these may not be exhaustive or exclusive. This shows there is increasing consumer concern about social responsibility issues, such as sustainability, fair-labor practices, and a healthy lifestyle (Malter et al., 2020). Consequently, CnSR is still an emerging research domain in the field of consumer behavior and additional dimensions may be unfolded over time.

2.3.8. Theoretical foundations in consumer social responsibility research

Theories are used to understand concepts and research ideas from different approaches, as they help researchers to view and analyze concepts through various lenses. CnSR research draws on divergent theoretical lenses (see Table 3). From the 72 papers reviewed, 43 explicitly drew on one or more theoretical lenses. From the 43 papers that are theoretically informed, six papers used value-based theories and four papers used the TPB, while fair-trade perspective, theory of need, stakeholder theory, random utility theory, ethics-based theories, terror management theory, and economic viewpoints were used by two articles each. The remaining papers utilized a wide range of theories, such as social capital theory, game theory, and social dilemma theory. The adoption of various theories is unsurprising, given that CnSR is studied from divergent disciplinary perspectives, such as consumer ethics, environment, and human rights. Moreover, since there is a contextual variation to what CnSR means (e.g., based on the development level of countries), using multiple theoretical lenses can broaden the understanding of the subject.

The most widely used theories are value-based theories and the TPB. The TPB advocates that the intention to engage in CnSR is guided by consumers’ attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (e.g., Han & Stoel 2017; Prendergast & Tsang, 2019; Robinot et al., 2017). The TPB can support CnSR by predicting and

explaining the antecedents that affect consumer behavior, but it has limitations. The TPB considers individuals as having complete control over their behavior but, in reality, external factors like social and situational conditions can shape people's behavior. In addition, moral and ethical issues that have a lot to do with socially responsible behavior are not captured in the TPB.

Contrastingly, value-believe-norm theory suggests that consumers' values and beliefs affect their behavior, which is further strengthened by social norms. Consumers who develop values and beliefs associated with social and environmental issues tend to demonstrate SRC (e.g., Prendergast & Tsang, 2019; Song & Kim, 2018). These behaviors are reinforced as acceptable through social norms. However, like other theories, value-believe-norm theory has limitations, as it does not portray how external factors, such as culture, social norms, and advertising programs, influence consumers' socially responsible behavior (Prendergast & Tsang, 2019).

Table 3:Theories Applied in Consumer Social Responsibility Research.

Theoretical basis	Articles	Author and year
Value-belief-norm theory/Value-based theories	6	Golob et al. (2019); Lee and Cho (2019); Pauluzzo and Mason (2022); Pepper et al. (2009); Saleem, Eagle, & Low (2018); Saleem, Eagle, Yaseen, & Low (2018)
TPB and TRA	4	Graafland (2017); Han and Stoel (2017); Prendergast and Tsang (2019); Robinot et al. (2017)
Fair-trade theory and theory of change	2	M. Anderson (2018); Wang and Chou (2021)
Economic viewpoints	2	Bagnoli and Watts (2003); Chen and Kong (2009)
Need-based theories	2	Brooker (1976); Shobeiri et al. (2016)
Terror management theory	2	Ferraro et al. (2005); Rahimah et al. (2020)
Random utility theory	2	Marquina and Morales (2012); Marquina Feldman and Vasquez-Parraga (2013)
Signaling theory	2	Johnson and Chattaraman (2019, 2021)
Ethics based theories	2	Song and Kim (2018); Vitell (2015)
Stakeholder theory	2	Quazi et al. (2016); Yu et al. (2019)
Social contract theory, contagion theory, tragedy of the commons	1	S. Anderson and Anderson (2020)
Consumer decision-making	1	Devinney et al. (2006)
Psychological sense of community	1	DeVincenzo and Scammon (2015)
Roger's innovation decision process	1	Dos Santos (2012)
Restrained theory	1	Farah and Shahzad (2020)
Social dilemma theory	1	Ingenbleek et al. (2015)
Socialization theory	1	Luan and Chen (2021)
Regulatory fit theory	1	Mathmann et al. (2019)

Theoretical basis	Articles	Author and year
Persuasion knowledge model	1	Nam and Hwang (2019)
Theory of symbolic interactionism	1	Petkus (1992)
Game theory	1	Pigors and Rockenbach (2016)
Theory of social action	1	Schlaile et al. (2018)
Classical test theory	1	Villa Castaño et al. (2018)
Theory of justice	1	Caruana and Chatzidakis (2014)
Social capital theory	1	Manning (2013)
Consumer culture theory	1	Caruana and Crane (2008)

2.3.9. Methodological foundations in consumer social responsibility research

The papers employed quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches. While it is common to consider papers with numerous methods in a literature review (Palmatier et al., 2018), in this review of CnSR research, the positivist paradigm was dominant. Of all the studies reviewed, 61 studies were empirical (50 quantitative, nine qualitative, and two mixed methods) and the remaining 11 articles were conceptual and theoretical. As shown in Figure 5, various data collection methods have been used in CnSR research. Of the 50 quantitative papers, 30 papers used a traditional onsite survey to collect data, 16 articles employed an online (web-based) survey, three utilized an experimental survey, and one comprised an interview survey. Of the qualitative papers, six used interviews and two papers employed a case study method, while the remaining paper used discourse analysis. The two papers that employed a mixed-methods approach utilized a combination of interviews and surveys. In terms of analysis, quantitative and mixed-methods papers used structural equation modeling, regression, ANOVA, discriminant analysis, factor analysis, and principal component analysis, whereas qualitative papers used thematic analysis, content analysis, discourse analysis, and hermeneutics. As indicated in Figure 6, quantifiable data are dominant. However, since CnSR is still an emerging area of research

with little conceptual clarity in consumer studies, more conceptual and theoretical papers are expected in the following years.

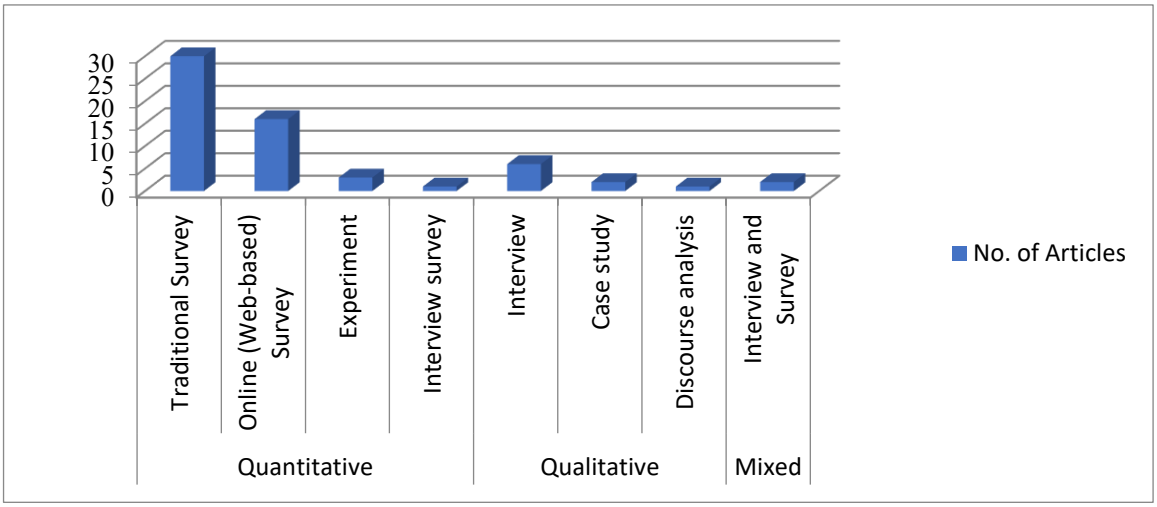

Figure 6:Distribution of publication by methodology

2.4. Future research direction

This literature review generated several potential areas for future research. Regardless of the common assumption that post-positivist methods of qualitative techniques are drawing the attention of researchers in the field of consumer behavior (Malter et al., 2020), the neo-positivist method employs survey and experimental studies with quantitative analysis, remaining a dominant research approach in CnSR. Qualitative and mixed approaches are less popular in literature than the quantitative approach. Therefore, future researchers can use these methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward CnSR. Most of the empirical studies reviewed in this paper used survey techniques to collect data. However, survey data may suffer from social desirability bias, which was reflected in the results where consumers reported favorably on CnSR. This is due to respondents presenting as selfless and considerate to themselves and others (Mohr

et al., 2001). One way to minimize social desirability bias could be to use indirect questioning and anonymity as well as employing stated and derived measurements together (Bergen & Labonté, 2020).

Concerning data collection, although most of the information was collected through the usual onsite survey method, nearly one-third of the quantitative studies (i.e., 16 of the 50 quantitative papers) used online surveys to collect data. Despite its benefits in saving time and money (Lee & Cho, 2019), an online survey has its limitations. First, little is known about the characteristics of the online population, resulting in uncertainty and high digital misinformation and sampling problems. Second, there is a systematic bias related to the availability of internet infrastructure and the level of education of consumers (Wright, 2005), because online surveys only consider consumers who have computers, are connected to the Internet, and have technical proficiency. Hence, the responses of consumer groups who do not own a computer, do not have access to the internet, or do not have the skill of using such online platforms is missing. Consequently, using a more robust data collection method can be a promising future research direction. Another method-based limitation in CnSR is in the sample. Half of all quantitative studies in the reviewed papers used student samples. Collecting data purely from student samples is more convenient for researchers to grasp homogeneous data (Arli & Tjiptono, 2018), yet the student sample deviates from the assumption that statistical inferences should be restricted to the sampled population (Peterson & Merunka, 2014). Therefore, future researchers should consider non-student samples and, more importantly, diverse consumer groups.

From the conceptual viewpoint of CnSR, most of the studies focused on four perspectives: philanthropic, environmental, social, and ethical. Despite their importance – particularly from developing countries' perspectives, where the economic and health condition of consumers is inadequate – economic and health perspectives are given

minimum attention. Future researchers could consider these perspectives. Most of the reviewed papers discuss SRC, namely how consumers should behave. Far fewer studies reported the opposite (i.e., socially irresponsible consumption) – that is, how consumers should not behave is not given significant attention. Future research could draw on this issue.

Moreover, the incongruence between consumers' beliefs and actions concerning the purchase of socially responsible goods is a major shortcoming of the TPB (e.g., Han & Stoel, 2017; Prendergast & Tsang, 2019). Thus, the question of how consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions relate to actual behavior remains unanswered. Future researchers could embark on addressing this gap, with longitudinal studies potentially helping to track the intention-behavior gap by measuring behavior over an extended period.

Determining the demographic variables and guiding consumer values in patronizing CnSR-based consumption in different communities can be an important future research area, as consumers' contextual variation can determine the values placed on product attributes. Contextual variations may provide future researchers with additional variables not covered in extant CnSR studies, followed by developing a comprehensive scale to measure CnSR. One important area that may advance our understanding of CnSR could be to investigate the relationships between culture, religiosity, and socially responsible consumer behavior.

Some studies have mentioned a single-industry context, including food and beverage (e.g., Graafland, 2017; Lee et al., 2017; Manning, 2013), entertainment (Arli et al., 2017), and donations (Ferraro et al., 2005), yet in most of the studies, no specific industry is mentioned. This may also decrease the generalizability of the studies (e.g., Gupta & Ogden, 2009). Furthermore, the limited attention paid to numerous industry-related social and ecological issues by CnSR researchers (see section 3.7), particularly

from a developing country perspective, may open an avenue for future research to focus on a wide array of industries.

2.5. Conclusion

Understanding the conceptual clarity and updates of knowledge on a certain topic requires periodical monitoring and examination of its research progress. The purpose of this study was to convey how CnSR is viewed in previous literature. Based on the review of 72 journal articles, the study provides useful insights into how CnSR is conceptualized and has evolved, in which region and industry setting it was mostly studied, and what methods and theories were widely used in the CnSR study. Moreover, CnSR has not yet been studied in a developing country context. Although some papers applied one or more theories, most of the studies did not explicitly indicate nor apply any theory. A quantitative approach is predominantly used in CnSR research, yet some studies also used qualitative and mixed approaches. Nevertheless, researchers have shown increasing interest in the past five years. Despite these developments in CnSR research, its conceptualization has a range of terms and meanings.

Nevertheless, this study is not without shortcomings. Only peer-reviewed journal articles were reviewed, with book chapters and proceedings being excluded. This review only considered articles written in English, hence articles written in other languages are missing. Likewise, the literature search was limited to the business and management subject area. Provided that CnSR is a multidisciplinary concept, including articles from other areas would have been interesting. Furthermore, excluding articles not on the journal lists may have led to additional insights being omitted from this review. However, the findings of this study are an important contribution to the CnSR field, and the findings and directions for future research may be of interest to future researchers.

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CHAPTER THREE

3. PAPER II- CLOTHING DISPOSAL IN ETHIOPIA: METHODS AND MOTIVES

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Abstract

Purpose *– This study explores clothing disposal in a developing economy. It focuses on how consumers dispose of clothing and what motives influence them to use a specific disposal method.*

Design/methodology/approach *– Semi-structured interviews, a qualitative research method, were conducted with a purposive sample of 27 participants from diverse demographic backgrounds within the developing economy of Ethiopia. The interviews were coded and analysed using thematic analysis to identify categories and themes.*

Findings *– The findings reveal various clothing disposal methods, such as bartering, donating, gifting, repurposing and reusing, and discarding. Different motives drive consumers to use these methods, including economic benefits, altruism, and convenience.*

Originality/value *– The study bridges an important knowledge gap in literature mainly on three aspects, as highlighted by previous research. Theoretically, in addition to proposing a different perspective of bartering as a disposal method, the study investigates the motives behind clothing disposal methods from diverse consumer groups and proposes a conceptual framework to illustrate the link between clothing disposal methods and motives. Methodologically, the study addresses the call for a more inclusive and diverse sample, considering gender and varied socio-economic groups. Contextually, while previous research has focused on developed economies, this study explains clothing disposal methods and motives from a developing economy context, specifically Ethiopia.*

Keywords Clothing disposal, Disposal methods, Motives for disposal, Socially responsible disposal, Sustainable disposal, Developing economy

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3.1. Introduction

There has been a recent increase in clothing demand in all economies, including developing economies (Piribauer and Bartl, 2019). This trend is driven by various factors, such as increased consumption, lower production costs, and lower clothing prices (Soyer and Dittrich, 2021). Additionally, the emergent and increasing number of middle- and higher-income consumers has given rise to higher consumption levels in general and clothing in particular (Kumar and Srivastava, 2020; Sonnenberg *et al*., 2022). This seemingly insatiable appetite for clothing has significant societal implications, including the generation of textile waste, deposits/dumping in landfills, and an adverse environmental impact (Acquaye *et al*., 2023; Laitala, 2014; Piribauer and Bartl, 2019).

To counteract this environmental trajectory, research and development initiatives in developed economies have focused on promoting and enhancing recycling, second-hand consumption, and collaborative consumption models as potential solutions (Sonnenberg *et al*., 2022). The effectiveness of these initiatives is anchored on the role of consumers, as their responsible disposal of clothing reflects a socially responsible (SR) and sustainable action, crucial for mitigating the negative effects of clothing consumption (Davis *et al*., 2017). Consumers' role in the disposal and adoption of these sustainability-related initiatives has served as a focus of previous research (Cruz-Cárdenas and Arévalo-Chávez, 2018). Extant literature concentrates on specific consumer-related issues, including disposal behaviour, disposal options, patterns, destinations, reasons, environmental attitudes, environmental consciousness, recycling, and demographics (Laitala, 2014).

The Bernardes *et al*. (2020) review of 51 studies on clothing disposal behaviour found a focus on behavioural aspects, such as how people dispose of their clothing, without examining motives. Scholarly discussions emphasise pre-purchase and post-purchase stages of consumption, yet a gap exists in exploring post-purchase behaviour, particularly

in clothing disposal (Bernardes *et al*., 2020; Hassan *et al*., 2022; Patwary *et al*., 2023). Where methods and motives have been studied, inconsistent findings have been reported, such as environmental awareness not being identified as a motivating factor in clothing disposal (Bianchi and Birtwistle, 2012). Nonetheless, Joung and Park-Poaps (2013) found that it did play a motivating role. This dissensus across studies highlights a dearth of knowledge regarding consumers' clothing disposal (Bernardes *et al*., 2020) and the various motives driving it (Dommer and Winterich, 2021).

Earlier studies have focused on homogeneous samples like women, the youth, and college students, resulting in a growing call for further research with a more heterogeneous population, including men, seniors, and consumers from different socio-economic contexts (e.g., Bernardes *et al*., 2020; Sonnenberg *et al*., 2022). Understanding consumer disposal actions within this broader context is crucial due to the community implications of disposal methods.

Furthermore, compared to developed economies, studies in developing economies like Ethiopia have gained little attention (Cruz-Cárdenas and Arévalo-Chávez, 2018). Consumers' clothing disposal in developing economies may differ from developed economies, as they are affected by contextual factors, including a shortage of resources, inadequate recycling infrastructure, demographic diversity, social unrest, and political instability (Kumar and Srivastava, 2020). As Africa's second-most populous nation, Ethiopia has a growing market. East Africa's growing production facilities serve local and international customers (Berg *et al*., 2015). However, fast fashion dominates in Ethiopia due to its low prices (Khurana and Muthu, 2022), causing sustainability issues for end-of-life clothing items (Bizuneh and Tadesse, 2022). Previous research in Ethiopia has investigated local textile manufacturers' disposal (Bizuneh and Tadesse, 2022), but

consumers' perspective is suggested as a new area of research (Khurana and Tadesse, 2019).

To address these aspects, our study explores the methods and motives behind the SR disposal of clothing in a developing economy context. More specifically, this study examines: 1) how consumers dispose of clothing; and 2) what motives influence them in using clothing disposal methods.

3.2. Literature review

3.2.1. Ethiopia as the empirical context

Ethiopia is an important country in the fashion industry as a production and consumption site. As a production site, leading retailers are relocating production facilities to East Africa, particularly Ethiopia, due to low wages (Khurana, 2018). As a consumption site, Ethiopia imports clothing to meet increased demand and positive perceptions of imported clothing over domestically produced ones (Khurana and Muthu, 2022). Imports comprise 79% of Ethiopia's clothing (Governing Economic Hubs and Flows Somali East Africa, 2019). However, not all imported clothing is new, as 46% of Europe's clothing collected for recycling is exported to Africa (Lingås *et al*., 2023), raising sustainability issues. This has led to discussions about prohibiting imported second-hand clothing in developing economies (Dissanayake and Pal, 2023).

Ethiopia's growing population and the youth's fashion interest (Bizuneh and Tadesse, 2022) necessitate a study on clothing disposal practices to address rising consumption. Low-priced imported clothing, mostly from China, and second-hand clothing from illicit channels impact purchasing power and variety (Pankhurst, 2019). These two aspects, in conjunction with overconsumption and the resulting increase in clothing waste, are significant contributors to environmental sustainability challenges.

3.3. Ethiopian consumers' clothing choices

Clothing choices in Ethiopia reflect global market penetration, affordability, and cultural identity. Imported garments often dominate urban markets and are perceived as higher in quality and fashionability than local alternatives (Khurana & Muthu, 2022).

In Africa, 80% of people wear second-hand clothing due to limited income (Sumo *et al*., 2023). Ethiopia is not an exception. Second-hand clothing (*Bonda*) forms a major segment due to affordability and durability. In Ethiopia, second-hand clothing outperforms fast fashion, counterbalancing imports and providing economic benefits (Khurana and Tadesse, 2019). At the same time, traditional attire such as *Habesha kemis* remains symbolically important during social and religious events (Pankhurst, 2019). Clothing thus serves identity and heritage functions, encouraging retention and gifting practices thereby promoting clothing circulation and subsequently shaping disposal behavior.

However, the rising fast fashion, characterized by low-cost and low-quality materials (Patwary *et al*., 2023), is changing consumer behavior and undermining traditional hand-woven clothing (*shemma*) (Pankhurst, 2019). The young and growing clothing market in developing economies like Ethiopia is becoming a relevant target for fast fashion, raising questions of social and environmental implications (Khurana and Muthu, 2022).

3.4. The nature of clothing disposal

The nature of clothing disposal refers to the material routes garments follow after consumers relinquish ownership. Disposal is therefore not only a behavioral act but an entry point into different environmental and socio-economic flows (Laitala, 2014; Jacoby *et al*., 1977). These routes include reuse practices (donation, resale, gifting), recycling processes, international second-hand export flows, and waste streams such as landfill or

open dumping (Dissanayake, 2023). Consumer decisions determine whether garments re-enter circulation or contribute to waste accumulation.

More specifically, disposal is the act of no longer using a product, even when it is still useful (Sandes *et al*., 2019). Clothing disposal is the clothing's ultimate stage of use under the current owner (Bernardes *et al*., 2020). It can occur when the clothing has outlived its purpose because of a poor fit (Hassan *et al*., 2022) or when the consumer stops using an item of clothing (Wang *et al*., 2020). Disposal is important to society, given the increasing consumption of clothing addressed in consumer social responsibility (CnSR) literature (Davis *et al*., 2017). Responsible/Sustainable disposal is part of SR consumption, as consumers' disposal methods can limit the negative effects and provide a societal benefit (Mason *et al*., 2022). Hence, this study views clothing disposal methods and motives from this perspective.

3.5. Reasons for clothing disposal

Before disposing, an owner decides to cease using an item (Sandes *et al*., 2019), requiring physical and emotional detachment (Dommer and Winterich, 2021). Research has investigated why consumers dispose of their clothing and identified psychological, physical, and situational factors. Psychologically, changing fashion trends result in clothing being perceived as being out of date and being disposed of (Mason *et al*., 2022). The connection between clothing disposal and consumers' emotional attachment, nostalgia, and symbolic value also impacts clothing disposal (Sandes *et al*., 2019; Wang *et al*., 2020). Boredom or the gradual decrease in enjoyment from repeated clothing use may trigger clothing disposal and replacement with new items (Kwon *et al*., 2020). Physical factors, including clothing obsolescence (Degenstein *et al*., 2020), weight fluctuations

(Laitala, 2014), poor fit, and wear and tear (Patwary *et al*., 2023), contribute to clothing disposal. Situational factors like closet space shortages (Roster and Ferrari, 2022) and life transitions including marriage, divorce, or illness (Cruz-Cárdenas *et al*., 2019) also influence disposal decisions.

3.6. Methods of clothing disposal

Once the disposal decision has been made, a disposal method must be chosen (Sandes *et al*., 2019). Researchers have proposed a taxonomy of disposal decisions for products, comprising three primary disposal methods: 1) keeping the product for alternative usage; 2) permanent disposal by donating it to charity or giving it away, exchanging, or dumping; and 3) temporary disposal by renting it out (Dommer and Winterich, 2021; Hassan *et al*., 2022; Jacoby *et al*., 1977; Roster and Ferrari, 2023; Sarigöllü *et al*., 2021). Contrastingly, Soyer and Dittrich (2021) proposed four types of clothing disposal methods: reusing, recycling, incineration, and landfilling. Reusing involves donating, selling, or swapping clothes; recycling includes discarding items in recycle bins; incineration concerns disposing of clothes with or without energy recovery; and landfilling is throwing items out with regular trash. Thus, as shown in Table 4, consumers can dispose of clothing in many ways, including reusing, donating, recycling, and discarding (Cruz-Cárdenas and Arévalo-Chávez, 2018; Sandes *et al*., 2019). Unwanted clothing can be sold for cash, swapped for other clothing, rented out (Laitala, 2014), or upcycled into something valuable (Coppola *et al*., 2021). These disposal methods can be considered at any time, as they are perceived differently and motivated by various factors (Cruz-Cárdenas *et al*., 2019; Shim, 1995).

Table 4:Summary of disposal methods

Themes and Definition	Reference
▪ **Donating** Giving to charity	(Laitala, 2014)
▪ **Gifting** Giving to family/friends	(Cruz-Cárdenas *et al*., 2016)
▪ **Repurposing & reuse** • **Repurposing** Transforming or upcycling into useful items • **Reuse** Reorienting with/without physical conversion	(Coppola, 2021; Degenstein *et al*., 2020; Cruz-Cárdenas *et al*., 2019)
▪ **Discarding** Throwing into as garbage	(Laitala, 2014)

Source: Prepared by the authors.

3.7. Factors influencing clothing disposal methods

As a multifaceted experience, clothing disposal is affected by economic and environmental factors (Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013). Wai Yee *et al*. (2016) identified several factors that influence clothing disposal behaviour (see Table 5), which underpin this study and are discussed next.

Economic factors. Economic factors are crucial in consumers' choice of clothing disposal methods. Economic crises can drive consumers to dispose of their possessions (Hassan *et al*., 2022), including clothing, for financial gain (Bianchi and Birtwistle, 2010; Degenstein *et al*., 2020). Economically conscious consumers prefer to reuse clothing to extend its life and avoid spending money (Shim, 1995). Reselling can also provide additional income (Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013) and alleviate guilt associated with discarding clothing (Hassan *et al*., 2022). Consumers may save money when they reuse or modify existing items to create handcrafted substitutes for new purchases. Encouraging

economic sensibility can motivate consumers to take more care of their used clothing, leading to responsible disposal (Sarigöllü *et al*., 2021). However, research on the role of economic factors is limited, especially in developing economies (Cruz-Cárdenas and Arévalo-Chávez, 2018). Therefore, further research is needed to understand these factors.

Environmental factors. Environmental factors like awareness and concern affect clothing disposal behaviour (Shim, 1995; Wai Yee *et al*., 2016). Consumers must be aware of climate challenges and the need for alternative disposal methods to show appropriate SR behaviour (Hameed *et al*., 2022; Hassan *et al*., 2022). When consumers are aware of the environmental impact of their clothing disposal, they may be more inclined to show pro-environmental behaviour (Wai Yee *et al*., 2016), impacting their disposal method choice. Examples of such behaviour in the clothing context include recycling, reusing, and repairing, which can reduce the amount of new clothing purchased and decrease the environmental impact of clothing (Acquaye *et al*., 2023). However, while fashion consumers expressed a favourable attitude to environmental sustainability, this attitude does not consistently manifest in their choices of clothing disposal methods (Park and Lin, 2020; Soyer and Dittrich, 2021).

Attitudes to recycling. Attitudes are how a person feels about engaging in a specific behaviour (Soyer and Dittrich, 2021). They influence a range of SR behaviour, including recycling and various disposal methods (Bianchi and Birtwistle, 2012). Recycling in the fashion industry is particularly important in promoting sustainable consumption (Park and Lin, 2020). Research shows that positive attitudes towards recycling drive recycling intentions (Hameed *et al*., 2022), though intentions do not always translate into actual behaviour (Park and Lin, 2020; Soyer and Dittrich, 2021; Wai Yee *et al*., 2016). Consumers with favourable attitudes towards recycling tend to dispose of their possessions in environmentally friendly ways, such as donating, gifting, repurposing, and reusing

(Bianchi and Birtwistle, 2012; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013). However, recycling is less practical in developing economies due to its high cost (Bizuneh and Tadesse, 2022) and less-developed recycling infrastructure (Sonnenberg *et al*., 2022).

Philanthropic (e.g., altruistic) factors. Philanthropic factors stem from the assumption that each consumer's reaction from a humanistic and selfless perspective towards society has a positive societal contribution (Davis *et al*., 2017). Therefore, philanthropic disposal involves helping other people in the broader community who are impoverished or needy (Hassan *et al*., 2022). Altruistic factors, such as donations, are linked to SR disposal methods, which may reduce clothing waste and support charitable causes (Kim and Childs, 2021). This is influenced by philanthropic consciousness, which refers to the active involvement of consumers in their local communities as they look for opportunities to help others, give back, show compassion, or promote justice and unity (Davis *et al*., 2017). Helping the needy is the major reason behind consumers' use of donations to dispose of used clothing in developed and developing economies (Hassan *et al*., 2022; Wai Yee *et al*., 2016). For example, developing economies tend to have a collectivistic culture, raising a community mindset among consumers, thereby making charitable giving a more suitable disposal method (Cruz-Cárdenas *et al*., 2019).

Additional factors. The availability of disposal infrastructure and nostalgia can influence clothing disposal behaviour (Kumar and Srivastava, 2020). In developing economies, a lack of recycling facilities means lower recycling rates (Hameed *et al*., 2022), triggering environmental issues like landfills (Khurana and Tadesse, 2019). Improved infrastructure linking textile producers and recyclers could increase sustainable disposal (Laitala, 2014).

Nostalgia, the emotional attachment to clothing, also influences the choice of disposal method. Consumers are more inclined to reuse, donate, and recycle than throw

away clothing they have a personal connection to (Wang *et al*., 2020). Studies indicate that nostalgia positively impacts clothing disposal by inducing a sense of meaning among consumers, leading to more meaningful disposal (e.g., Kim and Childs, 2021; Zhang *et al*., 2021). Older consumers, such as baby boomers and seniors, may be more nostalgic (Zaman *et al*., 2019). This sentimental yearning for the past may lead consumers to act without considering the potential impact on the future (Wang *et al*., 2020).

Table 5:Summary of motives for disposal

Themes and Definition	Reference
▪ **Economic benefits** Saving money directly or indirectly	(Joung and Park-poaps, 2013; Shim, 1995)
▪ **Altruism** Helping others	(Wai Yee *et al*., 2016)
▪ **Additional motives**	(Farrant *et al*., 2010; Hameed *et al*., 2022; Hassan *et al*., 2022; Albinsson and Perera, 2009)

Source: Prepared by the authors.

3.8. Method

3.8.1. Qualitative research

This study was conducted in a relatively previously unexplored developing economy, thus an exploratory study using a qualitative research method was undertaken. Semi-structured interviews were used because they can provide a deeper understanding of a topic and provide rich detail (Denscombe, 2017). These interviews also permit flexibility and focus (Bell *et al*., 2022).

3.8.2. Sampling

A judgement (or purposive) sample was used to attain the research purpose (Bell *et al*., 2022; Denscombe, 2017). Robinson (2014) suggested that a heterogeneous sample helps identify commonalities across diverse groups, ensuring findings are not confined to specific demographic, temporal, or spatial domains. Participants from various backgrounds were included to represent a diverse cross-section of characteristics, such as gender, age, religion, socioeconomic status, and geographic location (Campbell *et al*., 2020; Denscombe, 2017). To ensure diversity, the sample included both male and female participants aged between 18 and 65, ranging from daily laborers to university professors, as well as individuals who were employed or self-employed. Participants also represented different religious backgrounds, including Muslim, Orthodox Christian, Protestant, and non-believers. Additionally, participants were required to have disposed of clothing within the six months preceding the interview.

This study involved 27 semi-structured, face-to-face interviews from Addis Ababa and Hawassa, each lasting 35 minutes (see Table 6). Interviews continued until saturation was attained, resulting in no new information (Denscombe, 2017). Saturation was reached in the 22nd interview, although additional interviews were conducted to confirm this.

The interview guide was developed based on the literature review (see Appendix 1). It was prepared using indirect questioning to reduce the potential impact of social desirability bias (Bell *et al*., 2022). It was written in English, translated into Amharic, and reviewed by a language expert. Pilot tests were conducted to identify potential issues with question formulation and the semi-structured questionnaire was adjusted until saturation was reached (Denscombe, 2017).

The study considered the importance of managing language differences in cross-language research to ensure trustworthiness (Mohamad Nasri *et al*., 2021). The source

language was used for transcription and coding of interview data, while themes were translated into English. This method allowed for iterative comparison and evaluation of the translation, and the accuracy of the codes and themes against the original transcript in the source data. This approach is an ideal choice for qualitative research (Esfehani and Walters, 2018).

Table 6:Details of the interview participants

Participant number	**Gender**	**Duration**
F01	Female	31:01
F02	Female	33:39
M01	Male	55:53
M02	Male	50:07
M03	Male	37:34
F03	Female	34:04
M04	Male	37:01
F04	Female	33:57
F05	Female	38:33
F06	Female	37:10
M05	Male	46:31
M06	Male	31:25
F07	Female	27:09
M07	Male	33:51
M08	Male	30:29
F08	Female	29:22
M09	Male	31:33
F09	Female	35:40
F10	Female	34:48
M10	Male	31:42
M11	Male	32:34
M12	Male	46:55
F11	Female	38:40
M13	Male	33:40
F12	Female	30:05
F13	Female	28:20
M14	Male	31:45
	Average duration	**35:41**

Source: Prepared by the authors.

3.8.3. Data analysis

The interviews were transcribed by one of the researchers. Each interview transcript was carefully observed and read several times to get immersed and familiar with the data (Saldaña, 2021). Open coding was utilised to segment the data into meaningful units. The coding was done manually, line by line, using highlighters to identify initial codes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This manual method is a common and effective method that forms the root of electronic coding (Saldaña, 2021). An inductive approach was used to build categories and themes followed by thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Categories were established based on the 25% minimum participation rate (Butterfield *et al*., 2009).

Several a priori codes were identified from the literature review, but the analysis of the interviews enabled the identification of emergent codes. A coding framework was developed to provide data validity and reduce bias (Marquardt *et al*., 2017). An independent coder was briefed on the study's purpose and assisted in verifying the coherency and accuracy of the coding (Marquardt *et al*., 2017).

Table 7:Data structure

First order concepts	Second order themes	Aggregate dimensions
• Handing it to "liwach" • Exchanging for household appliances	Bartering	Disposal methods
• Redesign it into an alternative clothing • Mending and repairing • Transforming into bags, pillowcases • Cutting for rags, doormat, mop, and pillow inserts	Repurposing & reuse	
• Giving to churches' • Send out to school • Hand in to volunteer charity clubs • Sharing with the needy • Supporting disadvantaged	Donating	
• Give to younger sisters/brothers/cousins • Circulate in the family • Giving to friends & neighbours	Gifting	
• Throw it with garbage • Give it to garbage-collectors • Put it in trash	Discarding	
• Saving money for other goods • Get new items in return • Changing with usable item • Means of finance	Economic benefits	Motives of disposal
• People deserve more • Sharing is love • Caring for the needy • Giving brings happiness • Cooperating during difficult times • What I don't need, needed by others	Altruism	
• Close by • Effortless • Time-saving • Inexpensive	Convenience	

Source: Prepared by the authors.

3.8.4. Data quality/trustworthiness

To ensure the findings were trustworthy, the characteristics described by Guba (1981) were used to convey trustworthiness. The interviews also provided evidence of credibility in the coding process by applying the codebook developed based on literature. The quotes provided in the findings illustrate the themes and patterns in the data (Denscombe, 2017; Saldaña, 2021). The coding strategies and data interpretation were cross-checked through peer checking, thereby reflecting transferability (Stahl and King, 2020). Dependability was obtained, as the interviews were recorded and transcribed, and then analysed. Confirmability was obtained by reflecting on the possible bias during the research and limiting any effect thereof (Stahl and King, 2020).

3.8.5. Ethical considerations

The study followed all the ethical requirements associated with conducting qualitative research. The participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and their rights before the start of the interview. All participants gave informed written consent to partake and to the audio recording of their interview. Participants were allocated a number, which is used in the findings to ensure the confidentiality of their responses.

3.9. Results

3.9.1. Findings – disposal methods

The data analysis showed that clothing disposal methods are important issues in developing economies. Consumers may use five major disposal methods: one emergent theme (bartering) and four a priori themes (repurposing and reusing, donating, gifting, and discarding) (see Table 7).

Bartering. Bartering is a common practice in Ethiopia, where used clothing is exchanged for household appliances. This is a different mode of bartering, named *liwach* in Amharic. People doing this pass residential areas with vending carts laden with household appliances, proclaiming "*liwach yalesh*!" to mean "anyone in need of bartering", and individuals with clothing await the arrival of *liwach* to engage in the barter. As F11 stated:

> *"I often get rid of clothing that I don't wear using liwach…. I utilise this technique most of the time …. What is interesting is that they carry a variety of household items for you to choose and take in return."*

Similarly, M01 mentioned that bartering was common and stated:

> *"Some individuals would interpret it as being, um, selfish. It is, after all, my possession, and I have the right to handle it however I see fit. Therefore, bartering is the most convenient and effective technique, in my opinion."*

Repurposing and reusing. Repurposing is the process of using clothing for an alternative purpose, extending its lifespan by redesigning, modifying, upcycling, and transforming it into another usable item (e.g., Coppola *et al.*, 2021; Degenstein *et al*., 2020). In Ethiopia, most consumers utilise used clothing as doormats, cleaning rags, and mops. Some consumers turn their used clothing into other items, such as bags or pillowcases, by taking it to a local tailor. The study's participants admitted to transforming different clothing items into various forms, including pants into shorts, skirts into shirts, and t-shirts and skirts into bags and pillow inserts. For example, F04 stated:

> "*I create bags with my designs using the pieces of worn-out sweaters and shorts.*"

Similarly, reusing clothing involves using it by the same consumer after storing it for different reasons, such as physical changes during pregnancy, where women temporarily store clothing and reuse it after reducing their weight. Ethiopians keep expensive traditional dresses for holidays and special events, like Epiphany and Ethiopian New Year, while disposing of regular outfits using other methods. F05 shared:

"*I retain my favourite clothing that doesn't fit me any more after giving birth in the hopes of wearing them once my body has adjusted.*"

Similarly, keeping it for a special event even if it is out of fashion was identified by F04, as she "*might need it someday for a special event*".

Donating. Donating is a common method of clothing disposal in Ethiopia, with most participants donating clothing through third parties like religious organisations, schools, and voluntary youth associations. Ethiopian consumers are highly influenced by their collectivist community, with religious groups and schools setting up charity programmes where members give food, money, used clothing, and other resources. Churchgoers also participate in occasional charity programmes when a call for donations is made by their church, as stated by F01:

"*The church requested supplies and clothing from us, so we gladly provided them*."

Schools and voluntary youth associations are key sources of charitable donations, serving as intermediaries between donors and recipients, primarily non-governmental organisations. F04 expressed her willingness to donate to these programmes:

"*Sometimes my children take part in school charity programmes when they are asked by their teachers"; while M03 highlighted that it "is one method of teaching kids to be kind*".

There are also volunteer groups that collect clothing from individuals and distribute it to those who are displaced by war, helpless in prison, or homeless. F08 described this as follows:

"*Volunteers requested clothing twice this year, and we provided it to them…. If they let us know in advance, we'll wash and prepare the items for pick-up tomorrow or the following day*."

Gifting. The participants highlighted the importance of family orientation in Ethiopian culture, extended family living, and sharing clothing. Younger children often wear older siblings' or cousins' clothing, and giving clothing to those with lower economic status is common. This cultural aspect is cherished and promotes clothing disposal through gifting, extending its service life. M05 shared:

"*My parents and grandparents taught me the value of generosity. I want this positive culture of giving and coming together to be passed down to my children*."

M10 described gifting in the following way:

> "*I wore two wool outfits a few times, and neither their attractiveness nor their quality had faded. They resemble fresh fabric. Recently, my wife took them out and gave them to my elder brother. He currently has them on. I don't want them to be removed in any other way. But now I am happy he keeps them on longer. He will probably pass them to our uncle or a neighbour after he quits wearing them."*

Discarding. Clothing depreciates over time, causing its economic value to deteriorate. Repurposed clothing becomes worn and torn, while other items may become stained and faded due to repeated washing and ironing, ultimately becoming useless. Consumers discard ripped clothing with garbage, as suggested by F03:

> "*I toss anything in the trash if it is ripped and not wearable."*

According to F04:

"If it is too old and no longer of any use, it would be discarded with the trash. There are paid people who do the garbage collection job. Two days a week, or perhaps once a week, they come and take up the trash…. They deliver it to the location set up by the local government."

3.9.2. Findings – motives for disposal

Participants reported three motives that guide them in choosing a given clothing disposal method: economic benefits, altruism, and convenience (see Table 7).

Economic benefits. The data analysis indicates economic benefits an important motive for clothing disposal, with consumers preferring methods that provide pecuniary benefits. However, participants did not mention the direct selling of used clothing for money, and respondent M04 did not know if there are buyers for used clothing from domestic sources, despite the common selling of imported second-hand clothing. M04 further stated that, "*If there was a way to sell it for money, the money could be used as needed.*"

"*We gather used clothing and trade it for the home goods we most urgently require. For instance, we recently experienced broken coffee cups that fell to the ground. A set of coffee cups used to cost us US$30-35. But we gathered some discarded children's and adult apparel and traded them via liwach for a set of coffee cups.*

I get by with giving away used clothing when there is yard labour to be done, like pruning pine trees, without spending any money." (M04)

Participants reported saving money by repurposing and reusing used clothing. They find alternative uses for used clothing with modifications or redesigns, saving money on other items. For example, F03 expressed her dislike of buying handbags, stating:

"*I design my own bags from used clothing."*

One participant mentioned keeping her traditional clothing for future use due to its high cost:

> "*I don't want to donate or barter my traditional clothes since, among other things, it costs too much…. I prefer to temporarily store them. The price of traditional outfits is rising these days; the average item costs between US$120 and US$160. Well, that's my salary [laughter].*" (F04)

Altruism. The data show that altruism is an important motive for clothing gifting and donations, particularly to the needy and house helpers. When consumers are driven by altruistic motives, they give used but also new clothing. Participants mentioned feeling happy and satisfied when they helped the needy. Participant F11 emphasised that it is uncomfortable to see herself as a donor for giving clothing that she did not use. She believed what should happen is that the needy be provided with new clothing:

"*What I deserve, they deserve as well."*

Some participants viewed their charitable donation as a religious duty, but emphasised satisfaction over any religious connection.

> "*It feels nice when you encourage someone and observe a positive change in them. For instance, I support a child in an orphanage; I give him 4 000-5 000 ETB [about US$75-US$100] annually, and I also visit and mentor him. I feel that by doing this, I am assisting in this child's education and mentoring so that he can use his potential, discover his best self, and achieve the level he is capable of."* (M05)

"*About a fortnight ago on a Sunday … I was heading to church early in the morning like I always do. I noticed a shivering woman sitting on the side of the road. I glanced at her before moving forward, but after a short distance, I turned around. I was unable to ignore her in such circumstances. I took off my jacket and put it on her. My conscience would not have been at ease if I had left without doing it."* (M06)

Our study uncovers that during challenging times, gifting and donating are common methods of disposing of clothing. Participants often choose these methods because what is no longer useful for them may be highly needed by others. (It should be noted that the data were collected during the war in north Ethiopia.) F06 affirmed this by stating:

"*Lending a helping hand to the displaced people; sharing meals and clothing is what the time requires*."

Convenience. The last motive identified is convenience. Consumers prefer a convenient easy-to-use method for disposing of clothing, avoiding extra effort, time, and labour. They opt for a method that is easily available and convenient in terms of time, place, and effort, and choose the most suitable one based on available disposal options. Feedback from the interviews included:

"*If the church didn't ask us [the family], we would get rid of the clothing most likely through exchanging … because they take it from our door. (F08)*

Giving to a poor person who couldn't afford it would be nice, but that can only happen when there is someone who can provide the garments to the needy. I consider the process to be laborious and challenging." (M08)

"…I act in a way that suits my needs at the time. I don't have a set routine that I stick to. I might make a deal if I see liwach as I leave my house in the morning. I'll

give it to someone if they can help with some of the work at home. I shred up a rag and use it if I don't have any more to clean something. But since there is always a solution that takes place in its own time, I don't want to worry about how to handle used clothing." (M08)

"*You know, liwach is a feasible choice for me … of course, for many others…. You see, I don't need to put in any extra work. They come to my door and take the clothing. That simple*." (M01)

3.10. Discussion

This study aimed to explore the methods and motives behind the SR disposal of clothing in Ethiopia, focusing on the disposal methods and the motives behind these.

3.10.1. Clothing disposal methods

Our study identified five disposal methods: *bartering, repurposing and reusing, donating, gifting*, and *discarding* (see Table IV). Swapping involves exchanging used clothing for money. Swapping takes place in physical or online events where people socialise and exchange used clothing (Bernardes *et al*., 2020; Roster and Ferrari, 2023), which is dominated by the social and experiential aspects (Machado *et al*., 2019). If participants cannot find suitable clothing for swapping, they can dispose of their old clothing or any leftovers from swapping by donating to charity.

Our study found three differences between swapping and bartering. First, bartering involves exchanging used clothing for other new (non-clothing) items, which have not been identified in developed economies, making this a unique contextual feature. Second, bartering is a door-to-door system where small informal traders come to consumers' residences to trade household appliances. This door-to-door system involves hand-driving

a cart full of items for exchange. Finally, bartering does not provide clothing for free, although leftover clothing is given for free in swapping events.

Concerning repurposing and reusing, consumers often find new uses for items they would otherwise discard (e.g., Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013). This mirrors a sense of resourcefulness and understanding of the alternative value of objects beyond their intended purpose. Repurposing contributes to sustainable consumption by reducing waste and extending clothing's lifespan (Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013). This disposal method, often seen as upcycling and "converting" clothing for different uses (e.g. Coppola *et al*., 2021), is common in developed economies like the United States and Canada, as it is in the context of this study (Degenstein *et al*., 2020; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013).

Donating is a widely used disposal method in developing economies, promoting waste reduction and fostering a sense of social engagement and solidarity for the underprivileged (Bianchi and Birtwistle, 2010, 2012; Hassan *et al*., 2022; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013; Sonnenberg *et al*., 2022). Gifting is another prevalent disposal method in developing economies. It aligns with the close relationship with the recipient (Cruz-Cárdenas *et al*., 2019). This practice resonates with many developing economies owing to their collectivist cultural tendencies and societal norms (Cruz-Cárdenas and Arévalo-Chávez, 2018). For instance, in Ethiopia, the family structure – consisting of three generations (grandparents, parents, and grandchildren) with the possibility of up to four generations (Evason, 2018) – has a tradition of mutual assistance, promoting the practice of gifting.

Lastly, discarding is a disposal method used when clothing is no longer useful (Bianchi and Birtwistle, 2012; Soyer and Dittrich, 2021). A lack of awareness about other options was also a reason for discarding. Previous studies have found that some consumers

choose to keep clothing items due to high purchase prices or emotional attachment (e.g., Degenstein *et al*., 2020; Wang *et al*., 2020), but these were not identified in this study.

3.10.2. Motives for clothing disposal

Three motives for clothing disposal were identified among the participants: *economic*, *altruistic*, and *convenience* (see Table IV). The study's participants mentioned economic motive as a primary reason for disposing of used clothing, consistent with previous studies (Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013). Despite the prevalence of impoverished consumers, our study found that participants did not directly consider reselling used clothing for money, contrary to previous studies (Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013; Shim, 1995).

Our study found that participants had altruistic motives for clothing disposal (Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013; Wai Yee *et al*., 2016). In developed economies, charity shops are common, enabling this motive (Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013). In this study, charity was done directly or through informal means, such as schools, churches, and youth volunteer groups. In developed economies, charity shops collect clothing to reduce textile waste going to landfills (Bianchi and Birtwistle, 2010). However, developed economy consumers view altruism from the perspective of environmentalism – accepting responsibility for one's actions and having values concerned with others' well-being (Bianchi and Birtwistle, 2010).

Convenience was identified as an important motive for clothing disposal, with participants expressing a desire for disposal to be easier and take less time and effort. This is consistent with previous research. However, in Ethiopia, sustainable (i.e., SR) clothing disposal is challenging due to the absence of second-hand charity shops, recycling facilities, and other relevant clothes disposal infrastructure. Similar results were noted in Malaysia, another developing economy (Hassan *et al*., 2022). Customers often discard

clothing for convenience, as it saves time and effort (Soyer and Dittrich, 2021). Future efforts should focus on encouraging sustainable and SR clothing disposal by making it more convenient for consumers to donate, repurpose, and reuse clothing instead of discarding it.

3.11. Contribution and implications

3.11.1. Theoretical, methodological, and contextual contribution

The study contributes to literature theoretically, methodologically, and contextually. Theoretically, the study introduces a unique perspective on bartering as a disposal method, focusing on using clothing to acquire new household items like glassware, rather than exchanging similar used products. This is different from the methods discussed in previous literature (e.g., Machado *et al*., 2019; Roster and Ferrari, 2023).

Moreover, the choice of disposal method is driven by a range of motives. This paper bridges an important gap in literature (Bernardes *et al*., 2020) by examining the motives behind clothing disposal methods, resulting in the framework linking the disposal methods and the motives (see Table 8). In this matrix, the rows indicate the various disposal methods, while the columns indicate the different disposal motives. The "X" denotes the alignment between a specific disposal method and motive. Accordingly, bartering, repurposing, and reusing align with economic benefits; donating and gifting align with altruism; and discarding align with convenience.

Table 8:Summary of clothing disposal methods and motives

	Economic benefits	*Altruism*	*Convenience*
Bartering	X		
Donating		X	
Gifting		X	
Repurposing and reuse	X		
Discarding			X

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Methodologically, the study addresses the need for a more inclusive sample (Bernardes *et al*., 2020; Sonnenberg *et al*., 2022) by employing a heterogeneous population, including men and participants from varied socio-economic groups, to deepen our understanding of clothing disposal methods and motives. Contextually, although sustainable consumption is a global agenda, extant literature (Cruz-Cárdenas and Arévalo-Chávez, 2018; Sonnenberg *et al*., 2022) focuses on developed economies. This study clarifies context-specific methods and motives used by consumers in a developing economy (i.e., Ethiopia) to dispose of their clothing. This is relevant to Ethiopia given the sustainability challenges presented by fast fashion, clothing imports, and the lack of recycling infrastructure.

3.11.2. Practical and societal implications

Understanding motives for SR clothing disposal can encourage sustainable practices. All stakeholders in the fashion sector, including consumers, retailers, manufacturers, and the government, must contribute to these sustainability practices.

At the individual level, the study suggests that practical changes in SR clothing disposal by consumers have crucial societal implications. Consumers can contribute by reducing consumption, disposing of clothing responsibly (i.e., donating to local charities, repurposing, recycling), and making sustainable choices. This translates into tangible

behavioural changes affecting the actual clothing disposal practices, including mending and amending used clothing, thereby contributing to a more sustainable/SR consumption. This has a significant implication for the Ethiopian community by meeting the needs of impoverished ones, reducing textile waste in landfills and rivers, and promoting a culture of sustainability.

At the organisational level, retailers and manufacturers can facilitate sustainable and responsible clothing disposal practices by launching buyback and recycling initiatives. These give customers the choice to recycle and return used clothing to suppliers, thus encouraging the local fashion manufacturers to become more sustainable. Manufacturers can also promote SR clothing disposal practices by linking it with their CSR strategies, organising donation programmes (e.g., launching thrift stores), and creating awareness of SR disposal through marketing communication. Such initiatives can improve the waste minimisation strategies of Ethiopian fashion manufacturers, considering there is a lack of strategy in this area, as highlighted by Bizuneh and Tadesse (2020).

At the governmental level, policymakers in Ethiopia can play a vital role in sustainable clothing disposal by formulating and implementing appropriate policies. More specifically, they can encourage the sector's players – for instance, through awarding and incentivising more sustainable fashion manufacturers as well as producers and designers of the traditional handwoven *shemma*, allocating resources like land and finance for recycling facilities, and supporting sustainable initiatives, such as buyback programmes. While preserving Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage and values, these collaborative efforts can promote sustainable/SR clothing disposal and a sustainable society in general.

3.11.3. Managerial implications

Fashion sector managers can make strategic decisions based on consumer motives for clothing disposal by linking business strategies with SR disposal. This can be achieved, for example, by getting people to donate (altruism) in their marketing and implementing in-store clothing take-back programmes to give economic benefits to participants.

These programmes would require advertisements focusing on their benefits, which may increase consumer trust and result in a positive brand image (Hameed *et al*., 2022). Collaborating with the *liwach* can create a circular supply chain by collecting used clothing to be recycled, upcycled, or resold. This reduces the purchase of new products, thereby promoting sustainable fashion. This study contributes to strategic managerial decisions of the Ethiopian fashion industry and retailers, enabling them to become more sustainable and SR and contribute to the global Sustainable Development Goals, while respecting the unique socio-economic and cultural context.

3.12. Limitations and future research

This study has typical limitations associated with qualitative research, such as a small sample size and subjectivity bias. The study's focus on Ethiopia's urban areas, particularly Addis Ababa and Hawassa, limits its generalizability, urging the need for research in rural areas and other developing economies. Quantitative research is recommended to obtain a broader perspective, potentially including various developing nations in an inter-regional study. Additionally, further investigation into clothing disposal methods, motives, and their relationships through quantitative analysis is suggested. Unlike prior research, this study does not identify the significance of environmental factors in clothing disposal, which is a point warranting further exploration, given the substantial clothing sales in Ethiopia and across Africa. Future studies may explore if alternative connections between

disposal methods and motives differ from those indicated here. Investigating online consumer reporting, such as sharing tips and forming community groups, could be valuable, as this topic holds significance across all economies.

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CHAPTER FOUR

4. PAPER III- YOUNG CONSUMERS' MOTIVES BEHIND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE FASHION DISPOSAL: EVIDENCE FROM ETHIOPIA

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Abstract

Purpose *- Consumers consider various clothing disposal methods, all driven by a range of motives. Thus, this study aims to examine young consumers' motives behind socially responsible (SR) clothing disposal methods in Ethiopia, a developing economy context.*

Design/methodology/approach *- A quantitative cross/sectional survey was conducted among Ethiopian youth aged 18-30 with a total sample size of 501. Using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), the relationship between economic, altruistic, and environmental motives and SR disposal methods were tested, with disposal convenience analysed as a moderator.*

Findings *- The results confirmed that economic motives significantly affect bartering and repurposing, while altruistic motives strongly influence charitable giving. Environmental motives significantly affect all three disposal methods (bartering, repurposing, and charitable giving). Disposal convenience negatively moderated the relationship between altruism and charitable giving, contrary to expectations. It did not significantly moderate other relationships.*

Originality/value *- This study is among the first to quantitatively examine the relationship between SR clothing disposal motives and methods in a developing economy, extending theories of sustainable consumer behavior to a new context and highlighting a new insight into the role of disposal convenience.*

Keywords responsible consumption, sustainable consumption, fashion disposal, fashion consumption, young consumers, developing economy

Paper type Research paper

4.1. Introduction

Fast fashion which is characterized by inexpensive and rapid turnover of fashion trends, fuels unsustainable clothing consumption patterns (Mehta *et al*., 2023; Boykoff *et al*., 2021). It is estimated that by 2050, if the current fast fashion trend continues, nearly 814 billion new clothing items will be produced (Pan, 2023), the fashion industry's resource usage will triple, and its carbon emission will rise to 26 per cent of the world's annual

emissions (Boykoff *et al*., 2021; Pan, 2023). Addressing these issues is crucial for the well-being of our planet, society and the industry itself as highlighted by the United Nations' designation of sustainable consumption and production as one of its sustainable development goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015).

In developing economies like Ethiopia, sustainability challenges are intensified by the rise of both domestically produced and imported second-hand clothing/ fast fashion, which often end up in landfills and cause severe environmental and social burdens (Khurana and Muthu, 2022; Kaur *et al*., 2022). With 72% of Ethiopia's population under the age of 30 (Geda, 2022), the youth demographic plays a critical role in shaping sustainable consumer behavior. Their growing preference for fast fashion accelerates unsustainable clothing consumption and disposal, underscoring the urgent need for interventions promoting socially responsible clothing disposal (Vlastelica *et al*., 2023; Williams and Hodges, 2022).

Studies suggest that all stakeholders, including consumers, need to take proactive measures to minimize waste in the clothing sector (Rotimi *et al.*, 2023) which can be done by implementing socially responsible (SR) clothing disposal (Vollebregt *et al*., 2024; Rotimi *et al.*, 2023; Patwary *et al*., 2022). SR clothing disposal involves decisions about the motives (why) and the methods used (how) to dispose of unused clothing (e.g. Hassan *et al*., 2022; Vlastelica *et al*., 2023).

Previous research has identified 3 main motives for SR disposal namely economic, altruistic and environmental (Hassan *et al*., 2022; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013; Lehner *et al*., 2020). An economic motive provides a financial benefit to the person disposing of the clothing item (Phulwani *et al*., 2021; Lehner *et al*., 2020), an altruistic motive encourages consumers to give their clothing to provide for others (Vollebregt *et al*., 2023) while an

environmental motive reflects a concern about the effects of clothing on the environment (Hassan *et al*., 2022). Similarly, research has identified several SR disposal methods. This pertains to various actions, including extending the lifespan of clothing through reusing, recycling, upcycling, bartering, donating and repurposing (Öztürk and Şahin, 2023; Patwary *et al*., 2022). These various disposal methods reflect wider socio-economic and cultural impacts on sustainability and consumption.

The selection of disposal methods is influenced by disposal motives (Williams and Hodges, 2022). For example, an economic motive may lead consumers to exchange, or barter used clothing. This enables them to make a living while simultaneously being sustainable (Hassan et al., 2022; Shim, 1995). Similarly, Lehner *et al*. (2020) found environmental reasons and altruism as important factors affecting SR disposal such as donation of home textiles, leaving potential for further study in the context of clothing. The selection of a disposal method is also influenced by its convenience, which refers to how easily and quickly consumers can dispose of clothing items, including the effort required, which affects consumers' disposal decisions (Acuti *et al*., 2023).

While sustainable clothing disposal has been extensively studied in developed economies, little is known about the motives behind young consumers in developing economies such as Ethiopia. This study aims to fill that gap. In the context of developing economies such as Ethiopia which are characterized by growing numbers of young consumers (Geda, 2020), there is a need for a more comprehensive study of fashion/ clothing disposal motives and methods using a quantitative approach (Young Lee et al., 2013). Correspondingly, recent research by Woldeyohanis *et al*. (2024), proposed a framework indicating the association of specific motives with specific SR disposal methods. Thus, this study aims

to examine the relationship between various motives affecting young consumers in their use of clothing disposal methods and the role of disposal convenience. Two research questions were formulated for the study. 1) What is the relationship between motives and methods of clothing disposal among young consumers in Ethiopia and 2) Does convenience moderate this relationship?

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The paper starts by presenting the literature and the theoretical support for the hypotheses after which the study's methodological design is discussed. The results and discussion follow, and the paper concludes by presenting the theoretical, managerial and societal implications of the study.

4.2. Literature review

This section reviews the existing literature on young consumers' fashion consumption, the Ethiopian context, and socially responsible disposal motives and methods, setting the foundation for the study's hypotheses.

4.2.1. Young consumers and fast fashion

Young consumers are at the forefront of fast fashion, shaping trends (Sobuj *et al*., 2021; Yamane and Kaneko, 2021), making the most frequent purchases and spending a significant portion of their income on fast fashion (Williams and Hodges, 2022). This demographic's choices directly influence sustainability, as the increasing clothing turnover leads to increased waste and resource depletion. (e.g. Ziesemer et al., 2021). To advance towards improved sustainability, understanding young consumers' SR clothing disposal motives is important (Vlastelica *et al*., 2023), because they have the potential to be the main agents of a more sustainable world (Yamane and Kaneko, 2021).

4.2.2. Ethiopia as a context

Ethiopia is a developing country in sub-Saharan Africa, and the continent's second most populous nation, with over 123 million people (UNDP, 2023), of which 72% are under 30, highlighting a substantial and rapidly growing youth demographic (Geda, 2022). Like their counterparts in developed and other developing countries, Ethiopian youth are influenced by social media, have access to information and exhibit growing environmental awareness (Khurana and Muthu, 2022; Kautish and Sharma, 2019). However, the socio-demographic, economic and cultural contexts in developing economies create a unique backdrop for these influences (Khurana and Muthu, 2022: Nguyen *et al*., 2019).

Furthermore, globalization has diminished geographic barriers, leading to increased consumption patterns among the younger generation that are often excessive and unsustainable (Hume *et al.*, 2010). In Ethiopia, as in other developing countries (e.g. Sobuj *et al*., 2021), there is a noticeable rise in fast fashion consumption, driven by the availability of affordable options, primarily from Chinese fast fashion brands (Khurana and Muthu, 2022). Additionally, emerging economies like Ethiopia are increasingly becoming destinations for second-hand clothing from the global north, posing a sustainability threat (Khurana and Muthu, 2022, Lingås *et al*., 2023).

4.2.3. SR clothing disposal motives and methods

Understanding the motives behind responsible clothing disposal is essential, as is the consumer's preference for specific disposal methods. Research categorizes the motives behind various disposal methods into "self-oriented" and "other-oriented" (Park *et al*., 2017). Self-oriented motives, like economic benefit, are related to personal advantage

while others-oriented motives, such as altruism and environmental concerns, focus on the welfare of others, including society (Park *et al*., 2017; Young Lee *et al*., 2013).

Sustainable/ SR disposal methods include charitable giving, including gifting to family and friends as well as donating to unknown recipients as both involve helping someone (Kaur and Bawa, 2018). Bartering, which is widely used in Ethiopia involves exchanging clothing often for new household items (Woldeyohanis et al., 2024); and repurposing/reusing, involves finding new or related purposes by modifying used clothing into other useful items (Wilson, 2016). Discarding (throwing away) is excluded from this study because it is not a sustainable/ SR disposal method (Lehner et al., 2020; Phulwani et al., 2021).

Together, these motives and disposal methods show how making responsible decisions may benefit oneself as well as larger societal and environmental goals.

4.2.4. Conceptual development and hypotheses

Based on the review of the extant literature and knowledge of the wide range of potential drivers of SR clothing disposal (e.g., Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013; Lehner *et al*., 2020; Woldeyohanis *et al*., 2024), this paper specifically focuses on the role of economic, altruistic, and environmental motives (independent variables) associated with SR clothing disposal methods: charitable giving, bartering, and repurposing (dependent variables). Moreover, the integration of some moderator variables while studying SR disposal of clothing was suggested by previous research (Nguyen *et al*., 2019), hence, with theoretical support from the literature, disposal convenience is treated as a moderator variable.

Economic Motives

Economic motive regarding disposal could be any form of financial benefit whether it be a direct exchange of clothing for another item or an indirect one resulting from repurposing and reusing clothing to avoid new purchases (Phulwani *et al*., 2021; Lehner *et al*., 2020). As consumers' actions are driven by their expectations of the results of those actions, such as financial gains (Zhang *et al*., 2019), economic motives positively drive SR clothing disposal (Sarigöllu *et al*., 2021; Lehner *et al*., 2020; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013).

Economic factors resulting from a personal financial crisis can influence the disposal behavior of consumers (Hassan *et al*., 2022), who try to be resourceful and make economic gains out of used clothing by bartering/exchanging their used clothing to make extra money (Hassan *et al.,* 2022). Young adults can also use this strategy to increase their income by bartering/exchanging clothing (Hassan *et al*., 2022).

As consumers' disposal methods are based on the cost-benefit analysis, economic motives are more appealing and they are closely related with exchanging/ reselling behaviours (De Ferran et al., 2020; Sarigöllü *et al* (2021). Similarly, economic gain causes consumers to repurpose/reuse their used clothing into another item that will fulfil a similar or distinct function (Coppola *et al*., 2021). While researchers formerly argued that less-privileged consumers repurpose used clothing due to financial constraints (Beninger and Robson, 2014), this practice has become common among all consumers (Wilson, 2016). This is driven by the economic benefits of avoiding/ reducing new purchases (Coppola *et al*., 2021).

However, while economic motives are among the important drivers of bartering/reselling and repurposing/reusing clothing (Lehner, 2020), they do not appear to be a significant

motivator for charitable giving as a disposal method (Lehner *et al*, 2020), indicating that those who engage in bartering are more likely to prioritize economic considerations.

Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Economic motive is positively related to the use of bartering as a clothing disposal method.

Hypothesis 1b (H1b): Economic motive is positively related to the use of repurposing as a clothing disposal method.

Altruistic Motives

Altruism is one of the important factors influencing SR clothing disposal behaviour (Zhang *et al*., 2019; Öztürk and Şahin; Lai and Chang, 2020; Vlastelica *et al*., 2023). This other directedness is reflected in an altruistic motive that can encourage consumers to give their possessions to provide more for others, thereby encouraging reduced consumption and finding ways to prolong the useful life of clothing (Vollebregt *et al*., 2023).

For people with higher incomes, SR clothing disposal may be driven by altruistic motives due to their perceived moral obligation to support others (Hassan *et al*., 2022), leading to the use of donation as a disposal method (De Ferran *et al*., 2020; Lehner *et al*., 2020). This takes on increased significance in the context of younger consumers, as altruistic considerations emerge as essential factors affecting SR clothing disposal practices among this demographic group (Wai Yee *et al*., 2016), instilling a sense of personal responsibility for others well-being (Öztürk and Şahin; Lai and Chang., 2020).

Hypothesis 2 (H2)*:* There is a positive relationship between altruistic motive and charitable giving as a clothing disposal method.

Environmental Motives

Environmental protection is a fundamental human value that can be integrated into daily life (Lai and Chang., 2020) as it reflects a concern about the effects clothing can have on the environment (Hassan *et al*., 2022). This concern results in consumers selecting a disposal method that can help to extend the life of clothing owing to the environmental impact of discarding (Wilson, 2016).

Earlier studies reported that clothing disposal methods are influenced by environmental factors with consumers who have a positive environmental attitude being more likely to donate or reuse their clothing i.e., using a SR disposal method (Connell and Kozar, 2014; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013). However, recently, inconsistent and mixed results have been reported in the literature. For example, Sarigöllü *et al* (2021) and Öztürk and Şahin (2023) found that SR clothing disposal behavior was not affected by environmental motivations, yet Lai and Chang (2020) found that clothing donation was affected by environmental factors while resale and reuse were not affected.

Hypothesis 3a (H3a): There is a positive relationship between environmental motive and bartering as a clothing disposal method.

Hypothesis 3b (H3b): There is a positive relationship between environmental motive and charitable giving as a clothing disposal method.

Hypothesis 3c (H3c): There is a positive relationship between environmental motive and repurposing as a clothing disposal method.

Disposal convenience as a moderator variable

Disposal convenience refers to how easily and quickly consumers can dispose of clothing items, including the effort required, which affects consumers' disposal decisions (Acuti *et*

al., 2023). Inconveniences associated with SR disposal methods such as repurposing and donation may inhibit consumers' SR disposal (Lehner *et al*., 2020). One way to reduce the inconvenience and increase SR disposal is through accessible disposal facilities (Rotimi *et al*., 2023; De Ferran *et al*., 2020) as these facilities can ease and shorten the time allocated for disposal thereby encouraging consumers to dispose of clothing responsibly (Acuti *et al*., 2023). For example, consumers prefer donating instead of discarding, but their behavior is influenced by disposal convenience (Lehner *et al*., 2020), including availability of disposal sites (Williams and Hodges., 2022). However, there are mixed findings such as disposal convenience was shown to be insignificant when used as an independent variable to predict the waste disposal behavior of young consumers (Kumar, 2019). However, its role as a facilitating factor in predicting the socially responsible behavior of consumers was found to be significant (Phulwani *et al*., 2021), thus treated as a moderator variable in this study.

Hypothesis 4a (H4a): Disposal convenience moderates the relationship between altruistic motives and charitable giving.

Hypothesis 4b (H4b): Disposal convenience moderates the relationship between economic motives and bartering.

Hypothesis 4c (H4c): Disposal convenience moderates the relationship between economic motives and repurposing.

This study, therefore, examines the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable with the moderating role of disposal convenience (see Figure 7).

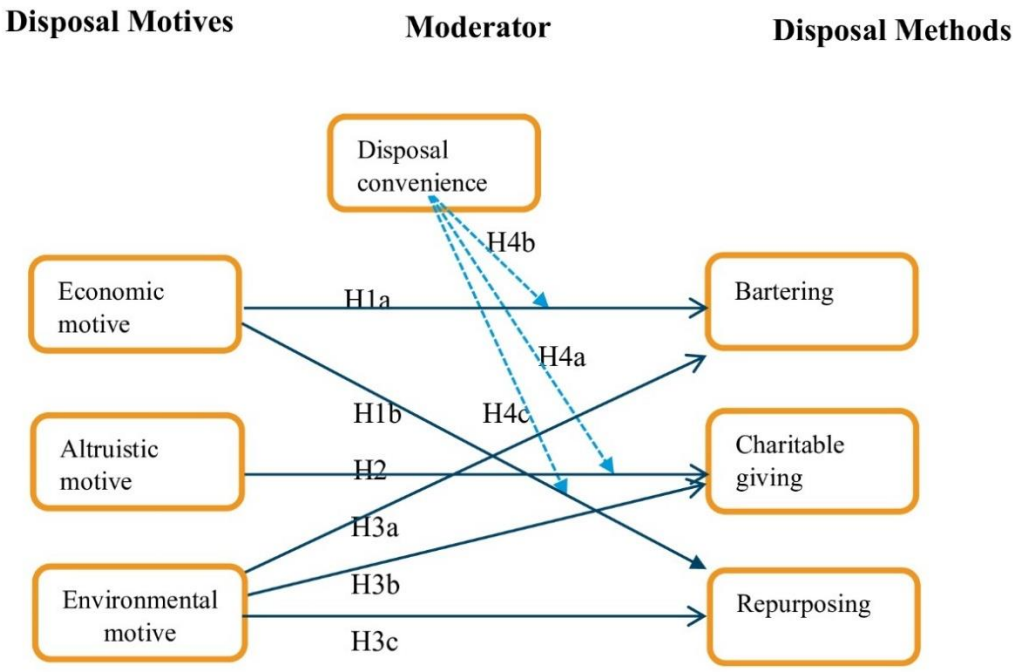

Figure 7: Conceptual model

4.3. Methodology

4.3.1. Research design

The research adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to gather data from young Ethiopian consumers, as suggested by previous studies (e.g. Young Lee *et al*., 2013; Sarigöllu *et al*., 2021; Woldeyohanis *et al*., 2024).

4.3.2. Population and sampling

The population comprised young Ethiopian clothing/ fashion consumers aged 18 to 30. Using non-probability judgement sampling (Etikan, 2016), the sample respondents were selected based on variables that identified suitable candidates. These respondents were screened to ensure they were within the specified age range and had experience in clothing disposal.

The data were collected through an online survey using Google Forms and distributing its link to individuals and various youth groups through the Telegram platform between September 2023 and November 2023 across a wide geographical area within Ethiopia, covering different metropolitan and semi-urban locations. A total of 517 questionnaires were collected, which resulted in 501 usable questionnaires after removing unengaged responses. No missing data was found because all questions were marked as "required" to ensure that responses are provided to all questions. The demographic variables of the study sample are outlined in Table 9.

As suggested by Hair *et al*., (2019), the sample size requirement for application of partial least squares structural equation modelling was determined by conducting G*power analysis, resulting in a minimum sample size requirement of 129, at a 95% confidence level and effect size of 0.15. Hence, the sample size of 501 for this study was found to be appropriate.

Table 9:Sample profile (n=501)

Demographic variables	*N*	*%*
Gender		
Male	348	69.5
Female	153	30.5
Age (years)		
18-20	156	31.1
21-30	345	68.9
Education		
Primary/Secondary	17	3.4
TVET/Diploma	11	2.2
Undergraduate	463	92.4
Postgraduate	10	2.0
Monthly income (ETB)		
<2000	347	69.3
2000-5000	77	15.4
5001-8000	21	4.2
8001-11000	18	3.6
11001-14000	12	2.4
14001-17000	9	1.8
17000 and above	17	3.4

Source: Smart PLS 4 Output (2024)

4.3.3. Measures

The study has used seven constructs: economic motive, altruistic motive, environmental motive, disposal convenience, bartering, charitable giving, and repurposing. Multiple-item scales were used to measure the research constructs, which were validated in previous research. The measurement items were adapted from various past studies such as Bianchi Birtwistle (2012) and Shim (1995) and modified and rephrased based on the current study's context. The items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 5". Demographic factors such as gender, age, education, and income were included at the end of the questionnaire in the form of closed-ended multiple choice questions. The questionnaire was originally written in English. Before data collection, it was translated into Amharic and Afan Oromo languages and back to English by a language expert. The translated version was compared with the original one by an English language teacher. A pilot study involving 30 young consumers (15 each for the Amharic and Afan Oromo versions) was conducted to assess the instrument's validity, leading to minor adjustment in the wording of both versions.

4.3.4. Data analysis process

Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) is a widely used approach in social science research including marketing for its ability to analyze complex relationships between observed and latent variables (Sarstedt *et al*., 2022). The multivariate statistical analysis of the present study is undertaken using PLS-SEM approach due to three main reasons: first, the complexity of the proposed model that aimed to examine the relationship between multiple exogeneous variables, namely, economic motive, altruism, and environmental motive on multiple endogenous variables, namely, bartering, charitable giving, and repurposing at a time; second, the capacity of PLS-SEM

to deal with non-normally distributed data; and thirdly, high statistical power of PLS-SEM makes it especially well-suited for exploratory research situations where theory is still developing (Hair *et al*., 2019; Usakli and Rasoolimanesh, 2023). To operate the PLS-SEM, SmartPLS 4.0 professional software package has been used.

Typically, the SEM includes two models: the outer model and the inner model. The outer model (measurement model) shows the relationship between items and constructs, while the inner model (structural model) depicts the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Hair *et al*., 2017).

4.4. Results

4.4.1. Analysis of measurement model

Reliability of the measures was assessed using Cronbach's α and composite reliability (CR) (Hair *et al*., 2019). As depicted in Table 10, the statistical analysis shows that all the reflective constructs scored Cronbach's α coefficients higher than 0.7, satisfying the criteria for adequate level reliability (Hair *et al*., 2019). This holds for the CR and Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (RhoA), indicating excellent internal consistency (see Table 10). To assess possible measurement errors for the collected data, convergent validity and discriminant validity measures were established (Hair *et al*., 2019). The convergent validity of the construct's has been ensured as the values of all the average variance extracted (AVE) were found higher than 0.5 for both endogenous and exogenous variables (Hair *et al*., 2019). Discriminant validity requirement is satisfied with the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratios below 0.85 (Hair *et al*., 2019; Henseler *et al*., 2015) (see Table 11). Also, the cross loadings of all observed constructs are low as compared to the loadings, establishing the discriminant validity (Appendix 2). To further substantiate the discriminant validity,

Fornell-Larcker criterion was applied; the square root of AVE values is greater than the inter-construct correlations (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair *et al*., 2017) (see Table 12).

Table 10:Assessment of the measurement model (n=501)

Construct	*Item*	*Loadings*	*Cronbach α*	*Rho_A*	*CR*	*AVE*
Bartering	BAR1	0.845	0.78	0.79	0.87	0.69
	BAR2	0.845				
	BAR3	0.806				
Charitable giving	CHG1	0.935	0.90	0.90	0.94	0.84
	CHG2	0.910				
	CHG3	0.897				
Repurposing	REP1	0.883	0.85	0.85	0.91	0.76
	REP2	0.856				
	REP3	0.882				
Economic motive	ECO1	0.905	0.90	0.91	0.94	0.84
	ECO2	0.926				
	ECO3	0.913				
Altruistic motive	ALT1	0.948	0.93	0.93	0.96	0.88
	ALT2	0.941				
	ALT3	0.917				
Environmental motive	ENV1	0.903	0.86	0.86	0.91	0.78
	ENV2	0.905				
	ENV3	0.840				
Disposal convenience	DCO1	0.852	0.76	0.76	0.86	0.67
	DCO2	0.799				
	DCO3	0.810				

Source: Smart PLS 4 Output (2024)

Table 11:Discriminant validity - Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) (n=501)

	ALT	**BAR**	**CHG**	**DCO**	**ECO**	**ENV**	**REP**
ALT -							
BAR	0,322						
CHG	0.754	0.443					
DCO	0.423	0.393	0.410				
ECO	0.217	0.298	0.188	0.425			
ENV	0.530	0.425	0.504	0.624	0.317		
REP	0.380	0.297	0.351	0.500	0.307	0.481	-

Note*:* ALT, Altruistic motive, BAR, Bartering, CHG, Charitable giving, DCO, Disposal convenience, ECO, Economic motive, ENV, Environmental motive, REP, Repurposing.

Table 12:Discriminant validity – Fornell-Larcker criterion (n=501)

	ALT	BAR	CHG	DCO	ECO	ENV	REP
ALT	**0.936**						
BAR	0.274	**0.832**					
CHG	0.691	0.369	**0.914**				
DCO	0.366	0.316	0.352	**0.821**			
ECO	0.199	0.256	0.171	0.357	**0.915**		
ENV	0.473	0.350	0.444	0.520	0.280	**0.883**	
REP	0.342	0.245	0.311	0.407	0.269	0.415	**0.874**

***Note**:* ALT, Altruistic motive, BAR, Bartering, CHG, Charitable giving, DCO, Disposal convenience, ECO, Economic motive, ENV, Environmental motive, REP, Repurposing.
The values in the boldface are the square root of AVE.

4.4.2. Analysis of structural model

A structural model is employed to examine the hypothesized relationship between the latent variables in the theoretical model (Hair *et al*., 2014). Before assessing the structural relationships, the variance inflation factor (VIF) has been assessed to ensure that the regression results are unbiased which resulted in values below the threshold 3, confirming the absence of multicollinearity issues in this research (Hair *et al*., 2019) (see Appendix 4). The coefficient of determination, R^2 values were computed to measure the predictive power of the structural model (Hair *et al*., 2017; Ringle *et al*., 2015). The model explained 16.5% of the variation in bartering, 52.2% of the variation in charitable giving, and 23.6% of the variation in repurposing (see Figure 8 and Appendix 5). While acceptable value of R^2 varies between research context, R^2 values of 0.2 are considered higher in consumer behavior studies (Hair *et al*., 2017). Besides, this study establishes that all the constructs are within the acceptable threshold of f^2 except for the effects of economic motive on repurposing, environmental motive on charitable giving, and interaction of disposal convenience on both repurposing and bartering, as exhibited in Table 12.

The goodness of fit index was tested with the standard root mean square residual (SRMR) (see Table 14). The SRMR shows a value of 0.064, which is below the maximum acceptable value of 0.08, indicating a good fit (Hair *et al*., 2019).

4.4.3. Predictive relevance

Further, assessment of the PLS path model's predictive relevance was performed using a blindfolding procedure to obtain Stone-Geiser's Q^2 value (Hair *et al*., 2017; Usakli and Rasoolimanesh, 2023). The Q^2 values 0.145, 0.506, and 0.217 were generated respectively for bartering, charitable giving, and repurposing (see Table 13). All Q^2 values are higher than zero between the small to large ranges, indicating the predictive relevance of the structural model for the endogenous constructs (Hair *et al*., 2019).

Lastly, PLSpredict was conducted to compare LM RMSE and PLS RMSE. Only one indicator (REP1) showed a higher PLS RMSE, whereas all other indicators had lower RMSE value for the PLS model compared to the LM model (see Appendix 3). This results in a lower difference (PLS RMSE - LM RMSE), indicating that the PLS model has relatively higher predictive power and lower prediction error (Hair *et al*., 2019; Shmuel *et al*., 2019).

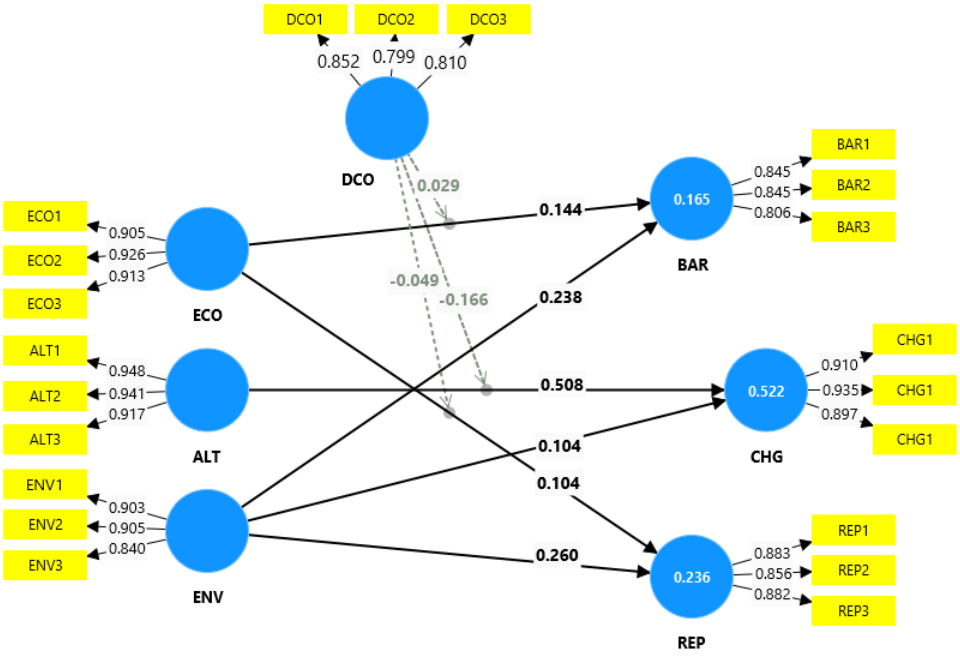

Figure 8:Conceptual model with results

4.4.4. Hypotheses testing

Overall, assessment of the model result confirms that the model is reliable, valid, and of a good fit, leading to hypotheses testing. This study used 5000 bootstrap samples as suggested by Hair *et al* (2017), to assess the path coefficients and empirically validate the hypothesized relationships proposed in Figure 7. To determine whether the relationship is significant or not, standardized beta coefficients, *t*-values, and *p*-values are used with a cutoff value higher than 1.96 and lower than 0.05 for the t values and p values respectively. The statistical significance of the path coefficients can be verified from the output depicted in Table 13, where the hypotheses, the paths, path coefficients, t statistics, p values and the decision on each hypothesis is summarized.

Hypothesis H1a predicted a positive relationship between economic motive and bartering, which was supported ($\beta = 0.144$, $t = 2.940$, $p < 0.05$). H1b, which proposed a positive relationship between economic motive and repurposing, was also supported ($\beta = 0.104$, $t = 2.202$, $p < 0.05$). H2, predicting a positive relationship between altruism and charitable giving, was supported ($\beta = 0.508$, $t = 10.233$, $p < 0.001$).

Hypotheses H3a, H3b, and H3c predicted a positive relationship between environmental motive and bartering, charitable giving, and repurposing, respectively. All three hypothesis were supported: H3a ($\beta = 0.238$, $t = 4.422$, $p < 0.001$), H3b ($\beta = 0.104$, $t = 2.109$, $p < 0.05$), and H3c ($\beta = 260$, $t = 5.039$, $p < 0.001$).

H4a predicted that disposal convenience would moderate the correlation between altruism and charitable giving. The interaction term was significant ($\beta = - 0.166$, $t = 4. 224$, and $p < 0.001$), but, contrary to the hypothesis, the direction of this relationship was negative.

Hypotheses H4b and H4c predicted that disposal convenience would moderate the correlations between economic motive and bartering and between economic motive and repurposing. However, both hypotheses were not statistically supported, with H4b showing ($\beta = 0.029$, $t = 0.692$, $p < 0.49$) and H4c showing ($\beta = -0.049$, $t = 1.271$, $p < 0.20$).

Table 13:Hypotheses testing (n=501)

Hypotheses	Path	Path coefficients	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	F^2	p values	Decision
H1a	ECO -> BAR	0.144 **	2.940	0.021	0.003	Supported
H1b	ECO -> REP	0.104 *	2.202	0.012	0.028	Supported
H2	ALT -> CHG	0.508 ***	10.233	0.305	0.000	Supported
H3a	ENV -> BAR	0.238 ***	4.422	0.049	0.000	Supported
H3b	ENV -> CHG	0.104 *	2.109	0.014	0.035	Supported
H3c	ENV -> REP	0.260 ***	5.039	0.064	0.000	Supported
H4a	DCO x ALT -> CHG	-0.166 ***	4.224	0.049	0.000	Supported
H4b	DCO x ECO -> BAR	0.029	0.692	0.001	0.489	Not supported
H4c	DCO x ECO -> REP	-0.049	1.271	0.004	0.204	Not supported

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

Table 14:Model fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.051	0.064
d_ULS	0.593	0.942
d_G	0.319	0.327
Chi-square	999.598	1005.315
NFI	0.848	0.847

Source: Smart PLS 4 Output (2024)

4.5. Discussion and implications

This study explores the relationship between the various motives and SR clothing disposal methods used by young consumers in a developing economy. It also demonstrates the moderating role of disposal convenience in these relationships.

This study found that economic motives positively influence bartering and repurposing, altruistic motives drive charitable giving, and environmental motives significantly predict all three SR disposal methods. Surprisingly, disposal convenience negatively moderated

the relationship between altruism and charitable giving, while no significant moderation was found for economic motives.

The results indicate that economic motive is positively correlated with bartering and repurposing. Specifically, hypotheses H1a and H1b predicted a positive correlation between economic motive and bartering, and repurposing, respectively. Both are supported, indicating that young consumers with a strong economic motive are more likely to use bartering and repurposing as a disposal method in the study's context. This suggests that the desire to gain economic value from used clothing drives young consumers to barter/ exchange or find new uses for their clothing, potentially as a cost saving measure. The findings are consistent with previous research, including those from developing countries, that underline economic benefits as an important factor affecting sustainable/ SR clothing disposal (e.g. Hassan *et al*., 2022; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2011; Laitala, 2014, Woldeyohanis *et al*., 2024). In the context of developing economies like Ethiopia, where a significant number of consumers faces financial difficulties, it is crucial to recognize that economically disadvantaged consumers engage in the creative repurposing of used clothing. This action serves as a coping mechanism to address their various needs amidst economic hardship (Beninger and Robson, 2014).

Hypothesis H2 predicted a positive relationship between altruism and charitable giving, which was strongly supported by the data. This strong relationship characterizes the influence of altruistic motives on the young consumers' decision to donate clothing to charity. The high beta value implies that consumers who are motivated by a desire to help others are significantly more likely to give their clothing to charity. This finding aligns with previous studies that have identified altruism as an important motive for charitable

giving (e.g. Joung and Park-Poaps, 2011; Mitchell *et al*., 2009; Lehner *et al*., 2020). Hypotheses H3a, H3b, and H3c predicted the correlation between environmental motives and bartering, charitable giving, and repurposing as SR disposal methods. All are supported, indicating that environmental concerns significantly affect young consumers in their use of disposal methods. This implies that environmentally motivated consumers are more likely to engage in SR disposal methods, emphasizing the importance of environmental awareness and concern in promoting sustainable behaviors (e.g., Connell and Kozar, 2014).

Moreover, the moderating role of disposal convenience was examined in hypotheses H4a, H4b, and H4c. While H4a predicted that disposal convenience would influence the relationship between altruism and charitable giving, the relationship was found to be statistically significant but negative. This implies that when disposal convenience is high, the strength of the relationship between altruism and charitable giving weakens. This finding is interesting as it deviates from the theoretical hypothesis proposed and previous research. A possible explanation for this negative relationship could be that disposal convenience reduces the perceived effort required by consumers for charitable giving, thereby reducing their altruistic satisfaction. Studies show that when the charitable practice is too convenient, it may reduce the perceived personal sacrifice, diminishing the consumer's sense of giving to charity, making altruistic satisfaction less meaningful (e.g., Small and Cryder, 2016; Olivola and Shafir, 2013).

In contrast, hypotheses H4b and H4c predicted that disposal convenience would strengthen the economic motive's relationships with bartering and repurposing, neither being supported. These results indicate that disposal convenience does not significantly influence

the relationship between economic motive and the said disposal methods. This may suggest that economically driven consumers mainly focus on the financial related benefits rather than the convenience of the disposal method. These findings are also consistent with previous studies (e.g., Hassan *et al*., 2022). Prior studies found that disposal decisions are often guided by cost-benefit analysis (e.g., Sarigöllu *et al*., 2021), where other factors including disposal convenience may not be crucial if the economic gains are perceived as significant.

4.5.1. Theoretical implications

The findings extend the theoretical framework proposed by Woldeyohanis et al. (2024) by providing empirical validation among young Ethiopian consumers. Confirming the positive influence of economic and altruistic motives that aligns with prior research (e.g., Hassan et al., 2022, Joung and Park-Poaps, 2011), this study enhances our understanding of the drives behind SR disposal methods.

The strong positive relationship between altruism and charitable giving underscores that altruism is a crucial factor in promoting SR disposal. This study not only strengthens past studies (e.g., Joung and Park-Poaps, 2011; Mitchell *et al*., 2009) but also provides a deeper understanding of the magnitude of the relationship.

Although earlier studies suggested that consumers with strong environmental attitude are more likely to engage in SR clothing disposal practices such as donating and reusing (Connell and Kozar, 2014; Joung and Park-Poaps, 2013), more recent studies have reported inconsistent findings. For instance, Sarigöllü et al (2021) and Öztürk and Şahin (2023) found no significant relationship between environmental motivations and SR clothing disposal behavior. Despite these mixed results in the literature, the current study identifies

a statistically significant relationship, supporting the relevance of environmental factors in shaping SR disposal practices and offering new insights into this ongoing debate.

The unexpected negative moderation effect of disposal convenience offers a novel contribution, suggesting that ease of disposal may reduce the perceived altruistic satisfaction. While this concept exists in psychology literature, its application to the domain of clothing disposal offers fresh insight, aligning with psychological theories of prosocial behavior (e.g. Small and Cryder, 2016).

Additionally, aligned with other studies (e.g., Hassan et al., 2022), the lack of statistical significance in the moderating effect of disposal convenience on economic motive strengthens the postulate that since consumers mainly focus on economic benefits, the influence of convenience is negligible. This is particularly important in developing economies such as Ethiopia, where most consumers are economically impoverished.

4.5.2. Practical implications

These findings highlight several opportunities for influencing the clothing disposal behavior of young consumers. To drive sustainable/ SR disposal behavior, policymakers and organizations should formulate impactful strategies. For example, by integrating the economic and environmental benefits into their strategies, developing economies' firms in the clothing and garment industry can encourage consumers to adopt bartering and repurposing as SR disposal methods. Collaborations with informal used clothing traders who collect clothing from consumers can pave the way for firms to engage in circular economy (Woldeyohanis et al., 2024). Additionally, environmental advocacy groups and government agencies can inspire creativity and consumer engagement by hosting exhibitions that showcase innovative repurposing efforts, inspiring consumers to extend the life of their clothing, as the findings indicated these are more relevant in economies

where a significant number of consumers faces financial difficulties. Robust donation programs to local NGOs and second-hand/ thrift stores, can offer consumers a sustainable disposal option while emphasizing the positive impact of charitable giving. Finally, integrating environmental considerations into business strategies and partnering with environmental protection authorities to raise awareness can strengthen the appeal of sustainable/ SR disposal methods.

4.5.3. Societal implications

By encouraging SR disposal methods among young consumers, this study contributes to broader sustainable development goals (SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production). Promoting altruistic and environmentally driven disposal behaviors can reduce textile waste and increase community solidarity, particularly in resource constrained contexts like Ethiopia. Moreover, the positive effect of economic motives on bartering and repurposing suggests that promoting these practices has dual purposes. While consumers can reduce their financial burden, they can develop a SR disposal habit. Both the federal and regional governments in Ethiopia can consider these motives in their policies to encourage sustainable clothing disposal.

4.6. Limitations and future research

As with any research, this paper has limitations. First, the data was collected through an online survey, hence responses from young people who lack access to the internet and browsing device might have been missing. Second, since the study's sample is limited to urban and semi-urban areas as well as Ethiopian young consumers, the findings of the study may not be generalized to rural areas and young consumers in other developing economies. Additionally, this study did not include control variables such as gender and

socioeconomic status, which may have influenced the results. Future researchers could include samples from different age groups, including senior citizens, and consider controlling for these demographic factors in both Ethiopia and other developing economies.

The values of the coefficient of determination in this study show that other variables could affect SR clothing disposal practices. Therefore, future researchers can consider other variables such as consumer lifestyles, brands, and government regulations to increase the model's explanatory power.

Future research should explore the underlying mechanisms driving these relationships, specifically the unexpected negative moderation effect of disposal convenience on altruistic giving. Additionally, examining these and other SR disposal motives and methods across different consumer groups and socio-cultural and economic contexts could advance our understanding of clothing disposal behaviors in general.

4.7. Conclusion

This study examined young consumers motives' for socially responsible clothing disposal in Ethiopia, addressing an important gap in sustainable consumption literature. Using a quantitative approach and PLS-SEM analysis, the findings reveal that economic motives significantly and positively influence bartering and repurposing, while altruistic motives strongly predict charitable giving. Notably, environmental concerns emerged as a consistent driver across all three disposal methods, highlighting the importance of sustainability in young consumers' clothing disposal behavior.

The moderating role of disposal convenience produced mixed outcomes. While it negatively moderated the relationship between altruism and charitable giving, it showed no significant impact on the other relationships. This research offers valuable implications

for policymakers, NGOs, and sustainable fashion initiatives aiming to promote responsible disposal behaviors.

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CHAPTER 5

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter discusses the findings of the compiled studies, conclusions, limitations, and future research directions. It begins by revisiting the main research objective and demonstrating how the research questions align with it. The discussion synthesizes the key insights from the systematic literature review and the empirical studies, highlighting the progression of CnSR and the various clothing methods and motives identified in Ethiopia and their interplay. It then presents the dissertation's conclusion, emphasizing its theoretical and practical contributions, and recognizing consumers as active agents in sustainability. Finally, the chapter acknowledges limitations and suggests directions for future research.

5.1.General Discussion

5.1.1. Connecting back to the research purpose and questions

This dissertation set out to examine the concept of CnSR with a specific focus on clothing disposal in the context of Ethiopia. The focus of the study is on CnSR with a specific focus on post-consumption disposal of clothing. This overall purpose was approached from different but interlinked methodological approaches to develop explanations in the search for answers to the two overarching research questions.

This dissertation is guided by two research questions. The first research question is: How is CnSR defined in academic research, and what is its current state? To address this, I conducted a systematic literature review to identify definitions and conceptualizations of CnSR, key themes, research gaps, and future research directions. The main components of CnSR fall under six key themes: economic, environmental, health, philanthropic, social,

and ethical responsibilities (Paper 1). Furthermore, the concept of CnSR has recently shifted from a reactive, firm-oriented responsibility to a proactive, self-oriented) approach. Instead of merely responding to corporate actions, consumers can now actively drive sustainability through their consumption choices.

The second research question is: What clothing disposal methods and motives do Ethiopian consumers use? To explore this, I conducted two studies. The first study, using a qualitative approach, examined Ethiopian consumers' clothing/ fashion disposal methods and motives, providing insights into sustainable and socially responsible disposal practices in a developing economy context (Paper 2). The second study, a quantitative survey, focused on young consumers, analyzing the relationship between disposal motives (independent variables) and disposal methods (dependent variables) (Paper 3).

The qualitative study identified various clothing disposal methods used by Ethiopian consumers, including bartering, donating, gifting, and repurposing and reusing, with bartering offering a different perspective. Several disposal motives were also explored, including economic benefits, altruism, and convenience.

The quantitative study analyzed the relationship between the disposal methods and motives of young consumers. In addition to the three motives identified in the qualitative study, environmental concern was included in the analysis, as literature highlights its significance — even though it did not emerge as a motive in the qualitative study. Furthermore, disposal convenience was treated as a moderating variable. The findings revealed that economic motives drive bartering and repurposing, while altruism influences charitable giving. Environmental concerns impact all methods, with disposal convenience showing mixed effects.

5.1.2. Synthesis and implications of the three papers

By synthesizing findings from the systematic literature review on CnSR and the empirical studies on clothing disposal methods and motives, the research highlights several crucial insights. Together, the studies demonstrate progression from a theoretical understanding to empirical evidence.

The first study conducts a systematic literature review of CnSR, establishing the conceptualization and theoretical foundations of the field. It also identifies gaps in current research, particularly the lack of focus on emerging economies and the limited methodological diversity. This study sets the stage by identifying the need for research that explores CnSR, particularly post-consumption disposal behaviour, within different contexts, specifically developing economies, paving the way for the empirical and applied studies that follow. Developing economies exhibit unique socio-economic and cultural factors that influence consumers' engagement in sustainable practices. For instance, while recycling dominates disposal practices in developed economies, consumers in developing economies often rely on alternative methods such as bartering and repurposing. These practices reflect both systemic constraints in waste management and individual creativity in resource utilization.

The second and third papers, building on the first study, provided empirical evidence on post-consumption clothing disposal methods and motives. Jointly, these studies identified donation, gifting, bartering, repurposing and reuse as disposal methods that are driven by varieties of motives including economic benefits, altruism, and environmental factors. For instance, the studies identified context specific aspects such as economic factors as motives for CnSR. In developing countries, consumers in the lower income group often find alternative solutions to their financial challenges such as repurposing and bartering their used clothing. Moreover, cultural values rooted in collectivism and shared responsibility

reinforce altruistic disposal behaviors, such as donation and gifting. This is in line with previous studies (e.g. Hassan *et al*., 2022).

Additionally, the findings reveal a shift in consumer behavior from reactive to proactive social responsibility, underscoring their active role in sustainability efforts. As awareness of environmental and social issues grows, consumers in developing economies increasingly adopt practices that align with global sustainability goals. However, the persistence of external barriers, such as inadequate infrastructure and policy support, remains a challenge. Community-driven sustainability initiatives such as churches and school charity clubs have proven effective in bridging infrastructural gaps and encouraging responsible consumption. Addressing these challenges requires collaboration between policy makers, businesses, and community organizations to implement effective sustainability initiatives.

5.2.Conclusion

This dissertation offers a comprehensive analysis of CnSR, focusing on clothing disposal in the context of Ethiopia. Through an in-depth exploration of existing literature and empirical findings, it highlights the diverse methods and motives behind clothing disposal behaviors and underscores the importance of convenience in promoting socially responsible actions. By accentuating consumers as change agents, this dissertation advances theoretical understanding of CnSR and sustainability. It also provides practical insights for policymakers and business practitioners seeking to foster responsible consumption.

This thesis investigated the conceptualization of CnSR, illustrating its progression from reactive to proactive approaches. Additionally, it highlights underexplored perspectives such as economic-oriented and health-oriented CnSR which are particularly relevance to

developing economies. Theoretically, the dissertation extends existing frameworks by including contextual variables pertinent to such economies. Practically, it offers valuable insights to business practitioners and policy makers. It also examines the motives behind sustainable and socially responsible clothing disposal. Empirical studies reveal that Ethiopian consumers, particularly the youth, are influenced by the blend of economic, altruistic, and environmental motives. Moreover, the study introduces bartering as a disposal method, as defined in this dissertation and the negative relationship between disposal convenience and altruism as novel introductions to this domain.

The tragic events of Koshe serves as a cautionary example that unregulated consumption, specifically post-consumption disposal, can have devastating consequences. This dissertation was motivated in part by this disastrous incidence, while also recognizing the broader potential for change within developing economies, specifically Ethiopia. By developing the necessary policy frameworks and equipping young consumers with the knowledge and infrastructure they need, Ethiopia can empower its youth to drive a sustainable change, reshape consumption patterns, and mitigate environmental risks. Supporting the SDGs for 2030, these efforts can help to slow the cycle of waste creation, that has dreadful consequences for both people and the planet.

This dissertation posits that understanding the fundamental motives behind sustainable clothing disposal, particularly in the fashion industry, can enable firms to adapt their practices in areas such as sourcing, production, marketing, and consumer engagement in ways that better reflect sustainability values. By aligning with these motives, the industry can support the transition to a more sustainable and responsible consumption.

By focusing on the role of the individual as a central driver of sustainable behavior, this dissertation underscores the significant role consumers play in fostering sustainability.

Particular attention is given to young consumers, whose decisions carry growing influence, especially in Ethiopia where they constitute two-third of the population (i.e. the majority). Within the context of this developing economy, the dissertation offers insights into consumer behavior that are often underrepresented in mainstream sustainability discourses. In doing so, it contributes to the global discourse on CnSR by demonstrating how individual actions can impact global sustainability efforts. Ultimately, this work underscores a crucial reality: every act of consumption and disposal carries long-term consequences. A truly sustainable future can be realized as a result of conscious and responsible consumption. Only through such initiatives can we hope to stop the cycle of environmental and social damage that continues to plague vulnerable communities.

5.3. Limitations and Future Research Directions

5.3.1. Limitations

The dissertation employs a rigorous methodological approach by integrating systematic review, qualitative and quantitative papers. However, several limitations should be acknowledged. From a methodological perspective, the qualitative component of the dissertation may be susceptible to bias due to the interpretive nature of qualitative research (Lim, 2024). The online survey used in the quantitative study may have excluded individuals without internet access, particularly among young consumers in Ethiopia, thereby limiting the representativeness of the sample. Furthermore, the empirical studies' geographic focus on urban and suburban centers may restrict its generalizability to rural areas.

From a theoretical standpoint, the coefficient of determination in the quantitative model indicates that additional factors may influence socially responsible and sustainable clothing disposal methods. This suggests that the current model does not fully capture the complexity of disposal methods and motives, particularly in developing countries.

In terms of practical limitations, the studies' primarily focus on clothing disposal may limit the generalizability of findings to other consumer products. Moreover, the dissertation does not fully explore alternative disposal methods such as secondhand markets, and digital platforms facilitating clothing reuse, which are increasingly relevant in developing economies. Despite these limitations, the different methodological approaches and careful attention to ethical considerations strengthen the validity and reliability of the research findings.

5.3.2. Future research directions

Future research should consider methodological improvements, such as expanding sample sizes to include diverse consumer segments across both rural and urban settings. Additionally, alternative data collection methods, such as behavioral tracking or observational studies, could help mitigate self-reporting bias.

From the theoretical perspective, future research should investigate a broader range of factors influencing sustainable or socially responsible clothing disposal methods. This includes personal values, environmental awareness, and emotional attachment to clothing, along with external influences such as consumer lifestyle, brand engagement, and government regulations. By incorporating these additional variables, future studies can enhance the model's explanatory power and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the drivers behind sustainable and responsible disposal.

Further exploration of the negative moderation effect of disposal convenience on charitable giving would provide deeper insights into the complexities of consumer-decision making, particularly in clothing disposal.

While more study into demographic and contextual characteristics, such as, age, cultural values, and religiosity might improve our understanding of consumer motives, longitudinal

studies are crucial for investigating the intention-behavior gap in socially responsible consumption.

On a practical level, expanding research beyond young consumers to include older demographics and individuals from various income levels would enhance the applicability of findings. Further studies should also explore how digital engagement, such as online consumer communities and secondhand clothing platforms, influence clothing disposal behaviors in developing economies. Additionally, investigating policy and business interventions that promote sustainable disposal practices could offer practical insights for governments and industry stakeholders seeking to address clothing waste on a larger scale.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: A. Interview Questions

Warm Introduction

After the introduction, start with informal talks about (education, occupation, etc) and try to find out some demographic data.

1. Share your thoughts with me regarding what happens to the used clothing whenever they are no longer used. When choosing which clothing to part with, what are the most important considerations?
2. What do you think about those who sell their clothing? What about providing for street/homeless people or to a charity, or giving to relatives?
3. Tell me about your recent experience in handling your used clothing. What did you do with it? Why? and how? Where? When?
4. What inspired you to handle it that way? How did you take that option? Who was with you? How did he/ she/they respond to your decision?
5. How often do you do that (*i.e. the method of disposal*)?
6. Why did you choose one option over another?
7. What do you think about this practice (i.e. *of your family, friends, neighbours*) and how it affects the community, environment etc?
8. Are there any further recommendations you would like to make or anything you think I should have brought up?

Closing

Thank you for your time and thoughts.

Appendix1: B. Interview Questions

Variable	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bartering	I exchange my used clothing for other goods and services. I exchange my used clothing for yard work and household chores. I often exchange garments online.					
Charitable Giving	I donate my used clothing to charity for the needy. I always give clothing away to the needy I give used clothing to members of my family and friends.					
Repurposing	I often utilize used clothing for other purposes to get the most out of them. I often transform used clothing into another useful item. I try to extend the life of my clothing by repairing, cutting, sewing etc.					
Economic motive	I dispose of clothing for financial gain. I generate money from my used clothing I save money by exchanging my used clothing for other goods and services					
Altruistic motive	I shar clothing with those in need because I believe in helping others. I provide clothing to others to support their well-being. I dispose of my clothing in ways that benefit people in need.					
Convenience	I find a time-saving method to dispose of my used clothing. I find a method with less hassle to dispose of my used clothing. I consider time and effort as important factors in choosing a clothing disposal method					
Environmental motive	I often dispose of my used clothing in environmentally friendly ways I dispose of my used clothing in ways that can benefit the environment I use less harmful disposal methods than throwing away used clothing in the landfill					

Appendix 2: Discriminant validity – cross loadings

	ALT	BAR	CHG	DCO	ECO	ENV	REP
ALT1	**0.948**	0.238	0.679	0.340	0.191	0.439	0.320
ALT2	**0.941**	0.275	0.653	0.323	0.183	0.443	0.332
ALT3	**0.917**	0.256	0.605	0.367	0.185	0.447	0.306
BAR1	0.220	**0.845**	0.277	0.268	0.278	0.318	0.232
BAR2	0.272	**0.845**	0.371	0.270	0.163	0.288	0.170
BAR3	0.193	**0.806**	0.279	0.251	0.188	0.263	0.205
CHG1	0.629	0.356	**0.935**	0.321	0.212	0.420	0.277
CHG1	0.641	0.329	**0.910**	0.322	0.145	0.409	0.302
CHG1	0.625	0.328	**0.897**	0.323	0.111	0.387	0.274
DCO1	0.373	0.337	0.369	**0.852**	0.321	0.521	0.369
DCO2	0.221	0.213	0.223	**0.799**	0.259	0.332	0.313
DCO3	0.283	0.199	0.246	**0.810**	0.292	0.395	0.310
ECO1	0.178	0.209	0.129	0.304	**0.905**	0.236	0.234
ECO2	0.162	0.230	0.175	0.357	**0.926**	0.261	0.245
ECO3	0.205	0.260	0.163	0.318	**0.913**	0.270	0.258
ENV1	0.418	0.324	0.401	0.462	0.272	**0.903**	0.395
ENV2	0.392	0.334	0.360	0.502	0.253	**0.905**	0.345
ENV3	0.442	0.269	0.414	0.414	0.217	**0.840**	0.356
REP1	0.368	0.252	0.331	0.375	0.233	0.415	**0.883**
REP2	0.225	0.203	0.196	0.342	0.226	0.297	**0.856**
REP3	0.289	0.183	0.275	0.348	0.246	0.365	**0.882**

Source: **Authors' own work**

Appendix 3:PLSpredict MV summary - overview

Item	PLS _RMSE	LM_RMSE	PLS-LM	Q^2predict
BAR1	1.224	1.237	-0.007	0.129
BAR2	1.250	1.253	-0.003	0.086
BAR3	1.249	1.262	-0.013	0.084
CHG1	0.919	0.935	-0.016	0.405
CHG1	0.872	0.884	-0.012	0.425
CHG1	0.893	0.907	-0.014	0.431
REP1	1.121	1.115	0.006	0.203
REP2	1.141	1.155	-0.014	0.125
REP3	1.185	1.203	-0.018	0.165

Source: **Authors' own work**

Appendix 4:Collinearity statistics (VIF)

A. Collinearity - Outer model	VIF
ALT1	4.352
ALT2	4.066
ALT3	3.143
BAR1	1.555
BAR2	1.755
BAR3	1.583
CHG1	3.577
CHG1	2.858
CHG1	2.560
DCO1	1.448
DCO2	1.595
DCO3	1.638
ECO1	2.867
ECO2	3.272
ECO3	2.638
ENV1	2.652
ENV2	2.780
ENV3	1.755
REP1	1.981
REP2	1.994
REP3	2.129
DCO x ALT	1.000
DCO x ECO	1.000

Source: **Authors' own work**

B. Collinearity- Inner Model	VIF
ALT -> CHG	1.768
DCO -> BAR	1.520
DCO -> CHG	1.466
DCO -> REP	1.520
ECO -> BAR	1.190
ECO -> REP	1.190
ENV -> BAR	1.394
ENV -> CHG	1.581
ENV -> REP	1.394
DCO x ALT -> CHG	1.441
DCO x ECO -> BAR	1.047
DCO x ECO -> REP	1.047

Source: **Authors' own work**

Appendix 5:Model Fit and Predictive Power (R2 and Q2)

	R-square	R-square adjusted	Q^2predict
BAR	0.165	0.158	0.145
CHG	0.522	0.518	0.506
REP	0.236	0.230	0.217

Source: **Authors' own work**